



North Star News

May, 2020

Dear members and friends,

As you can see from the format of this newsletter, these unprecedented times have us all struggling with the new normal. As of this writing, most parks in the state will reopen by May 1st, with reduced hours. Park stickers are required and can be purchased via phone, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm daily. The number is: **888-305-0398. We cannot sell them at the office.** For information from the WI DNR about COVID-19 and admission information, see the following link:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/admission.html>

Park hours will be 6:00 am to 7:00 pm. All parks will be closed on Wednesdays, to allow staff to perform maintenance and cleaning duties. Newport State Park's trails are open, but offices, bathrooms and campsites are closed. As we ride this out together, enjoy some facts and photos from the park.

Upcoming Events

(No events scheduled at this time)

“Out With the Naturalist”-

See Newport Wilderness Society's Facebook page for short videos with our naturalist Beth Bartoli

NWS Board meeting

April 29th via Zoom

What's Going on in the Woods?

As is typical of our northeastern climate, it is still much cooler here. There was still snow flying while checking bluebird boxes not even a week ago. Warm days still lead to cool nights, and rain seems to lurk around the corner of many of our days. Even still, the woods bear the signs of spring, as ephemeral wildflowers gather enough courage to break ground and send up tender shoots of leaves and petals.

Spring wildflowers are on a mission. They need to emerge, grow, bloom and reproduce all before the tree canopy fills in and shades them from the precious sunlight. These spring plants are using the energy produced in last growing season and stored in their roots, tubers or bulbs to produce leaves and/or flowers in the current season. Some of these flowers, like trout lily and trillium, can

take 6 to 7 growing seasons to store up enough energy to produce just one flower. Beside it being against the law, you can see how detrimental it would be to pick these flowers

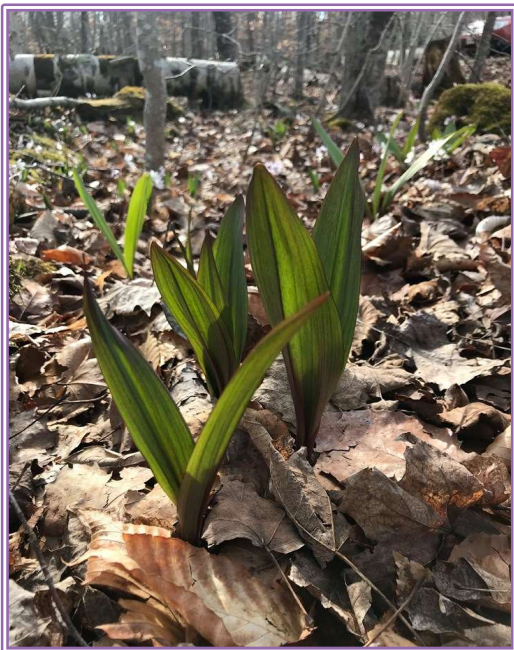
Some of the first to show up at Newport are hepatica, ramps (wild leek) and bloodroot. As in all state parks, it is illegal to dig up or destroy anything growing. You may harvest fruits, nuts, berries or mushrooms for personal consumption.



Hepatica in early spring



Hepatica blooms, trout lily leaves and ramps



Ramps (wild leeks), a delicious edible



Bloodroot, with their leaves curled around their stalk



Europe Bay beach looking north (top photo) and south. Chilly, blustery day with snow coming

The Newport Wilderness Society, Inc. is the Official Friends Group for Newport State Park and is a 501 [c] [3] non-profit, tax exempt, dynamic organization - dues and donations are tax deductible within the limits of the law.