

# Skip into Spring!



Photo courtesy Tony Peroutky.

**What is hepatica?...** Hepatica, also known as liverleaf, are wildflowers that tend to bloom in the spring from March through June. They are four to six inches tall, and their flowers can be pale blue, lavender, pink, or white. Hepatica retain their leaves all winter long. In the spring, they quickly shoot up flowers before the trees overhead are able to produce leaves to shade them out. Old winter leaves tend to be dark purple or brown, whereas new growth is light green. After flowering, hepatica allow their pollinated flowers to droop to the ground so that ants can collect and disperse the seeds. Hepatica are also called liverleaf because the leaves are shaped like the three lobes of the human liver. Early herbalists believed hepatica was beneficial for the liver, a thought that has since been disproved. Two common species of hepatica in this area include round-lobed hepatica (***Hepatica americana***) and sharp-lobed hepatica (***Hepatica acutiloba***). They are nearly identical and differ mostly in leaf shape.

Tekiela, Stan. Wildflowers of Minnesota Field Guide. Minneapolis: Adventure Publications, 1999.

**Q:** What does the letter "A" have in common with a flower?

**A:** They both have bees coming after them.

**Q:** If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?

**A:** Pilgrims!

## Maple Syrup Volunteering

Want to know more about the process of making maple syrup? Volunteers are always welcome to help collect sap, cook syrup, or help at our festivals. Email [arboretum@csbsju.edu](mailto:arboretum@csbsju.edu) and let us know you want to get involved!

## The Voices of Minnesota Frogs- Tuesday April 21

Join Frank Ziegler (SJU '03), member of the Minnesota Herpetological Society, to learn about frogs in our area. From the earliest spring peepers to the last sounds of summer, Frank will walk us through the frog calling season and help us to identify which species are calling and why. Meet at the New Science Pendulum at **6:30 p.m.**

## Spring Plant Sale- May 9

Come stock up on plants and garden tools at the Spring Plant Sale. The sale takes place at the New Science Pendulum from **8:30 a.m.- noon**, or whenever we are sold out!

## Spring Birding Day- May 9

Saint John's Arboretum and the Minnesota Ornithologists Union (MOU) have partnered to bring you a day of hiking through an "Important Bird Area" in Minnesota during peak migration! We have seen 100+ species in past years at Saint John's! In addition to birding, participants will have a chance to hear from local birding experts. [Learn more and pre-register online!](#)

## **Bird Migration in Minnesota- May 19**

Learn all about the great migratory birds of Minnesota! This session will be led by Bob Russell from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and SJU alum. Meet at the New Science Pendulum at **6:30 p.m.**

**If you would like to be on the volunteer e-mail list for the Arboretum, please reply e-mail [arboretum@csbsju.edu](mailto:arboretum@csbsju.edu).**

**We'll be in touch...**

**Your friends at the Arboretum**

**It's your backyard, so get out and play!**

\*\*\*Nature Notes is a weekly publication designed to keep you informed about exciting events offered by the Arboretum!

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