

# inSTALLations

May 2009

## Plant Parade Wild Ginger



The woods are filled with spring wildflowers this month. Many are delicate and showy, but the flower of Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*) is neither. Tucked under the heart-shaped leaves, the triangular flower is a reddish brown color and a little stinky.

The odor and color help attract the beetles, flies, and gnats that will pollinate this flower to produce its seeds.

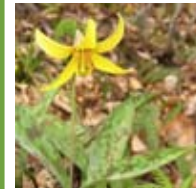


Each Wild Ginger seed has an *elaiosome*, or an oily structure packed with nutrients. This structure attracts ants and is the key to the spread of Wild Ginger. Ants carry the seeds into their nests where they eat the elaiosome

and discard the rest of the seed into their underground 'landfill'. This area provides ideal conditions for the germination of the seeds.

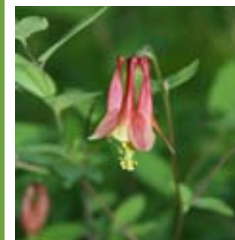
## Native Nuggets

Ants disperse the seeds of many other wildflowers including trillium, hepatica, Dutchmen's breeches, bloodroot, and violets.



The **trout lily** provides critical early nectar and pollen to queen bumblebees.

**Dutchmen's breeches** are pollinated by honeybees and bumblebees, but only the longer tongue of the bumblebee can reach the nectar.



Hummingbirds are the primary pollinators for **American Columbine**.

These red, upside down flowers with long tubes are designed perfectly for their avian visitors.

**Visit the Information Desk for program information.**