

A walk in the woods is an eye-opening pastime

As I walked along the Bruce Trail North of Terra Cotta on Easter weekend, the forest was generally quiet. The heat of the mid-day sun silenced the voices of all but the most amorous frogs and only occasionally was the quiet broken by bird-song.

Winter wrens, early spring arrivals from their wintering grounds

Backyard Naturalist

By DON SULLEN
Herald Special



in the United States heralded their presence with a lovely gurgling trill. Flickers contributed their raucous 'wick, wick, wick' and hairy woodpeckers proclaimed their nesting territories by pounding their beaks of the resonant wood of dead trees.

These sounds of early spring give only a hint of the tumult to come next month when the woodlands will host the noisy return of a multitude of migrants.

At that time the eyes of a naturalist will be directed upwards to follow the movements of vividly colored warblers, orioles and grosbeaks.

For now, however, another spectacle commands attention - the wildflowers of the woodland floor. During the early days of spring, before the leaves of the deciduous trees have emerged, the floors of the

woodland is bathed in warming sunshine.

Taking advantage of the warmth and high levels of light are numerous wildflowers - spring beauties, hepaticas, bloodroot, trout lilies and trilliums among others. During their brief period of bloom these wildflowers cloak the ground in a patchwork quilt of color.

Many of these wildflowers are small and best appreciated up close. Snoop down and examine the nodding yellow flowers and attractively mottled leaves of the trout lily or the tiny pink-striped star shaped flowers of the spring beauty.

If most of our wildflowers have a subtle beauty, trilliums are an exception.

The combined impact of a mused group of white trilliums is not at all subdued - trilliums flaunt their beauty against the light green background of the spring woodland and they do it in virtually every deciduous woodland across the south of the province.

The white trillium is the star performer of the early spring scent with a supporting cast that includes the red or purple trillium.

A discerning eye will pick out the occasional clump of these maroon-colored flowers usually nestled in the nook of a rock or against a tree trunk.

If you care to smell this flower you may detect the unpleasant scent that attracts the carrion flies that pollinate it.

My favorite wildflower has to be the jack-in-the-pulpit, so named because its form suggested a preacher in his pulpit. Its primary appeal is not flower color, but this unusual flower configuration.

The stalk bearing the tiny petal-less flowers is the 'preacher' and the preacher's hood is a part of the flower bud called a 'spathe'. The whole flower structure may measure 10 cm high.

The jack-in-the-pulpit can reach an impressive size - up to three feet high. It has long lasting appeal; not only do its flowers persist longer than most other plants of the female plants, they eventually yield to a spire of berries that ripen into brilliant eye catching red in late

summer. Look for "jacks" in moist, low-lying areas.

The attraction of woodland wildflowers has led many people to consider growing them in their yards. Success with wild flowers hinges on how closely their natural woodland environment can be imitated. They need moist loamy soil, rich in organic matter and require the spring sunshine and summer shade conditions that prevail under deciduous trees.

I would not recommend digging these flowers in the wild, unless permission is given by the property owner and only a few specimens of the more abundant species are removed.

A good alternative to digging is to acquire wildflowers from a garden centre or through a mail order nursery.

Most of the larger nurseries carry wildflowers and C.A. Cruickshank Inc., a mail order nursery business located in Toronto, sell a good selection.

The ephemeral nature of wildflowers behaves us to appreciate them now.

Why not take a walk this weekend and see how many you can identify.

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Against the odds
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Are you in the market for a second hand power scooter? A Georgetown resident is asking \$1500 for a nearly new Rascal which was purchased in the United States for \$2000.

The wheels are large, allowing for easy travel on gravel or lawns. It has three speeds, requires two 12-volt batteries and weighs 119 pounds, fully assembled.

DEAR MEG
Meg Whitcomb

X-rated ex-hubby tries blackmail

DEAR MEG - Five years ago my ex persuaded me to try "swinging." I didn't like the idea, but I was desperate because our marriage was in deep trouble.

During the next two years I had some 70 male partners and four female ones. I was miserable the whole time. Finally I got a divorce.

Now I'm married to a terrific man who knows nothing about my past. The problem is, my ex had hundreds of X-rated pictures of me with a variety of partners in a variety of poses. He knows my husband is well off, and he is threatening to blackmail me because he's broke.

Please advise me. I feel helpless and fear that my happiness is in jeopardy. - XYZ, N.Y.

DEAR XYZ - I'm not a believer in fessing up about the past to a new husband or wife. By the same token, I don't believe in blackmail, which, no matter how well disguised, is a crime.

Write a letter to your lawyer explaining exactly what's happening and send a copy to your ex. With your lawyer's approval, you might even tell your ex that your husband already knows, even though he doesn't.

DEAR MEG - My daughter and I have been alone for most of her 11 years. Last March I met a marvelous man I want to marry. Edward cares for Melissa, but she's rude and nasty to him. She's even threatened to run away.

Melissa has always been a lovely, bright, well-adjusted child. I'm so afraid she'll rebel by drinking, getting into drugs or sex. I feel I'm at the crossroads, and I don't know which way to go. I love Melissa, and I love

When dismantled the heaviest section is around 40 pounds. Direct inquiries to 877-1436.

The design of buildings is changing rapidly due to the new Ontario Human Rights Code and The Ontario Building Code.

Architects must plan for the concept of barrier free design and that means new tools and techniques are required. The Barrier Free Design Centre is hosting a seminar for architects on May 20 at Venture Inn Hamilton, May 26 at the Valhalla Inn, Kitchener, and May 8 at the hotel Admiral in Toronto. The cost is \$20 for the day. Any local architects wanting details can call 1-885-0030.

Lynn Gates, Community Health Nutritionist, Halton Region Health Department, has sent a review of Dr. Berger's Immune Power Diet.

Dr. Berger is a psychiatrist who represents himself as a specialist in nutritional medicine treating immune disorders, food allergies and obesity. His diet promises weight loss and also professes to revitalize your immune system. The three step approach to "Power Tune the Immune System" includes the diet which consists of menus and recipes, eliminating certain foods, a re-introduction phase and a maintenance phase.

According to the report the energy intake level, for the diet is below that recommended and due to the inadequate servings of milk, bread and cereals, the diet may be deficient in calcium, iron, B vitamins and trace minerals.

The conclusion of the review states that "the book is filled with unscientific claims and is not recommended as it promotes neither sensible eating nor exercise". On the personal level, I can only report that a few individuals I know that have tried the diet claim to have had some positive benefits, both in weight loss and in physical well being.

I would advise anyone however who is considering a decision to begin dieting to consult their doctor or Health Dept., to ensure they are receiving proper nutrients.

Tony Ruppreck, Minister without portfolio for the physically disabled will be the honored guest at a social evening sponsored by the Physically Handicapped Citizens Association on Friday May 1, 1987 at St. Andrew's United Church, Georgetown.

Tickets are still available. Door prizes, dancing, games and food are all featured attractions. Direct inquiries to 877-1436.

Edward. How can I choose? Should I wait to remarry until she's on her own? - LAURA, NEV.

DEAR LAURA - As long as Melissa knows her tactics are keeping Edward at bay, she'll keep on using them. She's picking up on your uncertainty and using it as a weapon to keep you to herself. This is standard operating procedure for kids with a single parent who's considering remarrying.

You don't have to make a choice, you can have both. But it's time to show a little muscle with Melissa. You can't let an 11-year-old run your life.

Lonely? Meg's booklet "Breaking out of the Loneliness Trap" tells you how to free yourself. Send \$1 to DEAR MEG, in care of this newspaper, P.O. Box 91428, Cleveland, OH 44101-3428.

Write to Meg care of this newspaper. Meg can only answer letters that contain a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Questions of general interest will be discussed in future columns.

Clean up your act

This is a good time to clean out the garage and the cupboards in which you've packed away the household hazardous wastes the garbage man won't collect.

September 29, the Region will be holding a collection day for hazardous wastes in Halton Hills. A similar day will be held at Sheridan College in Oakville May 9. Pesticides, fertilizers and paints are all hazardous wastes.

Last year, Halton Region held the household hazardous waste collection days in Burlington and Milton. Syntath, Service of Tricel (Sarnia) Ltd., will be collecting and handling the hazardous waste. They will receive, sort, inventory, pack and load the wastes. About 500 cars are expected to turn out.

"We find Halton Hills is a very good participant in anything to do with recycling," Public Works Director Bob Moore said last week. He noted the community is much more aware of disposal of hazardous materials, compared to four or five years ago.



Halton Board of Education Trustee Dick Howitt and Branwen Williams officially opened the "Arts Sparks" school art show at the Cultural Centre on April 21. The show features seven pieces of art from each school in Halton Hills from Kindergarten to Grade 13. The

show is running in observance of Education Week which begins April 25. Art Sparks will run until May 4. Above, Harrison Public School Grade 1 student Branwen Williams (left) and Dick Howitt admire Branwen's entry into the show. (Herald photo)