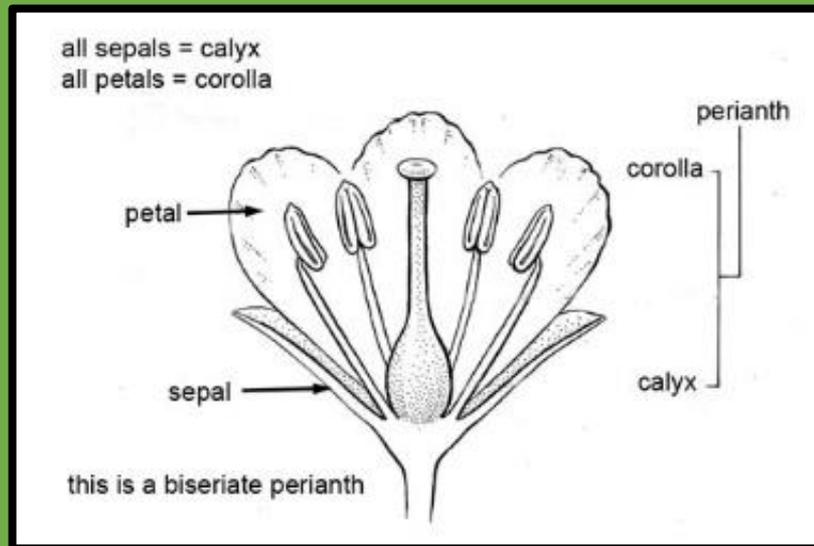


EARLY FLOWERING HERBS WITH GREEN PETALS

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In this essay, we present common plants that flower from March to the end of June and have green petals. This essay does not include all species with green petals, some of which have not yet been documented in the Preserve.



There is often wide variation in color within flowers. For example, a species may have green sepals, yellow petals, white filaments, and orange anthers. For this reason, we have elected to use petal color. Nevertheless, petals may be multi-colored. In that case, we use the dominant color and in some cases, we have treated the species in more than one essay.

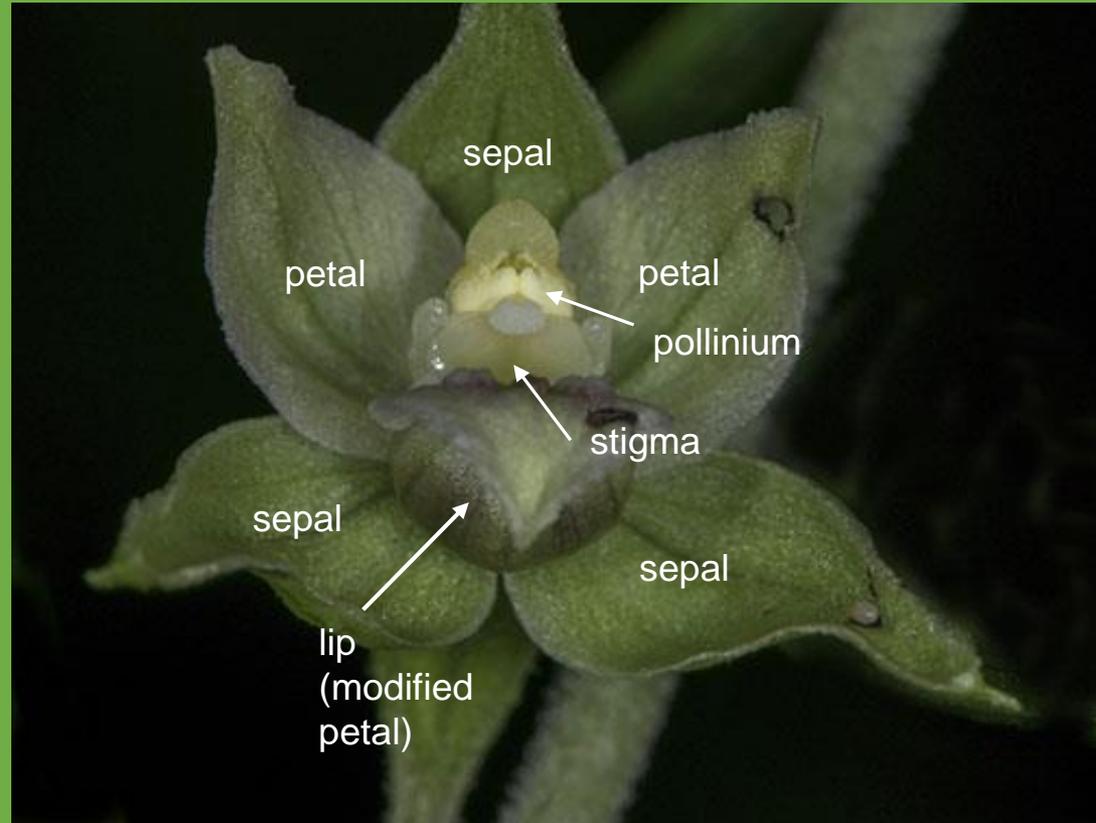
Plants with green petals at any time of year are rare. The most conspicuous green spring flowers in the Preserve belong to the Melianthaceae (Trillium Family), Orchidaceae (Orchid Family), Polygonaceae (Buckwheat Family), Saxifragaceae (Saxifrage Family).

MELANTHIACEAE: FALSE HELLEBORE (*Veratrum viride*)



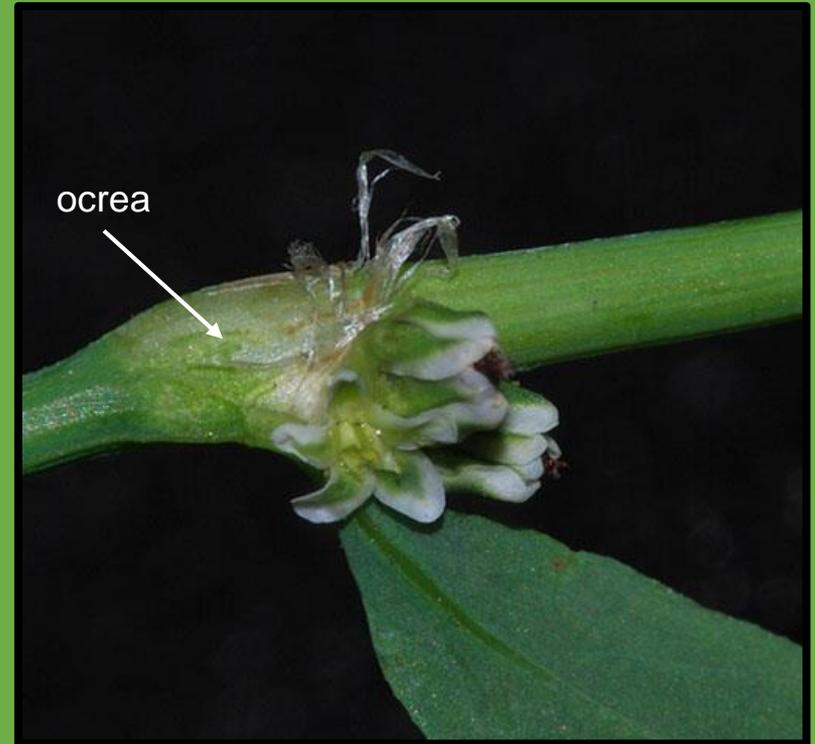
This native species is one of the first to produce leaves in the spring. It is most commonly found in the Preserve in wet areas where it reaches 2 meters in height. The simple, alternate, plicate, sessile leaves are up to 30 cm long and the primary leaf veins arch from the base to the apex of the leaf blade. Except for the short globular yellow, anthers; the flowers are green. The plants are poisonous.

ORCHIDACEAE: HELLEBORINE (*Epipactis helleborine*)



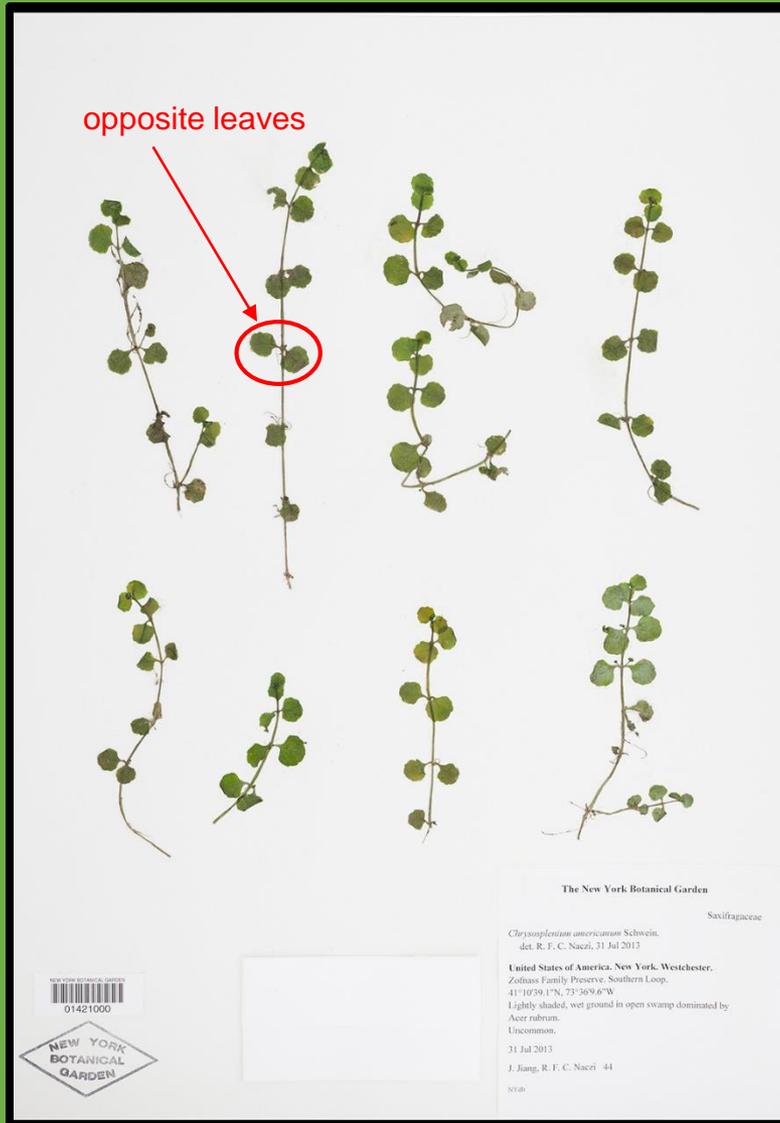
This invasive species from Europe is now established in eastern and western North America but is mostly absent in the Midwest. In the Preserve, it is found in deciduous forest understory and is a common weed in lawns and gardens outside of the Preserve. The inflorescence is indeterminate (i.e., the flowers open from the bottom to the top of the rachis), the bilaterally symmetrical perianth consists of three sepals and three petals (one petal is modified), and the pollen is found in sacs called pollinia.

POLYGONACEAE: FIELD KNOTWEED (*Polygonum aviculare*)



The field knotweed is widely distributed in temperate North America and Eurasia. It is a prostrate herb with alternate, small, linear gray-green leaves found in open, sunny areas such as roadsides. The flowers are produced in fascicles and these are subtended by a sheath of fused stipules called an ocrea. The petals are half green and half white which is a common color combination in this family.

SAXIFRAGACEAE: GOLDEN SAXIFRAGE (*Chysosplenium americanum*)



This species is found in dense patches in wet areas. The golden saxifrage can be recognized by its prostrate stem and simple, opposite leaves. The leaf blades are oval or orbicular and the margins are nearly entire. The buds are square, there are no petals, and the donut-shaped nectary is dark red. The filaments are short and white and the anthers are red.