

Dutchman's-breeches *Dicentra cucullaria*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Papaverales

Family: Fumariaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Dutchman's-breeches is a perennial plant that grows from a bulb. It has no leaf-bearing stems. The leaves arise from the base and are very finely divided. Flowers are arranged in racemes on a leafless stalk that may be 10 inches long. Each flower may be two-thirds inch long and up to three-fourths inch wide. The four petals are in two inflated pairs that are white except for the yellow tip. The petals spread out and have pointed spurs at the base. Fruits are oblong to linear, smooth, up to one inch long and contain several seeds.

BEHAVIORS

Dutchman's-breeches may be found statewide in Illinois. This plant grows in rich woods. Dutchman's-breeches flowers from mid-March to early May. It is a popular plant to use in wildflower gardens. This species contains an alkaloid that is poisonous to cattle.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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