

Mayapple *Podophyllum peltatum*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Ranunculales

Family: Berberidaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The mayapple, or mandrake, is a perennial plant that grows from an underground stem. Its smooth, upright stem grows to about two feet tall. The two umbrellalike leaves have five to nine lobes. Each leaf may be 14 inches wide. The leaves are attached at the center to the stalk. The single, white flower has six to nine petals and grows from the place where the leaf stalks join the main stem. The fruit is an ovoid, yellow berry that may be two inches long.

BEHAVIORS

The mayapple may be found statewide in Illinois. This plant grows in woods. The mayapple flowers from late March to June. Its underground stem is poisonous, but the ripe fruit is edible.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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