



Dutchman's breeches

Dicentra cucullaria

Kingdom: Plantae
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta
Class:
Order:
Family:

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 which 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 which 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. Dutchman's breeches contains an alkaloid which is poisonous to cattle.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.