

Edward L Rose Conservancy



Conservancy Currents

Spring-2026



Red Elderberry bud

Upcoming Educational Events

Spring Bird Walk

May 2nd at 8 AM

Naturalist, Joyce Stone, will be hosting her annual spring birding walk along Baker Rd. on the back side of the Woodbourne Preserve in Dimock starting near the south end of the road. Bring your binoculars and join in the search for our recent spring arrivals. The diverse environment along Baker Rd. results in a wide variety of birds and relatively easy viewing.



Amphibian Walk and Talk at Woodbourne Preserve

May 17th at 10 AM

Conservation Specialist, Kristi Sullivan will be directing a program on the many different types of amphibians that can be found in Susquehanna County woods and waterways. Some, like our frogs, may be obvious. Others, like many of our salamanders, are more secretive. Each one, however, can tell us a lot about the habitat types and environmental conditions where they reside. Join us at Woodbourne Preserve for a brief talk about amphibians and then a short trail/stream walk where we will find some of these animals and explore the unique relationship each type has with land and/or water. Meet at the Woodbourne Preserve Parking lot on Rt 29. This program is presented through the Montrose Adult School. A fee of \$5.00 is charged and the class is limited to twenty participants, so don't delay. To sign up, visit



<http://www.montroseadultschool.org/nature-and-country-living-classes/>

Annual Meeting

Save the Date - Annual Members' Meeting, E. L. Rose Conservancy

This year's members' meeting will take place on Saturday, July 25th at Salt Springs Park, beginning at 11:00 a.m. Like last year's, the event will include a picnic brunch, a business meeting and a short educational program.

Spring Beauties, and other forest delights

In the rugged terrain of Northeast Pennsylvania, the true arrival of spring isn't marked by a date on the calendar, but by a frantic race tucked between the last of the snow and the greening of our forests.

Before the black cherry trees, oaks and maples of Susquehanna County can weave their summer canopy, a specialized group of wildflowers known as **spring ephemerals** must complete their entire life cycle. Spring ephemerals have evolved a high-stakes survival strategy. They take advantage of a brief "solar window" when the forest floor is bathed in direct sunlight and the air is finally warming.

In just a few short weeks—from mid April to early May—these "fleeting" beauties emerge, bloom, and set seed before retreating underground for the rest of the year.

These plants help jumpstart the whole ecological process each spring. They provide the first critical food source for newly emerged pollinators. For instance, **Dutchman's Breeches** rely almost exclusively on queen bumblebees, whose long tongues are the only ones capable of reaching the nectar hidden in the flower's "pantaloon." In return, the flowers provide the high-energy fuel these queens need to start their colonies.

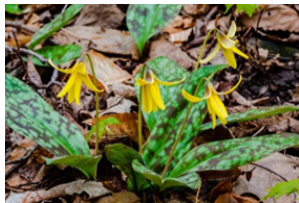
While hiking the mossy trails of the Conservancy's **Highpoint Preserve, Greenwood Sanctuary** or **Woodbourne Forest**, keep an eye out for these local favorites:

1. White & Red Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum* & *Trillium erectum*)



These are some of the largest ephemerals of the spring woods. The Large-flowered White Trillium are usually infrequent, but occasionally can turn entire hillsides into snowy carpets. Its cousin, the Red Trillium has a dark maroon hue and a faint scent of rotting meat to attract carrion flies for pollination.

2. Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*)



You'll often find these near streambanks. They are easily identified by their mottled green and brown leaves, which resemble the skin of a brook trout. Curiously, a colony of Trout Lilies can be centuries old, yet only a tiny fraction of the plants will produce a flower in any given year. They flower a little later than some of the other ephemerals

3. Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)



These plants create some of the most dramatic displays in the region, particularly in moist bottomlands and floodplains. Their buds start as pink and "explode" into brilliant sapphire-blue bells.

4. Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)



One of the earliest to bloom, its pure white flower is wrapped in a single, scalloped leaf like a cloak. It gets its name from the bright orange-red sap found in its roots, which was historically used by Indigenous peoples as a dye.

5. Spring Beauties (*Claytonia Virginica*)



Individually low and unassuming, they are small plants with white to pink flowers, often with darker pink veins, that bloom in early spring. But they can carpet the forest, turning it into a delicate fairyland. As with most of the ephemerals, they prefer moist woodlands with rich soils.

Other popular places to catch this transient show in the region:

- **Ricketts Glen State Park:** While famous for its [waterfalls](#), the mist and damp microclimates of the Glens Natural Area create a haven for Jack-in-the-pulpit, wild ginger, and trilliums.
- **The Delaware Water Gap:** The various trails along the river, such as the [Hornbecks Creek Trail](#), feature rich alluvial soils where bluebells and Dutchman's breeches thrive.
- **Salt Springs State Park:** Its old-growth hemlocks and rocky gorges host a variety of early-season blooms tucked among the moss.
- **Jones Park in Vestal:** Its stream banks and numerous trails proliferate with spring flowers.

These plants are as fragile as they are beautiful. Many ephemerals take years—sometimes up to seven for a Trout Lily—to produce a single flower. Removing the flower prevents the plant from seeding, and picking the leaves can starve the bulb, effectively killing the plant. Ephemerals often grow in dense colonies. Staying on marked trails prevents soil compaction and the accidental crushing of dormant bulbs.

Conservancy Board Notes

- The process of attaining national accreditation for the Conservancy is ongoing. Accreditation through the Land Trust Alliance requires an extensive and sometimes wrenching review of financial and acquisition procedures. The good news is that the Conservancy's application for national accreditation is on schedule.
- We have created a new updated tri-fold informational brochure about the Conservancy, its history and its mission. We have also acquired two new table top banners and have produced a short booklet to educate landowners about conservation easements titled, "What Will Become of Your Land?" Both publications can be found on our website.



- The Conservancy participated in Ag Day in Montrose again this year. Supporting local agriculture is an important part of conservation in our area. And Ag Day presents an excellent opportunity to interface with fellow conservation organizations and the larger community.

- Our battle with invasives continues. Removal of invasive barberry is planned for this Spring at the Highpoint Preserve, and efforts are continuing to protect hemlocks at

Woodbourne from hemlock wooly adelgid.

- Nature cameras, and sound recorders, are becoming increasingly common in parks and preserves, not only for authorized scientific or educational purposes, but for personal enjoyment, and sometimes for less desirable purposes. The board is developing a policy to guide their use in our preserves.
- A major project slated for this Spring is repairs and improvements to the barn at the Greenwood Sanctuary. Doors and windows need repair, the exterior needs a new coat of paint, and installing gutters will extend the life of the building.
- Attorney Kathryn Fitzgerald is retiring as a director from our board. We thank Kathryn for her many years of service to the mission. She continues to volunteer her legal guidance on behalf of the Conservancy.
- New comprehensive management plans have been approved for Longford Lake and the Woodbourne Forest Preserve. Updates to the Highpoint Preserve and Greenwood Sanctuary management plans are underway. A forest Management Plan is in the works for Woodbourne, allowing us to apply for NRCS funding.
- The Conservancy has joined the Susquehanna County Forest Landowners Association and participated in their annual members meeting. This conservation minded fellow organization is a partner in our efforts to protect the environment and the rural character of our community.

If you have questions or concerns about any board activities or our ongoing projects, reach out to a board member or email board@elrose.org.

Help Wanted

The Conservancy is interested in acquiring the services of a part time land steward. With over twelve miles of trails to maintain, invasive plants on the rise, upkeep needed on structures and parking areas, boundaries to mark, and a garden to take care of, it's all becoming too much for our generous volunteers to handle. If you know anyone who might be interested, either as an employee or as an independent contractor, please let us know.

Highpoint Trails Spring Cleanup

It has been a long hard winter. The trails need your help. Saturday, May 2nd, at 9:00 AM, we will be meeting at the Butterfly Garden at the end of south lake road. Bug spray, gloves and sturdy shoes are recommended. Please bring loppers or a chainsaw, if you have them. Cleanup usually takes a couple hours.

Unbidden

The first warm day lies quietly. The ground is still locked, roots gripped in cold earth, but something has shifted. The light lingers a little longer. The angle changes. Tic-Toc. The tree knows.

It is not thought, not in the way we flatter ourselves with the word. It is chemistry and pressure; unfathomably ancient memory written in the cells. As temperatures rise above freezing, even briefly, the frozen columns within the xylem begin to loosen. Gases dissolved in sap contract and expand with the cold nights and warmer days. Pressure builds. Then releases. A pulse begins.

Deep in the roots, osmotic gradients stir. Sugars stored in roots from the previous summer—sunlight banked against winter's austerity—dissolve into solution. Water follows. Always, water follows. The concentration differential draws it inward, upward, into the great vertical conduits of the trunk. Capillary action lends a hand, but it is not the engine. The engine is above.

At the crown, buds swell imperceptibly. Their scales loosen. On a dry day, when the air is hungry, evaporation begins along the nascent leaf surfaces. Transpiration, the botanists call it. A modest word for a powerful force. A vacuum forms pulling upward like a straw. Molecule by molecule, water escapes into the atmosphere, and in doing so, pulls the column behind it. Cohesion holds the chain unbroken—hydrogen bonds linking each molecule to the next in a tensile line that can stretch a hundred feet without snapping.

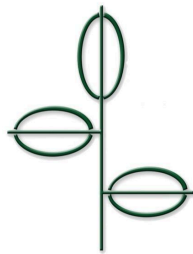
The effect is relentless. A negative pressure develops, a suction that draws sap upward from root to branch tip. Not in fits and starts now, but in a steady climb. The tree drinks the sky.

Stand close and you will not hear it, but it is there—the silent ascent, the quiet industry of spring. The bark warms in the sun. The buds fatten. The system hums. Cadence, mantra, rise, pull. The stored past becomes the imminent future.

And then, one morning, without announcement, the leaves arrive.

Bill Fischer

More info at [ELROSE.ORG](https://www.ELROSE.ORG)



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