

## SPRING EPHEMERALS

“Things change, people change, hairstyles change, interest rates fluctuate.” –*Top Secret*, Paramount Pictures, 1984

Spring ephemerals are plants that emerge quickly in the spring and die back after a short growth and reproduction phase. The Lamont Campus hosts a number of these short-lived plants, such as:

- Skunk cabbage
- Trout lily
- Virginia bluebells
- Mayapple



Photo credit: NC Extension

*Spring beauty is a perennial found mostly in the moist woods of the eastern US. The plant spreads by underground tubers, so it also goes by the name Fairy Spud!*

## BIRDS ARE ON THE MOVE

Longer days mean many birds are already *en route* northward from their wintering grounds to their breeding grounds.

Our local red-winged blackbirds arrived in February and immediately started singing to define their territories. Our three Wild Turkey Jakes/Toms (immature/adult males) are showing bright blue and red heads and iridescent copper plumage. Watch for them to start displaying more frequently and intensely!



*This turkey is Bruce. Ask B&G!*

Migration will peak for most songbird species in mid-May ([BirdCast migration tracking](#)), and this is when we may notice an increase in bird strike frequency. While strike deterrents are most effective when installed on the window exteriors, some interior decals, like [Bird's Eye View](#), have been shown to have some positive effect. If you observe a window strike or find a dead bird, please report it to [Linda Pistolesi](#).

## NOCTURNAL LAMONT: LIGHT REIGNS

Although sparsely populated, nighttime at Lamont is far from pristine.



Photo credit: Andrew Goodwillie

*Blinded by the light! LED floodlights without motion sensors, like this one (also inset) at the eastern end of the Marine Biology building, produce intense, unshielded glare, deep shadows, and vastly over-illuminated areas.*

Artificial outdoor lighting is a pollutant that can severely stress ecosystems by disrupting:

- Daily/seasonal rhythms of plants and animals (e.g. activity levels, predation, [pollinator interactions](#), [bird migration](#), mating habits, [leaf texture](#))
- Our view of the beautiful night sky
- The Lamont budget

**NIGHT SKY BLOTTED OUT BY LIGHT POLLUTION** vs **VISIBLE NIGHT SKY**

**VERY BAD**      **BAD**      **BETTER**      **BEST**

**Bad, better, best**

Use outdoor lighting responsibly by only using it where it's needed, when it's needed, and in the amount required. Use the lowest light level required, limit blue-violet light, utilize timers or motion sensors, and use shielding.

Image from DarkSky.org

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK  
 APR 5 to 12 2021