

SOLF Presents: Eastern Skunk Cabbage

The latest in Southborough Open Land Foundation's The Nature of Southborough series.

by [Beth Melo](#) on [April 15, 2025](#)



Above: Southborough's wetlands host one of spring's early blooming "flowers". (image cropped from photo contributed by SOLF)

[This post is part of a special guest series focused on appreciating nature in Southborough, contributed by the [Southborough Open Land Foundation](#) (SOLF), a non-profit dedicated to preserving and stewarding natural resources here in town.]

This early spring blooming native plant grows in boggy wetlands and is a cousin of the Jack in the Pulpit and the Peace Lily!

To find the flowers of the skunk cabbage, you would visit a low wet area in April and look for purplish or green curved "hoods" that are about 6 inches high. Inside the hood, which is known as the spathe, you will see an intriguing ball called the spadix. It is covered with tiny flowers that sit in the middle of flat "Tepals" that can range from a dark pink to light yellow.

The smell of the skunk cabbage, which, as it matures is said to resemble that of a skunk, attracts various types of insects that, while rambling about on the spadix, pollinate the plant.

By May, those purple and green cloaks have disappeared, and in their place, you will see the large broad leaves of the Skunk Cabbage.

For more information I suggest [[this post by the Northeast School of Botanical Medicine](#)]

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Debbie Costine

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