

FIELD LEARNING ACTIVITY | Forest in Bloom: Identifying, Collecting, and Pressing Flowers from Trees

**Saturday May 11, 2024
10am-12pm**

Hillside Environmental Education Park, UConn Storrs



Join The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and Dr. Sarah Taylor, Collection Manager for the George Safford Torrey Herbarium at UConn, on a spring hike to identify and collect specimens from blooming trees!

Dr. Taylor will discuss best practices for collecting and preserving tree flowers and will demonstrate how to press what you collect to make good scientific specimens. Flowering plants pressed during the hike will be added to the George Safford Torrey Herbarium's collection.

This hike may be challenging for some and will include hilly areas and forays off trail to look for flowering trees. Sturdy footwear and long pants are recommended.

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu **by Monday May 6, 2024.**

***** Space for this event is limited and registration is required! *****

Cost: \$10 for Museum Members, \$15 for non-Members

Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs/> for more information and to register.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Learn to identify, collect, and press museum specimens from blooming trees and shrubs at UConn

Storrs, CT— The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is hosting a spring hike on Saturday May 11 in search of flowering trees and spring ephemerals. The hike will take place at the Hillside Environmental Education Park and will be led by Dr. Sarah Taylor, Herbarium Collection Manager for the [Biodiversity Research Collections](#) in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at UConn.



Many people are familiar with flowers like daffodils, tulips, and other brightly colored blossoms that come out in early spring. Less recognized are the small, but important, flowers that bloom on trees and shrubs! These are an important part of the plants' yearly cycle: they attract bats, bees, and other pollinators, who travel from tree to tree spreading pollen. This ensures that trees and shrubs produce fruit and seeds in the fall, allowing them to reproduce.

Ecologists and natural historians track the first flowering of trees and shrubs to gather [phenology data](#), or information about the timing of seasonal cycles in nature. Information gathered this year about when local trees and shrubs flower can be compared to the deep record of data kept in herbaria. Herbaria are repositories of dried plants that preserve flower specimens from the last 150 years. Herbarium collections allow researchers to compare flowering times in 2024 with those of past years—and future scientists will be able to compare *their* observations to 2024 collections! Phenology data in herbarium collections can answer questions like, “Is flowering time changing for native plants?” “How about for non-native plants?” “Are flower sizes changing?” “Do we find species of trees and shrubs that weren’t documented here 100 years ago?” and, “Are any species missing?”

Dr. Taylor is the Collection Manager for the [George Safford Torrey Herbarium](#) in the Biodiversity Research Collections in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut. On this hike, she will discuss best practices for collecting and preserving tree flowers and will demonstrate how to press what you collect to make good scientific specimens. Flowering plants pressed during the hike will be added to the George Safford Torrey Herbarium’s collection, expanding the historical record of flowering times in Storrs, Connecticut!

The hike will be held at the **Hillside Environmental Education park (the “HEEP”)** at UConn Storrs on **Saturday May 11, 2024 from 10am-12pm**. This hike may be challenging for some and will include hilly areas and forays off trail to look for flowering trees and shrubs. Sturdy footwear and long pants are recommended – the hike will be held rain or shine! In case of extreme weather (lightening or high winds), event will be moved indoors as a collection-based workshop with pre-collected specimens. Detailed location and parking information will be sent to registered participants ahead of the event.

***** Space for this event is limited and registration is required! *****

Cost: \$10 for Museum Members, \$15 for non-Members

Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs/> for more information and to register.

If you require accommodations to participate, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu by **Monday May 6, 2024**.

The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is part of the Institute of the Environment at the University of Connecticut.

Contact: **Elizabeth Barbeau**

860-486-4460 | Web: csmnh.uconn.edu | Facebook: [@CSMNH](https://www.facebook.com/CSMNH) | Instagram: [@ctnaturalhistory](https://www.instagram.com/ctnaturalhistory)