

School-to-Nature

Jack-In-The-Pulpit

Jack-in the Pulpit is a wonderful and unusual wildflower that grows in shady, moist woodlands. On Caledonia Conservancy lands you may spot it at Tabor Woods or Short Road Trailhead.

It sprouts with three large leaves on sturdy 1-2 foot tall stems. From April to June, you may find the striped green or



purple-green flower, looking like a little like a person with an umbrella overhead, as you can see in the photos. That “spike” under the top petal of



the flower is actually made up of hundreds of tiny florets that attract a specific insect called a Fungus Gnat, that pollinates the flower.



In late summer and early fall you will see the flower spike change to green berries, then bright red berries. (Do NOT eat the berries; in humans they cause mouth and throat swelling, and irritation to the digestive system.) Larger birds and rodents can eat the berries safely.

Native Americans dried and ate the root bulbs of the Jack-in-the Pulpit, and used the berries as a red dye.

They also mashed the stems to use on skin irritations.

Bears dig up Jack-in-the-Pulpit in spring to eat the root bulbs, too. But it is not recommended to consider any part of this plant as safe for human use without some research on correct preparation. We recommend that visitors to CC lands should enjoy Jack-in-the-Pulpit, right where it grows, and leave it alone.

April 2022 BH / DL

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