

# This Week in the Woods: Second Week of June

JUNE: WEEK TWO



Snapping turtle



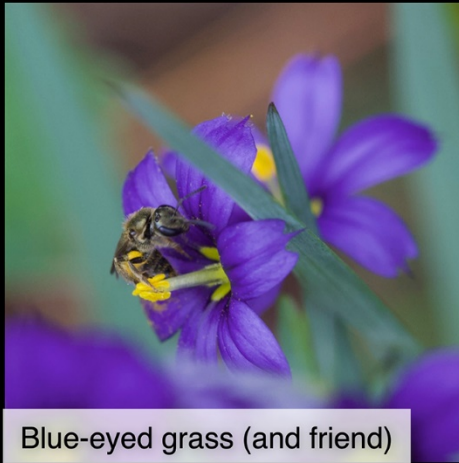
Herb-Robert



Pink-footed millipede



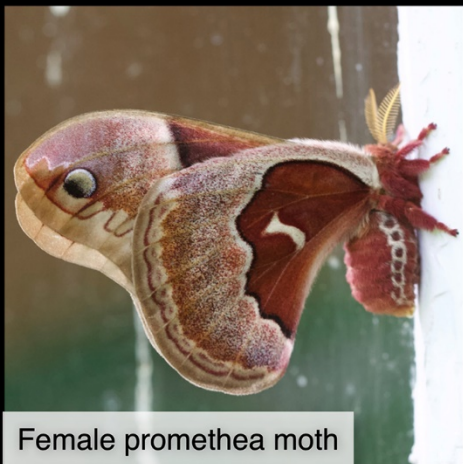
Swamp beacon fungus



Blue-eyed grass (and friend)



Common yellow wood sorrel



Female promethea moth



Female wood duck



Bunchberry

This week, we're straying out of the woods, and out of our "15 miles from the office" rule, to share a photo by Meghan McCarthy McPhaul of a **snapping turtle** crossing a road in Sugar Hill. Many turtles are crossing roads to reach nesting sites; please look out for them, and when you can, help them get across the pavement safely! Snapping turtles pose a special challenge to would-be-rescuers because of their long necks and powerful bites. Here's [an \*Outside Story\* article](#)

[about the species](#) by Brett Amy Thelen, and [a profile from the Vermont Reptile & Amphibian Atlas](#), which includes a video showing how to move snapping turtles without harm to their spines, or your fingers.

**Herb-Robert** is in bloom. According to [The Native Plant Trust](#), this tiny geranium may have been named after an acclaimed herbalist, or Robin Hood. It's a member in good standing of the northern woods, but out West, it's considered a noxious weed and sometimes goes by the epithet "Stinky Bob."

We've noticed **pink-footed millipedes** moving along the forest floor. They're peaceful recyclers of old leaves and other detritus, although they can be unnerving – they can grow four inches long and are remarkably fast. Here's [a link from earthlife.net about millipedes](#). Kids may also enjoy learning about the biggest millipede that ever lived, arthropleura, which was roughly the length of a car and skittered around during the Carboniferous Era. Here's a link (go to minute 7:35) to [Episode 2 of the BBC's "Walking with Monsters" documentary](#), which features arthropleura and other Carboniferous era creatures. Warning: not for the squeamish.

The glowing fruiting bodies of **swamp beacon fungus** (also called matchstick fungus) are popping up now in shallow water and moist leaf litter. There are several species that go by this name, but they're all related and look pretty much the same: yellow-to-orange heads on top of gangly stems. According to mycologist Lawrence Millman, in *Fascinating Fungi of New England*, they are probably associated with oak or maple leaves. Here's [a link with more information](#).

**Tiny blue-eyed grass** (here show with an even tinier bee) is in bloom in fields and woods edges. For most of us mortals, "blue-eyed grass" is sufficient, but if you'd like to botanize, there are several species. Here's [a roster with descriptions from The Native Plant Trust](#).

**Common yellow wood sorrel** is popping up in sunny woods and also fields. This kid favorite also goes by the name of "lemon clover." Its leaves have a strong citrus flavor. Here's [a discussion of the plant from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden](#), including the fun fact that it takes a ballistic approach to spreading its seeds.

Giant silk moths (Saturniidae) are appearing now, including fuzzy bodied **Promethea moths**. The females are reddish; the males are sooty black. Silk moth numbers have dropped in part because of a biological control effort gone wrong – non-native parasitic tachinid flies, released to kill gypsy moth larvae, also prey on other, native moth species. Here's [an article describing New Hampshire artist Lucy Golden's work](#) to raise giant silk moths.

We haven't spied any **wood duck** ducklings emerging from their nests in tree cavities or duck boxes yet, but adults are making frequent stops at vernal pools and ponds. Here's [a profile of the birds from Cornell](#), including an audio recording of their distinctive flight call (second sound file down), and [here's an article by Carolyn Lorie](#), describing female wood duck's sneaky practice of "egg dumping" in other ducks' nests.

Finally, while you're out scouting for wood ducks, take a moment to look down at the water's edge. You're likely to find **bunchberry** in bloom right now. As the name indicates, this dogwood genus flower grows in bunches. Here's [a profile from Adirondacks Forever Wild](#).

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