

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Symplocarpus foetidus

Skunk Cabbage



A much-maligned but undeniably beautiful plant, and a terrific groundcover for wet sites. Great in low woodlands, or on the banks of streams or ponds. Streaked or dappled purple-bronze spathe emerging from the ground announces spring's arrival. Bright green leaves, as much as 3' long, unfurl from tightly-rolled spires. The "skunk" in its common name is undeserved; the plant does not smell at all unless the leaves are bruised or broken, and even then, the odor is not particularly strong or unpleasant.

Suggested companions: red-twig dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum dasycarpum*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*)

Photo Credit: Bob Grese

Plant Type: Wildflower

Size: 1'-3' H
W

Water Tolerant: Somewhat

Soil: Rich Moist
Very Damp/Wet

Flower Color:

Purple
Red

Bloom Time:

March
April

Other Attributes:

Deer resistant
Wildlife attracting

Habitat:

Swamp/ Bog
Shrubby Wetland
Forested Wetland

Exposure: sun
filtered

Plant in:

Groundcover: Yes