

## Other Buds and Blossoms You Can Find



Shagbark Hickory



Can you spot the differences between these similarly shaped buds and flowers? See if you can locate them along the trail.



Northern Red Oak



The buds and blossoms found in this brochure are only a fraction of what you can find in nature. Look for buds and blossoms on every tree. Which is your favorite? Be sure to come back in the summertime to discover how these flowers will become fruit.



**TRACK and KIP**  
want You to become a  
**Trail TRACKer**

Thank you for joining us on the trail today. We want you to join the Trail **TRACKer** Team. It's fun, healthy and free. Best of all, by keeping TRACK of your trails on our website, you can earn prizes. For more information about the Trail TRACKer Team, other TRACK Trail adventures near you, or for general information about the

**Kids in Parks** program, please visit our website at:

**[www.kidsinparks.com](http://www.kidsinparks.com)**

The TRACK Trail program is part of the larger **Kids in Parks** initiative sponsored by the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation. Working together with partners throughout the community, our mission is to increase physical activity of children and their families, to improve nutritional choices, and to get kids outdoors and along the Blue Ridge Parkway.



*The Blue Ridge Parkway...*  
*your home, for your health and your heritage.*



**Buds become Blossoms**

Every summer, trees prepare for spring by developing buds. Buds are small growths on plant stems that develop into flowers, leaves or shoots. For example, in the sequence below, you can see the tightly closed bud swell into a bulb and blossom into a flower.



See if you can use this brochure to identify buds and blossoms as you walk along the trail. In early spring, you will find primarily buds; however in late spring, most of the buds will have blossomed into beautiful flowers. How many can you find?

*Just remember, when visiting our National Parks, we can not keep the things we find. Be sure to leave them here so others can see them too.*



# Match each Bud...



Chris Evans, CWMA



Carolyn Ward



Wendy VanDyk Evans



Paul Wray, ISU

## ...to its description...

### Red Maple:

It's easy to see how the red maple got its name. Their red buds occur in clusters at multiple locations along their red twiggy branches. These buds blossom into flowers in April or early May, usually just before the tree leafs out. The flowers are "fire-truck" red and have five small petals that hang down.

### Flowering Dogwood:

As you walk along the trail look for these gray, chocolate chip-shaped buds on the tips of branches. These buds will blossom into flowers in April or early May. Although the flowers appear to be white, the true flowers are found in the tiny, yellowish-green cluster in the center. The white "petals" are actually special leaves called bracts. Sometimes you may be lucky enough to see a flowering dogwood with pink bracts.

### Rhododendron:

Shaped like a raindrop, the lime green buds of the rhododendron have bracts that are edged in red. Depending upon elevation and species, the blooms may happen anytime between April and June. The large, clustered flowers range from white, to light pink, to dark pinkish-purple. The brightest colored flowers are found at higher elevations, so you may want to travel up the Parkway!

### Tulip Poplar:

Tulip poplars have long, thin, brown buds that grow at the tips of branches. In May, these buds swell into large green bulbs before blossoming. If you look high up in the tree, you may see the greenish-yellow cup-shaped flowers. The flowers look like tulips, thus the tree's name – tulip poplar. Late in the season, you can find these flowers on the forest floor. Take this opportunity to examine their bright colors and count the number of petals... there should be six.

Photos taken from forestryimages/bugwood.org



Paul Wray, ISU



The Dow Gardens Archive



Derek Ramsey



William M. Ciesla

# ...and its Blossom.