

Little Spring Beauty

Claytonia exigua

Purslane Family, *Portulacaceae*



As the name implies this low growing plant is one of the little beauties of spring. Often found growing in dry or sometimes moist soil, in serpentine and chaparral, the contrast between the delicate pink flowers and the fleshy leaves and stems is curious. The flower has five pink petals with tips notched and one opposite pair of dark green lance like leaves fused but partly or fully split on one side. A wildflower that indeed is a beauty to behold.

Apr–Jul • Ma, So, Na, Me
8–15 cm, 2–6 in



Little Spring Beauty

Miner's Lettuce

Claytonia perfoliata

Purslane Family, *Portulacaceae*

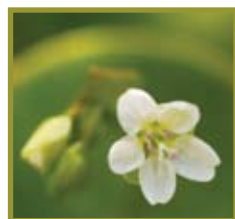


The delicate cluster of tiny flowers above a fleshy, saucer shaped leaf reminds one of a nosegay. This appealing little plant is common to shaded, moist areas and damp trails. Five tiny petals form a cluster of white or pinkish flowers. Leaves initially are paddle shaped but as they grow they completely encircle the stem, becoming umbrella like, with the flower cluster appearing to float above.

This was a favorite food of gold miners since it was a source of vitamin C and prevented scurvy, hence the common name.

This is a good annual herb that reseeds readily and does well in shade to part shade with minimum water. It can spread greatly if given extra water and will develop thick, matted carpets across disturbed areas the first spring. Its shiny black seeds provide food for California quail and other birds.

Feb–May • Ma, So, Na, Me
10–30 cm, 4–12 in



Miner's Lettuce