

SIZE: Up to 60 cm long leaves.

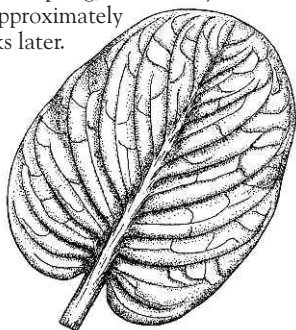
LEAVES: Large, bright green, oval to heart-shaped, 30-60 cm long and up to 30 cm wide. They grow in a cluster at the base (basal) and have a short leaf stalk. The veins on the leaf branch and rejoin.

STEM: The plant grows from a thick underground stem (rhizome).

FLOWERS: A spongy stalk composed of many small flowers (spadix) that is enclosed by a large, curved specialized leaf called a spathe. The spathe is 8-15 cm tall, fleshy, oval, and ends in a point. It is greenish-purple and often spotted and striped.

FRUITS: Large, round, 8-12 mm wide, and contains 1 mm wide seeds.

NOTES: The flowers appear first very early in the spring, followed by the leaves approximately six weeks later.



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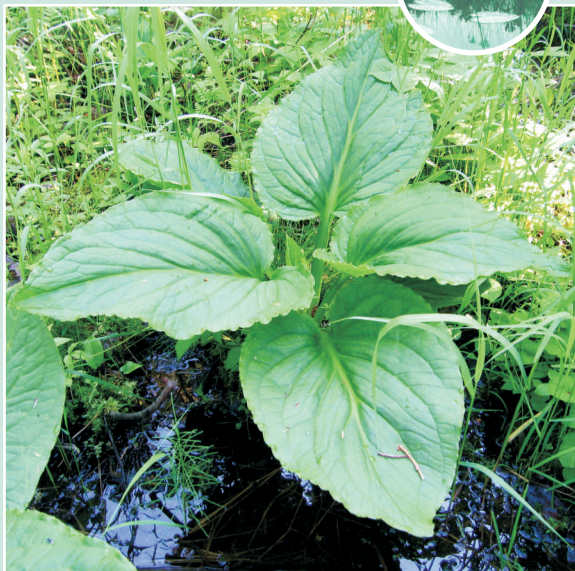
Habitat:

Wetlands (open bogs, swamps) and mossy, wet woods.

Interesting point: Skunk Cabbage flowers have the ability to generate heat and can break through frozen soil and melt the snow and ice around them when they emerge in the spring. Its name comes from the unpleasant odour of the leaves and flowers.

Similar species: None.

Skunk Cabbage
Symplocarpus foetidus



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Fruits

© CHARLES CRON (NS WILD FLORA SOCIETY)



Large leaf

© ALAIN BELLIVEAU



Spadix

© CHARLES CRON



Fleshy purple spathe enclosing the spadix

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