

MARCH 1 – 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

FIRST MONTH OF SPRING



Daffodils, *Narcissus species*, © Dick Harlow

First leaves of Spring bulbs will begin to poke their way through the soil as soon as the soil frost is gone. Although it has been a roller coaster ride with temperatures this winter, the ground will soften up as the increased warmth of the sun's rays exert their influence.

We plant perennial bulbs in the Fall so that we can have color as early as possible. Although some of us look forward to winter and snow, many more of us look forward to those first warm spring days as the leaves of the first daffodils are beginning to poke through the ground. We are looking forward to when all those yellow, white, and orange-yellow flowers will appear. There are garden varieties that show reds, pinks and deep orange parts.

The common name daffodil belongs to the genus *Narcissus* of the Amaryllis Family. Daffodils are native to European fields and woods as well as Northern Africa. They were introduced to North America and have been naturalized, wildly cultivated and horticulturists have created many garden varieties.



Daffodils, *Narcissus species*, © Dick Harlow

MARCH 1 - 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

EARLY SPRING BUTTERFLIES

Which butterfly might be the first that we will see here in the Spring? Living here at EastView the first butterfly that we could see would be the **Cabbage White**.



Cabbage White, *Pieris rapae* © Dick Harlow

Butterflies go through 4 stages in their development: egg, larva, chrysalis, adult. Cabbage Whites overwinter in their chrysalis stage and appear in early spring, once the temperatures climb into the 60-70 F range. After emerging from their chrysalis, they immediately will be looking for a mate. However, although Cabbage Whites are white they also have some very light-yellow tints that become more obvious as summer progresses.

MARCH 1 – 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

Another spring individual that overwinters in the chrysalis stage is the **Spring Azure**, *Celstrina ladon*.



Spring Azure, *Celstrina ladon*. © Dick Harlow

This species can readily be seen wherever there are blueberry flowers or other spring berry flowers needing pollination.

The next individual you might see is the **Mourning Cloak**, *Nymphalis antiopa*. However, these fellows overwinter as an adult butterfly, secure between pieces of tree bark or somewhere where they will not be immediately affected by rain, snow or ice.



Mourning Cloak, *Nymphalis antiopa*, © Dick Harlow

MARCH 1 - 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

Another early spring emerging butterfly that similarly winters as an adult is the **Eastern Comma**, *Polygonia comma*.



Eastern Comma, *Polygonia comma*. © Dick Harlow

However, one has to see both sides of this butterfly to distinguish both its beauty and the characteristic from which it gets its name. In the first photograph there isn't anything resembling a comma. However, notice in the image below the white comma that shows on the underside of the hind wing.



Eastern Comma, *Polygonia comma*. © Dick Harlow

I have added the same picture below with an arrow pointing to the white comma to give you some perspective.



Eastern Comma, *Polygonia comma*. © Dick Harlow

MARCH 1 - 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

OBSERVATIONS

MAMMALS

Eastern Cottontail Rabbit - tracks

Weather Tidbits

Month of MARCH 1-14, 2018

[All Measurements taken at solar noon \(1230 EST\).](#)

PRECIPITATION

Total Precipitation: 36.2 mm or 1.4 inches

Overcast Days: 9