

Miterwort or Bishop's Cap (*Mitella diphylla*)



Miterwort Plants With Buds

As people observe plants, they see shapes that remind them of other objects, beliefs, or experiences in their lives. The Greek word *mitra* means little cap. The flower and seed capsule of the Miterwort look like a little cap. The flower is sometimes also known as Bishop's Cap. Christian bishops sometimes wear a special cap in liturgical services and the flower reminds people of that headpiece.



Open Flowers on Miterwort Plants

Diphylla comes from the Latin meaning “two leaves”. Usually this plant has two opposite, nearly stalkless leaves part way up the hairy stem. Usually they have three lobes. Sometimes a smaller leaf develops higher up on the stem. The plant grows to be eight to twelve inches high.



Two Leaves Near Bottom of Stem

Miterwort is a member of the Saxifrage Family (*Saxifragaceae*). It grows well in rich, moist, shady woods.

The tiny, fringed, creamy-white flower looks like a small snow crystal but has only five petals rather than the six points of a snowflake. Five to twenty of them may be on the flower stalk.



Close-up View of Miterwort Blossom

The cap-shaped capsule contains shiny, black seeds in the two halves that split open when ripe.