



Here is Stinker's Challenge for you.

How many Wildflowers did Booger pursue?

In *Booger*, there were several supporting characters who were named after wildflowers. Can you name them?

Wow! Booger saw many wildflowers and plants on his adventure! Did you notice? Did you realize that most of the characters in the Booger book are wildflowers?

Well let's take a closer look. We find *Stinking William*, *Wild Rose Begonia*, *Turtleheads* and *Jack in the Pulpit* in the story!

But how many of these wildflowers did Booger pursue?

The answer is only two! **Turtleheads** and **Jack in the Pulpit!**

On page 14, Stinking Will tells Booger that **Turtleheads** will guide his way to **Jack** and what his wish is.



Stinker wants to tell you about Jack in the Pulpits! She thinks Jack in the Pulpits are awesome! The flower looks like a little preacher in his pulpit, but it really doesn't look like a flower. Jack in the Pulpits are fascinating to find growing in their natural habitat. Watch for them in the late spring. First, you usually see one large green leaf with three leaflet parts, (sometimes there will be two leaves). If you look closely, you see Jack on a stalk growing up through the leaves. The flower is thick and feels a bit like rubber. Jack can be green to maroon in color, often streaked with purple. The plant really looks like a pulpit! When you lift up the greenish flap of the pulpit, you see "Jack" standing upright inside!

Now, the weird thing about Jack is that the plant itself is not always what it appears to be. Sometimes Jack can be a girl, which totally confuses Stinker. Stinker thinks if Jack decides to be a girl, she should have a proper name like Jackerina or Jackie, Jacqueline, or Jackie Sue or Jackie Lou. Anyway, you can catch Stinker's drift on that one. The point is that Jack turns into a green seedpod in the summer. In the fall, the seedpod turns bright red. By the way, if you find a seedpod, never eat it! That seedpod is fire hot! Even the Native Americans in the United States were cautious not to eat the seedpod. The pod is how the plant protects itself and keeps growing!



Now, at the bottom of the stem of this plant is a bulb that turns hard. It is called an **acorn**. All the time the Jack is growing, the leaves of the plant stores food, in the acorn. The next year the acorn produces Jack's leaves. If the acorn is large, it produces two leaves and a female flower (Jackie Sue?). If the acorn has stored less food, it produces one leaf and a male flower! If the acorn has stored little food, or energy (perhaps, due to less rain), it goes into survival mode and doesn't come up at all in the spring. That's why Stinker thinks there should be a Jackie Sue, but the plant is simply named Jack In the Pulpit.

Jack in the Pulpit is a very unusual plant. Stinker hopes that you will get to see one growing in the woods someday! Remember, most of the time, you will see the large leaves first, then the Jack, just growing there, ready for his sermon!



Now, its time, for Stinker to tell you about Turtleheads!

Turtleheads look like the head of a turtle, and Stinker thinks they are funny! When she wants to annoy her friend Howdy cat, she calls him a Turtlehead! Howdy doesn't think he looks like a turtle! He is sure that he looks like a big yellow cat (Howdy is cute, but he's a little slow). Stinker loves to confuse Howdy, and she thinks it's great fun to play in the Turtleheads. In some places, Turtleheads can grow up to 5 feet tall! But Stinker has never seen them grow that big. Turtleheads can be white, red or pinkish-purple in color. They usually grow along streambeds, or in moist soil. But stinker has seen them growing in high places, way up in the mountains.

Have you ever seen a Turtlehead?

If you squeeze the flower gently, the Turtlehead will look like it is chomping or snapping like a real turtle!

Turtleheads grow from Canada to South Georgia and west over to Alabama. Turtleheads are really fun to find growing in the late summer.

Now, lets talk about **Stinking William** and **Wild Rose Begonia**.



Stinking William is a trillium!

Stinking William is a Red Trillium, and he really does smell bad. Remember, in the book, Booger screams at Will and says he smells like a pack of skunks! Will says, "Well, it's a *fact* that I smell this way, but you should know better." Stinking Will just plain smells bad. Stinking William has a flower with three petals. Trillium means "three." Do you see the three smaller leaves in the photo? The three smaller leaves are called sepals. There are also three larger leaves. So, trilliums have three sets of three. Trilliums bloom in the spring and can be many different colors. Trilliums grow from Canada, south to Georgia in the United States.

Do you have Trilliums growing in your woods?



What about Wild Rose Begonia?

Do you think Wild Rose is a Begonia? No, she's a Wild Rose. Some folks think she's just a weed, a nuisance, and an invasive species! She's not really though, because she's pretty enough, and smart enough and gosh darn it, most people like her! She's not a Begonia, she's part Multi-Flora, and Swamp Rose, with a little Sweetbriar thrown in. Rose's hips make real good potions, tea and syrup! Some folks eat her Roses in salad! No, Rose isn't all-bad, her thorny leaves form thickets, where birds build nest and other wildlife can take refuge from predators. Folks call her Wild Rose Begonia after her Granddaddy's, moonshine! Her Granddaddy's slogan was "Begonia, Shine since 1889"! And that's the story on Wild Rose!

Which brings this to a close!

If you would like to know more about wildflowers, I recommend the website for the **Wildflower Center** in Austin Texas! www.wildflower.org. If you have any good hard questions, you can ask Mr. Smarty Plants at www.wildflower.org/expert/. The center is a great resource, and a great place to visit. The Wildflower Center also has a list of nurseries throughout the U.S. that can provide native plants to grow for your classroom. Perhaps you can choose plants that are indigenous to the area where you live and grow a native plant garden. It 's wonderful for kids to see what the plants really look like, and how they grow. Parents and teachers: If you would like to grow a Jack in the pulpit, or a Turtlehead, You can order a plant from www.sunlightgardens.com. A Jack will be called Arisaema Triphyllum- Jack-in-the-Pulpit. A Turtlehead will be a Turtlehead. (Chelone).