

SPOTLIGHT

COMMON BLUE VIOLET – *continued*



Top: Common blue violet (*Viola sororia*) on sidewalk on Naudain Street.

Bottom: Closed flower, hidden on the ground under the leaves.

On sidewalks in Center City, pollinators are scarce, especially in the spring when violets bloom. The “cleistogamous” flower in the bottom photo will never open but can self-pollinate while closed. The violet’s two flowering types—open and closed—allow cross-pollination when pollinators are present, and self-pollination when pollinators are absent. In addition, the common blue violet is able to propagate asexually in pavement cracks by stolons and rhizomes. On Naudain Street deep crevices between brick pavers protect these vegetative structures from trampling.¹