

March 14, 2018

Good evening!

Mother Nature showed us who is boss this week, didn't she! Due to the low temperatures over the past week, there has been no change in the GDDs for any of our zip codes – an indication that spring has yet to make a marked appearance. Therefore, there is still only a 4-GDD difference in the temperature range between our areas. As we stated last week, those 4 GDDs do not make much difference, but expect those differences to expand as the season goes on.

Here is the data by town/zip code and the number of growing degree day units (GDD units) in our county:

Adams Mills/43821	59
Conesville/43811	57
Coshocton/43812	56
Fresno/43824	55
Walhonding/43843	55
Warsaw/43844	55
W. Lafayette/43845	56

This is a repeat of information, but some phenological events that you may be seeing now or will see soon are:

- Silver maple, first bloom at 34 GDD units
- Corneliancherry dogwood, first bloom at 40
- Silver maple, full bloom at 42
- Red maple, first bloom at 44
- Speckled alder, first bloom at 51
- Northern Lights forsythia, first bloom at 58

Events that should be occurring next are:

- Japanese pieris, first bloom at 60
- Red maple, full bloom at 75

You can find the OSU Phenology Calendar at <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/CalendarView.asp>. There is a place to plug in your zip code and the date in order to see what potential events are in your area. There are pictures of the plants and insects listed and a list of the events in the order they generally appear.

A quick look at our local forecast indicates that daytime temperatures will be warmer than this past week, but they may not register high enough for us to expect many phenological changes for a little while! Although we may be in a hurry for warmer weather, this cooler weather may get us back into a more “normal” pattern for this area than we had last year.

As we get a bit warmer and the sun is shining, you may start to see some early bees and other insects flying about – I saw a bee on my back porch more than a week ago when the temperature was near 60 degrees. That's indicative of the fact that pollinators can come out early; when they do, they depend on the very early

blooms for nutrition. Many folks advocate leaving dandelion blooms alone for just that reason; you may want to consider leaving some of those “weeds” for our early pollinators to enjoy. I’ve also noticed some reddish color in some trees which indicates that buds are forming in some places, another sign that we’re getting closer to spring!

We are still hearing reports of daffodil and crocus bulbs blooming in some areas of the county, particularly in protected areas such as in town, foundation plantings, etc. Keep in mind that bloom time for bulbs can vary greatly depending on variety, depth of planting, and micro-climates. We have buds showing at the phenology garden, but no blooms yet.

Last week we told you that pre-emergent crabgrass control should be applied while the forsythia is in bloom. Although some information says to apply that control during certain dates, that may not be the most effective advice. Crabgrass germinates at about the same temperature that forsythia blooms; sometimes this is not during the dates recommended. Looking at past dates for first bloom on our forsythia, we can see why! First bloom for our phenology garden forsythia has occurred as late as April 5 and as early as February 22 (that was last year and the only time in our records that it has happened so early). If we had relied on the calendar instead of GDDs, we could have missed the best time for the application. Keep watching for those yellow blooms!

The picture below is from last spring in the phenology area – blooming bulbs galore – and shows us what we can look forward to...

