

March 28, 2018

Good evening!

We've had a few days that reached over 50 degrees this past week which gave us another mini-boost in our Growing Degree Day totals. As noted below in the list of accumulated GDDs, each zip code increased by 1 or 2; we now have a 4-GDD difference in range here in Coshocton County. We'll undoubtedly see a bigger differences in that range as the season progresses.

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

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Adams Mills/43821 | 62 (+1 GDD this week) |
| Conesville/43811 | 60 (+2) |
| Coshocton/43812 | 58 (+1) |
| Fresno/43824 | 58 (+2) |
| Walhonding/43843 | 58 (+2) |
| Warsaw/43844 | 58 (+2) |
| W. Lafayette/43845 | 58 (+1) |

Since we have not experienced much of an increase in GDDs yet, this is a repeat of information; some phenological events that you may be seeing now or will see soon are:

- Northern Lights forsythia, first bloom at 58
- Japanese pieris, first bloom at 60

Events that should be occurring next are:

- Red maple, full bloom at 75
- Star magnolia, first bloom at 83

You can find the OSU Phenology Calendar at <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/CalendarView.asp>. Plug in your zip code and the date and you can see what potential events are occurring in your area. There are pictures of the plants and insects listed and a list of the events in the order they generally appear. Keep in mind that these are general values for a particular zip code and may vary a bit within that area.

The blooms on our *Gold Tide forsythia 'Courtasol'* at Lake Park continue to open and show more color. Meanwhile, our star magnolia has buds that are starting to break open – the white petals are not open yet, but can be seen through the cracks in the bud coverings. Our daffodils are opening slowly and many of the perennials have leaf sprouts at the ground level or on branches. The cool temperatures we are having may allow many blooms to last longer – temps that are too warm tend to hasten wilting.

Our local forecast for the coming week shows temps ranging all over the spectrum for the daytime highs; a few days may get into the 60's while some may stay in the 40's – the unpredictability of spring! Some nights may still register below freezing. We may see a bit of an increase in our GDDs and the progress of our blooms, something I'm sure most people will welcome.

One sign of spring that many are starting to see is a very early plant called hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*). This innocent-looking plant pops up in late winter with a rosette-like whorl of heart-shaped leaves and tiny white flowers on thin stalks (pictured below). This plant quickly sets seeds which, when ripe, will fly

up to 16 feet when the plant is disturbed. Remove the plant before the seeds set to prevent a new crop next season; it is best not to compost these plants in case seeds have started to develop. More info on hairy bittercress can be found at: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/hairy_bittercress_a_weed_to_watch_out_for

Take a look around this week and notice some signs of spring: some lilacs have leaves breaking out; daffodils and other bulbs are starting to bloom; tulip leaves are emerging; catkins and leaf buds are forming on some of our trees. You may see bumblebees or other insects on warmer days too. Spring really is coming!



Hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*)



Leaf buds are making an appearance on the Chinese lilac 'Red Rothomagensis' at the Phenology Garden at Lake Park.



American black elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) is showing new growth!



Star magnolia 'Royal Star' has lots of flower buds which are starting to break open

