

April 17, 2018

Good evening!

A friend told me last week, “The forsythia LIED!”. She was referring to the folklore that there will be three snows after the forsythia blooms. We certainly have had several snows after some of the forsythia made an appearance – but there are some circumstances we should think about. First, how much snowfall must there be to count? And second, what variety of forsythia is the one to watch? The pheno calendar has 2 varieties – “Northern Lights” (58 Growing Degree Day units) and “border” (86 GDDs); they do not bloom at the same time and are often weeks apart, but folklore doesn’t give us specifics! There are often many different cultivars or varieties of the same basic plant; plants are often hybridized for specific characteristics and can vary widely in size, bloom, color, etc. To compare the phenological timing, we must compare the same cultivars.

Thanks to the few days last week of very warm temps, each zip code increased by 47 or 48 GDD units; we now have a 7-GDD difference in range here in Coshocton County. Historically, bigger differences have occurred over time. Again, we’ve noted the GDDs for the same date last year – it’s very obvious that last year’s phenological events were a good bit earlier than this year. Here is the current data by town/zip code and the number of growing degree day units (GDD units) in our county:

Adams Mills/43821	121 (+47 GDD this week)	273 GDDs for 4/17/2017 (last year)
Conesville/43811	117 (+47)	262
Coshocton/43812	115 (+47)	254
Fresno/43824	115 (+48)	251
Walhonding/43843	114 (+47)	251
Warsaw/43844	114 (+47)	253
W. Lafayette/43845	115 (+47)	253

Some phenological events that you may be seeing now or will see soon are:

- Eastern tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma americanum*), egg hatch at 92 GDDs
- Manchu Cherry (*Prunus tomentosa*), first bloom at 93
- Northern Lights Forsythia (*Forsythia x intermedia*), full bloom at 94
- Speckled Alder (*Alnus incana*), full bloom at 97
- Corneliancherry Dogwood (*Cornus mas*), full bloom at 98
- Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*), first bloom at 116
- Border Forsythia (*Forsythia x intermedia*), full bloom at 116
- Chanticleer Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), first bloom at 123
- Sargent Cherry (*Prunus sargentii*), first bloom at 127

Events that should be occurring next are:

- Japanese Pieris (*Pieris japonica*), full bloom at 129
- Saucer Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana*), first bloom at 133
- Exotic Ambrosia Beetle (*Xylosandrus germanus*), first adult emergence at 136
- Common Floweringquince (*Chaenomeles speciose*), first bloom at 137
- Bradford Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), first bloom at 142
- European Pine Sawfly (*Neodiprion sertifer*), egg hatch at 144
- Weeping Higan Cherry (*Prunus subhirtella*), first bloom at 145
- PJM Rhododendron (Rhododendron PJM), first bloom at 147

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 or check on past dates. 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.

Our local forecast for the coming week shows seasonal high temperatures in the 50's and 60's which should accumulate a few more GDDs, although we may have some low temps around freezing. Hopefully we'll see more blooms, which will make our environment look more spring-like! At the risk of being repetitious, keep in mind that pruning of spring-blooming shrubs should occur immediately after the bloom is spent. These shrubs set buds soon after the bloom is gone and pruning too late will cut off those buds so that they are not available to flower next spring.

For those of you who would like to feed hummingbirds, the time is fast approaching for them to return to our area! "Scouts" usually show up in late April or perhaps early May; it's a good idea to hang a feeder with just a little bit of nectar for them to find in the next week or two but remember to bring it inside in case of a freeze! The "scouts" will get the word out to more hummers. You can purchase ready-made nectar or make your own by mixing 4 parts of water with one part of sugar – no food coloring is necessary and DO NOT use honey or sugar substitutes! I like to boil it, let it cool, and then add it to a clean feeder. The sugar-water can ferment, especially in hot weather; change the nectar and clean the feeder every few days, especially if the nectar becomes cloudy. Hummingbirds are great little pollinators and are attracted to the color red as well as tubular-shaped blooms.



The star magnolia in the phenology garden was in full bloom on Friday of last week.

