October 9, 2018

Good evening!

Our summer weather has been hanging on and it’s not even “Indian Summer” yet! That term generally refers to warm, dry days after we’ve had a frost; temps that low haven’t happened yet but could occur any day now since we are well into October.

As mentioned a while back, we have stopped reporting the Growing Degree Day units (GDDs) for this year. There are no more phenological events listed on the Ohio Phenology Calendar. The last event occurred at 2195 GDDs, which was several weeks ago. We now have only one plant – smooth aster - that is not listed in the phenology calendar that we are watching for bloom span; we are still monitoring the pollinators that visit. By watching the current GDD figures, we hope to be able to estimate its bloom time in the future.

A few plants that we grow in the phenology garden are still in bloom. There are fewer visitors now, but we are still watching the smooth aster, coreopsis and butterfly bush (buddleia) to see if a pollinator happens by. We will soon have no data or photos to post, but we’ll look forward to resuming these reports in the spring.

Please feel free to visit and find past data at the OSU Phenology Calendar at http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/CalendarView.asp. Plug in your zip code (or the one closest to you if your code is not in the network) along with the date and you can see what potential events have occurred in your area for past dates. Events are listed in the order they generally appear; there are pictures of the plants and insects listed. Keep in mind that these are general values for each particular zip code and may vary a bit within that area.

Our extended summer seems to be coming to an end according to the weather forecast. Most high temperatures will be in the 50’s and 60’s with a possible dip into the 40’s one day and low temps will drop into the 30’s and 40’s. Our ground is still pretty wet from all the rain we've had, so we’ll hope the rain in the forecast is minimal.

The monarch chrysalis we talked about last week is still hanging onto one our common milkweed stalks; hopefully the butterfly will emerge before extremely cold temperatures set in. There was a medium-sized monarch caterpillar there this week – hopefully it will not get too cold! The one monarch butterfly that we saw should be heading south very soon.

There are still fact sheets on Asian lady beetles, brown marmorated stink bugs, and ticks in the boxes on the information station at Lake Park – feel free to take them; they are also available at the Extension office. Just a reminder that black-legged ticks are active all year round – be very careful when cleaning up your gardens and raking leaves! Several folks have been dealing with the brown marmorated stink bugs lately and the multi-colored Asian lady beetle will be upon us very soon.

Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) seeds are available at the Extension office. We harvested some common milkweed (Asclepias syriaca) seed pods this week and will have them available soon. Both types of seeds should be sown this fall to germinate in the spring and both are on the list of required plants for monarch butterflies; the blooms attract other pollinators as well. It is a good idea to mark where the seeds are planted – they germinate later than many other plants and can be mistaken for weeds.

Have a great week!

See next page for recent photos from the MGV phenology area!
Dog vomit slime mold (*Fuligo septica*) grows when the ground is very moist and the temps are warm. Although it looks gross, this slime mold is harmless to plants, pets, and humans.

The monarch chrysalis is still hanging out on the common milkweed and should be fully developed very soon. Note the darkening color...

This monarch butterfly was hanging from a bloom on the Buddleia this week – probably stocking up on nectar for its trip south.

We wish we knew the variety of this iris is – It was a “give-away”, variety unknown. It has bloomed in both the spring and fall for the last 2 years.