

September 25, 2018

Good evening!

The weather has turned cooler and the rain certainly could take a break – especially as our local farmers get ready for harvest and we gardeners are thinking about cleaning up our planting beds.

We have now 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 listed is the Banded Ash Clearwing Borer (*Podosesia syringae*), adult emergence at 2195 GDDs, which occurred weeks ago. We have only a couple of plants that we are watching for bloom span and are still monitoring the pollinators that visit them. By watching the current GDD figures, we hope to be able to estimate their bloom time in the future. We will continue to report what is happening at our local phenology garden at Lake Park and post some photos.

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 local forecast for the coming week shows most high temperatures will be in the 60's and 70's and low temps in the 40's, 50's and 60's, so our GDDs will slowly increase. Fortunately, there is no forecast of rain (at this time...) until Tuesday; we'll see if that changes! Our area certainly does not need any rain for several days – our rain gauge at the phenology garden showed 3.9 inches on 9/26 and 1.2 inches on 9/23.

The smooth aster plant (pictured below) in the phenology area bloomed this week; fall-blooming plants are a real boon for our pollinators, providing a source of needed nectar and pollen when most other plants are finished. We also have coreopsis and butterfly bush still in bloom but they are waning.

Seeds from the butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) will soon be offered at the Extension office and our Master Gardener Volunteer displays, including the MGV fair booth. Common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) seeds will be made available soon, after they mature and can be packaged. Those seeds should be sown this fall to germinate in the spring. 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.

We continue to see a few monarch caterpillars on the common milkweed. Hopefully they will have time to pupate and develop into butterflies before the weather gets too chilly! This is the generation of monarchs that will make their way to the interior of Mexico for the winter. Bees are still gathering pollen, although we are seeing fewer of them.

The great amount of precipitation lately has resulted in lots of toadstools, mushrooms and other fungi. See a photo below of an unusual fungus – what we think is a “stinky squid”. Guess what it looks like?

Don't forget to stop by our MGV booth in the youth building at the Coshocton County Fair, Sept. 28 – Oct. 4! We'll have information on solitary bees and other pertinent topics available plus a sign-up sheet for questions.

See next page for recent photos from the MGV phenology area!



This smooth aster (*Symphyotrichum leave*) opened this week; we'll be watching for pollinators!



This monarch caterpillar has attached itself to a sturdy part of a common milkweed plant and is ready to pupate. We'll be watching for a chrysalis!



We spied a hornet nest in the phenology area; it probably houses bald-faced hornets. There is no need to worry as it has been there for months without incident. Cold temperatures will kill the residents and birds will peck the nest apart to eat the larvae.



We wish we knew what variety of iris this is! It bloomed this spring and again this fall.



Found this week – this strange-looking thing is most likely a stinky squid (stinkhorn) fungus (*Pseudocolus fusiformis*).

