



We certainly are not in a drought situation so far this spring! Now that the nightly temperatures have been staying above freezing, we'll be able to keep better tabs on just how much rainfall we're getting - just remember to dump the water out of the rain gauges if the forecast calls for freezing temps.

Here is the data by town/zip code with the number of growing degree day units:

Adams Mills/43821	410 GDDs
Conesville/43811	398
Coshocton/43812	370
Fresno/43824	336
Walhonding/43843	344
Warsaw/43844	356
W. Lafayette/43845	372

We have a range of 336 to 410 GDD units across the county, a difference of 74 units, disregarding micro-climates. The trend continues with Adams Mills area warming up the fastest and Fresno & Walhonding staying on the chilly side. Our GDD units increased moderately this past week, from 39 to 50 units depending on the area of the county, slightly less than last week. We still may see as much as a week's worth of difference in bloom or emergence times from one area of the county to another. We may have some warmer temps this week; if so, that will escalate our GDD units.

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

- Common horse chestnut, full bloom at 344
- Optimal time to spray for gypsy moth, 370
- Ohio buckeye, full bloom at 374
- Holly leafminer, adult emergence at 375
- Euonymus scale, egg hatch of first generation and Vanhoutte spirea, full bloom at 406 GDD units
- Catawba rhododendron, first bloom at 407

One can see a practical phenology application above: watch for euonymus scale when Vanhoutte spirea is blooming!

Events that should be occurring next are:

- Miss Kim Manchurian lilac, first bloom at 422
- White fringetree, first bloom at 435
- Boxwood leafminer, adult emergence at 440
- Red Prince weigela, first bloom at 446
- Black locust, first bloom at 467
- Common ninebark, first bloom at 478

At Lake Park in Coshocton, the Vanhoutte spirea is nearly in full bloom (close-up picture below); there are buds coming on several other shrubs. We pruned back some of the spring-blooming plants (after they finished blooming!) this week and will prune a couple more next week. If pruning spring-bloomers is necessary, it needs to be done very soon after the blooms fade, before buds are set for next spring; pruning too late can destroy the blooms for next year.



We noticed that our common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) has finally sprouted - our 2 shoots are about 4 and 6 inches high and the leaves are still pointed upward. We are hoping to have more milkweed plants soon for Monarch caterpillars to feast on as they develop. We also have some butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) that attracts Monarchs. These two plants are great additions to a butterfly or pollinator garden!

Another native plant that has come up recently is wingstem; these plants are recognized by the "wings" or ruffles of tissue that grow vertically along the stem. Wingstem grows quite tall, has bright yellow flowers that bloom later in the summer and attracts pollinators. See the picture below.

We're seeing buds on the lupine; the ferns are getting tall, the iris will be coming on soon and the bee balm has multiplied greatly - our pollinators will enjoy that! There is a pink dogwood in bloom close to our phenology area that is gorgeous; we hope everyone has enjoyed the dogwoods in bloom all around town.

One plant we are now seeing can be the bane of a gardener's existence - poison ivy! The noxious vine is poking up all over the place right now, so beware if you are one of the many people who is allergic to it! There is a picture of it below, taken at Lake Park this week. Notice that some "leaves-of-three" are red in color while others are green. Remember the old adage, "Leaves of three, let it be!"

As noted above, the optimal time to spray for gypsy moth is at 370 GDDs, so keep that in mind; that time is here for parts of the county; in fact there was an article in the local paper this week to alert us to low-flying airplanes that will be applying spray. Here are some informational links to check out: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/plant/gypsy/gypsy-index.aspx> and <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/gypsy-moth>

Don't forget! The average "frost-free" date for our area is May 15 - and is NOT guaranteed! Although the outlook for this next week is very good temperature-wise, be prepared to cover up those new plantings if we get a frost!

For more information on the phenology calendar and GDD units, go to <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/default.asp> The site includes pictures of the plants and insects which can help in identifying specimens.

Happy Mother's Day to everyone!

