

Creating a Blooming Chart for Your Garden¹

Every gardener wants year-round interest in the landscape. Annuals are tough work. Spring blooming shrubs are nice, but they sure don't last long! The solution? Making a plan. Don't just expect year round interest – make it happen! All it takes is one piece of paper and your understanding of what blooms in your landscape, when and how long.

When reviewing blooming chart for the garden, limit the list to perennials, shrubs and trees. These are the permanent additions to the landscape which will have some kind of visual impact through the year. And, don't let the word blooming fool you. Try to think of blooming as **visual impact**. Don't simply relate blooming to the flowering aspect of a plant. This visual impact could include ornamental effects, such as branching habit, texture, bark color, scent, foliage or fruit that stays on the plant into the winter months.

The purpose of a blooming chart is to take inventory of what is already in the landscape to ensure year-round enjoyment of the tireless efforts during the busiest times of the year. Once inventory is taken, blank spots are easily identified and the search can begin to fill those spots with visual impact in your landscape. It's a good excuse to head to the local garden center when you are finished.

Adding plants that attract pollinators is a good way to start filling in the blank spots for your chart. These plants are essential, especially in August and September when pollen sources are limited in some areas. Using Ohio State University's phenology chart, you can check your bloom times based on growing degree days. Using this, you can identify the part of late summer with no blooms and choose plants that bloom within that time. Just search "Ohio State Phenology" or "Ohio State Growing Degree Day." You'll find the site that outlines bloom order of many perennial plants/trees in Ohio. Plants for pollinators information can be found at u.osu.edu/beelab.

An often underutilized group of plants is the flowering shrubs, especially hydrangeas which have extended blooming periods. Oakleaf hydrangeas even have beautiful red color in the fall and cinnamon colored bark that peels away, showing off season interest.

Some plants are worth having, even though the bloom time is short, but location is more important. Plants with a shorter period of visual interest should be planted so they can be seen on the way out the door or by the guests traveling up the driveway. Scented plants should be placed so the scent is spread when walking by or through the plants. There are many more examples to be taken into consideration.

The best way to start is to use a clipboard and hang it the garden shed. Fill it out as best as you can now. Update it as the year passes. Add the plant to the chart when you buy it and keep the tag for references to bloom time and other visual impacts. Do remember, though, that planting zones may affect the exact time it may be interesting in your garden area.

You can download sample charts and a blank one for your garden at: <http://go.osu.edu/bloomchart>

¹ Presented by Eric Barrett - Ohio State University Extension • barrett.90@osu.edu.

My Garden

Month	Plant 1	Plant 2	Plant 3	Plant 4
January	Holly / taxus	Sycamore	Red twig dogwood	Hellebore
February	Pansies	Birch	Rose of sharon	Hellebore
March	Crocus / iris reticulata	Redbud	Forsythia	Hellebore
late	Daffodil	Flowering Almond	Crabapples	Saucer Magnolia
April	Dogwood / daffodil	Flowering Almond	Crabapples	Lilac
late	Scilla siberica / daffodil	Azaleas	Viburnum	Ground vinca
May	Rhododendron	Azaleas	Viburnum	Locus trees
late	Rhododendron	Peonies	Hydrangea (arborescens)	Columbine / Iris
June	Coreopsis	Peonies / yarrow	Hydrangea (arborescens)	Roses
late	Coreopsis	Garden Phlox	Hydrangea (Oakleaf)	Shasta daisy (Becky)
July	Black-eyed susan	Purple coneflower	Hydrangea (Oakleaf)	Shasta daisy (Becky)
late	Yucca / hibiscus	Agastache	Hydrangea (Oakleaf)	Bee balm
August	Clematis paniculata	Vernonia Ironweed	Hydrangea (paniculata)	Bee balm
late	Black-eyed susan	Purple coneflower	Hydrangea (paniculata)	sedum
September	Asters	Butterfly Weed	Hydrangea (paniculata)	sedum
late	Sedum Autumn Joy	Caryopteris	Hydrangea (paniculata)	Crabapples
October	Deciduous trees w/fall color	Mums / Joe Pye Weed	Hydrangea (paniculata)	Ornamental Grasses
November	Ornamental grasses	Holly	Saucer Magnolia	Red fruit of dogwood
December	Red twig dogwood	Sweetgum	Hydrangea	Sycamore

Notice things that you may not have thought of as visually interesting in the winter. Also, note that some things are not listed as long as their entire blooming season. If you have a good number of a certain plant (like many different hydrangeas and 300+ daffodils), you can list them for a longer time.


Blooming Chart

Month	Plant 1	Plant 2	Plant 3	Plant 4
January				
February				
March				
late				
April				
late				
May				
late				
June				
late				
July				
late				
August				
late				
September				
late				
October				
November				
December				

Example: Average bloom seasons of hydrangeas that grow in Ohio.



Example: Searching for a plant's approximate bloom time on Ohio State's Phenology Calendar.


THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

The Ohio State Phenology Calendar

[Home](#) | [Weather](#) | [Glossary](#) | [Summary](#)

Change Date & Zip [Go](#)

Date:
 Zip Code:

How to use it:

Enter your zip code and obtain a daily calendar of all the phenological events occurring in your area.

Please enter your 5-digit Ohio zip code and a date. The cumulative GDD for that date will be calculated.