

What's In Bloom?

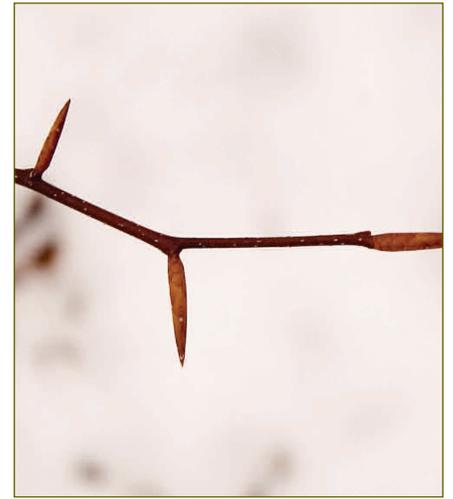
AT ADKINS ARBORETUM IN MARCH



Cornus florida (KOR-nus FLO-ri-da) flowering dogwood—Even without flowers or leaves, one can easily recognize our native dogwood. The bark is reminiscent of an alligator's hide, with grayish-brown to blackish blocks. Topping many twigs is a biscuit shaped flower bud pointing upwards. Look for the flowering dogwood in the upland forests.



Liquidambar styraciflua (lih-kwid-AM-bar sty-rah-SIH-floo-ah) sweetgum—When you walk over many prickly balls, you are probably standing underneath a sweetgum. A sweetgum has a rather large (1/4"-1/2") and very shiny bud at the end of its branches. The grey bark looks ridged and scaly. You might also see corky ridges on smaller branches and twigs. Sweetgums are abundant in the Arboretum's young forest.



Fagus grandifolia (FAY-gus gran-dih-FOH-lee-uh) American beech—This is a readily identifiable tree found throughout the Arboretum grounds. The smooth bark is a silvery gray color often described as resembling an elephant leg. The buds are also distinctive, long golden brown cigar shapes, ready to pop open. The twigs can have a zigzag appearance with the buds sticking out at right angles, almost looking like thorns.



Asimina triloba (ass-uh-MEE-nah try-LO-bah) paw paw—In March look for purplish, rounded flower buds growing directly out of the smooth gray bark. In April, deep maroon flowers appear from the buds just before the leaves do. The terminal bud (at the end of a twig) may be 1/2 to 1 inch long and it looks like a curved dark yellow flame. Paw paws commonly grow as a small suckering tree throughout the Arboretum's woodland paths.



Carya tomentosa (KAR-ee-uh toh-men-TOH-sah) mockernut hickory—In late winter, the terminal buds (at the end of a twig) of this slow growing, medium-tall tree with a straight trunk and furrowed grey bark appear covered in silky greenish scales. They are rounded with a short point at the tip end. "Tomentose" means finely hairy referring to the bud scales, twigs and the undersides of the leaves for this tree. Found along the Upland path and Tuckahoe Valley paths.



Liriodendron tulipifera (Leer-ee-oh-DEN-drawn tu-lih-PIFF-er-uh) tulip tree—Typically growing to heights of 70 to 100 feet with trunks perhaps as wide as 10 feet, the American tulip tree has dark red winter buds with scales that become stipules (appendages at the base of the leaf) for the unfolding leaves. Each terminal bud is valvate (duck-billed). Large showy flowers appear from the buds in late spring. There are many large tulip trees along the Blockston Branch path.

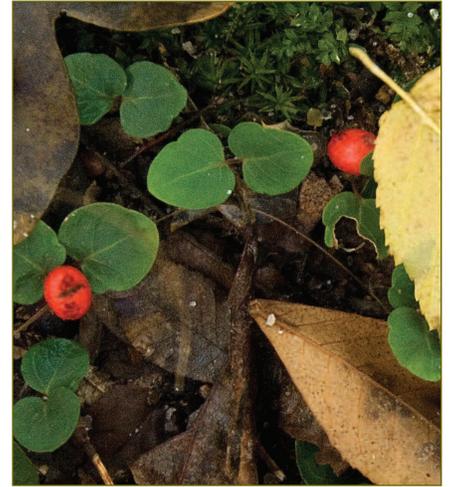
What's In Bloom? at Adkins Arboretum in March



Rhododendron periclymenoides (row-duh-DEN-dron pehr-ih-kly-men-OY-dees) pinxterbloom azalea—These deciduous azaleas feature pink-tinged flower buds that will soon produce a cluster of white to rose pink, honeysuckle-shaped flowers. They grow 3- 6 feet tall with upright stems that branch heavily towards the tips. Grow in moist woods along the Tuckahoe Valley and Tuckahoe Creekside paths.



Lindera benzoin (lin-DAYR-ruh ben-ZO-in) spicebush—This understory shrub puts on an early show of flowers. The clusters of flowers are yellow and are held close to the slender greenish brown branches. Some have called it the “forsythia of the wilds”. The aromatic leaves will emerge later in the spring. Look for it in the moist forested floodplains.



Mitchella repens (mit-CHEL-ah REE-pens) partridge berry—Red berries often peek out from the rounded, opposite leaves of this ground-hugging plant. Found growing in acidic soils under pine trees as well as hardwoods. Partridge berry refers to the bird that loves the fruit; though many other ground foraging birds share in the bounty. Common along the Tuckahoe Valley path.



Lycopodium obscurum (ly-co-PO-dee-um ob-SCUR-um) clubmoss—Also called princess pine or running cedar, this moss relative reproduces by spores rather than seeds. It forms large colonies on moist, shady ground. Because the roots associate with a fungi, it is extremely difficult to transplant. Look for a large patch at the intersection of Tuckahoe Valley south and the Upland Path.



Symplocarpus foetidus (sim-plo-CAR-pus FEH-ti-dus) skunk cabbage—In February, maroon colored “hoods” poke through the soil in the forest floodplains. These spirally sculpted hoods (spathe) encircle the flower head (spadix) of skunk cabbage. Skunk cabbage flower heads produce their own heat to attract early flying insects. Bright green leaves unfurl in March.



Polystichum acrostichoides (pol-ISS-tih-kum ak-ro-stik-OY-deez) Christmas fern—This evergreen fern found in the woods reminds many visitors of the ubiquitous houseplant Boston fern. This time of year you can spy the emerging downy, fiddleheads that will unroll into 1-2 ft fronds. This is a fern readily available from nurseries and makes a welcome evergreen addition to winter home landscapes.