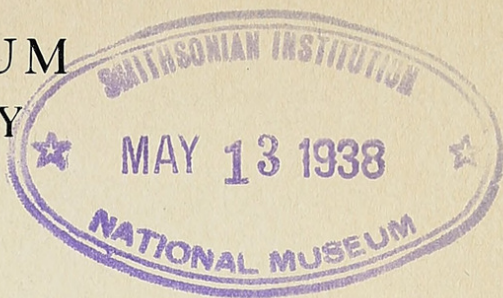


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ARNOLD ARBORETUM
HARVARD UNIVERSITY



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SPRING RUSHES ON!

WHEN we read in the papers that the Japanese cherry trees were blooming in Washington, D.C., the latter part of March—ten days ahead of time—we were not particularly interested. But that was the forerunner of an unusually early spring season which has blanketed the eastern part of the country at least from South Carolina to Maine. All types of plants are blooming unusually early. Even ornithologists tell of bird migrations being noted the earliest in years. Still the warm weather prevails. Those who have visited the Arboretum this spring have seen many plants blooming a week or ten days earlier than in previous years. This bulletin is written to inform our readers of the situation, so that they may not miss certain displays which normally come later at the Arboretum.

Lilacs

Lilacs are in full bloom now. If the weather is cool during the next week, the plants will probably remain in fairly good condition, but if the days are very warm the flowers will fade rapidly. Sunday, May fifteenth, will be Lilac Sunday, a day on which the largest crowds of the year visit the Arboretum. Some of the early flowering lilacs started to bloom the week of April twenty-fifth, and at the time this bulletin is being written *Syringa oblata dilatata* is at the height of its beauty. A very few of the *S. vulgaris* hybrids flowered last week in the Arboretum collection, and here and there in gardens around Boston, where in a warm sunny location, individual lilac bushes were in full bloom.

The two greatest collections of lilacs in the world are in the United States. The collection at the Arboretum contains 417 named species and varieties, while that at Rochester, New York, contains 390. It is interesting to note that the flowering of the collection at Rochester

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is also considerably advanced so that Lilac Sunday there will probably be May fifteenth. Normally, both this excellent collection and that at the Arnold Arboretum are at their best about a week later.

The blossoms on the plants this year are not as profuse as last year. Lilacs, like many other ornamental woody plants, are subject to alternate bearing, the good flowers of one year being followed by poor blossoms the next. In large collections, however, there are sufficient bushes flowering well each year to make a visit worthwhile even for the most casual observer.

Crabapples

Although such gorgeous crabapples as *Malus floribunda*, *M. arnoldiana*, *M. baccata*, *M. hupehensis*, *M. atrosanguinea*, *M. purpurea*, and *M. spectabilis* have already faded, several of the crabapples are in full bloom now. One is the Sargent crab, (*M. Sargentii*) the lowest growing of all, the pure white flowers of which make it most conspicuous. The double-flowered Bechtel crab (*M. ioensis plena*) and several others can be seen in the collection at the base of Peter's Hill. The crab-apple bloom this year was good, but because of the warm weather the flowers opened so quickly that there was not the mass of color in the collection which has made such a vivid display in previous years.

Other Plants in Bloom

Azaleas have been outstanding for several days. Earlier in the season *Rhododendron mucronulatum* was severely injured by a late freeze, but *R. Schlippenbachii* was in full bloom on May first, and *R. yedoense poukhanense* was in full bloom a few days later. The torch azalea *R. obtusum Kaempferi* is now at its best. This plant was considered by Professor Sargent as the most brilliant of the Arboretum's introductions from Japan. There are literally thousands of them planted around the Arboretum grounds, and every spot graced by their vivid color is now a place of beauty. Some have been planted in the woods by the pond adjacent to the shrub collection. A thousand were planted several years ago in the woods next to the old Bussey mansion on South Street. These shrubs will increase in size and beauty with the years.

By far the best collection of the torch azalea is on the top of Bussey Hill, where there is a mass planting of splendid specimens six feet tall. Every year these plants, growing under the century old pines on the top of the hill, are admired by thousands. Another colorful planting is a little below this on the same hill. The torch azalea is best planted in the partial shade of the woods, since its delicate flowers are easily injured by too much bright sun. Several of the



PLATE III

The lilac path at the Arboretum.



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