

A Calendar of Beauty for Biltmore's Gardens (Biltmore Gardens Fact Sheet)

January-February

- The Shrub Garden entices with yellow flowers of winter jasmine and fragrant yellow and red blooms on vernal witch hazel. Wintersweet offers small yellow flowers that are very fragrant – a real treat when most of the garden is still dormant.
- The Walled Garden beckons with “Midwinter Flame” dogwood. Angelina provides interest in the Winter Border with its stem and leaf color.
- In winter, the Spring Garden offers a glorious view on a clear afternoon. From the path above the east side of the garden, you can look back at the sun setting over the French Broad River and enjoy a view of the towering white pines silhouetted against the western sky.
- The west side of the Lagoon, which was part of Frederick Law Olmsted’s original design for the estate, offers a postcard-perfect view of the west façade of Biltmore House – and its reflection in the water. This perspective can be accessed by the gravel road off the paved road between the House and Antler Hill Village.
- The Conservatory, open 365 days a year and filled with thousands of tropical plants, provides a warm and welcoming refuge on cold winter days. Enjoy our orchid display, which is at peak bloom this month and next, and then rest awhile in the charming Sitting Room.

March

- Look for early-blooming kobus magnolias at the top of the Rampe Douce and near the Conservatory.
- The Shrub Garden and Azalea Garden show early color with spectacular blooms on yellow-lantern magnolia and star magnolia.
- Regional favorites such as lenten rose, false solomon’s seal, and trillium bloom in numerous estate gardens.

April

- The Walled Garden bursts into color just in time for *Biltmore Blooms*. Thousands of tulips and other spring bulbs spring forth in the seasonal beds.
- In the Spring Garden, lilacs and forsythias welcome the new season, while viburnum and spirea add early color and fragrance to the landscape.
- The Azalea Garden is in its prime from mid-April through the end of May. Hundreds of varieties of Asiatic and hybrid azaleas signal spring’s arrival with vibrant blooms.
- Wisteria begins to bloom across the estate. Admire the drooping purple blooms of Chinese wisteria on the Library Terrace, which was planted in the 1890s. Also noteworthy are the old Japanese wisteria on the Shrub Garden pergola and the Chinese wisteria with purple and white blooms in the Walled Garden.

May

- In the Spring Garden, everything from the ground up is in bloom, including pink lady's slippers, May apples, flowering quince, sweet shrub, mock orange, azaleas, rhododendrons, beauty bush, and kousa dogwood. On the eastern side of the Spring Garden, the dove tree offers brilliant white flowers in mid-May.
- The Walled Garden continues its show by adding poppies, snapdragons, and pansies to the mix.

June

- The bright orange blooms of the trumpet creeper, which was planted in the 1920s, bloom this month. Below the South Terrace, the pergola in the Shrub Garden is also covered with mature specimens of trumpet creeper.
- More than 200 varieties of heirloom and hybrid roses bloom in the Rose Garden. Look for the international trial roses in the garden. Submitted by breeders from around the world, these garden roses are being tested for their disease resistance, fragrance, and overall performance for the home landscape. Several times throughout the season, judges review the trial roses, and winners are selected after two full years of growth.
- Nearly hidden in the bog area of the Azalea Garden ravine, carnivorous pitcher plants make their appearance this month. These interesting plants are not native to this area, but the plants growing here are hardy in the mountains: yellow pitcher plant, fluted red pitcher plant, and white-topped pitcher plant.

July

- The walk to the top of the Vista above the Rampe Douce is well worth the effort in summer. Here you'll find a lovely statue of Diana, the Roman goddess of the hunt, located under the pergola. Looking back down the Vista from this point provides the most dramatic view of Biltmore House with the Blue Ridge Mountains behind it. In July, this magnificent panorama is complemented by the sweet smell of the blossoms of the original American linden trees and littleleaf linden that line both sides of the vista.
- In the Shrub Garden, the purple-leaf European beech's branches are draped with its purple leaves during the summer.
- The Walled Garden is bursting with bright summer annuals, such as marigolds, impatiens, salvia, and coleus. Other highlights include the Butterfly Garden, the woody plants in the Scented Border, and the grapes in the main arbor. The Victorian Border is filled with perennials and annuals common to the time in which Biltmore was constructed, such as cannas, hollyhocks, bananas, elephant ears, and tropical foliage plants.
- Continuing the Biltmore tradition of planting out palms and other tropical trees during the summer, the Conservatory spills outdoors with more than 1,200 pots in its tropical container displays, including some of the original giant urns in front of Biltmore House.

August

- Summer annuals and perennials in all of Biltmore's formal beds continue to bloom through late summer.
- Water lilies, elephant ears, and papyrus are in bloom in the Italian Garden's elegant pools. The stars of the season are Victorian lilies, which look like giant floating cake pans with spines and bear night-blooming, pineapple-scented flowers.

September

- Autumn is approaching, but the shrub roses in the Rose Garden, Shrub Garden, and elsewhere on the estate are still in full bloom.
- Cannas and hollyhocks continue to bloom in the Walled Garden.
- Several species of wildflowers also add color to the early fall landscape, including the purple flowers of ironweed, goldenrod, and the large purple blooms of Joe Pye weed, which rise over eight feet off the ground.

October

- Autumn arrives on the estate with multitudes of mums throughout the estate. The most breathtaking display is in the Walled Garden.
- Many tree species at Biltmore exhibit striking fall color. Of particular note are the Japanese maples in the Shrub Garden, and the red maple, sourwood, black gum, scarlet oak, and American beech found throughout the estate.
- Apple, pear, and apricot trees, along with rose of Sharon and firethorn, are espaliered along the original stone walls of the Walled Garden. All are particularly striking this month.
- Take note of the katsura trees in the Azalea Garden, the largest of which is located just south of the circle area of the garden. Katsura trees have magnificent apricot fall color, accompanied by an unusual, sweet fragrance that permeates the area around the trees. Some describe the smell as cinnamon, while others think it is reminiscent of cotton candy.

November

- As the leaves fall from the thousands of deciduous trees on the estate, the distinctive bark of many species is revealed. The cinnamon-colored bark of the tall Stewartia along the Approach Road is especially attractive this month. Take note of the scarlet spikes of the leafless red-twig dogwood on the right just past the second iron gate in front of the House, as well as the paperbark maple and North Carolina state champion river birch in the Shrub Garden.
- In the Azalea Garden and elsewhere, enjoy the bright berries of the deciduous hollies, winterberry, and possumhaw holly now that their leaves have fallen.
- The 115-foot dawn redwoods in the Azalea Garden offer luscious bronze foliage in the fall, which complements their attractive exfoliating bark. This ancient species is over 100 million years old. At one time native to North America, it was reintroduced from China in the 1940s after an absence of some 15 million years.

December

- While this is the month we enjoy Christmas trees indoors, many species of plants are evergreen throughout the year. Enjoy the natural greenery of pines, hemlocks, spruces, firs, juniper, and arborvitae. Several kinds of cedar add a blue-green hue to the landscape, while dozens of species of hollies provide outdoor holiday cheer.