

# Plant Health Care Report

## Scouting Report of The Morton Arboretum

May 8, 2026

Growing Degree Day/Weather issue

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there.

What indicator plant is in bloom at the Arboretum?

Bridalwreath spirea (*Spiraea x vanhouttei*) is in full flower (fig. 1)

Accumulated Growing Degree Days (Base 50): 272.5 (as of May 7)



Figure 1 Bridalwreath spirea

Updates: Confirmation of powdery mildew on ninebark (*Physocarpus*) and peach leaf curl on peach trees.

### Degree Days

The historical average (1937-2025) for this date at the Arboretum is 92 GDD<sub>50</sub>.

Location	GDD as of 5/7/2026	GDD as of 5/8/2025	GDD as of 5/7/2020	GDD as of 5/7/2015
Carbondale, IL*	798	607	354	446
Champaign, IL*	476	376	176	319
Chicago Botanic Garden**	277	160	No report	93
Glencoe*	95	52	19	No report
Chicago O'Hare*	298	241	108	206
Kankakee, IL*	355	253	127	246
Lisle, IL*	311	256	117	No report
The Morton Arboretum	272.5	153	97.5	130.5
Quincy, IL*	572	430	243	411
Rockford, IL*	278	207	89	162
Springfield, IL*	570	424	218	381
Waukegan, IL* (60087)	211	133	52	124
Waukegan, IL* (60085)	242	170	66	No report

\*Information from the GDD Tracker from Michigan State University website <https://gddtracker.msu.edu/>. \*\*Thank you to Elizabeth Cullison, Chicago Botanic Garden, for supplying us with this information.

Seasonal precipitation (rain and melted snow) in inches.			
	2026	2025	Historical average (1937-2025)
Jan	2.33	.97	1.95
Feb	.14	1.3	1.79
Mar	5.22	4.59	2.57
April	5.32 (this number corrected since last issue)	3.32	3.66
May	.67 (thru 5/7)	1.86 (full month)	4.14 (full month)
Year to date	13.68 (thru 5/7)	12.04 (thru May)	14.10 (thru May)

Examples of insects that may emerge soon in northern Illinois (based on growing degree days)			
GDD (base 50)	insect	Life stage present at this GDD	Type of damage
300-700	<a href="#">Oystershell scale</a>	Crawlers emerging	Feeding on sap
400-600	<a href="#">Bronze birch borer</a>	Larvae hatching out and beginning to enter bark	Tunneling under bark
400-500	<a href="#">Pine needle scale</a>	Crawlers emerging	Feeding on sap
450	Boxwood leafminer	Adults emerging	Laying eggs
500-700	<a href="#">Euonymus scale</a>	Crawlers emerging	Feeding on sap
500-600	<a href="#">Viburnum crown borer</a>	Caterpillars hatching and entering bark	Tunnel under bark
700-800	<a href="#">Bagworm</a>	Caterpillars emerging	Chewing foliage

### Soil temperatures around Illinois (from Illinois State Water Survey)

This information will be provided all season. For data from other reporting stations, go to <https://warm.isws.illinois.edu/warm/> (you will need to set up an account to access data.) Root growth on trees/shrubs occurs when soil temps are above 45 degrees (use deeper depth).

Max. Soil temps For May 7, 2026*	St. Charles reporting station (north)	Champaign reporting station (central)	Carbondale reporting station (south)
2-inch, bare soil	65.6	70.4	75.3
4-inch, bare soil	60.3	66.4	69.2
4-inch, under sod	54.2	65.1	66.9
8-inch, under sod	54.8	60.6	65

\* This is the maximum soil temperature recorded the day prior to publication of PHCR.



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[\*Bartlett Tree Experts, Plant Clinic sponsor.\*](#)