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Many of the Lilacs are now in flower and persons interested in these plants should visit the Arboretum during the next few days, although the flowers of several of the species will continue to open until the end of June.

The plant with which the popular idea of Lilac is associated, and which for New England and other regions with cold winters and hot summers, is one of the most beautiful and successful of all shrubs is *Syringa vulgaris*. It is a plant for the north, for in southern New England and southward the leaves in summer are often temporarily disfigured by a white mildew. This plant was sent from Constantinople to Vienna about 1560 and soon reached western Europe, as the purple and white varieties were cultivated by Gerard in England in 1597. The Lilac was long believed to be a native of Persia, and it is only in comparatively recent years that its home has been found to be among the mountains of Bulgaria. A few years ago the Arboretum succeeded in obtaining seeds from wild Bulgarian plants and the seedlings raised from these seeds will bloom here this year for the first time. For more than two centuries only the purple and white varieties were cultivated; then a few selected seedlings appeared in gardens, and in the last thirty or forty years a great deal of attention has been paid in France and Germany to improving the Lilac. In the Arboretum collection there are now one hundred and twenty of these named varieties and there are others for which room cannot be found. Further improvement in these plants by selection can hardly be expected; indeed some of the oldest varieties are still the best, and many of the seedlings of recent years are so much alike that many of them are not worth cultivating. Indeed, in a dozen selected varieties nearly all the good qualities and the greatest beauty of modern garden Lilacs can be found. If there is not much now to be expected from new seedlings of *Syringa vulgaris*, the making of hybrids between the species promises interesting and valuable garden plants if we can judge by the excellence of a few hybrid Lilacs, which have already been raised. The first of these hybrids, the Rouen Lilac, was raised in 1795 in France and is the result of crossing *Syringa vulgaris* with the small, late-flowered *Syringa persica*. The oldest name for this plant is unfortunately *Syringa chinensis*, given to it through a misunderstanding of its origin; it is also known as *S. rothomagensis*. It is very vigorous and is intermediate in character between its parents. The flowers are reddish purple, fragrant, and produced in long comparatively narrow clusters which weigh down the slender branches; there is a variety with nearly white flowers. This hybrid is among the best of all garden Lilacs.

A hybrid between *S. vulgaris* and *S. oblata* with small, semi-double, very fragrant, purple flowers, known as *S. hyacinthiflora*, is one of the earliest of all Lilacs to flower and is a vigorous, large-growing and very hardy plant. *S. oblata*, one of the parents of this hybrid, is a native of northern China and has been in flower for several days. The large pale lilac flowers are very fragrant and are produced in more or less irregular

clusters. The leaves are thick and leathery in texture, and, unlike those of all other Lilacs, turn in the autumn to a deep bronze red color. In gardens this plant becomes a tall, broad shrub, but the brittleness of the branches, which are often broken down by snow or ice, reduces its value.

Two other Chinese Lilacs bloom as early or earlier than *S. oblata*. These are the white-flowered *S. affinis* and the lilac-flowered form of this species, called var. *Giraldii*. *S. affinis* is the common and perhaps the only Lilac cultivated in the gardens of Peking in which great masses of it are sometimes seen. The variety comes from the province of Shensi. The flowers of these two Lilacs are fragrant and beautiful, but the open irregular habit of growth assumed by these plants in the Arboretum is not attractive. If they become more shapely with greater age, they will be garden plants of real value. *S. pubescens* is just opening its very fragrant, long-tubed, rather small flowers; this is a native of northern China, and is hardy, free-flowering, and one of the most beautiful of all Lilacs. It is still little known in gardens. The Persian Lilacs (*S. persica*) bloom rather later than the common Lilacs. This beautiful plant has been known in gardens for two centuries and a half, and there are purple and white-flowered varieties and a form with deeply-divided leaves (var. *laciniata*) which is less vigorous than the others. One of the least beautiful of Lilacs is the Hungarian *S. Josikaea*, a tall, slender shrub with narrow elongated clusters of small purple flowers which open later than those of the Persian Lilac. By crossing this plant with the Chinese *S. villosa* a remarkable race of hybrids was produced in Paris a few years ago. This hybrid race has the vigor, good habit, and large flowers of *S. villosa*, and the purple flowers of *S. Josikaea*. The general name for this race of hybrids is *S. Henryi*, from the horticulturist who produced it, and the best known and most beautiful of these hybrids is called *Lutèce*. This is a plant which should be in general cultivation. *S. villosa* blooms later than the other Lilacs and is therefore more valuable. It is a large, vigorous, and very hardy shrub with good foliage and numerous clusters of pale pink or rose-colored flowers which, unlike those of the other true Lilacs, have a disagreeable odor. A hybrid between *S. affinis*, var. *Giraldii*, and the common Lilac has been produced in France and is highly spoken of. It has not yet flowered in the Arboretum.

On the right-hand side of the South Street entrance are large plants of *Crataegus mollis* and on the left-hand side there is a plant of *C. arkansana*, and next to it and nearer the gate a plant of *C. submollis*. These trees, which are now in full flower, belong to the section Molles of the genus which has large leaves, large flowers and large, usually scarlet fruit. *C. mollis* is one of the common Hawthorns of the middle and western states where on bottom-lands it grows to a large size. Its fruit ripens and falls in September. *C. arkansana*, a native of central Arkansas, is a handsomer tree distinguished by its long, wide-spreading, more or less horizontal branches; the fruit ripens late and remains on the branches until the end of November. *C. submollis* is a native of eastern Massachusetts, with pear-shaped fruit which ripens and falls in September. These trees and a number of other Hawthorns were raised at the Arboretum from seeds planted about 1880. When fifteen or twenty years later they began to flower it was seen that many of them were un-

like any of the described species. This fact led to the general study of American Hawthorns which has been carried on at the Arboretum during the last twelve years. During these years three thousand lots of seeds collected from wild plants in different parts of the country have been planted and thousands of seedlings have been raised and distributed. A set of these seedlings has been planted on the eastern slope of Peter's Hill where the oldest of them are already beginning to flower.

On the left-hand side of the South Street entrance may also be seen the largest plant in the Arboretum of the Ohio Buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*) now in full flower. The earliest blooming of the American Magnolias, *M. Fraseri*, is unfolding the pale-yellow petals of its large flowers which open as the leaves begin to expand. This native of the forest of the southern Appalachian Mountains is a comparatively small tree; it does well at the Arboretum where it flowers freely every year. It can be seen in several specimens with the other American Magnolias on the right of the Jamaica Plain entrance and between the gate and the Administration Building.

In the Shrub Collection the red-fruited Elders are in full flower and are handsome shrubs, especially in early summer when their brilliant fruit ripens. In the collection can be seen the North American *Sambucus pubens*, the European and Siberian *S. racemosa* and their varieties, and the Japanese *S. racemosa* var. *Sieboldiana*. This is a very vigorous large shrub, and although the flower and fruit clusters are smaller than those of the other forms of this group, the bronze color of the finely divided leaves makes it particularly attractive at this season.

The large plant of *Fothergilla major* with its attractive heads of white flowers is now in full bloom in the Witch Hazel Group near the pond at the end of the Meadow Road; it is also in the Shrub Collection. Many of the Bush Honeysuckles are beginning to flower. One of the most conspicuous of the early-flowered species of this group is *Lonicera chrysantha* from eastern Siberia. A large plant of this can be seen on the right-hand side of the Bussey Hill Road opposite the Lilacs, and here, too, are several large plants of some of the hybrids of the Tartarian Honeysuckle.

An illustrated guide to the Arboretum containing a map showing the position of the different groups of plants has recently been published. It will be found useful to persons unfamiliar with the position of the different groups of plants. Copies of this guide can be obtained at the Administration Building in the Arboretum, from the Secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 300 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, from The Houghton, Mifflin Company, 4 Park Street, Boston, at the Old Corner Bookstore, Bromfield Street, Boston, and at the office of the Harvard Alumni Bulletin, 50 State Street, Boston. Price, 30 cents.

The Arboretum will be grateful for any publicity given these Bulletins.



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