

Bell County Master Gardener
Tip of the Week
By Mary Lew Quesinberry
“Forsythia Forecasts Spring”

The Forsythia bush is a forecaster of spring. This plant starts blooming in January and is a bright, lemon yellow signal that spring is on the way. Forsythia, a native of China, does well here in Central Texas. It blooms before its leaves appear!

Forsythia can be planted in sun or light shade. Prune it immediately after blooming to keep it a compact, bushy plant and to ensure more prolific blooms for next year. Forsythia makes an outstanding specimen plant or plant several together for a beautiful screen. Add a bright yellow accent of color to your home by simply cutting a Forsythia branch and placing it in a vase of warm water. After a few days in a warm room the branch will be covered in blooms!

This time of year, between winter and spring, our landscapes are almost devoid of color. You can have instant color by planting Dianthus, Snapdragons and Pansies. These plants are available in the nurseries and if planted now, will provide weeks of color. Plant Snapdragon and Dianthus in the shade and they will bloom longer and will last for several years if they are watered. Spring annuals, Bluebonnets and Poppies, have been growing since fall and will start blooming in March. Tulip, Narcissus and Daffodil planted last fall now have leaves 6-7 inches tall and will start blooming soon.

Native trees - Redbud, Anacacho Orchid Tree, and Mexican Plum will soon be in bloom, as will the beautiful perennials: Columbine, Coral-Bells, and Violas.

Sometimes it seems like winter will never end, but the blooms of Forsythia are forecasting spring.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com

In the photo: It seems like winter will never end, but the bright yellow blooms of the shrub Forsythia are forecasting spring. This plant does well in Central Texas and should be pruned immediately after it blooms to ensure prolific blooms next year.

