The winter of 1913-14 will be remembered in all parts of eastern North America as a winter of exceptional severity. The unusually low temperature accompanied by high gales of a day or two in January when there was no snow on the ground, and the severe cold and high winds of late February and early March caused much anxiety to the lovers of plants in eastern Massachusetts. So far as the Arboretum is concerned these fears have not been realized, for the losses from the winter here are few and unimportant. The plants of a small Rhododendron, *R. Gowenianum*, chiefly interesting as one of the hybrids between an Azalea and a Rhododendron, have been killed; otherwise the Rhododendrons are in remarkably good condition and their flowering promises to be the best that the Arboretum has seen. A few of the small, half hardy conifers, like some of the Torreyas and Cephalotaxus planted near the top of Hemlock Hill, have suffered but will probably recover, and here and there through the Arboretum the dead tips of small branches show how severe the winter has been. Even small plants of Buckeyes from Georgia and Texas, and several species of Plums from Texas planted in the open ground, show no signs of injury.

The effects of the cold on the new plants from western China are of special interest for it would seem that any plant that could survive such a winter might be considered hardy. It is gratifying, therefore, to find that very few of the Chinese plants even when planted in the most exposed positions have suffered. The Oaks, Birches, Poplars, Willows, Ashes, Cherries, Plums, Yellowwoods, Davidias, Eucommia, Catalpas, Berberis, Cercidiphyllum, most of the Cornels, Viburnums, Cotoneasters, Honeysuckles, Spiraeas, Lilacs, several of the Evodias and Ehretia and many others are uninjured. Some of the Chinese Roses, as might have been expected, are killed back nearly to the ground, while others are quite unhurt. Two of Wilson's conifers, *Picea Watsoniana* and *Tsuga chinensis*, have been growing for three years in the open ground without protection and are now as bright and fresh as any conifer in the collection. This is interesting for these two trees came from the region where Wilson later found the large number of new conifers, the introduction of which into cultivation was one of the important results of his travels, and the hardiness of this Spruce and Hemlock indicate that other species from the same region may perhaps be equally hardy in New England.

It is interesting to note that the flowers of the winter-flowering Witch Hazels from southern Missouri, Japan and western China were not affected by the severe cold. The Chinese species, *Hamamelis mollis*, produced its flowers for the first time in the Arboretum in February. These flowers are larger than those of the other species; the petals are bright yellow and remained for weeks in good condition. This promises to be a valuable plant for persons who can use winter-flowering shrubs.

The spring is exceptionally late. The bluebirds did not arrive this year until March 25th; they have been known to come as early as the 21st of February, and the average date of their arrival for the last thirty years is March 9th. In the bulletin published last year on April 25th there was announced the flowering of several Cherries, of the
Amelanchiers, of some of the Forsythias, and of other plants which are now only just beginning to enlarge their buds. A week later the Japanese Eupelea polyandra was in flower, and the branches of the Chinese Prunus tomentosa were already covered with its handsome flowers.

In spite of the lateness of the season several trees and shrubs, however, are already in flower. The branches of the White Elm, Ulmus americana, the earliest of the Elm trees to open its buds here, have been brown for several days with the clusters of its small flowers, and the Scarlet Maple (Acer rubrum) is gay with its crowded flowers which cover its otherwise naked branches and are on some individuals scarlet and on others pale red or yellow.

The earliest exotic tree to flower this year is the European Dogwood or Cornelian, Cornus mas, often called the Cornelian Cherry. The small bright yellow flowers in dense clusters now cover the leafless branches and make the plants conspicuous in early spring. The leaves, which will unfold as the flowers fade, are abundant, of good size and pleasant color, and the bright scarlet lustrous fruits, which are the size of large cherries but oblong in shape, hang gracefully on slender stems and are very ornamental. This small tree is perfectly hardy and probably was better known and more generally planted fifty years ago than it is now. The plant in the Arboretum in the Cornel Group, at the foot of the Bussey Hill Road, is not flowering particularly well this year, but many specimens can be seen in the shrubberies of the Boston parks now in full flower; and there is an exceptionally large and shapely tree on the Boylston Street side of the Boston Public Garden near the entrance to the Subway.

Many of the Alders are in flower and their delicate blossoms will well repay careful examination. The flowers of several Willows in the collection planted along the eastern border of the great meadow are now open, and during the next two weeks others will appear in succession. It is at this period that these trees and shrubs are seen in their greatest beauty and are most interesting to the student.

The Spice Bush (Benzoin aestivale) is just opening its flowers and can be seen to advantage in the large group on the right hand side of the Bussey Hill Road opposite the end of the Lilac Group. This is a native of the eastern United States and an inhabitant of the borders of swamps where it sometimes grows to the height of ten or fifteen feet. The flowers are small, bright yellow, and the male and female flowers are produced on different individuals, so that some of the plants only bear the small, scarlet, shining fruits which contrast so well with the bright yellow autumn foliage. The leaves are fragrant like those of its relative, the Sassafras, and are not injured by insects. The Leatherwood Group (Dirca palustris) which can be seen on the right-hand side of the Bussey Hill Road just above the Spice Bushes, is now covered with its beautiful small yellow flowers. This is one of the most successful groups in the Arboretum and should be visited by persons interested in early spring flowering shrubs of good habit and entire hardiness.

The earliest Magnolias are just opening their flower-buds in the neighborhood of the Administration Building. These are two Japanese species, Magnolia stellata, M. kobus and its northern form var. borealis. These plants, like many other Asiatic species, open their flowers before
the leaves appear. The former is a shrub which may in time be expected to grow to the height of ten or twelve feet and to spread to a diameter equal to its height. It is perfectly hardy and one of the most beautiful of all early spring flowering shrubs but, like several of the other early flowering Magnolias, it blooms too early and the flowers are often injured by late frosts. This is true, too, of Magnolia kobus and its variety. The latter is a larger and more vigorous tree than the typical Magnolia kobus, which in the Arboretum has remained shrubby in habit. These two plants, in their young state at least, do not produce large quantities of flowers and their flowers are less beautiful than those of many Magnolias, but the northern tree grows rapidly, is very shapely and covers itself with dense, dark green, handsome foliage.

Other plants now in bloom are the European Daphne Mezereum and Erica carnea. The former is a small shrub sometimes growing to a height of eighteen inches or two feet, and is ornamental when it is covered with its small flowers, and later in the season when its red fruits are ripe. It may now be seen in good condition on the lower side of Azalea Path. Erica carnea is one of the few Heaths which are hardy in this climate and the first of the genus to flower here. The red and white-flowered varieties may be seen in the Shrub Collection and among the Rhododendrons at the base of Hemlock Hill.

The interest in native birds is now so great, and fortunately so rapidly increasing, that it may be interesting to make known some of the resources of winter bird-food which can be found in the Arboretum. In March a representative of the Department of Agriculture at Washington came to the Arboretum to study the plants found here which might furnish birds with winter food. His examination revealed the fact that fleshy fruits of the sort eaten by birds were still hanging on the branches, and in good condition, of one hundred and ten species of trees and shrubs, and that the fruit of fifteen other species, although dry, was still available as bird-food. These one hundred and twenty-five species belong to thirty genera. Of the species only forty-nine are natives of the United States and only thirty of New England. In the course of a few years, moreover, the number of plants producing winter food for birds will probably be largely increased in the Arboretum by recent introductions.

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.