

Keep a Lookout for Changes on the Horizon
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Children often tell jokes like what's black and white and red all over. The answer is "the newspaper". I have a similar riddle. What's red, orange, and yellow with splashes of green and brown, all over? Clashing colors like these may make some people overly active as they try to sort them out or they might cause you to be relaxed. These colors are definitely typical this time of the year. Autumn is not only the transition from the hot long days of summer to the cold long nights of winter but provide a wonderful time to take a day and enjoy the colors trees and shrubs and other plants become while getting ready for winter.

Good fall coloration depends on many factors. General plant health, temperature, rainfall, soil pH, and fertility are some of these factors, just to name a few. Different species of plants will produce different colors usually. Fall color is often taken into account while designing landscapes. However, in nature the design is often a mishmash of colors. A forested area may end up being largely one color but there are always other colors present. Individually these colors may not go well together but when you look at the big picture they tend to be very lovely. In addition to woody plants, herbaceous plants can add a splash of fall color to your landscape. Garden mums, grasses, goldenrod, and sedum all become spectacular during the autumn. Even weeds and produce will show colors in your lawn and garden this time of the year.



Although many of the trees in the Black Hills area are evergreen there are still a vast number of deciduous species that display awesome fall coloration. Spearfish Canyon and Custer State Park are two favorite areas for fall color viewing. The US Forest Service maintains a website to assist fall color viewers in finding the best places and times to take a drive to see fall colors. This website is www.fs.fed.us/news/fallcolors, fall color chasers can click on an area near them for updated

information. Other excellent places to view colors are national parks and forests, city parks, and scenic drives, all of which can be found within driving distance of our area. So I would encourage you to take some time this fall to enjoy the nature's last show of the growing season. Take a few photos and make some lasting memories.

More information on horticultural topics can be found by visiting us online 24 hours a day at www.co.pennington.sd.us/extension/extsvc.html, which is updated often, or by calling 605-394-2188 or emailing ricky.abrahamson@sdsu.edu. Feel free to send me any feedback about my articles or our web site.