

Fall Color

HOW IT HAPPENS

It all starts with spring's long days and warm temperatures. New growth begins.

SPRING

New stems emerge.

Last year's growth resumes growing now.

In summer, chlorophyll makes photosynthesis possible.

SUMMER

Next year's leaf buds already exist.

We see green.

This year's growth ceases.

Chlorophyll changes color into sugar.

In fall, days shorten and temperatures drop. Chlorophyll breaks down. As green fades, other pigments are revealed.

FALL

Chlorophylls
Xanthophylls
We see yellow.

Anthocyanins
We see red and purple.

Carotenoids
We see orange.

Tannins
We see brown, like oak leaves.

Don't fall asleep!

cool nights

plenty of sun

no tundra

With precipitation, frost

leaves in dry before color is gone.

