



AUGUST PHENOLOGY

A reflective look at 2011

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

In August, pollen counts soar as the first birds collect for migration and school-age children squeeze in some last summer hurrahs. What's to expect in the coming month? Listed below are a few observations from a year ago in the Twin Cities Metro area, Waconia and areas beyond when indicated. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming happenings and will help you compare this year with last.

August 1 * Great ragweed sheds pollen for the first time this season.

August 2 * Common ragweed adds to the pollen count.

AUGUST

3

American Goldfinches feed greedily on bull thistle seeds.



August 5 * Migrating White Pelicans return to Lake Waconia. Wild cucumber begins to bloom.

August 6 * Keep those feeders filled: young Eastern Towhees, Brown Thrashers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, along with about a dozen other species, frequent backyard feeding stations.

August 7 * Close to 200 Great Egrets gather in a wetland area just west of Lake Waconia. Boneset, specifically Joeye weed, displays showy flowers.

August 10 * Rudbeckia, garden phlox and gladiola bloom.

AUGUST

11

Purple Martins gather in flocks and stage for migration. Northern Cardinals continue to be very vocal, some singing until 30 minutes after sunset. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds begin a feeding frenzy; now is the time to space your hummingbird feeders far apart.



August 12 * Wild grapes ripen. Marigolds, zinnias and snapdragons are garden showstoppers.

August 14 * Migrating Common Nighthawks collect over Duluth bluffs.

August 15 * With an abundance of blooming wildflowers, beekeepers are ready to harvest honey.

August 20 * Between 8:00 and 8:45 pm, hundreds of Chimney Swifts enter their chimney roosts.

August 23 * Migrating Common Nighthawks reach the Twin Cities area.

AUGUST

26

Warbler migration is in full swing; 16 species grace the U of MN Landscape Arboretum. Monarchs and other butterflies feed on Mexican sunflowers.



AUGUST

27

Baltimore Orioles continue to visit feeding stations, though most will head south in the next few days. Orioles are among the night migrators.



August 31 * The large fringed-cup acorns of the bur oak start to fall. Canada goldenrod's beauty peaks with a very showy bloom. Common ragweed sheds copious amounts of pollen.