



AUGUST PHENOLOGY

A reflective look at 2010

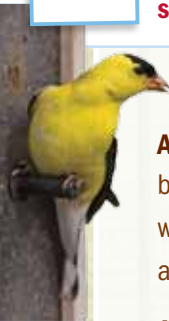
by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

August is the month of light winds; it is normally a sunny month and often lacks the extreme heat of July. Listed below are a few observations from a year ago in the Twin Cities Metro area, Waconia and beyond. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming summer occurrences and will help you to compare this year with last.

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American goldfinches nest for the first time; they wait to raise their young until late summer, when thistle seeds are ripe. House wrens nest for the second time.



August 2 * Common ragweed begins shedding pollen.

August 5 * Birds commonly seen at birdbaths include: black-capped chickadees, chipping sparrows, house wrens, blue jays, Baltimore orioles, American robins and gray catbirds.

August 7 * Temps climb to highs of 89°F. Flocks of purple martins stage for migration. Northern cardinals sing until about 30 minutes after sunset.

August 8 * Summer temperatures continue to rise. Expect record highs of 96°F plus. In 2010, this was the hottest day, tying the record set in 1894 and 1914.

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In addition to the record high temps, Lake Waconia surface temperature hits 90°F. Many birds use birdbaths.



August 11 * At this time and through September, ripe wild grapes offer a treat to more than 60 species of birds, including wood ducks, ruffed grouse and northern cardinals. Monarch butterflies start to aggregate in Waubun.

August 12 * Along the North Shore of Lake Superior, common nighthawks begin to migrate south.

August 14 * Wood ducks are eating fallen red and bur oak acorns.

August 19 * With plenty of rain lately, lawns look lush green. First ripe heritage raspberries (a fall producer) appear. Fifteen species of migrating warblers make their way south through Minnesota.

August 20 * First big flight of migrating common nighthawks are seen over the Twin Cities Metro area.

August 22 * More ruby-throated hummingbirds are seen at southern Minnesota feeders now that migration has begun.

August 25 * Fields of Canada and other goldenrods have radiant yellow flowers. Goldenrods do not cause hayfever, as their pollen is heavy and sticky; it's carried on the sides of insects rather than in the air.

August 26 * Beekeepers are extracting honey. Baltimore orioles are leaving; they winter in southern Mexico and northern South America. Orioles are among the night migrating birds. The harvest of southern Minnesota sweet corn is in full swing.

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Trees are full of migrating monarch butterflies resting for the night.

August 29 * High of 94°F—our sixteenth day of $\geq 90^\circ\text{F}$ this year (13 days is normal).

August 31 * Mosquitoes are very bothersome. Warbling vireos are vocal. Green darner dragonflies and common nighthawks are heading south in numbers.

