



MAY PHENOLOGY

A reflective look at 2012

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

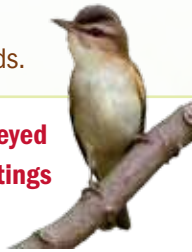


May is a month of numerous woodland wildflowers, birds migrating and nesting, and mostly delightful weather. Listed below are a few observations from a year ago in the Twin Cities Metro area, Waconia and areas beyond when indicated. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming happenings and will help you compare this year with last.

May 1 * The first Chimney Swifts and Least Flycatchers arrive. It's time to put out the oriole and hummingbird feeders, and to watch for the first Rose-breasted Grosbeaks visiting feeding stations for sunflower seeds. House Wrens fill our yards with their cheerful songs as they scout for nesting boxes. 48% of Minnesota corn is planted; about 30% is normal during the past 5 years.

May 2 * The first monarch butterflies arrive. Honeybees and wild bees explore flowers on blueberry shrubs. The first migrating Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers return to Grand Marais.

May 6 * Many pairs of Canada Geese are seen with young goslings. Northern Lights azaleas and lily of the valley are at peak bloom. In southern Minnesota, field corn is up a few inches in some fields.



MAY

7

Bobolinks, Eastern Kingbirds and Red-eyed Vireos call, while migrating Indigo Buntings visit feeding stations.

May 10 * Nest-building birds at this time include Barn Swallows and Red-winged Blackbirds. Western chorus frogs, common tree frogs and American toads croak their serenades. Ginkgo and bur oak leaves are about a quarter of their full size.

May 12 * It's the Minnesota fishing opener, and the water temperature of Lake Waconia is 60°F. Leech Lake is 57°F.

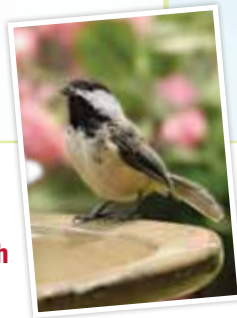
May 14 * Near 8 am, newly hatched broods of Wood Duck young begin to jump from their nest boxes. Wild geranium, Virginia waterleaf and yellow lady's slippers bloom.

May 16 * Trained spotters today observe about 20 species of migrating warblers.

MAY

18

Black-capped Chickadees, robins and Baltimore Orioles bathe in birdbaths on this first 90°F day. It's a record high of 93°F at MSP International Airport.



May 21 * Common Nighthawks fly over Minneapolis for the first time tonight.

May 22 * The first garden strawberries are ready to pick. White-tailed deer give birth to fawns. Female Baltimore Orioles busily weave their nests. In the Lutsen area, White-throated Sparrows and spring peepers frogs sing loudly.

May 26 * Snapping turtles gather on dry land to lay eggs. This evening, the first fireflies take flight.

May 27 * The morning bird chorus is fantastic with American Robins, Eastern Bluebirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, Northern Cardinals, House Wrens and others filling the air with their special music.

May 30 * Lawns are lush green. Russian olive trees and shrub roses teem with fragrant flowers.

MAY

31

Common Loons incubate their eggs, black flies stalk hikers and wild blueberry plants erupt with white flowers.

