

September Phenology

a reflective look at 2009

by Jim Gilbert

1 Red-breasted Nuthatches are arriving for the winter. Warblers are moving through on their way south. Fall-bearing raspberries have first ripe fruit.

2 Sumacs and sugar maples show patches of fall colors. First Dark-eyed Junco of the season seen at Sherburne NWR.

6 A few Baltimore Orioles still around, most have already left the state on their way to Central America. Flowering autumn joy sedum is popular with bumble bees.

8 Wild plums are ripe. Two newly-hatched Mourning Doves seen in their nest.

10 High of 83 degrees in the Twin Cities; the warmest day since mid-August. In southern Minnesota, soybean fields are golden-yellow with mature plants.

11 Red Baron, Wealthy, Minjon and Sweetango apples are ripe. Giant puffball mushrooms can be found. Both common and great ragweeds continue to shed pollen. The wild rice harvest has begun in central and northern Minnesota. At Park Point Recreation Area in Duluth, 23 warbler species were observed.

13 The first American Coots arrive on Lake Waconia for the fall season. The surface temperature of the lake is 74 degrees F and perfect for swimming. About 20,000 migrating American Coots have gathered on Lake Christina in the northwest corner of Douglas County.

14 Today at Hawk Ridge in Duluth, 8,757 birds were counted of which 7,728 were Broad-winged Hawks.

15 High of 84 degrees. This is the eighth consecutive day of 80 degrees or above. Annual cicadas buzz loudly.

19 Ohio buckeye nuts are falling. Dahlias, chrysanthemums and garden roses have numerous showy flowers. The last Ruby-throated Hummingbird left from a Lutsen feeding station. Most Ruby-throateds leave northern Minn., by Sept. 15 and southern Minnesota by Sept. 25 (but keep the feeders up a couple more weeks for stragglers). They winter all the way from southern Texas to Costa Rica, migrating mostly by day, but can also fly long distances at night.

24 First Snow Buntings arrive in Lutsen/Tofte area.

25 Fall colors are coming on fast, with nice reds on sumacs and Virginia creeper vines, big patches of red and burnt orange on sugar maples, and golden-yellow foliage on green ash and eastern cottonwood trees.

27 Northern Flickers migrating through. Some will stay here over the winter, visiting suet feeders. High winds and rain cause many leaves to fall. But there's still beautiful fall colors along the Gunflint Trail.

29 First scattered frost in the Metro.

30 Soybean combining begins and southern Minnesota farmers are chopping corn for silage.



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