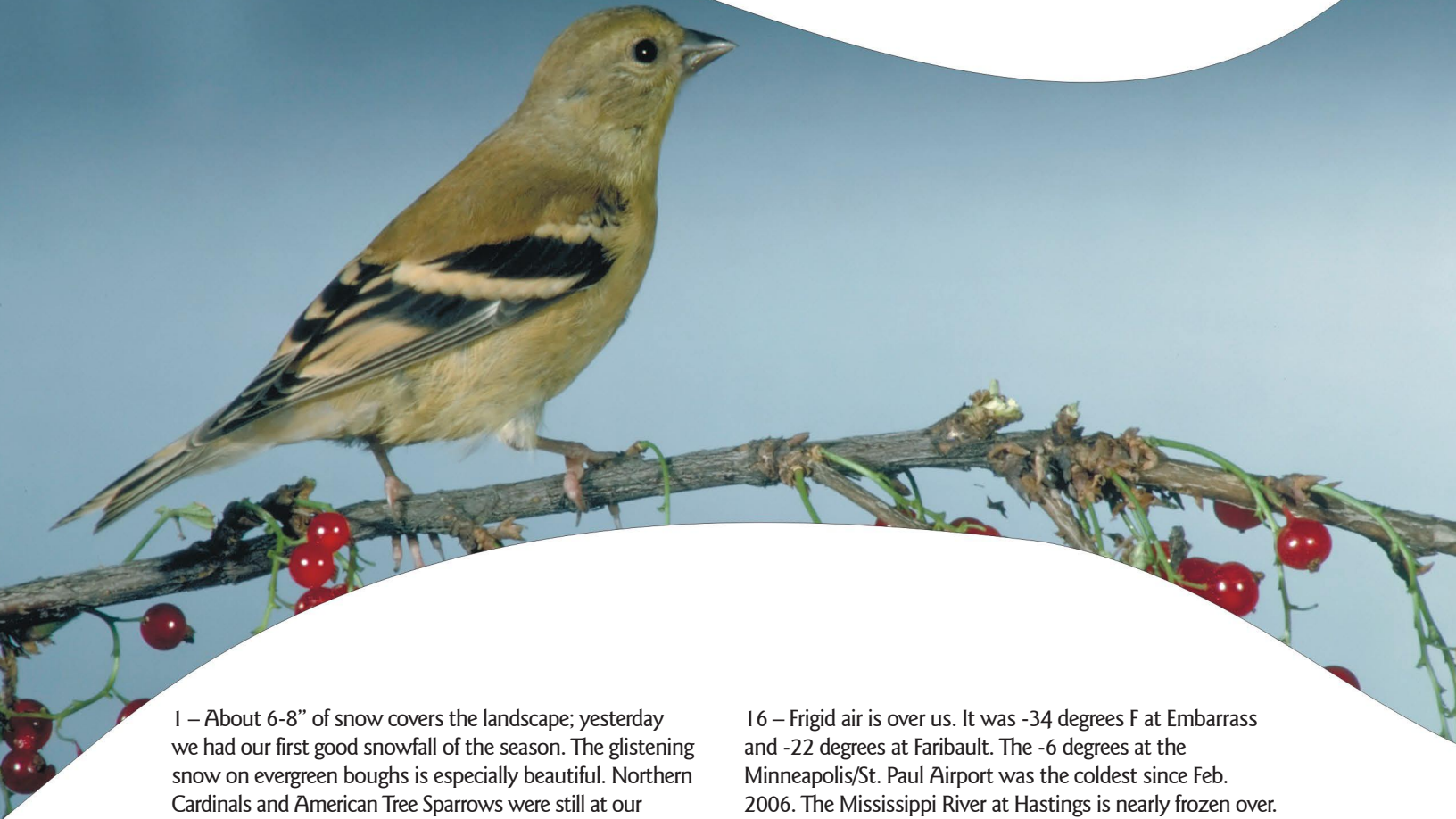


January Phenology

a reflective look at 2007

Jim Gilbert



1 – About 6-8” of snow covers the landscape; yesterday we had our first good snowfall of the season. The glistening snow on evergreen boughs is especially beautiful. Northern Cardinals and American Tree Sparrows were still at our feeding station 20 minutes after sunset.

2 – High temperature of 36 degrees F. White-breasted Nuthatches heard singing the “whi, whi, whi,.....” spring song. Eastern chipmunk out in Chisago City.

4 – First spring songs of the Black-capped Chickadee (“fee-bee”) and Blue Jay (“pumphandle”) were heard. We are in a January thaw. The high temperature of 41 degrees F tied the modern record set on this date in 1898.

5 – High temperature of 37 degrees F (15 degrees above normal). Lake Minnetonka, which froze over on December 5, now has large open water areas, and Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis has opened again. Raccoons were out and about this warm evening. A Great Blue Heron was spotted at Minnehaha Creek in Minnetonka.

10 – A flock of 30 American Robins feeds on crabapple fruit in Victoria.

13 – Cold air is back. Lake Harriet in Minneapolis, Lake Pepin and Lake Minnetonka froze over again. The duet hooting of a Great Horned Owl pair was heard. Low temperature of +1 degree F in the Twin Cities and -32 degrees at Embarrass.

16 – Frigid air is over us. It was -34 degrees F at Embarrass and -22 degrees at Faribault. The -6 degrees at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport was the coldest since Feb. 2006. The Mississippi River at Hastings is nearly frozen over.

21 – So far this season only 9.7” of snow have fallen at the Mpls./St. Paul Airport. By now nearly 30” would be normal. Mille Lacs Lake has ice about 20” thick. At Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, near Finland, MN, birdfeeder birds include pine siskins, pine grosbeaks, common redpolls, gray jays and black-capped chickadees. Common ravens are often seen and heard in that area but don’t come to feeders. At this time of year, male ravens do elaborate courtship flight maneuvers including steep dives, tumbles and rolls.

23 – Wintering-over Red-tailed Hawks continue to be seen. The open water below Coon Rapids Dam contains 101 Common Goldeneyes and a few Mallards. A definite very early spring flight of Horned Larks arrived in the Plato area.

26 – The high temperature of 41 degrees F today tied with January 4 for this month’s high. Northern Cardinals were heard singing full songs. Lake Waconia ice is 15” thick.

28 – On this below zero morning, beautiful intricate frost patterns are seen on some windows.



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February Phenology

a reflective look at 2007 *Jim Gilbert*



5 – This is the second consecutive morning with a -42 degree F reading at Embarrass. It was -38 degrees at Hallock and -17 degrees in the Twin Cities.

6 – Wow, a -46 degrees at Embarrass. Two male Eastern Bluebirds seen in Medina, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler visits a suet feeder in Monticello.

9 – A Great Horned Owl is on a nest in St. Paul. It's the earliest nesting bird in Minnesota. Gray Squirrel mating season begins.

12 – House Finches have begun singing and Downy Woodpeckers drumming.

14 – The “wicker” spring call of the Red-bellied Woodpecker is heard. Another spring sound! Our snow drought continues. Only 4-8” of snow covers most of the Arrowhead, and 1-4” over most of the rest of Minnesota. Lake Superior is wide open but the rocky shore has an elegant ice covering from wave spray.

19 – First warm day (high 43 degrees F) after 20 days in a row with below normal temperatures. The air has the smell of spring.

21 – High of 47 degrees F. Wild Turkeys gobble and fan their tails on warm days like today.

25 – Snowstorm ends with a total of 9.1” at the Mpls./St. Paul Airport, 15.5” at Hutchinson and Duluth, and 29.5” in Winona. American Tree Sparrows, juncos, cardinals and Blue Jays are among the numerous birds at our feeding station on the shore of Lake Waconia.

28 – Bald Eagle is on a nest in Lake Elmo. Only 22.6” of snow for the season so far at Mpls./St. Paul Airport. About 8” of snow covers the Twin Cities landscape.



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