

April

PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

Naturalist Jim Gilbert's observations from this time last year, plus a seasonal checklist of backyard tasks.

APR

01

Fox Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, American Robins, Mourning Doves and more make up the morning bird chorus. A **White-breasted Nuthatch** pair is building a nest in a basswood tree cavity. A **Brown Thrasher** appears in Northfield. In the Lanesboro area, western chorus frogs and spring peepers are very vocal. **Common Loons** begin arriving in southern and central MN.

APR

04

Lawns begin to green.

APR

05

Wood frogs begin their barking, or some say quacking sounds, in the Waconia area. A first thirteen-lined ground squirrel is out and about at Linnaeus Arboretum in St. Peter. A male **Ruffed Grouse** is drumming in Lutsen area.

APR

06

The first Carver County farmer works the soil for spring planting. Beautiful Pasqueflowers are at bloom peak on Kasota Prairie near St. Peter.

APR

08

First 70°F temperature for 2017. A first **Purple Martin** returns, and the first **Mallard** and **Wood Ducks** begin incubating eggs. Carver County farmers plant the first oats and sweet corn. Migrating **American White Pelicans, Northern Flickers, and Chipping Sparrows** arrive in Faribault. Ice cover left Potato Lake in Hubbard County yesterday, and a pair of **Common Loons** is there today.



APR

09

For a second day, we enjoy 70°F air temperature. The first daffodils bloom. We hear the double squawks of male **Ring-necked Pheasants**. Comma, red-admiral and mourning-cloak butterflies take flight.

APR

10

Up to 3 inches of snow falls on parts of the Twin Cities. Snow falls on the backs of the **Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Dark-eyed Juncos, and White-throated Sparrows** at our feeding station.

APR

11

The first **Ospreys** return.



APR

13

From St. Peter to the Twin Cities, the first green tinge emerges in urban and natural forest canopies as boxelder, willow and other trees begin leafing out. Red maples and forsythia shrubs are in bloom.

APR

14

Ice is off Leech Lake, Lower Red Lake, and Shagawa Lake at Ely.

☐ Track oriole, hummingbird and monarch migration at Journey North, journeynorth.org

☐ During the last week of April put out nectar feeders for hummingbirds and feeders for orioles including half oranges, grape jelly, nectar, mealworms and **Suet to Go insect recipe suet pellets**.



☐ Use a **Nectar Protector Jr. ant trap** to prevent ants from entering nectar feeders. Hang your nectar feeder from the ant trap, which is a moat filled with water. Ants can't swim and therefore cannot get to the nectar.

☐ Try a **Humm-Bug Hummingbird Feeder** to provide fruit flies for hummingbirds. Simply open the two-piece feeder, add 2 to 3 bananas and within a few days, hummingbirds will arrive to feast on the fruit flies. See a video on our blog: wildbirdstore.com/2018/02/humm-bug-hummingbird-feeder



☐ Clean out nest boxes from last year and replace cracked or damaged houses.

☐ Hang **The Best Nest Builder™** to provide nesting materials for birds.

April PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

(Continued from front)

APR
15

Woodland flowers bloom: white trout lily, bloodroot, Dutchman's-breeches, and wild ginger. Gardeners plant onions, potatoes and cabbages, and seed-in radishes, beets and carrots.

APR
17

The first rhubarb is ripe for sauce. Quaking aspens begin leafing. Apricot trees display light pink flowers. At River Bend Nature Center in Faribault, four species of **Wrens** sing: **House**, **Winter**, **Sedge**, and **Marsh**.

APR
18

The first report of a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** comes in from Anoka.

APR
19



Flocks of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** pass through. About 5,000 **American Coots** form several rafts on Lake Waconia. A **Whip-poor-Will** sings at Afton.

APR
20

Tamarack trees have new tiny green leaf clusters. Lawns are a lush green.

APR
22

The first leaves appear on native sugar maples and basswoods. A **Black-capped Chickadee** nest has 7 eggs so far.



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24

Newly hatched broods of **Canada Goose** goslings swim and graze on fresh green grasses with their parents.

APR
25

An early-to-arrive male **Baltimore Oriole** sings at the Bass Ponds in Hennepin County. A large-flowered trillium blooms in southern MN woodlands.

APR
28

Morel mushrooms emerge. PJM rhododendrons, magnolias, serviceberry trees and shrubs, daffodils, and hyacinths bloom.

APR
29



Prairie Chicken males dance on a lek in far western Becker County, and **Sharp-tailed Grouse** performs audible and visible displays on a lek near Biwabik.

APR
30

Some early crabapple trees bloom. Thickets of wild plum are loaded with white flowers. The light bright greens of newly leafed-out deciduous trees contrast beautifully with the dark green of pines, spruces and other evergreens.

- ❑ Attract more birds to your birdbath with moving water. The **Aurora Water Wiggler** provides constantly rippling



water and has a light that casts a soft glow of a gradually changing rainbow of colors. The light comes on at dusk and glows for three hours and automatically shuts off after three hours.

- ❑ Nesting birds such as chickadees, cardinals, nuthatches, House Wrens and others feed their young caterpillars and larva. Help them out by offering **live mealworms**.

- ❑ Reapply **WindowAlert™ decals** each spring to prevent window collisions. For especially problematic areas of the house, use **ABC Bird Tape** for full window coverage.

- ❑ Bring feeders to your neighborhood All Seasons store for cleaning. Fees apply.

- ❑ Cracked feeders allow water to pool in the birdseed causing mold and mildew growth. Replace damaged feeders with new easy to clean versions such as the **Squirrel Buster** family of feeders or **Aspects Quick Clean** feeders.

- ❑ Scrub birdbaths with 9 parts water and 1 part bleach then use **Bird Bath Protector™** to keep it clean.



- ❑ Use no-mess seed and mixes such as **Medium Chips** and **Kracker Jax** that leave no shells to clean up.