

August

PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

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

AUG

01



House Sparrows dust-bathe. European mountain ash trees display beautiful orange fruit. Firefly season is ending; only a few individuals still fly at night.

AUG

02

A build-up in the numbers of **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** at Twin Cities and other SE MN feeding stations is probably due to migrants from the north.

AUG

03

Orb spider webs in tall grasses glisten on dewy mornings. Common visitors to birdbaths include: **House Wrens, Blue Jays, Baltimore Orioles, American Robins, Black-capped Chickadees,** and **Gray Catbirds.**



AUG

05

First wild grapes ripen. Dozens of bird species relish this fruit. **Northern Cardinals** sing until about 30 minutes after sunset.

AUG

06

Kayaking, tubing, canoe trips, and swimming are all enhanced by the warm water conditions we enjoy. Most lakes are in the mid-70°Fs.

AUG

08

First wild American plums ripen. The native Joe-Pye weed, boneset, blue vervain, and jewelweeds display blossoms in wetlands and moist places.

AUG

11

Purple Martins, the largest member of the swallow family, line up on utility wires as they prepare for migration.

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The second broods of **Barn Swallows** fledge, but return to their nests in the evenings.

AUG

13

It's the beginning of the **hummingbird** feeding frenzy. First ripe overbearing garden raspberries. Farmers throughout the state harvest winter wheat and oats.



- Goldfinches are our latest nesting songbirds, nesting in July and fledging young in August. Unlike most songbirds, goldfinches feed their young a slurry of seed such as **Nyjer™ and Chips.** Keep your feeders clean and full to attract them.



- Additional **birdbaths** will help birds beat the heat in your backyard. **Misters** and **drippers** are another way to get your water moving. Just hook them up to an outside water source and regulate the flow of water by adjusting a small valve.

- You can use a faucet timer from a garden center or hardware store to program when to turn misters and drippers on and off.
- You'd hire someone to clip your grass or fertilize your lawn—why not schedule **regular seed delivery and feeder fillings?** The service includes keeping your seed supply stocked and stored properly, inspecting and filling feeders, and cleaning or repairing feeders as needed. Let us know how often you'd like us to come out, and we'll do the rest. **Call 952.473.4283.**

- Hummingbirds are active at nectar feeders and flowers into October with the females and juveniles staying the latest in the fall.



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(Continued from front)

AUG
14

Common Nighthawk migration begins.



AUG
17

Both butternut and black walnut trees continue to show quite a few yellow leaflets—this is an early preview of fall color. The harvest of sweet corn for canning and freezing is underway in southern MN. Both great and common ragweeds, with their green flowers, shed significant quantities of pollen into the air.

AUG
20



American Goldfinches flock to feeders; they sure relish sunflower seeds. **Baltimore Orioles** continue to come in numbers to grape jelly and sugar water feeders; most of these orioles will leave by Sept. 5. Mushroom hunters find Indian Pipes, puffballs, inky caps and at least two-dozen other mushroom species.

AUG
21

Early season apples now ripe include Williams Pride, Oriole, Viking, Mantet and Zestar.

AUG
23

Watch for aggregations of monarch butterflies clustering in trees, a sign that their migration is beginning. Several migrating **warbler** and **shorebird** species move through.

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24

The second broods of juvenile eastern chipmunks explore their surroundings.

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26

Tiny, newly hatched snapping turtles head for ponds and lakes.

AUG
27

This evening Art and Bard Straub from LeSueur, who monitor several chimneys in the area, counted 1,344 **Chimney Swifts** that entered one chimney near sunset until 20 minutes after sunset to roost for the night. These birds are staging for migration.

AUG
29

Asters, goldenrods and tall sunflowers bloom nicely along northern MN roadsides. Young **Common Loons** have begun to take on some adult colors as their parents still watch over them.



AUG
31

Lawns are lush green and we are in an excellent mushroom-watching season due to more-than-adequate rainfall this month.

- ❑ Use **Nectar Defender** to keep nectar in hummingbird feeders fresh longer.



- ❑ Orioles visit backyard feeders through the first week of September for **mealworms**, **nectar**, grape jelly, oranges or dark grapes.

- ❑ Mint extract on nectar ports helps to repel bees, wasps and bald faced hornets. Hanging the feeder from an **ant trap** prevents ants from reaching the nectar.

- ❑ For some birds, migration begins in August. Replace your **Window Alert** decals every six months to prevent window strikes.



- ❑ As birds gather in pre-migration flocks, avoid large numbers of grackles and starlings at feeders by filling feeders with **golden safflower** or **white safflower**. Use **Bye, Bye Starling** to continue providing a sunflower mix while discouraging European starlings.

