



JULY PHENOLOGY

A reflective look at 2015

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

Warm and sunny July days are the backdrop for blooming flowers, ripening fruit and fledging birds. 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.

July 1 ✨ American Robins sing and call until 30 minutes after sunset. It's the peak time to see fireflies flashing in the dark. There's a huge mayfly hatch in Hastings.

July 13 ✨ After staying in their nest for three weeks post-hatching, two young Ruby-throated Hummingbirds fledge.

July 16 ✨ First locally grown sweet corn is available. First common sunflowers are blooming along highways.

July 17 ✨ Purple Martin young will fledge soon. Almost all nests of Tree Swallow young have fledged.

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Up to two dozen species of birds, including Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Baltimore Orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Indigo Buntings visit feeding stations several times daily. First wild blackcap raspberries ripen.



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First juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbirds come to drink from sugar water feeders. They're shaky, smaller and have shorter beaks than adults.



July 3 ✨ First annual cicada buzzes.

July 4 ✨ Much of Waconia area field corn is up 5 to 6 feet. Lake Waconia water temperature is 78°F. Hollyhocks start blooming. Native basswood trees are blooming and humming with honey bees and wild bees. Northern Cardinals bring their young to feeders for sunflower seeds.

July 20 ✨ The daylily collection at the U of MN Landscape Arboretum is at overall bloom peak.

July 25 ✨ Joe-Pye weed and boneset are blooming in wetlands. Lake Waconia water temperature is 80°F (down 1 foot in 8 feet of water).

July 5 ✨ Observers near ponds hear green frogs calling day and night; they sound like banjo pickers. Garden blueberry shrubs such as Northblue and Northsky are loaded with ripe, ripening and green fruit.

July 26 ✨ Keith Radel continues to monitor his bluebird trail made up of 135 pairs of nesting boxes along 40 miles of roads, all in Rice County in the Faribault area. So far this season 516 young Eastern Bluebirds have fledged, and there are still 216 eggs and chicks combined. This year the first egg was laid April 13 and last one on July 21.

July 7 ✨ Showy blooming prairie plants now include: butterfly-weed, both white and purple prairie clovers, leadplant, and Culver's root.

July 27 ✨ First snowy tree cricket chirps.

July 10 ✨ First field corn tasseling and silking.

July 28 ✨ In a Bald Eagle nest near Northfield, the young are almost as big as their parents.

July 12 ✨ The first Canada Geese are flying again since molting their flight feathers in June. Young geese test their new flight feathers too. The morning bird chorus has dropped off considerably as many males have stopped singing to proclaim territories.

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Migrating shorebirds such as Lesser Yellowlegs and Pectoral Sandpipers move through the area.

