

# May

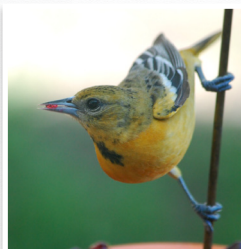
## PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

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

MAY

01

It's time to put out **oriole** and **hummingbird** feeders, and to watch for the first **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** coming to feeding stations for sunflower seeds. **House Wrens** continue to arrive, filling our yards with their cheerful songs and looking for nest boxes. Thickets of wild plum are full of white flowers. Golfers at Superior National can look up and see skiers and boarders enjoying the last good snow on Lutsen Mountains.



MAY

02

Masses of blooming common dandelions are now a critical food source for honey bees and other pollinators. In the Lutsen/Tofte area deciduous trees such as quaking aspens don't have even tiny green leaves yet, but male **Ruffed Grouse** are drumming and spring peepers are very vocal.

MAY

04

The U of MN Landscape Arboretum crabapple collection is at overall bloom peak and very showy (the 45 year average is May 14 for peak of bloom). Ice cover exits Lake of the Woods.

MAY

06



First 90°F day this year (high of 92°F in Twin Cities). Wild columbine begins blooming. **House Wrens** and American toads are very vocal. Eastern redbud trees and tulips have showy flowers.

MAY

08

Blooming apple and crabapple trees, lilac and spicebush shrubs, and lilies of the valley give us visual beauty and wondrous spring scents. Mushroom hunters are gathering morels the official MN state mushroom.

MAY

09

Some of the birds on nests incubating eggs now include: **Wood Ducks**, **Wild Turkeys**, **Black-capped Chickadees**, **Eastern Bluebirds**, and **American Robins**.



MAY

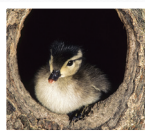
10

Yesterday and today we finally receive some good soaking rains. Corn is up about 2 inches in many Waconia area fields.

MAY

12

First brood of **Wood Duck** ducklings jump.



- ☐ Attract orioles with nectar, oranges, mealworms and grape jelly. Orioles feed their young caterpillars and are especially attracted to mealworm feeders while young are in the nest. Change nectar every three days. 
- ☐ Use liquid or powder nectar with **Nectar Defender** already added to keep your nectar fresh longer. Great for use at the cabin when larger capacity nectar feeders will be unattended for a week. Do not use Kool-Aid®, honey, or artificial sweeteners in nectar feeders.
- ☐ Keep ants out of the nectar by hanging a feeder from an ant moat filled with water or an **Antguard**, which repels ants. 
- ☐ Hang the **Best Nest Builder**, nesting material made of cotton fibers, from a tree, shrub or shepherd's pole.
- ☐ Put out at least two bird houses, one for wrens and one for chickadees. Best practice is to hang them from a pole and put a squirrel baffle on the pole 4'¼" to 5' off the ground. Place the chickadee house out of direct sight line from nesting wrens, to reduce conflicts.
- ☐ Deter bees from feeders by rubbing mint leaves or mint extract on the nectar ports. 



# May

## PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

(Continued from front)

MAY  
14

It's the MN fishing opener for walleye, sauger and northern, and water temperatures are in the low 50°Fs for this biggest outdoor event of the year. Northern Lights azaleas have striking bright pink, orange, purple, or yellow flowers with a spicy fragrance. The big **warbler** migration is on and birders can expect to see about 21 species of these tiny songsters.

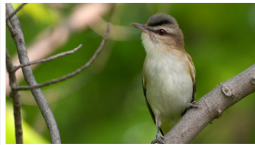
MAY  
15



Some of the birds coming to grape jelly feeders include both **Baltimore** and **Orchard Orioles**, **House Finches**, **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**, **Gray Catbirds**, **Scarlet Tanagers**, and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. A frost in parts of southern MN kills small soybean plants in some fields, kills apple blossoms, and damages leaves of sumac shrubs and black walnut trees. Ice appears on some birdbaths.

MAY  
18

**Red-eyed Vireos** are returning from South America. Other newly arriving migrants include **Common Nighthawks**, **Great Crested Flycatchers**, **Eastern Kingbirds**, and **Indigo Buntings**.



MAY  
21

Tall bearded irises bloom. Red pines shed pollen. In the Lutsen/Tofte area, quaking aspens and paper birches are among the trees that have new small leaves, marsh marigolds in wet ditches have bright yellow flowers, serviceberry shrubs bloom, and black flies start biting.

MAY  
22

Across southern MN, gardeners harvest leaf lettuce, radishes and green onions. Farmers busily plant soybeans and harvest the first crop of alfalfa.

MAY  
24

The first monarch butterflies arrive. Eastern cottonwood trees shed seeds on cotton carriers.



MAY  
28

White-tailed deer fawns are being born. Mosquitoes become bothersome for the first time.

MAY  
29

Many broods of **Wood Duck** young now jump from nests, typically between 8-10am. Both painted and snapping turtles come up on dry land to lay eggs.

MAY  
31



**Chipping Sparrows**, **Red-eyed Vireos** and **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** are among the very vocal birds. Young **Eastern Bluebirds** and **Black-capped Chickadees** fledge.

- ❑ Use calcium-rich suet during egg-laying time such as **Pacific Bird and Supply Co suet cakes** and **Attractor nutritional suet plugs** in various flavors.



- ❑ Scrub birdbaths with a solution of 9 parts water to 1 part bleach. Rinse well. For a safe and healthy birdbath add **Birdbath Protector** to the just cleaned bath.

- ❑ The **Water Wiggler** attracts more birds to a birdbath and prevents mosquitoes from laying their eggs by moving the water constantly.



- ❑ Store seed in the freezer or outside the house to avoid moths. Hang a **moth trap**, available in our stores, near seed containers in the garage.
- ❑ Use **Golden Safflower** to avoid attracting grackles, and starlings while still attracting cardinals, goldfinches, chickadees and House Finches.
- ❑ To avoid attracting starlings while still providing a bird seed mix, serve **Bye, Bye Starling**.
- ❑ Discourage a bird from repeatedly fighting its reflection on your window by tacking landscaping cloth over the window.