



# MAY PHENOLOGY

*A reflective look at 2015*

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

*May paints the landscape* with greening grasses and trees, blooming woodland wildflowers and returning spring 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.

**May 1** \* The first returning House Wrens fill backyards with cheerful songs as they claim nesting boxes. A male Baltimore Oriole arrives in Lauderdale. 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. White flowers cover thickets of wild plums as crabapple trees begin to bloom.

MAY

2

**The first Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrive and the first Mallard Ducklings hatch.**



**May 3** \* Spotters report the first Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting. The first Canada Goose goslings hatch. Common tree frogs began calling. Whip-Poor-Wills and Wilson's Snipes sing in Sherburne County just before dark. Ice finally retreats from Saganaga and Gunflint Lakes, near the end of the Gunflint Trail.

**May 5** \* Lilacs, tulips, masses of common dandelions and crabapple trees bloom. Feeding stations attract about a dozen species, including: Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Baltimore Orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Indigo Buntings.

MAY

6

**A pair of Scarlet Tanagers drops in near Victoria. At the U of MN Landscape Arboretum, eastern redbuds and the crabapple collection reach peak bloom.**



**May 7** \* Apple orchards reach bloom peak. Columbine and wild geranium start to bloom. Greenwood Lake, NNE of Grand Marais, is the last MN lake to lose its ice cover.

**May 9** \* Common purple lilacs are in full bloom—a sign for gatherers of common morels to start their hunts.

**May 15** \* It's an excellent warbler migration; waves of these tiny songsters are moving through the Twin Cities.

MAY

16

**Red-eyed Vireos and Eastern Wood Pewees arrive and begin calling. Northern Lights azaleas bloom. Spotters count 24 warbler species in at Park Point in Duluth.**



**May 17** \* Some of the birds coming to grape jelly feeders include: Baltimore Orioles, Orchard Orioles, Scarlet Tanagers, House Finches, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Gray Catbirds and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

**May 19** \* A first brood of Eastern Bluebird young fledge from a bluebird trail near Faribault.

**May 21** \* It's the peak of Common Nighthawk migration. Red pines begin shedding pollen. The first alfalfa fields are ready to cut in Waconia and Watertown area.

**May 23** \* White-tailed deer give birth to fawns. The first monarch butterflies arrive and the first fireflies take flight in the Lanesboro area.

**May 24** \* Purple Martins and Baltimore Orioles build nests.

**May 30** \* Baltimore Oriole nests hold full clutches of eggs. Gardeners harvest leaf lettuce, radishes, green onions, and the first ripe strawberries.

**May 31** \* Tall bearded irises and black locust trees bloom. In northern and central MN, common loons incubate their eggs, and black flies become bothersome.