



# NOVEMBER PHENOLOGY

*A reflective look at 2013*

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

*November usually begins like autumn but ends up wintry.* Fall colors linger, dried grasses stand tall, waterfowl migrate, and ice appears. Though cloudy, November can produce the best sunrises and sunsets of the year. Listed below are 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 2014 with last year.

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**Over 500 Tundra Swans gather in the Mississippi River backwaters just south of Brownsville.**



**November 2** \* Lawn grasses still require mowing. With ghostly hoots, Great Horned and Barred Owls give voice to November nights.

**November 3** \* Fox and White-throated Sparrows come to feeding stations. The fall leaf color season continues with golden-yellows on paper birches, smoky-gold on tamaracks, reds on Boston ivy and winged euonymus, browns and reds on red oak tree foliage, and much more.

**November 5** \* Today is the first accumulating snowfall, measuring between 1 and 4 inches in the Twin Cities area and 6 to 8 inches in southwestern Minnesota. Feeding stations are active spots with many birds.

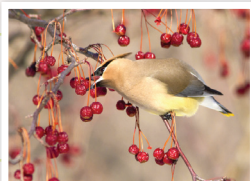
**November 6** \* The first ice is on small ponds.

**November 8** \* The last of the long bands (a.k.a. "rivers of life") of migrating grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds passes overhead.

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**Crabapple trees bearing fruit and heated birdbaths invite flocks of Cedar Waxwings.**



**November 10** \* Today becomes the last day to pick the remaining Haralson, Regent and Fireside apples before the cold weather freezes the remaining fruit. An estimated 16,000 Tundra Swans migrate between La Crescent and the Iowa border on the Mississippi River and backwaters.

**November 14** \* American Robins migrate through the area. Flying squirrels come to feeding stations a bit before 6 p.m. They like sunflower seeds, peanuts and peanut butter.

**November 18** \* This is the median date for the first inch of snow at MSP International Airport. A last painted turtle settles on a log, sunning itself.

**November 20** \* For the last time this season, flocks of Franklin's Gulls return to Lake Waconia, just before sunset, to spend the night on the water.

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**There are still about 6,400 Sandhill Cranes at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge; they will be leaving very soon.**



**November 22** \* Today is the freeze-up date for Iowa Lake in Martin County, Wells Lake at Faribault, and Caribou Lake near Lutsen.

**November 24** \* A few Snowy Owls arrive in northern Minnesota.

**November 27** \* With the recent cold weather, nearly all raccoons and skunks begin sleeping in sheltered places; we probably won't see them out for many weeks.

**November 28** \* Common Mergansers are very abundant on Lake Pepin at Lake City.

**November 29** \* Today is the freeze-up date for Lake Minnetonka, the tenth largest lake in Minnesota.

**November 30** \* Heated birdbaths are very popular with birds such as Black-capped Chickadees and American Goldfinches, plus squirrels, deer and other animals.