



# November PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

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

NOV

01

Common witch-hazel shrubs are in bloom, and apricot trees have red, yellow, and golden-yellow fall foliage. There are still red leaves on some sumacs. At Lutsen/Tofte, migrating **Pine Grosbeaks** and **Snow Buntings** arrive.



NOV

03

An inch of snow falls. Carpets of yellow leaves form beneath ginkgo trees. On Cannon Lake in Faribault, 41 **Common Loons**, along with other migrants such as **Common** and **Hooded Mergansers** and **Canvasbacks**, stop for a visit. The first **Snowy Owls** of the season appear in southern MN.

NOV

04

**Dark-eyed Juncos** are now the most numerous of birdfeeder birds. Flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** feed on hackberry fruit and juniper berries, then come to birdbaths to drink.

NOV

05

The first **Tundra Swan** flocks vocalize as they migrate over the Twin Cities area. They pause to rest and feed at such places as the Weaver Marshes and backwaters of the Mississippi River just south of Brownsville, en route from their summer range—mainly north of the Arctic Circle—to their winter headquarters along the Atlantic coast from Chesapeake to North Carolina.

NOV

07



More flocks of **Tundra Swans** migrate over. Now an estimated 9,000 of these majestic swans arrive on the Mississippi River and backwaters just south of Brownsville.

NOV

09

Only 12°F this morning. Heated birdbaths and drinkers attract numerous birds and other wildlife.

NOV

10

Today is the freeze-up date for Upper Red Lake, Wolf Lake near Finland, Caribou Lake inland from Lutsen, Lake George located 7 miles east of Itasca State Park, and Little Rock Lake near Rice in Benton County. At Caribou Lake the low temperature this morning is -10°F. 16 inches of snow has fallen there so far this fall.

NOV

11

Thousands of **Franklin's Gulls** roost nightly on the water in the center of Lake Waconia.

❑ Enjoy a good read: **Wild Birds—North America's Most Unique Birds** by Stan Tekiela

❑ Switch at least one feeder to **Medium Sunflower Chips** or **Kracker Jax** to provide quick, high-energy bird food that requires less energy to consume, since there is no shell to crack. These shell-less bird food varieties make for easy spring clean-up as well.



❑ Fill the **heated birdbath** with fresh cold water every few days. Filling with cold water will reduce evaporation and keep the bath full longer.

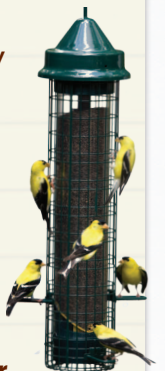
❑ Flocks of Cedar Waxwings devour crabapples and mountain ash fruits and visit heated bird baths.

❑ Add **suet** and a **peanut feeder** for high-fat and high-protein foods to fuel birds during cold temperatures.

❑ Mix in **suet pellets** and **dried mealworms** to **seed tube feeders**, **hopper feeders** or **hanging trays**.

❑ Blue Jays cache **in-shell peanuts** in the fall. Offer peanuts in a **peanut wreath**, **hanging tray** or **fly-through feeder**.

❑ Winter-visiting finches join goldfinches at the **Nyjer™ feeders**. Look for Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls to join the House Finches and goldfinches eating **Finches' Choice**, **Nyjer & Chips** or **Nyjer**.



# November

## PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

(Continued from front)

NOV  
12

We are starting to see the last of the huge flocks of migrating **Red-winged Blackbirds** and **Common Grackles** traveling in long “rivers of life” from roosts to feeding areas in the morning and back before sunset.

NOV  
16

The first fresh-cut evergreen trees arrive in a Christmas tree lot. A few eastern chipmunks are still gathering food above ground, but the majority have begun hibernating in their underground burrows.

NOV  
17

Today marks the last lawn mowing of the season.

NOV  
19

Newly built dome-shaped muskrat homes are quite numerous on edges of ponds and small lakes. **Pine Siskins** are among birdfeeder birds visiting northern and southern MN.



NOV  
20

We are treated to fiery sunrise colors. We're now deep into November, a month when skies are partly to mostly cloudy and spectacular crimson sunrises and sunsets enchant us.

NOV  
22

At Grand Marais, observers count 18 bird species today including: **Bohemian Waxwings**, **Common Redpolls**, **Pine Siskins** and **Herring Gulls**. It's the freeze-up date for Moosehead Lake at Moose Lake in Carlton County, and Upper Bottle Lake near Park Rapids.

NOV  
23

**Turkeys** have excellent hearing and vision; they, like other birds, see in color. Minnesota's **Wild Turkey** population has grown from just a few birds in the 1970s to probably more than 60,000 now. They are found in southern, western and central MN. At night they roost high up in large trees.

NOV  
24

Today reaches a record high of 60°F. Twin Cities area lakes lose any ice cover they've accumulated so far. A **Great Horned Owl** pair hoots duets in Victoria this evening; it's a sign of pair bonding and declaring territory.

NOV  
26



Southern MN farmers are working to finish up soybean and corn combining. **Dark-eyed Juncos**, **Black-capped Chickadees**, **Blue Jays** and **Northern Cardinals** are some of more than a dozen bird species coming to feeding stations. Birds are warm blooded so they can be active all winter.

NOV  
29

Freeze-up date for Lake of the Woods.

NOV  
30

As of today, lakes and most ponds in southern MN are ice-free. Since early November there have been thin ice sheets on ponds and lakes several times, but warm air temperatures and winds clear the ice away.

- ☐ Use a **clamp-on-the-deck-rail hanger** to have easy access to the feeder this winter.
- ☐ Reduce trips out to the feeders by using a **large-capacity Quick Clean Big Tube feeder**.
- ☐ Install a **Wood Duck house** on a pole at the pond edge before freeze-up.
- ☐ Tundra Swans fly overhead. Listen for their muffled musical whistles as they fly to their wintering range along the Atlantic Coast.
- ☐ Migrating waterfowl include: Widgeons, pintails, Canvasbacks, scaups, Buffleheads and Ruddy Ducks.
- ☐ White-throated and Fox Sparrows forage beneath backyard feeders. Sprinkle some **Finches' Choice** on the ground.
- ☐ Watch for huge flocks of migrating grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds in black “rivers of life” in the overhead skies.
- ☐ Large rafts of coots can be seen on some lakes, as well as Bald Eagles watching them from the tree tops.
- ☐ Look on the trunks of trees for Brown Creepers camouflaged against the gray-brown bark.
- ☐ Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpeckers frequent **suet feeders** throughout the year but Northern Flickers may be seen on feeders in the winter months.

