

September

PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

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

SEP

01

Baltimore Orioles come often to grape jelly feeders. Juvenile **American Goldfinches** relish sunflower chips at feeding stations. Migration is well underway for many birds such as **warblers**, **swallows**, and **Common Nighthawks**. Monarch butterflies also head south, one by one. Beekeepers continue extracting honey.

SEP

02



Fireweed blossoms in northern MN are nearly spent, signaling summer's ending. Starting at 7:45pm, and for the next 25 minutes, 1,142 migrating **Chimney Swifts** drop down into a school chimney in LeSueur to roost for the night.

SEP

03

A good share of the **Baltimore Orioles** leave for Central America by this date each year; they are among the night migrators. Along the North Shore of Lake Superior, some orange and red fall colors are seen on moose maples and some golden-yellow foliage on paper birches.

SEP

04

Lake water temperatures in MN and western WI lakes are mostly around 70°F and good for swimming, but that won't last long.

SEP

05

Mosquitoes still irritate. In southern MN, some soybean fields are all green, while others show golden-yellow foliage. Farmers begin chopping corn for silage. The sweet corn harvest continues. A long weekend of birding in northwestern MN results in 160 species observed, including 18 **warbler** species in Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge.



SEP

07

Apple growers harvest Sweetango, Honeycrisp and Minjon, plus Chestnut crab apples. Beautiful chestnut-brown Ohio buckeye seeds fall. **Shorebirds** and **warblers** migrate through. *Kettles* of migrating **Common Nighthawks** appear over Minneapolis, Northfield and Rochester.

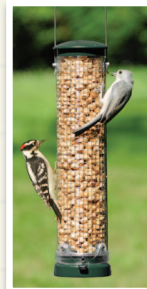
SEP

09



First migrating **American Coots** arrive on Lake Waconia for the fall season. Swarms of **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** come to 10 sugar water feeders at a station in rural Waconia. Each year by Sept. 18 hummingbird numbers drop way down.

- ☐ Orioles leave Minnesota the first week of September and winter in the neo-tropics. Replace oriole feeders with **mesh feeders for Peanut Pick-Outs**. Red-breasted Nuthatches arrive in the fall and will feast on the peanut pieces and **suet**.



- ☐ Migrating hummingbirds will continue to visit your feeders into October. Keep your **hummingbird feeders** up until you don't see any hummers for a week, or until the nectar freezes.
- ☐ If your yard is hosting a lot of grackles, switch to **Golden Safflower**. It's less appealing to grackles, starlings and gray squirrels.
- ☐ Keep **Nyjer™** feeders full for American Goldfinches. These finches are here all year, but appear to be disguised in their dull olive green winter coats. Try **Nyjer™ and Chips**; it's less mess for you and high oil content for birds.

- ☐ Keep a watch for the robins and waxwings feeding on berry trees, like mountain ash, viburnums, and dogwoods. Attract them with a **birdbath**.



- ☐ Juncos are coming! Scatter **Finches' Choice** or **Spectrum Mix** on the ground or in a ground feeder for these winter visitors. White-throated Sparrows, White-Crowned Sparrows and Mourning Doves are also ground-feeding birds that will enjoy this treat.

September PHENOLOGY & CHECKLIST

(Continued from front)

SEP
10

With all the rain lately, about 60 species of mushrooms thrive along forest trails in the U of MN Landscape Arboretum.

SEP
11

The first common milkweed pods are open and shed seeds on silvery parachutes. Touches and patches of red foliage appear on sugar maples, sumac shrubs and Virginia creeper vines.

SEP
12

Most **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** leave northern MN by this date and the southern part of the state by Sept. 25.

SEP
13

Counters tally 8,163 **Broad-winged Hawks** migrating over Hawk Ridge in Duluth.

SEP
14

A late straggler **Baltimore Oriole** leaves today.



SEP
16

Migrating **White-throated Sparrows** still arrive in southern MN.

SEP
19

Monarch butterflies, heading south, stop to sip nectar from zinnias, Mexican sunflower, New England aster, and other garden flowers. Wild cranberries are ripe in northern MN and WI bogs.

SEP
24

A big raft of about 500 **American Coots** drift on Lake Waconia.

SEP
26

The first of season **Dark-eyed Juncos** arrive. At the U of MN Landscape Arboretum, garden roses and dahlias bloom nicely and are very showy.

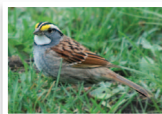
SEP
27



Flocks of **Blue Jays** and **Northern Flickers** migrate through. Virginia creeper vines are at the peak of fall color; those up in trees look like red garlands.

SEP
29

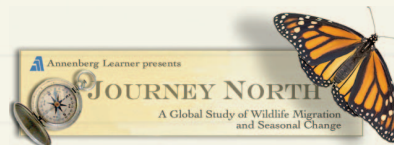
Migrating **White-throated Sparrows** come to feeding stations. They like to feed on millet and cracked corn scattered on the ground below feeders.



SEP
30

In gardens, ever-bearing strawberries and fall-bearing raspberries continue producing ripe fruit. Statewide, it was the tenth wettest September since 1895.

- ☐ Don't cut seed heads from your perennials. Birds will eat seed from them into the winter. Particularly valuable are purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan, sunflowers, and hollyhock.
- ☐ Indian meal moths are very active in September. To prevent unwanted guests, store your seed in metal bins on the deck, in the garage, or in the shed.
- ☐ To remove moths, install a **moth trap**.
- ☐ For easy access, store smaller quantities of seed in the freezer.
- ☐ Migration: September is the main month for the southward migration of warblers, vireos, grosbeaks and sparrows. Blue Jays migrate in flocks across Minnesota. Early September is the peak time for monarch migration. You can monitor migration of many species at learner.org/jnorth.



Hawk Ridge in Duluth hosts a major migration of Sharp Shinned, Broad Winged and other hawks.

- ☐ Our **Feed and Fill service** will take care of your birds while you are on vacation. Call our Wayzata store at 952-473-4283 for more details.

