



AUGUST PHENOLOGY

A reflective look at 2012



by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

Warm, light winds and sunshine generally accompany the month of August. It's a great time for outdoor fairs and farm stands. 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.

August 1 * Giant sunflowers teeter with massive blooms, and a noisy chorus of male cicadas buzz their mating calls.

August 2 * Today's high of 90°F at MSP International Airport today is the 26th day of 90°F or above in the Twin Cities this year—twice the occurrence in a normal year. European mountain ash fruit and common elderberry fruit are ripe. Both are important bird foods.

August 5 * Apple growers now pick William's Pride variety apples. Baltimore Orioles continue to come to feeding stations for grape jelly and sugar water.

August 8 * Common ragweed sheds pollen. Blooming Canada goldenrods, wild cucumber and garden roses bloom.

AUGUST

11

Warblers, shorebirds and flycatchers are a few of the migrants that pass through the area as they prepare to head south. Purple Martins also stage for migration.



August 13 * Common Nighthawk migration begins. A loose flock appears over Golden Valley about 7:45 pm; the birds circle, dive and feed on insects in the air.

August 15 * In Minnetonka, a nest of snapping turtle eggs hatch.

AUGUST

16

Two more signs of autumn today: the first Red-breasted Nuthatches arrive at two Golden Valley feeding stations and poison ivy foliage displays its yellow and red fall colors.



AUGUST

17

A feeding station in rural Waconia attracts 100-plus Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. The flock of tiny birds drains ten sugar water feeders, twice in one day! Many Twin Cities and southern Minnesota feeding stations observe increasing numbers of hummingbirds.



August 18 * Chimney Swifts enter their chimney roosts between 8:09 and 8:35 pm.

August 21 * Sixteen species of migrating warblers flit about in Carver County.

August 24 * Big colonies of Canada goldenrod are in full bloom. Mature sugar maples display patches of burnt-orange fall color.

August 25 * Lake water temperatures are mostly in the mid-70s°F and perfect for late summer swimming. A gathering of 60 Common Loons visit the east end of West Battle Lake in Otter Tail County.

August 26 * Beacon, Paula Red and Wealthy apples are ready to pick. This is a good honey year and many beekeepers are extracting honey.

August 28 * Wild grapes are at the peak of ripeness; Northern Cardinals and Gray Catbirds are among many bird species that relish this fruit.

August 31 * Some Baltimore Orioles continue to visit feeding stations. Any night now, a majority of these birds will leave for their wintering territories in Central America.