



# NOVEMBER PHENOLOGY

*A reflective look at 2012*

by Jim Gilbert, Naturalist

*November enters as autumn and exits as winter.* Fall colors linger, dried grasses and herbs stand tall, waterfowl migrate and ice develops. It's a month of clouds, leading to spectacular sunrises and sunsets. 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 2013 with last year.

**November 1** \* Thousands of American Coots cluster on Lake Waconia and on lakes throughout southern Minnesota.

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**Pine Siskins, American Goldfinches (shown) and Fox Sparrows visit feeding stations.**



**November 4** \* A Snowy Owl makes an appearance in Maple Grove.

**November 6** \* Observers report the first flocks of migrating Tundra Swans over the Twin Cities today. The swans arrive from their summer range mainly north of the Arctic Circle, and pause en masse in places such as the Weaver Bottoms marshes and in backwaters of the Mississippi River just south of Brownsville, then leave for their winter headquarters along the Atlantic coast.

**November 7** \* A pair of Great Horned Owls hoot a duet in Northfield.

**November 9** \* Today through the 12th is typically the peak of white-tailed deer rutting season, but weather and other variables can affect these dates a bit. Both White-winged and Red Crossbills feed locally on spruce cones.

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**The last river-like strings of blackbirds pass above the Twin Cities.**

**November 11** \* American Crows move in large groups to their roosts at sunset. About 2,000 Tundra Swans now grace Weaver Bottoms. The Brownsville area hosts close to 1,500 Tundra Swans, plus American Wigeons, Hooded Mergansers and other waterfowl.

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**The Twin Cities has its first snowfall today; a tenth to a half inch falls, resulting in 50 automobile accidents.**



**November 17** \* Both Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, plus Common Redpolls investigate Lutsen area feeders.

**November 19** \* Flying squirrels dine at feeding stations in the evening. Today is the average date for lasting snow cover to appear in the greater Twin Cities area.

**November 20** \* It's unseasonably warm today, with a high of 54°F. Gossamers—single strands of spider silk—stretch from tree and shrub branches, glistening silver-white in the sunshine.

**November 22** \* On this warm Thanksgiving Day, people from northern to southern Minnesota are out golfing, fishing, sailing and biking.

**November 26** \* Freeze-up dates arrive for Lake of the Woods, Upper Red Lake in Beltrami County, and Lac Qui Parle Lake near Watson.

**November 29** \* American Robins and Cedar Waxwings feed on ripe crabapple fruit. Black-capped Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches, American Goldfinches and Pine Siskins busily feast at feeding stations. A few southern Minnesota farmers work in their fields.

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**Brown Creepers spiral up tree trunks in search of spiders and other insects. About 83% of Minnesota is in severe drought.**

