

Nature Notes and Phenology Archive 2013

12/18/13: Approx. 30 Goldfinches just showed up at the feeder area today!

12/7/13: -15 degrees F this morning, without windchill- coldest morning yet!

12/4/13: Tracked the Discovery Trail ski trails for the first time this year! (Last year conditions didn't allow this to happen until January 26th!)

12/3/13: With several inches of snow on the ground, we were able to roll the ski trails- we didn't even have snow this time last year!

12/1/13: There was a big brown bat in my curtains at my house in Presque Isle- Big browns are the only species that would be out this time of year, able to withstand very cold temperatures as they hibernate in attics and more open places.

11/27/13: While deer hunting, a bear was spotted around the Tomahawk area.

11/24/13: Our coldest temps yet- below zero, some locations at -23 with windchill!

11/22/13: With about an inch of snow on the ground, we've had our first skier here at the Center- sometimes that is all you need!

11/20/13: Reports of completely white ermine and snowshoe hare, little to no snow on the ground.

11/19/13: Statehouse Lake has a complete ice top today.

11/12/13: Our resident Bobcat was seen again (fourth sighting) sitting under the bird feeders staring at the squirrels!

11/11/13: Loon seen on Ike Walton Lake in Lac du Flambeau.

11/9/13: Statehouse Lake mostly open after a super windy night!

11/8/13: Statehouse Lake about 85% frozen over (temps in the low 20's)

10/22/13: Area received about 4-6 inches of snow!

10/20/13: about 1 inch of snow fall in the area, still on the ground 10/21/13!

10/17/13: 20 loons staging on Trout Lake, swainsons thrush seen and several swans on the Manitowish River

10/15/13: Ruby throated hummingbird seen in Lac du Flambeau (about 1 month later than last year!)

10/5/13: Dark eyed Juncos passing through

10/1/13: Asian beetle explosion! (warmer temps, in the upper 60's)

9/20/13: Golden crowned kinglets, palm warblers on the trails

9/19/13: 70 snapping turtles hatch at Rainbow Lake in Winchester

9/17/13: First year yellow-rumped warbler flying around the Nature Nook

9/9/13: Maple seeds (samaras) dropping like crazy!

9/8/13: Snapping turtles hatched at the Center (about 25)

9/6/13: Hummingbirds begin migration

8/29/13: Blackberries beginning to ripen. YUM!

8/28/13: Aster flowers in bloom

8/26/13: Monarch butterfly emerged: tagged and on its way to Mexico!

6/3/13: Wood land flowers in bloom

-Gaywings

-Barren Strawberry

-Wood anemone

-Canada Mayflower

Bog Flowers in Bloom

-Leather Leaf

-Bog laurel

Sweet fern

6/2/13: Dragonflies out

5/31/13: Monarch Butterflies

5/22/13: New Born Albino Fawn (near Crab Lake Road)

5/21/13: wood anemone, spring beauty, trillium all in bloom

5/18/13: Leopard frogs calling

5/17/13: Chestnut-sided warblers out, Phoebe building nest, wild leeks, barren strawberry, trout lily in bloom

5/16/13: toads trilling, bats active, painted turtles out

5/15/13: Hummingbirds returned, tree frogs calling

5/11/13: 89 species of birds heard/seen at Bird Fest this weekend! Check our website for more details.

5/7/13: Nashville warblers heard for the first time today, also chipping sparrows, pine warblers and winter wrens are now calling. Temps in the 70's now, lake almost completely open...

5/5/13: LAKE OPEN!

5/4/13: Wood frogs calling and lakes still frozen. Also had 3 skiers out on the trails this morning!

4/30/13: The lake remains completely frozen, the edges are opening up a bit, but it is getting darker!

4/28/13: While out for a walk down my road, I came across a large beaver cutting down small white birch. He seemed uninterested in myself and my dog, so we watched him walk around and eventually head over the snowbank and back to the snowy wetland. Mourning cloak butterflies are also out, along with reports of spring peepers! Spring has finally sprung!

4/27/13: Loons, hermit thrush, fox sparrows, song sparrows, ruby-crowned kinglets, phoebes, grackle, red wing blackbirds, brown headed cowbirds, woodcock (peenting), sandhill cranes, white throated sparrows, purple finch, brown creepers, yellow bellied sapsuckers, merlins, yellow rumped warblers, cardinals have all been heard the past few days with this warmer weather (upper 60's)

4/27/13: About 30 Dark-eyed juncos out at the feeders and all over the trees singing away- it finally sounds like spring out there!

4/26/13: Happy Arbor Day! Spring is on the way, temps in the upper 60's and in the 70's next week! Don't let that fool you, it still looks very much like winter out there...snow in the woods still up to two feet, snow banks up to four feet and Ryan just checked the ice depth on the lake- 22 inches!

4/16/13: Black bears, woodcock, Yellow-rumped warbler, Common goldeneye have all been spotted or heard this week. The resident merlin pair are back and calling. We still have several feet of snow in the woods and the ice is 30 in thick on some lakes!

4/10/13: Our page was down for a few days, and even though we still have lots of snow out there (possible 8 more inches tonight!!) over the past several days there have been sightings that tell us spring is really on the way: grackles, killdeer, skunks, Red-wing blackbirds, hooded mergansers, chipmunks and eastern kingbirds are among those critters spotted this past week. Keep 'em coming spring!

4/1/13: Unbelievable warm temps today, the snow is completely gone! APRIL FOOLS. It snowed a bit more last night, there are still huge snowbanks in the parking lot, and hopefully warmer temps coming this weekend. Where is spring? Reports of geese flying overhead (probably very confused with the lack of open water) and salamander movement in Anne's basement in Bruce Crossing. Still a couple feet of ice on the lake.

3/27/13: We had another inch or two of snow yesterday, incredible how this time last year we had no snow, the lakes were open, and had 3 frog species calling! There are still some natural things that continue on, even with all the snow- eagles have been on their eggs for over a week and we continue to hear reports of the Northern Saw-whet owl out and about. Keep your ears and eyes open, with temps predicted to be in the 40's this weekend, things may move towards spring fast!

3/23/13: While down in Stevens Point for a training, Katie and I watched two gray squirrels hanging and licking branches of a maple tree...confused at first we soon came to the conclusion they were licking sap that was dripping out- sure enough, later that morning a flying squirrel came down and started licking away at the branches! This is a nocturnal animal, so imagine our surprise to see it gliding down in the middle of the day! What a neat sight!

3/20/13: Happy spring Equinox! It was a balmy 5 degrees this morning to ring in the spring season. There have been several reports of Northern saw-whet owls in the area- by bird feeders and in trees near homes- keep your eyes out for them, look carefully, they are the smallest owl in the state of WI weighing 2-4 oz, a wing length of 5 1/4" - 5 3/4", and a total length of 7"-8 1/2"!

3/19/13: A few more inches of light snow fell last night (better than the first predicted 16"). Still plenty of skiing to be done this mid march- did I mention that tomorrow is the first day of spring?

3/17/13: A year ago this week we had temperatures in the 70's and had three frog species calling. This year we have several feet of snow on the ground and mid-20's temps! (obviously no frogs calling)

3/12/13: Several flocks of Common redpolls reported in the area.

3/7/13: Early this morning Katie heard a Great Horned Owl, a mourning dove and pine siskins in her backyard near Harshaw.

3/2/13: Snowshoe hare begin mating this time of year.

2/25/13: Pine siskins!! Several are at the feeder this morning- they tend to be pretty nomadic during the winter months, they are brown and very streaky birds with subtle yellow edgings on wings and tails. I noticed the sound before I saw the bird- an ascending trill lasting about 3 seconds.

2/20/13: Great horned owls begin nesting this time of year.

2/17/13: Boreal Owl spotted hunting in a nearby yard. Very cool and unusual for this area!

2/14/13: Groups of Red and White wing Cross bills have been reported in the area.

2/12/13: 7 inches of beautiful snow fell yesterday, finally it is starting to look like winter out there! Temps in the mid-upper 20's is keeping the snow on the branches and it looks beautiful

2/7/13: Coyotes begin mating this time of year.

2/2/13: Male chickadees singing their song, the easily identified "Cheese-bur-ger" call.

1/31/13: Great horned owls begin their courtship activities this time of year.

1/29/13: Temps in the high 30's, freezing rain last night...our new snow (6-8" received late last week) is melting again. Colder upcoming temps should help, however everything is very icy!

1/28/13: Over 100 Common Redpolls at a feeder near Land O Lakes.

1/26/13: Took a snowshoe along the Manitowish River today, right off the parking lot on Tower Road there was a group of about 13 swans and 2 otter playing on the ice (swans were NOT playing with the otter). Along the trail we saw several more, and had a couple groups fly over honking. Very cool!

1/24/13: This week the red fox, wolf and beaver begin mating. Watch for lots of extra territory marking with canine raised leg urination.

1/22/13: A beautiful sunny day! Morning temps were at a balmy -22 F...coldest yet this year, all local schools were called off for today. At 4 pm we have reached our high for the day- 0 F!

1/21/13: We received about 3-4 inches of snow in the past few days, which helps, but still not nearly where we should be. Winter has arrived today with a temperature this morning of -16 F and a predicted high of -9. Cold temps are supposed to continue throughout the week, with some chance of snow. Bundle up!

1/19/13: With very little snow, and temps in the mid-upper 30's today the snow fleas were out! They appear as though someone sprinkled pepper on the snow, but if you look close they are really little spring-tail insects. Learn more about them at the Wisconsin DNR's EEK website (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/EEK/critter/insect/snowflea.htm>). Normally we don't see these critters surface until early spring when the temps are in the 40's and the snow is melting for good.

1/14/13: We recieved a nice dusting of snow last night, which makes today a great time to go out looking for animal tracks. I did a quick sweep around campus and found sign of the following: squirrels, deer (the usual suspects), cottontail rabbit, shrew, mouse, and ermine. Treks deeper into the woods may reveal even more animals out and about.

1/10/13: High of 36 degrees F today...and forecasting rain tonight! Where is winter?!

1/8/13: Hoary Redpoll (we usually only see Common Redpole) was spotted and confirmed in MW this weekend- they are lighter in color and lack the barring on the underside- it also appeared to be quite aggressive towards the group of Common Redpoles it was sharing a lunch with.

1/4/13: Black bear cubs are being born in dens in early January. They weigh less than a pound and are born blind, deaf and hairless.

1/3/13: Still no significant snowfall, a few small flakes here and there, but we still only have a few inches on the ground.