



FRESHWATER

SALT SMART THIS WINTER

Salt buildup in lakes, streams and groundwater is a growing problem in Minnesota. It is toxic to freshwater organisms, can damage infrastructure and is permanent. It only takes one teaspoon to permanently pollute five gallons of water. You can help this winter by following these steps:

- 💧 **Shovel:** Clear walkways before snow turns to ice.
- 💧 **Scatter:** Use salt only where critical. There should be 3-4 inches between salt granules.
- 💧 **Switch:** Salt doesn't melt ice below 15 degrees. Use sand or other grit for traction when it's too cold.
- 💧 **Sweep:** Clean up leftover salt to save and reuse as needed.

NOVEMBER PHENOLOGY

Jim Gilbert's Nature Notes

First week of November

Watch for steam fog rising from ponds, lakes and rivers on cold mornings. The crunching and aroma of fallen leaves makes walking on woodland trails special this time of year.

Look for tundra swans overhead and listen for their muffled musical whistles – a wonderful sign of fall. They are coming from their summer range, which is mainly north of the Arctic Circle, and heading to their wintering range along the Atlantic coast. A good area to see hundreds or more of these swans is the Mississippi River and its backwaters near Brownsville.

Look for flocks of snow buntings, winter visitors from the far north. Dark-eyed juncos and white-throated sparrows, also visitors from the north, come to our feeding stations for seeds scattered on the ground.

November 1, 2024: A low of 25 degrees ended the growing season for many garden plants.

Second week of November

A few common dandelions still bloom but on short stems. Witch-hazel shrubs continue blooming. Winterberry fruit is bright red and bittersweet fruit is glowing orange.

Gossamers – single strands of spider silk – hang from tree and shrub branches, glistening silver-white in the sunshine.

Short-tailed weasels have turned from brown to white except for the tips of their tails, which remain black. They are now called ermines and are ready for snow cover.

Canada geese and sandhill cranes forage in harvested soybean and corn stubble fields.

November 14, 2024: Norway maples displayed golden-yellow leaves. With a bumper crop of apples, growers were still picking. Apples can withstand temperatures in the mid-20s for short periods of time.

Third week of November

Native red cedar trees, also called junipers, have turned reddish-brown for the winter. Ginkgo trees have sunny-yellow leaves.

Rutabagas and parsnips, sweetened by frosts, can be dug for good eating or stored for winter.

Dark-eyed juncos are numerous at feeding stations, where they like cracked corn and millet seeds scattered on the ground. Northern cardinals arrive at feeders 25 minutes before sunrise, and come back in the evening to stay until darkness arrives.

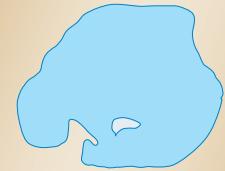
Fourth week of November

November's clouds and low angle sunshine produce some of the most colorful sunrises and sunsets of the year. Farmers labor to finish corn combining and other field work.

By the end of the month, raccoons enter their sleeping dens and new ice appears at least on some ponds and lakes. Immersion heaters, available commercially, keep birdbaths ice-free. Birds need water year-round, and so do other wildlife such as deer, squirrels and foxes.

November 24, 2024: Last day for apple picking at Havlicek Orchard near New Prague. Red Haralson, Fireside and SweeTango were still good for picking.

LOOK FOR...



Freeze-up for Lake Waconia (Carver Co.)

2024	Dec. 3
2023	1/4/24
2022	Dec. 4
2021	Dec. 7
2020	Dec. 24
2019	Dec. 2
2018	Nov. 28
2017	Dec. 7
2016	Dec. 9
2015	Dec. 19



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