

# Phenology

## Keeping track of the seasons through events in nature

Jim Gilbert, Jim Gilbert's Nature Notebook (1983):

- “Phenology, the study of the chronology of natural events....”
- This year in Carver County we observed the first active chipmunk of the season on February 23, the first American robins and male red-winged blackbirds returned March 14, and grasses were turning green in ditches and on south-facing slopes April 13. By May 24 a farmer had cut the first crop of alfalfa hay, and the first garden raspberries were ripe on June 23. These happenings are examples of phenological observations.
- “All living things, the players in our theater of seasons, react to temperature, moisture and other weather elements of the script differently each year, making an individual year different from the preceding one in its own unique play or production.”
- “The theme of my learning has been that as knowledge conquers certain fears, so does it lead us to an appreciation of beauty. The selfish destroy beauty around them, the lazy become overwhelmed by detail, but the truly educated usually find happiness in beauty and detail.”

Richard Gray, Sr., Jim Gilbert's Nature Notebook (1983)

- “This world of ours is made of whole cloth – and each of us is a mere thread in it. Not only are *we* a mere thread, so it is with all natural things. The beat of a dragonfly's wing, the hop of a grasshopper, the opening of a precious bloom of some wildflower – all and each its own somehow or another affect this world of ours. They are as much a part of the whole as we are.”
- “Each thing, however, plays its own part in relation to everything else, and does it in its own time and at its own place. The periodic comings and goings of all of these things make up a fascinating science called phenology...”

Larry Weber, Backyard Almanac (1995)

- “Many people believe that to look at nature they must travel to distant wild areas. No doubt those places provide wonders for the wanderer, but our backyards also offer natural adventures.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson speaking of Henry D. Thoreau:

- “He thought that if waked up from a trance, in this swamp, he could tell by the plants what time of the year it was within two days”

John Burroughs:

- “If you want an adventure in nature, take the same walk that you took yesterday, and do so again tomorrow.”

A Good Phenology entry has:

- When
- What
- Where
- Why
- It may also include questions, drawings, objects.