

**From the North Shore of Little Rock Lake in pristine Benton Co.
June 2012 WEATHER & PHENOLOGY IN REVIEW**

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Another strange weather month. The first ten days drier than a popcorn f - - - t. Then the next eleven days nearly five inches of rain followed by almost no rain at all. The deluge of rain here at Little Rock Lake although not a big deal here, a lot more rain fell in the Mississippi River watershed further north. This in turn caused a significant raise in the river here. And, of course, caused Little Rock Lake to rise about a foot. Some docks experienced water above the decking but that was about it.

The river was another story. Many docks were several feet under water and in some cases were swept away when debris just "chugging" along with the fast current found a dock or two just a minor obstacle and both went their merry way down the river. With no rain to speak of for the last nine days here or the Mississippi River watershed further north, the water is receding. Yes, it is now dry and I'm using the garden hose to keep gardens and the lawn happy.

Back to the river. When the folks who predict flooding or high water put out the word that flood conditions might exist due to the large amount of rain north of St. Cloud, LRL residents took note. It is my understanding that the river level is measured below the dam at St. Cloud and the measurement they use does not correlate with the measurement here. The warning was enough to get some of the residents to inquire about sandbags. Note the information in the LITTLE ROCK LAKE CONCERNS portion.

WEATHER LAST JUNE:

Cooler and drier. The average low and high were about three degrees cooler. I was surprised to note that there were only six days with temperatures of 80/90 degrees (F) compared to twelve this year. Yes, it was a cool month. Although there was measurable precipitation on twelve days, two days, the 15th & 16th, provided the bulk of the rain with 1.41" from a storm. It was a mundane weather month.

WEATHER:

Warm and wet. Wet meaning the middle of the month. The low reading was a chilly 39.7 degrees on the 1st making me wonder if this was going to be a cold June. Not to be. By the 5th the low readings were in the 50's and the highs were 70's and 80's with the high on the 28th of 88.9 degrees. Because my readings are on the north end of the lake, it is a little cooler here. Rice saw several days in the 90's as I'm sure St. Cloud did. It was interesting to learn from the SCSU weather web site authored by St. Cloud Professor Bob Weisman, that June was the ninth consecutive month posting average temperatures of more than 3 degrees above normal.

By the 10th I feared that this was going to be another really dry month. Then on the 11th, it started raining and never quit. Not just sprinkles, one down pour after another. By the time it was over more than 2.11 inches filled the rain gage. It was a welcome rain. Three days later more than an inch made the grass even greener. Now at the end of the month we need rain.

MN WEATHER RECORDS IN JUNE:

Locally, we missed the low record (32 degrees (F)) set in 1993 by 7 degrees with a 39 degrees (F) reading while our friends in greater MN saw the mercury dip to 15 degrees. On the warm side, in 1907 the poor folks locally sweltered with a temperature of 107 degrees (F) while the folks in Canby recorded 110 degrees (F).

The most rain fell in 1920 when St. Cloud recorded 10.56" of rain. The latest recorded SNOW fell in Mizpah (I don't even know where that is) on the 4th when 1.5" was measured. On the 16th the most tornados in one day occurred with 27 in 1992 and the most tornados in a month 38 (statewide) in 2001. The most damage from an F-5 tornado occurred in Tracy-Chandler in 1968 and again in 1992. June has not been a good weather month for a lot of Minnesota citizens.

PHENOLOGY:

I'm going to put everything together. Lots of flower things so just the highlights. Hollyhocks in bloom on the 3rd and on the 4th Clematis, roses and a White Throated Sparrow making an appearance. The 4th also ushered in Blue Algae in the lake. Boy, did it smell. Fortunately, it was there for only a couple of days. On the 7th, and off and on for the entire month, "Reggie" the raccoon made its appearance at the bird feeder. It was after the grape jelly we leave out for the orioles. After the first appearance we started taking the jelly indoors. That seemed to keep Reggie away for the most part. On the 19th a Pearl Crescent butterfly ventured in the garden and on the 26th a pair of House Wrens took up residence in one of the many houses I have on the west side of the house. I'll really miss their loud "chatter" every morning and evening come fall. In good numbers are the Purple Martins, Northern Orioles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and no less than six squirrels.

Yellow Bird, a lost or used to be pet of someone, finally is MIA. Missing for most of the month. It was a fun bird to watch. Not afraid of any other bird. Yellow bird may not have realized the hazards of living in the wild and became a statistic of a hawk.

RESIDENT OBSERVATIONS:

My neighbor and friend, Jerry Perske, observed that a Northern Flicker had made its nest in one of his wood duck houses. I've observed a flicker here several times looking for food in the garden. They really love ants and there is no shortage of them here.

In order here: **Happy Birthday to Jerry's mom, Ms. Irene Perske, who is turning 93 this June.** She's quite a lady.

LITTLE ROCK LAKE ITEMS:

The green algae that came and went on the 4th gave concern that this would be a long-lasting issue. So far, not the case. The water temperature started at 66 degrees (F) and ended at 76 degrees (F). The really vocal concerns about high water on the lake proved to be unfounded.

This spring, the DNR issued me a device for measuring the lake water level. Ms. Sandy Fecht coordinates the program state wide. It is an interesting gage, one that measures water to the hundredth of an inch in calm weather. The numbers that you read come from that gage. Normal water level is about 11.40 ft. On the 27th the lake crested at 12.21 feet. I realize that this measurement may not mean much. Keep these figures in mind when lake water levels become a concern. I would guess that at 13.5 feet water would be coming into some yards of lake home folks. When you hear of flooding measurements, they are recorded quite some distance from Little Rock Lake and how these measurements are equated to feet above sea-level I'm not sure. Anyway, when I pull the gage in the fall, I think I'll be able to put the gage in the water at almost the same level as it was this year next spring.

What will July bring?