From the North Shore of Little Rock Lake in Benton Co. MN
JANUARY 2013 WEATHER & PHENOLOGY IN REVIEW

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WEATHER:

With all the "hype" from the media and complaining from friends about the cold weather my records indicate that yes, it was significantly colder than last year. Last year was sort of an exception. Other year starters were just as cold or colder. It's Minnesota. It's winter. Let's drive on with the mission, put on more clothes! Enjoy our winter. After all, it helps define us. I will confess though, wind chills reaching nearly -40 degrees (F) made even hardy Minnesotans grit their teeth.

Temperature wise, fifteen days the lows were below zero. The coldest was a -21 degree (F) day on the 22nd. Our average low temperature was 1.9 degree (F) compared to 7.65 degrees (F) last year. On the warm side of things our warm day was 42.3 degrees (F) on the 7th. This year I recorded only two days with temperatures in the 40s while last the digital thermometer displayed readings in the 40's and 50's on six occasions. Yes, part of the winter that was not a winter.

On to precipitation, or lack thereof. Total precipitation for the month was only .58". More than last January by only .04". It was an unusual month in this part of the weather picture. Believe it or not, I recorded rain or snow on no less than sixteen days. Breaking down the information is in order. Most of the precipitation came in the form of RAIN. I recorded only 2 inches of snow. Only trace amounts of snow on ten days, the reason for showing precipitation on so many days. The most precipitation came in the form of rain on the 10th when I measured .14 inches. The most snow fell on the 28th when I shoveled 1.1 inches of the white stuff off the driveway. Seasons snow total stands at 20 inches.

LOCAL WEATHER RECORDS IN JANUARY:

In 1885 and again in 1888 the poor settlers huddled in their houses when the temperature dropped to -50 degrees (F). In 1981 it was a no jacket day on the 24th when the mercury made it to 56 degrees (F). In 1975 St. Cloud received no less

than 29.9 inches of snow. I'm sure we, unfortunately, contributed to this total, of the most fatalities from a single winter storm (12th – 13th) in 1888 totaling up to 200 good Minnesotans. No weather advisories back then.

PHENOLOGY:

Not a lot to report here. Generally, the bird population seems to be down. On the 13th I observed ten species of birds, two bunnies and three squirrels. Most notable, a very large Pileated Woodpecker. I believe I have a pair in the area. During the very cold weather, the heated bird bath is a popular place. No wild turkeys so far this year.

NATURE NOTE:

Snowshoe hares are members of the rabbit and hare family. Young hares are born having a fur coat and open eyes, and they are able to run within hours of birth. *Minnesota's Outdoor Wonders by Jim Gilbert pp19.*