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

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WEATHER: A little cooler than average by a couple of degrees with an average low and high of 36.82 and 52.86 degrees (F) respectively. The low and high recorded temperatures were 26.9 degrees (F) on the 22nd and 75.2 degrees (F) on the 1st of the month. Yes, ICE covered the bird bath on several occasions.

A lot more moisture! Nearly four more inches than last October's .87 inch of rain and snow when I recorded 4.76 inches of rain and snow. I recorded precipitation on nineteen days. The most rain fell on the 15th when 1.19 inch of rain filled the rain gauge. The first SNOW of the season fell on the 21st when I measured .8 inch of the white stuff. It all melted in a couple of hours. The ground was just too warm. So far this year we have received 31.6 inches of precipitation compared to 27.96 inches last year. ALL the green things really appreciated the gift that nature provided.

LOCAL WEATHER RECORDS IN OCTOBER: A month of contrast in temperatures. From a low of 2 degrees (F) in 1896 to a high of 90 degrees (F) in 1953 demonstrated that October can be a month of true transition. In 2005 we broke the old record with 8.22 inches of rain. More than seven inches fell on the 4th putting some docks under water. Snow totaled 6 inches back in 1995 with nearly 5 inches on the 23rd forcing snow removal equipment out of retirement.

PHENOLOGY: The copious water that blessed the plants and trees sure eased the drought conditions. Even with the cold mornings, the monkshood still displays its bright blue flowers. The last cold morning finished the monarda with its bright red flowers. The garden is now mostly brown. The different grasses that Jan and I planted display a distinct contrast of different shades of brown and almost bronze with their white tassels that glimmer in the sunlight. Autumn tree color is not as brilliant, especially with maple trees as I remember last year. Oaks on

the other hand are just now coming into their full color. Leaves have left all the ash trees and depending on the specific maple tree, only a few left to a tree that is still green and full of leaves.

Only two animals were observed. Jeb Willis observed a garden snake crossing North Freedom Rd. and I observed an opossum on our deck.

Winter birds are only now starting to arrive. Juncos are here in some numbers. Our four species of woodpeckers are attacking the suet that I now have out for them along with a good supply of blue jays. On the 20th the first ice covered the birdbath and ice covered it on several other occasions. It won't be long before I get the birdbath heater out and installed.

LITTLE ROCK LAKE: Water temperature at the beginning of the month was 60 degrees (F) and was a chilly 39 degrees (F) on the 31st. With the drop in water temperature the algae has all but vanished. Clear water should greet the ice anglers when they can get on the ice to fish. Only a few docks remain in the water.