

# Minnesota Signs of Spring

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FLOWER CO.

Spring may seem slow to come or far away but have no doubt the Northern Hemisphere is tilting towards the sun. Take a nature walk or a slow Sunday drive. Tune into nature and check off the Minnesota Signs of Spring as they come your way!

## SPRING IS ON THE HORIZON

### BALD EAGLES

Look for giant nest and a watchful parent near by. Eagles are returning from wintering areas and pairing up to nest. Minnesota is one of the best spots to view eagles.

### CROWS

Listen for more crow calls when outside and watch for more crow as they begin building nest.

### CHICKADEES

Listen for these song birds. Chickadees reside here year round but they start their spring mating and territory calls in Feb!

### SNOW MELTING

Smell the melting snow. Snow traps scents and releases them when melting. Rising humidity causes smells like decaying grass under snow to linger

### GROUSE

Listen for a sound similar to a lawnmower starting near sunrise. Ruffed grouse beat their wings on logs to declare territory and attract a mate.

### MAPLE SAP

Watch for bags and pails on trees. As the wood warms above freezing, pressure rises making sugar stores go from the roots to the leaf buds and back down again. The pressure also pushes sap out of 'taps' put in trees to collect for Maple Syrup

### THE SUN

Feel the power of the sun. As the Northern Hemisphere tilts towards the sun, it feels warmer on the skin.

## IT'S COMING

### CHIPMUNKS

Watch for the first chipmunk on a 40 day. They don't hibernate but do hide away until Spring.

### REDWINGED BLACK BIRDS

Listen for this distinct "okalee-okalee" call. The black males with red wings come back first to claim their cattail marshes.

### SKUNKS

Smell the distinct skunk sent. Skunks wake from hibernation mate in March when temps go above freezing.

### HOUSE FLIES

Listen for the buzz of the first house fly. Eggs laid in the Fall hatch and mature over winter and start to rouse as temperatures rise.

### PUSSY WILLOW

Watch for fuzzy tips on trees in moist ground. Pussy Willows are the first willow to break bud and flower. They are important as they are the first food source for native pollinators!

### LAKES

Watch for open water on the lakes! Snow insulates the ice from the sun. As snow melts sun shines through the ice making a greenhouse effect warming the water beneath.

### SANDHILL CRANES

Watch and listen for Minnesota's largest bird species to return to open meadows and farmlands. Bonus points if you see them do their distinctive mating "dance."

### GEESE & WATERFOWL

Listen for the first honk and watch for the "V" in the sky. Waterfowl are some of the first birds to head back on their Northern Migration

### WOODLAND FLOWERS

Peek in the woods and leaf litter for native trout lilies, jack in the pulpit, rue anemone, wild ginger, and bloodroots. Theirs first blooms awaken before the leaves and grass to feed the first pollinators.

### QUAKING ASPEN

Look for long "catkin" flowers appearing on these light barked trees that come even before their leaves

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## SPRING IS IN FULL SWING

### LOONS

Keep your ears open for the first loon call. These state birds migrate back to the forested lakes from the United States coasts every year over their 30 year lifespan.



### BEEES

Listen for the buzz! Minnesota natives like the mason bee waken first to pollinate the very first trees and flowers after a few 50 degree days. Mason bees only live long enough to lay eggs in the spring for next years population so protecting them is extra important!



### LILACS

Smell the distinct sent of the beloved lilac. Hot summers and cold winters make Minnesota a perfect host for this shrub that southern states don't get to witness.



### TURTLES

Watch for turtles that warm themselves on pond logs when the temperature warms to 60!

### ORIOLES

Watch for flashes of orange and listen for their distinctive call. May first is officially Oriole Day in Minnesota.

### DANDELION

Look for the first pop of yellow facing south where the soil has warmed

### FROGS

Listen for the frog clucks as they come to thawing ponds to attract a mate and breed.

### CRABAPPLES

Watch for these short lived bright white, pink, and wine colored blooms. Minnesota has one native cultivar of these spring symbols.



### ROBINS

Listen and watch for these red bellies who appear first in large groups and then separate off into pairs to lay bright blue eggs.



### HUMMINGBIRDS

Listen for the buzz of the this busy little sign of Spring. It's on its way back from Central America



### MONARCHS

Look for one of the very last migrants to make it back North from Mexico to solidify spring.



### TULIPS

Watch for bright pops of my favorite sign of Spring. This is another one that the farthest southern states can't enjoy as they need a cold frozen period before they bloom and shine! 14,000 tulips will make an appearance in the True Blue Flower fields this Spring!



WATCH FOR OUR SPRING HAPPENINGS



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*with  
love,  
Bayleigh &  
The Crew*