

## 2004 LLCC Phenology:

12.30.04

Steady rain forms nearly half an inch of ice at Long Lake. Roads are treacherous across the state, and authorities recommend no travel. Meanwhile, in the Twin Cities its 50 degrees F, warmest temps on that day since 1904.

Six owls along Hwy 169 from Aitkin to Grand Rapids.

12.28.04

Tracks in the woods near the North Bog: fox, fisher, squirrel, grouse.

Birds observed in the same location: raven, blue jay, grouse, and, yes, a robin!

12.27.04

Squirrels have been scurrying around Aitkin city park, leaving holes through the snow where acorns used to be buried.

12.24.04

Cold, cold morning again: Grand Rapids hits 27 below zero. Don't forget to unplug your car before you drive away!

12.23.04

Todd sees not one, not two. . . but three great gray owls near Round Lake, west of Palisade. He also sees two shrikes and a hawk owl.

It's about time for winter. Twelve below zero.

12.17.04

A barred owl is roosting in a tree along Hwy 210.

12.15.04

2:15 p.m. Bald eagle overhead.

12.13.04

8 a.m. 6 degrees F, one of the first genuinely cold mornings of the season.

But the sun appears for most of the day, which makes it all worth it! It has been hidden in clouds for weeks!

Rough-legged hawk cruises over the flats in Aitkin.

Cambridge students are the first to try cross country skiing in the Long Lake woods for the 04-05 school year. Snow cover is thin but adequate.

9 p.m. Meteor shower, 1 to 2 per minutes.

12.12.04

Four dozen or so cedar waxwings in Palisade clean out Carlson's crab apple trees.

Todd's weekend report includes several great grays, a barred, and a hawk owl.

Howling wind all over the state and the upper Midwest: large branches are downed and snow forms drifts here in Aitkin County; electricity is knocked out in the Twin Cities and parts of Iowa.

Intern spies a hawk flying "absolutely nowhere" against the wind, trying to cross over highway 210.

12.10.04

Juncos, chickadees, blue jays, and starlings in town.

12.09.04

6:30 p.m. Britt observes a barred owl drop out of the sky and plunge on a mouse, right in the IC residence's back yard.

12.08.04

8:30 a.m. Great gray owl perched along Hwy 210 near McGregor.

12.06.04

Early morning snow continues off and on through out the day. About three inches accumulate at Long Lake. We're waiting for skiing season!

12.05.04

Another great gray owl.

12.04.04

A.M. Rain overnight and 35 degrees in the morning. Temperatures drop all day long, resulting in ice-glazed streets.

Todd sees two groups of trumpeter swans flying over Crow Wing County.

12.03.04

Sherman the ermine (Herman's brother) shows up behind the Dining Hall.

8 a.m. Ermine in white coat in the parking lot.

Todd sees a great gray owl.

12.02.04

Dayton Lake Hike group sees a bald eagle cruising over Long Lake.

11.29.04

We notice odd, star-shaped holes in the ice on Long Lake. What's causing these?

11.28.04

Pileated woodpecker in Aitkin.

11.25.04

Thanksgiving day brings us the first snow of the year. . . and some dangerous roads. LLCC gets about 2 inches.

11.24.04

7:30 a.m. 16 degrees F is the overnight low. The lake is frozen over entirely. For keeps?

11.23.04

5:50 a.m. Red fox eating in ditch Co. Rd. 5 near Co. Rd. 88.

Cold day and windy! But no ice on the lake.

11.22.04

Patchy ice on Long Lake, fringing the shores and cutting across the narrows. Since 1998, ice-over dates have varied from November 5 through December 10, with November 22 as an average date.

Chipmunk by Energy Center.

6:30 p.m. Halo 'round the moon.

11.21.04

4:50 Six-point buck in Chris' front yard, eating sunflower seeds.

11.19.04

5 p.m. Two moths flutter in headlights on LLCC's road.

11.18.04

1:30 p.m. Juvenile bald eagle feeding on something in field at junction of Co. Rd. 5 and Hwy 210.

11.16.04

5 a.m. to 6 a.m. Very foggy, especially Hwy 169 from Hill City to Palisade. 40°.

11.15.04

8 a.m. Long Lake is about 2/3 covered in thin ice.

Ice recedes as high temperature of 50 degrees is reached by midday.

An otter is fishing near the beach at Long Lake, and tossing fish onto the thin ice.

Two eagles are cruising at the east end of the lake.

11.14.04

Mosquitoes?!! Oh no!

3:30 p.m. Three cedar waxwings on crab apple at Chris' house.

11.13.04

Flock of Canada geese flew over.

Eastern half of Long Lake is iced over.

Clear, sunny, day with temperatures topping 50 degrees.

Three deer are grazing on the north lawn of the North Star Lodge.

11.12.04

A flock of snow geese flies over Aitkin.

11.11.04

Flock of swans flew over.

Fork buck standing on entrance road.

11.10.04

Two deer (doe and fawn) spotted near compost pile.

11.08.04

2 p.m. Big beaver spotted munching cattails on the beach.

11.07.04

6:30 p.m. and on: Fabulous "northern" lights set the whole sky glowing, even to the south.  
They're green, red, and violet.

Juncos, chickadees, and bluejays in McGregor.

11.06.04

Afternoon: ermine in a white coat pokes his head out of the rocks behind the Lodge.

11.05.04

10:30 a.m. 8-point buck near the CCC wall.

Red-bellied woodpecker in Aitkin.

11.04.04

3:35 p.m. Bald eagle flew over the North Star Lodge.

11.02.04

2:10 p.m. 4 magpies, 3 mature eagles, 2 immature eagles, 3 turkey vultures, on Co. Rd. 5, one mile north of LLCC.

11 p.m. One deer near volleyball net, two deer near the North Star Lodge.

11.01.04

An otter is fishing on the lake, and a beaver is swimming down on the east end.

Fearless chippies (lots) by the office, School House, and Energy Center.

Butterfly garden and garden sedum have been nibbled down to twigs by deer.

Tamaracks have dropped half to three-quarters of their needles.

Early afternoon: STMA students spot a deer on Sumac Hill.

2:30 p.m. Six large eagles in tree on Co. Rd. 5.

3 p.m. Grouse flew from Marcum House into the woods.

3:35 p.m. Ruffed grouse still drumming in the woods.

4:45 p.m. I saw two grouse on the sidewalk going to the Marcum House.

4:50 p.m. A student saw a grouse in the woods coming back from CCC.

11 p.m. STMA staff spooks a deer behind the Marcum House.

10.31.04

Weekend visitor reports seeing a gray fox on campus.

10.30.04

9 p.m. Five deer spotted between Director's residence and Energy Center.

Nearly all leaves are off trees on campus, except a few oaks.

10.29.04

5:20 a.m. Two red fox on Co. Rd. 5.

5:45 a.m. Eight point buck in the bus parking lot.

5:50 a.m. Trumpeter swans were heard flying over Long Lake.

10.28.04

7:15 a.m. A skunk is on Hwy 210. . . in the middle of the road!

Most trees are bare of leaves, except the oaks. In the bog, small tamaracks have lost most of their needles.

Cranberries are bright and still relatively abundant in the bog.

12:15 p.m. A large bald eagle glides low over the orienteering field.

4:30 p.m. Ten robins in Chris' front yard.

5:10 p.m. Large eagle picks up small rabbit off road in Itasca County.

10.27.04

A.M. Gary and the Isanti students spot a six point buck near LLCC's entrance.

10.26.04

10:40 p.m. Four does and one small buck are on campus near the flag.

10.24.04

Several mice, shrews, chipmunks, and other little critters have been apprehended trying to make their way into warm buildings.

10.23.04

A chipmunk invades the Energy Center with his cheek pouches stuffed full.

10.22.04

A red-tailed hawk is perched on a round bale near the flats northeast of Aitkin.

10.20.04

Blue jays are around, but the flickers have disappeared.

10.17.04

A pileated woodpecker is feeding in an old oak in Aitkin.

A large ringneck drake is on Long Lake.

6 p.m. Six deer graze in the Director's yard.

10.16.04

Early a.m. Long Lake gets its first snow, enough to make the ground white.

10.15.04

7:45 a.m. Three otters play on Long Lake's beach.

The visiting quilters encounter a large skunk by the butterfly garden. All parties escaped unscathed.

10.14.04

A.M. Four whistling swans fly over Pat's house.

7:30 a.m. Three deer cross the yard between LLCC's office and the lake.

5 p.m. Broadwing hawk with juvenile dines on one of Chris' chickens.

10.13.04

12:05 p.m. Large doe and fawn cross road by Britt's house.

10.12.04

5 a.m. to 6 a.m. Lots of deer on the highway and in ditches this morning. One small red fox.

7:15 a.m. Large doe and 2 yearling fawns are in the Director's yard.

1:56 p.m. A heard of hairy hippos is heard happily hopping along Long Lake. That's what they say, anyway.

Millie reports a ringneck pheasant on Hwy 232 near Palisade.

7:50 p.m. Red fox crosses Co. Rd. 5 near the turn to Long Lake.

10.11.04

8:30 a.m. Two otters are swimming near the northern lake shore.

Tamaracks around Long Lake are beginning to look yellow.

Several different subspecies of Canada geese on Long Lake: Greater, Lesser, Cackling, Richardson's.

Red fox crosses Co. Rd. 5, two miles from LLCC.

10.10.04

Three hooded mergansers on the lake.

Lots of blue jays around campus and in town.

A chickadee turns up outside the office. Ready for winter?

10 p.m. A gray fox crosses the road and goes into the woods next to the bus parking lot.

10.09.04

Harrier over a field along Co. Rd. 5, south of LLCC.

Can we have this weather year-round? Temps peak out at 70 degrees, the sky is blue, and the trees are at peak autumn color.

Maple trees in Aitkin are lit up brilliantly.

A skunk is running down the road behind the Dining Hall.

10.08.04

Todd reports peak fall colors along Hwy. 18 west of Hinkley and Hwy. 65 south of McGregor.

Red oaks have turned a brilliant magenta.

10.07.04

Tamaracks in the bog have turned just yellow enough to be noticeable.

The blueberry bush near the teaching square in the bog is still loaded with berries.

10.06.04

Temperature in the high 70s. Mosquitoes go on a feeding frenzy one last time.

10.05.04

5:55 a.m. 6 point buck on Co. Rd. 5.

10.04.04

5 a.m. 24 degrees: first hard frost in Hill City.

7 a.m. Livestock water tanks are iced over at Pat's farm.

10.03.04

Red oak trees on LLCC's campus close to full color.

Strong wind all afternoon pulls many leaves from maple trees.

10.01.04

Cold, cold rain brings more than an inch of rain to Long Lake. Temperature plummets all morning.

Skies are clear for the star-gazing event, and it's good and cold!

09.30.04

Coyote scat near the bog.

09.29.04

Fresh porcupine poop under the den near Long Lake's bog.

09.27.04

5:35 a.m. Red fox crosses Co. Rd. 3.

Red oak leaves in front of Dining Hall are shot with gold and red.

Recent road kill on Hwy 210 has included several porcupines, several raccoons, a skunk, and a couple young deer.

09.26.04

1:45 p.m. Three large eagles on road kill, Hwy 169.

9 p.m. Racket of Canada geese passing over in Aitkin.

9:30 p.m. Doe and half-grown fawn (no spots) run across road by bus parking lot.

09.25.04

Mushrooms abound in LLCC woods.

Rose hips are brilliant red and slightly soft.

Lots of flocking birds.

09.24.04

Acorns from burr oaks are crunching under foot in Aitkin.

09.23.04

The first tamaracks on the north side of Hwy 210 are showing signs of gold.

09.22.04

Spreading dogbane is yellow.

09.21.04

9:50 p.m. Red fox crosses Hwy 210, 5 miles west of LLCC.

09.20.04

5 a.m. to 6 a.m. Lots of wildlife on morning commute: 2 raccoons, 8 deer, 1 red fox, 1 black bear, 1 skunk. Very warm morning, 61 degrees, and very windy.

9:30 a.m. A blue heron arrives on the beach.

09.19.04

Acorns are clattering onto roofs, canoes, etc.

Mushrooms in a wide variety have popped up on the lawn between the office and the beach.

Wolves howling south of LLCC, heard from parking lot.

09.18.04

Ferns are golden-brown, and most maples have reached almost full color.

09.17.04

2:45 p.m. A red-tailed hawk scoops up a mouse on Hwy 169.

6 p.m. Green heron flies over the beach.

9:15 p.m. Very, very large skunk is ambling along Hwy 169.

09.16.04

Prometheus moth caterpillar found near the office.

Wooly bear on the road outside of Aitkin.

09.14.04

8:15 a.m. Northern flickers grouping along Co. Rd. 5.

Sumac in roadside ditches is rich red.

09.13.04

2:30 p.m. Young porcupine on white trail. . . followed it to the lake!

09.12.04

Crab apples are falling abundantly in Aitkin.

09.10.04

5:45 a.m. Large buck crosses LLCC's road.

Mourning cloak butterfly behind the Marcum House.

Ditch stonecrop blooming in front of the North Star Lodge.

Critter count on ditch-pickup: at least seven garter snakes (three tiny, two medium, and two large); several large leopard frogs; and a juvenile porcupine.

Bottle gentians are blooming.

5 p.m. Large flock of bluejays (25+) fly over the Carlson's house in Palisade.

09.09.04

Large buck on Co. Rd. 5, one antler up, one antler down.

A mourning cloak butterfly and a monarch butterfly near butterfly garden and Dining Hall.

09.08.04

Canada geese are using Long Lake for a resting spot.

37 degrees at Long Lake at 6 a.m.

Millie and Pam flush a female ruffed grouse out of currant shrubs near the Lab.

2:15 p.m. Four sandhill cranes are in a field off Co. Rd. 5.

Pileated woodpeckers visit bird feeder with their baby. . . how cool is that!

A sphinx moth at Carlson's in Palisade.

09.07.04

Starlings are grouping on powerlines.

Doe and fawn are outside the intern apartment.

The Director sees large buck on Co. Rd. 11 in Crow Wing County.

Ferns in road ditches are brown. Many maples are at least half red. Some ash and birch are going yellow.

The first green acorns are falling from the red oaks on campus.

Roberta the toad, a venerable old lady amphibian who has been around Long Lake at least 10 years (and was full-grown when we got her) has passed away. May she rest in peace.

09.06.04

Mourning cloak butterfly in Aitkin.

Tansy flowers are turning velvety brown.

09.05.04

Grackles are gathering in flocks.

LLCC receives 3.35 inches of rain between Saturday morning and late Sunday night.

09.04.04

Fluffies, fluffies everywhere. Thistle seeds and others are ripening and taking to the wind on their little white puffs of cotton.

09.03.04

The Ripple River in Aitkin goes from being almost dry one evening to having a stream at least 8 inches deeper the next night.

09.02.04

Sumac is turning red.

08.31.04

Milkweed is starting to turn yellow.

The basswood trees on campus have gone to seed.

5 p.m. At least half a dozen northern flickers are outside the office. (Watch for their white rumps to flash when they fly, and their undulating flight pattern.)

Garden sedum has finally started to open, and are covered with bees.

08.30.04

The first intern of the 04-05 school year arrives at Long Lake.

10 p.m. Todd and Erika see aurora borealis on their drive from the Twin Cities.

08.29.04

Bird feeder report from Schwampy: a red-breasted nuthatch veers out of its normal range to visit Aitkin. An immature rose-breasted grosbeak dwarfs the other visitors, immature gold finches.

08.26.04

8 a.m. A few crows are gathering loudly on campus.

Noon: A pair of grebes is feeding on the lake.

3:15 p.m. 30 Canada geese land on the lake. The grebes are gone.

08.25.04

50 or so Canada geese are on the lake at mid-day. They depart (noisily) about 3:30 p.m.

In flower today: Jewelweed (orange slipper-shaped flower); bugleweed; heal-all; hog peanut; pointed-leaved tick trefoil; arrow-leaved tear thumb; white lettuce (dangling flowers); ditch stonecrop (yellow-green flowers); mad dog skull cap; and square-stemmed monkey flower.

Red baneberry is ripe.

4 p.m. A pair of grebes has arrived on Long Lake.

08.24.04

A white-lined sphinx moth is in the entry the Dining Hall.

08.23.04

Yet another chilly morning, with something called "freezing fog" (ouch) across some of north-central Minnesota.

The maple behind the School House is russet-red.

Evening: Southwestern Minnesota gets a drenching. The Porter area, in Yellow Medicine County, receives between 7.9 and 8.2 inches of rain over a period of about six hours.

08.22.04

Several kingfishers are hunting over the Ripple River in Aitkin.

08.21.04

Record cold temperatures strike all over Minnesota; frosts damage crops all the way to the southern part of the state. Tower drops to 23 degrees. Aitkin wakes up to 30 degrees.

3 p.m. 40+ Canada geese are grazing on the lawn by Long Lake. (Get out the pooper-scooper.)

5 sandhill cranes in field off Hwy 169, 18 miles north of Aitkin.

08.20.04

6 a.m. The thermometer shows a low of 36 degrees, and there was frost on the east-facing roof of the Marcum House.

A small maple tree on the Court House lawn has turned orange.

08.19.04

6:30 a.m. 39 degrees by the thermometer, and Anne spies frost on a hillside near the Aitkin hospital.

Six-point buck with velvet antlers crosses Hwy 210 a few miles west of Co. Rd. 5.

08.18.04

Pam reports a flock of 40 or 50 Canada geese grazing in a hay field south of Palisade.

Canada thistles have seeded out in full force.

08.17.04

We have noticed a remarkable lack of monarch caterpillars and monarch butterflies themselves this summer, and we have none to report at this time.

08.16.04

7:45 a.m. A large hawk is perched on a bale along Hwy 169/210, just northeast of Aitkin.

10 a.m. A small flock of Canada geese, perhaps a dozen, take a breather on Long Lake, but they don't stay long.

1 p.m. Campers find a few tiny wood frogs in front of the Dining Hall.

3 p.m. A kingfisher is hanging out on the swimming raft.

08.13.04

Wild plums and wild hazel are ripe.

08.12.04

3 a.m. A barred owl is calling outside the Director's residence.

Another chilly "October" morning, but finally the clouds have cleared. 45 degrees at 6 a.m.

1 p.m. A northern flicker and pair of cedar waxwings are in the basswood and oak trees in front of the Dining Hall.

08.11.04

This feels like autumn. The days dawns at 44 degrees and overcast, with drizzle occasionally throughout the day. The temp never breaks 60.

8:30 p.m. Lots of bats out in Aitkin, flying close to the ground.

Water shrew swimming along the south side of the lake.

08.10.04

Is this autumn already? Cool, cloudy, blustery day is 54 degrees at noon.

Three bald eagles are soaring over Aitkin, between 6:30 and 7:30 a.m.

A single maple branch has turned flame red at the intersection of Co.Rd. 5 and Hwy 210.

08.09.04

A maple branch along Hwy 210, near Co. Rd. 5, has turned bright red.

Joe Pye weed is blooming.

08.08.04

8:15 a.m. A small black bear crosses Hwy 169, one mile south of the junction with 200 at Hill City.

A teeny-tiny wood frog is on the path in front of the Energy Center. When crouched, he is hardly half an inch long.

08.07.04

Chris witnesses a young broadwing hawk get hit by a truck, and tries to rescue him. The LLCC's counselors take him to the wildlife rehab vet (Wild and Free in Garrison), but the prognosis is not good. He has broken legs as well as a broken wing.

Several juvenile raccoons and a skunk have failed to find safe crossing on Highway 210.

08.06.04

A ruby-throated hummer checks out the red knob on the garage door cord at the Energy Center.  
No nectar here?

10:30 a.m. The osprey nest on Hwy 210 is empty. The fledglings are out and about.

Be careful on the roads. . . young critters have ventured out into the world.

BWCA campers return and report that raspberries and blueberries are ripe in the BWCA, and there are LOTS.

08.05.04

Cool morning, feels like it might be fall. 53 degrees in Aitkin.

Curly dock has gone to seed and doll's eyes (white baneberry) are ripe.

08.04.04

Sunflowers are blooming in Aitkin.

Blueberries are ripe and abundant.

08.03.04

Wool grass is out.

08.02.04

Pearly everlasting blooming, along with asters, especially large-leaved. Red baneberries are ripe. Don't eat 'em!

07.30.04

Wild raspberries are abundant.

07.29.04.

Basswood trees are in flower.

07.28.04

Red oaks have tiny acorn clusters on them. Goldenrod is blooming.

07.27.04

Swamp milkweed is blooming.

07.26.04

Black-eyed susan is in bloom. Oxeye daisies are finishing up their blooming.

07.24.04

Turk's cap lilies are blossoming.

A 4-hour trip down the Mississippi between Palisade and Aitkin turns up observations of at least 4 eagles, three turkey vultures, a red-tailed hawk, half a dozen kingfishers, and a fawn about three months old, wandering without mom.

07.23.04

Wild raspberries are ripe.

Cool, sunny day, doesn't exceed 70 degrees. Can it get any more perfect?

07.22.04

5:30 a.m. A doe with twins at the Old Waukenabo Town Hall.

2:30 p.m. The heron is back again, this time standing on the beach. A loon is calling in the middle of the lake.

07.21.04

A great blue heron is hunting (successfully) by the beach, until he is startled off by the Tadpole Campers.

07.20.04

7:45 a.m. A pileated woodpecker is at the edge of the astronomy field.

10:30 a.m. A great blue heron flies over the School House. Later he is fishing amid the water lilies on the south side of the lake.

Tansy (look for yellow fuzzy buttons) is starting to bloom.

07.19.04

What a shock! A hot, humid day, reaches 93 degrees.

07.18.04

7:45 a.m. A pileated woodpecker is at the edge of the astronomy field.

07.15.04

Columbines have gone to seed.

07.14.04

5:45 a.m. Doe and fawn on Jenkins Lake Rd.

07.13.04

Director sees spike and forkhorn bucks on Co. Rd. 88.

5:45 a.m. Two foxes are sitting in the ditch of Co. Rd. 5.

6:45 p.m. Todd and Bailee see a cow moose from the Soo Line Trail south of Swatara.

07.12.04

Our resident adult Canada geese are in molt, and their 4 surviving goslings are getting their grown-up feathers.

Is it summer yet? Finally, we get one good, hot, humid July-ish day.

Tree frogs are making a racket near the Ripple River in Aitkin. One has laid claim to Anne and Jeff's house.

07.11.04

Early, early in the wee hours: dramatic thunderstorm drops 1.9 inches of rain at Long Lake.

Seed pods on columbines are ripening.

A family of skunks crosses the road by Keith's house. Um, did they leave any odor at Keith's house overnight?

LLCC's resident goose family is grazing new grass by the Dining Hall.

07.10.04

Several northern flickers in Aitkin. (Look for their white rumps when they fly, and their undulating flight pattern.)

07.09.04

White admiral butterfly near wetland on campus.

07.08.04

8 a.m. Mama mallard with three babies is swimming on the lake.

8:15 a.m. Mama and papa Canada goose with four goslings come up and chase the ducks away.

Pat finds a penny-sized painted turtle in front of the Energy Center.

07.07.04

5 p.m. Adult skunk crosses the road by the Orienteering Field.

07.05.04

Baltimore orioles are still in Aitkin.

07.04.04

"Colder than the 4th of July." Spectators at the fireworks in Aitkin bundle up in blankets and coats on a damp, 58 degree evening.

07.02.04

Millie saw two fishers on LLCC property today.

06.30.04

Blooming in and around the lake: marsh cinquefoil, rose pogonia, calopogon, small cranberry, white water lily, bullhead lily, bladderwort, iris, pitcher plant.

06.28.04

Another snapper is laying eggs on the beach.

06.26.04

Loons carry on all night long at Barb's new home on North Long Lake.

06.25.04

Baltimore oriole and scarlet tanager spotted separately in Aitkin.

06.23.04

10 a.m. Green heron on the lake shore.

Wild roses blooming in the wetland at the center of campus.

We're noticing bumblebees with bright orange bands around the abdomens. New migrants?

06.21.04

2:30 p.m. We observe a loon on the lake apparently acting strangely: fussing with its feathers constantly, and rolling over to poke at its feet.

3 p.m. A muskrat passes by the beach.

06.19.04

The weather folks threatened patchy frost in the region overnight; temperatures dropped to "only" 36 degrees in Aitkin.

06.17.04

5:45 a.m. Fawn and its mom in ditch along Co. Rd. 3.

Four otters spend the morning fishing and playing on the south and west side of Long Lake, near the beach.

Gray catbird behind Rippleside in Aitkin.

06.16.04

Fawn on LLCC's road, 5:50 a.m.

The staff sees five different does with fawns during an 80 mile drive to Deep Portage Learning Center.

Wild roses blooming.

06.15.04

Snapping turtle the size of a trash can lid in Long Lake.

Twelve-spotted dragon flies are busy over the lake.

06.14.04

8:45 a.m. A cormorant is swimming on Long Lake. (The size of a large loon, nearly black, with orange bill angled upward.)

A pair of Canada geese is on the beach with two goslings. The same pair that had five goslings a month ago?

A mallard hen paddles near the beach with a cluster of ducklings.

06.09.04

Columbines at full bloom.

06.08.04

Gold finches, purple finches, and an indigo bunting at the Director's feeder.

06.04.04

Monarch butterflies show up at Long Lake.

06.05.04

A pair of Baltimore orioles and a cedar waxwing and a monarch butterfly in Aitkin.

Wee baby bunnies (cottontail rabbits, that is) appear near the Ripple River.

06.03.04

7 a.m. Three beavers swimming at the west end of Long Lake.

06.02.04

A.M. The sun appears again after a long absence!

06.01.04

7 p.m. Purple finch, male rose-breasted grosbeak, and ruby-throated hummingbird at feeders in Aitkin

05.26.04

The air is full of popple fluff--seeds from quaking aspen trees set loose on little tufts of cotton.

Six cedar waxwings in apple tree in Palisade.

05.25.04

4:30 p.m. Two large, male scarlet tanagers are outside the Dining Hall.

P.M. Osprey over the lake.

Bluebirds are feeding each other.

5:30 p.m. Large scarlet tanager in a tree between the lab and the Marcum House.

05.24.04

9:30 a.m. A scarlet tanager is outside the director's residence.

Green heron on lake shore.

P.M. Unidentified hawk (sharp-shinned?) flies through forest next to LLCC.

05.23.04

10 a.m. American redstart flitting around the Marcum House.

Three otter run through Britt's yard on the way to Long Lake.

05.22.04

11:30 a.m. A scarlet tanager shows off for volunteers at Spruce Up day.

05.21.04

Overnight, a black bear destroys a feeding station at Chris' house, in northern Aitkin County.

7 a.m. A loon is calling on Long Lake.

05.20.04

A.M. Orioles in a backyard in McGregor.

05.19.04

9 p.m. Pat hears a whippoorwill, on Co. Rd. 3, 8 miles west from Hwy 169.

P.M. A porcupine tours campus, from Marcum House (room 9), to the Bigfoot Den, to a tree by the lake. . . and stays on the trail! (Now, why can't we convince you kids to do that?)

05.18.04

7:30 p.m. Grouse drumming in the valley, south of the North Star Lodge.

05.17.04

Morning bird-watching at Long Lake: yellow-rumped warblers, a male Cape May warbler, a Magnolia warbler, a male gold finch, a pair of Canada geese with five goslings (about 2 weeks old) grazing on the beach, a loon on the lake, and a green heron in the oak by the water.

05.16.04

Bird report from Rice Lake Wildlife Refuge: tree swallows, Swainson's thrushes, yellow-rumped warblers, red-winged black birds, bobolinks, loads of mallards and geese, and a great blue heron.

Marsh marigolds and blood root are blooming.

6 p.m. Half dollar-sized painted turtle in front of North Star Lodge.

05.15.04

1 p.m. An otter high-tails it across the bridge over Hwy 169 near the KKIN studio

Yellow-rumped warblers and a redstart, along with chipping sparrows and black-capped chickadees, at feeder in Aitkin.

Bear scat on Lake Trail, just past Britt's house.

05.13.04

Leather leaf and sedges in bloom in the bog. Pussy toes are blooming by the School House.

Three red-headed woodpeckers at Pat's feeder.

4:35 p.m. Male indigo bunting and Baltimore oriole at Chris' feeder.

Wood anemones are blooming.

05.12.04

Director spots hummingbird on shrub by deck at the Residence.

Instruction Coordinator watches hummingbird feed on flowers outside the IC House.

05.11.04

Large flowered bellwort in bloom by archery field.

05.10.04

Two rose-breasted grosbeaks at Pat's feeder, and a flock of Harris sparrows (never before seen. . . .)

Bluebirds are nesting near the driveway by the North Star Lodge. And Mr. Bluebird wanted to sit on the archery targets while kids were shooting!

Watched female great-horned owl feed her baby at Big Sandy Lake.

Trilliums in full bloom in Chris' woods, northern Aitkin County.

Marsh marigolds in full bloom in ditches along Hwy 169.

05.09.04

8:30 a.m. Cedar waxwing in Aitkin.

8 a.m. A skunk unexpectedly ambles within a few feet of an innocent staff member in Aitkin.  
Disaster narrowly diverted.

05.07.04

Popples leaf out. Maple leaves begin to emerge.

05.05.04

7:35 p.m. Two swans on Highway 169, Moose River.

05.04.04

Bluebird on campus.

Turtle crosses River Road north of Palisade.

05.03.04

8:30 a.m. A Harris sparrow was at Pat's bird feeder.

A.M. A woodchuck eats outside the intern apartment for half an hour.

05.02.04

8 a.m. A loon is feeding on Long Lake.

P.M. A turkey vulture circles ominously.

P.M. A little brown bat in on the ground outside the Marcum House.

05.01.04

A pair of hooded mergansers on Long Lake, near the beach.

04.30.04

Very small, transparent green leaves have emerged on some quaking aspens.

Yellow-rumped warblers near the wetland at the center of campus.

1 p.m. Marsh hawk chased over the Flats by a flock of backbirds.

04.29.04

Dandelions blooming by the pump house.

04.28.04

Daytime high temp of 90° at LLCC. It's a short-lived heat-wave. . . it drops to 33° overnight.

04.27.04

Cold morning: overnight temperature of 27°.

6:45 a.m. A vast flock of unidentified ducks--100+ birds--passes over Aitkin.

9:30 a.m. The ground hog is scurrying around behind the Energy Center.

04.26.04

A downy woodpecker is drumming behind Rippleside Elementary in Aitkin.

A.M. A few flurries of snow in the morning make us whine.

04.25.04

Red maples are in full bloom.

Birch, maples, and poplars are budding.

A bald eagle and a great blue heron fly across the lake.

1 p.m. Green darner butterflies (you know, the big, blue ones) are darting around Tank Trails near Aitkin, and hepaticas are blooming.

1 p.m. Chorus frogs are singing, more than wood frogs, near Aitkin.

04.24.04

5:15 p.m. The Director finds a freshly-killed grouse (still warm) half eaten by the Big Foot Den.  
Possible culprit? Hawk? Mink?

A robin with a great beak-full of nesting material is spotted in Aitkin.

7 p.m. A great blue heron flies over Ripple River and Aitkin City Park.

04.23.04

12:30 p.m. Turkey vulture soars over Hwy 210/169 intersection.

A kingfisher and snapping turtle out on Long Lake.

Evening: Two beavers swim close to shore on Long Lake. One does a tail-slap on the water.

Night: A barred owl and a great horned owl call across the lake.

04.22.04

8:30 a.m. A yellow-bellied sapsucker is drumming on the basketball backboard, and later on the metal trail-markers.

1 p.m. A bluebird is perched on the display case outside the Dining Hall.

7:30 p.m. Two belted kingfishers with funky crests are resting on power lines, 2 to 3 miles west of McGregor.

04.21.04

A red fox gets three of Chris' chickens. That's the last we'll hear of that particular fox.

6:30 a.m. Wild turkey spotted along Hwy 210, a mile north of Aitkin.

04.20.04

7 a.m. Both ospreys were on their nest at the flats, northeast of Aitkin.

8:45 a.m. Loons call over Long Lake.

2 p.m. Two pairs of buffleheads are down by the beach, with the males dancing and displaying for the females.

2:30 p.m. Hepaticas in bloom behind the Marcum House, and dandelions are blooming at Sally's house.

Swallows are in the butterfly garden nest box.

10:15 p.m. A snipe was flying and calling over Pat's pasture.

04.19.04

8:30 a.m. A killdeer was on the roadside of Co. Rd. 5.

5:30 p.m. A lone turkey vulture soars over the orienteering field.

6:30 a.m. 150+ pound black bear at Chris' compost pile in northern Aitkin County.

Popple trees, a.k.a. quaking aspen, are blooming.

04.16.04

8 a.m. A barn swallow chases insects outside the North Star Lodge.

10 a.m. The yellow-bellied sapsucker is now hammering on the basketball backboard and making a much louder noise!

04.15.04

2 p.m. A bald eagle makes several spectacular swoops on the lake before snagging the bullhead he was after and perching in a tree to dine.

New high temperature for the spring: 74° at 3:15 p.m.

Belted kingfisher working hard along southern lake shore.

4 p.m. Chorus frogs are calling and yellow-bellied sapsuckers are hammering on campus.

4:20 p.m. Twenty-plus loons on open water on Lake Pokegama by Hwy 169 in Grand Rapids.

5 p.m. A yellow-bellied sapsucker hammers away at the blue metal XC ski sign outside the intern apartment!

10 p.m. Barred owls calling behind the intern apartment.

04.14.04

8:15 a.m. A red-tailed hawk is perched in a tree near the intersection of Hwy 210 and Co. Rd. 5.

8:30 a.m. Long Lake is about 65% open water.

9 a.m. A loon in full breeding plumage makes a splashy landing on Long Lake.

1 p.m. A crow grabs a dead bullhead, 8 inches long, from the lake and deposits it on the beach.

Ice-out is official! Britt declares the ice more than 80% gone by late afternoon. Barb Lucken is the proud winner of "all the bullheads she can catch" and the honors of teaching the first canoeing class for guessing the right date.

9:30 p.m. Frogs calling in the woods behind the North Star Lodge.

04.13.04

9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. Two male American kestrels spotted on Hwy 210.

7:30 a.m. Four wood ducks (2 female, 2 male) and a pair of hooded mergansers on Long Lake.

8:30 a.m. Second morning bird count on the thawed third of Long Lake: three mallard drakes and a hen, one ring-billed duck, one pair of wood ducks, some Canada geese, and three hooded mergansers. The two hooded drakes are bobbing and strutting to impress the lady.

6 p.m. The same 2 kestrels perched on a power line along Hwy 210.

04.12.04

5:45 a.m. Two skunks are walking along Co. Rd. 3.

8:30 a.m. The mink is scurrying around a upturned boat on the lake shore.

04.11.04

A merlin was perched on a power line along Hwy 210, west of Co. Rd. 5.

A pair of teal on Hill River.

04.10.04

Lots of juncos and chickadees in Aitkin.

11 a.m. A pair of canvasbacks on Long Lake.

04.08.04

Canada geese spotted on Long Lake, looking for a suitable nesting spot.

04.07.04

A flicker was beside LLCC road.

A lark on power line along Hwy 169.

1 p.m. 16 (or so) swans on the flats north of Aitkin.

9:15 p.m. A red fox crosses Co. Rd. 88 in front of the Director's truck.

04.06.04

8:15 a.m. An osprey has claimed its nest along 169/210 and Co. Rd. 54, near the flats north of Aitkin.

The ice on Long Lake has turned blue-black.

Phoebes are back on campus.

6 p.m. Wood frogs sing--briefly--on campus for the first time this year.

A sandhill crane is spotted crossing Hwy 169 on the flats northeast of Aitkin.

A barred owl is calling outside the Director's residence at night.

04.05.04

Hepatica leaves starting to stand up.

Wooly bear caterpillar by the archery shed.

04.04.04

Robin outside the Dining Hall.

Two Canada geese on open hole in lake.

4:45 p.m. 15 geese, 2 teal, 4 swans on Chris' back 40 in northern Aitkin Co.

Afternoon: Pat saw wood ducks, blue-winged teal, and mallards on the logan on her property.  
Turkey vultures circling lots of places.

04.03.04

4:30 a.m. Snow flurries!

04.02.04

7 a.m. A mallard was walking on the frozen ditch water along the flats north of Aitkin.

04.01.04

6:30 p.m. Unidentified owl glides over Co. Rd. 88 near LLCC gates.

03.31.04

A.M. Two chipmunks are chasing each other around the woodpile.

Todd sees a Milbert's tortoiseshell butterfly.

3:45 p.m. A mink is fishing under the old raft at Long Lake's shore.

2:15 p.m. Two larks on Co. Rd. 5.

3:45 p.m. A mink is fishing under the old raft at Long Lake's shore.

5:45 p.m. 26 swans on Rice Lake (Cass County), Remer.

03.30.04

A.M. A large red-tailed hawk crosses Hwy 169 on the flats.

12 p.m. Porcupine in a tree by the big kettle hole along the Red Trail.

"Little Peter Cottontail, hopping down the bunny trail, hippity, hoppity, etc."

03.29.04

5:10 a.m. Pair of swans on Hill River, by Hill City.

5:40 a.m. Pair of hooded mergansers at the peat plant pond.

6 a.m. Red-winged blackbirds, robins, and grackles in Pat's yard.

11 a.m. Fox scat near the butterfly garden.

All day: Over 100 red-winged blackbirds in Pat's yard.

Pussy willows are busting out!

Two raccoons and four deer at the Rice Lake Wildlife Refuge.

5 p.m. Swans on Mille Lacs.

03.28.04

Temperature is 52° F at 6 a.m. and drops throughout the day.

7:15 a.m. Lots of birds, of the "little brown bird" variety, as well as grackles, are congregating on power lines.

7:30 a.m. Four Canada geese pass over Long Lake.

11 a.m. Long-tailed weasel in full winter coat at the Carlson's horse yard, along Co. Rd. 5.

12 p.m. Red-winged blackbirds at Carlson's feeder in Palisade.

The Mississippi is open at Palisade.

03.27.04

A robin and a dark-eyed junco visit the intern bird feeder.

1:30 p.m. Raccoon and beaver tracks between CCC and the lake.

Intermittent rain makes the snow nearly disappear.

The Ripple River is open (and just slightly over its banks) in Aitkin.

6 p.m. 2 Canada geese fly over Hwy 210 near McGregor.

03.26.04

12:45 p.m. Anne sees three bald eagles between Aitkin and Long Lake.

10:30 a.m. Lone Canada goose flies over LLCC's campus.

12:15 p.m. A male robin is singing in a tree next to the North Star Lodge.

12:30 p.m. The director spies a robin near the Energy Center.

3:30 p.m. A mink is hunting under the boats near the Oar House.

LLCC's temperature cracks 60° Fahrenheit!

6 p.m. Four bald eagles are feeding on Long Lake: they appear to be two pair; one is a third-year juvenile, with a nearly-white head and mottled wings.

03.25.04

5 a.m. 40 ° F, very foggy.

5:35 a.m. 19 deer by Mississippi bridge on Co. Rd. 3

7:15 a.m. Bright, misty, sun-shiny morning turns densely foggy in Aitkin.

8: 20 a.m. Red-winged blackbird at side of Co. Rd. 5, just north of Hwy. 210.

Canada geese on Mississippi River.

11:30 a.m. A major thunderstorm passes through, dropping small hail, lots of thunder, and several near-miss lightning bolts.

A male robin is spotted on campus, high up in oak tree.

4:00 p.m. A pair of herring gulls are on Long Lake, near the hole in the ice.

03.24.04

A.M. Redpolls at Pat's feeder.

Marvelous day! High temp approaches 60° F.

5:15 A red-winged black bird in perched on a cat-tail in the Hwy. 210/169 ditch.

7:15 p.m. Bats are back! They're flying above the streets in Aitkin, looking for insects.

7:30 p.m. A maple tree in Aitkin, accidentally scarred, is dripping sap at about a drop every two seconds.

9:30 p.m. An owl swoops over the walkway by the butterfly garden.

03.23.04

4:45 p.m. Two bald eagles circle over the archery field.

5:30 p.m. A doe and two fawns visit the intern bird feeder for an evening meal.

7:20 p.m. UFO: Unidentified flying owl, spotted flying over Co.Rd. 5.

03.22.04

6:30 a.m. Cold morning. 7° F in Aitkin.

8:15 a.m. Black squirrel runs across the road just by LLCC's parking lot.

10 a.m. Beige/brown caterpillar outside Marcum House.

Aspen buds are opening, fuzzy and white.

4:30 p.m. Immature bald eagle soars over Long Lake.

5:15 p.m. Great grey owl over a bog, near mile marker 275 on Hwy 169.

5:22 p.m. Big bald eagle on the ice on Long Lake.

03.20.04

Gray squirrels turn up in Anne's back yard in Aitkin.

1 p.m. Three robins in Carlson's yard in Palisade.

3:30 p.m. American kestrel along Hwy. 210 near Co. Rd. 5

03.19.04

8:15 a.m. Two bald eagles, one a third-year juvenile, fly over Co. Rd. 5 just south of Long Lake.

10 a.m. Large pileated woodpecker outside intern apartment.

03.18.04

5:45 p.m. A lone goose flies over the flats, north of Aitkin. Spring is coming!

Black billed magpie on Co. Rd. 5.

6:00 p.m. A large-ish hawk is sitting on the powerline northeast of Aitkin.

03.17.04

Bob reports a live mosquito zooming around the Energy Center.

10 a.m. Bald eagle gliding over Dining Hall.

A.M. Fox tracks in bog, and red squirrels scurries up a tree.

03.16.04

Lots of crows are gathering on roads and tree tops.

10 a.m. A male northern harrier over fields north of Aitkin.

11:15 a.m. Pequot Lakes 4th graders found weasel, raccoon, deer, rabbit, and red & gray squirrel tracks on bog hikes.

03.15.04

Beautiful, cold morning, 10 degrees, with hoar frost and sun dogs.

Tracks by the lake: a mink that caught something and dragged it merrily across the snow, and a raccoon.

More weasel tracks near Britt's house.

Reports of geese and ducks in Aitkin from the DNR office in Aitkin.

03.14.04

P.M. Moth flies to light at the Intern's door.

03.12.04

Low of -2° at LLCC: winter still going strong!

A.M. 4 Wild turkeys by side of road on MN 27, towards Moose Lake.

11:30 a.m. Weasel tracks on the road by Britt's house.

03.10.04

Raccoon road kill on Hwy 210/169 north of Aitkin.

A.M. Northern harrier over the flats north of Aitkin.

Eagle is back on the lake, and soars right over the Dassel-Cokato students on their tour of Long Lake.

03.09.04

A pileated woodpecker flies over Hwy 210, just east of Hwy 169.

Four crows are gathered in a group on the north side of Hwy 210, each sitting at the very top of a tree.

The topmost birch branches are very red.

Sun dogs (at a vast distance from the sun) just before sundown. Beautiful sunset!

8 p.m. Coyotes reply to Alpha Wolf class.

Barb gets response to barred owl call.

Northern lights again.

03.08.04

A bald eagle eats bullheads at the hole in Long Lake.

4:15 p.m. Eagle flies over snow snakes class.

6 p.m. Little mink waddling along Hwy 210.

8:30 p.m. Two flying squirrels visit LLCC feeder, four the next night.

9:15 p.m. Barb has a "near miss" with resident skunk.

10 p.m. Beautiful northern lights.

03.07.04

Two mature bald eagles spar over the bullhead hole on the northwest edge of Long Lake.

1:30 p.m. A bald eagle and a large flock of snow buntings on Co. Rd. 5 from Palisade.

Afternoon: A mourning dove was hanging out at Pat's feeder.

Several immature bald eagles in various fields.

One or two dozen horned larks on Co. Rd. 1 roadside.

7:30 p.m. Full moon, low in the sky southeast of Long Lake.

03.05.04

A red squirrel scurries across Hwy 47 in Aitkin.

5 sets of fox tracks and one set of fisher tracks in bog

5 p.m. 3 deer check out the intern bird feeder for leftovers.

03.04.04

Porcupine in tree by archery field.

Fox tracks in the woods on the south side of Co. Rd. 88.

Britt and Todd see a rough-legged hawk in the flats, north of Aitkin.

Bald eagle flew over the Thicket activity.

03.03.04

Between 2 p.m. and 5:30, northern Aitkin County gets 3 ½ inches of snow. LLCC gets an inch or so, which melts to less as it falls.

03.02.04

We identify our resident butterfly as a Milbert's tortoiseshell, not terribly common in Aitkin County, but known for its tendency to appear in very early spring. It hibernated over the winter in its adult form.

4:30 p.m. Bald eagle flies over the woodchip trail.

03.01.04

A butterfly, found in the Energy Center, hitches a ride to the office with Millie.

02.27.04

Schwampy reports seeing a horned lark on Hwy 210, and flocks of red-tailed hawks in the Twin Cities.

Early sign of spring! Pat sees 7 horned larks 4 miles north of Aitkin on Co. Rd. 1.

2:30 p.m. Small, fuzzy caterpillar on path in front of the North Star Lodge.

02.25.04

8 a.m. A small sink hole has opened on the north side of Long Lake and attracted a couple crows, munching on bull heads. It's only a matter of time before the eagles notice.

By 1 p.m. a bald eagle has discovered the sink hole, and lands to watch over from several yards away. The two crows fly off at first, eventually returning to continue their eating at the hole. The eagle watches.

02.24.04

5:10 a.m. Snowshoe hare crosses northern Aitkin County Line Road.

5:30 a.m. Muskrat crosses Co. Rd. 5

Aspen buds are swelling.

9:00 p.m. 2 barred owls are calling during Alpha Wolf activity.

9:45 p.m. Coyote howls near Lake States Lumber in Aitkin.

02.22.04

A snowshoe hare--white except for tan ears--darts under a parked car in Aitkin parking lot.

02.20.04

Snow, snow, snow: 4 inches between 11 o'clock last night and 4 p.m. today.

2 p.m. A bald eagle is eating road kill at the junction of Hwy. 65 and 27.

02.19.04

10:30 a.m. A star-nosed mole is herded off the South Road by Todd.

A woolly-bear caterpillar appears in the snow, during the Loons game.

Warm streak continues, bringing steady snow.

7:30 p.m. Porcupine munching on bark at top of tree, halfway down the Alpha trail.

02.18.04

Heat wave! 49° F by mid-afternoon.

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow! Slow and steady snow, with not much accumulation.

Warm temperatures bring out a ground hog along Hwy 210 west of Co. Rd. 5.

Beautiful stars at night.

Bird count: 8 bluejays, 13 rose breasted grosbeaks, and 16 evening grosbeaks at a feeder in northern Aitkin County.

02.17.04

The sun is shining--thank goodness! Temperatures of -6° F in the morning rise to just grazing the freezing mark during the day, a swing of 38 degrees over six hours. Chickadees continue their fee-bee call, indicating an approaching spring??

Light hoar frost covers the trees in the morning, so everything sparkles beautifully in the sun.

02.16.04

10 a.m. A bald eagle soars over SuperValu in Aitkin.

02.15.04

It's cold. No, really! -44° reported at Embarrass, MN. -16 to -20 in the LLCC and Aitkin area.

02.14.04

A snag at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park has had its bark and cambium layer munched almost entirely off, bottom to top, by a porcupine. The porcupine himself is nowhere to be seen.

02.13.04

The temperature exceeds the freezing point for the first time since mid-December.

Pileated woodpecker passes over the junction of Hwy 210 and 169.

02.11.04

9:30 a.m. Same woodpecker, same tree, same time.

Snow, snow, snow. . . .

02.10.04

9:45 a.m. A pileated woodpecker is hammering into a tree, half way round the ER loop on the cross country ski trail.

02.09.04

7:35 p.m. A skunk comes up to Chris' feeder at night. (The cat saw it first.)

02.08.04

Another lovely snowfall leaves a few more inches of fresh powder on Long Lake.

02.06.04

Pileated woodpecker at Chris' feeder.

02.04.04

Two eagles on Hill Lake, feeding on fish.

02.03.04

1:35 p.m. Two eagles on Hwy 169 by the peat plant.

02.02.04

5:30 a.m. Two fox cross Co. Rd. 5

Ground Hog's Day. What's-his-name Phil in Pennsylvania sees his shadow and scurries back under ground. Only six more weeks of winter? We'll take it!

But no shadows here. . . light snow all morning, tapering in the afternoon, amounting to about an inch. Meanwhile, a snowstorm drops 10 to 14 inches of snow in a swath across east-central and southeast Minnesota, and up toward Duluth. Sadly, school was canceled in New Prague, and they cannot be with us today! We miss you!

02.01.04

Great horned owls are calling at Pat's house, north of Aitkin.

February dawns astonishingly warm! 10° by 10 o'clock! Snow falls steadily throughout the day, leaving just shy of 4 inches on LLCC's campus.

01.31.04

-22° F in the morning, to reach 0° as a high.

A bit of research into the LLCC Energy Center log shows that the last time temperatures were above 0° F was on Tuesday, January 27, and the last time temperatures exceeded 20° F was Saturday, January 17.

01.30.04

We look at the thermometer in the morning to see that it is. . . very, very cold.

-31° F at LLCC in the morning.

01.28.04

6 p.m. Eight deer cross Co. Rd. 88. Two are yearlings.

Windchill makes it down below -50° F.

01.27.04

After yesterday's generous snowfall, Duluth announces 24.8 inches total and the third-highest 24-hour snow fall on record.

01.26.04

Monday morning, snow still hasn't stopped, with 9 inches on the ground. Finally, Hugo students get the chance to go snowshoeing!

Noon: With a yardstick, Chris measures 14.5 inches of snow on the staff picnic table. Still snowing!

Snow tapers and stops in the evening. 16 inches total at LLCC.

01.25.04

4:30 a.m. Snow started lightly early in the morning and continues more heavily all day and through the night.

01.24.04

Tracks on fresh snow on Larson Lake Trails south of Deerwood show lots of critter movement: mouse trails and tunnels, numerous deer tracks, a couple squirrels, fisher tracks, chickadee calls and a woodpecker. Basswood buds are bright red.

01.23.04

5 a.m. Light snow begins in the morning, clears up after about two inches.

01.22.04

Deep cold last night: -18 degrees F here at LLCC.

5 a.m. Northern lights are very bright! Great sight to see.

11:30 a.m. Two deer on Long Lake.

1 p.m. Dead shrew next to the path by the Energy Center.

01.21.04

9 a.m. Four pine grosbeaks at the Instruction Coordinator feeder: 2 female, one male, and one immature.

A front passes through with a brief blast of snow and wind at 10:45 a.m. Clear skies follow. Meanwhile, temperatures of 22 degrees F in the morning plummet to five degrees by 1:30 p.m. and -4 degrees by 4:30. Hang on to your hats!

2:55 p.m. Sharptail grouse crosses Hwy 169, 2 miles south of Hill City.

01.20.04

11 a.m. Fisher tracks found near the porcupine tree just off the Alpha wolf trail.

01.19.04

8 p.m. Coyote speeds past the intern apartment.

1 p.m. Porcupine out on branch by archery field.

01.18.04

11 a.m. Redpolls, goldfinches, and grackles in McGregor.

01.13.04

4 to 5 p.m. Possible wolf tracks found in the snow just south of the entrance to LLCC during Thicket class.

01.12.04

3 p.m. A couple of grouse flush out of the thicket near the start of the Alpha Wolf trail.

01.11.04

5:35 a.m. A red fox crosses Hwy 169 by mile marker 284.

01.10.04

2:15 p.m. Mature bald eagle perched in tree, along road to Palisade.

01.08.04

5:40 a.m. Buck crosses Co. Rd. 3, with only one antler. The other has been dropped in the woods to be devoured by small mammals.

01.07.04

11:30 a.m. Mature bald eagle comes face-to-face with BJ's windshield, and pushes off the roof with its talons.

2:20 p.m. The same eagle feeds on road kill along Co. Rd. 5.

5:10 p.m. Flying squirrel at Chris' feeder in northern Aitkin County.

01.05.04

Chickadees are singing their fee-bee song, in preparation for spring mating.

01.05.03

The coldest night of the year thus far hits -18 degrees.

P.M. Great-horned owl in the middle of Aitkin hoots half the night.

01.03.04

BJ's neighbor sights a wolf on the shore of Lake Waukenabo.

01.01.04

Coyote tracks and wolf tracks on Bog Road in the Refuge.