

Fall is here and winter is closing in fast!



Fall brings with it warm, sunny days, and crisp, cool evenings.

Nature's transformation from summer to fall is awe-inspiring. There is no finer place to view the dramatic and perhaps the more subtle fall spectacles than at a North Dakota state park. Certainly the most dramatic of these spectacles is the **fall migration**. Rather than face the harsh reality of North Dakota's winters, birds and some insects simply take to the skies and flee for the south. Nature's most spectacular **feeding frenzies** occur in the fall as animals get ready for winter by eating extra food and storing it as body fat. Fall is also marked by nature's more **subtle changes** like the changes in light, deeper blue skies, and plants calling it quits for the season.



Take some time to explore nature this fall at your favorite state park. Keep track of how many of nature's fall spectacles you witness. Take a look around, spend some time outside. How many of these fall events or spectacles have you seen? Have a favorite you want to add to the list? Here are some of our most **noteworthy fall spectacles**.

On the Move...



- ❖ High skeins of passing Canada geese.
- ❖ The clamor of Canada geese on a chilly autumn night.
- ❖ Juncos arriving in flocks and returning to feeders.
- ❖ Robins filling the skies as they hurry southward.
- ❖ Scaups, ring necks, buffleheads and goldeneyes flock to large bodies of water to rest from their migration south.
- ❖ Broad-winged hawks on the move.
- ❖ Monarch butterflies migrating to Mexico.



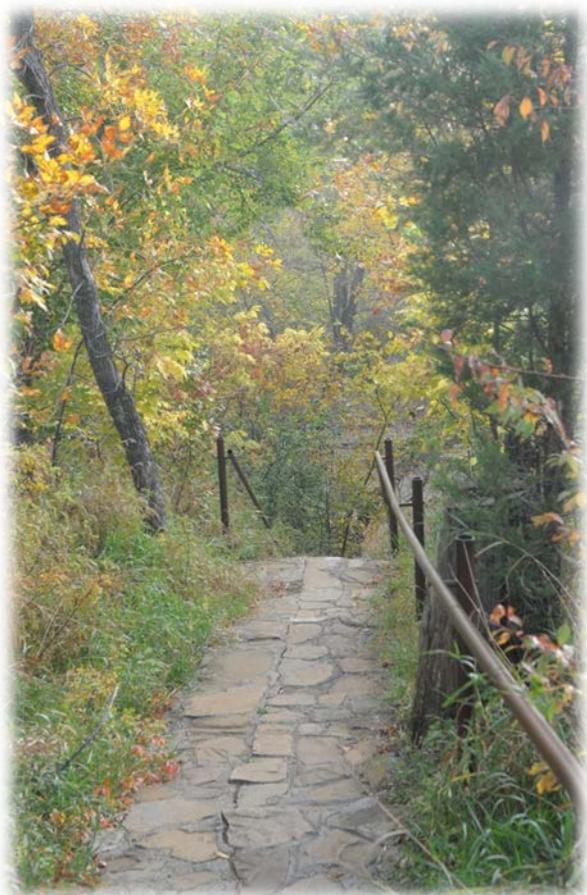
Feeding Frenzies...

- ❖ Muskrats fattening up on starch-rich cattails
- ❖ Cedar waxwings feasting on high bush cranberries.
- ❖ Yellow jackets swarming to anything that is sweet.
- ❖ Northern flickers flocking to lawns and roadsides.
- ❖ Squirrels gathering and storing nuts.
- ❖ Bluejays visiting feeders.
- ❖ Chickadees gathering seeds and storing them in hundreds of hiding places.



Subtle Changes...

- ❧ Birches, cottonwoods, green ash and aspens turning golden yellow.
- ❧ Highbush cranberries ripening.
- ❧ Tiny, ballooning spiders riding on silken threads carried off by the warm, autumn breezes.
- ❧ Drone bees being kicked out of the hives.
- ❧ Woolly bear caterpillar crossing a path. Some believe, if the black stripes on each end are longer than the middle stripe, the winter will be harsh.
- ❧ Watching later sunrises and earlier sunsets.
- ❧ Noticing the fall turnover in the lakes.
- ❧ Young beavers being kicked out of the lodges, forced to fend for themselves.
- ❧ Frost becoming more common.



- ❧ Garter and red-bellied snakes sunning on the pavement perhaps for the last time this season.
- ❧ Painted turtle crawling out of cool pond waters to warm themselves on nearby logs.
- ❧ Night frosts killing millions of mosquitos.
- ❧ Frogs begin to disappear as they search for the perfect winter resting spot.



Everyone must take the time to
sit and watch the leaves turn.

Elizabeth Lawrence

