

Iron County REPORTER

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Celebrate Johnny Appleseed at local apple festival

BEECHWOOD — Fall weather calls for fall activities, and the 12th Annual Beechwood Historical Society's Apple Fest has everything covered. Johnny Appleseed is celebrating 250 years!

This year, the event is scheduled for Sept. 28 from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The yard will be filled with local vendors, selling apple jellies, jams and other baked goods.

Also, treat yourself to the cider press with hand-picked local apples.

Kids will have a blast with free arts and crafts, activities and youth archery.

No need to go anywhere for lunch, as there will be brats and hotdogs for sale. There's also a pie contest.

Beechwood Hall is located at 178 Beechwood Store Road. For more information, follow the Beechwood Historical Society Facebook page or call 906-284-1501.



2023 Beechwood Historical Society's Apple Fest.

Ninth Annual Harvest & Haunt Fall Festival

IRON RIVER – The Iron County Economic Chamber Alliance, in partnership with the Iron River DDA and in collaboration with local businesses and organizations, will host the Ninth Annual Harvest & Haunt Fall Festival Saturday, Sept. 28 from 4-9 p.m. at the Klint Safford Memorial RV Park in Iron River.

"We've got some fun for everyone," said Brett Smithson, Assistant Director. "As always, we try to make this event as free as possible for the community." Smithson said this year's festival will include offerings for students and young children, including a Caution Tape Maze and free hotdogs courtesy of the First Lutheran Church. The festival will also include trick-or-treating in the Haunted Campground from 4-7 p.m. and the popular Family Fun Zone, including free kids' games and crafts, a bounce house, face painting, free prizes and more.

"And for the adults," Smithson added, "there's local food and craft vendors, live music, a beer/wine tent and the ever-impressive bonfire brought to us by the West Iron County Fire Department that will be lit at 7 p.m."

This year's live music features local talent including Melanie Rose, a singer/songwriter from Crystal Falls. Melanie Rose will be playing from 4-6 p.m.

The headliner, with music starting at 6:30 p.m., right before the bonfire blazes until 9 p.m., is Kyndrid, an Iron River based group whose style is classic rock.

Chamber businesses and service organizations will be on site throughout the afternoon and evening as "Trick-or-Treat Booths" offering candy and games for kids, promotional materials and products, and information about upcoming events.

"Celebrate the beginning of fall with family fun and great friends," said Smithson, who encourages attendees to dress in costume and enjoy the fall colors throughout the park.

For more information call 906-265-3822.



2023 Harvest & Haunt Festival Bonfire.

Shamco named 2024 timber harvesting logging business of the year



The Shamion family, from left, Eric, Todd, Kris, Scott and Ryan Shamion.

IRON RIVER – It's been an exciting and busy year for the third-generation loggers at Shamco Inc. after being named the 2024 timber harvesting logging business of the year and their recent \$5.5 million lumber mill expansion in Iron River.

The family found themselves as the cover story in the recent issue of the Timber Harvesting and Forest Operations magazine for the prestigious award. According to the article, Shamco Inc. is the 27th logging operation to win this award, and only the second company from Michigan to be awarded.

"We are very honored to have been awarded the timber harvesting logging business of the year," said co-owner, Scott Shamion. "Especially since there are other well known logging companies in the country."

Acceptance of the award will take place at the annual American Logger's council meeting in October in California.

This isn't their only award this year, however, as they were also named Logger of the Year by the Michigan Association of Michigan back in May.

"I think it's a testimonial of all the hard work of the team members over the years," he said. "We have

exceptional people that we get to work with every day, and they are a big part of our success."

Shamco Inc. began in 1997 when Todd Shamion started the company after working with Shamion Brothers. By 2009 all four brothers were owners of Shamco. Currently, the company has 35 employees ranging from heavy machine operators to office staff and together have over 60 years of experience in the timber logging industry.

The company started with only one set of equipment: two machines and a logging truck. In 1999, another set of equipment and logging truck was purchased. Today, the company has several sets of equipment and logging trucks, along with other necessary tools for the operation to keep the crews going.

"We are definitely one of the larger companies in our region," Scott Shamion said. "Most of them are much smaller."

In addition to timber harvesting, Shamco also provides forest management plans and wildlife habitat enhancement. 280,000 pounds of pulpwood are produced by Shamco and its sub-contractors on an annual basis. Shamco has expanded through the years by forming Shamco Lumber, Inc., a partnership with Jon Richter in 2018 and

again in 2021 when they partnered with Brad Suheski in S&S Tree Works, a full-service tree removal service.

Shamco Lumber Inc. recently hosted a grand opening of the recent lumber mill expansion in June. The grand opening celebration included tours of the mill and information behind the process the lumber goes through in the mill. The mill was originally owned by Jon Richter and his father in 2003 but became a partnership in 2018 with the Shamion brothers. In 2021, the new expansion began. The \$5.5 million expansion included an automatic railroad stacker, which takes lumber that has been cut into ties and then stacks the ties and groups them together, along with an addition to the building itself. This expansion now allows the mill to process one log per minute.

Many of the employees at Shamco Inc. have been there for over 20 years, allowing relationships to prosper, according to Scott.

"Honesty, integrity, and building relationships with people," were listed as core values for the company. "One of our pillars of success is that we have had long-term employees that have done so much to help us get where we are. It's like having other owners out there. These guys can do everything we can do from starting a job to building roads, to fixing equipment."

The local community is also important to the Shamion Family, and they are also known for their cancer-fundraising initiatives including a pink logging truck. The company also sponsors and hosts forestry field trips for students.

"We started the relay for life in our area and we do different things to raise money for the American Cancer Society and local cancer closet. We live here, work here, and try to support the community," Scott said.



Shamco received 'Logger of the Year' award in 2023.

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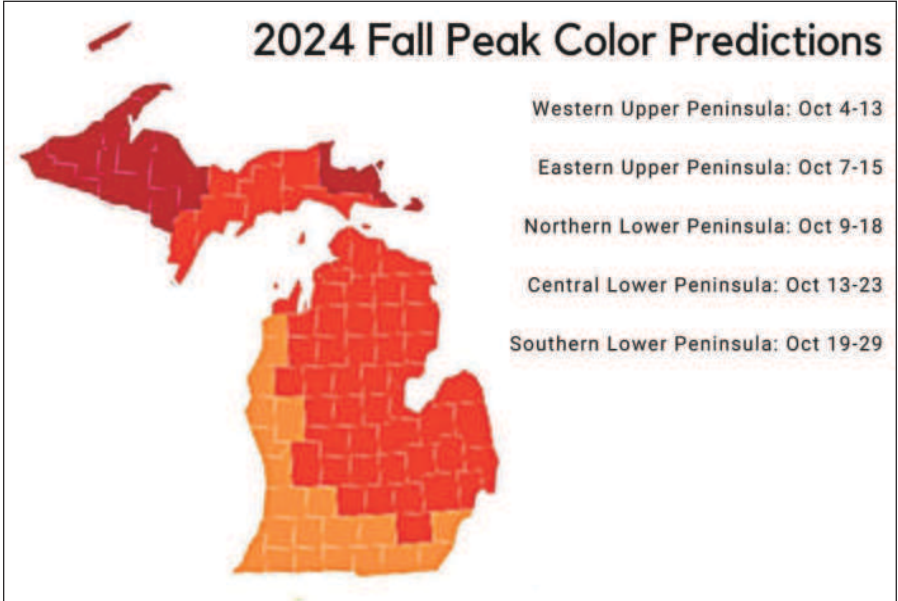
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Autumn in the Woods



Fall colors will soon take over Michigan’s county roads in the U.P.

CRA OF MICHIGAN

LANSING – As the crisp fall air arrives, Michiganders flock to the best color viewing spots – and many of those are located alongside the Upper Peninsula’s county roads. It’s the ideal time to enjoy an afternoon drive and take in the splendor of the fall leaves.

“The County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan encourages Michiganders to explore the beauty of the Upper Peninsula this fall,” said Denise Donohue, CRA CEO. “We all know Michigan has a lot to offer, and the changing leaves are just one of the state’s admirable qualities.”

The County Road Association of Michigan has worked with the state’s 83 county road agencies to develop a list of the best county roads in the state for fall color. The list is located on CRA’s website at micountyroads.org/mibackroads.

This list of fall color drives reflects the best suggestions from eight U.P. county road agencies. Peak viewing conditions for the Upper Peninsula are expected from Sept. 25 to Oct. 9.

Listed in alphabetical order, the following counties’ best fall color drives are:

Chippewa County - North and South Caribou Lake Roads in the DeTour Village area, Gogomain Road from Goetzville to Pickford, Lakeshore Drive from Brimley to M-123, and Salt Point Road from M-28 to Lakeshore Drive

Dickinson County - Kramer Drive on the north side of the city of Iron Mountain and Metropolitan Road near Felch

Gogebic County - Black River Road to Black River Harbor, Lake Road from



Ironwood to Little Girls Point and Superior Falls, Black River Road from Bessemer to Copper Peak and Black River Harbor, Wolf Mountain Road from US-2 to Wolf Mountain, County Road 519N from Wakefield to the mouth of the Big Presque Isle River and Porcupine State Park, and Thousand Island Lake Road from US-2 to Sylvania Wilderness Park

Houghton County - Covered Drive Road, Freda Road, and Calumet Waterworks Road

Iron County - Ottawa Lake Road/Hagerman Lake Road loop, Pentoga Trail (County Road 639) to County Road 424 along Chicagon Lake and Pentoga Road from County Road 424 to Brule River, Bates-Amasa Road (County Road 643) US-2 to US-141 by Paint River and Hemlock River, and Gibbs City Road and Ponozzo Road

Keweenaw County - Brockway Mountain Drive, Lac La Belle Road, Gratiot Lake Road, Mohawk-Gay Road, Eagle Harbor Road, Cliff Drive, and Five Mile Point Road

Marquette County - Triple A off County Road 510 in Big Bay and M-35 from County Road 480 to Gwinn

Ontonagon County - South Boundary Road from Presquile to Ontonagon

Autumn Events

• Year-round	Hunting may be taken year-round with a valid Michigan hunting a license. Opossum, porcupine, weasel, red squirrel, skunk, ground squirrel, woodchuck, Russian boar, feral pigeon, starling and house sparrow, coyote.
• Sept. 15	Squirrel, Fox and Gray (Black Phase included) Opening, Cottontail Rabbit and/or Snowshoe Hare Opening, Ruffed Grouse Opening, Woodcock Opening, Wild Turkey Corn Maze, Loud Acres Farm, Crystal Falls (7-10 p.m.)
• Sept.–Oct.	Open Mic Night – Windsor Center
• Sept. 28	Harvest and Haunt – Klint Safford RV Park from 4 - 9 p.m.
• Sept. 28	Beechwood Applefest, Beechwood Hall from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
• Sept. 28	Deer Archery Opening
• Oct. 1	Fall Fest: Quilt & Fine Arts Auction/Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp
• Oct. 5	Cranberry Festival, Eagle River, Wisconsin
• Oct. 5-6	Deer Hunting - Independence Hunt
• Oct. 17-20	Crystal Falls Halloween Candy Bash
• Oct. 26	Open Mic Night – Windsor Center
• Oct. 26	Deer Regular Firearm Opening
• Nov. 15	Crystal Falls 3rd Annual Buck Fest (4-7 p.m.)
• Nov. 23	



HARVEST & Haunt Fall Festival

Presented in part by the Iron River DDA

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 | 4-9 PM

Klint Safford Memorial RV Park, Iron River

4 PM

Festival Kickoff
Beer/Wine Tent & Food Vendors
Crafts & Business Booths



6:30-9 PM

Live Music: Kyndrid

4-7 PM

FREE Trick-or-Treating in the Haunted Campground
FREE Kids' Games



7 PM

Lighting of the Awesome Harvest & Haunt Bonfire

4-6 PM

Live Music: Melanie Rose



9 PM

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Autumn in the Woods

Smokey Bear turns 80

USDA FOREST SERVICE

80 years is a tremendous milestone—for anyone. To make it to 80 means you have overcome life’s greatest challenges and you truly become the elder, the sage, the one who knows a thing or two and should be listened to. Being the spokes-bear, if you will, of the longest running and most successful advertising campaign in American history, at 80 years old, I think Smokey Bear would agree. And so does the USDA Forest Service.

Smokey’s actual birthday was Aug. 9. However, in January, the Forest Service which has, in cooperation with the Ad Council and the National Association of State Foresters, managed the image of Smokey Bear since the 1940s launched a yearlong celebration. The kickoff was with Smokey sharing his iconic phrase of ‘Only You Can Prevent Wildfires’ in the Tournament of Roses Parade Jan. 1.

And the fun continues through the year with the Smokey Bear balloon appearing in the Macy’s Thanksgiving



Day Parade and the lighting of the U.S. Capital Christmas Tree.

To keep up on national events surrounding Smokey’s 80th, follow the Forest Service social media sites as well as the Ad Council’s Smokey Bear website www.smokeybear.com and social media sites.

Despite the success of Smokey Bear’s campaign over the years, wildfire prevention remains one of the most critical issues affecting our country’s forests and grasslands. With over 80 percent of wildfires being started accidentally or by careless or bad behavior, Smokey’s message is as relevant and urgent today as it was in 1944.

Help us get the word out about Smokey’s 80th by reposting official Forest Service or Ad Council social media posts or by telling all your friends and family that only they can help prevent wild fires by spreading Smokey’s messaging far and wide.



Letters to Smokey Bear reveal promise of hope for the future

BY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION, U.S. FOREST SERVICE IN FORESTRY

Smokey Bear, the iconic symbol of wildfire prevention for 80 years, is for many people a comforting symbol of a promise that everything will be okay. As long as we all work together, as one of Smokey’s young pen pals wrote recently:

“Dear Smokey: I would like to be a Junior Forest Ranger and help the big rangers. I promise to look after the forest and watch out for baddies making fires and damaging trees. Love Adam”

The letters come one-by-one or in neatly piled stacks, with carefully drawn portraits and hastily scrawled letters. They want to know if Smokey Bear is okay. They ask if he can write to them. They show compassion, knowing Smokey’s mother did not make it out of the fire.

“Dear Smokey: I think your story was awesome. I want to prevent forest fires. I am with you forest fires stink. I am so sorry that your mother past away. Someday I want to be like you. Reed”

For 80 years, hundreds of thousands of letters have landed on Smokey Bear’s desk, sometimes addressed as only “Smokey Bear 20252.” The letters came even though 20 years ago Smokey’s specially designated ZIP code was decommissioned.

But thanks to the joint efforts of the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Postal Service, 20252 is once again Smokey Bear’s official ZIP code.

“Luckily, the letters never stopped coming,” said Bob Schneider, the Forest Service volunteer who helps Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl open mail and answer letters. “I spent my entire life living near and camping in national forests, and you can’t underestimate the importance of the lessons taught by Smokey Bear. Generations of children have learned to be more careful and not to play with matches.

“I was one of those children. And today, I could not be more proud than to be helping Smokey Bear continue to teach that ‘Only you can prevent wildfires.’”

“Dear Smokey the Bear. I love you so much! You are my hero! I live in Wisconsin and we have the amazing, the beautiful, Nicoley Chegomogan National Forest. Love Future Forest Ranger/Smokey’s Friend Flynn”

The letters, drawings and even Christmas cards have not stopped coming. And they are not always from children.

At one time students who wrote to Smokey Bear received tokens in return, including a copy of ‘The True Story of Smokey Bear’. (U.S. Forest Service)

“Dear Smokey: My grandson is turning 4, and I would like him to start learning about wildfires. You were so good to my children. Could you send something to him?”

Smokey’s mailbox also gets big letters like the 24-inch by 30-inch pieces of paper from an Ohio pre-school that includes a list of questions from the 4-year-olds:

“Did you ever go camping? Josh”

“Where do you live now? Sophia”

“You’re my best friend. Myla”

“I want you to live with me. Braden”



Iron River Parade 2021, Smokey Bear.



2024 U.P. Championship Rodeo parade1



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Autumn in the Woods

Sixteen Michigan Apples

Michigan is the nation's second-largest producer of apples. There are more than 14.9 million apple trees covering 34,500 acres on 775 family-run farms in Michigan. Growers pride themselves on a rich heritage of producing an array of fine Michigan Apple varieties.

Braeburn - These rich, spicy-flavored apples are very firm with a crisp bite. Ideal for pies and baking, they also have a good fresh-eating quality!

Cortland - A hint of tartness makes this a great baking variety, used frequently in desserts. A descendent of the McIntosh, this variety is a bit sweeter than its ancestor. Known for its white flesh and excellent flavor.

Empire - An excellent lunchbox apple or crunch snack! Sweet and tart at the same time. Use for fresh-cut slices, candy and caramel apples. Also used in baking. Texture remains very firm, a good storing apple.

EverCrisp® - A newer apple variety, EverCrisp® is sweet, juicy and firm. It stores well and is long-lasting. Packs a powerful crunch.

Fuji - New to Michigan's apple line-up. Fantastic sweet and tart flavor, with a low acid content. An incredibly good keeper, Fuji stays crisp for weeks!

Gala - Talk about a great apple: Crisp snappy bite over a mellow sweetness. Michigan's third most popular apple for fresh eating or cooking. Looks great, smells sweet, eats like a dream!

Golden Delicious - A gingery-smooth, sweet taste treat lies under a thin skin. The most popular yellow apple, Goldens may be eaten fresh or cut up in salads. Professional's choice for applesauce or cider, baking pies and other desserts.

Honeycrisp - This apple is hot! And mighty crisp. Combines unusual color and excellent sweet flavor with a great bite. Use it for fresh eating, fresh-cut slices or cut up in salads.

Ida Red - Suits your every use! Eat fresh or for cooking. Taste is both tangy and tart. Flesh is white, crisp and juicy. Favored for sauces, pies and desserts. Texture holds up well when baked.

Jonagold - Make sure you try this one! Superbly crisp and juicy with shades of tart and sweet in each apple. Usually large and aromatic. Highly ranked by apple connoisseurs. Best from Michigan's cooler climate.

Jonathan - Both pretty and popular! Used for fresh eating and cooking. Juicy flavor has a spicy tang that blends well with other apples. Michigan's cooler climate produces superb Jonathans. Discovered in Woodstock, New York!

McIntosh - Classic large, round apple for eating out of hand! Ultra-juicy white flesh, lightly tart flavor and excellent fresh apple aroma. A perky addition to salads. Excellent in applesauce and cider. Also used in pies.

Northern Spy - Intriguing name, yet this apple is a professional baker's dream! An antique apple still popular because of tart, acidic properties that cook up well in applesauce, pie and other dishes. A hard apple that ripens late and stores well.

Paula Red - Don't miss this late summer apple! Available only into October. Pleasingly tart flavor and good aroma. Great in back-to-school lunches, or early season baking. Discovered in Sparta, Michigan!

Red Delicious - America's most popular apple, known for the "five little bumps" on the bottom. Best for fresh eating and snacks. Full-flavored sweet taste, yellowish flesh and crisp texture. Discovered over 100 years ago in Iowa.

Rome - A big, round apple right out of storybooks! Romes have mild, sweet flavor. Most popular for baking because it holds flavor and shape well. A Southern favorite, although discovered in Ohio.

Apple & Cinnamon Smoothie

This apple cinnamon smoothie recipe is the perfect drink to start your day! With a delightful blend of fresh apples, cinnamon and creamy goodness in every sip!

RECOMMENDED APPLE VARIETY:
Gala, Golden Delicious, Jonagold, Honeycrisp, Fuji

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 sweet apple
- 1 peeled banana
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 tablespoon creamy roasted almond butter
- 1/2 teaspoon chia seeds

DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine the cinnamon, apple, banana, honey, 2/3 cup almond milk and almond butter in a blender. Blend, starting on low and moving to high, for 2 minutes, or until all the grit of the apple is smooth.
2. Add a couple ice cubes and the chia and blend again. Add a little more of the almond milk if you like your smoothie on the milky side. Serve, sprinkled with cinnamon. Enjoy!



Maple Ginger Sweet Potatoes with Apples

Shakeup your taste buds with Maple Ginger Sweet Potatoes and Apples, a blend of sweet maple, earthy potatoes and delicious apples.

RECOMMENDED APPLE VARIETY:
McIntosh, Paula Red, Rome, Gala

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 lbs. sweet potatoes, peeled & cut into bite-sized pieces (*about 5 cups*)
- 2 medium tart cooking apples (*about 2 cups*), chopped
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1 1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup maple syrup

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a slow cooker, combine all but water and syrup.
2. Mix the syrup with the water and pour over everything in the cooker.
3. Cover and cook on low setting for 3-4 hours or on high for 1 1/2 hours.



Slow Cooker Apple BBQ Meatballs

Enjoy the simplicity of Slow Cooker Apple BBQ Meatballs, featuring meatballs smothered in sweet and tangy apple BBQ sauce.

RECOMMENDED APPLE VARIETY:
Gala, Jonagold, McIntosh

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup applesauce
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- 1 egg
- 1 Apple, finely chopped
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 cup Italian breadcrumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- black pepper to taste
- salt to taste
- Pinch of red pepper flakes (optional)
- Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a 3-quart slow cooker, stir together applesauce and barbecue sauce.
2. Place egg in large mixing bowl and whisk until smooth.
3. Add apple, beef, breadcrumbs, garlic powder, black pepper, salt and red pepper flakes.
4. Mix with hands until just combined. Do not overmix.
5. Using hands, form mixture into meatballs just smaller than golf balls.
6. Place meatballs in bowl of slow cooker and gently stir to cover meatballs with sauce.
7. Cover and cook on high for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until meatballs are cooked through.
8. Stir mixture well and serve garnished with parsley, if desired.



Mini Apple Pie Pancake Kabobs

Enjoy mini apple pie pancakes, fresh apples with cinnamon on skewers. Perfect for breakfast or snacking.

RECOMMENDED APPLE VARIETY:
Cortland, Gala, Ida Red, Jonathan, Northern Spy, Rome, Braeburn, McIntosh, Empire

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons pancake mix
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup chopped apples
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ground nutmeg to taste
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 or 5 10-inch skewers, cut in half
- whipped cream for garnishing (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. In large bowl, mix together pancake mix, milk, egg, apples, cinnamon, nutmeg and vanilla.
2. Heat 10-inch skillet or griddle over medium heat. Lightly coat inside of skillet with butter.
3. Drop tablespoonfuls of batter into skillet; cook until edges are dry and bubbles begin to form on the top. Turn and cook until golden brown. Repeat with remaining batter, adding more butter as needed to keep skillet lightly greased.
4. Place 4 to 5 pancakes on each skewer with whipped cream between each pancake. Top with syrup, and serve.



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Autumn in the Woods

Love Autumn? Five unusual facts about this cozy season

What do you think of when you picture Autumn? For many, this season is all about settling down in the evening with a mug of our favorite hot chocolate, for walks in the woods underneath the glowing colors of Autumn leaves, and eating s'mores over a fire at dusk.

However, the Autumn season has some pretty interesting facts behind it. Five things that you didn't know about Autumn so that you can impress your friends and family in time for this year's season change.

1. The Autumn equinox is different each year
The Autumn equinox happens every September, each year it lands on a different date, normally either September 22 or 23. The equinox is when the sun is directly in line with the Earth's celestial equator, meaning day and night is of equal length. This year Autumn equinox falls on September 22.

The reason why the equinox falls on a different date each year is because the Gregorian calendar (the one used by most of the world) counts only 365 days a year, rather than the 365.25 days the Earth actually takes to orbit the sun.

2. Autumn was once called Harvest
The Autumn season once had a completely different name; during the 12th and 13th centuries in England,

Autumn was known as 'haerfest' (which also meant the act of taking in crops), or in today's spelling, 'harvest'. One of the reasons it earned this name was because the full moon nearest to the Autumn equinox is called the harvest moon.

The harvest wasn't just significant because it owed its title to the moon – harvest was also a time where farmers could finally reap the rewards from the crops they sowed, resulting in an abundance of produce.

3. The term 'Fall' isn't exclusive to America only
Although Americans who have labelled the Autumn season 'fall', it was actually a fairly common term in England up until relatively recently. The phrase was commonly used in England up until the 17th century, derived from – unsurprisingly – the shortening of the phrase "fall of the leaf".

4. Autumn babies live longer
Although the days might be getting shorter, those born in Autumn could live longer, according to a study carried out by the Journal of Aging Research. The study found that 30% of U.S. centenarians born during 1880-1895 were born in the Autumn season.

One of the theories for this is because Autumn marks a change in temperature: babies born in colder months

can therefore develop a greater immunity to colds and flues. Some also believe simply that cold, crisp Autumn air is good for the constitution, resulting in the child growing up with strong health, although this may simply be an old wives' tale.

5. Autumn and animals
Have you ever really thought about a squirrel's brain capacity, until now. During the Autumn season, squirrels allegedly become smarter. Although these little fellas seem pretty content with the simple things in life, during Autumn squirrels actually show a 15 percent increase in the size of their hippocampus: the part of the brain which controls the memory and emotion of the animal.

As Autumn is the prime time for a squirrel to find nuts and seeds to store away for the barren winter months, this little critter has to be on top of his game to find the best picks.

Some animals can't stand Autumn. In fact, the Monarch butterfly dislikes it so much that it'll fly South from America to the warmth of Mexico and parts of California at a speed between 12 and 25 miles per hour. This fluttering fella is the only insect that migrates up to 2,500 miles for nicer weather.



A Bald Eagle sits in a tree with the beautiful fall background scanning the area.

Fall is upon us, what can we do Fall scavenger activity hunt

Some might say the end of summer is sad, but for some, that just means it's time to gear up for all the fun fall has to bring. Enjoy doing the following list of things, make sure you take pictures so you can create a fall photo collage.

1. Find a scarecrow and take a selfie with it.
2. Take time to get lost in a corn maze.
3. Nothing better than a fall hayride with friends, take pictures.
4. Visit a pumpkin patch and get together with a few people and have a pumpkin carving party, don't forget to roast some seeds!
5. Get a basket and collect apples and make apple pie. (Don't forget to share!)
6. Create a fall photo shoot with family, friends or by

yourself.

7. Go on a bike ride, see how many different kinds of trees/leaves you can identify. Collect clippings and create your Festive Fall Wreath, take a picture!
8. Visit a sunflower field and smell the beauty and dance. Nature is soothing for your soul.
9. Collect some acorns, bake them (get rid of bugs) and paint them (with acrylic paint, two coats) and put them into a vase, jar or some kind of decorative bowl.
10. Rake a pile of leaves and get a picture of you jumping into it.
11. Collect some rocks and paint them in fall colors.
12. Take a walk in the woods and see how many different types of mushrooms you can find. Remember to take pictures so you can identify them.



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Autumn in the Woods

Needs for all seasons await at The Tackle Box

The Tackle Box in Land O'Lakes, owned by Karen Weaver, the shop offers products for all seasons ranging from swimming goggles to snowshoes.

Open since 1937, Karen is the sixth owner of The Tackle Box. After growing up in Sayner, she and her late husband returned to the area to buy the shop August of 1996. Karen said that the nature of Land O'Lakes and its family-oriented community is one thing that attracted them to the area.

"The Tackle Box is like two shops under one roof," Karen said. "There's the gift gallery and the sport shop."

The fishing gear section includes fishing rods and combos, live bait, line and more. Free line comes with any purchase of a combo or reel, as well as re-spooling services being offered.

The Tackle Box sells live bait. The selection includes six different kinds of minnows, four different sizes of leeches, night crawlers and four styles of worms.

The clothing and souvenir section is a popular stop amongst Land O'Lakes residents and visitors alike. This area of the gift gallery offers a multitude of items such as puzzles, jewelry, books, high quality leather belts, swimming accessories and candy. Clothing sizes 2XL through 5XL can also be found in the shop.

Also found here is Karen's customized "LANDO" attire. Shirts can be found with the name LANDO on them, a common nickname for the town used by residents and familiars of the area. With a new design every year, she sells these as a Land O'Lakes souvenir.

The Tackle Box is also ready for hunting season. With items such as ammo, gun cases, cleaning supplies and more, customers will find everything they need. They also do bore sighting.

The Tackle Box sells both Wisconsin and Michigan DNR licenses and permits, and is conveniently located between the two states.



The Tackle Box offers a wide variety of live bait for purchase.

The shop also offers a fun map activity to customers. Those that come in from out of town can place a pin on a map where they live, showing how people have come to The Tackle Box from all over the world.

At The Tackle Box, all items can be found at a reasonable price. "We are a family store with prices to please everybody," Karen said. The store does not accept credit or debit cards, but they do have an ATM. Karen also has an FFL.

The shop is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays 8 a.m. to noon, and closed Wednesdays. They are open year-round with seasonal hours.

For more information, call-715-547-3434, email-info@tackbox.com, or visit-tackbox.com.



A Partridge scavenging for food among the fallen leaves.



This bobcat sat in the middle of the trail, just taking a break!



Fall wheeler ride to Lake Ste. Kathryn Campground.



Stolling on a trail in the sunflower farm.

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Autumn in the Woods

The grand procession

“Whoa, it came out of the sky landed just a little south of Moline,” John Fogerty

BY JOHN PEPIN
DEPUTY PUBLIC
INFORMATION OFFICER
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES

It was one of those rare moments when I felt like I was momentarily in a Hollywood motion picture.

My character was not unlike that of an unnamed farmer who, in digging with a long-handled spade in his field, happens to glance to the sky as something distracts him.

Turning upward, he sees the monster or the flying saucer or whatever it might be and exclaims, “What in good God is that?”

In my case, it was evening – just about dusk.

I was returning from a fishing trip, trying to get the back door of the house unlocked while carrying my fishing waders over my left shoulder.

I had a pair of blue jeans draped over my arm with my cellphone and reading glasses in my left hand and the handle of a cooler containing ice and fish and my house keys clutched in my right hand.

I held the metal storm door open with my left side and I put the cooler down on the cement to free my right hand to put the key in the dead bolt. In that downward motion, my attention was drawn to the sky above me.

But what I saw didn’t prompt an excited exclamation.

Instead, I stood in hushed silence at what, for me, was a solemn sight.

Time had seemingly stopped dead. I heard no sound at all.

About 30 feet above the treetops, there were V-shaped forms, gliding and tilting, dipping and soaring. They flew in what seemed like haphazard fashion, but I knew they were chasing airborne insects.

These were common nighthawks. What made the occasion solemn for me was the realization that these birds were already on their southward migration to South America.

That meant confirmation that despite my best wishes and hopes to the



Common nighthawks on an August southward migration flight over Iron Mountain and M-95 in Dickinson County. **John Pepin**

contrary, the grand procession south of some of my favorite birds was well underway.

The chill of autumn and its slow decline and dissolve into white scenes of winter will now no doubt be around just a few more bends down the road. I can almost smell turkey and hear sleigh bells. Ugh.

I had seen nighthawks migrating before, but never over my own backyard. This made it seem like they were coming specifically to say goodbye to me. It was like they understood their importance to me and wanted to let me know that they knew.

To make the occasion even more poignant, interspersed with the nighthawks were small groups of chimney swifts, which like the nighthawks are another of my all-time favorite bird species.

These are birds I’ve known since my earliest childhood days. Nighthawks occasionally could be spotted on the wing over our old backyard during the springtime or summer when they were hunting bugs.

Chimney swifts nested in our neighbor’s brick chimney, and I could watch them fly into it each summer evening, just before dark.

Since 1966, the populations of both species have diminished significantly, at least partially because of changing human habits. Chimney swifts are estimated to have declined by 67%, and common nighthawk numbers have diminished by nearly half (48%).

With humans building fewer brick chimneys and flat, gravel-covered rooftops, chimney swifts and common nighthawks have fewer suitable nesting sites, respectively. In some cases, humans have sought to help remedy this situation by building nesting sites for chimney swifts

and installing graveled rooftop sections for nighthawks.

Chimney swifts are found across eastern portions of the United States during summer before migrating to the Amazon region of South America each fall. Common nighthawks range across the entire United States and north as far as the Northwest Territories, flying deep into portions of South America for the winter months.

During migration, both species can be seen traveling in large numbers.

In flight, common nighthawks can be identified by white patches on the undersides of their wings, which are often visible even when the birds are at great height. They also have a white chin patch.

Their “peent” songs, which resemble those of American woodcocks, often indicate the presence of common nighthawks on the wing.

In my experience this week, I only heard one call from any of the nighthawks. They floated over in artfully expressive flight – completely silent.

In all, over the course of 20 minutes or so, I saw roughly 100 nighthawks, with no telling how many I had missed before I noticed the procession or after I’d gone inside the house to clean my brook trout.

The chimney swifts only numbered about 30-40 birds, total. They flew past eating insects along with the nighthawks in squadron flights of about a half-dozen each.

In contrast to the nighthawks, the swifts were constantly chattering while flying over, which is a very common behavior for them. Their black bodies are shaped like cigars, and their curved wings shake in sputtering motion as they fly.

In my earliest years of any kind of

awareness or acknowledgement of the presence of birds, common nighthawks and chimney swifts were among the first species I came to know and enjoy.

When I moved out of state for several years, I encountered white-throated and Vaux’s swifts and even black swifts that nested behind a waterfall in a canyon outside Los Angeles.

There were lesser nighthawks and common poorwills in the deserts in California and buff-collared nightjars in southeastern Arizona that I enjoyed.

But these other, often much rarer, cousins could not compete in my heart, soul and mind with my early Michigan experiences with common nighthawks and chimney swifts.

In years since I have returned home to the Upper Peninsula, I have also become more acquainted with another nighthawk relative, the whip-poor-will. I never encountered them here when I was growing up, but now frequently hear them singing in the evenings while out fishing in the springtime.

Over the past couple of weeks, there have been reports from other areas in the Upper Peninsula of nighthawks migrating south. No doubt flocks are also floating over portions of the Lower Peninsula as well.

Because both these species are most often only seen when they are on the wing, I suspect many people may not recognize them or perhaps have never even seen them or realized what they were beyond “just birds.”

When I saw the nighthawks, I dropped everything I had been holding, shut the back door to the house and stood, watching silently with my arms crossed.

I was in awe of the presence of so many of these birds at one time. Typically, I might see two or three together at most overhead during the spring or summer.

The mental images I captured, some still and others in video-like segments, will last me a very long time.

While I am deeply touched to have been able to arrive home just in time to see the nighthawks and the swifts over my own backyard, I remain a bit unnerved by the experience.

I hope it isn’t a goodbye for good. No one could have convinced me that Upper Peninsula hibernacula would lose more than 80% of their resident bats, but here we are, on the downside of that disclosure. It’s a staggering loss, with all hibernacula infected with white-nose syndrome.

I know it’s silly to attach human feelings and sensibilities to the patterns and behaviors of wild animals, but I do feel the infrequency of special occurrences like the nighthawk migration above my backyard holds some sort of greater significance somehow.

Like a lot of things that I think and feel these days, I guess time will tell what it all means. For now, there’s watching and waiting and shimmering hope.

Find out more about common nighthawks and chimney swifts at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology’s [AllAboutBirds.org website](#).

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Fall Color Season

BY BILL COOK

The annual color change makes autumn the favorite season for many. While gorgeous, it's part of a much longer physiological process of tree survival during a harsh season.

As I was driving along US-2 west of Iron River, a buddy of mine asked me why do the trees change color? I responded with a goofy comment, then followed-up by saying it's all about chemistry.

The timing is relatively consistent, as it is controlled by a balance between dark and light hours. This window is roughly 10 days to two weeks from the end of September and into the middle of October.

Tree species comply, more or less, with their biological clocks, but not every species uses the same clock. The ashes and balm-of-Gileads go first. Oaks will persist longer. Sugar maple is a stickler for punctuality. Trees along the Lake Superior shore have milder microclimates and often change colors at the end of the window. Forests on the shallow soils of northern Iron County are among the first landscapes to transform.

Red maples along our highways often cause comments about an early color change. These trees are responding to unfavorable growing conditions rather than the onset of an early fall.

There is a lot of biochemistry related to the annual undressing of the forest. Those particularly valuable elements get pulled into storage. The magnesium heart of the chlorophyll molecule is a good example. As the green chlorophyll molecules break down, other colors appear. But, that's not the entire story.

Should the first hard frost happen while the leaves retain good stocks of sugars, we should usually see a better color show. Color intensity is also a function of tree health and September temperatures.

While timing is largely controlled by photoperiod, the intensity and visual quality of the fall colors can be impacted by weather. The compounds with red, yellow and purple pigments may be brighter, or persist for a

little longer, with warm days and frosty nights. But it's a risky business to predict color change patterns.

The process is part of what trees undergo to make themselves hardy for the cold and dryness of winter. Northern trees have some astounding and fascinating adaptations.

The geography and expansive forest of Michigan provides some of the most colorful fall displays in the world. Annual treks by thousands of leafpeepers provide testimony to this fact. It is a good time to be in the woods, as bird hunters will quietly attest.

Much of our hardwood, or broad-leaf, forest consists of maples, aspens and oaks. We eagerly anticipate the crimson and gold of maples, which usually outperforms the color changes in other parts of the continent. Our aspens also turn a lively yellow color, especially with the right weather conditions. Oaks exhibit deep purple when the frosts come early. A bright yellow canopy over a snow-white paper birch stand is an experience not soon forgotten.

But, let us not ignore the softwoods, or evergreens. Although they do retain needles year-round, they don't retain them all. The older needles, nearer to the trunk, fall off every year. The only exception is the glorious tamarack. Not only does it lose all its needles each fall, but it typically departs the season in a flaming blaze of gold! It is the last tree to change colors as the forest bids farewell to the growing season.

Once again, the much anticipated season of color change will soon lie behind us. This time of year, many of us hold our breath, lest we miss those few days when the forest canopy alights with the fire and brilliance of the last hurrah of the summer.

Every season hosts a multitude of changes in the forest and all that lives there, including us humans. Fall color is arguably the favorite of all seasonal changes and without doubt the outdoors is teeming with interesting events this time of the year.

Colorblind viewers 'Wow!'

BY HEATHER JOHNSON DUROCHER
TRAILS AND RESOURCES WRITER,
PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Imagine seeing fall's vivid colors, on full display at a scenic state park, for the very first time. This is the experience of some visitors to state parks that feature EnChroma colorblind viewers.

Mike Knack, park manager at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park in the Upper Peninsula, first heard of EnChroma colorblind viewers through his counterparts with the Tennessee state parks system.

"I knew we needed them – the Porkies is such a special place, and we want everyone to be able to enjoy it," said Knack, who learned that 12% of the population has some form of colorblindness. "This is one more way we can offer accessibility in Michigan's state parks and these visitors can experience the views of the park in a similar way."

The Porkies is home to specially adapted EnChroma lenses at the Lake of the Clouds Scenic Overlook (the most photographed feature in the park), the 50-foot Summit Peak Observation Tower (the highest point in the park at nearly 2,000 feet above sea level; look for views of the Apostle Islands to the northwest and Isle Royale to the northeast on clear days!) and Nawadaha Falls on the Presque Isle River, located on the western edge of the park.

Visitors with colorblindness who experience these special viewfinders are in awe about what they're able to see in an entirely new way, Knack said.

"The typical first reaction is 30 seconds of looking through the viewer, then outside of the viewer and back in the viewer before looking back out again to compare and contrast what they are seeing," he said. "This is often followed by another 30 seconds of silence and then finally a 'Wow!' That reaction is exactly why these viewers are so important. The majority of us take for granted the vibrant green trees we see in the summer and the yellows, oranges and reds we see in the fall."



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