

*August 1, 2018*

As we settle into the later stages of summer in the Northland, the activity along the Ruttger's Nature Trail continues to reward the observant nature lover. Watch for the first of the shorebirds starting their August migration south. Solitary Sandpipers can be seen along shorelines searching for invertebrates, snails and slugs. The MN State bird, the Common Loon (those who did not find a mate and reproduce) start to congregate in groups and spend their days fishing in preparation of their upcoming migration. Vigilant Trumpeter Swans are busy protecting their cygnets (young swans) as they continue to grow and start to build their flight muscles by flapping their wings many times a day. Other birds such as Song Sparrows and Flycatchers can be seen along lily pads of Bass Lake foraging for scrumptious bugs. Watch for recently emerged Meadowhawk dragonflies cruising overhead gobbling up those pesky mosquitoes. The last of this year's Purple Martin chicks can be seen poking their heads out of the Martin house awaiting their parent's delivery of muscle-building, protein-filled flying insects. Watch your step as you explore around Bass Lake, you may encounter a variety of fungi (mushrooms) including Boletes emerging from beneath pine needles carpeting the trail or shelf fungi growing from fallen hardwoods. Thanks for reading and being observant of all natures' wonders!

- Ron & LeAnn