



The Katharine Ordway  
Natural History Study Area

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ORDWAY BULLETIN  
No. 90

MACALESTER  
COLLEGE

located at 9550 Inver Grove Trail (Dakota County Road 77), Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

### SPRING FOLLOWS WINTER at ORDWAY.

Journal entry: Apr. 3, 1980: The last patch of snow has disappeared; a large reach of open water has appeared in River Lake.

It is just dawn - or it would be if the rainclouds had not enveloped the place - and a lone Killdeer is screaming overhead, circling in the robust east wind which will be bringing rain in a short while. Its lone voice in the grey dawn is a haunting reminder that the season repeats itself. Every year the killdeer is back and looking for a nesting-site to continue what really did not end last season.

Spring has come back to Ordway, spring with its combination of the new and of the immutable. The woods and the hillsides and banks have lain under a snow blanket for months awaiting the new life's emergence; and this has been joined by the moving forces - the winds and clouds, the returning summer birds - making a vital, vibrant new season.

A miserable-looking and emaciated Muskrat crawled out yesterday onto the edge of the pond to scratch for some fragments of vegetation to sustain him until nourishing forage emerges from the cold earth which is only now beginning to thaw under the warm touches of the afternoon sun.

Spring has indeed come once more to Ordway. A small assembly of Chorus Frogs announces it from the chilly waters of the wet meadow just south of the building. A bevy of Bluejays sass about the place and a flock of Juncoes assembles on the parking-lot as if to make an assembled good-bye to the locality while marking well the location in order to return when winter again drives them southward from their sub-arctic nesting-grounds.

Winter has gone north for the summer.

R. J. CHRISTMAN,  
Naturalist

Feb. 11, 1981