

Kaw Valley Almanac

December 25 - 31, 2023

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Day	Moon rises	South	Moon sets	% Illum/Phase
Monday	03:43 PM	11:39 PM	06:36 AM	97%
Tuesday	04:36 PM		07:39 AM	Full Moon
Wednesday	05:35 PM	12:35 AM	08:33 AM	100%
Thursday	06:38 PM	01:30 AM	09:18 AM	98%
Friday	07:41 PM	02:21 AM	09:55 AM	95%
Saturday	08:44 PM	03:09 AM	10:25 AM	90%
Sunday	09:44 PM	03:52 AM	10:51 AM	84%



This immature hawk perched on a cedar limb is looking for an rodent or stray bird for a quick meal. Judging from the number of hawks on power line poles, fences and trees this time of year, there is enough to live on. Many eagles are awaiting the arrival of snow geese at Loess Bluff National Wildlife Reserve - you can find out here: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/loess-bluffs>



Sun

Jupiter SE, Saturn SW at dusk; Venus E at dawn.

Day	Gets light	Sunrise	Sunset	Gets dark
Monday	06:39 AM	07:37 AM	05:04 PM	06:11 PM
Tuesday	06:39 AM	07:37 AM	05:05 PM	06:11 PM
Wednesday	06:40 AM	07:38 AM	05:06 PM	06:12 PM
Thursday	06:36 AM	07:38 AM	05:06 PM	06:09 PM
Friday	06:37 AM	07:38 AM	05:07 PM	06:09 PM
Saturday	06:37 AM	07:38 AM	05:08 PM	06:10 PM
Sunday	06:37 AM	07:39 AM	05:08 PM	06:11 PM

Live outside the Lawrence area? Get rise and setting times, moon data where you live at: <https://www.timeanddate.com/astronomy/>

§ Year-end hiking provides an opportunity to look at how a very dry fall with a late rain has affected vegetation. Most sunflower and grass seedheads are smaller, as are most hedge apples, except for a scattering of large hedge apples that were still on the tree and took advantage of the late moisture.

§ This year, due to the mild weather, I've seen quite a few young grasshoppers about. What will this mean? Time will tell. Most years, grasshoppers and crickets die in the winter, laying eggs in the soil that hatch in spring. Beetles survive by digging underground or overwinter in egg or larval stages. Many moths survive in waxy pupal stages that survive in cocoons aboveground. Some insects produce antifreeze or eliminate bacteria from their bodily liquids, which means that their fluids can super-cool down to as low as -40° F. without freezing.

§ Packrat nests are easy to pick out this time of year: look for piles of sticks, leaves and grass piled up at the base of trees or sometimes even in the crotch of the tree, above the ground. It is not uncommon for more than one generation of packrat to live in a large nest, with even rabbits, mice, insects, spiders and shrews reportedly sharing the structure at times in the winter.

§ Coyotes can be heard this time of year calling after dark, particularly after the moon rises. They are seen crossing roads in mid-day, too, but are hard to spot in fields because their fur color blends in so well with the grasses.