

Superior National Forest

Fall Color Report

October 10, 2014



“When the hunting moon of October first appears, it is big and orange and full of strange excitement. Then it is at its best; later it pales, but those first few moments are moments of glory.”

- Sigurd F. Olson, *Runes of the North*



Mid-October, another step on the road to winter.

Winter can have days, weeks, even months that are very much alike. It is hard to tell a day in late-January from a day in mid-December from a day in early-March. Summer too, plop yourself down on a summer day in the forest, and one day under the green canopy of leaves is much like any other. But fall, fall changes daily.

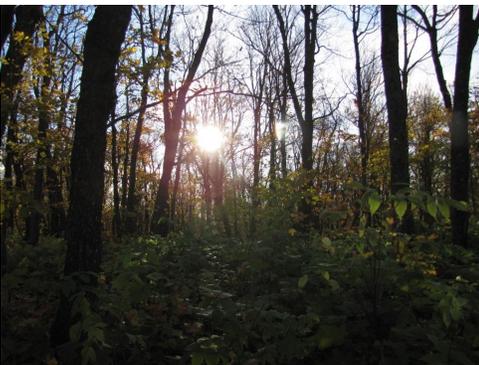
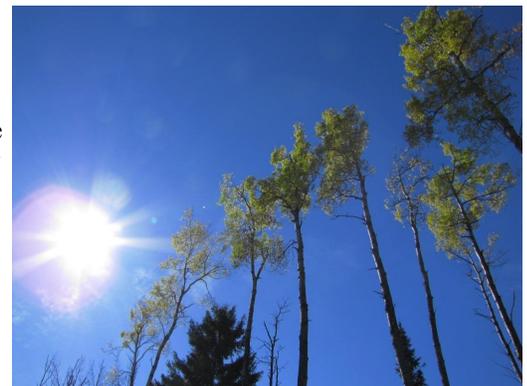
This week is not like last week, the maples are bare and the aspen and birch are brilliant yellow along the shore. This week is not like next week, when the aspen may be bare as well, but the golden tamaracks will be glowing in woods. The joy in autumn is the change and the unpredictability. A wind or rain may drop leaves quickly, or they may hang on for two weeks. It may be a year with more yellows and reds, or it may be a year that favors browns. There is road map of what might happen, but it is impossible to tell how long the trip on the road will be, or what the exact scenery is. That wondering, that feeling of what will the woods be like: that is one of the keys to fall. It makes every walk with the dog exciting, every hike in the forest an adventure, and every trip down a familiar trail something new. Nature is palpably stirring in the fall, you can tell the earth is alive in a way that is hard to sense in the slower moving seasons. It can spur you to be more active yourself: summer may be spent lazing away in the backyard listening to the monotonous whine of the neighbor's lawn mower, winter spent inside huddled around bowls of soup, but fall is when the garage gets cleaned, the lawn raked, the cars vacuumed, the hoses drained, and the flower beds tucked in. Just like in



Honeymoon Trail, Oct 10, 2014



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For this moment, we have 80% or so color in the birch along the north shore of Lake Superior, but only about 15% left inland. Things are dropping fast, but there are plenty of beautiful spots to visit still this fall.