NOVEMBER 15 – 30, 2020 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES
By Dick Harlow

WILD TURKEY

Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*,
© Dick Harlow

The Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*, is native to North America. This species was and still is very common; however at the beginning of the European occupation of North America, especially in the Northeast, over hunting practically eliminated the Wild Turkey from many Northeast states.

Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*, flock,
© Dick Harlow

Since we moved to EastView in 2013 I've observed only one Wild Turkey come out of the cover beside Otter Creek and walk across the meadow to our neighbor's backyard. EastView does not have the kind of habitat or feeding areas to attract turkeys.

Turkeys normally search for food by scratching in leaf litter looking for what they might uncover. They feed mostly on plant-based material, although they will not pass up insects, amphibians or reptiles if they are easy prey. The usual time that turkeys forage is in early morning as well as in the evening.

Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*, close-up of a Tom Turkey, © Dick Harlow

A male turkey, aka Tom Turkey, will usually mate with several females. Female turkeys nest on the ground usually by a tree, shrub or something that will give the turkey and its nest some cover. Females will lay 8-14 eggs, sometimes less sometimes more, but data does not suggest a female will lay more than 18 eggs.

The downy young will be brooded by the female at night and she will continue to brood them (cover them with her wings and keeping them close to her body heat) until the young start to feather at a few weeks after hatching.

NOVEMBER SUNSET

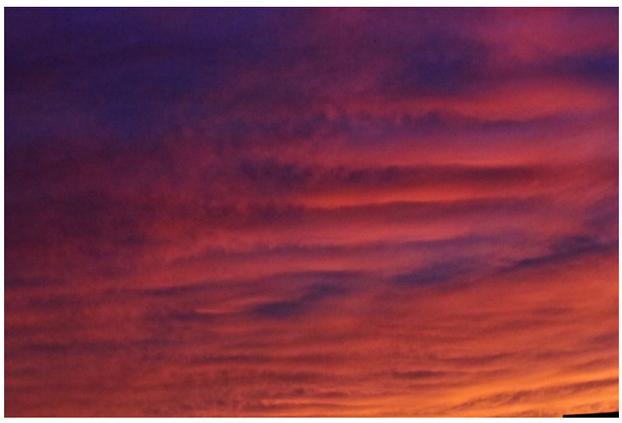
As a change of pace from my normal note about a particular wildlife organism, I wanted to portray how beautiful our sunsets can be here at EastView.

#1. Sunset, EastView, November 12, 2020.
© Dick Harlow

The colors of a sunset, yellows, oranges to pinks and reds are particularly striking, especially here in Vermont during Fall and Winter.

What we know is that dust and pollution do not enhance the beauty of a sunrise or sunset. We would be aghast at the beauty over cities during twilight without that dust or pollution.

The fact is that pollution and low-level dust subdues the colors of a sunset or sunrise.



#3. Sunset sky, EastView, November 12, 2020,
© Dick Harlow

#2. Sunset, EastView, November 12, 2020.
© Dick Harlow

Clean, pollution and dust free air are considered the primary ingredients that will allow us to see the colors and brightness of a sunset or a sunrise.

Without going into a lot of detail, we need to remember how we see blue and blue shades of the sky and the various shades in the daytime. The blue is a result of sunlight being scattered by air molecules.

Sunlight is made up of a number of colors in a spectrum that run from violet and blues at one end and yellow, oranges to red at the other end of the spectrum.

As the sun sets, its sunlight takes a longer path through the atmosphere compared to the length it takes when the sun is directly overhead during the day. This lengthening light as the sun rises and sets results in an increased violet and blue light being scattered out of this sunlight beam of light resulting in the eye seeing more oranges and reds at sunset. Thus we see sunsets and the sky around them with more orange and red.

It is not my intent to write a scientific paper here, but for those interested in a further explanation it is recommended that good documented information can be found on the internet.

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OBSERVATIONS

MAMMALS

- **Coywolf – barking**
- **Short-tailed Weasel**
- **Gray Squirrel**
- **Eastern Cottontail Rabbit**
- **Meadow Vole**

Weather Tidbits
Month of NOVEMBER 01-30, 2020
All Measurements taken at solar noon (1230 EST).
PRECIPITATION

Average November Precipitation for Vermont = 3.15 inches.

Total precipitation for November was 43.0 mm or 1.69 inches. This is a 1.46 inch deficit for the month.

Overcast Days: We had 21 days, three weeks of overcast skies. Of those overcast skies 12 days produced some precipitation. This month definitely added to the draught we are in.