This photo was taken on 9/26/17 from the dam at Stephen A. Forbes State Park in Marion Co.

**Northwest**

Trees in northwest Illinois are seeing more yellowing of the leaves because of the dry conditions, with many urban trees losing a lot of leaves early in the fall season. In urban areas, more burning bushes are turning color (with more of a maroon color). Midweek cooler weather may mean some better overall fall colors in the coming weeks.

**Northeast**

In northern and northeastern Illinois so far, the fall color season has been “weird.” There hasn’t been a whole lot of precipitation since early July, so foresters are seeing a lot of trees going into an early dormancy. Honey locust have been quickly browning and dropping their leaves. Some silver maples are doing the same thing. Leaves are quickly browning and not turning colors at all, including some shagbark hickories and red oaks. Hopefully, this won’t last long and the region will get some good color soon. Other than some trees here and there, most are still fully green.

Extremely dry September weather in the Will County area has caused much premature fall color. In the woods: Cottonwood, elm, soft maple, and hackberry are all showing yellow and browns from the bottom of the trees up. Walnuts are featuring leaves that are yellow and falling. Oaks are still green, but with a hint of yellow on dryer sites. Sumac and ivy are red. In urban landscapes: Soft maple and pear
varieties are turning burgundy. Honey locust on dryer heat islands and in parking areas are yellow and falling from drought stress. Burning bush shrubs are bright red.

**West Central**

Calhoun, Pike, Adams, Scott, Brown, Macoupin, Greene, and Jersey Counties: Fall colors are starting a month earlier than normal due to dryness. Most of the landscape is still 60% green, but there are noticeable color changes in understory and mid-story species (sumac, dogwood, creeper vines - red; sassafras and sugar maple - red/orange/yellow); as well as isolated color changes in canopy species (Sugar maple - red/orange/yellow; ash - purple/red/yellow; walnut-yellow; sycamore, cottonwood, silver maple, and hickory - brown/yellow). This weekend should be good for color drives.

Fall colors are starting to pick up in west central Illinois in the areas along The Great River Road including Pere Marquette State Park, where there are developing browns in the hickories, walnuts and elms. The green ashes are turning yellow, the dogwoods, sumacs, white ash, creepers and maples are starting to show orange, purple and red. The oaks are mostly green yet.

Drought conditions are causing an early leaf drop in McDonough County. Maples are turning and dropping, as are pecan and walnut. Understory is showing a lot of color - yellows and browns. Sassafras and sumac showing lots or reds. Oaks have not started to change yet.

**Central**

Menard/Mason County: A bright yellow color is showing in the walnuts, hackberry and cottonwoods. The sumac is a lively red. Orange, red and purple are showing up on dogwoods, sassafras; yellow and purple on the ash trees. Oaks are still not showing anything. The river bottoms do not have much color yet.

Soft maples are turning yellow north of Springfield, north to Peoria. Locust trees are golden with touches of green, the sassafras are starting to turn into rich reds and yellows. Maples tree leaves are turning orange and red.

There is not a lot of color yet in the Illinois Valley in the Starved Rock area, where hot and dry weather had some trees have turning brown. A good number are going to yellow to yellow brown and the leaves are dropping off. Farmers have hit the fields in force, so there is a lot of machinery and trucks on the road. Drive carefully and slow down on the side roads. Leaves are dropping fast from the soybeans and the corn is turning brown. Blue chicory flowers can be seen along the roadsides. Common milkweed pods are splitting open and the downy seeds are flying. Thistle seeds are also flying, and yellow goldfinches can be seen eating on them. Prairie grasses continue to turn and there is still good flowering. Poison ivy is red.

**South**

Effingham, Clay, Marion, and surrounding counties: Some deep red colors are mixed with green in sassafras; Virginia creeper is showing red; poison ivy is showing yellows and reds. Sugar maples are
continuing to display yellow-orange early this year. Hickory have been the biggest change in recent days, with many hickories showing yellow for a few days before going completely brown. The extremely dry conditions are really causing stress. White ashes are showing reddish purple color, while green ashes are yellowing along with walnut. Many of the green ash and walnut have lost more than 50% of their leaves. Although normal, it seems to be exacerbated by the dry conditions. Goldenrod is on the downhill side of its bloom period, with yellows turning more brown Sumac has a deep red that stands out in old fields and prairies.

Clinton County area: Sweet gum, green ash, cherry, black walnut, and sycamore leaves are turning yellow. Due the excessively dry weather, several of those species aren't going through any color changes, with leaves turning brown instead. Many of the sassafras and sumac continue to turn shades of red. Several of the Virginia creeper and poison ivy vines are starting to turn red.

In Wayne County, it has remained hot and dry, so leaves have barely changed, though the green is a little more chlorotic and lighter compared with last week. However, some trees are starting to 'brown out' – skipping their fall color and going straight to yellow/brown. That is especially noticeable in understory smaller trees, regardless of species.

Randolph County: Fall colors are starting to show on some trees, but most are being stimulated by drought stress. Flowering dogwood is turning red, mulberry is turning yellow and many have already lost all their leaves; white ashes are turning reddish-purple and sumac is turning bright red. Most others are still green. It has been so unbelievably dry in recent weeks in southern Illinois that a lot of leaves are turning brown and falling now.