

# Kaw Valley Almanac

December 31 – Jan. 6, 2019

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| Day       | Moon rises | South    | Moon sets | % Illum/Phase |
|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Monday    | 03:24 AM   | 08:54 AM | 02:17 PM  | 22%           |
| Tuesday   | 03:24 AM   | 08:54 AM | 02:17 PM  | 18%           |
| Wednesday | 04:26 AM   | 09:42 AM | 02:53 PM  | 11%           |
| Thursday  | 05:26 AM   | 10:31 AM | 03:33 PM  | 6%            |
| Friday    | 06:23 AM   | 11:21 AM | 04:17 PM  | 2%            |
| Saturday  | 07:16 AM   | 12:11 PM | 05:06 PM  | New Moon      |
| Sunday    | 08:04 AM   | 01:00 PM | 05:58 PM  | 0%            |



While this coyote is easily seen in front of this eastern red cedar, notice how well matched the fur is to the colors of the dormant grass. It virtually disappeared as it ran into the field because it was so well camouflaged. Coyotes can be heard this time of year calling after dark, particularly after the moon rises. With the moon nearing New Moon, it's better to spend the time admiring the dark starry nights and winter constellations this week, Thursday night after midnight, the Quadrantid meteor shower peaks, possibly over 50 meteors/hour.



## Sun

Mars SW at dusk,

Mercury, Venus in the east before sunrise

| Day       | Gets light | Sunrise  | Sunset   | Gets dark |
|-----------|------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Monday    | 06:38 AM   | 07:37 AM | 05:03 PM | 06:10 PM  |
| Tuesday   | 06:39 AM   | 07:37 AM | 05:04 PM | 06:10 PM  |
| Wednesday | 06:39 AM   | 07:38 AM | 05:05 PM | 06:11 PM  |
| Thursday  | 06:40 AM   | 07:38 AM | 05:05 PM | 06:11 PM  |
| Friday    | 06:36 AM   | 07:38 AM | 05:06 PM | 06:11 PM  |
| Saturday  | 06:36 AM   | 07:39 AM | 05:07 PM | 06:12 PM  |
| Sunday    | 06:37 AM   | 07:39 AM | 05:07 PM | 06:12 PM  |

## Nature Notes

§ With a little ice on area ponds and reservoirs, it's fun to see waterfowl huddled together on open patches and see some of them walking on the thin ice. Ice makes it more likely that you'll see eagles below Bowersock Dam, which always has open water and is a favorite fishing spot for the eagles that perch in the cottonwoods along the bank.

§ 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.

§ Some mammals like coyotes and some squirrels do not hibernate. The jumping mouse undoes "torpor," which is where they rouse for food and excreting, but spend some time sleeping in a lowered temperature state. Ground squirrels undergo true hibernation, with their core temperatures dropping to 39 degrees.

§ Freezing and thawing ground has made the bare patches of ground rough in mornings and days below freezing, unless it is gets enough sunlight to thaw out, in which case it's muddy.