

OUTDOOR ALMANAC

MARCH 2019



3 The furry, light-gray flowers of **pussy willow** burst from their buds.

4 The first of the migrant Red-winged Blackbirds are returning north. The earliest groups are made up almost entirely of adult males. Look for them perched on high marsh reeds and rushes such as cattails, displaying their bright red and yellow shoulder patches, or epaulets.



10 Listen for the distinctive quacking of **Wood Frogs** in the evening as they gather at vernal pools. They are the first amphibians to emerge in the spring and often congregate on pools still partially covered with ice.

14 American Woodcock nuptial flights begin about this time, as the snow melts back in open fields. Listen for the *peent* call and the whistle of wings.



16 **Skunk cabbages**, among the first plants to emerge in spring, appear in wetlands. Soon their unpleasant odor attracts pollinators such as flies and beetles.



17 The first warm (40°F), rainy night will bring out the **salamanders** as they migrate from their winter burrows to vernal pools to mate. They spend only a short time at the pools and, soon after mating, head back to the uplands.

18 Look for the red haze around the tops of red and silver maples as their flower buds begin to open. Maples are wind-pollinated so there are no petals, but other parts of the flowers are brilliant red.

20 **Full moon** and the vernal equinox fall on the same day. Night and day are of equal length and it is the first day of spring. This full moon is often called the Worm Moon but the Abenaki called it Moose Hunter Moon and the Algonquin called it Fish Catching Moon.



22 **Great Blue Herons** return to heronries; they begin nest building and repair almost immediately upon arrival.



26 Look and listen for tom turkeys gobbling and displaying. Their heads turn brilliant red and blue, they fan and waggle their tails, and drag their wings across the ground as they strut back and forth. When you find displaying toms, look around to find the hen who is nearby but often hidden from view.

27 Unlike most of our insects, **Mourning Cloaks** overwinter as adults in tree crevices and beneath loose bark, emerging on warm days in early spring.



30 Tree Swallows return. Look for them scouting for nest boxes or tree cavities as breeding season begins.