

OUTDOOR ALMANAC

SEPTEMBER 2020

1 Common Nighthawks are migrating along river valleys. Search above open fields near water and listen for their raspy peent calls as they hunt night-flying insects.



2 **Full Corn Moon.** All Eastern Woodland tribes grew and harvested corn as an important food source and late summer was the time to harvest. While some corn was eaten fresh most of it was dried and stored for winter.



4 **American Goldfinch** is almost exclusively a seedeater, even when feeding nestlings. They are also a late nester, which gives them access to the very nutritious seeds of thistle for their young. Look for thistle heads and other composites and watch for the goldfinch's acrobatic seed harvesting.

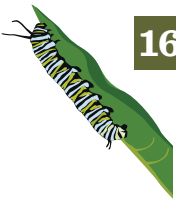
9 Mushrooms seem to pop up overnight with the first cooler rains—puffballs, stinkhorns, hen of the woods and more appear throughout the fall. Stinkhorns usually live up to their name, having a slimy, elongated body and vile smell.



11 On clear days with a northerly breeze look for kettles of **Broad-winged Hawks** circling high in the sky on their way to South America.

12 Moose are more frequently seen during fall rutting season as they seek out mates. Moose are well adapted to cold but suffer from heat stress when average summer temperatures are above 57°F. Climate change has already impacted moose survival because of rising temperatures and increased tick populations.

15 Blackpoll Warblers, along with many other warbler species, migrate south.



16 The last generation of **Monarch caterpillars** are feeding on milkweeds before they pupate. The adults that hatch out this month will fly to Mexico for the winter.

18 Not all migrating orange butterflies are monarchs; **Painted Ladies** also migrate this time of year. The dorsal surface of their wings is orange when open but when closed the wings are spotted gray-brown on their lower surface.



22 Autumnal equinox. Day and night are equal length today and fall begins.

23 Sugar maple leaves that look like they've been hole punched are evidence of Maple Leafcutter moth larvae that chew two circles and make themselves into a larva ravioli as protection from predators.

26 Look for fall sparrows (**White-throated Sparrow**) in thickets and field edges. Their plumage helps them blend in well, but careful observation will be rewarded with beautiful patterns of feathers.



27 Bumblebees are the most common pollinators seen when temperatures are 55°F or lower, as they not only have more insulation than other insects but they can also warm themselves by shivering their wing muscles.

28 **Dark-eyed Juncos** can be found year-round, but their population increases in the fall as many return from the north to overwinter here. Look for their distinctive white breast and dark hood plumage and listen for their sweet bell-like trills.



29 **Woodchucks** are out eating as much as they can to add fat equal to 30% to 40% of their body weight before they begin hibernation. If they can't accumulate enough fat reserves, they will not survive the winter.



30 Last day to enter the Mass Audubon Photo Contest. If you have taken photos of any of wonderful things listed in the almanac, enter them at massaudubon.org/picturethis.