

# OUTDOOR ALMANAC

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Listen for woodpeckers drumming on tree trunks to uncover insects to eat or, as with the louder repetitive drumming, to communicate.

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American Robins and **Cedar Waxwings** forage in sumac, viburnum, and other fruit-bearing shrubs and trees.

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**Full moon** and total lunar eclipse. An eclipse is a result of the sun and moon being on the exact opposite sides of Earth. On the East Coast, the eclipse will only be visible at moonset, when the moon is low in the sky.

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Pitcher plants, sphagnum moss, and sundews in bogs have turned yellow, orange, and deep maroon, making fall the most beautiful season to visit a bog.

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You may see inch-deep, cone-shaped holes in your yard or along forest paths left by Striped Skunks as they forage for grubs, earthworms, salamanders, rodents, fungi, nuts, and seeds.

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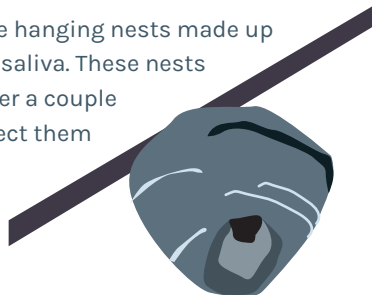
With the deciduous leaves mostly gone, it's easier to see and appreciate the low-growing evergreens that cover the forest floor such as American wintergreen, spotted pipsissewa, partridgeberry, downy rattlesnake plantain, princess pine, and more.

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Normally solitary animals, porcupines only come together in the late fall for mating, which usually involves fierce and loud battles among the males fighting for a female's attention.

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**Bald-faced Hornets** create intricate hanging nests made up of chewed wood mixed with hornet saliva. These nests are only used for one season, so after a couple of hard frosts, it is possible to dissect them and appreciate their beautiful, complex architecture.



17-18

**The Leonids**, one of the most active meteor showers, peaks just before dawn. This shower is known for fireballs (larger explosions of light and color) and earthgrazers (meteors that streak close to the horizon and have long, colorful tails).



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Keep an eye out for newly arrived Purple Sandpipers. They are perfectly camouflaged on windswept boulders in Gloucester, Scituate, Westport, and other rocky shorelines.

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Rough-legged Hawks winter in open, treeless areas similar to the Arctic tundra where they breed. Look for them hovering over large, open fields, hunting for prey.

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Peek around in shrubs and trees for the bird nests that were well hidden during the leafy spring and summer. Remember to just look and not touch, as it is illegal to possess bird nests or feathers without a permit.

23

**Snowy Owls** have arrived and will stay here through April. Watch them from a respectful distance at Plum Island, Duxbury Beach, and other open, treeless areas near the coast.



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Watch for wintering Snow Buntings and Horned Larks in fields and open areas as they search for seeds on withered, golden grasses.

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Look for Wild Turkeys or their tracks and signs. Turkeys can crack acorns in half with their beaks and leave the split shells behind, so peruse the forest edges for signs of turkeys feeding.

28

Early snowfalls bring an opportunity to see wildlife tracks of squirrels, rabbits, foxes, and skunks, or even **fishers** and coyotes.

