

# OUTDOOR ALMANAC

1

Look and listen for Northern Cardinal's *purdy, purdy, purdy* song; **Dark-eyed Junco's** musical bell-like trill; White-breasted Nuthatch's *ankh, ankh, ankh* calls; and Black-capped Chickadee's *chick-a dee-dee-dee* call.



3

In winter, groups of American Crows often have a lookout (aka a sentinel) that caws regularly while the others feed. If you hear a single crow cawing, look for the rest of the group feeding nearby.

6

Full Moon



7

Observe your shrubs and fruit trees after the first snow. Chewed twigs and evergreen leaves with ragged edges are a sign of deer. Cleanly nipped, angled twig ends close to the ground or top of the snow are a sign of rabbits.

10

Spend an hour outside after dark listening for hooting owls. This is the best time of year to hear Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls, and Eastern Screech-owls as they set up territories and find mates.

12

Look for Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Sparrows, **Snow Buntings**, American Goldfinches, and other songbirds scratching along the edges of roads for grit, which they store in their gizzards. Since birds have no teeth, they need the grit to help grind up the seeds and fruit pits that make up their winter diet.



16

When ice forms on interior lakes, Bald Eagles move to river mouths along the coast where they can fish in the open water. The mouth of the Merrimack often has a number of wintering eagles.

18

Signs of coyote breeding season can be found in parallel **coyote tracks**, scent markings, and duet howling.



20

River otters do not hibernate during winter and remain active by using holes in the ice to breathe and come to land. If you are in an area where river otters live, look for the long slide marks they make in the snow when gliding on their bellies.

23

The beauty of bark is most easily appreciated in winter. Look for the distinctive coverings of white ash (interconnected narrow diamonds); quaking aspen (pale, grayish green, smooth on the branches and rough on the older trunk); American beech (silvery gray and very smooth); and sugar maple (grayish, thickened vertical strips broken into irregular rectangles).

27

Although **black bear** mating took place in early summer, cubs are being born now while the sows are in their dens. Because of a process called delayed implantation, the fertilized eggs don't begin to develop until late fall.

