

MARCH | 2024

# OUTDOOR ALMANAC

3

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



4

Black Bears are emerging from their winter sleep and looking for food. Bears have excellent memories, so if you live in an area with bears, take down your bird feeders before the bears visit them.

6

Late winter is a great time to look for ducks. Along the coast you can find Common Eider, Harlequin Duck, scoters, and

**Long-tailed Duck**. In open freshwater habitats look for Wood Duck, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, and Common and Hooded merganser.



8

Several moth species overwinter as caterpillars, including the **woolly bear caterpillar** of the Isabella tiger moth. When the weather warms, they can be found crawling up sticks and last year's stems looking for a good place to pupate.



10

Eastern cottonwood trees have large, sticky buds. In early spring, honeybees, which are not native, collect the resin to make propolis, a protective glue that they use to seal their hives.

12

Silver, red, and sugar maples are flowering. Maple flowers are wind pollinated and have no petals, but these tiny flowers are beautiful, nonetheless.

14

American Woodcock nuptial flights begin about this time, as the snow melts back in open fields. Around sunset listen for the peent calls followed by the whistle of wings.

16

Listen for the duck like quacking courtship calls of male wood frogs. These frogs return to their vernal pools so early that there is often still ice on the water. Wood frogs only reproduce in vernal pools, so if you hear wood frogs you know there is a vernal pool.

17

The first warm (40°F), rainy night will bring out **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.



19

Vernal equinox: first day of spring. Night and day are of equal length.

22

Woodpeckers drill on dead trees both for food and to make nest holes. Pileated Woodpeckers, our largest woodpecker, make large, oblong holes as they follow the tunnels of carpenter ants, which are their favorite food.

25

Full Moon



27

Crows have begun nesting as they're among the earliest nesters of the passerines (perching birds). Listen and watch as they interact with each other and eat almost anything they can find, from black walnuts to roadkill gray squirrels.

30

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

