



MAY

OUTDOOR ALMANAC

03 **Wood Ducks** are nesting in tree hollows or nest boxes near freshwater swamps. Within a day of hatching, the ducklings leap from their nests to the ground or water below.

04 Height of the Eta Aquarids meteor shower. In the northern hemisphere, roughly 30 shooting stars per hour, most prominent before dawn, grace the dark sky.

07 In marshes and wetlands, female Red-winged Blackbirds are gathering nesting materials, such as cattails, reeds, and rootlets. Males are easily recognizable with their black plumage and bright red shoulder patches, but females are brown streaked and often mistaken for a sparrow. Compared to sparrows female red-wings are larger with undersides covered with dense, dark streaking and only found in marshes.

10 Colorful and uniquely shaped fungi grow in the woods. Look for **true morels** with their distinct, elongated honeycomb caps.

12 Full moon.

13 Elusive **Eastern Box Turtles** are mating. The sex of the hatchlings depends on the temperature inside the nest—eggs that are incubated at 70–80°F are more likely to be male and those at temperatures above 82°F are more likely to be female.

15 Bobcats are giving birth to 2–4 kittens. They will remain with their mother for 10–12 months before heading off on their own.

17 Height of the **spring warbler migration**. Listen to the dawn chorus and watch the treetops and shrubbery at sunrise and sunset for these beautiful little birds.

20 Happy World Bee Day! Although this day originally started to honor honeybees, which are an introduced species in North America, we can take the moment to celebrate the 400 native bee species in Massachusetts that are a critical part of our local habitats.

22 Male and female Common Loons share the incubating responsibilities for their two, green speckled eggs. Successful and safe nest sites are often reused by the loon couple every year.

25 Pickerel frogs are calling and breeding. Sensitive to water pollution, these frogs stick to clear waters where females lay masses of eggs attached to underwater vegetation.

27 Enjoy the beautiful white or occasionally pink blooms of our native flowering dogwoods along forest edges or look for one of our most distinctive forest wildflowers, Jack-in-the-pulpit. Keep an eye out for the 1- to 2-foot-tall spathe (pulpit) that grows up and over the flower stalk (Jack).

30 **Musk rats** can be seen carrying cattails and other plants back to their dens to feed their young.

PHOTOS

Wood Duck © Barye Hall
True Morel © Marcie Jonas
Eastern Box Turtle
Cape May Warbler
Muskrat © Donna Woelki