

# APRIL

## OUTDOOR ALMANAC



**01** Full moon

**04** With warming weather, Black-capped Chickadees sing their sweet fee-bee, fee-bee as they prepare for nesting season. Don't confuse the sweet chickadee song with the Eastern Phoebe's more emphatic, raspy, whistled fee-BEE, which can also be heard now.

**06** Garter snakes are emerging and mating. If you see a group of entwined garter snakes, look for the one female at the center covered by several males.

**07** It's breeding season for **Spotted Salamanders**. Each year, they return to the same vernal pool they hatched from to lay jelly-like egg masses on twigs and vegetation.

**10** Check open waters for **water striders**, who spent their winter hidden under leaf litter on the shore. These insects have water-repellent hairs that allow them to sit atop the water, not disturbing the surface tension as they glide to look for prey.

**12** Just before dawn breaks, listen for the Mourning Dove's "perch cooing" as they start the nesting season. This repeated, low-pitched song is frequently mistaken for an owl calling.

**14** **Eastern shadbush**, also called serviceberry, blooms in wetlands and moist woodlands, creating clouds of white blossoms along riverbanks.

**19** Red Squirrels have shed their warm, deep-red winter fur. They are more olive green-to-brown during the warmer seasons.

**22** Earth Day. The Lyrid meteor shower is expected to peak tonight.

**24** Watch for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Early returning hummingbirds often feed from sap wells made by Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. If you plan to put out a hummingbird feeder, it is time to start.

**25** The birdlike trill of Gray Tree Frogs can be heard all day when it's warm and cloudy as the frogs rest on tree bark or the sides of buildings. If you are patient and move slowly, it is possible to trace the call and find the frog.

**26** Search in woodlands for spring ephemerals (or native forest perennials that bloom before the leaves come out), such as **Trout Lily**, Trillium, Bloodroot, Trailing Arbutus, and hepatica.

**27** Ferns emerge from the ground tightly wound like the scroll on the end of a fiddle, earning them the nickname, "fiddleheads."

**30** **Killdeer** start breeding and laying eggs in April. These birds perform an iconic distraction display to divert the attention of predators away from their nest by feigning injury by drooping a wing and fanning their tail.

### PHOTOS

Spotted Salamander © Alex Karasoulos  
Water Strider  
Eastern Shadbush  
Trout Lily  
Killdeer