



OCTOBER

OUTDOOR ALMANAC



01 With its molt nearly complete, the **American Goldfinch** has only a few remaining yellow breeding feathers. Its new wing feathers sport broad, pale edges and wing bars that, by next August, will be worn away almost completely, leaving an all-black wing.

02 The last of the Green Darner Dragonflies can be seen flying over sunny meadows before they migrate south for the winter.

05 **Common Milkweed**, an important resource for many different insects in the summer, disperses its seeds. Look for large, bumpy pods with fluffy white seeds emerging, ready to float off in the wind.

06 Dark-eyed Juncos and White-throated Sparrows start showing up at feeders.

08 Northern Saw-whet Owls migrate through for the next few weeks. Look in cedar trees or dense thickets for roosting owls during the day and listen for their hoot, which sounds like a backing truck's safety beeps.

12 Look closely at rotting logs to see the tiny fruiting bodies of wolf's milk slime mold; they are bright pink to purplish gray. Slime molds are not fungi but single-celled organisms that feed on fungi, bacteria, and other microorganisms.

PHOTOS

American Goldfinch
Common Milkweed
Beaver
Woodchuck
Harlequin Ducks

15 **Beavers** are beginning to start their seasonal prep and winter food storage. Throughout the month, they'll be ramping up their preparations, and are most active in the evening.

18 **Woodchucks**, a.k.a. groundhogs, are preparing for hibernation. To get ready for their slumber, they can eat up to a pound of vegetation a day and add about ½ inch layer of fat to sustain them through the winter.

20 Turkey Vultures are migrating. Scan the sky for a large, black bird soaring with its wings in the shape of a shallow "V."

21/22 After the sun goes down, look to the night sky to view the peak of the Orionids meteor shower.

23 North American Racers migrate from the field habitats they live in most of the year to forested slopes, where they overwinter in dens with other snakes.

26 Full Moon

28 Look for **Harlequin Ducks** and Common Goldeneyes arriving to spend the winter along the coast.

31 Happy Halloween! Don't worry about any vampire bats in Massachusetts. Species that we do have, such as Big Brown Bats and Little Brown Bats, are preparing for hibernation in caves and cavities or traveling south.