

# NATURE NOTES

January 2025

3

Painted Turtles hibernate in the mud of lakes and ponds, breathing through the skin of their cloaca. They will sometimes awaken and swim slowly beneath the ice to find warmer water pockets or potentially a future mate.

14

Chipmunks don't fully hibernate time of year so they are waking up from their long nap to find buried food stored in burrows. They do this to replenish their fat stores so they can go back to bed!



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Deer have a limited food source compared to warmer months. They are left to gnaw on tree bark and eat things like twigs, stems, and lichen while they wait for Spring to deliver more nutritious foods.



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You can hear the Great-horned Owls calling more often now. They are in the middle of the breeding season. The monogamous pair call as part of their courtship behavior and also to defend their territory from other owls.



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Goldfinches are year-round residents and gather at thistle feeders where food is easy to access. They may be harder to recognize though, because the male loses his bright yellow breeding plumage and instead takes on a duller grey/green appearance.



22

Watch for wintering towhees scratching around the ground under brush. Both males and females have bright red eyes and white bellies with orange sides. The males are black and the females brown on their head and back.



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The full Wolf Moon will rise tonight. During this time of year, wolves tend to stay closer to human communities due to food scarcity. They stick around to scavenge food scraps.

30

Snow fleas pepper the snow on warmish days. Don't be put off by the name, they are not actually fleas and do not bite, in fact they are decomposers! They are able to be active on warm winter days due to an antifreeze that their body creates.

