



It's been a long winter. Need some hope?

SIGNS THAT SPRING'S ON THE WAY

15°
mid-February

20°

25°

30°

35°

40°

45°

50°

55°
mid-April

SIGNS OF HOPE

GETTING WARMER

SPRING IS REALLY HERE

Birds begin to stir.

Cardinals start chirping around mid-February, just after Super Bowl. Red-winged blackbirds are one of the earliest migrators to return.



Tree buds change.

Watch for changes at the tips of branches. Buds fatten and brighten, giving many trees a fuller look. Leaf-out is only weeks away!



Squirrels get frisky.

It's not in your imagination that those squirrels are going a little crazy chasing one another. It's mating time.



Great horned owl young peek out.

Watch the nest of this common owl for hatchlings in mid-March. It lays eggs in February, getting a head start on other birds.



Wood frogs sing.

They can start as early as February. Chorus frogs and spring peepers aren't far behind.

Sap's on the move.

When clear drops of sap start showing up from tapped maples, it's a sign that trees all over the woods are moving sugars back out to their limbs.



Skunk cabbage blooms.

The maroon-hood of our earliest blooming native plant may actually melt snow.

Snow melts and water opens.

By mid-March, we hope, though it can cruelly hang around until mid-April.

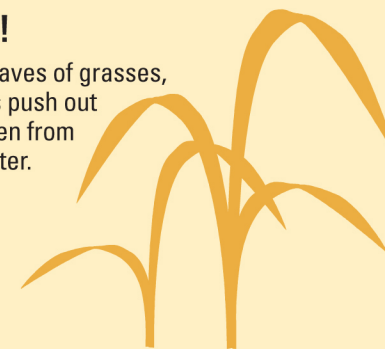


Migrating ducks return.

Waterfowl headed north usually come through in early March, resting on open bodies of water. Sandhill cranes also trumpet overhead.

Shoots emerge!

Hopeful little green leaves of grasses, trees and wildflowers push out from soil, mostly hidden from view under the leaf litter.



Spring's first flowers bloom.

The earliest spring woodland ephemerals appear in mid-to-late March, and include bloodroot, toothwort, hepatica and trout lily. Soon they'll be followed by the rest of spring's glory.