

PARKS & RECREATION

2023 SPRING SELF CARE

We can all agree, self-care is very important, it should be part of our routines and that the earlier we begin taking self-care the better
No matter our age!

We're encouraging everyone **to get outdoors and hunt for Signs of Spring!**

According to legend, we should expect a long winter because our friend Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow on Groundhog Day this year.

In spring when temperatures start rising, the snow starts melting and nature comes to life! Despite our friend Phil's prediction, let's search for early signs of spring!

Below is a list of items found in nature that tell us spring is on the way!

1)
BUDDING TREES _____



Some of the first trees to bud in New England are the willows and silver maples, followed in March by the red maples.

2)
CHICKADEE _____



There are many different birds to be seen and heard in the spring. We chose the black capped chickadee for our scavenger hunt! The chickadee is the Massachusetts state bird and can found in your own backyard. For the more adventurous hunters... Visit the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary in Topsfield Mass where you can feed these tiny birds out of your hand!

3)
LISTEN FOR A BIRD SONG _____

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FOR AN ADDED CHALLENGE, TRY THIS FREE APP TO IDENTIFY BIRD SONGS
Audubon Bird Guide

Where there are birds, there are worms!

4)

EARTHWORM _____



Birds have very good vision and can spot the tiny end of a worm as it pokes out of the dirt. You may need to do some digging to find them!

5)

LISTEN FOR PEEPERS _____

Best time to listen is at dusk = right before sunset



Like its name, the spring peeper's call is a high pitched single "peep!" These tiny frogs can survive freezing temperatures and live under logs or underground like wooded areas, ponds, and wetlands.

6)

LISTEN FOR WOOD FROGS "QUACKING" _____

Best time to listen is during the day in the spring; at night in summer



These frogs make a sound which from a distance sounds like a bunch of little quacking ducks. Unlike the peepers, wood frogs **do** freeze over the

winter – they don't die but they stop breathing and their hearts stop beating. Their bodies make a special antifreeze substance that keeps their cells from freezing which would be deadly. Ice does form, but in the tiny spaces **between** the cells. When the weather warms, the frogs **thaw** and begin doing their thing.

7)

TRUMPETER SWAN _____



This swan was found at the Ipswich River Park, NR

Swans can survive very cold weather and will only migrate in search of food rather than shelter – so when the frozen rivers and lakesides start to thaw, the swans return.

8)

WILDFLOWERS _____



These tiny flowers called “spring ephemerals,” come out in early spring and disappear when the tree canopies fill out!

9)

SKUNK CABBAGE _____



Skunk cabbage can bloom even when there is snow on the ground. It is one of just a few plants that have the ability to metabolically generate heat with average temperatures 20 degrees warmer than the outside temperature. And yes, as the name suggests, this plant's leaves smell like a Skunk when they are crushed! **IMPORTANT: TOXIC TO DOGS, CATS AND HORSES**

10)

CROCUS FLOWERS _____



These flowers symbolize rebirth, innocence, joy, and new-beginnings because of their early blooming flowers in spring.

Next are two rather unpleasant signs of spring....

11) TICKS & MASQUITOS _____



Although we typically do not need to go looking for them, they will find us.... It is very important to **tick check** yourself and your animals!

Update your scavenger hunt as the season changes. Make it as simple or as challenging as you like. If you're not ready to get out and play just yet, create your own signs of spring scavenger hunt. Tailor it to your interests. If you'll be doing it with your family, ask them to tell you what reminds them of spring...

A few fun examples of we came up with are:

1) DAIRY QUEEN IS OPEN!



March 20th is the first official day of spring and FREE CONE DAY at DQ®!

2) RED SOX OPENING DAY!



The Red Sox will open the regular season at Fenway Park on 3/30

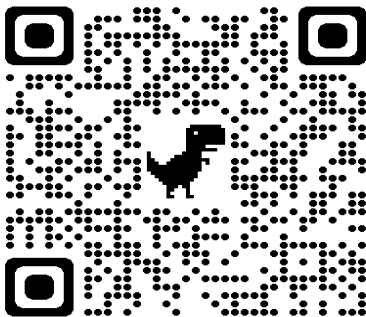
3) SWAN BOATS



These Swans return to the Lagoon at the Boston Public garden mid-April

Our favorite sign of spring...

4) NRP&R Spring Brochure _____



Meet Rex, our new QR code – He'll take you to our online brochure where you can view all the great programs coming your way this spring!

From all of us at NR Recreation – REMEMBER TO TAKE CARE!