

# What's Happening out in The Grove this WINTER

## Early Winter:

- ✧ Muskrats huddle inside their lodges to keep warm
- ✧ Rabbits nibble twigs close to the ground
- ✧ White-tailed deer form winter groups
- ✧ Chickadees and nuthatches flock together and forage for food
- ✧ Coyote scat can be found marking trail crossings
- ✧ Grey squirrels compete for mates
- ✧ Great-horned owls can be heard calling in the night
- ✧ Abandoned bird's nests are easily observed in the bare trees
- ✧ Raccoons begin their mating season
- ✧ The least weasel's brown summer coat turns white
- ✧ Sandhill cranes migrate and may be heard calling above

## Mid Winter:

- ✧ White-tailed deer bucks lose their antlers in the woods
- ✧ Great horned owls nest high in the trees
- ✧ Hoarfrost coats leaves and grasses when temperatures drop rapidly
- ✧ Meadow vole trails can be seen through the snow in the prairies
- ✧ Cardinals dine communally at feeding stations
- ✧ Pinkish-red cottontail rabbit urine can be seen staining the snow
- ✧ Insect galls are easily seen on dried wildflower stems
- ✧ Foxes mate and ready their dens for young
- ✧ Lichens flourish on rocks, trees, benches and buildings
- ✧ Tracks of raccoons, deer, squirrel and mink can be seen in snow
- ✧ Maple sap begins to flow and form icicles on the tips of twigs

## Late Winter:

- ✧ The first squirrels of the year are born
- ✧ Coyotes begin their mating season
- ✧ Skunk cabbage appears near wetlands and depressions
- ✧ Red-bellied woodpeckers begin courtship activities
- ✧ Woodcocks migrate through the woods and prairies
- ✧ Young great-horned owls hatch and may be heard calling for food
- ✧ Flocks of cedar waxwings dine on dried fruit in the trees
- ✧ Turtles may be seen swimming beneath the ice in the pond
- ✧ Snow drops poke through the snow to bloom
- ✧ Skunks emerge from their dens to find mates
- ✧ Red-winged blackbirds begin arriving to establish territories