



Hidden Pond Nature Center

June Almanac, 2025



Our disclaimer: These natural events, happenings and fearless predictions are based upon 40 years of observations at Hidden Pond Nature Center. Your observations may vary! Hidden Pond is not responsible for errors, erratic behavior or other whims of nature. Our trails await you. Take a walk and enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds of nature. They have the power to restore.

First Week

Fireflies—actually beetles—begin to emerge and flash. Several species are found in our area, each with its own flash color and frequency. The larvae feed on slugs and worms. To keep your lawn firefly-friendly, avoid using pesticides. Box turtles are laying eggs in sunny spots. Egg chamber temperatures above 82 degrees Fahrenheit produce females; cooler temperatures produce males. The young turtles, about the size of a quarter, will hatch in late summer. Linden trees bloom, drawing myriads of pollinating insects with their fragrant flowers. Yarrow and daisy fleabane are also in bloom.

Second Week

Gnats are everywhere now—waving your hand in front of your face is jokingly called a “Virginia hello.” Many species of gnats exist, and their larvae often develop in grass stems or decaying vegetation. Damp weather tends to favor their appearance. Daylilies bloom, with each flower lasting just one day. Fortunately, each stem has ranks of buds waiting their turn. Young backyard birds are fledging—leaving the nest for the first time. With luck, some learn to fly and survive, though first-year mortality rates exceed 90%. Chipmunks are busy gathering seeds, fruit, nuts, mushrooms, plant material and insects, which they store in extensive underground tunnel systems for winter. Their tails stand straight up as they scurry—likely to help them evade predators, which include hawks, owls, foxes, coyotes, snakes and domestic animals. The full moon on June 11 is known as the “Strawberry Moon,” named for its warm, amber glow.

Third Week

Mud dauber wasps emerge and get to work controlling spider populations. These wasps paralyze spiders with their sting and seal the still-living prey in mud chambers along with an egg. When the larva hatches, it feeds on the spider—reminiscent of a scene from the movie *Alien*. Robins begin raising their second brood. Often, fledglings from the first brood help feed their newly hatched siblings. The summer solstice falls on June 20. On this longest day of the year, the sun rises in the northeast at 5:44 a.m. and sets in the northwest at 8:38 p.m. In some homes, sunlight can reach every window throughout the day. At the North Pole, the sun doesn't rise or set—it circles the horizon, remaining 23.5 degrees above it for the full 24 hours.

Fourth Week

The musical trills of the gray tree frog (*Hyla versicolor*) echo from the treetops, especially after rain. Their calls are often mistaken for bird songs. These frogs are masters of disguise, changing their skin color to match the bark they cling to—hence their scientific name. Black-eyed Susans brighten our roadsides, and blackberries begin to ripen. Yellow and black tiger swallowtail butterflies flit through the treetops. Their eggs, laid on aspen and cherry trees, will hatch into caterpillars camouflaged to resemble bird droppings. While we love exploring nature, ticks are an unwelcome companion. Be sure to check yourself and others after walking through tall grass or meadows.



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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hiddenpond

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