

DECEMBER

MONTHLY MOSAIC



Berkshire Natural
Resources Council

BEECH AND OAK HOLD THEIR LEAVES

Even as snow falls, young beech and oak trees keep their coppery leaves through winter, a phenomenon called *marcescence*.

FUN FACT

The papery rustle of the leaves is one of the forest's lingering sounds. Scientists believe marcescence helps protect new buds from browsing deer and harsh winds.

1



TRACKS IN THE SNOW

When snow blankets the ground, the forest turns into a story of who's been here? Deer, fox, squirrel, mouse, and rabbit trails crisscross open fields and woodland paths.

EXPLORE

Be a footprint detective! Follow fresh tracks at **Clam River** in Sandisfield or **Bob's Way** in Sheffield after a light snowfall.

2



EVERGREENS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

With most of the leaves gone, evergreens like white pine, hemlock, and spruce take center stage in the forest. Their deep green needles stand out against the snow and sky.

FUN FACT

Eastern hemlocks create small, warm microclimates beneath their boughs where deer and birds shelter during the cold winter.

3



WINTER BIRDS ARE BUSY

Chickadees, nuthatches, and juncos brighten quiet forests with their calls, while flocks of redpolls and grosbeaks occasionally drift down from the north

EXPLORE

Visit **Thomas & Palmer Brook** in Great Barrington and **Parson's Marsh** in Lenox for two accessible reserves with great birdwatching!

4



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