

SEPTEMBER 2025

WILDROOTS NATURE PLAY PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

"May the long-time sun
shine upon you,
all love surround you,
and the pure light
within you
guide your way on."

-Mike Heron



In nature, September is a time of preparation. As the summer subtly shifts towards autumn, wildlife, plants, and trees are going through changes that will get them ready for the colder days ahead.

September is a time of preparation and transition for us, as well. We are moving into a new season of play, and sending many of our seasoned WildRoots children off to new adventures in preschool or kindergarten. We know these friends of ours will be well rooted in their experiences spent in nature play, and we wish them so much love and light.

Fall sessions will resume on Thursday mornings beginning September 18th. We will welcome some cooler days, changing leaves, and hot tea. We will continue to explore our play area as the rhythms of the season shift what is available, what the children may notice, and the types of process art invitations we offer.

We look forward to sharing another season with the families we welcomed over the summer, and some new families, as well. Look for other fall programming, including Rambles and some community collaborations with wonderful local organizations who are also serving children and helping us raise future stewards of our wild spaces.



Nature Highlights

Raptor migration - including *hawks*, *eagles*, *ospreys*, *harriers*, *falcons*, and *vultures* - occurs in New England in September and October. Many of these birds migrate during the day rather than the night, and some of them ride air currents while others rely on wing power.



Western conifer seed bugs, harmless shield-shaped insects, will seek refuge from cold temperatures inside of houses, beginning around this time of year.



Our *monarch butterfly* friends migrate from New England to central Mexico, traveling 3,000 miles in two months. They are seeking the oyamel fir trees that grow there. The adults who make it from New England to Mexico will not see this region again, but the third and fourth generations of their offspring will be back next summer.



Look for galls on goldenrod stems, round bulbs that grow around a gall fly larva deep inside. The *goldenrod ball gall fly* has developed this symbiotic relationship with these plants. Galls are formed by the plant as either a reaction to the egg laying or the chewing process, and they provide a safe spot for overwintering. Goldenrod hosts more than 50 species of gall-making insects.



The yellow and purple display of *Canada goldenrod* and *New England aster* is a sight that seems to mark fall. The meadows and roadsides are painted with these flowers right now.



Jewel weed, with species that produce either orange or yellow flowers, is a fascinating plant. It's jumping seed pods are fun to activate with the slightest touch, and its leaves, when crushed and rubbed onto skin, can be both a treatment for poison ivy itch and an antidote to poison ivy contact.