



# MARCH 2021

## WHAT'S UP AT UP YONDA FARM

### MARCH EVENTS

**Maple Festival** - On Saturday March 13th and 20th join an Up Yonda Farm Naturalist for an hour long guided tour through several interactive and informational outdoor stations about the science and history behind maple syrup. You can try your hand at tapping a tree, get to taste fresh maple sap and finished maple syrup! Tours will be available in the morning and afternoon, and group size is limited in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines for the safety of our guests and naturalists. The program costs \$5 per person, children 4 and under are \$1, and the day use fee is included in program rate.

Local maple syrup from Valley Road Maple Farm will be available for purchase, along with other local products in a pop-up shop on site!

Space is limited, reserve your spot at: [www.upyondafarm.com](http://www.upyondafarm.com)

**For Teachers** - Our March topic has typically focused around maple sugaring, with field trips out to our Sugar House. Since COVID-19 makes it so you can't come to us, let us Zoom to you! Contact us to schedule a Zoom or Google Meet with your class to have us virtually present a 15 to 60 minute program. Check out our YouTube channel for pre-recorded videos, and then have a live (via Zoom) question and answer session with our Naturalists. If maple sugaring doesn't fit into your curriculum right now, feel free to reach out with a request and we'll be happy to work with you to put together a program to enhance your students learning.

**Winter Junior Naturalist Program** - The Winter Junior Naturalist Program ends on the Spring Equinox, March 20, 2021! There's just a few weeks left for you to email photos or a scan of your completed work to Up Yonda at [uyfeec@gmail.com](mailto:uyfeec@gmail.com) so that we can mail you your Winter Junior Naturalist badge and certificate.



# THE SPRING EQUINOX

## Leaving Winter Behind

By Rick Landry

Each year, or really 365.26 days, the Earth makes one complete revolution, or lap around the sun. That extra quarter of a day it takes gets made up for on each leap year! The cool thing about this revolution is when we combine it with the tilt of Earth's axis, it's the reason for our seasons. Our North Pole always points toward the same star, Polaris - the North Star, and because of this there are times during the year when our Northern Hemisphere is tilted toward the sun, and times when it's tilted away.

At the Winter solstice on December 21st, our Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the sun, giving us shorter daylight hours and less direct insolation (incoming solar radiation), leading to our much colder temperatures that time of year. This date has just short of 9 hours of daylight with the sun rising around 7:24 am and setting at 4:21 pm. As we move past the solstice toward the spring, we see our daylight hours getting longer, and the temperatures starting to warm as the angle of the sun's rays begin to increase. On Saturday, March 20 we'll experience our vernal or spring equinox. On this day the Northern Hemisphere won't be tilting toward or away from the sun, and all areas of the Earth will experience 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of darkness! As we move forward to the summer, we'll see more daylight hours each day, and our temperatures will begin to warm more as the angle of insolation becomes steeper until we reach June 21st the Summer solstice. On this day we'll see the most daylight hours of the year, over 15 hours, and then our daylight hours will continue to slowly decrease until we reach the opposite side of our orbit around the Sun in December.

Each solstice and equinox is the astronomical beginning of the next season on Earth. The vernal equinox is the beginning of our astronomical spring, as we look at the path the Earth takes around the Sun. Often we often hear about meteorological seasons whose dates are slightly different. Meteorological seasons are based on past temperature cycles and the Gregorian calendar. This year, our meteorologists will announce spring beginning on March 1st. Whether you celebrate the advent of spring on the first of March or on the 21st, the Vernal Equinox is a pretty cool day to pay attention to the daylight and darkness hours on our trip around the Sun.

