

## Musing July 2018

July: A time of Coming Together

July is the peak of summer and is a time when we have totally forgotten about the isolation of winter and come together with family and friends. We do this by gathering out of doors to enjoy the warmth and sunshine in an abundance of outdoor activities such as hiking/walking in the woods, sharing cookouts, swimming, kayaking, canoeing, water skiing. It may also be simply relaxing with a good book at the cabin or sitting around a mesmerizing campfire.

This time of year also expresses a coming together through the effort you have expended in your outdoor space. For example, the seeds you have sown and the plants you are tending have reached or are close to maturity, be it flowers or produce. The woods and fields around reflect this coming together in our more native, wild, or natural spaces. This includes trees in full leaf, the profusion of wild flowers, loon chicks growing and maturing, and fawns with fewer and fewer spots.

For me it is reflected in observing the numerous eggs the Monarchs butterflies are laying on milkweed I planted 4 years ago. Every year the plants grow and spread, and along with this growth comes an increasing number of Monarch butterflies, feeding on my native wild flowers.

As these delicate creatures flutter their wings in the sunshine, hover and then land on a plant to further future populations, or gather nourishment is a joy to behold. Hopefully more people will join this effort to plant milkweed and native flowers, raise the caterpillars and help ensure future generations enjoy these beautiful butterflies. This to me is the essence of coming together in the summer.

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