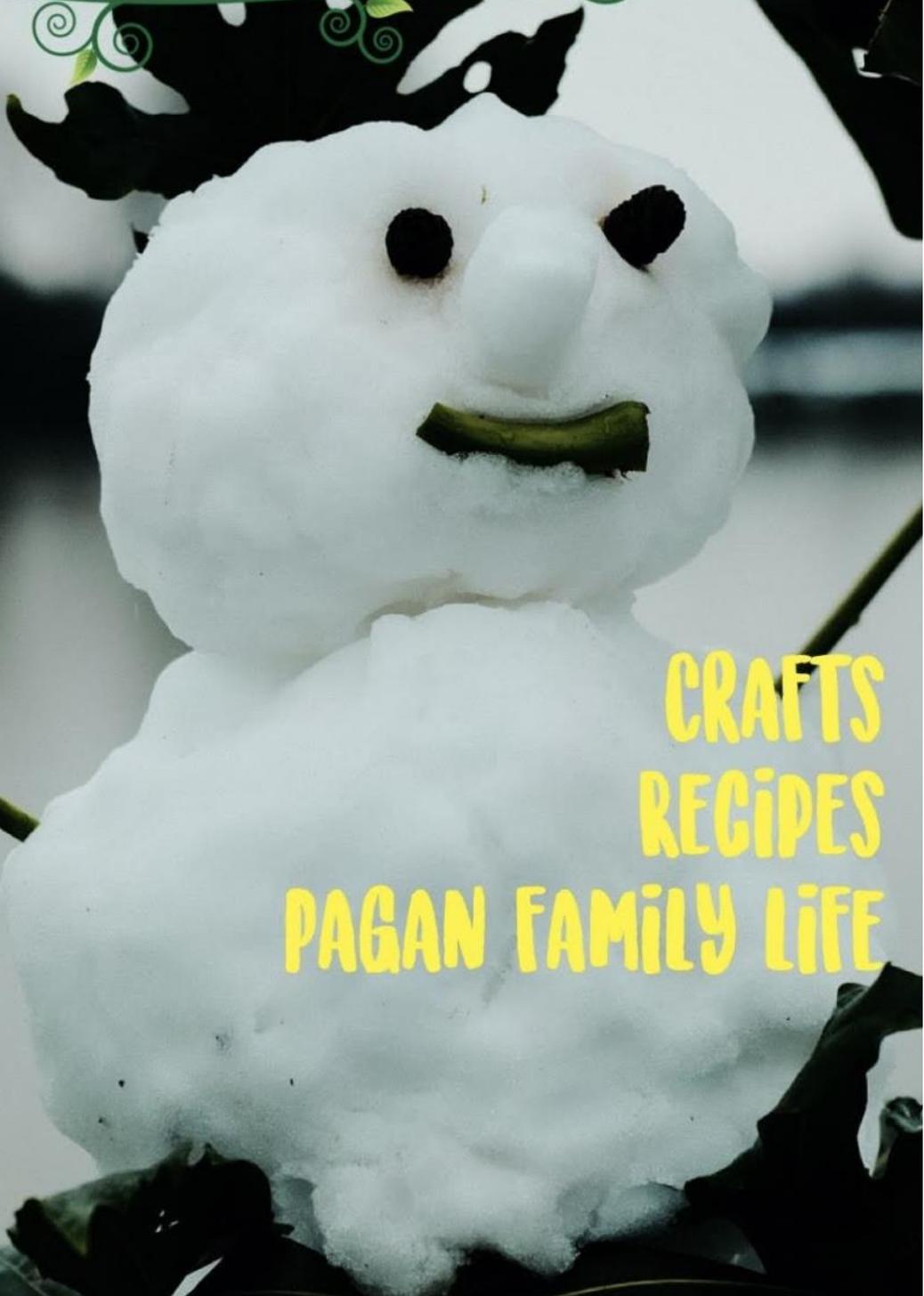


ISSUE 5. WINTER SOLSTICE 2021 FROM THE
PAGAN FEDERATION CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TEAM



Aether

The magazine for Pagan families, children, and young people



**CRAFTS
RECIPES
PAGAN FAMILY LIFE**

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Key

-  Intended for readers 16+
-  Intended for independent readers under 15
-  Intended for young readers or pre-readers
-  Intended for all readers

You may notice throughout these pages that there is limited use of font, text size and background colour.

This was a conscious decision made to try to be as accessible as possible for those with visual stress, processing issues, dyslexia, sight limitation and other additional needs.

If you're still having trouble with any aspect of our formatting, please let our team know so we can remedy it to the best of our ability.



Letter from the Editor



Dear Readers,

Solstice is here again after yet another strange and sometimes challenging turn of the wheel. We're still adjusting to the world with a bit of extra distance and a slightly different way of doing things, and the way so many of us flow into this "new normal" is a credit to how adaptable humans are. It's also been great to see so many of the online events continue despite some face-to-face gatherings resuming, as this helps many people in the disabled community that have always needed this extra support. Look out

for more online events from the Pagan Federation as we move into 2022.

Every issue of Aether revolves around a loose theme, and this Winter Solstice edition looks to the magic of water. Our cheerful snowman on the front is testament to the magic of transformation, and we explore that in a bit more depth later in the magazine. We've also got thoughts on what the season of winter teaches us, a snow wishing spell, and plenty of stories and poems for all ages.

We're also excited to share new and upcoming Aether patches with you. Have you started your Quest Packs yet? Share any of your Aether Patch experiences on social media with the hashtag #AetherPatches so we can see what you've been up to!

We're always looking for contributors for Aether Magazine. This is your magazine and we love to include reviews from the community, stories, artwork, crafts, recipes – anything you enjoy doing as a family. Get in touch at aether@paganfederation.co.uk

Warm wishes from all at the Children and Families Team!

Sláinte (health), Mabh Savage, Aether Editor

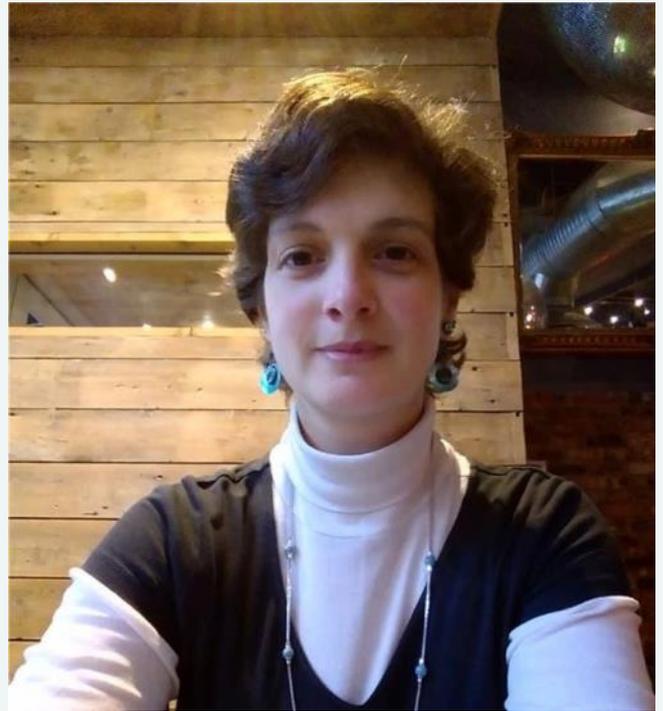


Image shows Mabh, Nathan (11) and Ember (4), shared with permission.



Letter from the Families Manager

It felt like autumn started early in my little corner of Yorkshire. The leaves started turning and falling, and that feel on the wind that just whispers the wheel is turning came early too. Now my little dilophosaurus is loving jumping in the deep stretches of leaves on the paths we walk and spotting all the colours. They get so excited when they see a squirrel scurrying up a tree or searching the ground for nuts. But the wheel is still turning and the feel on the wind is now whispering that winter is on the way. The hats and scarves have come out of hiding, the welly boots are getting more wear and like the animals near to us, we are starting to want more cosy days.



The children and families team won't be hibernating though. We've been working hard since the last issue of Aether on our blogs, continuing the A-Z of family deities and a new series on celebrating the full moons with children. We've been keeping the Wordy Wednesdays, Patchwork Tuesdays and Kids' Korner on Fridays going. If you don't already, please join in with these on our [Facebook group](#). We've also been working hard on bring you more Aether Patches. We now have 10 patches available: Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Moon, Imbolc, Beltane, Lammass, Samhain and the new patch on the block, Winter Solstice. Next year should see the release of Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice and Autumn Equinox quest packs to complete the wheel of the year. What other patches would you like us to do? Let us know on social media using the hashtag #AetherPatches or drop us an email to aether@paganfederation.co.uk

We've recently had some new faces on our team. Aaron has taken on the role of Liaison for North West district, and Morven has taken on South West district. I am truly thankful for every volunteer on this team; we couldn't do what we do without them! We have some vacancies right now, so if you are a PF member in East Anglia (covering Cambridgeshire, Essex and Norfolk) or South East (covering Brighton and Hove, Bromley, Dartford, Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex, Wells and East Kent), and fancy getting involved, check out the role descriptions on the website <https://www.pfcommunity.org.uk/children-and-families-team-vacancies/> and get in touch.

We are also looking for a new social media officer as it is currently being looked after by my deputy Lyn, who is doing a grand job for us, but she would like someone else to take it on. Again the role description for that and how to apply is on the website.

That's all from me for now, until the next time

Krys



Please join us

Pagans fighting poverty
and protecting
Mother Earth

www.paganaid.org/join



Greenmantle

A Pagan Journal

<http://www.greenmantle.org.uk/>

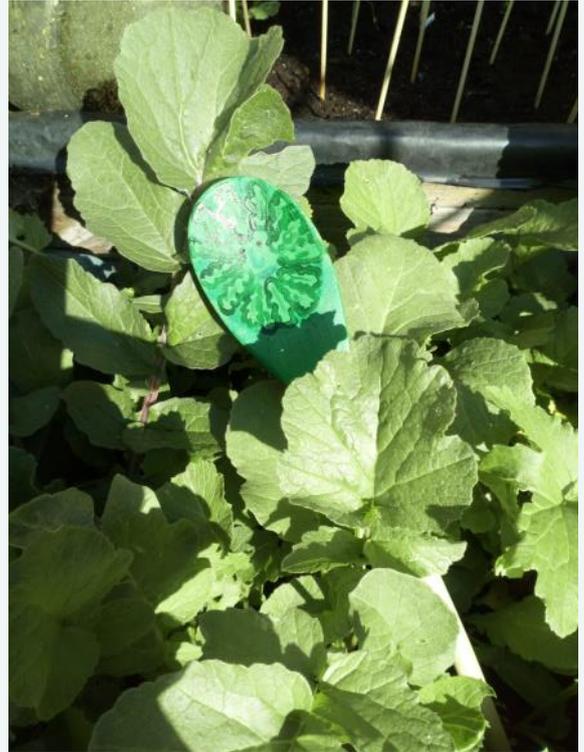


Greenmantle is a magazine for Pagans and occultists of all beliefs, paths and denominations. Founded in 1993, it has a unique voice combining thought-provoking and intelligent articles with news, humour, and a light-hearted personal touch. Avoiding the how-to and basic, Greenmantle concentrates more on living and reflecting as a Pagan, than on practice, and perhaps resonates more with the mature Pagan than the novice – though all are most welcome. One of the few surviving hardcopy magazines, Greenmantle has enjoyed over 25 years of serving the Pagan community.



Make a Greenman Spoon

Images of the Greenman can be found in old churches and cathedrals across Europe. They often depict a face surrounded by foliage and, despite being in churches, are believed to predate Christianity. It is thought that the Greenman is a kind of nature spirit, guardian or deity, and stands for nature's cycle of renewal and rebirth. The Greenman has been linked to Robin of the Wood, Jack in the Green, Cernunnos and Herne the Hunter, and can be called on to aid seedlings, new growth, harvest and wild spaces. You could place your Greenman spoon in a plant pot or flower bed you wish him to help grow.



What is a storyspoon? A storyspoon is like a puppet you can use to act out a story, and there are plenty of stories surrounding the Greenman and the other characters he is associated with to use your storyspoon with.

You will need: wooden spoon, paint, paintbrush, toy safe varnish



Step 1. Paint both the back and front of the spoon in your base green colour.





Step 2. On one of the sides paint a circle of leaves, leaving space in the centre to paint the face.

Step 3. Paint the face; eyes, nose and mouth. Add any other details you wish, could do some shading or embellishments to your leaves.



Step 4. When you are happy with your finished design wait for it to completely dry then get an adult to help do the varnish layer with toy safe clear varnish. Allow the varnish to completely dry before playing with it.

Note: Don't want to use paint? Felt pens will work too. Seal the design if you wish for it to last, especially if you put it outside.

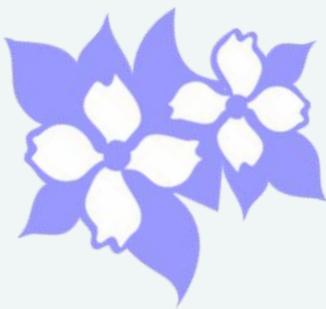




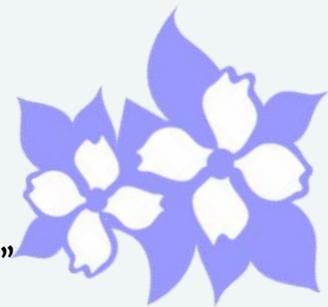
Weather Lore



As well as being Imbolc, February 2nd is also a weather lore marker. Weather lore markers are old sayings that predict weather conditions for the future by looking at signs in nature. The old saying for February 2nd reads as such:-



“If this day be fair and bright
Winter puts up another fight
If this day be dull and grey
Winters gone and won’t come again”



This is but one weather marker during the year, there are many more. They used to hold a lot of value in days gone by to enable agricultural workers to predict future conditions in preparation but today this lore is mostly considered irrelevant with the change in climate and weekly weather forecasts. Some however still hold true.



Another weather marker in the spring season is

“A wet March makes a sad harvest”

This refers to seed being washed away in deluges of rain and therefore less seeds staying put and germinating resulting in a poor harvest.

Although a lot of the lore is not relevant today it is a fascinating subject and a wonderful insight into how our ancestors lived and how they relied on nature, the elements and looked for signs much as we do today.





Warmers and Treats

With Rachel Patterson

Rachel Patterson is High Priestess of the Kitchen Witch Coven and an Elder at the online Kitchen Witch School of Natural Witchcraft. A regular columnist with Fate & Fortune magazine, she also contributes articles to several magazines such as Pagan Dawn, The Magical Times and Witchcraft & Wicca.

You can find more at Moon Books, Witches & Pagans, and her own personal blogs.

Many thanks to Rachel for taking the time to share these delicious sounding recipes! This issue she's gifted us a warming soup for those chilly days, and, in honour of our water theme, a mouth-watering chocolate "puddle" sponge suitable for vegans. Yum!

Parsnip and celeriac soup

Celeriac has a real celery taste, you will either love it or hate it, but I think it pairs really well with parsnip. Definitely a warming feel good soup.

Ingredients:

- 1 litre/35 fl oz vegetable stock
- 4 parsnips, peeled and diced
- 1 onion, chopped
- ½ celeriac root, peeled and diced
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- Salt and pepper



This is so easy – literally chuck everything into the pan together; veggies, stock and seasoning. Bring to the boil then lower the heat and simmer for about half an hour to forty minutes, until the vegetables are tender.

Blitz the soup in a food processor or liquidiser (or mash by hand if you are feeling really strong...and patient).

Reheat and serve.

Options

Replace the celeriac with a whole fennel bulb, diced.

Use cumin seeds instead of fennel for a warmer spicy taste.

If you really hate celeriac or fennel use 2 large carrots instead.



Chocolate puddle pudding (with vegan options)

This is seriously easy to make but it is incredibly yummy and doesn't taste at all like a puddle.

175g/6 oz self-raising flour
150g/5 ¼ oz soft brown sugar
50g/1 ¾ oz cocoa powder
150ml/5 fl oz milk (any kind)
2 teaspoons vanilla essence
50g/1 ¾ oz butter, melted (or vegan margarine)
50g/1 ¾ oz soft brown sugar
500ml/1-pint hot water



Mix the flour and sugar with half the cocoa. Beat in the milk, essence and melted butter and then pour into a buttered 1.4 litre (2 ½ pint) ovenproof dish. Mix the remaining cocoa with the smaller amount of sugar and sprinkle over the top.

Pour the water over the pudding and bake at Gas 4/180C/350F for about 1 hour.

The sponge should be crusty and cooked with a lush sauce underneath. Serve hot.



MABH SAVAGE

A MODERN CELT

SEEKING THE ANCESTORS



“It would be a particularly good read for teenage Pagans...” Nimue Brown, author of *Spirituality without Structure*

Available from all good book retailers



The Wildlife Corner: Slugs

Hello and welcome to the wildlife corner!

We begin our adventures with an “All Things Slimy” minibeast quest where we will discover some weird and wonderful facts all about slugs.



Where do slugs live?

Some slugs live on land and are known as terrestrial slugs. Others live in the seas and oceans. These are known as marine slugs, and there is a very small group which live in lakes, streams, rivers and ponds. These are known as fresh water slugs

What do slugs eat?

The majority of slugs are detritivores. This means they play an important part in the environment as they are part of the earth’s clean-up crew, eating all the dead and decaying organic waste matter.

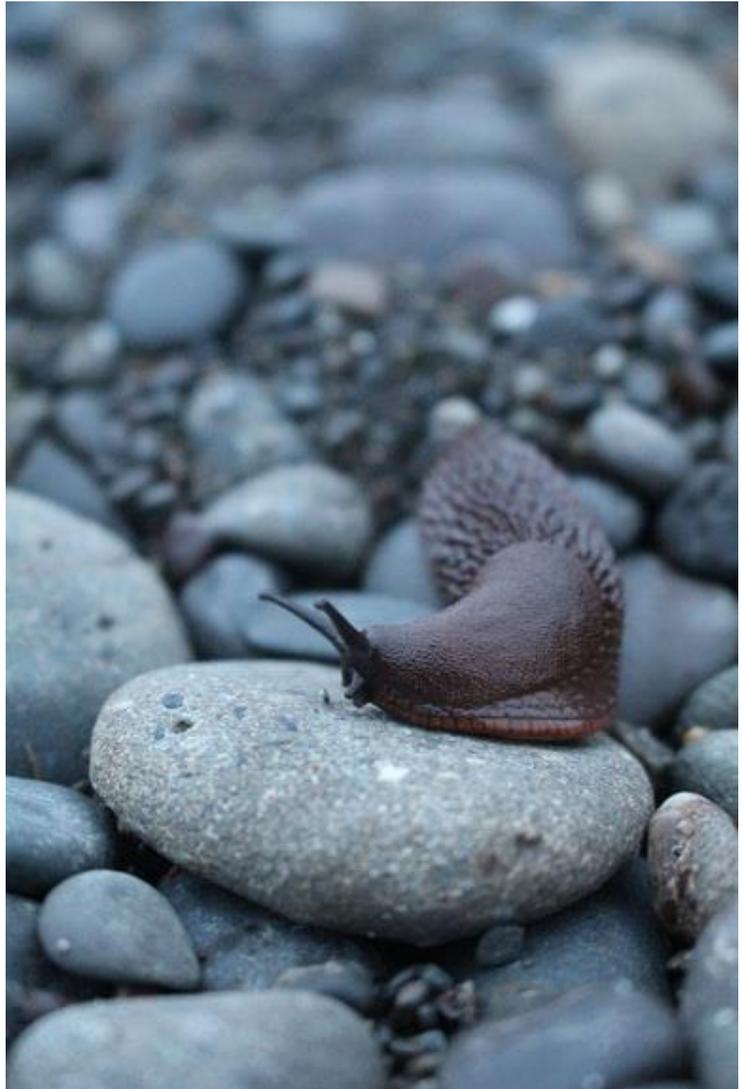


Slugs are molluscs. They are in the same Phylum (a special word which is used to help classify plants, animals and birds into scientific groups) as octopuses, cuttlefish, snails, clams and squid to name just a few.

Slugs evolved from snails. Over millions of years the size of shell became smaller, and finally disappeared but... some slugs still have shells! Sometimes, the shell of a slug is inside their body under what is called the mantle. It is mainly used to store calcium which is an important part of a slug's diet.

In the United Kingdom there are approximately 40 species of slug. They provide a valuable food for other creatures such as birds, hedgehogs, frogs, toads, and newts.

Slugs come in all colours, from the bright yellow of the Banana Slug which can be found living in the Pacific costal rainforest of North America, to the almost neon pink of the Mount Kaputar slug which can be found living on the slopes of Mount Kaputar in Australia.





The bottom of a slug is called the 'foot'. It is covered in a special slime called mucus.

The largest sea slug in the world can reach 99 centimetres and is called the Black Sea Hare or the California Black Sea Hare (*Aplysia vaccaria*, pictured right) and can be found living in the ocean off the coast of California.



The largest land slug in the world is called *Limax cinereoniger* and can grow to over 20 centimetres! It can be found in several countries throughout Europe...you never know you may even find some in your back garden!

Slugs have 'teeth', in fact they can have thousands of them (although they are not like our teeth). They are so tiny that you can only see them under a powerful magnifying glass, and they are arranged in rows on a long ribbon like tongue. They use these teeth to scrape at their food.

Experiment!

Undertake a slug survey!

One garden can have over 50 to 60 slugs per square metre, and many different species can often be seen.

With adult help, pop into your garden and taking a pencil and paper see how many different types of slugs you can find!

Article by Morven Marsh, Children and Families Liaison for the South West





2022 Calendar OUT NOW!

- Key dates from the Pagan calendar
- New moon and full moon dates
- Printed on 100% recycled paper
- Carbon neutral

£10
inc. postage



www.paganaid.org/pagan-aid-calendar

Have you got your copy of the [PaganAid 2022 calendar](#) yet? This beautiful calendar features 12 images, all submitted via a competition run by the charity earlier in the year. The cover boasts the winning photograph taken by Lee Smith. There are also photos from other members of the community, including our very own Hannah Semple from the Children and Families Team! The calendar features key dates from the Pagan Calendar as well as new moon and full moon dates. In keeping with PaganAid's commitment to improving life for our planet, the calendar is printed on 100% recycled paper and is carbon neutral.

Find out more about the amazing work PaganAid do [here](#) and order your calendar [here](#).





Reviews from the Community

Welcome to the reviews section of Aether Magazine! This issue, we've got a review of Winter's Tales by Lari Don, sent in by Fiona Dawson.

As always, we would **love** to hear from you about the Pagan products and services you interact with. Please send us family-appropriate reviews for things like:

- ◆ Celebrants or other Pagan officials
- ◆ Organisations
- ◆ Websites
- ◆ Books, magazines, or ezines
- ◆ Groups
- ◆ Moots
- ◆ Spiritual or Pagan gatherings
- ◆ Festivals
- ◆ Music



And anything else you can think of! This is your magazine, and we'd love to share the things that you enjoy with the community. Send any reviews to aether@paganfederation.co.uk.

With thanks from all the team!

the **Pooka Pages** for Pagan Kids

A free magazine - 8 times a year
Filled with original stories, crafts,
coloring pages, herbal lore, recipes
and magic for children.

www.pookapages.com



Winter's Tales by Lari Don

Published by Bloomsbury

Lari Don's book, *Winter's Tales*, is a lovely little volume of stories from around the world about the cycle of seasons, of spring returning after the dormancy of winter.

This is an excellent book for storytellers.

The theme of the cycle of the season, of death and rebirth, is explored with a sense of wonder.

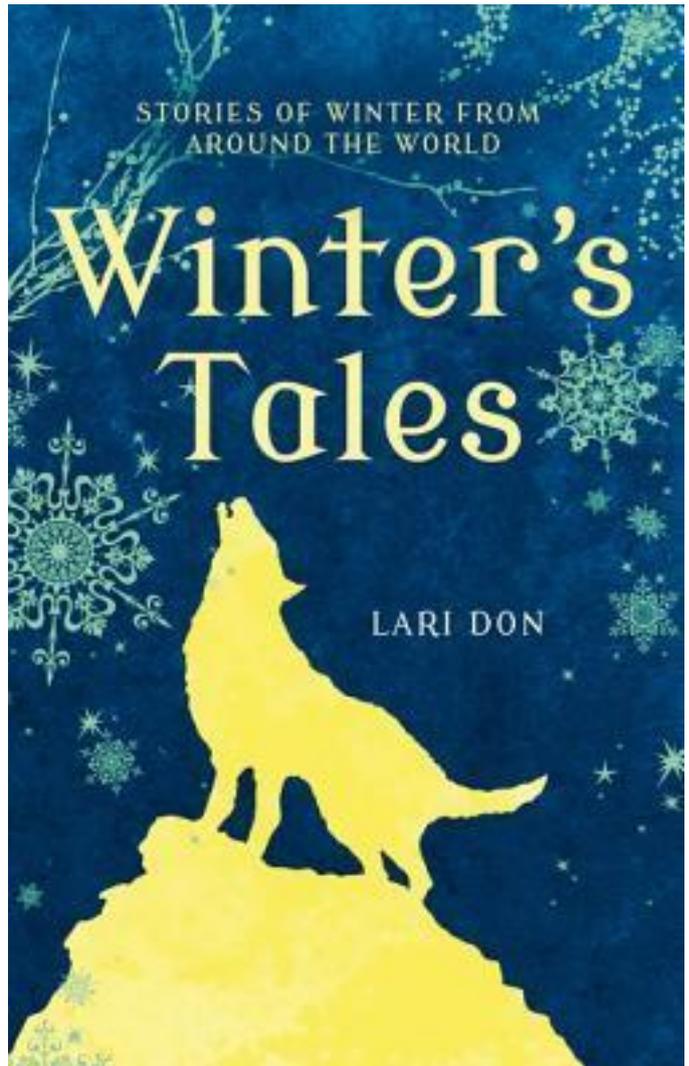
A Scottish story in which the Cailleach, the fourth aspect of the Goddess, is portrayed as a powerful and clever woman who has created Scottish islands, but not necessarily a figure of evil.

In the Ukraine a spider is hidden in the Christmas tree as a memory of the time when spider spun the first strands of tinsel.

The Norwegian story of the Snow Bear and the Trolls is wonderfully funny. Our hero, Lars, outwits the naughty trolls with a clever trick and all is well.

Lari Don takes us on a journey around the world, telling stories about winter and how the dark gives birth to the warmth of spring.

By focusing on winter, Lari Don has approached the darker aspects of traditional legends by embracing the fourth season.



Continues on next page...



Some of the tales are funny, like the snow bear and the trolls, others are poignant and terrifyingly relevant to our time.

In a Latin American story in which the ibis heralds the return of spring, when the seasons do not change and people are stuck in winter, water freezes so when spring does return and the ice melts, there is a great flood.

All over the world there are legends of floods which almost certainly relates to a historical event. In our own age we are facing changes in climate and flooding because, once again, humanity has offended Nature, the Goddess.

Essentially a children's book (why is storytelling always assumed to be for children?) Lari Don has written in such a clear way that it's simple to take each tale and tell it in your own style.

Fiona Dowson

Keep storytelling alive.

Review kindly submitted by Fiona Dawson, who lives on [YouTube](#) under her own name. She's also recently set up a [Facebook Group for sharing Stories for Winter](#). Go join and enjoy!



The Pagan Federation, founded in 1971, works to make Paganism accessible to people who are genuinely seeking a nature-based spiritual path. It is headed by an elected committee and administrative officers and has over 60 regional coordinators who act as its mainstay of activity. Coordinators stay in contact with members, provide information on events and are available to answer queries.

It works for the religious rights of Pagans, that they may worship and live free from defamation. The PF has helped supply expert witnesses in court cases and has effectively assisted in cases of religious discrimination in employment and child custody. It has also succeeded in having Paganism accepted as a valid religion in Scotland and obtained recognition from the Home Office in England and Wales.

The PF promotes factual accuracy, mutual tolerance among faiths and assistance to those who wish to explore Pagan spirituality.

The Pagan Federation

**"a collective and positive voice
to a diverse community"**

Join Today

£20 per year
(payable by cheque, PayPal or Direct Debit)

and includes
4 issues of Pagan Dawn



Join online at
www.paganfed.org



Recipe for Imbolc: No Bake Cheesecake

This is easy and fun for children to make. They will most likely enjoy bashing up the biscuits!

Ingredients

- Base – 200 grams digestive biscuits
100 grams butter
- Topping – 200 grams soft cheese such as Philadelphia
150 ml double cream
75 grams icing sugar
Lemon zest
Fresh fruit, chocolate or similar to decorate



Method

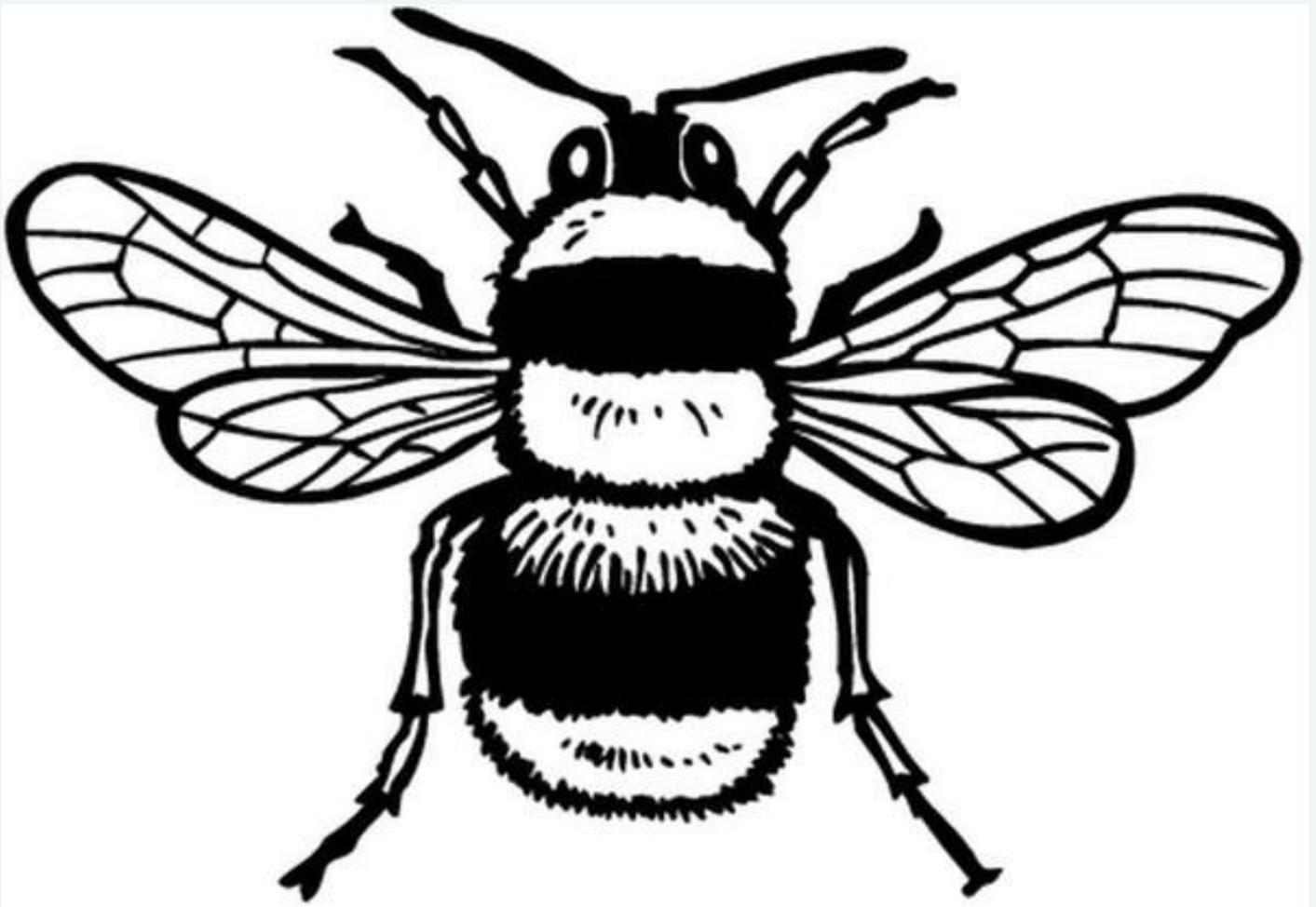
1. Crush up digestives into crumbs
2. Melt butter in a saucepan and stir in crushed digestives
3. Spoon into a dish, flatten off and cool
4. Meanwhile in a mixer put cream cheese, double cream, icing sugar and lemon zest.
5. Mix until firm
6. Spread cheese mix over cooked digestive base and smooth flat
7. Refrigerate
8. Decorate just before serving

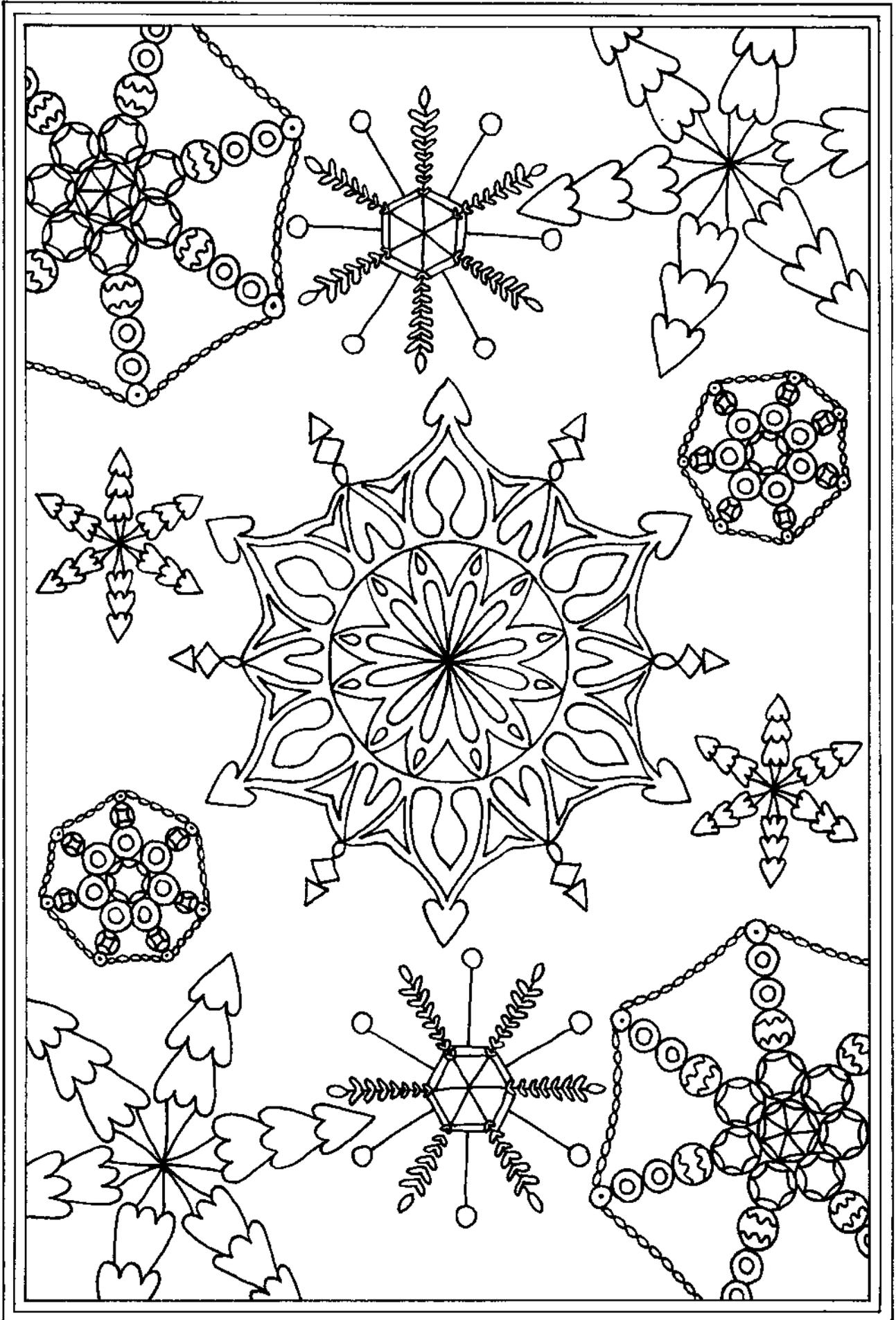




Printable Colouring Pages

Indulge your artistic side with our printable colouring sheets! Many thanks to artist and Pagan Federation president Sarah Kerr for the gorgeous snowflake art on the next page. The first page is taken from free site [Printable Coloring Pages](#) and shows a bee, one of the insects we can look forward to seeing again with the sun's return next spring. . Simply right click the image you want to colour and select print.







News: Aether Patches



We're so thrilled to see so many of you and your families enjoying the Aether Quests. Have you seen our [new intro video](#) yet? Go and [take a look](#) and tell us what you think at our Facebook Group!

We'd love to see photos, videos, or even blogs about what you've been up to whilst working towards your next patch. With that in mind, please share your adventures using the hashtag #AetherPatches. As well as showing us what you've been up to, it's a great way to connect with other Pagan families who are also completing their Quests!

If you've never heard of Aether Patches, it's a fun scheme that introduces kids to aspects of Paganism through exciting quests based around different themes such as the elements or the seasons.



In 2021 we launched a new Winter Solstice Patch, and one all about the Moon. Our next patch will be about the Spring Equinox, so keep an eye out for that! All our quest packs are free to download from the website:

www.pfcommunity.org.uk/aether-patches.

There are free certificates too. Just choose a gem level you want to work towards and complete the corresponding number of challenges to earn your patch. Physical patches are available to purchase from our store www.pfcommunity.org.uk/store and they really are stunning!



Please share your “patchwork” with us on any of your socials using the hashtag #AetherPatches, on our [Facebook group](#) and here in our community magazine by emailing

aether@paganfederation.co.uk

If you let us know the name and age of the person completing the quest, we'll give them a shout out in the next issue!

IMBOLC

**Buy your
Aether Patches
here!**

EARTH



Is your child a budding poet? Get them to submit their creations to the below email address.



Children's Poetry Book

Pagan Federation are after submissions for an anthology of poetry by the children in our community.

The themes are:

Moon and Stars

Animals

Weather

Woodland

Myth and Magic

Send your poems along with name and age of the child who wrote it, to aether@paganfederation.co.uk

Illustrations to accompany the poems are also welcome



★ Poetry: Young Voices ★

We're still delighted to be compiling poems from children in the Pagan community, with the aim of eventually publishing a whole volume of poetry from young pagan voices. The Pagan Federation already published a [volume of poetry from adults](#), so we thought it was time to give the kids a voice! As well as our regular Wordy Wednesday on our [Facebook group](#), we've been encouraging families to get in touch with their young people's poetic offerings.

Send poems to

aether@paganfederation.co.uk

The only proviso is that the author is under 18, and that the poems match one of our topics of Moon and Stars, Animals, Weather, Woodland, or Myth and Magic. We can't wait to read them!

Faces

By Jonty, age 10

An owl hoots as the wind blows through the trees
rustling the branches.

Candles flicker in the moonlight, and a strange glow
dances behind orange faces which sit on the doorstep.

Children run to the door 'Trick or Treat' they shout,
excited for sweets.

We open the door and the orange faces dance
some more.

The children turn to leave, their buckets full of treats.
As they walk down the dark footpath the orange faces
turn to say goodbye.



- Community Poems—These poems are created in our Facebook group each Wednesday.



Elephants
By Raven, Ember, and Nathan

Elephants go jumping
Like a dinosaur
Elephants are smooth...
It's an elephant!

A well known fact about elephants
Is that they do not wear pants!



THANK
YOU
TO ALL OUR POETS



Story Time



Made with PosterMyWall.com

We're really grateful to our contributors for some fun adventures for various reading abilities. Raven's Rest Farm is home to some fantastic characters and the tales are suitable for all ages, but will particularly appeal to the under 12s. Alfred the Squirrel is a bit different to the other squirrels, and learns how that makes him special. And, we have an exclusive from author S. D. Stevens, from *The Tales of Alhanassa*, ideal for young adults or reading together.



Alfred the Squirrel

By Hannah Semple

There was once a squirrel whose name was Alfred. Now Alfred was a very special squirrel because he was an albino which meant his fur was completely white. All his friends and family were red or grey but not Alfred.



Life was hard for Alfred, so even though he was super special it didn't seem that super to Alfred. He couldn't go out into the forest like the

other squirrels because his white fur stuck out among the trees unlike his friends who scampered through the trees and seemed almost invisible.

Being white and not blending in meant Alfred was often spotted by his enemies who would swoop down and try to eat him. After a close encounter with an owl Alfred decided it was safer to stay in and so he did, often wishing to himself that he was grey or red.

"Why is being white so special?" Alfred asked his mum one day.

"You'll see Alfred," she soothed, "One day, all the squirrels will need you and then you'll understand why you are special."

Then one morning in the depths of winter, Alfred was woken up with a lot of noise. He wondered what was going on and when he peeked out of his home, he saw the world was white.

"It snowed," a squirrel cried, "How will we go out and get our food?"

"We will show up too easily with our grey and red fur against the white snow!" cried another.

"But I won't," said Alfred

The squirrels all cheered, and Alfred's mum smiled.

Alfred had fun in the snow that winter, playing and scampering around and gathering food for the others. Best of all, he finally understood why he was so special.





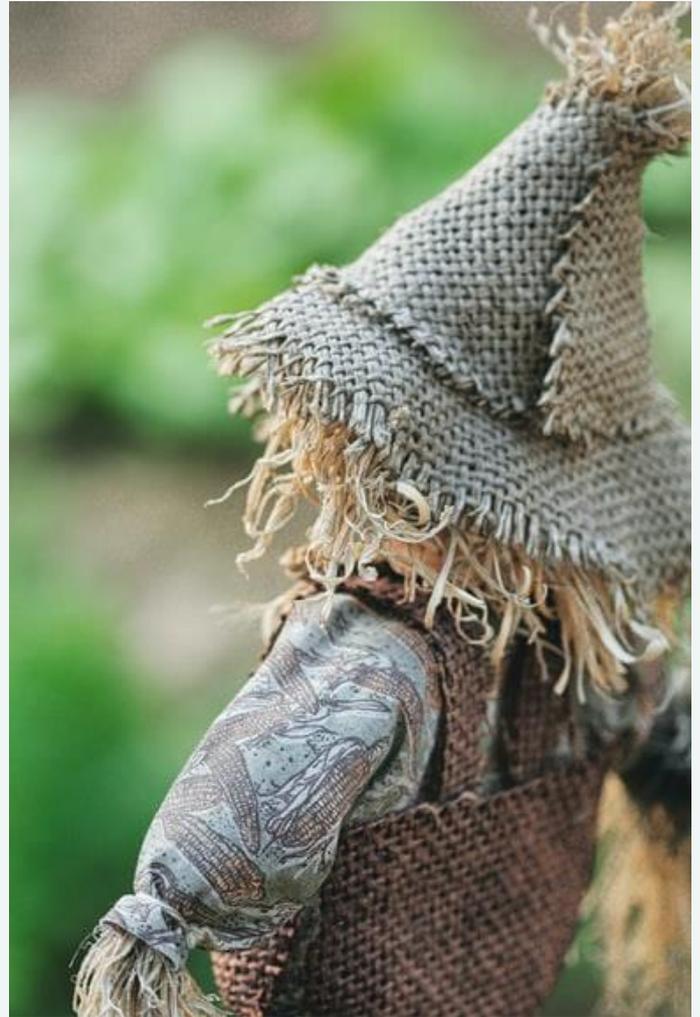
How Little Bitza Stuff Came to Be

By Lyn O'Callaghan

Many people who don't live on farms, believe it is the farmers who stuff their old clothes with straw and plonk the finished item in the middle of a field to make Scarecrows. Although the old clothes and straw are correct, the rest is different.

The truth is the older Scarecrows, sometimes one and sometimes two, put other scarecrows together and all are made to look after a particular field or part of a field. Scarecrows are made on the Eve of Imbolc and, when the first rays of the Imbolc sun warm the new Scarecrow, a Faery or a Gnome from nearby woods or hedgerow comes to bestow life.

Faeries and Gnomes love plants, and anyone who looks after them and helps them grow is loved also. This means Scarecrows are magic and, at night when no one can see, they can move.



Now the field we are interested in is the lower field on Raven's Rest Farm. It is the home of Cram and Jam Stuff. They had been close friends and very fond of each other ever since Cram had made Jam to help her to look after the lower field. They were also fond of Millie the Farmer and her husband, Joe.

Cram and Jam had watched with interest as Millie and Joe had had a baby and she grew into a lovely little girl called Esme.

Esme enjoyed everything to do with the farm and spent hours with Millie learning all she could about the farm animals, crops, and the wider nature around her.

For her fifth birthday, Millie and Joe decided to give Esme her own vegetable patch to grow whatever she wanted, and it was this that prompted Cram and Jam to increase their own family.





Aggie, being a fast sort of dog, was back quickly with all the things they had asked for and as soon as it was dark the two friends set to work. Using straw that they kept aside for repairs to themselves, Cram and Jam worked through the night stuffing, tying and fixing. They were finished a little before dawn and sat down to rest. While they waited for the sun, they began to discuss what name to give their creation.

“The one who made me was called Bitza,” said Cram, “I have always felt it was an appropriate name for a Scarecrow.”

“The one who made you was enormous, that’s why he was called ‘Big Bitza’, I think that is too large a name for a little Scarecrow in a child’s vegetable patch!” replied Jam.

They sat in silence for some time, each turning over names in their minds, ‘Ram’, ‘Pack’, ‘Crush’, ‘Squash’, ‘Squeeze’.

They were all traditional names for Scarecrows but did not quite fit.

“I still like ‘Bitza’”, said Cram, at last, “It’s kind of a family name, you see.”

“Yes”, Jam could see, “but ‘Big Bitza’ isn’t the right name.”

“How about ‘Little Bitza’ then?” suggested Cram and Jam had to agree, it was a perfect name. So, they sat in silence and waited for the Faeries and Gnomes to wake up Little Bitza.

When dawn arrived, Cram and Jam were very excited and couldn’t wait to meet their new chum. As the sun came creeping over the farm, they saw movement in the woods and out came a faery.

They recognised her at once; she was the Faery Queen’s daughter, Lady Evelyn. As she flew towards them, she left a glistening trail of faery dust in her wake, as faeries often do. She shone and glimmered towards the lifeless form of Little Bitza; this was always one of her most favourite parts of the Imbolc celebrations. Lady Evelyn enjoyed encouraging new flowers to bloom forth and trees to put out buds, but bringing a new Scarecrow to life was by far her preferred pastime. She had also been quite sad since her best friend, Lady Ellie, had left to help bring forth the flowers in another wood. Cram and Jam hoped giving a new Scarecrow life would cheer her up somewhat.

Lady Evelyn settled on Little Bitza’s shoulder, sprinkled some faery dust on where their face would be and gave them a kiss, then sat back to watch.

The sun was climbing higher in the sky and was now touching Little Bitza’s toes, which wiggled, and the process continued on as this. Each time the sun touched a new piece of cloth, it became alive and began to wiggle. Eventually the sun touched Little Bitza’s face, and they broke into a huge smile, looked at their new friends and began to laugh.



● Cram and Jam felt it was somehow fitting that Little Bitza should have the same birthday as Esme, as it was she that they had worked so hard for.

It turned out to be a perfect Imbolc and a day for good news.

Milly and Joe were present at the birth of their first lamb that season, and Esme had a wonderful birthday party. She was thrilled to see her new Scarecrow standing straight and proud in her new vegetable patch.

When all her guests had left, Esme set to work preparing and feeding the soil in her patch ready for planting. She talked non-stop to Little Bitza about what she would plant and why; what mini beasts her plants would attract and all the lovely meals she, Milly and Joe would make when everything had grown.

When night came Little Bitza stayed in the vegetable patch. Cram and Jam arrived for a visit and to hear how her first day had been and were pleased to see Lady Evelyn already there. They could tell from the giggling Little Bitza and Lady Evelyn were going to be very good friends.

And so, as the moon bathed the farm with her milky light, the companions talked until late, and they realised what an important night this had been.

It was Imbolc, a new friend for Lady Evelyn had arrived and it was the first night in the adventures of Little Bitza Stuff.





One to Keep

By Lyn O'Callaghan

Raven's Rest Farm was the home to a remarkable collection of humans, animals and all sorts of magical creatures. The farmer, Milly, had lived there all her life and Joe had moved in when he fell in love with her some years before. They were raising their daughter, Esme and their son, Oran to learn about the farm, animals and surrounding hills and woods. The family were happy, but this isn't a story about them, this is about someone else at the farm, someone who wasn't quite as happy – and how she found her bliss.



Imelda Chicken loved being a chicken. She was a nosy sort of bird. She loved scratching around for food. She found her nest very comfortable and the company of other chickens a pleasure.

In fact, there was only one part of being a chicken Imelda didn't like. She hated 'losing' her eggs.

When she laid them, they looked so perfect. She was proud of every single one, but either Milly, the farmer, took them away or her chicks hatched and broke them to pieces.

All Imelda's eggs were speckled brown, just the right size, just the right shape and not one beautiful example survived.

One day, as the last of winter was finally leaving, Imelda was enjoying a walk, seeing what flowers were pushing their way through. The sun was getting stronger and there was a feeling of waking up, all around the farm.

As she walked past the farmhouse, Imelda looked up at the open window where she usually saw Milly the Farmer and to her astonishment, she saw eggs!!!!

They were even more exquisite, more colourful, more dazzling than any she had ever made. All the colours of the rainbow were there, shining shapes, colourful shapes, they were so amazing.



Imelda knew she was not allowed in the farmhouse, but she could not help herself, she just had to see more, so she crept in.

At the kitchen table, Joe was 'blowing' an egg. To do this he was using a needle to make a small hole in the shell at one end and a slightly larger hole at the other. He was then blowing through the smaller hole, so the contents of the egg came out of the larger hole into a bowl.

Once this was done, Milly, Esme & Oran were helping to decorate the shells with paint, stickers, and an array of other items.

Imelda watched the activity and listened as Milly and Joe told Esme & Oran how they would celebrate the Spring Equinox, when day and night are equal in length, marking one of the quarter points of the year; how the Goddess would visit the earth on that night, disguised as a rabbit and deliver eggs for all the children.

Imelda couldn't care less about the story, Goddesses meant little to her, but she could not take her eyes off the eggs; they were so wonderful.

Just as she had decided to leave, the most amazing thing happened, Esme dropped a decorated egg, and it didn't break!

Quick as a flash, Imelda shot forward and sat on the egg. When Milly and Joe tried to move her to get the egg back, Imelda pecked at their fingers and scratched at their hands and clucked loudly, causing such a ruckus.

She felt she had made it very clear she had no intention of letting them have such a splendid egg back, especially as they had so many!!

The family laughed when they realised how attached Imelda was to the fabulous egg and decided to let her keep it. Leaving everyone else in the kitchen watching Imelda, Joe disappeared into the yard saying he had an idea and would be back soon.

When he returned, Joe scooped Imelda and the egg up; as she wasn't sure what was going on, she pecked him for good measure!! He took the chicken and the egg back to the coop, where he had built a shelf for the egg to sit on. He settled Imelda onto her nest and gently placed the egg on its new shelf.

Proudly, Imelda showed off her fine-looking egg to the other chickens, who weren't quite as bothered by such things as Imelda, but seemed happy for her anyway.

For her part, Imelda was delighted to finally have one to keep.





The List

From the Tales of Alhanassa.

Exclusively Written for Aether

©[S. D Stevens](#)

Excitement filled the stalls, girls gathered around the parchment on the table. Gwent had a huge smile on her face and rushed to Ambha, drawing her further into the room.

“Have you seen the list. Everyone’s talking about it.”

“Not yet,” Ambha pushed through the girls to look.

“Well done, Ambha.” One girl said and gave her a warming smile.

“Congratulations.” Another shook her hand.

“No wonder Dawn took off. You’ve stolen her place.” Someone shoved Ambha into the table.

The list was written in two columns. Under Queen Kohinran’s name was Gwent’s followed by the team she would be leading. The second column was Princess Kohinora’s and Ambha’s name was right underneath it. Excitement sent butterflies fluttering in her stomach. Ambha knew she could be part of the team but not as team leader. She scanned the list. The butterflies turned into a tight knot; Dawn’s name wasn’t there at all.

“I thought Dawn would be coming?”

“Not now.” Lehana pushed Ambha away from the table. “It’s all your fault.”

Dawn had run past her earlier; her face red and tear stained.

“I didn’t know!” Tears stung her eyes but she fought to hold them back.

“She’s Princess Kohinora’s messenger, not you.” Lehana sneered and pushed her with both hands. Ambha fell backwards, banging her head on a chair. Pain shot through her skull.

“Leave her alone!” Gwent snapped, standing between Ambha and Lehana.

Ambha’s cheeks burned with embarrassment. she wanted to cry, to hide and not come out. She knew she shouldn’t but the tears came regardless. Her body trembled with anger. She rose on shaky legs and stood next to Gwent.

“I... I expect to be on the team, not lead it.”

“And we’re supposed to believe that?”

“I don’t care what you believe!” She shouted at Lehana. The other girls had gathered around, some behind Lehana, the rest behind her and Gwent.

“I didn’t ask for this.” Ambha Jutted out her chin and stood tall. “Dawn is my friend so back off.” She swished her ponytail as she turned and left. She could hear arguing once the door was closed. Ambha didn’t care, she wanted to see Dawn.

Their room sparkled in the morning sunshine; tiny dust motes floated in the sunbeams. Dawn sat back on her bed, in the shadow, hugging her knees. When the door closed, her head turned towards the wall.



"I can't do it!" Ambha blurted out. "I'll tell Princess..."

"No, you'll do nothing of the sort." Dawn sat up and wiped the tears from her face. "I put your name forward. It's my fault."

"What?" She sat on the bed next to her friend.

"I asked for you on my team. Even said you'd make a good head messenger." Dawn wiped her nose on the back of her hand. "I never thought I'd be dropped all together!"

"We can..."

"No, the list has been made."

"But it's wrong!"

"Go and enjoy it." She sniffled and laid her head back on her knees, looking the other way.

"I won't, I don't know how to manage a team. This isn't fair on you or me."

The door opened and Gwent popped her head around it. "I've shut Lehana up for now." She looked at them both, closing the door behind her she sat on the bed. "Anyway, this came for you." She handed a leather tube to Dawn.

Ambha held her breath. This could be a letter to say why Dawn wasn't going. The knot in her stomach tightened again.

"It was a mistake!" Dawn jumped up and knelt on the bed.

Ambha's heart sank and her lip trembled. She'd been excited, scared and upset all at the same time.

"I'm glad you're going." She got up to Leave, her shoulders slumped.

"Wait, you're still coming. Silly."

Ambha turned around and shook her head, "I don't understand."

"I'm team leader but you're to be my shadow." Dawn folded Ambha into her arms. "See, we are both going."

Ambha tried to relax her stiff body, she wasn't sure she understood. "Your shadow?"

"Yes! You'll be learning from me."

Ambha giggled and covered her mouth. She wanted to jump up and down with happiness. Relief fell from her shoulders and she welcomed the giddy feeling.

Later that day Dawn, Ambha and Gwent sat in the stalls discussing their trip to Astra Rise. One of the flame stones lit up and Lehana stepped through.

"Oh look, it's the thief!"

"Shut up. My name was missed off the list, it was a mistake, that's all." Dawn rolled her eyes at the other girl. Lehana narrowed her eyes and glared at them.

The now familiar woosh of leather shooting through a tube halted their pending argument. Dawn snatched it up moments before Lehana could get it. She pulled the top off and slid out the paper.



“Oh, Lehana you’re to report to Mistress Rose.” Dawn sucked in her bottom lip, hiding a smile and looked wide eyed at Ambha and Gwent.

“Does it say why?” The smug look dropped from Lehana’s face.

“Nope.” She nodded towards the door, “I wouldn’t keep her waiting.”

Ambha had met Mistress Rose a few times. She was the royal messenger’s housekeeper. She was usually a jolly, friendly woman but very stern if you found yourself in trouble. The punishments she dealt out were a little harsh and came with a written warning!

“That will teach her to bully one of my friends.” Gwent sat back and put her hands behind her head.

“You told Mistress Rose?” Dawn giggled when Gwent nodded.

It wasn’t the first time Lehana had bullied Ambha. She usually made herself small and kept away from her but this time was different. Some of the other girls had supported Ambha, it was great feeling. She sat quietly and listened to Dawn and Gwent; Ambha was glad she had such good, loyal friends as these.

“~ ~ ~”

S.D Stevens' stories are about the magical world of Alhanassa. A world governed by Queens, Priestesses and Governesses. Where women rule and magic is a part of everyday life. To find out more, visit her website sdstevens.com or her Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Alhanassa>

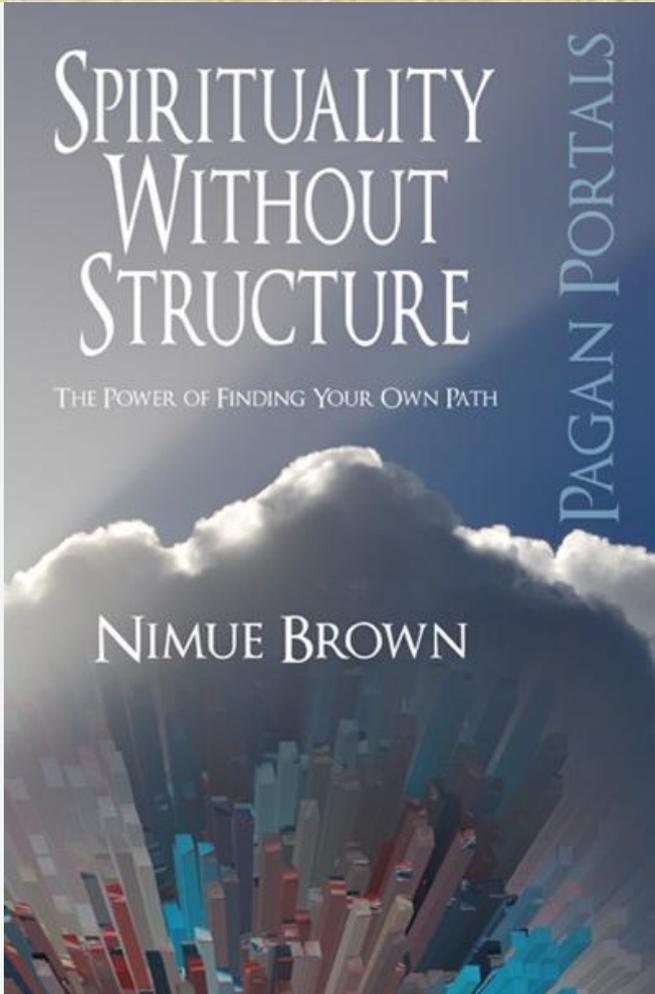
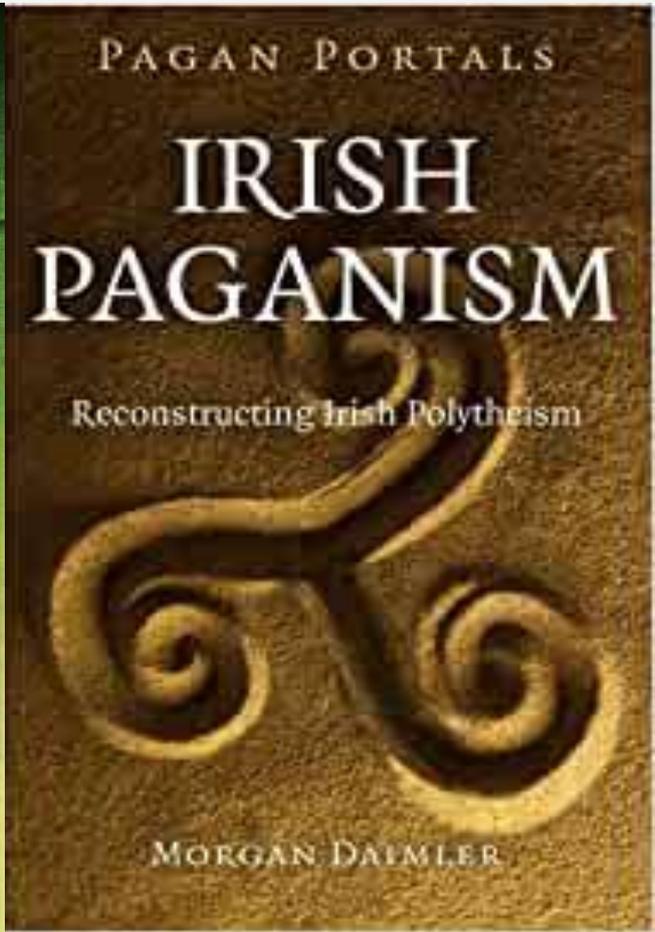
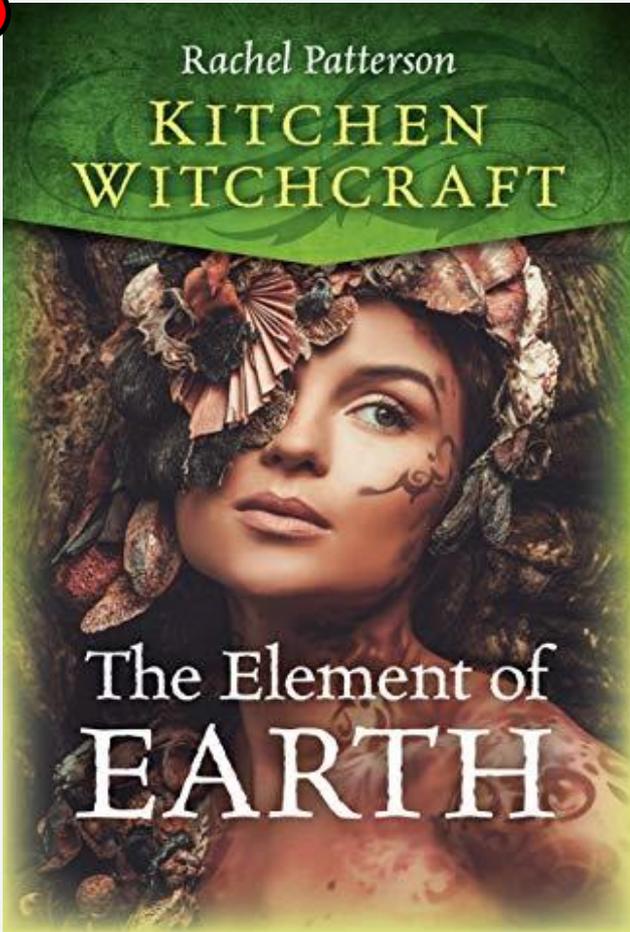
We hope you enjoyed these stories! Which was your favourite? Come and tell us which ones you loved and why over at our [Children and Families Facebook Group](#). We’d love to hear from you!

If you’re a budding writer or established author and you’d like to contribute towards this voluntary community magazine, we’re always on the lookout for short fiction for children or young people.

If you’d like to contribute any fiction, poetry, or art for our magazine, please send it to aether@paganeferation.co.uk

Thanks again to all our amazing contributors this issue!





Moon Books is a publisher exploring Paganism and spirituality, with books covering a diverse range of topics and paths. Find out more at their website, <https://www.johnhuntpublishing.com/moon-books/>.

PRACTICALLY PAGAN AN ALTERNATIVE GUIDE TO...

Practically Pagan is a new series of books from Moon Books, designed to give a spiritual twist to everyday things like gardening and cooking. The series focuses on simple ways to introduce magic into your lives, and makes you realise you may already be living a more spiritual life than you realise! Current titles to buy or pre-order include:

- ◆ Practically Pagan: An Alternative Guide to Cooking by Rachel Patterson
- ◆ Practically Pagan: An Alternative Guide to Gardening by Elen Sentier
- ◆ Practically Pagan: An Alternative Guide to Health and Wellbeing by Irisanya Moon
- ◆ Practically Pagan: An Alternative Guide to Magical Living by Maria DeBlassie
- ◆ Practically Pagan: An Alternative Guide to Planet Friendly Living by Mabh Savage

Plus a short introduction to the volumes titled Practically Pagan: An Introduction to Alternative Guides to Living. More coming soon!





A Snow Wishing Spell

By Hannah Semple

Continuing our theme of Water, this simple spell uses the temporary nature of snow to reinforce a magical intention.

Think of something you would like to improve within yourself such as courage or confidence.

Go out into the snow and keep thinking of this wish while you make a snow sculpture. This sculpture can be anything: a shape, an animal; whatever you like. It could represent your wish in some way. For example, if you want to learn something, you might sculpt an owl.

When you have finished your snow sculpture say aloud or to yourself.

“May my snow wish come to me,
It harm none and may it be.”

As your snow sculpture melts, your wish will be released to the universe.





The Transformative Nature of Snow

By Mabh Savage

Late November saw the first snow of the season here in Yorkshire. It was very late at night, late enough to be classed as early in the morning. It had been blowing a gale all day; blustery, wet, and so windy the trees looked like they were about to bend in two at times. Yet suddenly, there was silence. The realisation of this crept up on me, and I glanced up, alerted to a change by the lack of ruckus from outside. A glow emanated from behind the curtains, and I pulled them quickly back to reveal huge, fat flakes flying past the window and an already considerable covering of glistening snow on the ground.



Even though it was still windy, and the flakes whirled and danced on the gusts, the noise was all absorbed by the sudden, soft covering over everything. I marvelled at how snow completely transforms the world. But not only did it physically transform my street and the hedgerows, it felt like a real turning point; winter was making its presence felt in no uncertain terms, and the wheel of the year turned another notch.

Snow is a very sensory weather. It affects what we hear, how cold we feel, and there's even a certain smell in the air once it starts snowing. You can learn how snow transforms our senses, and connect more deeply with this sometimes dangerous but always fascinating weather.



Listen

Next time it snows, stop what you're doing and really listen. Can you hear the whisp of flakes landing? Is it windy, and does the snow whip around you or the windows? Once snow has settled, can you hear how it muffles all the other sounds?

Feel

Always stay safe when playing with snow. You should wrap up warm and be mindful that it can be slippery and dangerous. Touch the snow. You expect it to be cold, but what else can you feel? Is it soft or hard? Does it flow through your fingers or sit there like a stone? There are many different types of snow, from fat, ornate flakes to tiny lumps like polystyrene packing balls. Exploring how they feel is another way to get to know snow.

Look

If you're lucky enough to see an individual snowflake, try and take a photo before it melts so you can get a really good look at it. Examine the shapes and its form. How does it make you feel? Can you draw it, or your own version of a snowflake?

Smell

It's absolutely true that you can smell snow. Snow may smell different whether you are in the city or the countryside, but there is a definite aroma that we associate with snow. [Scientists believe](#) this is because the cold air impacts and dulls other aromas, and the increased humidity may actually boost our olfactory (smelling) senses. Can you smell snow? How would you describe it?

Create a snow journal, noting how the snow changes the landscape around your home, and how it affects your senses.

For more sense-based ideas, check out the [Aether Patch Quests](#). Don't forget to share your achievements with the hashtag #AetherPatches!





The Pagan Federation Internet Safety Tips for Twitches



P

Private

Keep personal information safe and secret. Don't share your real name, address, phone number or passwords.



A

Accept

Accepting emails, files, pictures, text or instant messages from people you don't know can cause problems. Always tell a trusted adult if you feel uncomfortable.



G

Gather

Don't arrange to meet up with people from the internet. If you feel you do want to meet someone you have met on the internet, make sure you have spoken to trusted adult.



A

Attention

Pay attention to the information you are reading, do you trust this source, is it reliable?



N

Nice

Remember to be respectful. It is easy to fall into the internet trap of saying things to a person online that you would never dream of saying in real life. This is also true for how other people should be speaking to you.



S

Safe

Don't let friends or strangers pressure you into doing something you would not normally do. If you have any concerns, speak to a parent or trusted adult.



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Grow Your Own Wheel of the Year



A great project for 2022 is to grow your own Wheel of the Year. Not only does this connect you with nature and the land, but it also teaches you about where food comes from, the effort of growing, seasonal foods and the importance of the elements.

So, where to start?

Look up what foods are in season at each festival, for example pumpkins are readily available at Samhain. Decide based on this research what you are going to grow for each festival. Next, find a sowing chart online or refer to the seed packet instructions so you know when you have to sow your seeds for your plant to be ready at the time you need it. Pumpkins need to be sown April/May to be ready for Samhain for example. Sow lettuces in March to be able to harvest some leaves around Beltane.

Up to now you've already learned so much: to be responsible for nature's bounty, how growth cycles work, how much effort goes into producing food, how to nurture, and also an appreciation of the elements. Think about the earth in which the seed is sown, the fire of the sun, the water in the form of rain for growth and the air for pollination.

Hopefully, your plant will be ready for the festival you grew it for and you can celebrate knowing how you worked with Mother Earth to produce something wonderful. If space is an issue, herbs are great or you can grow plants in hanging baskets or on a window sill. You don't have to limit yourself to vegetables and fruit or anything that's edible. You could grow flowers for decoration or for their scent.

You don't have to grow for every festival either, maybe start with one or two and don't get disheartened if a crop fails. This happens even to the best of gardeners! Most of all though, have fun and let us know how you get on, and feel free to share your pictures in the [Families Facebook group](#).





Pagan Puzzler

M	A	L	L	A	R	D	A	E	V	Z	Q	W	E	R	B
U	T	Y	U	I	O	G	S	M	E	W	P	P	A	S	A
T	D	F	G	H	J	A	K	L	Z	I	E	I	D	E	R
E	X	C	V	B	N	D	M	Q	W	G	E	N	R	T	N
S	C	O	T	E	R	W	Y	G	U	E	I	T	O	P	A
W	A	S	D	F	G	A	H	A	J	O	K	A	L	Z	C
A	S	H	O	V	E	L	E	R	Z	N	E	I	X	C	L
N	V	B	N	M	Q	L	W	G	E	R	Y	L	T	Y	E
U	S	C	A	U	P	I	O	A	P	A	E	S	D	F	G
G	H	J	K	L	Z	X	C	N	V	B	N	N	M	Q	O
W	G	O	O	S	A	N	D	E	R	E	E	R	T	Y	O
U	I	L	A	E	T	O	P	Y	A	S	D	D	F	G	S
H	J	K	L	Z	X	C	K	C	U	D	L	E	H	S	E
V	B	D	R	A	H	C	O	P	N	M	O	Q	W	E	R
M	A	N	D	A	R	I	N	T	Y	U	G	I	O	P	A

Water Birds to find

Barnacle Goose

Eider

Gadwall

Garganey

Goosander

Goldeneye

Mallard

Mandarin

Mute Swan

Pintail

Pochard

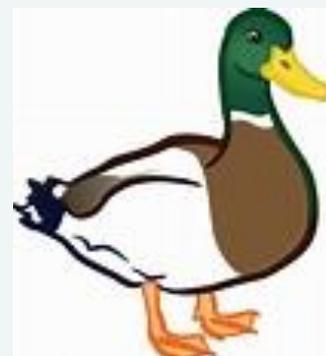
Scaup

Smew

Shoveler

Teal

Wigeon





Pagan Puzzler

Nocturnal Animals Word Jumble



LOWBRAN

THOM

OFX

HEGGEDOH

GRABED

TBA

WANTLOWY



Imbolc Wordsearch

A	F	M	B	T	B	I	P	W	D	K	R
Y	C	U	J	L	I	F	E	B	P	Q	X
E	D	M	A	I	D	E	N	U	L	L	S
S	Z	E	J	G	O	T	Y	D	A	D	I
T	R	N	S	H	X	N	C	S	N	H	M
E	R	E	S	T	R	E	N	G	T	H	W
K	B	G	T	C	Q	M	V	A	I	E	K
S	R	Z	F	S	M	O	V	O	N	N	S
A	Y	F	G	N	I	W	O	R	G	N	X
B	H	R	B	L	V	S	F	P	Z	J	T

Maiden	Planting
Life	Growing
Buds	Women
Strength	Baskets
Light	Sisters





Spring Equinox Wordsearch

D	J	S	C	M	W	G	Q	A	F	K	P
B	A	E	R	A	H	E	R	D	S	E	E
E	U	F	Z	J	N	E	S	X	K	C	G
G	H	M	F	R	W	W	B	G	C	L	G
I	Q	V	A	O	F	O	K	P	I	V	S
N	Z	C	V	F	D	G	R	I	H	L	O
N	R	F	U	X	A	I	D	K	C	G	J
I	M	P	S	V	Y	F	L	B	I	E	H
N	K	N	O	T	W	T	Z	S	D	N	H
G	L	P	T	X	B	S	F	J	N	R	G



Eggs
Hare
Chicks
Gifts

Working
Beginning
Herds
Daffodils





Tablet Weaving for Children

By Fiona Dawson

Weaving is magical.

Spells are woven created by weaving the weft through the warp and making something wonderful.

The great thing about weaving with tablets (often just called cards) is that you don't require a loom. All you need are cards which you can easily make from cereal packets with a pair of scissors and a hole punch.



The warp can be set up between any two points. Turn a chair upside down and wrap your work round the legs.

Tablet weaving has been around for a very long time. We know the Vikings did this; so did the Anglo-Saxons and the Romans. It may be even older.

You just need to mark each card with a pattern. A lovely lady named Shelagh Lewins has her own [website](#) with easy to follow instructions as to how to label each card with the pattern you wish to make.

For children you can even just make stripes using only four cards which is easy for little hands to turn.

Children as young as eight can make a friendship band, although they will need an adult to set the warp up for them. Older children can thread the tablets themselves.

Making friendship bands is lovely because there's a world of difference between just buying a gift and making something with your own hands. Isn't it wonderful to help children make their own magical presents!

The slightly tricky thing is the difference between S and Z threading. Simply S threads go from left to right so they form an S shape and Z threads, go on, you've worked this out already haven't you, run from right to left so they form a Z shape. Ropemakers and people who spin (they're called spinsters) also use these terms. Twist a thread clockwise and it comes out Z spun. Twist a thread anti clockwise and it..... yes, you've guessed correctly.



If you do make a mistake with threading all that happens is you end up with a different pattern, so it doesn't really matter.



Weaving means children are being creative, connecting with ancestors and developing fine motor skills. They're also learning about directions – tablets are usually turned clockwise.

I made a [YouTube video](#) specifically about teaching children, based on my experiences of volunteering at a museum.

There's a great deal to learn here and lots of fun to be had.

Jump in and have a go but be warned, weaving can be addictive!

My own video is Tablet weaving for children. There are also lots of really good, informative videos for beginners.



The next time you go to a re-enactment day ask one of the people there about tablet weaving. Someone is bound to be doing this.

I usually have a stall at the Faerie Festival in Sussex and I teach people how to tablet weave. Absolute beginners can make a short piece of weaving really quite quickly. On the other hand you can spend the rest of your life learning the really clever techniques.



Have you met The Elemenpals by Debi Gregory yet?

The Elemenpals are a “family of elemental imps who are learning all about Mother Earth and her children so that one day they can be grown up Elements and take care of the Earth. They're helped by woodland creatures, older elements and Mother Earth as they discover, play, watch and learn about the world around them.” (From the [Witch Path Forward website](#), home of The Elemenpals).

The Elemenpals: Meet the Pals! is a wonderful book for young readers, encouraging them to find ways to connect to the Earth. Cleverly, the author has left out descriptions of colour, gender, or ability, so there is nothing stopping a child from relating to whichever Elemenpal they feel closest to.

Have you introduced your family to the 'Pals yet? Here's what readers are saying about Meet the 'Pals:

“Visually beautiful”

“Lovely book for both pagan and non pagan children. The story is so sweet, and. I imagine could become a firm bedtime favourite. Any child will enjoy colouring the pictures in. I love the tips for nurturing your child into a love of literature at the back too. Lovely little book.”

“This is an amazing book.

I bought this for my grandchildren ... but want to hang on to it for a while!”

“A lovely interactive book that everyone will enjoy “

Get your copy now!

<https://bit.ly/2WcyxPe>



What can Winter Teach Us



By Hannah Semple

Wintertime can often look drab and bleak, and you may wonder what can nature teach us during this season when nature does not seem to be doing a lot itself, but nature in winter if you really look can teach us some valuable lessons.

Stock up on supplies – squirrels may not hibernate, but they do stock up and save nut stashes for the winter. Stocking up at the beginning of winter is also beneficial to us. Often, we have had a fall of snow that has left people unable to get out or shops closed. Its good to be prepared.

Conserve energy – winter is about resting. During the other seasons, nature has been extremely busy blossoming, growing, producing fruit and dispersing its seeds. Plants become dormant in winter, conserving energy until the time of action starting in spring comes round again. It is the same for humans.

Keep warm – very few British animals actually do hibernate, but all animals will shelter away as much as they can. Ladybirds will huddle together, and other insects will find nooks and crannies. We should also make sure that we keep warm in the winter to keep us healthy.

Be optimistic – look for the brightness in situations. Even in the darkness of winter there is still life and light. Evergreens grace the landscape; holly berries are gems of brightness and the moon and stars still shine light in the long dark nights.

Have a look at nature in winter, is there anything more you think it can teach us?





Creating Magickal Memories

By Aaron Garner

Picture the scene... A father walks into his seven-year-old son's bedroom to find him in tears. The weeping young lad is sitting with pencil in hand and a blank sheet of paper. "I don't have any good ideas, Dad!" he sobs.

It's always heart-breaking to see our children crying and for me, 11 years ago, this was no exception. But on this occasion, it was to become a beautiful bonding moment, full of magick. I gave my son a hug and asked if he'd like to do some magick together, with the aim of helping his creativity re-blossom. He immediately became excited, and we got to work.

I suggested we create a simple talisman and we set about finding an item that might work for the base of that undertaking. Clearly taking after me, my son had an extensive collection of stones and rocks stashed in a variety of places in his bedroom and, in no time at all, he found a smooth flint that he felt suited the job.

After a long chat about what he felt he needed we decided that his drawing and art was a multiple element pastime. Air for ideas, thoughts, and memories to draw upon; Water for his expression of how he feels through his pictures; Fire for the passion and motivation for doing art/craft; and, finally, Earth to help him ground all those elements into a solid idea through to manifestation on paper. He pondered for some time on the design of the stone but opted to begin with, to paint a simple Pentagram in white acrylic paint, which seemed fitting for his first foray into magick and the multiple elements we'd chatted about. He then used some other colours for arrows to mark the directions and the elements, then some extra arrows for good measure. The design was simple, but the process had already started him moving away from his "I have no good ideas" rut. Together we wandered to the bottom of the garden to where my simple altar was set up in my home office. We gathered what he needed for his magick. I held my son's hand as we defined a magickal working space, we both visualised blue light tracing from our hands as we turned around. We had the altar set up with elemental items around the stone we'd placed in the centre.

Continues on next page...



The stone was presented to a candle, a feather and incense, a bowl of water, and small dish of sand before being placed in the centre and my son duly named it his “Art Helper Stone”.

I don’t recall the exact words spoken at that point, but what I do recall is the profound sense of togetherness and happiness at watching my son talking to the stone in a respectful way, requesting it’s help, imbuing positive intent. The look on his face told me his request was certainly not falling on deaf ears... I remember we sat there for some time before closing, the candlelit room and a father and son with smiling faces was all that mattered in that moment.

My son used his Art Helper Stone for years as an anchor for idea generation and, now at the age of 18, continues to create art through music and spends hours playing guitar, keyboard, and singing. And before you ask... Yes, he does still have the stone... Kept in a little blue wooden box, with a wooden Wizard on the lid. And the memory of that day, I will keep forever in my mind and in my heart.



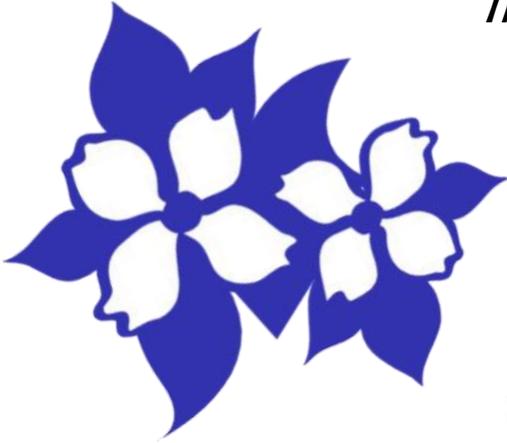


Your Poems

The Neglected Air of Winter

By Hannah Semple

The neglected air of winter,
Branches stark and bare,
Nature has let herself go,
She doesn't seem to care.
But if you look a little closer,
She's not forgotten, just asleep,
The evergreens stand fully clothed,
The ivy quietly creeps.
Seasons berries are shining gems
Amid the dark decay,
She may look a little tad unkempt,
But that's just Winter's way.



Oftimes Music is the Rain

By Mabh Savage

Oftimes music is the rain
Falling rhythm on the pane
Rolling drum like in my ear
Softly soothing then I hear
A pause
A change
The rhythm breaks
Has it...
Could it be...
A snatch of sun beam
One, two, three;
The cloud flows back
The beating starts
The rivulets my heart beat charts
And rain goes on
Beside my tune
We play together
Probably 'til June.

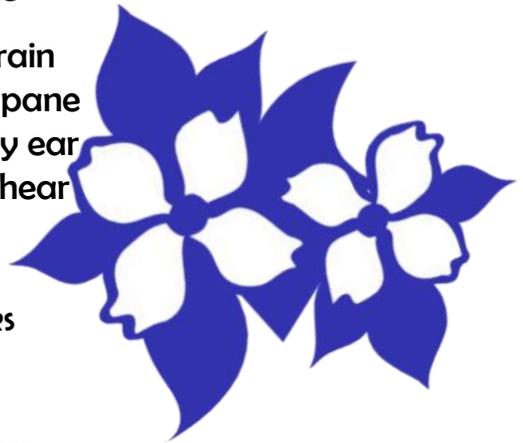


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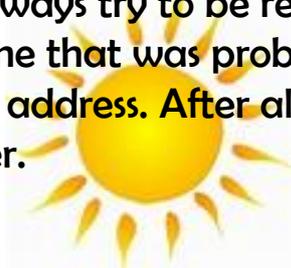
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Original Aether design and concept by Debi Gregory. Legacy content including glossary and useful links by Debi Gregory.

Corrections and suggestions to aether@paganfederation.co.uk

We try to be as inclusive as possible in our magazine. All articles are written by individuals with their own paths and beliefs, and those may be very different to yours, and we always try to be respectful of that. If you found anything within our magazine that was problematic or offensive, please let us know at the above email address. After all, it's only when we know better, that we can do better.



Pagan Federation Shop

Did you know we currently have LOTS of special promotions happening in the PF products shop online?

Grab yourself a super value goody bag for just **£12**, containing items worth over £30. Or perhaps indulge yourself with a huge bumper box of 120 mixed scents incense sticks for only **£2**.

Pagan Federation Products – the perfect way to show your support for the work of the PF with a lovely gift for all seasonal celebrations. Badges, patches, calendars, T-shirts, mugs and more. Visit <https://paganfed.org/shop/paganfederation-products>

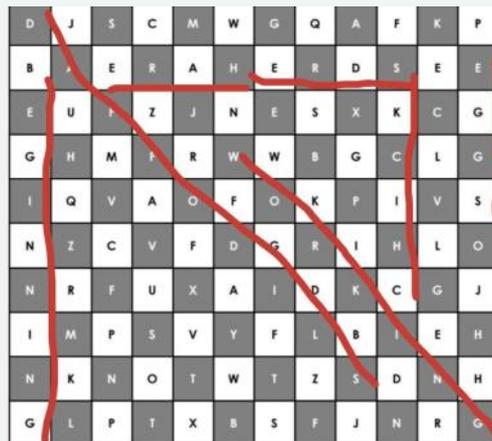
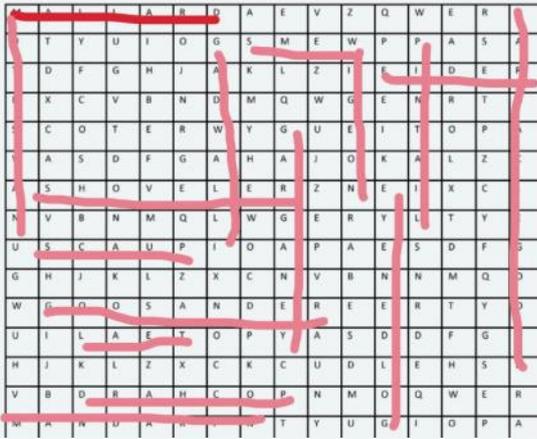
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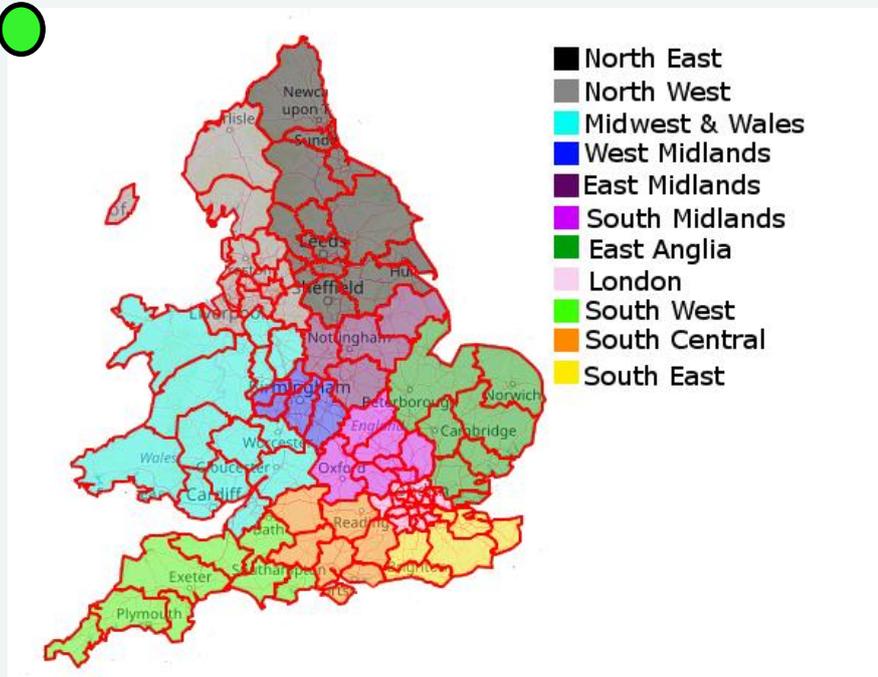
Puzzle Answers

Wordsearch Solutions



Nocturnal Animal Jumble: barn Owl, Moth, Fox, Hedgehog, Badger, Bat, Tawny Owl





If you're unsure which PF district you're in, this handy map by Jason Slowe can help!

Aether Glossary

Here are some definitions and links that may be useful for those new to the community, youths, and children.

Pantheon – A group of deities associated with a specific group.

Aether – The upper sky or breath of the divine.

Resonates – To trigger positive feelings or an emotional response.

Faith – A system of spiritual belief.

Horus – A sun god of Egyptian origin.

Juno – Roman queen of heaven.

Triglav – Slavic deity.

Magec – Deity of light.

Oracle – A divine form of communication.

Oracle cards – Cards used to communicate with the divine.

Divine – Comes from the Latin word for “godly” and is associated with anything deemed “more than” or “super” natural.

Revelation – A profound understanding or communication.

Symbolic/symbolism – When one thing represents or stands in for something else.

Angels – Divine messengers.

Zen – A state of meditation.

- Divination** – To communicate with “other” or to interpret signs.
- Sabbats** – Seasonal festivals that celebrate the changing wheel of the year.
- Deities** – Personification of the divine.
- Moot** – A meeting of Pagans.
- Moon phase** – The cycle of the moon from waxing to waning.
- Mindful** – To take more conscious notice.
- Hail** – A form of recognising the divine or the congregation.
- Sidhe** (pronounced shee) – Magical creatures in Celtic and Gaelic mythology. Often compared to fairies.
- Wicca** – Pagan path often associated with witchcraft.
- Faerie/fae** – Mythical beings associated with many beliefs systems.
- Celebrant** – A person who performs ceremonies such as birth blessings, funerals and Pagan unions.
- Altar** – A sacred space, often displaying tools of an individual’s path.
- Rite/rites** – A ritual or ceremony of divine or spiritual significance.
- Druid** – Celtic Earth based path.
- Runes** – Ancient Germanic alphabet now often used in divination.
- Atheist** – An individual who doesn’t subscribe to conventional constructs of spiritual beliefs.
- PF** – The Pagan Federation – An organisation who aims to support the Pagan community and educate those outside the community on Pagan practices.
- Meditate** – To either look inward or look to the divine in an attempt to find answers or calm.
- Solstice** – Points of the year when the Earth is tilting either closest too or farthest away from the Sun, either at Summer or Winter, causing the longest and shortest days of the year.
- Equinox** – Points precisely halfway between the Solstices.
- Samhain** – Often confused with or associated with Halloween, this is the festival halfway between the Autumnal Equinox and Winter Solstice and is often associated with death or new beginnings.
- Ostara** – Associated with the Spring Equinox.
- Yule** – A Northern European celebration of the Winter Solstice.
- Guru** – A spiritual guide or mentor.



Doreen Valiente (pronounced valient-ey) – Often called the Mother of Modern Witchcraft. Important figure for anyone in the Pagan community, a pioneer of our modern practices.

Pagan/Paganism – A term for those who identify as falling under the umbrella term for many, mostly Earth based, practices.

Tradition – A series of practices or beliefs that are handed down through generations or practiced regularly and consistently.

Ritual – A ceremony repeated at significant times or for significant reasons.

Spell/spell work – A ritual with a specific purpose. A working of intent.

Karma – The ideology that your actions have further consequences that will manifest.

Wyrd – Similar to fate or karma.

Havamal – An ancient text of Nordic origin.

Ancestors – The generations that came before, your deceased family.

Reincarnation – The ideology that a being can be reborn into another life after death.

Tribe – A group of people who are connected by ancestors, beliefs or customs.

Religious practice – The beliefs and traditions of a particular faith or faith group.

Theology – The study of the divine and spiritual.

Occult/Occultist – Relating to magic or supernatural practices.

Denominations – Particular faith groups.

Magic – Some call this the supernatural ability to harness and control and others call it other things. It's best to read a lot and decide for yourself.

Magick – A word used to distinguish the magic of faith beliefs from the stereotype of magic and magicians tricks.

Celestial – Heavenly or divine.

Relevant links -

Dorset Wildlife Trust - <https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/>

National trust - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/>

Pagan Federation – <https://paganfed.org/>

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Wildlife Trust - <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>

Witchy clip art credit - <http://www.joellessacredgrove.com/Clipart/index.html>

Pagan Aid Environmental and anti-poverty charity: <https://www.paganaid.org/>



Thank you for taking the time to read this publication, which has featured work from people all over the Pagan community!

We at the Pagan Federation thank our contributors and we wish you, our whole community, a very happy, safe, and blessed Winter and Spring!

