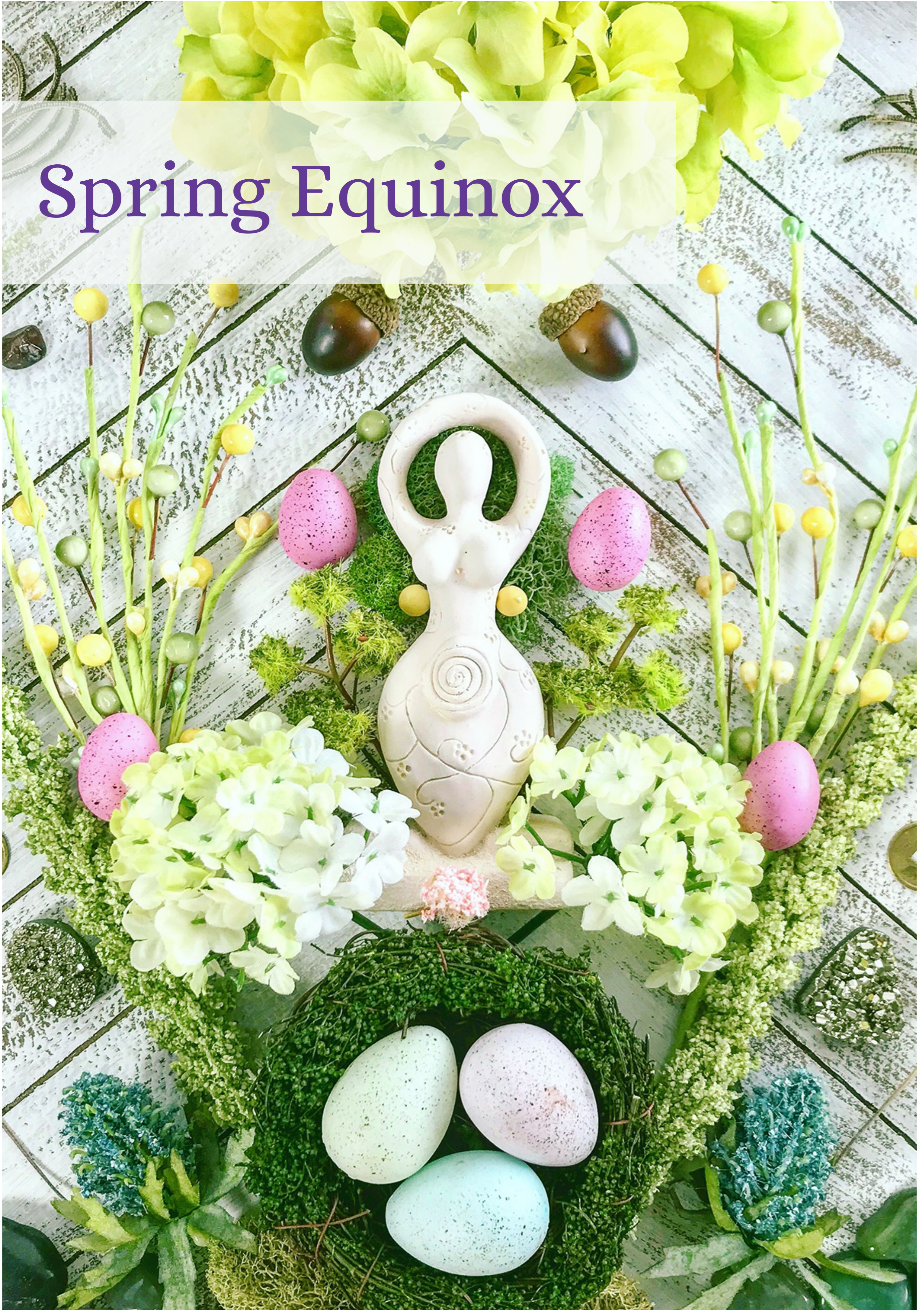


Spring Equinox





Spring Equinox

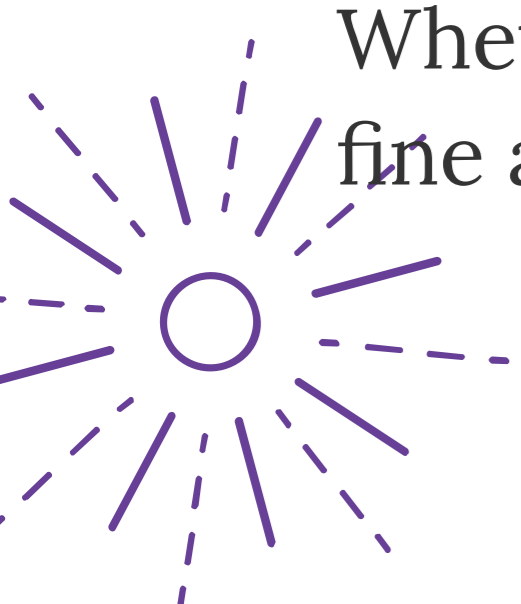
Spring Equinox, the perfect balance of day and night, light and dark, feminine and masculine. Known by some as Ostara, which traditionally falls on September 21st. Spring equinox marks the beginning of true Spring.



Folklore declares that Ostara was named for the Anglo Saxon goddess of the morning star, Eostre, who also gives her name to the Christian feast of Easter. It is a festival of fertility and rebirth, accompanied by the symbols of rabbits and eggs.

Eostre first makes her appearance in literature about thirteen hundred years ago in the Venerable Bede's *Temporum Ratione*, where he tells us that April (the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere) is known as *Eostremonath*, named for the goddess that the Anglo-Saxons honoured in the spring. Assumptions that she was widely honoured are disputed as she doesn't appear in Germanic mythology, nor was she a Norse deity as she doesn't show up in the poetic and prose Eddas either. In all likelihood Eostre was a localised goddess worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons in what is now south eastern England.

Whether Eostre existed for our ancestors or not, she makes a fine archetypal goddess for this time of year.



Asase Yaa (Ashanti)

This earth goddess prepares to bring forth new life in the spring, and the Ashanti people of Ghana honour her at the festival of Durbar, alongside her husband Nyame, the sky god who brings rain to the fields. As a fertility goddess, she is often associated with the planting of early crops during the rainy season.

Interestingly, there do not appear to be any formalized temples to Asase Yaa - instead, she is honoured in the fields where the crops are grown, and in the homes where she is celebrated as a goddess of fertility and the womb.

This time of year can be celebrated by sowing seeds, tilling gardens for late spring planting, and celebrating the balance of light and dark as the sun begins to tip the scales toward summer. This is the time of renewal, rebirth, resurrections, and new beginnings. Celebrate the coming of spring and life returning to our beautiful Mother Earth.



folklore



In Persia, eggs have been painted for thousands of years as part of the spring celebration of No Ruz, which is the Zoroastrian new year. In Iran, the colored eggs are placed on the dinner table at No Ruz, and a mother eats one cooked egg for each child she has. The festival of No Ruz predates the reign of Cyrus the Great, whose rule (580-529 b.c.e.) marks the beginning of Persian history.

Did You Know...

In medieval societies in Europe, the March hare was viewed as a major fertility symbol.

Magical uses for rabbit energy include protection, good luck, and messages from the underworld.

The rabbit is seen as a trickster figure in many western mythologies.



Rabbits are well known for their fertility and fecundity - "breeding like rabbits" is a well known simile. So, it is unsurprising that rabbits would feature as a symbol in this festival. As rabbits live in burrows there is also the analogy of the emerging from the dark tunnels of winter into the new light.



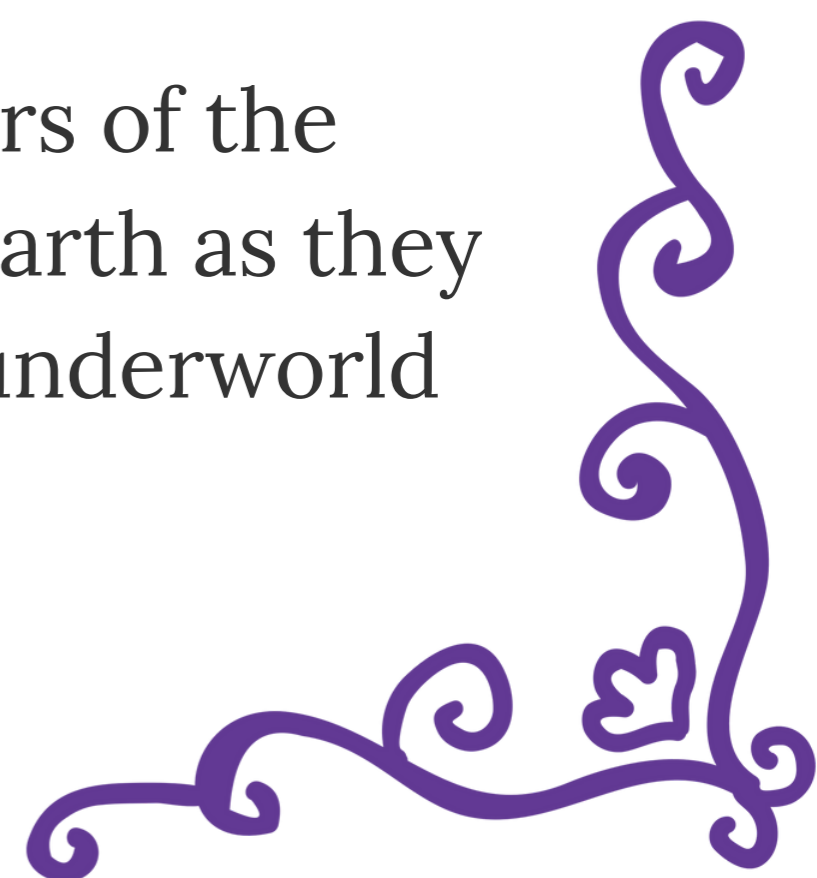
folklore

In Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime the egg was a symbol of light. When Dinewan the Emu quarrelled with Brolga the dancing bird, Brolga angrily grabbed an egg from Dinewan's nest and launched it into the sky. The yolk struck wood, caught fire and was transformed into a dazzling sun that illuminated a hitherto dark world. (see next page)

The character of the "Easter bunny" first appeared in 16th-century German writings, which said that if well-behaved children built a nest out of their caps or bonnets, they would be rewarded with colored eggs left in the night by an Easter Hare. This legend became part of American folklore in the 18th century, when German immigrants settled in the eastern U.S.



In some legends, rabbits and hares are the messengers of the underworld— after all, they come and go out of the earth as they please. If you're doing a meditation that involves an underworld journey, call upon the rabbit to be your guide.



How The Sun Was Made



Long ago in the Dreamtime, when the animals were first on the earth which were very much bigger than they are today, there was a time when there was no sun, only a moon and stars.

One day, Dinewan the emu and Brolga the beautiful dancing bird, were out on a large plain arguing and fighting. Brolga got so angry that she ran over to Dinewan's nest and grabbed one of her large eggs and threw it up into the sky with all her might. It landed on a heap of firewood breaking, spilling the yellow yolk that burst into flames. This lit up the whole world below to the astonishment of all the creatures as they had only been used to the semi-darkness and were dazzled by such brightness.

A good spirit who lived in the sky saw how beautiful the earth looked when it was lit up by this blaze. He thought it would be a good thing to make a fire every day; which he has done ever since. All night the good spirit and his helpers collect wood and stack it up. When the stack is nearly big enough, the good spirit sends out the morning star to let them know on earth that the fire will soon be lit.

However, the spirits found that sending out the morning star was not enough because those who slept did not see it. The spirits decided they must have a noise made at the dawn of each new day to announce the arrival of the sun that would wake the sleepers - but what noise.

Then one day the spirits heard the laughter of Goo-goor-gaga, the kookaburra ringing through the air. This was the noise the spirits were looking for. They asked Goo-goor-gaga that as the morning star faded and the day dawned, every morning would he laugh his loudest to awaken all the sleepers before sunrise. Goo-goor-gaga agreed and has done so ever since - making the air ring with his early morning laughter.

goo-goor-gaga - goo-goor-gaga - goo-goor-gaga

Michael J Connolly
Dreamtime Kullilla-Art



Celebrating *SPRING EQUINOX*



Eggs are obvious in their symbolism of birth and life, holding all the ingredients for a new life to begin. That new life emerges, breaking the shell of the darkness of winter to step into the sun as life reborn. Eggs were also associated with earlier Goddess traditions, especially Astarte. Put a note in your calendar for next year to buy chocolate eggs at Easter and pop them in the freezer for Ostara,

Decorate your own eggs to display around your home

If you haven't started already, the equinox is a great time to start planting out your garden. If you don't or can't have a garden where you live, buy some potted colour for your kitchen. Best time to plant is between new moon and full moon. For guidance on what to plant in your veggie patch, see our Gardening Goddesses section later in this issue.



Celebrating SPRING EQUINOX



Make some Equinox Incense

Time: Best mixed the week prior to September 22nd.

Herbs:

¼ teaspoon allspice

½ cup bergamot

½ cup lemon balm

⅛ teaspoon grated lemon peel

Oils:

10 drops hyssop oil


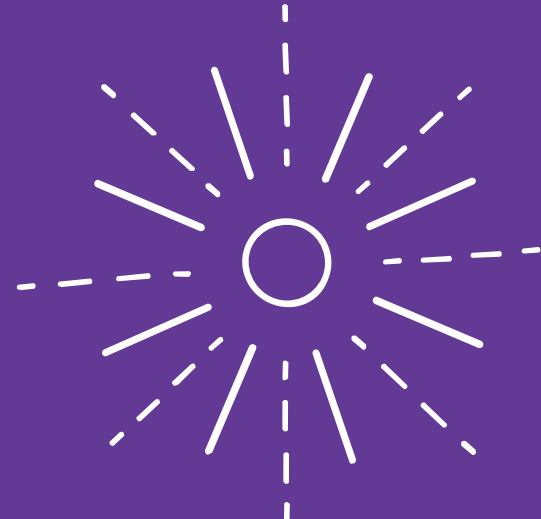


2 drops lemon oil

3 drops rosemary oil

Chant: Growing Sun, the year's well begun.

The pagan Saxons would bake cross buns at the beginning of spring in honour of the goddess Eostre - most likely being the origin of the name Easter. The cross represented the rebirth of the world after winter and the four quarters of the moon, as well as the four seasons and the wheel of life





One day when you wake up,
you will find that you've become a forest.
You've grown roots and found strength in them
that no one thought you had.
You have become stronger and more beautiful,
full of life giving qualities.
You have learned to take all the negativity around
you,
and turn it into oxygen for easy breathing.
A host of wild creatures live inside you,
and you call them stories.
A variety of beautiful birds nest inside your mind,
and you call them memories.
You have become an incredible self sustaining thing of
epic proportions.
And you should be so proud of yourself,
of how far you have come from the seeds of who you
used to be.

- Nikita Gill

Artist: Christy Kirk



Indigenous Wisdom

We are now entering the Gumbaynggirr season of Guunuga (fresh/green).

Locally, we need to be cautious - Ngaambul (magpie) is swooping. Garraan.gurr (grass-tree; grass-tree stick) is flowering much to the delight of dungaarr (native bee).

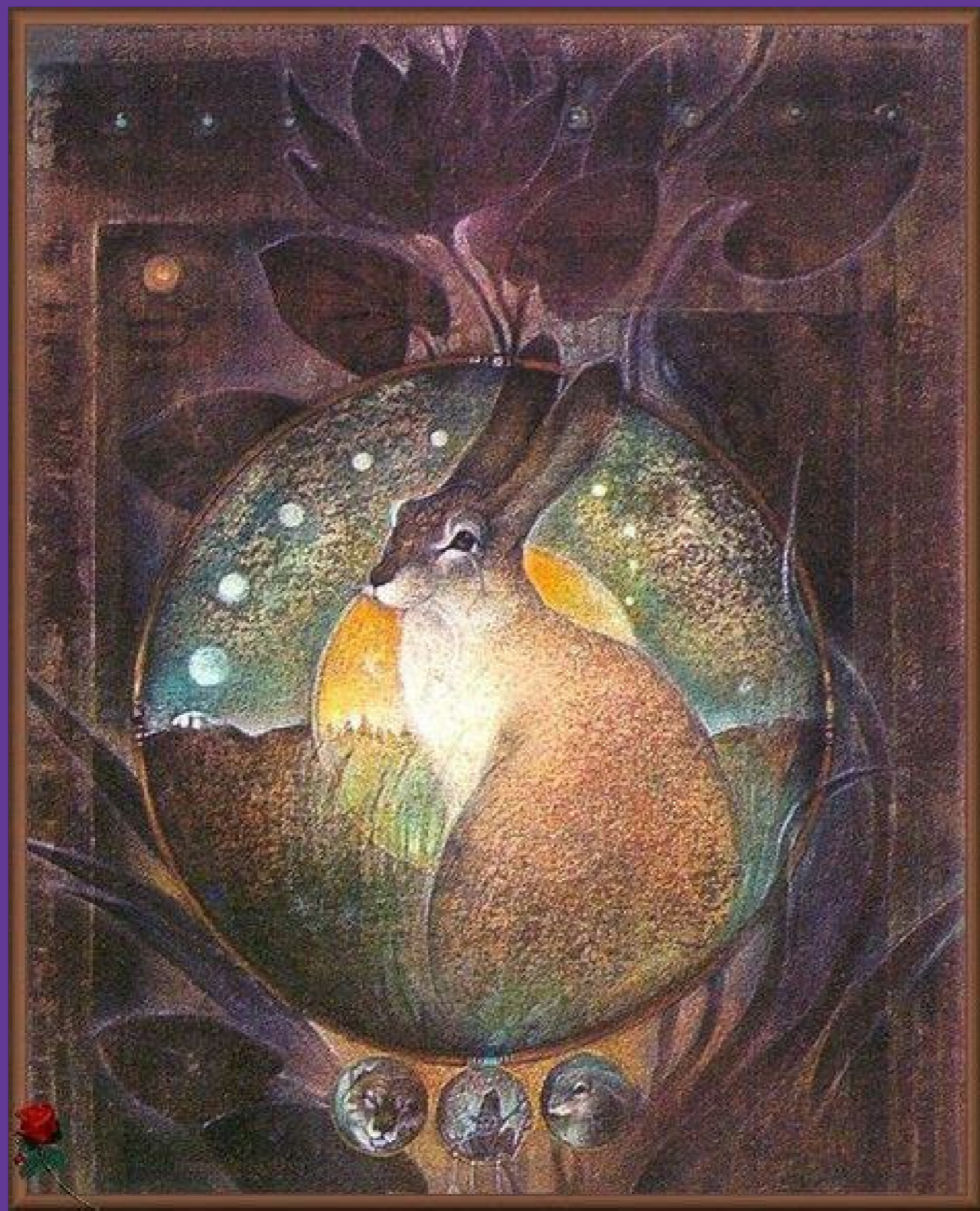


The Gumbaynggirr Seasonal Calendar mural design was completed by students with Nellie Gallop and is based on the work of Chels Marshall, Ricky Buchannan, Uncle Tony Perkins and Arrawarra Cultural Centre. The inspiration came from a similar (coastal) work created at Scotts Head Public School.

Introduction To A Goddess



Kaltes



Kaltes is a moon goddess venerated by the Ugric people of western Siberia. A shape-shifter, she is shown here manifested as a hare, an animal sacred to her.

This appearance shows her lunar nature, for the hare is a lunar creature;

many cultures, when looking at the moon, see the outline of the hare, who lives in the moon. The hare is often seen as an intermediary between lunar deities and humans, so the appearance of Kaltes in this form indicates her accessibility to her people. Kaltes is known as a fertility goddess and a goddess of rejuvenation. She is called upon by women in childbirth, for she is especially venerated as a promoter of the beginning of the life cycle. Although she is somewhat feared because she can determine people's destinies, she is mostly revered for her gentle wisdom. She is a compassionate guide to the mysteries of life.

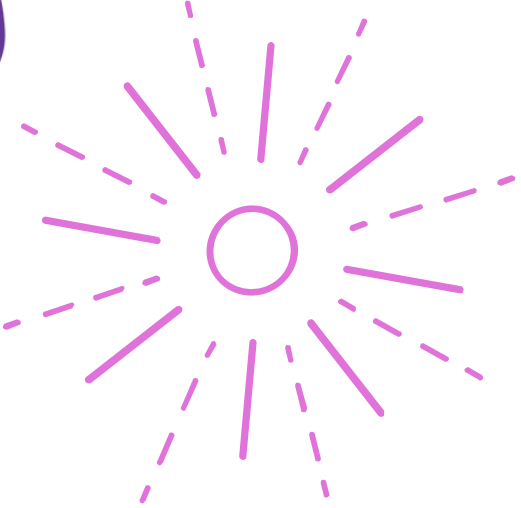
From Goddesses Knowledge Cards

Artist: Susan Seddon Boulet

Text : Michael Babacock



Plum Blossom Truffles



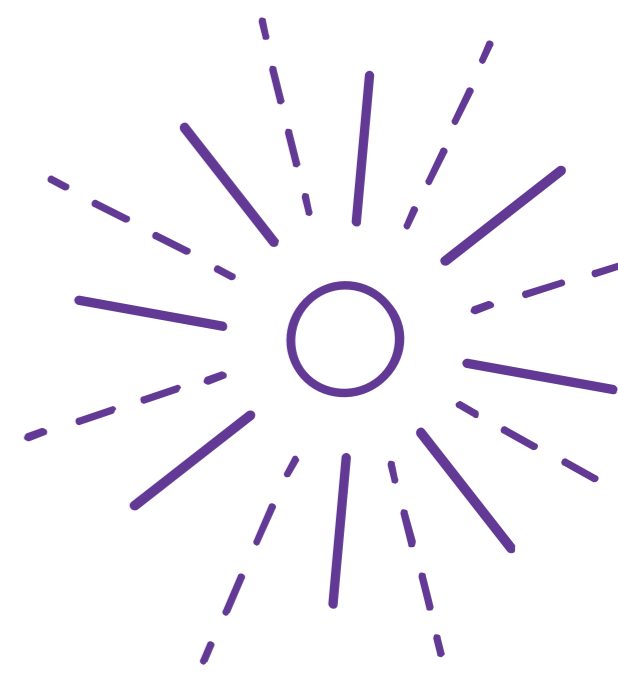
What would Ostara be without chocolate? For those of us who are truly organised, there will be chocolate eggs in the freezer, bought earlier in the year and tucked away out of sight lest temptation be too strong. For the rest of us, here is a lovely recipe from Gather Victoria to sate that desire for the sacred stuff. If plum blossoms are in short supply, rose or orange syrup would make a good substitute, taste test for amount required.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of spring blossoms
- 1 cup of heavy cream
- 16 ounces (454g) of good quality chocolate chips
- 3 tablespoons Cocoa Powder (for dusting)

Instructions

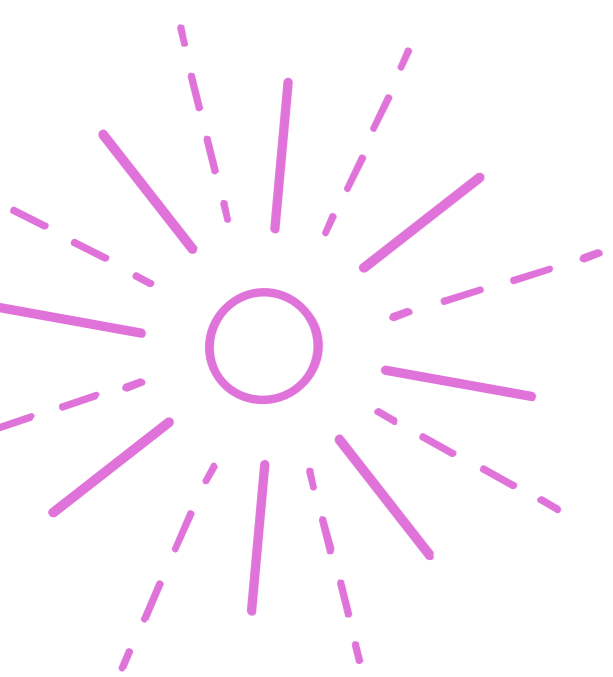
- Bring cream to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in the blossoms
- Let cool. Use a fine sieve to strain out blossoms
- Reheat blossom infused cream to just before boiling point
- Remove cream and pour over a bowl containing chocolate chips
- Stir until chocolate completely melted
- Let chocolate and cream mixture cool in the refrigerator for a few hours or preferably overnight



- Using a spoon scoop out about a tablespoon of the chocolate mixture then using your hands roll into balls
- Roll the balls in cocoa powder
- Eat ! Or store in an airtight container in the fridge until ready to eat! (should last up to two weeks)



Cautionary Note: While there are no specific warnings (unless you're a cow or a cat) regarding consuming Prunus blossoms, the leaves and pits are dangerous, containing cyanogenic glycosides which can produce hydrogen cyanide. I have both consumed copious amounts of plum blossom chocolates and cordial each spring with no ill effect – but that said, it is possible that the blossoms also contain trace amounts of the toxin. And consumed in excess, they could be harmful. Please use your discretion!



Story of Ostara and the Hare

This is a story of Ostara,
goddess of the dawn,
Spring, life, and fertility,
and how the Eostre
bunny came to be.



All through winter, while most creatures stayed snuggled away from the cold, one animal would be awake, standing vigil, watching the turning of the season and monitoring the moon's phases - the hare. When, at last, the sun began to turn back toward the land, the hares would dance in wild abandon. Leaping high and landing with a gentle thud, drumming a joyful tattoo upon the earth where Ostara slept.

Although the maiden is known as the goddess of the dawn, Ostara is not a morning person. There are years when she prefers to sleep late and ignore the dancing of the hares as they try to let her know that the sun is once more turning its face towards us. One such year, when Ostara rose late, and began her walk across the land, awakening the world with her warm breath and her soft touch, she came across a hen sparrow, lying on the icy ground, dying. The poor bird had grown impatient for her warm home and returned to this part of the land too soon. Ostara stooped to pick up the half frozen bird. Taking pity on the poor thing, she blew her warm breath over and into the little bird, bringing it back to life.



And although the bird was revived and cheerful, her wings were too damaged by frost to ever let her fly again. Knowing that the little sparrow had no chance of survival left flightless upon the ground, the goddess in her mercy, transformed the bird into a beautiful snow hare. Leaping and bounding, the hare admired her luxurious warm snow-white fur, her sleek long ears, and danced a circle around Ostara who laughed at the hare's playfulness. To honour the bird that was, Ostara bestowed a gift upon the snow hare. Once a year, the hare would lay her eggs, and not just any eggs - eggs of all the colours of the rainbow and intricate filigreed patterns. In gratitude not only for her life, but also the gift of laying such gorgeous eggs, the hare chose to lay the eggs for Ostara's Spring festival. And so the story of the Eostre bunny came to be.





Spring Equinox

Animals

Rabbits, Hares, Butterflies,
Lambs, Chicks, Birds
especially Robins, Bees



Colours

Pastels, Gold, Light Green,
Yellow, Pale Pink, Violet,
Light Blue, Silver



Crystals & Stones

Moonstone, Amethyst,
Bloodstone, Clear Quartz,
Green Moss Agate, Jasper,
Rose Quartz, Citrine, Ruby



Deities

Persephone, Demeter,
Eostre, Pan, Astarte, Kore,
The Maiden, The Green
Man,



Foods

Eggs, Hot Cross Buns,
Chocolate, Custard, Honey
Cakes, Strawberries,
Spring Greens and Herbs

Herbs and Flowers

Daffodils, Violets, Roses, All
Spring Flowers, Sage,
Lavender, Crocus, Peony,
Easter Lily.

Focus

Balance, Birth, Fertility,
Growing in Strength, Light,
New Beginnings, Renewal

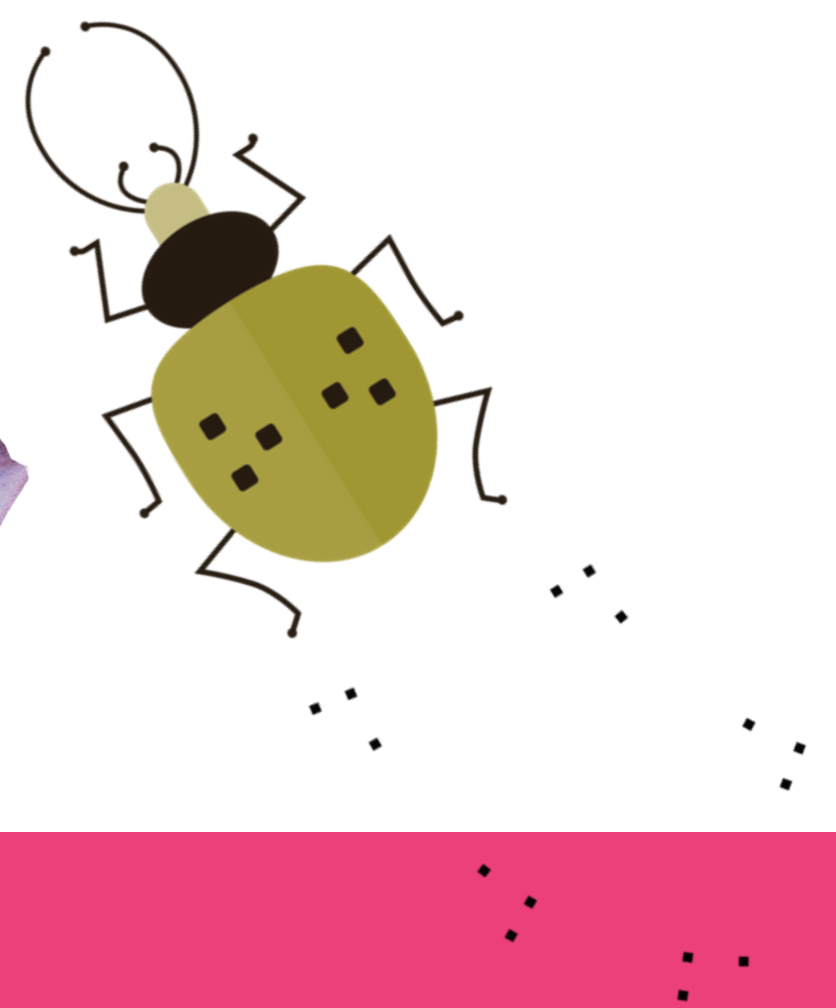


Wild Pollinator Count

A Spring Activity for the Family



A project such as the twice-yearly Wild Pollinator Count is a brilliant way to bring the world of insects and entomology into the view of families and children. All you need to do is sit down for 20 minutes and watch a plant in your garden or the local park and record the insects that you see in the time period. The count happens in spring and autumn, so there is a chance to see different activity across the seasons. Most importantly, this information is collated and recorded on a national database for use by scientists in valuable research. The more we engage, the more data with which scientists have to work. For me, this is the ultimate opportunity to start growing the next generation of engaged scientists. Career pathways can be incubated in the comfort of our own backyards. - Costa Georgiadis "Costa's World"



Gardening Goddesses

If you're lucky enough to be blessed with green thumbs and garden space, then here is list of vegies, herbs etc. to plant now in the mid north coast region of NSW. This list is not exhaustive, and there are many other fabulous plants you could add to it. Remember that much of the region is on the cusp of temperate and sub-tropical zones, so you may need to experiment - if you don't already know your garden well. Have fun and happy planting.

How to make the perfect compost

Whether using a bin, tumbler or open bay, the theory is the same. Perfect compost depends on maintaining a good balance of carbon-containing ingredients and nitrogen-containing ingredients. An easy way of remembering which products contain carbon and which contain nitrogen is to simply think 'brown' ingredients are carbons and 'green' ingredients are nitrogen.

Carbons - Autumn leaves, pea straw, lucerne hay, sugarcane mulch, moistened cardboard, shredded newspaper (not glossy paper).

Nitrogen: Lawn clippings, garden prunings, green leaves, kitchen scraps, citrus peel, egg shells, tea bags and coffee grounds.

A ratio of about **60% "green" material to 40% "brown" material** is ideal, but not essential.

Large material should be cut up as small as possible: the smaller things are, the quicker they break down. Animal manure will also speed up the process.

If making a heap or bay, build it directly onto the ground, rather than on concrete or paving, as this allows worms, bacteria, fungi and other beneficial organisms to get into the compost.

- Layer the materials like a lasagne - brown, manure, green, manure etc
- Water after each manure layer with molasses tea to feed the compost microbes. Mix 2 tablespoons of molasses in a 9 litre watering can.
- Turn the heap every two weeks for oxygenation - the microbes that break things down quickest need oxygen.

This compost will be ready to use in about three months. -Gardening Australia

- Amaranthus
- Basil
- Beans
- Beetroot
- Borage
- Capsicum
- Carrots
- Celery
- Coriander
- Lettuce
- Marigold



- Pumpkin
- Radish
- Rockmelon
- Silverbeet
- Sunflowers
- Sweetcorn
- Thyme
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon
- Zucchini



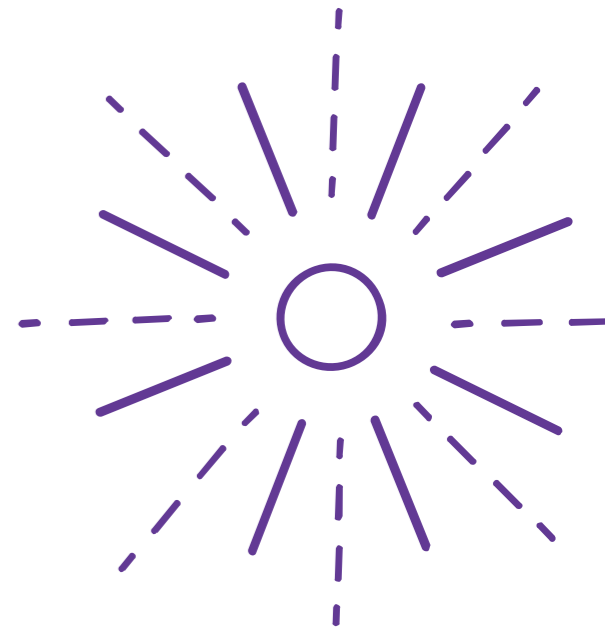


Music for the Season



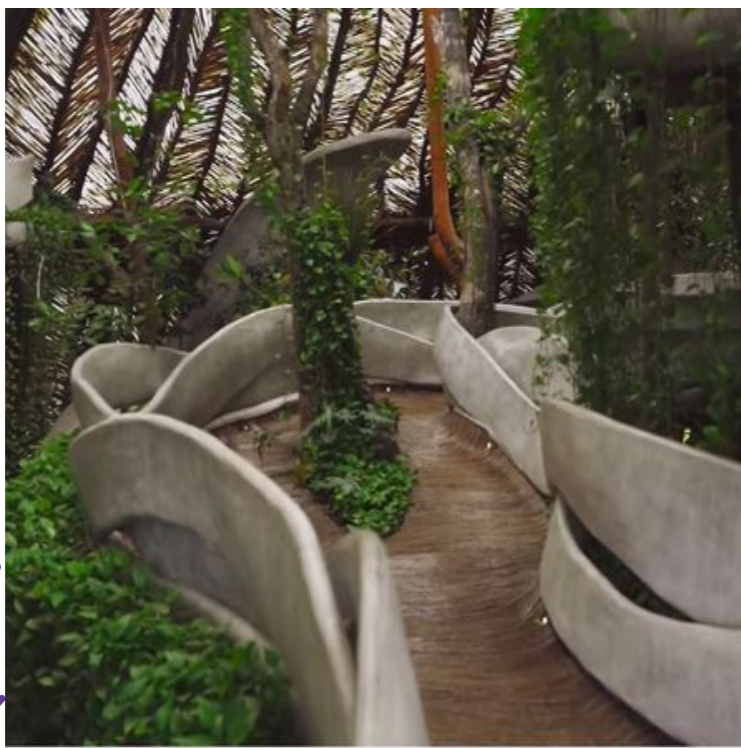
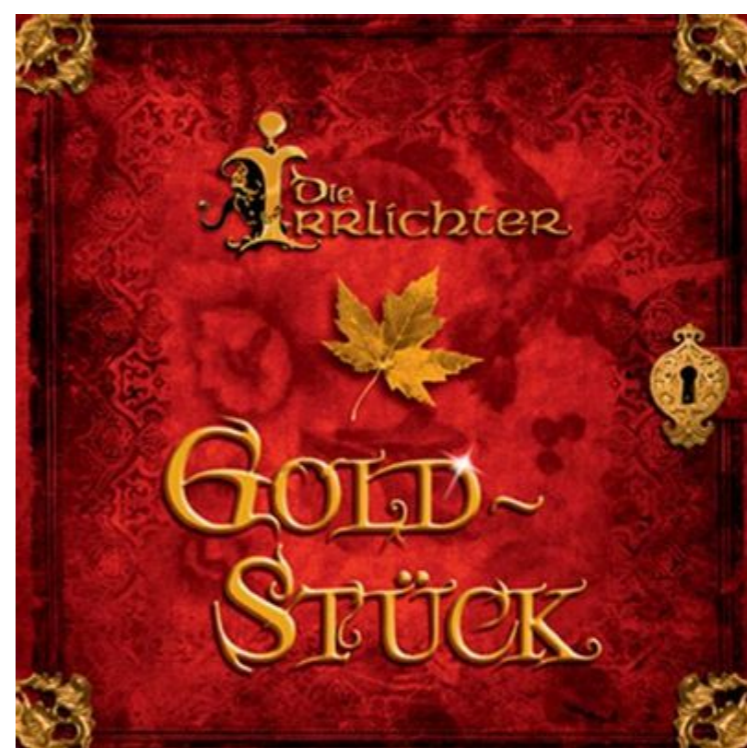
Ostara

By Lisa Thiel



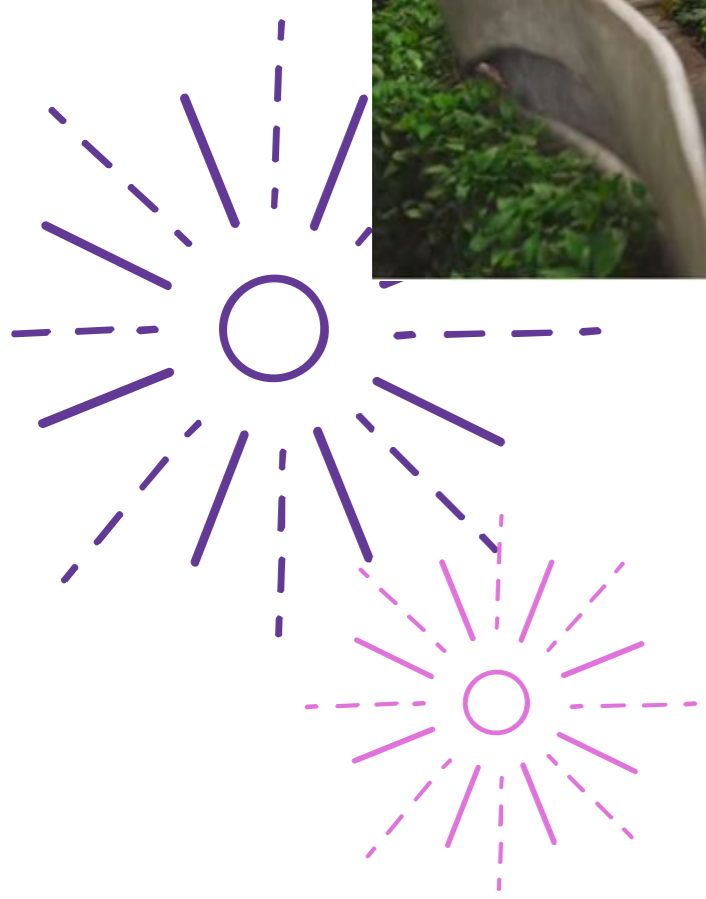
Flatworld

By Die Irrlichter
From album Goldstück



In Between: Sound Ceremony

By The Medicine of Sound
Single





Eostre - Dawn Goddess

the Alchemy of Spring Dew

Extract from [Charlotte Pulver](#)



This festival really is about the resurrected light embodied on the earth. Pre-Christian worship this time of year involved the honouring and veneration of the Goddesses of the Dawn.



Eostre was one of these Goddesses, a deity from pre-Christian Germanic cultures. Ostara was another dawn goddess venerated in western Germanic cultures, whose name is rooted in the word *Austra*. *Aurum* is the Latin word for gold which means 'shining dawn'. The essence within these names really is about the golden shining light of the dawn which these goddesses imbue the land and morning dew.

In the practice of alchemy dew is viewed as the celestial waters and the vehicle for the universal spiritual fire to become embodied on earth.

You may ask, why this time of year?

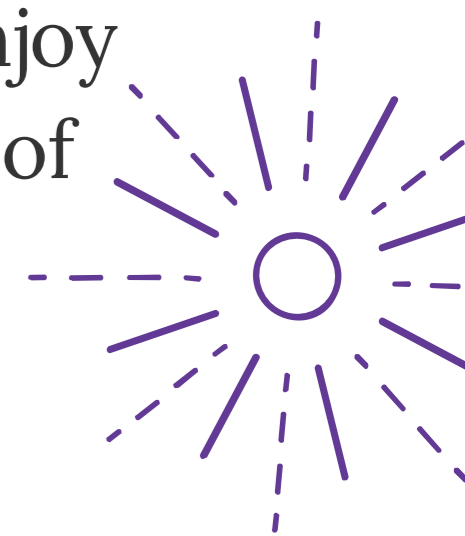
It's easy to understand the unique and powerful life force of Spring, which brings growth and regeneration out of the quiet stillness of winter. Buds swell, bulbs arise and flower and seeds sprout.

Alchemically, much of this rebirth is connected to the energy that the dew carries during this time of year, considered the fire of nature, 'cooking' the seeds in the ground, drawing the green out of the trees with its warmth, and transferring life back into the land.



The fire that the dew carries is understood on many levels. First, it is the energy of the sun's increased warmth, carried to the plants and all life. Secondly, dew is the carrier of 'Nitre', the life force of the heavens; in its literal physical form this is Potassium Nitrate.

So working with the alchemy of this time of year you may like to enjoy and try out one of the following practices, in meeting the Goddess of the Dawn for transformation and resurrection within, through the wonder that is spring time dew:



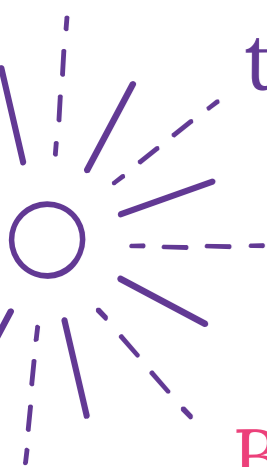
Place a shawl/scarf that is sacred to you outside before you go to sleep and ask the Goddess of the Dawn to bless your shawl and imbue it with the regenerative energies of spring. Your shawl will be charged up for the year and full of protection.



On waking, strip off naked and roll around in the morning dew, inviting the regenerative energies of the celestial forces of spring to imbibe and renew you.



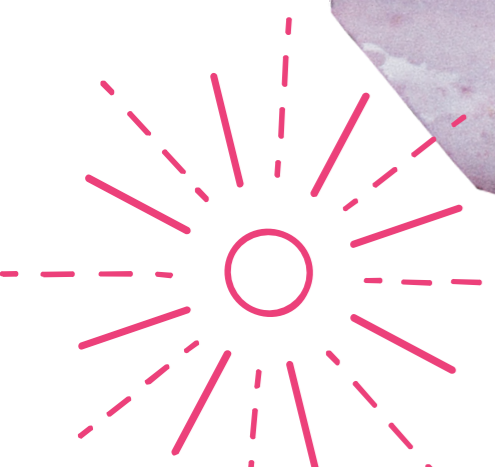
On waking walk outside into the morning dawn and bless yourself with the dew on the ground. Sending prayers into the world.




Before going to sleep at night, place a bowl of water outside infused with herbs and flowers of spring collected from the day. Ask the plants and the Goddess of the Dawn to infuse these waters with her radiant light. On awaking, bless yourself with these waters, your energy field and home.

May the light of the Goddess of Dawn bless and guide you on your way home.

Blessed Eostra!





IF YOU ARE LOOKING
FOR BEAUTIFUL OR
INSPIRATIONAL
GODDESS PROSE OR
POETRY, DON'T FORGET
ABOUT OUR **BOOK OF**
GODDESS ON OUR
WEBSITE

Last Word this festival comes from Druidry.org...

This coming Spring Equinox, may Eostre bring you the courage to explore new territories, new perspectives, to find the strength to be reborn to new and exciting possibilities. Although it might feel frightening to be pushing against your shell, if you call on Eostre's irrepressible energy, you will feel that fragile casing give way and, through it cracks, see the light of the dawn breaking. In that moment we are each hope eternal and infinite possibility; the bud bursting and the sap rising.

'Til next time, Blessed be!



www.goddesstemplebellingen.org

info@goddesstemplebellingen.org

