



# Gylden Magick

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## Nov. 2024

### PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Welcome to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – the spiritual magazine from Gylden Fellowship that spans both traditional and newer pagan beliefs and practice.

The **Gylden Community** is one of the most extensive pagan libraries in southern England. Its website, [www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk](http://www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk), is growing too and we welcome new members constantly.

First things first though – we’ve decided to continue with the longer version of our magazine in our 7<sup>th</sup> year of publication, from September. So, our **Frost Moon** issue comes in at 30 pages, with lots of different topics.

There are some longer pieces, to give authors more space. Most of our contributors come from the Gylden area, providing a mix of magick,

wisdom and stories. Past editions of **GYLDEN MAGICK** can be accessed on our website and on Facebook too.

This issue has a **natural flavour to it**. Earlier in the year, I completed a book by Jim Crumley, the *Nature of Autumn*. Now, I’ve read the whole set, covering the wildlife during winter, spring and summer. All are a mix of anecdotes and diary entries about the Scottish Highlands.

Dates for your diaries – not least **Lunantshees** on 11 November (original date of All Hallows Eve) for Irish færy folk. It’s also **Interfaith Week** on 10-17 November and we’ll be around to show our partnership with the local Interfaith Forum at a service at St Nicolas Church in Guildford on **17 November**.

**This month’s edition includes** sardonyx, wildlife news, folklore,

Maori sacred art, November magick, archaeomineralogy, celestial forecasts, blue carbon mapping and the science of cod liver oil from Mark.

Anything else? Oh yes, the title – we never forget that our faith is based upon Nature and that our strength comes from earth magick, regardless of the diversity of pagan pathways.

Many of our annual festivals are based upon the light, e.g. the solstices and the equinoxes, as significant to us today as to our ancestors.

For more info, why not join the **Gylden Fellowship** community on Facebook today and catch up on our news?

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# November magick

By Nic the Witch

Here's one that I've always called **a wish for winter**. OK, best done at full moon, but is all right in a waxing moon too. You'll need a small silver charm or token, a white or grey bag and 7 blue or white stones (could be crystals or garden pebbles – cleansed).

1. Take all the items to a moonlit window-sill.
2. Write your wish (e.g. "I wish for my heart and mind to be at peace") on a piece of paper and anchor it with the charm/ token.
3. Surround the wish with the stones.
4. For the next 6 nights, add 1 stone per night to the bag and chant:

*"Samhain has gone and winter's here,  
With frost and ice and air so clear,  
Bring peaceful nights with shining stars,  
Grant my wish as solstice nears.  
So mote it be."*

On the final night, put everything remaining into the bag and keep it with you or close by. Hopefully, your wish will be granted during this time.



Next up are **some spells to protect your home for the New Year**, which began at Samhain. I'll start with two very simple spells: **a prosperity bag** and **a success spell**.

**What you will need:** a new silver coin, a small blue bag, 1 whole fresh or dried sage leaf and a six-inch length of silver ribbon.

1. Place the coin and sage leaf in the blue bag.
2. Tie the neck of the bag with silver ribbon.
3. Chant, *"Silver and Sage, at the start of the year,  
Favour me always with wealth and good cheer"*.
4. Hang the bag in a prominent place or carry it with you, to attract prosperity and happiness.

**What you will need:** a yellow beeswax candle and holder, green ribbon and a small piece of parchment.

1. Write your name near the top of the candle.
2. Tie green ribbon around the base of the candle.
3. Write your wish for the year on the parchment.
4. Place candle in the holder on the parchment.
5. Light the candle.
6. Chant seven times: *"Busy as can be,  
Bright as a light,  
The success I see,  
Is mine from this night."*
7. Burn the candle for 1 hour and then extinguish.
8. Repeat the spell for seven days, allowing the candle to burn for 1 hour each night; on the final day, let the candle burn out.
9. Fold the parchment into a small packet, tie with the green ribbon and carry it with you.

One spell that can be used to protect your home is a **hearth blessing**. In Italy, this ritual is used in honour of the fairy-goddess, *Befana*.

**What you will need:** a broom, a three-foot length of natural cord and a white candle with three wicks.

1. Place broom, candle and cord on a table by the hearth.
2. The family should gather around the hearth.
3. The eldest person lights each wick, saying these words:  
*4. "I bring light to this home, I bring love to this home, I bring honour to this home".*
5. Each member of the household ties a knot in the cord.
6. The last person also ties the cord around the handle of the broom.
7. The mother of the household symbolically sweeps all the negative energy away from the hearth, saying  
*"All that is evil is now swept away, And nothing but good shall now come this way.*
8. Place the broom next to the hearth.
9. Burn the candle for an hour and then extinguish it.
10. Each evening the candle is re-lit for an hour until it is burned out.

One thing is that winter need not be all ice and snow – quite often, there's a lot of rain.

## 21 SPIRITUAL & MAGICKAL USES OF RAIN WATER

[www.CheriseWilliams.com](http://www.CheriseWilliams.com)

1. Anoint yourself & your chakra points
2. Make a facial mist
3. Pour in bath tub for ritual baths
4. Drink it
5. Use as an offering for Spirit, ancestors or deity
6. Mix with essential oils & use as a room spray
7. Anoint your magical tools or crystals
8. Bless your sacred space
9. Use rosemary to sprinkle the water for clearing
10. Rub around doors and windows to bless & protect
11. Make a floor wash with it
12. Clean your altar with it
13. Bless & protect your home by sprinkling in 4 corners of each room
14. Sprinkle in a circle to cast a circle prior to ceremony or ritual
15. Put in a dark bowl and use it for scrying
16. Use it in the kitchen for Kitchen Witchery
17. Use as a hair wash or body wash
18. Water your plants with it
19. Use it in your witch jars
20. Work it into your spells, potions and rituals
21. Make it into ice cubes to serve in magickal beverages

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## Island Voices: COP29, 11-24 Nov. Maori culture

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







# Arundel Bypass

By Sussex Wildlife Trust

The A27 Arundel Bypass plan was cancelled by Chancellor Rachel Reeves on 29 July 2024 on the grounds that the government is cancelling the A27 schemes, referring to them as "low value, unaffordable commitments".

Though we'd rather see the Arundel Bypass cancelled for its unacceptable biodiversity and climate impacts, we welcome the news that it will not be going ahead. In the midst of a climate and biodiversity crisis, spending hundreds of millions of pounds on a nature-destroying, traffic-inducing, carbon-producing scheme to save a few minutes of travel time was never a viable solution. We hope to see this option taken off the table completely with renewed focus on sustainable transport solutions that do not cost the environment.

What was being proposed? National Highways was proposing a huge new 8km dual carriageway south of Arundel. The main public consultation was back in March 2022, with a further consultation in November 2022. It stated that there would be no change in environmental impact from previous proposals, which have already been consulted upon. We maintained our objection to the proposed scheme on the grounds of impacts to biodiversity for the following reasons:

1. No recent detailed ecological survey information or hydrological modelling was provided with the main consultation and nothing further was being presented now - without this we could not assess National Highways' claims about minimal wildlife impacts.
2. There was not enough information about how surveys had been undertaken, so we could not assess whether best practice has been followed. If this work had not been carried out correctly, the results were invalid and could not be relied upon to draw any meaningful conclusions.
3. It was not clear that the preferred grey route had been informed by surveys, as most of the previous surveys from before 2019 were looking at areas impacted by alternative route ideas. For example, this route cut across Binsted Rife in a completely different location than previous proposals.
4. There was no detail on which elements of the proposal are affecting which areas: for example, haulage routes are required to build the road but we weren't told where these will go, so could not assess their potentially significant impact.
5. 15 species of bat use the area – these are nationally significant populations that would have been severed by a dual carriageway.
6. National Highways was proposing to create two green bridges to reduce wildlife impacts, particularly for bats – but did not provide any information to demonstrate that these would have been effective in terms of their location and design. It was critical to get this right - without thorough assessment, these could prove to be extremely costly mistakes.
7. The impacts on some ancient woodlands and ancient and veteran trees were unknown. Despite claims that there will be no direct destruction of these irreplaceable habitats, they remain at risk of degradation and deterioration if the new road had gone ahead and this was not acceptable.

# Environment: the Wainwright Prize 2024

By Gylden Fellowship

The Wainwright Prize is named after **Alfred Wainwright**, the author of the famous fell walking series, the *Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells*. Created to celebrate nature-writing and encourage exploration of the outdoors, the Wainwright Prize was initiated in 2014 by Frances Lincoln, publishers of the Guides. It has been administered since by the independent Literary Marketing Agency; AGILE.

The prizes are awarded to the works which best reflect Wainwright's core values and includes a celebration of nature and our natural environment or a warning of the dangers to it across the globe. Now in its 11th year, the prize is awarded annually to the books which most successfully inspire readers to explore the outdoors and to nurture a respect for the natural world. The prizes are co-owned by AGILE, The Wainwright Estate and the Quarto Group. There are different sponsors each year, managed by AGILE in association with The National Trust. In 2024, it was the James Cropper Wainwright Prize and there were 3 categories.

This year's judging panels were chaired by **Dr Khalil Thirlaway** (Nature Writing), **Joycelyn Longdon** (Writing on Conservation) and **Roisin Taylor** (Children's Writing on Nature and Conservation).

**The Nature Writing Prize** was awarded to **Michael Malay** for *Late Light: The Secret Wonders of a Disappearing World* (Manilla Press). This work combines natural history and memoir in an exploration of the author's journey as an Indonesian Australian making a home in England. Through an examination of our particular *unloved* animals, Malay explores economic, political and cultural events that have shaped Britain.

**The Writing on Conservation Prize** has been won by **Helen Czerski** for *Blue Machine: How the Ocean Shapes Our World* (Transworld). It blends marine biology, history and climate change concerns in a spellbinding exploration of the ocean. Drawing on years of experience in marine science, Czerski explores this complex, interlinked system and the multitude of ways life on the rest of the planet depends on it.

In a tale of adventure and journeys, *Foxlight* (Bloomsbury Children's) by **Katya Balen**, follows two twins into the ferocious wilderness in an attempt to find their mother. Winner of the **Children's Writing on Nature and Conservation Prize**, this heartwarming story, explores sisterhood, found family and accepting love in the most unknown places.



# Music and work

By Mark Sharpen

Off we go then – I research and write much of my work against music, because it allows me to focus on the job in hand and now there's a scientific basis for my belief, but which music is best? The choice could be informed by mood, by recent album reviews, by Spotify or YouTube or any number of other factors. According to a new study, there are two important variables: **predictability** and **novelty**.

"*Music is just such an emotional medium,*" says **Yiren Ren**, a sixth-year PhD student in Georgia Tech's School of Psychology. "*It can not only modulate how you feel at that moment, it can also modulate the memory you're recalling at that moment and how you perceive that memory itself*". As a composer and a scientist, Ren has long been interested in how music interacts with our brains. She recently put her interests into practice, conducting a series of studies with Georgia Tech cognitive neuroscientist, **Thackery Brown**, who runs the university's MAP (Memory, Affect, and Planning) Lab. One of the studies looked at how music affected a subject's ability to process or remember new information.

To determine whether different rhythms and melodies made an impact on people's cognitive abilities, the scientists asked 48 participants to learn sequences of abstract shapes while listening to different types of music. The study revealed that familiar, predictable music strengthened the participants' ability to keep sequences straight, while familiar music tweaked to be more atonal put a roadblock in the participants' path. If predictability in music helps cognitive clarity and productivity while performing tasks, it shouldn't surprise anyone who gravitates to familiar music during the workday, but there's also something to be said for listening to new albums whilst working.

While predictable music can lead to greater cognitive clarity, music that is new to the listener may, in some ways, allow them to stick with a task longer, because it contains surprising elements that can jar listeners out of complacency. Or, that was the impact it seemed to have on some participants in the study. This side effect led Ren to re-examine her love of jazz. The scientist grew up in China and only discovered jazz's eclectic rhythms after moving to the U.S.A. It quickly became a staple in her catalogue of music to play while working - now, she understands why. "*The syntax of jazz was just a new world to me when I discovered it, and I still cannot predict it,*" she says. "*It gives me a fresh surprise all the time and I think that kind of surprise adds a little uncertainty and hits the sweet spot of good mood, good attention, and focus on the task*".

Listening to the same kind of music all the time, though, would remove some of that novelty. And the same music doesn't translate well across all tasks. Ren shared some recommendations based on both her studies and personal experiences around which types of music help with **productivity** when it comes to specific types of work. Listening to music with lyrics in a foreign language (or music without any lyrics at all). Song lyrics in your native tongue can get tangled up with the words you're reading and formulating responses to, creating a hurdle, rather than guardrails, to getting work done. Lyrics you can't quite understand, on the other hand, just add another element in the wall of sound.

While doing any **coding work**, Ren reaches for fast rock music. Propulsive rhythms are what get people dancing, she says, and having fast rock play in the background while coding never fails to get her fingers pumping. Many scientists have debated the **Mozart factor**, which describes how listening to Mozart's symphonies tends to invite higher cognitive skills than other music. While Ren does find classical music to be perfect for focused writing, she prefers Beethoven or Chopin for the job. Of course, as helpful as music can be for attention and focus, it isn't always necessary. "*Sometimes, the best music to work to,*" Ren says, "*is no music.*"

# Blue carbon mapping

By Sussex Wildlife Trust

A new series of reports, published in September 2024, by a coalition of nature charities means the UK is the first nation to map and estimate the amount of carbon stored in its seabed habitats, including in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). [The Blue Carbon Mapping Project](#), completed by the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) on behalf of WWF, The Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB, reveals that 244 million tonnes of organic carbon are stored in just the top 10cm of UK seabed habitats, with 98% stored in seabed sediments such as mud and vegetated habitats, including salt marshes and seagrass beds (43% of this carbon is stored in MPAs).

UK seabed habitats could capture up to 13 million tonnes of organic carbon every year – almost three times the amount sequestered by the UK's forests – 4.8 million tonnes – although forests cover a much smaller area (32,500 km<sup>2</sup>).

Seas around the UK and Isle of Man cover nearly 885,000 km<sup>2</sup>: over three times the size of the UK's land mass. This vast area is host to habitats that capture and store carbon, known as **blue carbon**. They include:

- seabed sediments made of mud, silt and sand
- vegetated habitats, namely seagrass meadows, saltmarshes, kelp forests and intertidal seaweeds.
- maerl beds - a purple-pink, hard seaweed that forms spiky underwater carpets on the seabed
- biogenic reefs, such as mussel beds and honeycomb worm reefs.

Carbon is primarily absorbed by phytoplankton, which drift to the bottom of the sea when they die and are added to seabed sediment. The research analysed the storage capacity of just the top 10cm of sediment. Some sediments are hundreds of metres thick and contain millennia's worth of carbon, so the total carbon stored will be far greater. *The Blue Carbon Mapping Project* highlights how physical disturbances to the seabed, including from human activity such as bottom trawling, as well as moorings and offshore developments, pose threats to blue carbon stores. Disturbing seabed habitats can release large amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, worsening climate change.

In Sussex, [our key areas of work](#) in relation to Blue Carbon are:

**Saltmarsh at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve:** Sussex Wildlife Trust is working to protect 26ha of saltmarsh habitat at our nature reserve at Rye Harbour. Saltmarsh is part of a mosaic of habitats at this site, supporting a huge amount of biodiversity and naturally storing carbon.

**Wider marine policy:** Sussex Wildlife Trust continually champions for better protection of our blue carbon habitats via advocating for protection for our marine environment. Through our marine policy work, we fight for nature to be put first when it comes to marine protected areas, fisheries, and development at sea.

**Kelp recovery:** in Sussex, the work of the [Sussex Kelp Recovery Project](#) partners saw 300km<sup>2</sup> of seabed protected from bottom trawling. This vital protection will reduce seabed disturbance and protect potential blue carbon stores in the seabed locally.

WWF, The Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB are calling on governments across the UK to strengthen protections for valuable blue carbon stores – including in MPAs – by minimising the impacts of human activities on the seabed. Most MPAs were not designated to protect blue carbon, and failing to protect these areas from disturbance could threaten climate and biodiversity goals – including net-zero and protecting 30% of seas by 2030. WWF,

The Wildlife Trusts & the RSPB call for better management of MPAs and strategic planning of activities in UK seas, namely:

- Ensure that all MPAs are protected from destructive activities that damage blue carbon habitats and threaten marine life.
- Account for both carbon and biodiversity in designating new protected areas, to support ecosystem resilience and the role seas play in climate mitigation.
- Consider blue carbon in UK marine plans, avoiding damaging activities in MPAs and other key areas for blue carbon and wildlife that are not protected.
- Minimise the impacts of fishing and developments by undertaking blue carbon impact assessments.
- Support a just transition for fishing industries away from activities that damage the seabed.

More investment and research are needed on protecting blue carbon, such as:

- Allocation of funding to restore habitats, including seagrass beds and saltmarshes
- Support research and monitoring of blue carbon dynamics.
- Add seagrass and saltmarsh to the Greenhouse Gas Registry to track and monitor emissions.



# Sardonyx

By Nic the Witch

Sardonyx combines alternating layers of sard and onyx. Both are types of the layered mineral, chalcedony; they create a reddish zebra-striped gemstone with white bands. As a variety of chalcedony, which is a type of microcrystalline quartz, sardonyx forms through a combination of geological processes that involve the deposition of silica-rich solutions and the subsequent growth of quartz crystals. As a variety of quartz, sardonyx has a Mohs hardness of 7 and is reasonably strong, although prone to chips and scratches. The durability of sardonyx, combined with its pattern of attractive colours, means that it is frequently used for beads and brooches.

Sardonyx is the original **August** birthstone, with a history that dates back more than 4000 years. It was a popular stone for Roman seals and signet rings that were used to imprint wax emblems on official documents, since hot wax doesn't stick to this gemstone. During Renaissance times, sardonyx was associated with eloquence. Public speakers and orators wore it to aid clear thinking and communication. Used as a stone of strength and protection since ancient times, sardonyx is associated with courage, happiness and clear communication. It brings lasting happiness and stability to marriage and partnerships.

Since this gemstone promotes happiness, it also helps combat depression. Sardonyx can ease feelings of sadness and helplessness. A sardonyx gemstone can give you the willpower and courage to overcome obstacles you encounter. While the stone promotes bravery, it also offers protection when facing problems.

Healing practitioners advise placing sardonyx stones in all corners of a home to create a grid against negative and toxic energies. You can also place a stone under your pillow before going to sleep, to encourage a blissful night of rest. Sardonyx helps the Sacral Chakra and has these positive benefits.

- It supports courage, leadership and setting boundaries.
- It's a protective stone that empowers and inspires self-confidence and decision-making.
- Sardonyx is wonderful for periods of time where you feel unheard.
- It is good for meditation and trance, enhancing psychic abilities.



# Archaeomineralogy

by Salvador Domínguez-Bella

**Editor's note:** we continue with our new series on archaeogemmology. Most of the articles will be by guest writers – scholars, learned members of the Gemmological Association, etc. Last time, we featured **a ciborium from Einsiedeln Abbey** – this month, we take an overview of **archaeomineralogy**.

The study of the compositional nature, geological and geographical origin of the tools and jewellery used by man in prehistoric times has been, since the nineteenth century, the scientific goal of some researchers in the fields of mineralogy and petrology. This interest in heritage research studies is experiencing a significant growth in recent decades, with a great development of interdisciplinary collaborations, both from the field of archaeology as for the conservation, restoration and management of artistic and cultural heritage.

The application of physico-chemical techniques, common in studies of mineralogy, petrology and analysis of materials to the resolution of the fascinating questions posed from the archaeometry and the fact that we dispose of a growing number of analytical techniques with higher experimental performance mean that this line of research has grown in the interest of researchers. Here, several studies worldwide about some of the most widely used mineral substances throughout history and in different geographical areas and the tools and prestige objects manufacture, used by human societies are summarised. Finally, we present several examples of archaeometric studies carried out on minerals and fossil resins, used during the prehistory of the Iberian Peninsula, western France and North Africa in the elaboration of tools, jewellery and objects of prestige.

The study of the lithic (relating to stone) industry has a strong mineralogical and petrographic and geochemical component, so that participation of these disciplines is very important to determine the mineral nature of the object and their petrographic, paleontological and geochemical features. These factors are of great interest both from the determination of the source area of these raw-materials and the features and physical properties of the rock. The determination of the source areas of mineral raw materials is one of the main issues of concern. for archaeomineralogical studies.

These studies obtain great archaeological information, on the **strategies for obtaining of lithic resources, by prehistoric societies**, their exploitation techniques if they exist (underground mining, for example) (*Camprubí et al. 2003; Bustillo et al. 2009*), mobility of these groups in the territory, the use of the lithic material and determination of transport over short, medium or long distances, in case there are organised networks for such distribution. This occurs with some precious or exotic materials, which can travel long distances (up to thousands of kilometres), from its geological source areas to where they are deposited.

The study and determination of mineralogical and textural properties of many rocks and minerals is also of archaeometric interest, as these properties can be direct determining factors for a particular use by prehistoric societies of the material. These first steps in the materials science are interesting examples in many of the studies currently being developed, such as lithic assemblages in the Palaeolithic and Neolithic, indicating high levels of technical knowledge, obtained certainly through the experimentation.

By means of statistical analysis applied to mineralogical-petrological classifications of tools and their relationship with their technological type, a deliberate selection of certain raw materials for a particular use can be identified, such as flint and radiolarite in the Palaeolithic environment of the Strait of Gibraltar as Embarcadero of Palmones river, Algeciras or Benzú rock-shelter, Ceuta (*Domínguez-Bella et al. 2004*). In the studies that we are doing since 1994 on these materials, in southern Spain and northern Africa, it has been shown or inferred allochthonous or autochthonous provenance (*Domínguez-Bella and Morata 1995; Domínguez-Bella, Perez and Morata 2000; Ramos and Giles 1996; Domínguez-Bella et al. 2000, 2004 and 2006*).

(*Allochthonous* means something originated elsewhere, while *autochthonous* means something originated in its current location.) Within the group of analysed knapped stone materials, many minerals and rocks, especially siliceous, constituting in percentage the main group in prehistoric lithic industry. These include flint, radiolarites and jasper; we can join with other siliceous sedimentary and metamorphic rocks as silicified sandstones and quartzites.

The wide variety of minerals and organic materials used as **luxury or prestige jewellery** (Bard 1999), their geological origin or source areas, exploitation and trade routes of transportation and exchange, make these studies from the analytic sciences of great interest for archaeologists and museum and collections curators. It is one of the most exciting in the archaeomineralogy (Guillong & Günther 2001; Kosmowska-Ceranowicz 1990 & 2003; Domínguez-Bella 2004; Ruvalcaba et al. 2008; Querré et al. 2012; Calligaro et al. 1998 & 1999) and one of the archaeological materials that has attracted more interest from the archaeometric point of view: the gemmological minerals and substances.

There are interesting examples in the human historical record since the Palaeolithic, but a special abundance of these objects appears in the recent prehistory of Europe and Africa (Neolithic-Chalcolithic) or pre-Columbian times in America. Gemmological materials have been widely distributed over large commercial networks throughout history, as in the case of rubies, sapphires and emeralds, etc., highly appreciated in Roman times and later (Calligaro et al. 1998; 1999; Aurisicchio et al. 2005; Giuliani et al. 2000).

Notable examples in the minerals used in jewellery may also be some green minerals from prehistory which have been a constant across cultures and geographies. They highlight examples such as jade in Mesoamerica or Asia (Casadio et al. 2007) or turquoise in Mesoamerica and South America. From among the green minerals, as well as other colours, jade deserves special attention, as a material highly valued since prehistoric times in different cultures, chronologies and geographical areas. During the last decade, different methods of analysis of this mineral substance, using a wide range of analytical methods, have developed to determine their geological sources, early jade working methods, the detection of heating processes in jade, burial and surface alterations.



**Editor's note: the picture shows a piece of mesoamerican ancient jade art, from a common source = not part of the original article.**

# Time to forgive

by Lucinvampire©

A wise witch once said to me you have to let go of the past and heal so you can move forward in your life, and this is very true. We all can find it hard to forgive ourselves and others around us. Instead, we carry the pain, anger, hurt and regret with us and this can drag us down mentally, physically and spiritually. We all make mistakes and no one is perfect. We can all say that we have said and done things we shouldn't have throughout our lives. If you are a highly sensitive person or an empath you can carry with you these scars and also the scars of others because you have felt the other person's pain and suffering as well as your own.

Some witches are quite good at letting go, they know they have made a mistake or done something wrong and they can forgive themselves, accept the mistake and move on. For some witches though this is extremely hard, so that these burdens can be carried with them for years or their whole life, unless they choose to let go.

OK, so how could you release all of this negativity and forgive yourself? In Catholicism a person would go to the priest and confess their sins, receive a task to perform (saying prayers for example) to be forgiven and receive a blessing. As pagans, we don't have this hierarchical and dogmatic structure. We have to forgive ourselves and ask others for forgiveness. We can't physically go back in time to correct these mistakes and we can't always ask the people or beings for forgiveness if we no longer know them or if they are no longer on this plane of existence. So instead we have to ask the spirit, the universe and ourselves for this forgiveness. Here's one way you can do this: you'll need: a candle, squares of paper, a black pen and a smudge stick

- Prepare your space and light the candle.
- Perform a simple and calming meditation.
- Speak to the universe and yourself stating that you wish to seek forgiveness from all that is.
- Write down the things you wish to release from your life, you can either be specific such as writing each event/situation or you can be more generic and put such as: past mistakes, bad thoughts, negative actions, etc.
- Speak out to the ether, to those past and to those still in existence and ask them to forgive you for your wrong doings, your past mistakes and failures. The things you have done to harm them, the actions and things you have said and ask them to forgive you.
- Focus on yourself and ask you to forgive yourself, to let go of these negatives and release you from their negativity and bonds.
- In the candle flame burn each of the pieces of paper stating something along the lines of "I release (the subject matter) from my life and my being, and ask the universe for my apologies to be heard". Repeat this process for each of the items until all the pieces of paper are burned.
- State an affirmation which can be something along the lines of "I let go of negativity and forgive myself and may the universe do the same".
- Smudge yourself using the sage smudge stick, seeing the smoke removing any negativity you have carried with you until you are once again a shining white light. When you have finished the smudging say "and so mote it be".
- Thank the universe and all for their forgiveness and blessing and allowing you to move forward.
- Leave the candle to burn down to release all the negativity.

# Winter mushroom hot-pot

By Nic the Witch

There'll be more mushrooms later - so, this recipe is all about a vegetarian alternative for the pagan new year.

## Ingredients

12 shallots  
4 portobello mushrooms  
120g shiitake mushrooms  
250g chestnut mushrooms  
25g butter  
olive oil  
2 large carrots  
2 cloves of garlic  
Thyme to season  
2 fresh bay leaves  
500ml veg stock  
1tbsp tomato purée

## Method

1. Put the shallots in a bowl and cover with hot water (makes them easy to peel).
2. Roughly chop the mushrooms.
3. Heat half the butter with 1tbsp oil in a pan on medium heat.
4. Fry the mushrooms in batches, until coloured, but still firm, adding another 1tbsp oil between each batch. Tip the mushrooms into a bowl and set aside.
5. Peel and chop the shallots, garlic and carrots.
6. Heat the remaining butter in the pan. Fry the shallots and carrots for 10 mins, stirring occasionally – add garlic for last 3 mins.
7. Add the thyme, tomato purée and bay leaves.
8. Add the vegetable stock and simmer for 25 mins.
9. Season to taste and fish out the thyme stalks and bay leaves. Stir the cooked mushrooms into the sauce along with any juices, heating through for 5 mins or so – tastes well with colcannon, mashed potato or warm fresh bread.



# Midwinter's Magical Quest - Yules of Yesteryear

By Butser Ancient Farm

Saturday, 7 December 2024 10:00am to Sunday, 8 December 2024 3:30pm

Butser Ancient Farm, Chalton Lane, Hampshire, PO8 0BG

**Step Back in Time This Christmas to Share a Festive Wish with the Deer Queen and Holly King!**

Children £10.50 | Adults £18.50 | Family £48.50

Embark on *Midwinter's Magical Quest* in the heart of Hampshire and immerse yourself in ancient winter traditions brought to life! Join us on a heart-warming adventure through time as we celebrate the rich heritage of winter customs, long before the rise of modern holidays.

Meet captivating characters from history and folklore: the **Saxon Lady of Yule**, the Roman god of feasting, **Saturn**, the majestic **Holly King** and the brave **Deer Queen**. They will guide you on a magical journey through our ancient buildings, each brimming with festive crafts and activities. As you travel back through the Yules of Yesteryear, gather around the fire in a cosy roundhouse to hear enchanting winter tales.

Whether you celebrate Yule, Christmas, Winter Solstice, or something else, our magical quest offers an alternative family day out full of festive joy. Escape the hustle and bustle to step into the Evergreen Hall of the Lady of Yule, join a vibrant Roman Saturnalia celebration, hear stories in the enchanting Realm of Winter Wishes and visit the Deer Queen's Grotto to uncover timeless Christmas traditions and folklore.

"Midwinter's Magical Quest" is an inclusive celebration of the winter season—perfect for families seeking a unique and unforgettable experience. Don't miss out on one of the most extraordinary Christmas events near you in 2024! About this festive family event:

- An alternative, non-denominational festive family event.
- Choose your timed slot: 10am - 11.30am / 12pm - 1.30pm / 2pm - 3.30pm.
- Watch a live storytelling performance of festive tales in a roundhouse.
- Meet characters including the Holly King and Deer Queen, and make a special winter wish!
- Follow a magical trail around Butser Ancient Farm to complete the quest.
- Enjoy creative make-and-take activities and crafts, including candles and festive decorations.
- Suitable for all ages (storytelling aimed at ages 5-11)



# Folklore: A Winter's Tale

## By the Storyteller

*As we're at the Feast of Winter and the start of a new year, here's a little story from the mists of time.*

Long ago at the dawn of time itself, when everything was new, all the animals were trying out different types of food – the deer found that they liked tree bark and horses liked grass. Many birds tasted nuts and berries. All the trees and shrubs liked this attention – so, they competed with each other to produce the most juicy and tasty fruit for winter.

One of these trees was the wild cherry. She had wonderful red cherries, but they were too bitter for many birds and squirrels – they spat out the cherries in disgust. Other trees laughed at the wild cherry and she was sad, hiding away behind lots of white blossom.

Meanwhile, the nuthatch had a problem. He was only a little bird, but he could not find any food to eat for the forthcoming winter. Many of the larger birds had already claimed the best nuts. For example, wood pigeons liked chestnuts, woodpeckers preferred filberts and thrushes had claimed the cobnuts. Even the walnuts had been taken by squirrels.

The tiny wrens liked pine cones and the nuthatch knew that he could have scared them away, but he was not a bully. He had a kind heart and knew it would be hard for the wrens to find something else – he let the wrens have the pine cones.



So, while the nuthatch wondered what to eat when the snows of winter started, the wild cherry spoke up, offering her cherries and hard stones. "Aha", thought the nuthatch, "My beak is strong for breaking into the stones and, if the cherries are bitter, other birds will leave them alone." The nuthatch thanked the wild cherry and her fruit became the food of choice for all nuthatches during winter.

# Totally Wild UK: Fungi to forage in November



Sulphur Tuft



Winter Chanterelle



Wood Blewit

**AND NOW, HERE'S A COUPLE TO AVOID!!!**

Unlike many amanitas the Blusher is **generally considered edible if well cooked**; but, since it is known to contain a hemolytic toxin in its raw state, causing anaemia if eaten raw, most people steer clear of it as a food.



Although it looks inoffensive and similar to a number of edible mushrooms, the death cap is deadly poisonous.

# Celestial forecasts: November 2024

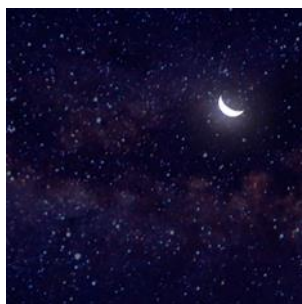
By Joanna Bristow-Watkins

*November in Britain, with the clocks having gone back, features more dark and colder nights, but peppered with the explosive lights (and smells) of bonfires and fireworks as Guy Fawkes Night and, sometimes also Diwali (though in 2024 the main Diwali Festival is 31 October), are celebrated.*

*This year, autumn colours linger with purple, brown, red and golden yellow, with most of the green having gone as the trees continue shed their leaves. Some remaining colours cling on and seed heads from old man's beard in the hedgerows look magical as they catch the low sunlight. Seasonal in the kitchen this month, we have Jerusalem artichokes, leeks, carrots, beetroots, parsnips, Brussels sprouts, kale, potatoes and winter squash. It remains good for harvesting chestnuts, hazelnuts and walnuts plus late-fruited apples and pears, with a plethora of fungi for those who know the edible from ones best avoided.*

*The month of November was named after **novem** meaning 9th in Latin, as November was the 9th month when the year started in March. To the Anglo-Saxons, November was called **Blotmoneth**, meaning "blood month" as this was traditionally the month of slaughtering and preserving meat to last through the winter. It was also a month of feasting as all the meat cuts which couldn't be preserved were cooked up, making it a bountiful month and helping folks keep warm.*

*During November, as well as **Guy Fawkes Night**, we have international festivals including **World Vegan Day** (1st) and **Armistice Day** (11th) and **Thanksgiving** in USA (28th). We can also look forward to the British Celtic Festival Samonios (Celtic New Year = 1 November) which is also the Christian festivals of **All Saints Day** (1st), **All Souls Day** (2nd) and St Andrew's Day to commemorate the Patron Saint of Scotland (30th). There are three annual Egyptian festivals: **Hilaria**(3rd), **Khoiak**(23rd) and **Nehebkau** (29th): to celebrate, we have a new series of **Violet Flame of Amenti** online module starting 27 November. We have our public Forest Bathing event on Sunday 10 November at Shere. The Beaver Moon peaks at 21:28 on Friday 15th (no live meditation this month). We also have the **Leonid Meteor Shower** peaking 17/18 November.*



**Friday 1 November starts the first month of the Celtic Year, called Samonios** (Seed Fall). Again, this mirrors the death/rebirth cycle of Asar (Osiris). It is thought that two Roman festivals became incorporated with Samhain - **Feralia**, when the Romans commemorated the passing of the dead, and **Pomona**, when the Roman goddess of fruit and trees was honoured. The Halloween tradition of bobbing for apples is thought to derive from the ancient links with the Roman fruit goddess, Pomona, and a Druidical rite associated with water. This is also **All Saints Day** in the Christian calendar.

The text below, by Helen Benigni, was kindly taken with permission from the [angelfire.com](http://angelfire.com) website, which may no longer be available.

*The month of SAMONIOS is a month of miraculous births beginning with the appearance of the twin stars of Castor and Pollux on the Eastern Horizon. These miraculously born twins, from an egg containing both mortal and immortal potential, bridge the gap between this world and the Otherworld.*

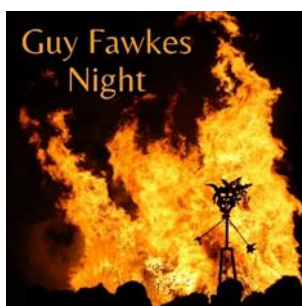
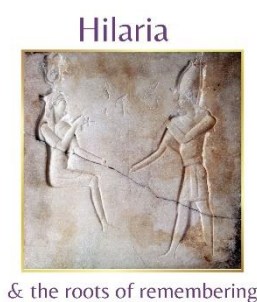
*Literally translated as "seed fall," SAMONIOS is the month when the light of the Dagda, the seed of his loins, penetrates the womb of the earth and creates life. This light is symbolized by the sunrise of the Winter Solstice penetrating the inner chambers of the sacred mounds of the Neolithic peoples. At Newgrange, the sacred mound of the Bru na Boinne, the light of the Winter Solstice shines through a roof-box of white quartz for seventeen minutes to dramatically illuminate the cruciform chamber of the passage tomb. Here, the stone-carved geometric motifs common to trance states of shamanic ecstasy amplify the light in order that the observer may experience the light of life bestowed by the solar deity.*

*This solar alignment initiates the light half of the year. Mistletoe is hung as a symbol of the immortal love that the good father, Dagda brought to Boand, the goddess of the Bru na Boinne. Oengus, the son of their union and the Lord of the Sid mound, guards the entrance to the Otherworld and immortal life.*

**Friday 1 November, in 2024 @ 12:47 is the peak of the New Moon.** The [New Moon Abundance Ritual](#) should be carried out within 24 hours after the New Moon. It needs to be after the New Moon because the moon should be waxing (getting bigger again) to carry the manifestation energy. There are video instructions on my [You Tube Page](#).

**Friday 1 November is also World Vegan Day.** In 1994, the event was established by Louise Wallis, then Chair of The Vegan Society, UK, to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of coining the terms, "vegan" and "veganism" and the founding of the organisation.

**Thursday 2 November is All Souls Day in the Christian calendar, commemorating the faithful departed.**



**Sunday 3 November is Hilaria, the culmination of the Egyptian Festival of Isia on the 28 October**, when Isis (Aset) resurrected Osiris (Asar) by re-membering him; no doubt contributing to the definition of our word remember meaning to recall someone from memory. *Informative laminated posters of Isis by Jacqui Taliesin El Masry from **Alkhem** and other Egyptian Posters by Jacqui, are available to purchase from the [Harmony Shop](#).*

**Tuesday 5 November is Guy Fawkes Night in the UK.** Some sources indicate that this replaced the Samhain Fire Festival, which was transferred in Britain to the night after Guy Fawkes's attempt to blow up parliament in 1605. The ritual burning certainly resembles the pagan sacrifice of the corn king!

**Sunday 10 November (also Remembrance Sunday), 10.45am-1.45pm, Forest Bathing** in the private grounds of [Harry Edward's Foundation](#), £39.77. We are starting a little earlier than usual to accommodate the 2 minutes

*silence at 11-11.02. Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. We will take you on a 3-hour journey through this beautiful private semi-ancient woodland, nestled in the heart of the Surrey Hills. Through a selection of simple sensory activities, you will learn how to enhance your perceptions and slow down to focus on what could easily be missed. We end with a treelaxation: a deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience and which, despite the title of forest bathing, does not involve any swimming!*

*Some of the scientifically proven benefits of spending time in woodland include reduced stress levels, stronger immune system response, and a stabilised cortisol cycle. We are opening this session up to interested children over 10 (attending with an adult) provided they are aware it is a 3-hour Forest Bathing session which will take place in all weathers except very high winds or electrical storms. Book via our the [Harmony Healing shop](https://www.harmonyhealingshop.co.uk). Email [katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk](mailto:katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk) to request receipt of our monthly Harmony in Nature updates.*

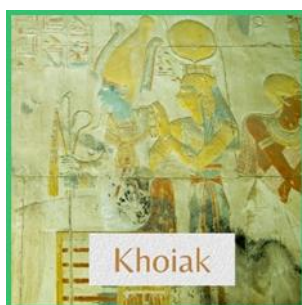
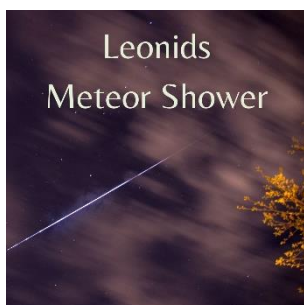


**Monday 11 November is Armistice Day to commemorate all those who died in World War 1 and 2.** Poppies are traditionally used for this occasion.

We also have the annual 11:11 Energy Portal. With many people worldwide recognising the 11 November as a powerful date, this, in itself, will create a heightened energy on the day. The effect of a high number of people all having positive expectations on the same date, due to the impact of quantum physics, will make it significant. I, personally, see this as an opportunity for a very cathartic release of all the sorrow, grief and disappointment for the thousands of families who were directly affected by WWI and the souls of all the millions who died, especially those whose bodies were never repatriated to their homelands. It's a pertinent day to undertake a meditation and send our love and gratitude to these people who selflessly gave up their lives. Remembrance Sunday, on the nearest Sunday, is the official celebration in the UK, this year it will be on Sunday 10 November.

**Friday 15 November is Beaver Full Moon @ 21:28.**

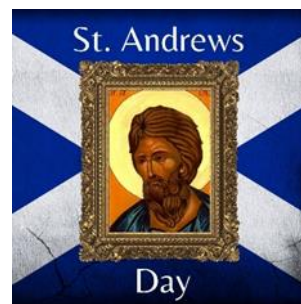
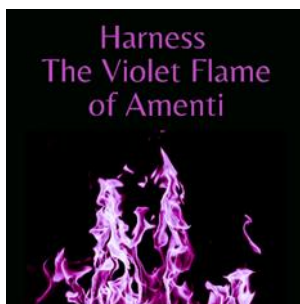
Click here for [Angela McGerr's Full Moon Meditation with Gabriel](#). Angela McGerr's publications are available from the [Harmony Shop](#) (including some signed by Angela). There's no online live Full Moon meditation this month. Between this date and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. A brilliant time for oil pulling.



**Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 November are the times for the Leonid meteors**, one of the most prolific meteor showers, also known as shooting stars. The shower peaks this year the night of 16/17 November and 17/18 November, but you may see some meteors from 6-30 November. The close proximity to the Full Moon on 15 November will hamper viewing this year. See [Time & Date website](#) or [EarthSky Website](#) for more.

The Leonids have had occasional periods when hundreds of meteors can be seen, roughly every 33 years, and were especially stunning in 1799, 1833, 1866, 1966 and 1998. This shower has produced amazing meteor storms in the past, but a Leonid storm is not expected this year. The Leonids are usually modest, with typical peak rates of about 10 to 15 meteors per hour, in the darkness before dawn. Look for the shower radiating from the constellation Leo after midnight.

This meteor stream is associated with **Comet Tempel-Tuttle**. As the meteors in the stream are thought to be dust particles released from the comet, it is thought likely that there is a dense stream of such particles in the path of the comet and located close to it. The Earth's orbit passes close to the comet's orbit each year in November and the Earth collides with these particles of cometary debris following the comet's orbit. According to the [EarthSky Website](#), it is a myth that we need focus only on the radiant point to see meteors. In fact, it seems they often don't become visible until they are 30 degrees or so from their radiant point, so they are streaking out from the radiant in all directions. Thus, the Leonid meteors – like meteors in all annual showers – will appear in all parts of the sky.



**Saturday 23 November is the Egyptian celebration of Khoiak and Nehebkau on Friday 29 November.** The Egyptian Year was split into three seasons (divided into 4 months of 30 days), commencing with Akhet in early August, then Peret from late November to early April and Shomu from early April until mid-July. Khoiak was a sombre celebration to complete the first season; later associated with the death of Asar (Osiris). However, it was followed closely by Nehebkau - marking the start of the next season Peret - and was seen as a kind of rebirth process.

**Thursday 28 November marks Thanksgiving in the US calendar.** Thanksgiving is the fourth Thursday in November (different in Canada, which is the 2nd Monday in October) and is a family day and public holiday to express gratitude for one's material and spiritual possessions.

**Wednesday 29 November is the Egyptian celebration of Nehebkau**, which literally meant 'he who unites the Kas'; the Ka being the body double which we might interpret as spirit or soul. Nehebkau was depicted in the form of a snake with arms and legs and occasionally wings! He was yet another deity associated with protection and magic.

**Wednesday 27 November is the start of Harmony Healing Virtual Workshop series: Violet Flame of Amenti (Level 1), 7.30-9.45pm (UK time/GMT), £88, 3x 2¼-hour evening course, held remotely on Zoom. The course will run on Wednesdays 27 November, 4 and 18 December.**

*The colour violet has an established association with spirituality. Having the highest frequency in the visible spectrum, violet is at the point of transition to the next octave of light. During the pre-Dynastic period of Khem (Ancient Egypt), the Violet Flame of Amenti was ruled by the Deities Ausar (also known as Wzr or Osirus), brandished by Sekhmet, and made freely available to Akhenaton.*

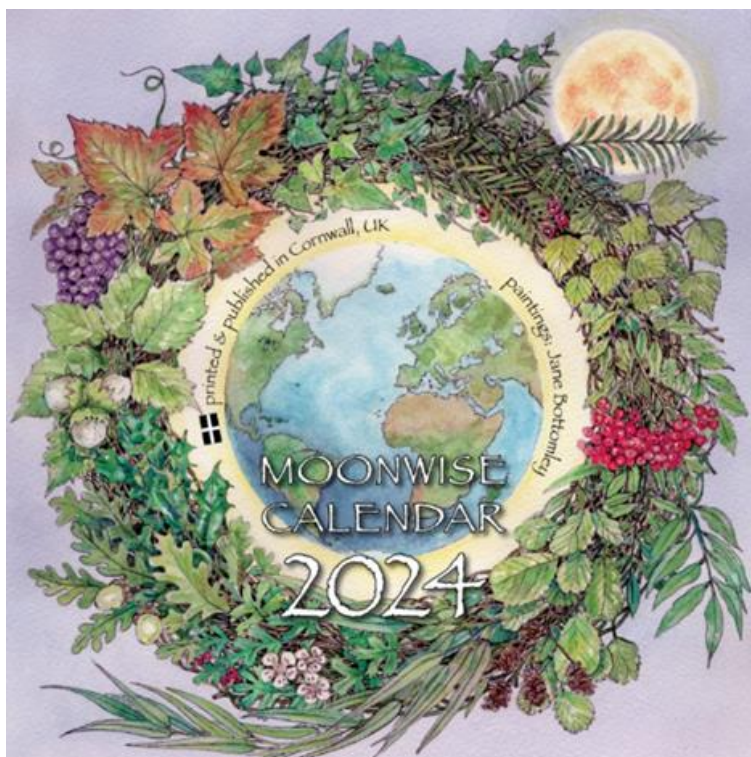
*Both in Atlantis, and subsequently during the Essene era (which spanned the lifetimes of Mother Mary, Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene), this powerful tool was retained under the Guardianship of Angels Melchisadec and Ariel.*

*This course features instructions on the ancient alchemical properties of the Violet Flame and how to use it in your daily life. See [Violet Flame of Amenti](#) page for further details and to book. This module comprises one unit towards [RSE Egyptian Alchemy Healing Level 1](#).*

**Saturday 30 November is St Andrew's Day in Scotland.** Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland and St. Andrew's Day is celebrated by Scots around the world on the 30 November. The flag of Scotland is the blue Cross of St. Andrew and this is widely displayed as a symbol of national identity.

### Acknowledgments

*Celestial Forecasts* are compiled by Joanna Bristow-Watkins of Harmony Healing: the original is published at Joanna's [Monthly Celestial Forecasts](#). It is created, using many sources but notably the [Moonwise Calendar](#) and Lia Leendertz's annual *Almanac*. Whilst considerable effort is made to ensure accuracy, this is not an exact science and sources are sometimes contradictory!



# Cod liver oil

By Mark Sharpen

Now here's something that caught my eye the other day. Cod liver oil as a medicine was always a remnant of a bygone age, alongside syrup of figs. However, it seems that cod liver oil is not such a quack remedy after all - made from heating the livers of codfish and catching the oil that leaks out. It is really rich in vitamins A and D. Before the discovery of vitamins - that would have to wait a few more years until 1910-1911 - people had noticed that children dosed with cod liver oil were less likely to develop rickets, the childhood bone disease from which the term, *rickety*, is derived and which can cause seizures and heart attacks.

Rickets is a condition that affects bone development in children. It causes bone pain, poor growth and soft, weak bones that can lead to bone deformities. Adults can experience a similar condition, which is known as *osteomalacia* or soft bones. In 1919, it was discovered that calcium and vitamin D deficiency caused rickets. This discovery explained the cod liver oil tonic's surprising power. During World War Two, the UK government issued free cod liver oil to children under the age of five. "*Don't forget Jimmy's orange juice & cod liver oil!*" exhorted one contemporary poster. In rare cases, children can be born with a genetic form of rickets. It can also develop if another condition affects how vitamins and minerals are absorbed by the body.

Cod liver oil, whatever its other qualities, was often an unpleasant thing to swallow. Like any oil, contact with oxygen can make it go rancid, yielding a foul fishy taste. But what seemed like another, less off-putting way to get vitamin D - sitting in the sun and letting enzymes under the skin's surface take care of its manufacture - was not really an option for children in the UK. This fact is as true today as it was last century, with the Met Office predicting rainier winters by 2070 (30% more so than 1990).



However, fortification of foods in the UK encountered some delays. In 1940, the UK started to fortify margarine with vitamin D. Similarly, bread, milk, and breakfast cereal manufacturers joined in. In the USA, fluid milk was fortified with vitamin D since 1933 and breakfast cereals, bread and flour are all fortified as a matter of routine. Even in this century, governments have changed policy to try to raise levels of vitamin D: Finland introduced its own voluntary fortification plan in 2003, with near-universal participation from food manufacturers.

There were some initial problems. After the start of fortification, cases of a disease called *hypercalcaemia*, in which excess calcium in the blood forms kidney stones and other problems, were discovered in the UK. That led experts to suspect that children were overdosing on vitamin D...fortification was banned in the 1950s, with the exceptions of baby milk and margarine. Fortifying certain foods (e.g. milk) lessened the need to take these supplemental oils Yet cod liver oil did not appear to make a comeback. In 2013, the UK discontinued the fortification of margarine, with the stated intention of encouraging people to take supplements instead (few people heeded this advice).

And in recent years, as blood tests for vitamin D levels have improved, some startling truths have come to light. Between January and March, when sunlight is at an all-time low, an enormous number of children are deficient in vitamin D: nearly 40% in some age groups in the UK nearly 30% of adults show a similar deficiency. According to the public health nutritionist, *Judith Buttriss of the Academy of Nutrition Science*, "People with darker skin are at particular risk. Low vitamin D status is almost universal in the UK South Asian population," (from the journal, *Nutrition Bulletin*).

What's more, rickets is back. Hospital admissions for rickets in the UK were low in the 1960s and 1970s and dropped further in the following decades. In 1991, statistically, there were 0.34 cases of rickets per 100,000 people under the age of 15 in England. But in the 2000s, rates began to rise, even skyrocket. "Hospitalisation rates for rickets in England are now the highest in five decades," wrote scientists in 2011. Is it time for fortification to make a comeback? The UK's Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition is considering the question: it is now thought that the cases of hycercalcaemia that scuppered fortification in the UK were due to a genetic disease that interfered with the vitamin's absorption. In other words, eating too many fortified foods was not necessarily the problem. There are likely a number of factors behind the rise of rickets in the UK, but maybe the spoonful of cod liver oil might make a return.

Figure 2. Photograph of a patient with rickets showing bowing of the legs (A) with classical radiological findings (B). of rickets.



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