



Gylden Magick

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March 2022

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

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

Dear readers of **GYLDEN MAGICK**,

It's March (the [Worm Moon](#)) – I've been reflecting on seeds and new projects. At Ostara, day and night are equal across the world. As we look around, all of nature is growing after the winter sleep: buds are on the trees, seeds start to germinate and spring flowers appear. The power of the sun increases each day as the nights get shorter.

We can use the potential and fertility of Ostara to create opportunities for positive change in our lives and in the world. At the spring equinox, we are poised between opposite forces – light and dark, receptive and

active, inner and outer. We should try to unite these opposites in each of us so that we are whole and balanced.

Ostara offers the opportunity for planning new projects. Our website has a new collection of tales from the [Storyteller](#), with another in the pipeline and we'll shortly feature a selection of poetry from [Nicola Ison](#).

This edition has a definite emphasis on spring - the altar colours for this period are pale blue, pink and lavender. But no ads – after all, we're like a pagan public library and all the information is free.

We continue with our regular series about celestial forecasts, sacred art, folklore, wands, Ostara and environmental issues. Our crystal expert, Charlie, turns her attention to chrysoberyl and our science

writer, Mark, has two pieces this month, both examining types of pressure. One looks at air pressure in sting jets and the other looks at water in the Bolton Strid.

In past years, we would be frantic with preparations for the Wandering Witches' Fayre, but not so in 2022. We will go along to catch-up with friends and look forward to the return of all the festivals, camps, fayres and markets in a post-covid world.

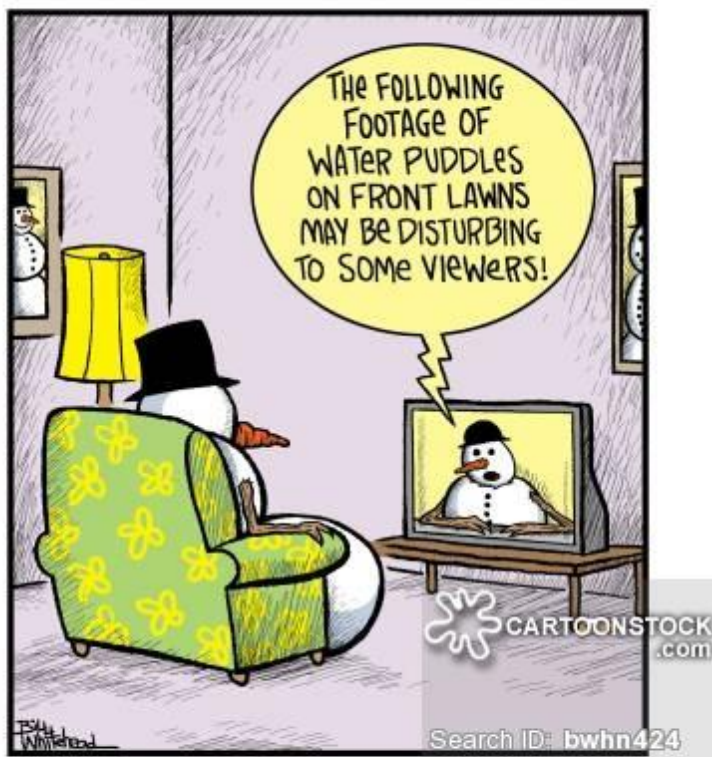
Thank you for all your feedback and many blessings.

Gylden Fellowship admins

For more info, why not join [Gylden River LRC](#) or [Gylden Fellowship](#) groups on Facebook today and see our archives or new briefings?

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Crystal clear: chrysoberyl

By Charlie Foreverdark

Time to send Ostara greetings to another regular author to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – **Charlie Foreverdark**. Charlie is a noted blog writer and participant in many online crystal and gemstone events.

Chrysoberyl is an enigmatic example of a beryllium-aluminium oxide mineral with a chemical composition of BeAl_2O_4 . Despite its name, chrysoberyl is **not** a member of the beryl family, which includes emeralds and aquamarine. Those are aluminium beryllium silicates, whereas chrysoberyl is a beryllium aluminium oxide. The name, **chrysoberyl**, is derived from the Greek words, *chrysos* meaning gold and *beryllos*, referring specifically to the blue-green colour of sea-water; essentially, chrysoberyl means *golden-green*.

Chrysoberyl is the third-hardest, frequently-encountered natural gemstone. It sits at 8.5 on Mohs scale of hardness, above topaz and just shy of corundum. Its hardness allows it to survive in deposits even after abrasion and chemical weathering: because of its durability, it is often found as a detrital mineral in streams and gravel beds. Although chrysoberyl is extremely hard, it has a brittle tenacity and fractures with distinct cleavage in one direction and indistinctly in two others.

Chrysoberyl commonly occurs in tabular or prismatic crystals with distinct ridges known as striations. It has an orthorhombic crystal system and can also occur naturally as incredible stellate (star-shaped), hexagonal and rosette shaped crystals, with repeated twinning. Chrysoberyl has double refraction and a vitreous lustre. The yellowed tones are caused by iron substitutions, though some rare mint-green chrysoberyls from Tanzania owe their unusual colour to the presence of vanadium.

The chrysoberyl mineral group was named in 1790 by renowned German geologist Abraham Gottlob Werner - the group splits into three subtypes, which all share the same physical and chemical characteristics, but are extremely different in appearance, on account of their various colouring elements. As a beryllium mineral, chrysoberyl forms in places and spaces where large concentrations of beryllium are present. This limits its geographic distribution and abundance mainly to the margins of magma bodies during the final stages of their crystallisation process. Thus, chrysoberyl is usually found in pegmatites from at least 250 million years ago.



A **pegmatite** is an igneous rock, formed by slow crystallisation at high temperature and pressure at depth. They exhibit large interlocking crystals. The word, pegmatite, derives from the Greek *pegnymi*, which means to bind together and is in reference to these intertwined crystals of quartz and feldspar. If the pegmatite fluid is rich in beryllium, then crystals of both beryl and/or chrysoberyl can form. Beryl has a high ratio of beryllium to aluminium and vice versa for chrysoberyl. Chrysoberyl also forms in the metamorphic rocks associated with pegmatites, such as dolomitic marble and mica schist.

On the rare occasion that chromium is also present, in addition to the beryllium and aluminium, as with the Ural Mountains of Russia, then the beautiful *pleochromic alexandrite* can form. As a group, chrysoberyls are most commonly mined in Burma, Sri Lanka, India, Madagascar, Tanzania, Pakistan, Brazil and the USA.

Ordinary chrysoberyl ranges from almost colourless to yellow-green and is transparent through to varying degrees of translucency in diaphaneity. When the mineral exhibits particularly good colour and transparency, it tends to be reserved for jewellery, as faceting this stunning stone can make for some particularly handsome pieces. In general, the brighter yellow and green shades are the most desirable, but there are some occurrences of rather striking golden brown/honey colours which are also highly prized.

In addition to ordinary chrysoberyl, there are two other distinct varieties; **cymophane (or cats-eye) chrysoberyl** and **alexandrite**. Ordinary chrysoberyl was historically referred to as **chrysolite** during the Victorian and Edwardian eras; however, this was also the common word for a separate and distinct olivine mineral species now known as peridot. As this became the source of some confusion, chrysolite is no longer used in the gemmological nomenclature.

Some specimens of chrysoberyl feature distinct examples of the optical reflectance known as the cat's-eye effect or **chatoyancy**. The chatoyant chrysoberyl is referred to as cymophane, which comes from a Greek word meaning *appearing like a wave* and alludes to the hazy opalescent appearance of the stone's surface. The phenomenon of cat's-eye is best displayed in cabochon cut stones, which contain a high density of microscopic parallel fibrous inclusions. The cat's-eye refers to the silver-white line of light that reflects from the dome of the cabochon at right angles to these tiny parallel inclusions. When the stone is turned from side to side, the fine strip of light appears to follow the curvature of the stone as it glides across the surface. As the light obliquely strikes the cymophane, it also creates a shadow effect within the gem, often causing one side to appear different in colour to its opposing side depending upon the light and viewing angle. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the *milk-and-honey effect*.

The chatoyant effect is a feature of several different mineral species, but when the term, *cat's eye*, is used independently without a suffix, then it usually refers to cymophane chrysoberyl. The lapidary is of especially high importance with cymophane. If the stone is cut too flat, the eye will appear wide, wavy and poorly defined. If the stone is cut too high, the eye may be off centre; this requires precision and skill, which is reflected in the expense of the beautiful gemstone.



Chrysoberyl has been a treasured material for thousands of years. In ancient Asia it was believed to provide the wearer with protection from the evil eye. It was used by the Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) natives as protection against evil spirits; however, according to folklore a person who dreamed of a cat's eye was of treacherous and deceitful character, so cymophane chrysoberyl also had negative superstitious associations for a time. The chatoyant stone became quite well known in Rome by the end of the first century. A green cat's-eye chrysoberyl featured in the symbolic necklace of the Hindu God, Vishnu, and was said to represent the magnetic centre of human passion. It became particularly popular in Spanish and Portuguese jewellery in the 18th and 19th centuries, with its desirability sky-rocking after the Duke of Connaught presented his fiancée with a cat's-eye betrothal ring. Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) could scarcely keep up with the overwhelming demand.

The largest cymophane chrysoberyl is a staggering 465 carat cabochon cut from a rough chrysoberyl of over 700 carats found in the gem-rich gravels of the Pelmadulla paddy fields in Sri Lanka. It was discovered in the late 1800s, and subsequently remained an heirloom of a particularly prominent and wealthy local family. The stone was preserved in its natural rough form for many years until 1930, when the family made the decision to have the gem cut by the most prolific gem cutter in the area. The final product was the stunning 465 carat cabochon. This cymophane chrysoberyl is documented (by the Smithsonian Institute of Washington) as the largest cut chrysoberyl in the world. The family appropriately named the gem, **The Eye of the Lion**.

There is a 45-carat transparent faceted chrysoberyl in the Natural History Museum here in the UK. It is called the Hope Chrysoberyl, and was discovered in Brazil around 1821. It takes its name from its one-time owner, British banker and gemstone collector Henry Philip Hope, who was famous for owning the Hope Diamond. This particular stone is described as "absolutely flawless" by Herbert Smith in his *Gemstones* text-book. Hope paid £250 for the rough stone and the 45-carat faceted piece is estimated at over £100,000 in value.

He also had examples of cymophane chrysoberyl which were believed to have formed part of the crown jewels of the king of Kandy in the year 1815. Kandy was a kingdom of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) and a very important source for quality cymophane chrysoberyl. Another of the King of Kandy's cymophane chrysoberyl gemstones, weighing 313.50 carats, was given to Queen Victoria in 1886. This one became known as the Kandy Cat's Eye. During the 19th century, various forms of chrysoberyl were often used in betrothal rings, which were the precursors to today's engagement rings. These rings were popular with royalty for a time, and chrysoberyl was a particular favourite of the fashionable Queen Victoria, who received several cherished jewellery gifts from her husband Albert which featured examples of chrysoberyl.

The Maharani (meaning Great Queen in Hindi) cymophane is presently part of the Smithsonian collection, and widely acknowledged to be one of the finest chrysoberyl examples worldwide. Originally mined in Sri Lanka (Ceylon in those days), it weighs in at 58.19 carats – just below 11 grams. Its hue is a beautiful light honey colour, the cats-eye chatoyancy is perfect, and the silk-like inclusions are too fine to be visible without the assistance of a jeweller's loupe.

Cat's eye stones have been laboratory synthesised since the 1970s and available commercially since the 1980s. It is fairly simple to distinguish these synthetic creations from their natural counterparts by noting that natural chrysoberyls have parallel needle inclusions rather than undulating ones. They are also typically devoid of all other inclusions (bubbles are a big indicator of a faux) and synthetic cat's eye stones may also fluoresce yellow under UV light.

Gylden
Magick
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Sacred art: Purim

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







Environment: Bees in danger

By Mathew Richards

Ministers have given the go-ahead for farmers to use a banned bee-harming pesticide in England for the second year running. The government went against the advice of its own scientific advisers, who said they did not see the justification for applying the neonicotinoid to sugar beet this year. Thiamethoxam is a seed treatment, taken up by the whole plant, including the flower, pollen and juices from the plant insects forage on, wildlife experts say. A single teaspoon of thiamethoxam is toxic enough to kill 1.25 billion bees, according to biology professor and insect expert, Dave Goulson – many wildlife organisations warned the decision could devastate already-struggling bee populations.

Pesticides have been found to be a leading cause of declining bee populations in the UK. The pesticides being reintroduced by the government are lethal – they damage the bees' navigation leaving them lost and confused. A third of the UK bee population has vanished in a decade, yet up to three-quarters of crop species are pollinated by bees, studies show. Bees are an important part of our ecosystem and pollinate three-quarters of the world's crops – apples, strawberries, onions, carrots and many, many more. We wouldn't last long without them, so we need to tell the government to ban these pesticides once and for all.



Environment officials announced they would permit the use of the pesticide to try to combat a virus transmitted by aphids. They say the UK's sugar harvest could otherwise be at risk this year and that "its exceptional temporary use will be tightly controlled and only permitted in very specific circumstances when strict requirements are met".

Neonicotinoids are considered so harmful that they were banned by the UK and the EU in 2018, but since then 12 countries, including France, Denmark and Spain, have also granted emergency permits for neonicotinoid treatments to go ahead. In 2021, there was an outcry when ministers first gave beet farmers the green light to apply the pesticide, although eventually it was not used because a cold winter killed off the aphids.

The Pesticide Collaboration, which encompasses environmental organisations the RSPB, Friends of the Earth, Buglife and the Wildlife Trusts, said the decision would harm wildlife and that the government should increase protection for bees and other wildlife from the harm caused by such pesticides. For example, minutes from a meeting of the Expert Committee on Pesticides say members agreed that the requirements for emergency authorisation had not been met and that pesticide water pollution caused by the decision would harm river life. Even minute traces of neonicotinoid chemicals in crop pollen or wild flowers "play havoc with bees' ability to forage and navigate, with catastrophic consequences for the survival of their colony", according to the RSPB.

Celestial notes

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins, Harmony Healing

We are very pleased to feature **Joanna Bristow-Watkins** as one of our regular contributors for **GYLDEN MAGICK** and, here, we're including a few details about her expertise – many thanks to Rebecca Granshaw for suggesting Joanna. Joanna runs **Harmony Healing**, which may be accessed at www.harmonyhealing.co.uk

We have North Surrey & London **Forest Bathing events** scheduled this month on the **16th** (Cannon Hill Common, London SW20), **20th** (Harry Edwards, Shere, Surrey), **21st** (International Day of Forests Tree Connection Workshop, Shere, Surrey) and **31st March** (Horsell Common, Woking, Surrey).

The **Reyad Sekh Em (RSE) Egyptian Alchemy Healing** online evening study Introduction programme continues this month with **Mindful Chakras** starting 10th March and **Essene Angelology** starting the 16 March. The earlier two modules can still be joined with recordings available for missed sessions.

To assist with therapeutic and abundant alignment with the moon cycle, we have our **Full Moon Guided Meditation** on Friday 18 March and our next **Lunar Cycle Alignment Programme** commences with the New Moon on Friday 1 April and runs until Saturday 30 April, more on this next month.

During March, we can look forward to extended daylight and the awakening of nature, especially in the forest. As well as new green buds and sprouts on the trees, we start to see new growth at ground level, with a plethora of camelias, hellebores, daffodils, narcissi, hyacinths and daphnes, some with lovely subtle fragrances. And even where trees have fallen recently, following three successive violent storms here in the UK, it will be amazing to observe the speed with which new saplings will appear to fill the spaces.

The month of March was named after the Roman God of War, **Mars**. The Roman Calendar originally started in March. To the Anglo-Saxons, March was called **Hrēðmonath**, named after a pagan fertility Goddess called Hreða (also known as Rheda).

March begins with the Welsh celebration of St David's Day as well as the Roman Festival of Matronalia. This year, it's also Shrove Tuesday. March was a busy month in the Roman calendar, indeed, there's even a festival for Roman Matrons (older married women) to celebrate by turning the household hierarchy of their day on its head. March is also a month for celebrating women, with International Women's Day (8th), Mothering Sunday (27th) and the celebration of numerous goddesses, Egyptian (5th & 20th) and Roman (1st, 15th, 17th & 19th). The Irish celebrate on 17th with St Patrick's Day.

Tuesday 1 March is St David's Day. St. David, Dewi Sant, is the patron saint of the Welsh, and 1 March, his feast day, is celebrated as a patriotic and cultural festival in Wales. Saint David, grandson of the King of Ceredigion, was said to have been born on a clifftop during a fierce storm. He died on this day during the year 500. He grew up to be a celebrated Bishop and founder of monastic settlements and churches. Glastonbury Abbey may have been founded by St David. So why is David associated with a dragon? There is a myth that when David was asked by villagers to slay a dragon, he instead went to visit the dragon and listen to its sad tale.

Tuesday 1 March is also Matronalia, according to Roman tradition, which was the topsy-turvy feast sacred to Juno, the birth goddess. It was also a celebration of marriage and the peace that these unions could usher in between Romans and Sabini, tribes from the mountain region near the Tibor. The Roman

mistress of the house waited on her servants for the day and presents were given to other people's partners! The wives of the house also gave a feast for their female slaves.



Tuesday 1 March is *Mardi Gras*, also known as Shrove Tuesday or, within the UK, as Pancake Day. Being the final day before Lent, this was traditionally a day for confessing sins and using up all the foods banned during the Lent fast. With pancakes containing butter and milk, they became associated with the date. The verb, *shrive*, means to gain absolution for one's sins through confession and/or penance. Hence, Shrove Tuesday is derived from the tradition that Christians were shriven before Lent.

The date of Lent - which takes place in either February or March, but always seven weeks before Easter - varies from year to year according to the lunar calendar which determines when Easter falls. Interestingly, as with many Christian Festivals, there is a theory that Pancake Day might actually have originated as a Pagan holiday; when eating warm, circular yellow pancakes - resembling the sun - celebrated the arrival of spring.

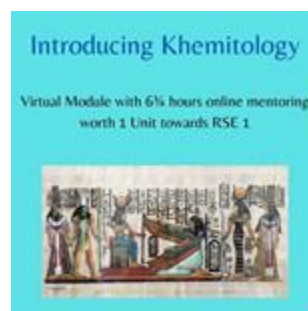
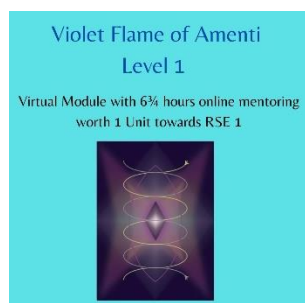


Tuesday 1 March, 11am - 1.30pm, Forest Bathing+ with Joanna & Katie at our Woking (GU21) location in Horsell Common, £35 (+ Paypal fee = £36.75). Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. Spend 2½ hours in the woods mindfully connecting to nature through simple sensory exercises and a treelaxation. Join us at this mixed woodland and heath location, featuring many Scott's pines and silver birches. This historic common land was featured in HG Wells' bestselling novel. A deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience, and which, despite the title 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. This session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds or electrical storms. Book via harmonyinnature.uk or our [Surrey Meetup](#).

Wednesday 2 March @ 17:38 is 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 [Facebook Page](#) or [You Tube Page](#). It is a good day for creating a personal or corporate Vision Board for

2022. Harmony Healing provides a [Vision Board template](#) and, periodically, we offer a lunar cycle mentoring programme.

Wednesday 2 March, is also Ash Wednesday this year, which is generally said to have been named after the tradition of burning away old issues in preparation for Lent. However, Ash Wednesday could have obtained its name from an apparent tradition of placing a stick of Ash down one's sock for good luck!



Wednesdays 2 & 9 March = Harmony Healing Virtual Workshop: [Violet Flame of Amenti \(Level 1\)](#), 7.15pm - 9.30pm (UK time/GMT = UK & America friendly hours), £88. three x 2.25-hour evening course, held remotely on Zoom. Recordings are kept of the missed sessions, so it is possible to catch up. This course features instructions on the ancient alchemical properties of the Violet Flame and how to use it in your daily life. Worth 1 unit towards the [RSE Level 1](#), available at a special package rate of £266, which includes a personal angelic attunement, worth £33, created around your date of birth.

Thursday 3 March is Fritter Thursday. The Free Dictionary states that *Fritter Thursday* took its name from the custom of eating apple fritters, which were fruit-filled cakes deep-fried in fat, on this day. I was surprised that this would be an acceptable dish once Lent had commenced (as fritter suggests batter which would contain egg and milk) and, on further research, I discovered that in [Lancashire](#) (source: [lep.co.uk](#)), traditionally, Shrovetide meant the three days before Lent and comprised of Collop Monday, Pancake Tuesday and [Fritters Wednesday](#) (rather than Thursday) with the fritters being sliced apple fried in batter.

Thursday 3 March = Final week of Harmony Healing Virtual Workshop: [Introduction to Khemitology](#), 7.15pm - 9.30pm (UK time/GMT = UK & America friendly hours), £88. 3 x 2-hour evening course. This course outlines an alternative version of Egyptology, as taught by the tribal elders and local wisdom-keepers. Worth 1 unit towards the RSE Level 1. Held remotely on Zoom. recordings are kept of the missed sessions, so it is possible to catch up.



Friday 4 March is Kissing Friday. According to [historic.co.uk](#), this bizarre custom was especially popular in the Victorian and Edwardian period and only died out in the mid-20th century. Although

unthinkable these days, a schoolboy could kiss a girl on this day without fear of repercussions. Of course, first of all the girl had to be caught and, in some instances, this involved tying ropes across the street and passing girls would have to pay a kiss for safe passage across the rope. Others would simply chase the girls until they caught them. Indeed, Kissing Friday was also the one day every year when girls could leave school early, to avoid being chased home by the boys. In the Leicestershire village of Sileby, this day was called *Nippy Hug Day*. Here, if the girl actively resisted a kiss, the boy could 'louse' (pinch) her bottom, a disturbing reference to the action of pinching off lice.

Saturday 5 March is *Ploiaphesia, Egyptian Festival of Navigation*. This was when one of the most important festivals of the Egyptian Goddess Isis was celebrated, the Ploiaphesia or Navigium Isidis (Ship of Isis). The festival marked the opening of the safe sailing season after the stormy weather of winter had passed. A statue of Isis was carried in procession from her temple down to the harbour, where a specially-built ship was moored. The ship would then be loaded with offerings and dedicated to the Goddess, before being launched and carried out to sea by the wind. The festival is described by Apuleius in his *Metamorphoses* (also known as the Golden Ass). To participate you can enjoy the energy of water and celebrate with processions, lights, mirrors, music and flowers.

Tuesday 8 March is *International Women's Day*; a day designated to celebrate the empowerment of women worldwide...this year's theme is *#BreakTheBias*.

Imagine a gender equal world.

A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination.

A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

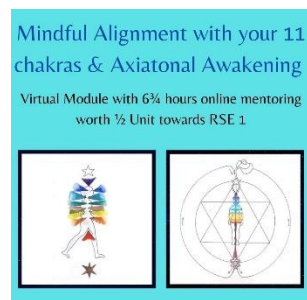
A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

Together we can forge women's equality.

Collectively we can all #BreakTheBias.

See the [International Women's Day website](https://www.internationalwomensday.com/) for more. Or for other inspiring ideas, see [womenforwomen.org](https://www.womenforwomen.org/).

Thursdays 10, 17 & 24 March, is the start of the *Mindful Alignment of your 11-chakras & Axiatonal Awakening* Interactive online evening course (7.15-9.30pm GMT). Re-balance your chakras and reconnect with the Earth & Sky. Learn to work with etheric crystals and the energy of the chakra system. Many of my students report powerful and transformational experience during this course of meditations and alignment techniques. Cost is £66 including a balancing attunement and 6¾-hours of mentoring. Held remotely on Zoom. Worth ½ unit towards [RSE Level 1](#), see [Harmony Healing Website](#) for details of this specific module.



Tuesday 15 March was the Ides of March in Roman tradition and a Festival to Jupiter.

Shakespeare had a soothsayer warn Julius Caesar, "Beware the Ides of March". Indeed, he was reputedly assassinated on 15 March 44 BC. In Ancient Rome, 15 March was also the celebration of *Anna Perenna*. Offerings were made to the Spirit of the Year, so that the circle could be completed.

Wednesday 16 March, 11am -1.30pm, Forest Bathing+ with Joanna & Katie at our new London location (woohoo) in Cannon Hill Park, £35 (+ Paypal fee = £36.75). Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. We will take you on a 2½ hour journey through the beautiful landscaped park, nestled in this little-known oasis of calm within Greater London. 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 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. This session which will take place in all weathers except 25+mph winds or electrical storms. Book via our the [Harmony Healing shop](#) or our [London Meetup](#).

Wednesdays 16 & 30 March (skipping 23 March): [Introduction to Essene Angelology](#), Harmony Healing Interactive online evening course, 7.15-9.30pm UK time (GMT), offering UK & USA friendly hours. Learn how to commune with the Weekday and Planetary Guardian Angels and invite them into your life on a daily basis. Even if you are already familiar with the angelic realm, discover how to strengthen your connection with channellings, affirmations, colours, crystals and planetary symbols. Connect with *Melchisadec* and *Pistis Sophia*, the Essene Guardians of our Planet Earth and the Constellations. Cost is £66 including a personal attunement into three of your Essene Guardian Angels plus 5½ hours of mentoring. This is a stand-alone unit but complements the *Chakra Balancing Course* (starting on the 10 March) and comprises ½ unit towards [RSE Level 1](#). Held remotely on Zoom. See [Harmony Healing Website](#) for details of this specific module.

Thursday 17 March is St Patrick's Day in Ireland. St Patrick is credited with converting the Irish to Christianity. Saint Patrick is said to have used the shamrock (three-leaved clover) as a metaphor for the Christian Trinity. The name, shamrock, comes from the Irish word, *seamróg*, which is derived from the Irish word for clover (*seamair*) and means simply *little clover or young clover*

Thursday 17 March was the Roman Festival of Liberalia. This was the feast to celebrate the male coming of age! In view of the date coinciding with St Patrick's Day, I wonder if there is a connection that when Eire converted to Christianity, they chose the Roman Festival for males coming of age as their date of celebration ...rebirthing and the Spring Equinox. I can't help wondering if it was a development from the Egyptian Pelusia Festival on 20 March.

Friday 18 March @ 07:20 is the Equinox Worm Moon. We are holding our Full Moon Meditation tonight (see below). Between Full Moon and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. For details of Full Moon timings for the year, as well as instructions for an Angela McGerr Angelic Meditation with Gabriel, see [Harmony Healing Full Moon](#) link.

Friday 18 March, 7.30-9.30pm UK time (GMT) is our [Full Moon Unity Consciousness Meditation](#). During this session, we connect with other like-minded people and together we work through a mindful chakra balancing process using colours and etheric crystals, with the aim that all participants will experience a degree of unity consciousness. Participants all receive a deeply healing experience. Cost to participate is £20 by online BACS payment (£1 admin fee added for PayPal, concessions to RSE/VFoA graduates), book at the [Harmony Shop](#). This activity serves as a good taster of Joanna's work in general and the virtual

format of our Zoom based programme. And, most importantly, it's a step towards making a difference to the global predicament. To find out how working on your own spiritual consciousness can help humanity and the planet by raising the overall human consciousness levels, see Joanna's [You Tube explanation](#).

Saturday 19 March is the Roman Festival of Quinquatrus, so named because it was the 5th day after the Ides of March. This was a Festival in honour of Minerva; it seems that women were accustomed to consult fortune-tellers and diviners upon this day. At one time, celebrations took place 19-23 March, originally an Etruscan festival to celebrate spring, rites of women, rebirthing and the Spring Equinox. I can't help wondering if it was a development from the Egyptian Pelusia Festival, see 20 March entry.

Sunday 20 March, 11am - 2pm, Forest Bathing+ in the grounds of Harry Edward's Healing Sanctuary, £35 (+ Paypal fee = £36.75). This session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds or electrical storms. Book via our the [Harmony Healing shop](#) or our [London Meetup](#).



Sunday 20 March is the Egyptian Festival of Pelusia, with the Egyptian Goddess Isis working her spring magic to ensure the flooding of the Nile later in the year, thereby guaranteeing a fruitful harvest.

Sunday 20 March is also the pagan Equinox at 15:32. On the Equinox, light and dark are equal over the whole world: mark the moment of the Equinox with silence and stillness.

Representing balance of opposites; it's a good time to bring balance into your life.

Monday 21 March is [International Day of Forests](#), sponsored by the United Nations. The theme for 2022 is Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption. Forests are home to more than 60,000 tree species; comprising about 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity. In fact, 1.6 billion people are directly dependent on forests for their shelter, food, medicines, income and energy. Alarmingly, we are losing around 10 million hectares of global forest annually (the size of Iceland) and this is said to accounts for 12-20% of greenhouse gas emissions thought to contribute to our climate change. As a qualified Forest Bathing+ guide, I am delighted to see forests being recognised for their wellbeing benefits and valuable biodiversity and efforts being made to protect dwindling international woodlands.

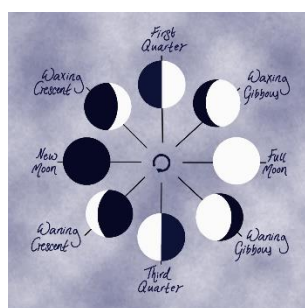
[Celebrate International Day of Forests with Harmony in Nature at Harry Edwards \(Shere, Surrey\)](#). Join us for the day in the Bluebell Room and outdoors to strengthen your connection with trees, particularly those native to the UK. Spend 2-3 hours Forest Bathing with us in the lovely private grounds (connecting with nature using mindful sensory activities), find out more about our most popular trees and learn how you can bring wellbeing into your life through a selection of tree essences, teas and essential oils. Discover about nature's WoodWideWeb and learn how to connect with it on a daily basis. Meditate with a tree through the seasons. An educational, interactive and fun workshop for tree lovers, which can work around school runs. £70. Book at harmonyinnature.co.uk

Wednesday 23 March, Joanna's talk entitled, *The Real Great Escape*, at Chertsey Museum. Joanna will tell the personal story of her father who was a Prisoner of War (PoW) in Stalag Luft III, at the time of the Great Escape in 1944. The one-hour talk will cover: details of what actually happened on the night of the Great Escape (made famous by the 1963 Hollywood blockbuster), as well as how he survived the war, his lucky escape, and how he came to run a travel agency in Chertsey. You can book online via [Cherstey Museum Website](#) or by phone on 01932 565764 - tickets cost £10.



Saturday 26 March, in the UK this year, is also when the clocks go forward, in fact at 01.00 on Sunday 27th March, and that is the start of British Summer Time, although we often have a while to wait until summer arrives in the UK.

Sunday 27 March is Mothering Sunday in the UK, now viewed as a chance to recognise the positive role of mothers in our lives. Often posies of daffodils are presented. Mothering Sunday is celebrated by Christians in the UK & Ireland and some other countries. It takes place on the fourth Sunday in *Lent*, which is exactly three weeks before *Easter Day*. It was once observed as a day when people visited their *mother church*, but has become a day for honouring mothers and exchanging presents with them. Increasingly, it's being referred to as *Mother's Day*, although that name originated as an American secular holiday, celebrated on a different date and quite distinct from the initial UK-based *Mothering Sunday*.



Tuesday 29 March, 7-8.30pm, Joanna's talk about the Moon cycle for Conscious Cafe. Tickets start at cost £5.98. Human beings have always been fascinated by the Moon and the power it has to influence so much of what happens on our planet. In this fascinating event, you will have the opportunity to learn from expert Joanna Bristow-Watkins how the moon impacts on your life in so many different ways and how to work with it to maximise the way it can help you. To find out more about the talk, and to book, go to [Conscious Cafe event listing on Eventbrite](#). To assist with therapeutic and abundant alignment with the moon cycle, our next Lunar Alignment Programme commences with the New Moon on Friday 1 April and runs until Saturday 30 April, more on this next month.

Tales for spring evenings: Nan Tuck

By the Storyteller

This traditional tale comes from East Sussex and it has a seasonal feel for this part of the year, being set between Imbolc and Ostara. **Editor's note:** a new collection of the Storyteller's tales, *Winter Chills*, has been published on the **Gylden Fellowship** website and is free to download.

Nan Tuck's Lane is a real place between Mayfield and Uckfield in East Sussex, but there is some doubt about whether Nan Tuck was a local wise woman or something more magickal.

Back in the early springtime of the 18th century, two young men (sons of Uckfield merchants) were riding to Heathfield for a night of card-playing and drinking. Suddenly, they saw a young woman walking ahead of them in the lane and they decided to have a bit of a romance on the way. So they climbed off their horses and followed the woman on foot.

She looked frightened and walked faster. They laughed and walked faster too. She climbed a gate and ran towards an old hut in a field, slamming the door shut behind her. The young men followed, pulled the door open and went inside, but there was no girl.

"Hello, my dears", said a very old woman, "I am Nan Tuck, but I can see that you are both fine young gentlemen". They demanded to see the girl, but the old woman asked them to sit by the fire and they'd see the girl soon. So they sat in front of the fire and they felt compelled to look at the flames. They saw pictures in the fire of a young girl dancing, an old woman walking, a baby crying and hares jumping in the fields. As the fire grew hotter, so their faces burned and blistered and the old woman laughed behind them as they rushed out to plunge their faces into the nearest stream.



The next day, the two young men returned with some friends for revenge, but there was no hut in the field and no evidence of any building or fire, except for a patch of bare ground where nothing has ever grown to this day.

The Science of the Strid

By Mark Sharpen

Funnily enough, this piece derives from a piece of erstwhile folklore, namely the River That Eats People! But, while the tale is very dramatic, the facts depend upon the awesome power of water or, to be precise, water pressure. Here's the poem from William Wordsworth about Bolton Strid.

This striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.
And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?
He sprang in glee - or what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep? –
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.
The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corpse.

Note: young William de Romilly, the son of Lady Alice de Romilly, who attempted to leap across the Strid in 1154 and perished. His mother was so grieved by her loss that she donated the surrounding land to establish the Bolton Priory monastery.

The truth is more sinister - between Barden Tower and Bolton Abbey in Yorkshire is a trap for the unwary. It looks like a small mountain stream, about six feet across, known as Bolton Strid. Many have tried to jump the stream, but it's actually part of the River Wharfe, compressed under huge pressure between two narrow straits. Below the water's surface is a deep chasm with powerful undercurrents that pulls anybody that falls into it to certain death. It is believed that not a single person who has fallen into the Strid has ever come out of it alive.

Further upstream, the stream expands to become the River Wharfe, some 30 feet wide. However, the river is forced through the rocks of the Strid with great speed and power. And it's not so narrow, because the undercurrents have eroded the land into deep caverns and tunnels. Anyone who drowns in there doesn't come out, as their bodies are trapped in the tunnels.

On the surface, the Strid appears so modest and the banks so close to each other that many foolhardy visitors in the past have assumed they could jump across it or walk across its stones, because it only seems knee-deep. Indeed, it's believed that its name comes from the word, stride. Due to the number of deaths, there are warnings signs on trees around the area discouraging people to attempt the leap. I guess you'd have to say that this is like a honey-trap for humans set up by nature with water pressure as the weapon...more about pressure in my second piece.

Environment: Springtime

By Sussex Wildlife Trust



Horse chestnut buds, from Janet Brown



Blue tit, from Andrew Holloway



Woods Mill, from Bryn Davies



Alcatheo Bat



Wren, from Simon Linington

Your magickal wand

By Gylden Fellowship

The following document is not the final word on wands, but is intended as an introduction. One thing to note before we start – if you are a craftsperson, just carry on and make your own wand and either decorate or carve it in your own way.

If you are not so skilled and wish to buy a wand, eg from a magickal fair or shop or internet, current prices would suggest that a good wooden wand costs about £30-£40. A small artificial wand might set you back about £15. Crystal wands depend upon the sizes of the end-stones, if there are any inlaid stones and whether the stones are fixed in place by copper or silver wire. Rough estimates would suggest that the price range of a crystal wand runs from £60-£170. Any more than that is probably a con. If you're simply looking for a crystal that has been faceted into a wand shape, eg a 6-inch selenite or tourmaline wand, I suggest £8 is OK.

What is a wand?

The wand is possibly the most valuable tool in magick. It is often identified either as a fire or an air element tool. Some people have different wands for different needs and a special one for major outdoor ceremonies or for a boost of power. You can also find/buy a small twig wand for travel. Almost any small smooth branch can work as a short-term wand if you ask the blessings of the forest where you find it.

Wands can be straight, slightly curved, tapered to a point or twisted like corkscrews. If you find a twisted piece of wood, it is unlikely to need any extra power or improvement to make it work. Driftwood can be surprisingly effective as the bark has been smoothed by the waves and it contains the water energy of the sea. Wands can also be made from natural grasses or flax.

Some witches work with metal or stone wands, namely not added stones, but metallic or crystal wands instead of wood. The best metallic wands tend to be silver or copper, such as copper tubes that are sanded to produce patterns. With crystal wands, some types obstruct energy flows, so try to avoid any wand made of sedimentary crystals, like hematite. Good ones might be onyx, obsidian or jasper.

Do you really need a wand/ What do you use a wand for?

Following on from the question of what is a wand anyway, comes the question of what I would use it for. The list below suggests some common magickal uses.

1. Spells of attraction: ever-increasing clockwise circles with your wand will attract whatever or whoever is needed in your life; while making decreasing anti-clockwise circles will banish sorrow, illness, bad luck and anything negative.
2. Bring your magickal intentions to reality by writing them in the air with your wand.
3. Cast a small circle of protection all around yourself in the morning before work or in the evening when you get home by holding the wand outward an arm's length and casting a circle around you.
4. Banishment of anxiety, pain or physical weakness, hold the wand in front of your face while speaking banishing words.
5. Draw a magickal circle of power by walking round the visualised circle, pointing your wand diagonally downwards from waist height in front of you. Your wand can be used to close a circle too.
6. You can use your wand to open and close the four directions of your circle by drawing, attracting or invoking pentagrams in the air as you welcome or dismiss the four guardians.
7. Use the crystal tip of a wand to mix in salt and make sacred water.
8. Draw down the moon or sun by holding the wand in a sharp angle to the sky and turning in rapid clockwise circles for the sun and the reverse for the moon.

It also depends upon which type of magickal energy is being raised, the focus of the witch and the type of wood or crystal in use. When your wand becomes old or tatty and you would like a new one, you can keep it near the altar until it splinters and finally rots; empower a new one in the meantime as the old one's work is done. When it comes to purifying the new wand, do this in a period of the waxing moon – after all, the more energy you can run through your wand, then the clearer it stays.



Choosing a wood for a natural wand

"The last shop was narrow and shabby. Peeling gold letters over the door read Ollivanders: Makers of Fine Wands since 382 BC. A single wand lay on a faded purple cushion in the dusty window."

A big problem in the Harry Potter stories is that, in reality, it is **not** the wand that chooses the wizard or the witch. It happens in reverse. True, some wands may feel more receptive to your touch – like some crystals – but mostly, it is you that is attuned to certain types of wood.

My personal inclination is to have a longer wooden wand for some spells and a small resin/crystal wand for special tasks. A special task is usually when I need to channel healing energy towards a chakra or dis-eased part of someone's body. So, I have a small resin wand with an inlaid lapis stone and a small clear quartz point for focus.

And how do you wish to use your wand? Using a wand that is made of the wrong wood will both lessen the energy of your spell and may even reverse it. The place to start, perhaps, is to know a few trees and their **common magickal attributes**.

Alder	Stability and bringing your hidden energies into reality
Apple	Beauty, happiness, circle casting and love spells
Ash	Renewal, sensitivity and higher awareness
Birch	New beginnings, cleansing, shedding the past and visions
Cedar	Healing, truth, integrity and protection
Cherry	General renewal after death, rebirth and new life
Elder	Rebirth, visualisation and dealing with færie magick

Elm	Strength of will and intuition
Hazel	Wisdom, justice, ceremonial uses, dowsing and divination
Holly	Anger management and spiritual strength
Maple	Balance, potential and commonsense
Oak	Strength, courage, prophecy and wisdom
Palm	Peace, opportunity, success in ventures and fertility
Pine	Creativity, courage, longevity and inspiration
Rowan	Divination and protection
Willow	Healing, inner vision and dreams

Is it OK to pick up a twig from the forest floor and use it as a wand? The key to making a new wand is that you must ask a tree for permission before cutting: in your own words. If possible, take a small, new branch and thank the tree afterwards too. Then place a token of thanks at the base of the tree. The nature of this token varies with each person, but my suggestion would be three silver coins, a handful of nuts or seeds and some biscuits.

Wiccan tradition suggests that all wands should be cut on Wednesdays or during the full moon. OK, we could go with that or simply do what witches have done for hundreds of years. What you **don't** want to do is hurt the tree, so try to cut any branches during the active growing season of the tree or bush.

Adding to your wand

Remove any leaves and small twigs as soon as you cut or find your wand. Cut the branch so that it measures from your inside elbow to the tip of your middle finger and then place in a bucket of salt water for a few days. The bark should peel off easily. Some people leave a little bark, to add to the decoration. Sand or rub it smooth, but it is up to you – a holly branch is dense and can be sanded very smooth. Try to leave your wand in a warm, airy place for any time up to 14 days until the wood is dry.

You can then carve runes, letters or pictures onto the wand, soak it in beeswax and leave to dry. You can opt to inscribe your wand with a magickal symbol or a sigil. Carve either with a pyrographic tool or a very fine awl. My wand has been pre-carved by a pyrographic tool, to match my other wooden jewellery, but if you want to do it yourself, all the tools, templates and practical advice is online.

Sometimes the wood will already be marked with a distinctive pattern or eye, which can be accentuated with a thin brush and a subtle brown wood paint. Sealing oils, such as linseed, can help preserve the wood. After each use, polish your wand with a soft cloth and cleanse the wand regularly with natural polish. Best of all is to leave it out under the light of the full moon.

You can give your wand a **crystal point** too by making a split in the top of the wand with a knife so the crystal will slide in and remain firm. If you want the crystal to direct energy outward, that should be placed at the top of the wand. Good examples include natural quartz and tiger's-eye. If you want the crystal to receive energy, it should be at the base of the wand – examples are blue or green or iridescent crystals. **Practical tip here** – glue is rubbish to fix crystals with. Do not buy an expensive wand with glued-in crystals as the glue diminishes the magickal energy and damages the wood. It is better to use a wand with crystals that are fixed in place with copper or silver wire.

Seasonal: Ostara blessing

By Nick the Witch

On the eve of Ostara, reflect that you are there to celebrate **Ostara**, the Spring Equinox, when day begins to last longer than night. **Ostara** is a festival of hope and joy, celebrating the gradual dawning of longer, warmer days, new light and the promise of summer. **Ostara** is halfway between Imbolc and Beltaine and all things are in balance: Goddess and God, Life and Death, light and dark. March is the seed moon: this is the time to lay the seeds of new projects and start on new directions that you have planned throughout the winter months. In other times, Ostara was celebrated as E-ostra, Ostra, the Festival of Trees and as Eostar. In druidic terms, it is known as Alban Eilir.

Ostara is the spring equinox – a time to give thanks and to reflect upon the wheel of the year and the cycle of renewal and rebirth. In many cultures, spring is celebrated as a symbol of new life and harvests, from maple sugaring ceremonies by Native Americans to Easter services by Christians.

Take a few minutes to meditate upon the new life that surrounds you in nature, as you walk in parks or forests or look at our gardens: plants, flowers, insects and birds.

Breathe in the forest air, smell the fragrance of the grove, listen to the sounds of nature and understand that the God and Goddess surround you.

Lord, move the spirit of my soul

Give me energy, make me whole

Lady, you are the Goddess of Spring

Bring light and life to every living thing.

Blessed are the God and Goddess.

So, here we are, gathered in a moot,

Giving our praise – that is the truth.

Last week was Ostara and it's the day

To put the clocks forward – it'll soon be May.

But first it's the god and the goddess who reign –

As young lovers, handfast the twain.

Keridwen is here, Queen of the Spring,

Giving fertility to every living thing.

And Cernunnos too, with antlers and horn,

Showing his power with every new dawn.

Fertile gods, you bring the seeds,

Of light and life for all our needs.

Blessed be.

Sting jets

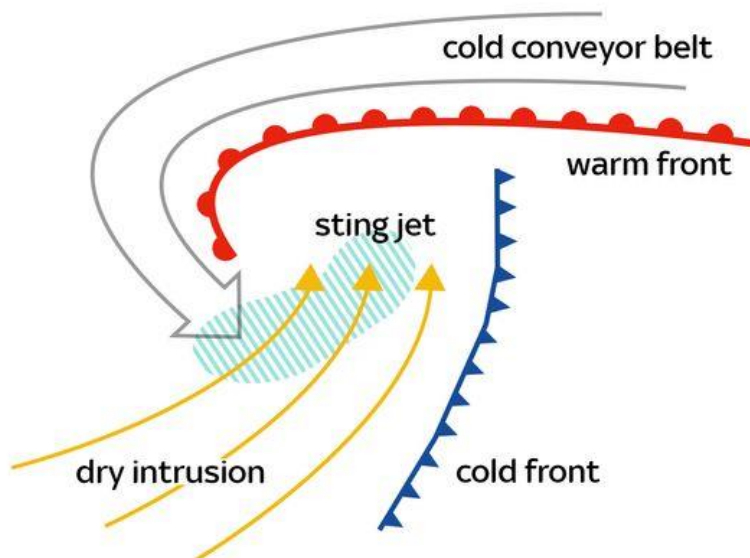
By Mark Sharpen

Having written earlier about the water pressure in my text about the Strid, I was reflecting on the power of storms and air pressure, particularly the storms at the end of February – and then, I thought that I'd share a few words about sting jets.

A sting jet is a natural feature of storms, such as Storm Eunice. It's a small area of extremely intense wind that can form inside storms passing across the UK, Ireland and parts of Europe. A sting jet forms when weather fronts divide areas of warm and cold air and this interaction creates and develops wet and windy weather. There are more focused streams of warm and cold air close to the weather fronts, known as conveyor belts – with the warm conveyor rising and the cold conveyor falling. Gusts of wind can reach 100mph in a sting jet, likely to cause flying debris, building roofs to fly off and power lines to be brought down. So, what do we know about sting jets?

- They start out 3-4km above the ground and descend over three or four hours.
- Snow and rain falling into them evaporate and cool as they descend, helping to accelerate them to high speeds.
- Sting jets can accelerate to more than 100mph.
- They are difficult to forecast because of their relatively small size and the way each individual low-pressure system develops.
- It is also possible to spot sting jets developing on satellite images, as the end of the cold conveyor is marked by a hook-shaped cloud with a point at the end. This often looks like the sting in a scorpion's tail, hence the name, sting jet.
- Sting jets are rare and were only really recognised when one occurred during the Great Storm of October 1987 - when wind speeds reached 115mph and millions of trees were brought down.

The diagram below, from *Severe Weather Europe*, shows how a sting jet is created.



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