

# The Mermaid Wave Journal

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## Stephanie's Corner

By Stephanie Leon Neal



"To Know Thyself Is the Beginning of Wisdom." Stephanie Leon Neal

Most agree that the phrase "To know thyself is the beginning of wisdom" is attributed to the Greek philosopher Socrates; this Socratic approach of becoming fully self-aware is an approach that honors the self's authentic gifts and purposes to a life well lived. When one deliberately opens their vision to both their powerful agency and world-awareness, all

knowledge becomes usable and practical for both the spiritual and the world of matter, which causes one to experience new knowledge from a new perspective.

Experiment your way by approaching cultural beliefs, asking, "Has this cultural standard belief served just a few people? Has it helped me grow? Has it fulfilled my life? If the answers are all no, then turn each belief that was never meant for you upside-down, or backwards, or begin utilizing your questions that surface in your mind. Is there anyone holding you back in any way? Are there any cultural beliefs holding you back? Are you holding yourself back from living the life that is rightfully yours?

It takes courage to see the world as it is, revealing itself to your easily accessible Higher-Self.

Children of the Goddess, freely express themselves through celebrating the uncelebrated, giving voice to the voiceless, listening to the pearls of wisdom from all who live in the neighborhood, by the ocean, desert, or mountains. Lending a hand to help



others when no one is watching. Mending a wound in a time of need, or presenting a song, or a statement of hope to lift the spirits in times of sadness, or visiting the local apothecary to support small businesses, or inviting folks over to spend an afternoon in your garden. The list of opportunities to lift others is too long to complete here, yet add yours here. As the world faces challenges, remember we are Goddess's hands, eyes, voice, and we live inside Her heart, together, caring for nature and all beings that walk, fly, crawl, or swim, with no strings attached. Everyone has several gifts to give to the world, not just one.

Knowing thyself is the first step to collectively shining our cosmic light as One. No one needs to find the light, because that is what you are.

To know thyself is to know you do not own wisdom; you are wisdom.

Love & Blessings,

Stephanie Neal

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## Voices From the Sea

By Rv Silas Mimir AP~

I am the breath between tides, the memory of moonlight on water. I sing in waves, whispering stories older than time. Come to me with stillness in your heart, and I will teach you how to ebb without fear, and rise without effort.

Let go. Float. Listen. You are never alone.

— The Ocean 🌊

## Whispers From the Sea

By Rv Stacey Blair AP~

Picture in your mind an image of a field of wheat. The wheat has grown and is as tall as you are, ripe and ready to be harvested. Take a walk through this field and imagine the feel of the stalks as you brush past. Everything is healthy, the ears are full of grain. You continue walking and suddenly notice some subtle differences. Some of the plants have larger grains, there are small differences in color. The plants are a multitude of shades of brown, others are more black in color. You realize that those are darnel, a weed typically found among wheat and is mildly toxic. But it is impossible to pull them without uprooting the wheat and damaging the plants. It depends on the wheat to grow. Take this knowledge and reflect on the world we live in. Our communities, our families, the places we live, our relationships. There are toxic people that are dependent on us, they continue to thrive in our fields. But in our world it is not clear who is good and who is the enemy. Even weeds have a purpose. By pulling the bad, you destroy the good. Look at the mixture of the good seeds and weeds in the field and apply this to your world. Notice the weeds growing around you. How can you continue to thrive while they still grow? Take this knowledge and reflect on it in your journal.

## Deep Sea Inspirations

By Rev. Bradley Quisenberry Foster/Fosterberry

#### First Harvest

I have come with dust on my hands and sun-warmed sweat behind my ears. The fields are whispering gold now, and the sickle sings like it remembers how to bleed the stalks into baskets.

I give thanks, yes but not with soft words. I thank with calloused palms and aching knees, with breath that tastes like basil and smoke, and prayers I mutter while I stir the pot.



Bread rises in the belly of the oven like a spell half-spoken. I tear it open and feel the heat the grain remembers the sun and the soil remembers me.

What I have planted, I now hold. What I have lost, I now name. What I have earned, I do not apologize for.

This is not the end.

It is the weight before the letting go.

It is the feast before the thinning.

It is the moment I look around the table and see that I am still here still hungry, still grateful, still mine.

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By My Hands- a chant for Lammas

By my hands, the seed was sown, By my hands, the grain has grown. By my hands, the blade did fall, By my hands, I honor all.

Sun to stalk and stalk to bread, Feed the living, wake the dead. Bless the sweat and bless the flame, All I give, I give in name.

Turn the wheel and light the fire, Build the feast and raise it higher. What I've worked is what I keep, What I've sown is mine to reap.

May Your Forge Burn Bright,

#### Rev Bradley Quisenberry Foster/Fosterberry

## Hand Made Projects



dry until just damp.

#### Cornhusk Witch

#### What You'll Need:

- Black and Orange Fabric Dye
- Dried Cornhusks
- Disposable Gloves
- Glue Gun
- 2" Styrofoam Ball
- Black Card Stock, cut into a 6" circle
- Scissors
- Wood Skewer
- Empty Wine Bottle

#### **Directions:**

- 1. Dye cornhusks in fabric dye. Allow cornhusks to
- 2. To make the body, hot glue the narrow end of a cornhusk to the neck of the empty wine bottle. Continue to layer and glue husks, working around the bottle until it is completely covered. This is the witch's dress.
- 3. Next, glue and wrap a cornhusk around the neck of the bottle, leaving the
  - seam at the back of the witch. Wrap another husk over the chest of the bottle, crisscrossing the 2 ends in the front and securing in place with hot glue.
- 4. Place the styrofoam ball inside a damp cornhusk and roll into a cigar shape so the ball is completely covered. Fold the top end of the husk over the ball and gather the ends together to form the neck. Use hot glue and a rubber band to secure the ends together. Apply hot glue around the opening of the bottle and on the neck, insert into the bottle, leaving just the head showing. Hold in place until secure.



- 5. Make the cape by covering the back and sides. Apply a strip of glue to the back cornhusk about 1" down from the neck. Continue to glue husks around each side and curl the husks to form a collar.
- 6. For a hat, glue one cornhusk on top of the 6" circle, trip excess to match the size of the circle. Glue 3 cornhusks to the center of the circle, forming the base of the cone shape. Gather top ends of the husks forming the point in the hat and glue together. Glue the hat to the head.
- 7. Make a broom by taking a few pieces of cornhusk and glue them to the end of a wooden skewer. Press firm to adhere. Glue the broom to the hip of the witch.

## Dabblings of a Green Witch

By Rev. Catherine Dragoni

Where I live, everything is growing and ripening. Tinges of red and gold are now seen in the marsh grass that was a lush green in June. Haying has begun in farm fields. The spring flowers have passed, and summer flowers are at their height of color.

Among them are my purple coneflowers (Echinacea purpurea). I have several plantings of these flowers, the largest under my bay window, forming a semi-circle around a bird bath, and near some other bird feeders. The planting is well established, and the flowers grow quite tall, so that the blooms are easily seen through the bay window from the chairs we sit in while enjoying our morning coffee.

Originally I planted coneflower for its medicinal uses, and I do harvest and utilize the plant for those purposes. But its hardiness and beauty lead me to plant this flower beyond my herb garden. Coneflowers attract many pollinators – there are so many bees in my front garden! There are also several species of butterflies, including monarchs, who are daily visitors. Birds are also big fans of coneflowers, especially if you don't dead head the blooms, and just let them go to seed. Goldfinches and other small birds will feed on the seed heads into the fall and winter, and help you seed a new



generation of blossoms. They are also native to Eastern and Central North America, making them an environmentally sound addition to your garden.

Medicinally Echinacea has a long established reputation for strengthening the immune system. It can be used to prevent, or reduce the severity and duration of colds. It has anti-inflammatory properties, which can alleviate symptoms from respiratory infections. It can also promote good health by serving as an antioxidant.

Every part of this plant is useful. The flowers, leaves, and roots can be dried for later use in preparing teas, tinctures, decoctions, oils and salves. Flowers should be harvested when in full bloom. You can harvest an entire stem, including the flower, by cutting the stem above the lowest leaf pairs. These can be laid flat, or hung in bunches to dry. The roots should be harvested from plants that have gone through two full growing seasons, during the fall after they have gone dormant. You can cut the root in half and replant one portion to maintain your plantings.

Once the leaves, blooms, and roots are dry, store in sealed containers. The leaves and blooms can be stored separately, or together.

To make tea from the dried root, place 1 to 2 tablespoons of chopped root into a small saucepan. Add one cup of water, bring to a simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, then strain.

To prepare the tea from leaves and flowers, use ½ cup dried echinacea or ½ cup fresh leaves and blooms. Pour 1 cup boiling water over the herb, and let it steep for about 15 minutes, then strain and serve.

Although teas are probably the easiest way to use Echinacea, you can also prepare tinctures, infused oil, and salve. To prepare a tincture, cover the dried herb with high proof vodka in a jar, and let it sit for 4 to 6 weeks. At the end of this period, strain the alcohol and reserve. One way the tincture can be used, is to mix with water in a glass spray bottle. This can be used to spray the back of the throat to soothe a very sore throat.



To prepare an infused oil, cover either dried or fresh leaves and flowers in a jar with an oil such as grapeseed oil. Seal the jar, and invert to mix. Periodically invert the jar to mix over a 4 to 6 week period. Then strain the oil. To prepare a salve, mix the oil with melted beeswax. A suggested proportion is 1 oz beeswax to 4 oz oil. For a softer salve, use a higher proportion of oil to wax. You will have to experiment to find the proportion that you like.

After you have weighed/measured the beeswax and oil, place the beeswax in a double boiler and gently warm until it melts. Add the infused oil and stir until well mixed.

Remove from heat and quickly pour into tins or small glass jars.

Both the oil and the salve can be useful for treating cuts or wounds, to reduce inflammation, or prevent/treat infection in the area. Although both preparations carry the beneficial components of the herb, the salve is easier to apply and use. Beyond medicinal uses, Echinacea has other very beneficial correspondences that make this a plant that is very desirable to grow around your home. From my herbal Grimoire:

**Echinacea** 

(Echinacea spp.)

Planetary association: Mars Elemental association: Earth Gender association: Masculine Astrological association: Scorpio

Uses: Grow around home to draw prosperity and prevent financial hardship; add to spell work to amplify magical energies; drink tea to encourage psychic insight and amplify clairvoyant abilities. Strength; wards off undesirable energies.

Medicinal: Stimulates the immune system. Germicidal and wound healing properties. Helps body fight off infections; beneficial for colds and flu

## Baking With Herbs

Nothing is better than to start the fire season with some gooey baked smores bars. These will truly become a Lammas tradition!

Ingredients:

#### Oat Base

- 1 cup sunflower seeds
- 3 cups rolled oats
- 3 tablespoons oat flour
- ½ cup coconut sugar
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup melted butter
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons water

#### Chocolate Ganache

- 1 cup milk chocolate
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup double cream
- 1 tablespoon caster sugar

#### Topping

• 40 marshmallows

#### Directions:



- 1. Line a shallow baking pan with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 300 F.
- 2. Place all the ingredients for the Oat base in a mixer and blend well. Every minute, pause the blender to scoop the mixture off the sides to ensure it is fully blended.
- 3. Add water gradually to make it stickier.
- 4. Spoon the mixture into the baking pan and press down firmly to make a thick crust about ½ inch thick.
- 5. Prick with a fork and bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 10 to 15 minutes or until the edges are a golden brown.
- 6. Remove and let cool completely.
- 7. Prepare the chocolate ganache. In a heatproof bowl place the ingredients. Set the bowl over a saucepan of boiling water and stir until the chocolate is melted.
- 8. Pour the chocolate ganache over the crumble base and spread evenly.
- 9. Add the marshmallows on top by standing them upright over the chocolate layer.
- 10. Place the dish in the oven on the top rack for a few minutes until the marshmallows are browned.
- 11. Remove and cut into squares and serve.

#### Tea Time With The Wave

Lammas is finally here, and many of us are dreaming of the cool crisp air of Autumn. A true Autumn Tea for me is made with mandarins as they are harvested in the fall season

#### Ingredients:

- 4 to 5 Mandarins
- Water
- 1 to 2 Cloves
- Small Cinnamon Stick
- 1 teaspoon of Pure Black Tea
- Honey



#### Directions:

- 1. Squeeze the juice from the mandarins and add to a saucepan.
- 2. Add an equal amount of water.
- 3. Add cloves and cinnamon sticks.
- 4. Bring to a boil over low to medium heat.
- 5. Remove from heat.
- 6. Add tea and steep for 5 to 10 minutes.
- 7. Strain into a teacup.
- 8. Add honey for sweetness.

## Demeter's Apothecary

Elderberry syrup is a staple in my home as fall approaches. Elderberries stimulate the immune system and help the body better defend itself against germs. Elderberry syrup has been around a long time and there are many different versions of it as with any herbal remedy you use trial and error on perfecting the one that you use. Lammas is the perfect time to start preparing for the cold and flu season. Add this to your arsenal of echinacea root tinctures, Vitamin C supplements, adaptogenic herbal blends, and teas.

#### Ingredients:

- ½ cup elderberries
- 1 tablespoon dried echinacea root
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 5 whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon dried ginger root
- 2 cups raw honey (maple syrup for children under 12 months)
- 4 cups distilled water
- 1 tablespoon bilberries
- 1 tablespoon rose hips
- 1 tablespoon dried hibiscus flower



#### **Directions:**

- 1. Pour water into a pan and heat on high until it comes to a full boil.
- 2. Turn the heat down to a simmer and add elderberries, ginger, echinacea, cinnamon and cloves. Mix well and simmer for 30 to 45 minutes or until water is reduced in half.
- 3. Remove from heat and cool for 15 to 20 minutes.
- 4. Add bilberries, rosehips and hibiscus.
- 5. Steep, covered for 15 to 20 minutes. The longer the better.
- 6. Strain herbs using a mesh strainer and press herb mix into the strainer using a wooden spoon to extract as much juice as possible.
- 7. Allow the liquid to cool to room temperature.
- 8. Add honey to the liquid and mix well.
- 9. Bottle, label and store in the refrigerator.

#### Dosage:

Adults: 1 tablespoon daily

Children: 1 to 2 tablespoons daily

For sickness: Adults: 1 teaspoon every 2 hours; Children: ½ teaspoon every 2

hours.

#### Shelf Life:

This syrup lasts 3 to 4 months with the 2 cups of honey as it gives the mix a 50% sugar content. You will find that you rarely have to worry about the syrup going bad as you will use it up quickly in your home.

Elderberry syrup has been a cold and flu remedy for ages. Elderberries contain phytochemicals that give them the ability to bind to viruses in order to prevent them from invading cells and replicating. They have an affinity for respiratory viruses like influenza. Cloves, cinnamon and ginger have their own antimicrobial properties due to their high volatile oil content and are warming herbs that work to stimulate digestion and circulation. This helps them act as catalysts to the immune-stimulating herbs. Echinacea is one of the most researched plants in the modern world, and it has been shown in many studies to stimulate the immune system and to fight viruses and bacteria. Elderberries, bilberries, rosehips and hibiscus all contain vitamin C, a necessary nutrient when it comes to stimulating the immune system and combating viral and bacterial illnesses.

## Magical Animals

By Rev. Catherine Dragoni

#### The Porcupine

I volunteer at a wildlife rehabilitation center, and I have worked with many species there. I retired at the beginning of the year, so I have been able to spend more time there. This past winter we had several porcupines over-wintering with us, giving me the opportunity to appreciate these animals in new ways.

Porcupines have quirky but gentle personalities. Offer



them a piece of sweet potato, and you will have a best friend forever. Porkies will

sometimes vocalize their appreciation, even while they are chewing away. Despite close proximity to porkies, I've only come away with a quill once or twice. The porcupine did not "throw" their quills at me, it was a brush with their tail on my part as I cleaned their cage around them. Still, the quills penetrated three layers of clothing (but only minimally penetrated my skin).

The center took in a female porcupine last fall – she was ill. She did recover, but was kept inside throughout the winter. Over the winter, the director suspected that she could be pregnant, and a veterinarian confirmed this. Porcupines have a relatively long gestation period, compared to other wild rodents – 200 days or more. The hope was that we could transition her to an outside enclosure before she had her baby, so that she could rear her young one in as natural a circumstance as possible. This was able to be accomplished, and her baby was born in April. The baby and mom did well, and the baby steadily grew, and it was determined that they were ready for release to a natural habitat.

Since my retirement, I have been working to help identify suitable places for releases of animals. I live near a wildlife management area, and also work with local land trusts. I have personally managed several releases; all have been extremely satisfying experiences. The last release – just a few days ago – was mom and baby porcupine. They were set free on a large land trust property, near a local river, in a wooded area with plenty of food sources for them.

Porcupines have innocence and simplicity as their main characteristics. They do not need to hunt, and are happy to eat whatever vegetation is around them. They are gentle and content, with very few wants. If they are threatened, they will bristle up and present an impressive backside of quills. But they do not "shoot" their quills. You will be quelled only if you are foolish enough to come too close.

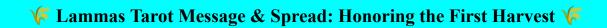
If the porcupine is your spirit animal, you may have a soft, gentle interior, but present to the world a rather harsh exterior. You may be a loner, yet, you are not self centered. Porcupine symbolizes resilience, and defensive self protection.

When you are doubting yourself, and your ability to make your way through difficult situations, call upon Porcupine energy, which can bring you patience and resilience to work through your circumstances. Porcupines can help you rediscover your confidence, and become unstuck from what is holding you back.

If your life has become too complex, look to the Porcupine for ways to simplify things. Follow the Porcupine's example, living a contented life with everything that is already on hand.

## Totally Tarot

By Rv Silas Mimir AP~



As the Wheel of the Year turns to Lammas, we celebrate the first harvest — a time of gratitude, reflection, and preparation. The seeds you planted earlier in the year have begun to bear fruit, both literally and spiritually. Lammas invites you to pause, honor your growth, and consider what you're ready to release before autumn's deeper transformations.

#### **Tarot Message for Lammas:**

"You are standing between abundance and becoming. Give thanks for what has ripened. Let go of what has withered. Trust the cycle that feeds both bloom and decay."

## 🌻 Lammas 3-Card Tarot Spread: The Harvest Within 🌻

### 1. What am I harvesting now?

 $\rightarrow$  This card reveals the blessings, skills, or progress you are reaping from your earlier intentions.

#### 2. What must I release to grow further?

→ Here lies what no longer serves your path — a habit, belief, or attachment that is past its season.

#### 3. What should I honor and give gratitude for?

- → This card invites you to reflect on the gifts, support, or lessons that have helped you on your journey.
- \*\*Pro Tip: Lay your cards on an altar cloth with seasonal items grains, sunflowers, bread, or gold candlelight to connect deeply with Lammas energy.

Lammas reminds us: we are always cultivating something. Celebrate what you've grown, even if it's still in progress. And don't forget to nourish yourself — body, spirit, and soul.

Blessed Lammas! 🌾



## Monthly Transits

(from cafeastrology.com)

#### August

6th - Mars enters Libra (excellent time to team up to reach a goal)

9th - Full Moon

11th - Mercury turns direct in Leo

22nd - Sun enters Virgo (focus shifts to smaller details of our lives)

23rd - New Moon

25th - Venus enters Leo (warmhearted, expressive, proud)

#### September

1st - Saturn retrograde enters Pisces

2nd - Mercury enters Virgo (analyze and decide what is useful)

6th - Uranus turns retrograde in Gemini

7th - Full Moon/Lunar Eclipse

18th - Mercury enters Libra (diplomatic, friendly, rational approach)

19th - Venus enters Virgo (express love through practical means)

21st - New Moon/Solar Eclipse

## Special Events

All times are Eastern Standard Time

**August** - August is a time to harvest and appreciate the fruits of your labor from the past year. Reflect on your achievements and the progress you've made during this period. This reflection not only brings a sense of fulfillment but also inspires us to set new goals for the future.

Lammas or Lughnasadh (First Harvest) - celebrating the year's first grain harvest. Lughnasadh celebrates effort, gratitude, and the turning of the year.

Honor the first harvest with a simple ritual of breadbaking, candle offerings, or a shared meal that reflects the abundance of the season.

Southern Hemisphere: Imbolc - High Winter.

4th Celtic Tree Month of Holly ends.

5th Celtic Tree Month of Hazel begins, symbolizing wisdom and inspiration.

**9th** Full Sturgeon Moon in Aquarius - focus on innovation, community, and humanitarian efforts. Brings a powerful energy to focus. This is the perfect time to think outside the box, connect with like-minded individuals, and work towards making a positive impact on the world around you. Let this moon inspire you to

embrace creativity and collaboration while staying true to your unique vision.

21st Festival of Hecate - honoring the goddess Hecate, invoking her protection over the harvest. Hecate is the guardian of crossroads, magic, and the unseen. This festival invokes her blessings and protection over the harvest, ensuring abundance and safety for the season ahead. Offerings are made, candles are lit, and rituals performed to seek her guidance and strength.

**23rd** New Moon in Virgo - an opportunity to build self-confidence



and creativity. Consider pursuing a dream that has previously intimidated you. This celestial event encourages you to ground yourself, trust in your abilities, and take practical steps toward your goals. With Virgo's energy supporting attention to detail and perseverance, you might find yourself more capable than ever of turning aspirations into reality. Take a moment to reflect, plan, and move forward with purpose.

Vulcanalia - a Roman festival dedicated to Vulcan and other deities of fire, celebrated to protect against destructive fires. It was celebrated as a safeguard against destructive blazes.

**September -** Ushers in the autumn equinox, a time to reflect on life's transience and gather with loved ones before winter's arrival. A moment when day and night stand in perfect balance, marking the arrival of fall. As the vivid colors of summer give way to a rich palette of reds, oranges, and yellows, we are reminded of life's

own seasons. It is a time to pause, reflect, and connect, contemplating the fleeting nature of our existence.

**1st** Celtic Tree Month of Hazel ends.

2nd Celtic Tree Month of Vine begins, symbolizing harvest and introspection.

**7th** Full Corn Moon in Pisces - marks the transition from summer to autumn; a time of nourishment, preparation, and intention. Also known as the Harvest Moon - a powerful time to reflect, celebrate abundance, and embrace spiritual insight.

This full moon invites us to tune into our intuition, let go of what no longer serves us, and open our hearts to new possibilities. It's the perfect time to balance practicality and dreams, meeting both our material and emotional needs.

Total Lunar Eclipse - visible in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, western North America, eastern South America, Pacific, Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Arctic, and Antarctica.

**13th** Fire Lighting Ceremony - a candle-lit vigil honoring the spirits of the deceased. This heartfelt tradition brings communities together in a moment of reflection, paying tribute to loved ones who have passed while fostering a sense of connection and peace.

**21st** New Moon in Virgo - focus on self-improvement, establish routines, and engage in shadow work to address personal growth areas.



Partial Solar Eclipse - visible in New Zealand and parts of Antarctica.

Feast of the Guardian Spirits - a celebration honoring spirit guides. This is a vibrant celebration to those who protect and support us. This special occasion unites communities to give thanks, share stories, and strengthen connections with the spiritual realm.

**22nd** Mabon (Autumnal Equinox) - marks a period of balance and gratitude for the harvest.

Ostara (Southern Hemisphere) - the Spring Equinox.

## Partnerships

Be sure to visit these partners and show some love!!

Customized Sigils: Round \$5, Square \$7. Contact Salena Murdock at murdocksam1@yahoo.com.





Winifred's Garden - Tea, Candles & Apothecary

Born in 1918, Winifred was taught to love and use natural plants. This tradition continues with Winifred's Garden.

We are a female run, small-batch, handcrafted herbal company. We formulate all products with the highest quality ingredients and promise to always deliver products that are as natural as possible. We also guarantee to source our raw

materials from trusted suppliers. Come through the gate and enjoy a relaxing afternoon of tea and shopping. We can be found on Facebook and Instagram.

## CORRESPONDENCE TO THE EDITORS

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