

A Perennial Course In Living Druidry

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STAR FROST MOON

(December - January)

Moon : Star Frost

Star Frost is the name I use for this moon. Consider the name over the course of its cycle, feeling it in your belly and fingers and breath. Find out what other names people and traditions use for this moon. By the end, choose your own name for it, one that reflects the cycle in your environment and your own nature.

Festival : Midwinter

This is the moon of Midwinter. The traditional date of Midwinter is three days after the Winter Solstice, and this may indeed fall within the days of this lunar cycle; however, more poignantly, this moon is a period during which we honour the turning of the solar tide. The days have been getting shorter and the nights longer, but no more.

At Midwinter, the sun rises and sets at its most southerly point on the horizon: witness those moments and make a note of where they are. From here on, the sun will rise each day a little closer to the east, setting a little closer to the west.

During this moon, the changes are slow but sure. Taking the time each day to watch the sun rise or set will provide moments of stillness, allowing you to feel connected to your ancestors, who have watched the tide turn before you.

Season : Winter Waning

At Midwinter, we celebrate the birth of a new light. This is poetic, expressing the first moments in the potential for renewal and regeneration, the beginning of a new cycle ahead. For many, this is an expression of deity, inspiring profound reverence and respect; here there is a god of light, a god of regeneration, of birth.

What is the purpose and impact of acknowledging these forces as deity or divine? What other gods are present and prominent during this moontide? Which do you feel most drawn to, in which do you see most beauty, and through which do you find inspiration? This is Midwinter and the darkness is still powerful. The worst of the cold is yet to come. It is a sacred time of stillness, when all life moves slowly; if we try to speed it up, it will only drag and pull us down. Spending time awake to the environment, be aware of how

nature functions at this time. Does anything in nature move quickly at this time? How can you, too, slow down and what value would there be in doing so?

Perception : Being

Through this moon, erase the word 'try' from your vocabulary, for too often at this time we are 'trying' to achieve something when nature is instead calling us to be still. Be present, simply being where you are. Allow yourself to feel the moments as they pass through and around you.

If it is a struggle, remember that it isn't necessary to be alone; be with a tree, a stone, an apple, the moonlight, the rain. Hold your attention gently upon that simple experience of being together.

Allocate a period of time each day to this task of simply being or being together.

Element : Mud

At this time, allow your focus to be Earth. Explore the mud of the land where you live, the soil that feeds you; what is it like and how is it distinct? What is its pH and what does that mean? How deep is the topsoil, and how much of that is natural, how much brought in from elsewhere by gardeners and developers? What of the mud beneath? Put some soil in a bowl on your altar inside, or craft an altar outside to remind you to honour this essential part of life. Be with it. Feel how it holds you.

Humanity : Earth

In terms of crafting or deepening a relationship at this time, allow your focus to be upon the Earth beneath your feet. For many in Druidry, the Earth is a deity; is it for you and what does that mean?

Be with this power of nature. Does it feel more male or female to you, god or goddess, or beyond the symbology of gender? What do you quest from the relationship? What do you need from the Earth, and what does it give you?

What do you give in return? Is the relationship in balance? How conscious are you of it on a daily basis and how can you extend that awareness?

Spend some time during this cycle considering the issues, but more importantly then allow your behaviour to change accordingly.

Environment : Sleeping

Some writers have allocated the birch as the tree of this moon; who? Does this tree call to you? Can you identify it without leaves?

Is there another tree that is more prominent during this moon in the

environment within which you live? Is it vibrant or hibernating? Spend time with different trees, feeling how they are at this time and with whom you feel most comfortable and inspired. Who still has green leaves, and how does their spirit feel compared with those who are 'sleeping'? What can the bare trees teach you of the Earth beneath you?

What plants are vibrant at this time? Are you aware of the non-human fauna (the wild creatures, not pets) that share your environment right now? How are they managing in this depth of winter? Who is hibernating near you, who is sleeping?

Self : Solitude

This moontide is often one of the hardest and one where we crave the distractions of food and company. How do you do this? Where is that behaviour healthy and nurturing, and where is it escapist and distracting? Nature teaches us of solitude at this time, of learning to be alone, or without human company. How is this so? What can you do at this time to explore your solitude or deepen your experience of it, finding the fears it provokes and the gifts it brings?

Creativity : Walking the Tale

During this moontide, in the silence of solitude and simply being in your environment, now is the time to learn the story you have chosen. You have heard it many times perhaps; now, as you learn it, explore ways in which you can more profoundly be within it, experiencing its every turn and tide, feeling how its energy rises and falls. Move with its every move, breathing in its every moment. Feel it. Walk its footsteps. Learn it from the inside out.

Ethics : Impact

Finding the stillness of the Earth goddess (or god) over the course of this moon cycle, open your consciousness to what impact your life has on the Earth. Consider the food you eat, what you eat and how much. Think about the earth where it was grown and nourished; how does the mud there differ from that beneath your feet?

What of fertilizers and pesticides?

Be wakeful to the rubbish you generate that is taken to landfill sites. Where is your nearest landfill? Go and see it, feel your part in its creation; allow yourself to be inside its story just as you are doing with the story you are learning.

Feeling the power of the Earth deity, how does it accept such sites? What other gods or forces of nature are present here? How did our ancestors deal with rubbish?

Responsibility is a word that asks about our ability to respond: only when we understand and accept a situation can we hope to respond honourably.

Similarly, as you feel the quiet and stillness of nature, be conscious of how much noise you put into the environment. Be patient, with yourself and others. Consider the word 'acceptance'.

Review :

In the last few days of the moontide, when the Moon is dark, consider what you have achieved through the cycle. What have you learned, changed, understood, and given in exchange?