

A painting of a woman with a large green leaf headdress and hummingbirds. The woman has dark skin and is looking directly at the viewer. She is wearing a large, intricate headdress made of green leaves and branches. Three hummingbirds are depicted: one perched on the headdress, one in flight to the left, and one in flight to the right. The background is a mix of green and yellow tones, suggesting a natural setting. The overall style is expressive and somewhat abstract.

Sheffield  
Goddess  
Temple

# Newsletter

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Cover image: <https://stillunfold.com/>

**Issue 20**

**Spring Equinox**

**2020**

*Boopyika Gonzalez  
2011  
Apr.*

# Our Spring Equinox Goddess and Temple Events

## Don

### Maiden Goddess of Air

The goddess of this festival is Don - an ancient Goddess found in our landscape in the swirls and eddies and raging currents of our River Don. Doncaster is named after her. We are children of the Don - children of the *Tuatha da Danan* (see below).

Her source is high up in the Pennines - where clouds meet earth, where winds beat and batter our landscape. In our wheel she is in the East - the place of air, and her energy is dynamic. She sweeps away the old and brings in the new. Although in the Mabinogion she is seen as a Mother Goddess, all Goddesses have all aspects of the Divine feminine within them, and on our wheel she is the young and strident maiden who is full of new ideas. She is vibrant and alive. She is the breath of life itself. Her head is often up in the clouds full of new ideas and inspiration.

The ancient Goddess Don has her sacred celestial place echoed in the constellation of Llys Don or court of Don. So important was she to our ancestors that the whole universe was her court. In her maiden aspect the Goddess Don is centre of the universe here on earth. Burgeoning life, plants, flowers, trees, new birth are evident at the time of year that we celebrate our Goddess Don as maiden of air.

### The TUATHA DÉ DANANN

The Tuatha Dé Danann, the people of the Goddess Danu, were one of the great ancient tribes of Ireland. The important manuscript '*The Annals of the Four Masters*', records that they ruled Ireland from 1897 BCE to 1700 BCE. They were a civilised and cultured people.

The Tuatha Dé Danann had four great treasures (or talismans). The first was the '*Stone of Fal*' which would scream when a true King of Ireland stood on it. It was later placed on the Hill of Tara, the seat of the High-Kings of Ireland. The second was the '*Magic Sword of Nuadha*' - capable of inflicting only mortal blows when used. The third was the '*sling-shot of the Sun God Lugh*', famed for its accuracy when used. The final treasure was the '*Cauldron of Dagda*' from which an endless supply of food issued.

The Tuatha Dé Danann were eventually defeated and consigned to mythology after an invasion by the Melesians. Legend has it that the Tuatha Dé Danann were allowed to stay in Ireland, but only underground! Thus they became the forebears of the fairies of Ireland, consigned to the underworld where they became known as 'Aes sidhe' (the people of the mound - fairy mounds).

The Melesians used the name of one of the Tuatha Dé Danann gods, Eriu, as the name of their new kingdom. Eriu or Eire is still used in modern times as the name of Ireland.

Information source: <http://www.ireland-information.com>



## Corona-virus Update

Please be aware that events at Sheffield Goddess Temple may be postponed or cancelled owing to the current corona-virus outbreak. Please check before attending events, by ringing the Airy Fairy shop on 0114 2492090. Thank you.

## Temple Celebrations

### Spring Equinox Celebration

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 12:00 pm**

Your chance to witness Goddess Temple priestesses celebrating Spring Equinox and the goddess Don's promotion of burgeoning new life in nature. Please ring the Airy Fairy shop (number below) to book on to this free event, & to book refreshments if required.

### Beltane Celebration

**Weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> May 12:00 pm**

Help Goddess Temple priestesses celebrate Beltane and Arnemetia, goddess of the sacred grove.

## Temple Diary Dates

### Free Monthly Guided Meditation

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April, 12:00 - 12:30 pm. No booking required.

### Moon Meets

Celebrate changing energies of the moon with Carmen Edwards:

- **Tuesday March 24th 7:00-8:00 pm - New Moon**

For later dates and latest news please check Carmen's Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/Livethemagicwithcarmenedwards](http://www.facebook.com/Livethemagicwithcarmenedwards)

To book events please ring Airy Fairy on 0114 2492090



### Spiritual Crisis Network

- Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1:30-3:30 pm.
- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1:30-3:30 pm.

### Pagan Pathways

- Talks, Discussion, Tuesdays, 8:00 pm
- 14<sup>th</sup> March: *The Isles of the Dead* – Robin Ellis
- 14<sup>th</sup> April: *Shamanism* – Nicola Irvine
- 28<sup>th</sup> April: *River Ghosts and Folklore* – Liz Bradshaw

### Magic, Witchcraft, Chaos and Beyond

- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 1-6 pm
- "Soul Mirror of the Elements" (£23 for the day)



# AJA - Goddess of Forests, Animals, and Healing



by mythgirl68

(adapted from - [www.deviantart.com](http://www.deviantart.com))

The illustration on the front cover of this Spring Equinox newsletter is of Aja – originally an 'Orisha' West African goddess of Forests, animals and healing.

An Orisha is the term used for the gods of the Yoruba

pantheon, like how the Greek gods are called Olympians and some of the Norse gods are Aesir. The Yoruba gods originate from West Africa, most notably Nigeria and Benin, but are well known to have spread throughout the world due to the slave trade. As happened with any people who moved in whatever way around the world, they took their culture and customs with them. Today, many Orishas can be found in the Caribbean with only small alterations, if any, to their original characters from Nigeria. Despite this particular Orisha not being one of the most prominent in her pantheon, she certainly has a lot to offer the Earth.

In the case of Aja it doesn't seem that she managed to make it to the Caribbean. As unfortunate as this is, it does make sense. She wasn't one of the central or highest ranking gods in her pantheon, and she wouldn't be someone to pray to get assistance. However, that doesn't mean that she isn't important to us humans. But before we get to that, we need to discuss her other role.

Aja is a nature-based goddess. She is mainly considered a goddess of the forest, but she also is a goddess of animals. While it may seem common or to be assumed that most deities of the Earth or of the forest or other physical forms of nature would be attached to animals, this is not always the case. It is far more common to find hunter gods as a sub-category of nature gods. Even though most hunter gods usually also deal with the protection of the animals they hunt, there is something inherently different about a goddess who only protects animals without hunting them.

It is through her larger forest aspect that Aja interacts more directly with humans. One of the main roles of any nature deity or spirit is to promote the health of the environment in which they live. Aja just seems to take this one step further. Along with acting as a forest and animal goddess, Aja is also a healer goddess.

Being a healer/medicinal god is not that rare a role to have, and it is an extremely important role in any pantheon. Yet with Aja we have a new and more reasonable approach to healing. Most gods of healing can heal just through an

incantation or a wave of their hands. Not that this makes them any less important, but it sort of distances themselves from humans. Aja does the exact opposite. Instead of just snapping her fingers and getting rid of someone's sniffles, she goes into the forests that she knows so well.

In her forests she finds plants with medicinal properties, and mixes herbs, roots, and other plant parts together to form the cure that is needed. Aja isn't too tight-lipped with her knowledge either, and is well-known for sharing with humans the information that she gains. However, that doesn't mean that she would just walk into a town, stand in the centre, and start rattling off ingredients to prevent headaches. What she does do is wait for someone to come and find her.



**Aja** - An Orisha and patron of the forest, the animals and herbal healers of whom she taught their art.

Aja is referred to as "wild wind" in Yoruba. It is said that if someone is carried away by Aja and returns they are believed to have become a powerful "jujuman" or *babalawo*. The journey supposedly will have a duration of between 7 days to 3 months, and the person carried is thought to have gone to the land of the dead or heaven.

text & image: [fuckyeahafricanmythology.tumblr.com](http://fuckyeahafricanmythology.tumblr.com)

This person is usually a shaman in training, or someone of that sort. There are varying lengths of time that it is said to be necessary for a person to be out in the forest before Aja approaches them with her knowledge, but it is definitely a significant waiting time. During this quiet waiting time the person concerned in effect proves themselves to be a worthy recipient of the goddess Aja's knowledge of how to use the properties of plants to heal others.

For this reason alone Aja is unlike so many other Earth deities. In most cases, earth gods rarely have any direct interactions with humans. Usually the only interactions that occur between nature gods and humans are about either scaring humans out of the woods, or even possibly killing them. But Aja isn't like that. Instead of trying to keep people out of the forests and away from nature, she opens her realm up to us, in order to show us all the importance of the natural world. This is perhaps one of the most essential messages any Earth goddess has ever presented to humanity. It provides an inherent respect for the Earth and is possibly the best way to generate a need in us to protect and conserve the natural world. 

# Gender in Pagan Early England

## (What the Elves can tell us)

### Introduction

If we were taught anything at all in school about life in pre-Christian early England, it was probably that these were the years of the dreaded 'Dark Ages' - that chaotic time squeezed between the withdrawal of Roman civilisation from Britain in the year 410 CE, and the gradual rebirthing of social sanity that came only with the gradual conversion to Christian belief from the early 7th century onwards. The 'Dark Ages', we were told, bear that name because not much can be known about those pagan, pre-literate years. However the impression given was that this was a violent, chaotic time, marked by the invasion of Britain by marauding Angle and Saxon tribes, an age when men were (brutal) men, and women just had to put up with it.

More recent academic research however has demonstrated that, at the very least, there was another side to the incoming pagan English tribes; in fact several other sides, as pagan English ways of understanding the worlds changed and evolved over those early centuries and beyond, partly in response to the advance of Christian ideology - for some pagan beliefs did survive the onslaught of the new Roman ecclesiastical invasion - thanks in no small part to the ever present, other-worldly relationships of the early (and later) English with Elves.

### Early English Understanding of Elves and Gender

It appears that in very early times (covering both the pre-migration and pagan early English periods, so at least up until about the 7th century CE) the Angle and Saxon peoples, who were later to create the single kingdom of England, thought of Elves as being predominantly male, or at least, it was the male elves who got all the attention. Not a great shock perhaps? After all, these were the Dark Ages, ruled by patriarchal, violent men. So not a huge surprise then if, even by the standards of those very gloomy times, females and femininity remained invisible and undiscussed?

But these male elves were not seen by the pagan early English as heroic, model warriors, or as anything like their much more macho Scandinavian Viking cousins. In fact English elves were, during this early period, perceived as being delightfully effeminate. As Alaric Hall explains, "*Early Anglo-Saxon 'ælfes' were prototypically male, but... were paradigmatically associated with seductive, feminine beauty, and intimately linked with 'siden' [magical and shamanic powers], whose Scandinavian counterpart 'seiðr' could not be conducted by men without compromising their masculinity and was itself associated with seduction*".<sup>1</sup>

How can this be? Hall believes that the effeminacy of the elves reflects a 'systematic gender inversion' found in early English mythology.<sup>1</sup> In other words, not only were other-worldly male beings perceived as effeminate, but other-worldly females were seen as having 'masculine' traits. It appears that 1,500 and more years ago the early English were already using pagan mythologies

to explore the complexities of relationships between sex and gender, for early Anglo-Saxon effeminate male *ælfes* (elves) were matched by female but manly, martial, *hægtessan* ('witches') - perceived as armed and violent women. "*Weapon-bearing was associated with masculinity, and freedom, at profound and ideological levels... The fact that... it is women who bear and use weapons represents a striking transgression of gender norms.*"<sup>2</sup> It appears that in the early English pagan worldview other-worldly beings, whether predominantly male elves or generally female witches, were believed to transgress the gender boundaries normally experienced in everyday life.

### The Middle Ages and Beyond

With the passing of the centuries and the ever increasing (but never total) ideological dominance of Christianity in England, perceptions of other-worldly beings and their gender roles evolved in response to mounting pressures on even limited female sovereignty in the 'real' world. Belief in elves and witches continued, but suffered some degradation and erosion, as one result of which gender differentiation between elves and witches was to some extent lost. Elves were no longer perceived as predominantly male, and witches ceased to be differentiated from female elves.

Why was this? Hall is clear that it happened in response to increasing Christian disempowerment of women:

*"Christianisation introduced concepts of sin, and associations of sin with sexual behaviour, which had not previously existed in Anglo-Saxon culture, and would both have encouraged the idea of female seductiveness as a spiritual threat to men, and the idea that male sexuality needed to be constrained... We can understand the rise of female *ælfes* [as] a drive... more rigorously to align sex with gender. Their appearance may relate to the gradual curtailment of women's power and independence."*<sup>3</sup>

Christianity's undermining of female sovereignty was not at first entirely successful, as the Church's drive to patriarchy was initially limited by traditional Anglo-Saxon cultural values which held women in high esteem: "*The evidence which has survived from Anglo-Saxon England indicates that women were more nearly the equal companions of their husbands and brothers than at any other period before the modern age... this rough and ready partnership was ended by the Norman Conquest... the teaching of the medieval Church reinforced the subjection which feudal law imposed on all wives.*"<sup>4</sup>

*"Christianity as interpreted by the fathers of the church developed a full set of theories on the inferiority of women... yet throughout the Anglo-Saxon period they seem to have had little practical effect."*<sup>5</sup> After the Norman Conquest however "*theological concept hardened into cannon law, and cannon law acquired control of much legislation concerning women...*

<sup>2</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.159

<sup>3</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.166

<sup>4</sup> Doris Stenton, *The English Woman in History*, London, 1957

<sup>5</sup> Christine Fell, *Women in Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford, 1986, p.13

<sup>1</sup> Alaric Hall, *Elves in Anglo-Saxon England*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2009 ed. p.157

*practically, the status of women deteriorated.*<sup>6</sup> The Church in England had attempted to control women's sexuality, for example, since the arrival from the Middle East of Theodore of Tarsus to be Archbishop of Canterbury in the 7th century, but after 1066 church laws imposing seven years of penitential punishments on any woman "fornicating with heathens" were much more likely to be put into practical effect. "Fornicating with Jews" got you nine years.<sup>7</sup>

Hall nevertheless believes that subversive concepts of female sovereignty did survive the early English period into the Middle Ages and later. In Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale" for example, the Elf-Queen or 'Queen of Fearrie' is the dominant power in her world, including male elves within her dominion. *"This female dominance of the other world inverts the usual patterns of rulership in medieval English society. Accordingly, rebels in Kent around 1450 were styling themselves 'servants of the Queen of the Fairies'"*<sup>8</sup> in an attempt to establish an anarchic ideological legitimacy outside everyday societal norms.

Similarly the indictment of Andro Man, a healer executed for witchcraft in 1598, reads: *"Thou affirms that the elves have shapes like men... and that they are but shadows, yet stronger than men, and that they play and dance as they please; and that the [elf-] Queen is very attractive; that she makes king any who pleases her, and lies with anyone she likes"*.<sup>9</sup> This is a clear example of a belief in other-worldly, subversive, female sexual sovereignty. Female elves were perceived as personally autonomous, able to rule their own bodies, and free to choose and change their sexual partners at will.

## An Effeminate Route to Male Power ?

It is only in the most recent centuries that the long history of female disempowerment has begun to be reversed. In northern Europe's Iron Age<sup>9</sup> societies, it is suggested, gender transgression had originally been ideologically important and empowering<sup>10</sup>: even up until late medieval times *"male experience of liminality or crisis could involve adopting feminine traits"*.<sup>11</sup> An obvious psychological escape route for men suffering spiritual or emotional crises was to cease envisioning themselves as having to comply with standard perceptions of manly constraints and responsibilities, by choosing to see themselves as effeminate.

The individuals whose accounts of such crises have survived were male members of the aristocratic ruling class. It is thought that, despite their attempts to relate to the feminine, they probably

remained unable to fully transcend their necessarily male view of existence. Hence they assumed, for example, that women going through sharp personal crises would react the same way high class men did *"and that their liminal moments were accompanied by gender reversal... In liminal space males were seductively beautiful and worked magic, and females bore and used weapons."*<sup>6</sup> It has been argued that in reality women and other less powerful groups were much less likely to experience personal crises as involving gender reversal, as in practice they did not (unlike powerful male members of the aristocratic class), enjoy anything like the required degree of personal sovereignty to allow such social defiance and transgression. They simply wouldn't be allowed to get away with it, not only in everyday life, but even in story-telling. Hall comments that *"one notes a certain satisfying continuity with ælfe's capacity a millennium before to destabilise the rational, masculine mind"*.<sup>12</sup>

## Conclusion

The conclusion seems to be then that even when envisioning effeminate male elves in mythological narratives, early English males of the aristocratic class were in reality far from contemplating any relinquishing of power. Gender inversion concepts may have helped men transcend personal spiritual and emotional crises, but even when viewing male elves apparently adopting feminine traits as part of such a process, men continued to seek power, though in different forms - firstly by claiming the authority to renounce some male constraints and responsibilities as and when desired, and secondly by seeking access to traditionally female power sources, especially magical and shamanic seiðr abilities.

Such (self-)deception is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the 'All-father' male god Odin (Woden to the Anglo-Saxons), he who appeared to temporarily disempower himself by hanging from a tree – but only in order to gain knowledge (power) of the runes; he who, despite being in many respects the very essence of masculinity, sought for himself the feminine magical power of seiðr in order, it has been said, that this cross-dressing god could *"inflict a fever while disguised as a woman [and healer] in order to rape Rindr"*.<sup>13</sup>

It may then be no bad thing that by the Middle Ages the earlier aristocratic Anglo-Saxon fascination with effeminate male elves had largely been replaced by a broader cross-class mythological recognition of a more gender balanced other-world, featuring both female and male elves, and where power at last came to lay not with cross-dressing, effeminate males, but with a genuinely female, genuinely autonomous Fairy Queen, who could express her sexual sovereignty by freely choosing her own kings. ☁

Jamie Lang



Image: [www.deviantart.com/yuchenghong/art/Elf-head-tutorial-482431796](http://www.deviantart.com/yuchenghong/art/Elf-head-tutorial-482431796)

<sup>6</sup> Fell, *ibid.* p.14

<sup>7</sup> Fell, *ibid.* p.20

<sup>8</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.160

<sup>9</sup> The Iron Age in northern Europe lasted from about 500 BCE to 800 CE (Wikipedia)

<sup>10</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.163

<sup>11</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.161

<sup>12</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.167

<sup>13</sup> Hall, *ibid.* p.148. *"Rindr (English: Rind) is a female goddess in Norse mythology; raped and impregnated by Odin, she gave birth to the avenger of Balder's death: Váli."* [Wikipedia]

## Rabbits and Hares

Abridged from: *Myth & Moor* website  
[www.terriwindling.com/blog/](http://www.terriwindling.com/blog/)



### Spring Fertility

Rabbits and Hares have long been associated with the fertility of the Spring season, and continue to be so today - just think of the Easter Bunny. In numerous traditions, these animals were archetypal symbols of women, femininity, female deities, and women's hedgerow magic, associated with the lunar cycle, fertility, longevity, and rebirth. If we dig a little deeper into their stories, we find that they are also contradictory, paradoxical creatures: symbols of both cleverness and foolishness, of femininity and androgyny, of cowardice and courage, of rampant sexuality and virginal purity. In some lands, Hare is the messenger of the Great Goddess, moving by moonlight between the human world and the realm of the gods; in other lands he is a god himself, wily deceiver and sacred world creator rolled into one.

### Greco-Roman Rabbits

In Greco-Roman myth, the hare represented romantic love, lust, abundance, and fecundity. Pliny the Elder recommended the meat of the hare as a cure for sterility, and wrote that a meal of hare enhanced sexual attraction for a period of nine days. Hares were associated with Artemis, goddess of wild places and the hunt, and new born hares were not to be killed but left to her protection. Rabbits were sacred to Aphrodite, goddess of love, beauty, and marriage - for rabbits had "the gift of Aphrodite" (fertility) in great abundance.

In Greece, the gift of a rabbit was a common love token from a man to his male or female lover. In Rome, the gift of a rabbit was intended to help a barren wife conceive. Carvings of rabbits eating grapes and figs appear on both Greek and Roman tombs, where they symbolize the transformative cycle of life, death, and rebirth.



### Germanic Hares

In Teutonic myth, the earth and sky goddess Holda, leader of the Wild Hunt, was followed by a procession of hares bearing torches. Although she descended into a witch-like figure and bogeyman of children's tales, she was once revered as a beautiful, powerful goddess in charge of weather phenomena.

Freyja, the headstrong Norse goddess of love, sensuality, and women's mysteries, was also served by hare attendants. She travelled with a sacred hare and boar in a chariot drawn by cats. Eostre, the goddess of the moon, fertility, and spring in Anglo-Saxon myth, was often depicted with a hare's head or ears, and with a white hare standing in attendance. This magical white hare laid brightly coloured eggs which were given out to children during spring fertility festivals - an ancient tradition that survives in the form of the Easter Bunny today.

### Celtic Hares

Caesar recorded that rabbits and hares were taboo foods to the Celtic tribes. In Ireland, it was said that eating a hare was like eating one's own grandmother - perhaps due to the sacred connection between hares and various goddesses, warrior queens, and female faeries, or else due to the belief that old "wise women" could shape-shift into hares by moonlight.

The Celts used rabbits and hares for divination and other shamanic practices by studying the patterns of their tracks, the rituals of their mating dances, and mystic signs within their entrails. It was believed that rabbits burrowed underground in order to better commune with the spirit world, and that they could carry messages from the living to the dead and from humankind to the faeries.

### Rabbits and Hares in Literature

#### *Watership Down*

Published in 1972 *Watership Down* is surely one of the most loved novels of our time. Richard Adams' story is a picaresque saga about a motley band of rabbits. Although they live in their natural wild environment, they are anthropomorphised, possessing their own culture, language, proverbs, poetry, and mythology. The novel follows the rabbits as they escape the destruction of their warren and seek a place to establish a new home (the hill of Watership Down).

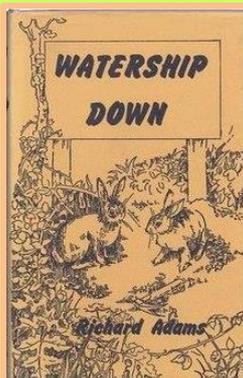
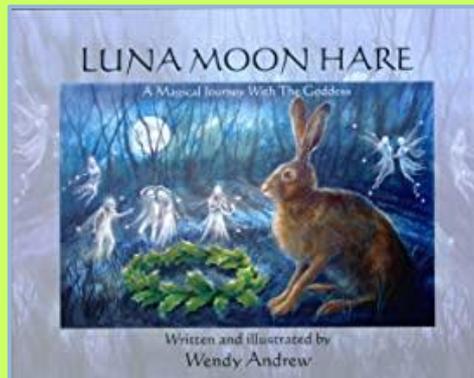


Image: First edition cover [Wikipedia]

#### *Luna Moon Hare*

As the moon waxes and wanes it is reflected in the eye of a hare. She follows the magical way of the Goddess on her cyclical journey through the seasons - helped, guided and challenged by mythical creatures, totem animals and faeries. Wendy Andrew's enchanting illustrations and lyrical words offer a subtle and yet profound insight into the magical world in which we live.



Available from: [www.paintingdreams.co.uk](http://www.paintingdreams.co.uk)



## Spring Equinox Recipe

by Patti Wigington at [www.learnreligions.com](http://www.learnreligions.com)

### Pagan Hot Cross Buns (!)



During the pre-Easter season of Lent, many of our Christian friends and family members are busily celebrating with Hot Cross Buns, a tasty pastry that's been around for a long time, with the decorative cross on the top being one of the most obvious symbols of Christianity.

There are a number of English traditions revolving around hot cross buns. One custom says that sailors should take a bun on their travels to prevent shipwreck. The cross on the bun comes from a superstition that marking the bun would prevent the Devil from getting into the baked goods. Interestingly, it's possible that breads with crosses on top were baked by the ancient Greeks, which makes the whole idea pre-Christian anyway.

So, how can you incorporate a Hot Cross Bun into your Pagan belief system? Well, what sorts of things appear in fours in your path? Here are some things that the four quarters of the cross could represent:

- The Elements: earth, air, fire, water
- Directions: north, east, south west
- The four phases of the moon: dark,

#### Basic Bun Recipe

##### Ingredients

625g/1.3lb strong white flour  
 1 tsp salt  
 2 tsp ground mixed spice  
 45g/1.5oz unsalted butter, cubed  
 85g/3oz caster sugar  
 1 unwaxed lemon, finely grated zest only  
 1½ tsp fast-action yeast  
 1 free-range egg  
 275ml/10fl oz tepid milk  
 125g/4oz mixed dried fruit  
 1 tbsp golden syrup, gently heated

##### Method

Sieve the flour, salt and ground mixed spice into a large mixing bowl, then rub in the butter. Make a well in the centre of the mixture, then add the sugar, lemon zest and yeast.

**Beat the egg and add to the flour with the tepid milk. Mix together to form a soft, pliable dough.**

Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Carefully work the mixed dried fruit into the dough until well combined. Knead lightly for 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.

**Grease a large, warm mixing bowl with butter. Shape the dough into a ball and place it into the prepared bowl, then cover with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour to prove.**

Turn out the proved dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knock back the dough. Shape it into a ball again and return it to the bowl, then cover again with the tea towel and set aside for a further 30 minutes to rise.

**Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and divide it into 12 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then flatten slightly into a bun shape using the palms of your hands. Cover the buns again with the tea towel and set aside to rest for 5–10 minutes.**

Grease a baking tray with butter and transfer the buns to the tray. Wrap the tray with the buns on it loosely in greaseproof paper, then place inside a large polythene bag. Tie the end of the bag tightly so that no air can get in and set aside in a warm place for a further 40 minutes to rise.

**Preheat the oven to 240C/220C Fan/Gas 8. When the buns have risen, remove the polythene bag and greaseproof paper. Transfer the buns to the oven. Bake for 8–12 minutes, or until pale golden-brown. Remove the buns from the oven, brush them with the warmed golden syrup, then set aside to cool on a wire rack.**

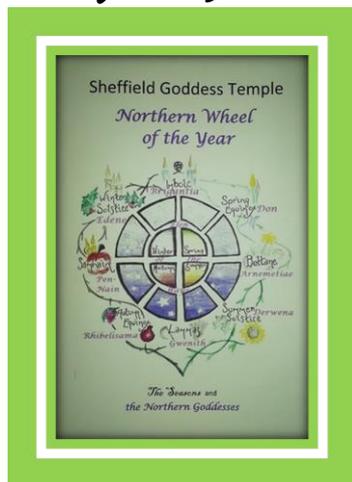
waxing, full, and waning

- The four seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter
- The fire feasts or quarter festivals: Imbolc, Beltane, Lammas, Samhain
- The Quarter festivals: the solstices and equinoxes
- The four suits of the Tarot: Wands, Cups, Coins and Swords.

To make your own Hot Cross Buns — or Cross Quarter Buns, or whatever you'd like to call them — **start with the basic bun recipe on this page.** Then, prior to baking, score the dough with a sharp knife, going across in each direction. This leaves the X as a pair of perpendicular indentations. Press raisins or currants in the shape of the X across the top of the bun. That way, when it comes out of the oven, you'll have a nice evenly baked cross.

Or, before baking, if you like you can even fill the indents with cream cheese or icing. Then wait until after the muffin or bun has baked, and finally use frosting to pipe an X on the top. ☘

### Discover Our Northern Wheel of the Year

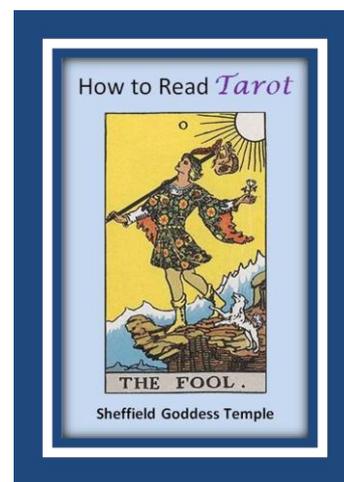


Booklet available in the temple (£4).

The temple is open each day, Monday to Saturday 12:30 to 1:30pm, or ask in the Airy Fairy shop.

### Available Again

### Discover The Tarot



Booklet available in the temple (£4).

The temple is open each day, Monday to Saturday 12:30 to 1:30pm, or ask in the Airy Fairy shop.

# USA – Goddess of Spring

**The Goddess of Spring** is a 9-minute “Silly Symphonies” animated Disney short film. It was released in 1934, and its production was important to the future development of Disney’s Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs animation. While the plot of *The Goddess of Spring* broadly follows the Greek myth of Persephone (known as “Proserpina” in Roman Mythology) and Hades (Pluto), the imagery is more evocative of Hell and Satan (or a traditional stage Mephistopheles).

According to film historians, the animation skill level between *The Goddess of Spring* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* appears to have a twenty-year gap between the two; although actually it was only three years. The development in that span of time was monumental and is reflected in the major motion picture. Although feature-length cartoons were initially disregarded, the animation advancements attributed to *The Goddess of Spring*, as they were displayed in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, brought the feature film to top the list as highest-grossing sound film at the time.

There are some negative reviews of certain aspects of *The Goddess of Spring* - such as the goddess' "rubber arms" and an over-melodramatic tone. However its operatic tendencies, while criticized, are also points of admiration for some viewers. It is also noted that the usage of shadows, especially in the "underworld" scenes, are phenomenal for their time.

Source: [en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Goddess\\_of\\_Spring](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Goddess_of_Spring)

**Persephone** was the goddess queen of the underworld, wife of the god Hades. She was also the goddess of spring growth, who was worshipped alongside her mother \*Demeter in the Eleusinian Mysteries. This agricultural-based cult promised its initiates passage to a blessed afterlife.

Persephone was titled Kore (Core) (the Maiden) as the goddess of spring's bounty. When she was playing in a flowery meadow with her Nymph companions, Kore was seized by Hades and carried off to the underworld as his bride. Her mother Demeter despaired at her disappearance and searched for her throughout the world, accompanied by the goddess Hecate bearing torches. When she learned that Zeus had conspired in her daughter's abduction she was furious, and refused to let the earth fruit until Persephone was returned. Zeus consented, but because the girl had tasted of the food of Hades - a handful of pomegranate seeds - she was forced to forever spend a part of the year with her husband in the underworld. Her annual return to the earth in spring was marked by the flowering of the meadows and the sudden growth of the new grain. Her return to the underworld in winter, saw the dying of plants and the halting of growth.

Persephone was usually depicted as a young goddess holding sheaves of grain and a flaming torch. Sometimes she was

shown in the company of her mother Demeter; at other times she appears enthroned beside Hades.

Source: [www.theoi.com](http://www.theoi.com)



A page from a 1934 comic book summarises the plot of Disney’s *The Goddess of Spring* film in 16 lines of verse (image: [www.mycomicshop.com](http://www.mycomicshop.com))

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