



*Also known as: Midsummer, Summer Solstice*

This is the longest day of the year when we celebrate the peak of the sun's power. From now until Yule, the days grow shorter and shorter. Fires are lit to honor the sun and keep it strong enough to ensure a good harvest at Mabon. The water element was also honored to insure rain during the hot months ahead. This is a perfect time to have an outdoor celebration with barbecues, bonfires and water games! Midsummer Eve is one of the times during the year when fairies and other nature spirits especially love to frolic. It's customary to leave offerings for them such as food or milk set out in the evening.



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# *The Storybook Chair*

## Pooka's Busy day



Pooka hurriedly finished his breakfast and cleaned his face and whiskers. He then informed his witch that he'd be in the garden.

Elsie was at the sink washing dishes, but she smiled over her shoulder at the cat. "I'm glad you remembered! The moon is waxing in a fertile sign, today - perfect for planting the last of our seedlings!"

Pooka's shoulders sagged. He **had** forgotten. There went his morning!

The next few hours were spent outside helping Elsie dig little holes in the dirt. Elsie used a trowel, but Pooka used his little paws. After she'd carefully nestled each baby plant in its earthy bed, he helped tuck them in and recited the "New Plant Blessing" she'd taught him.

When they were finished, he announced, "I'm going to go play now,"

She dusted her hands off on her apron and said, "You remember Matilda, the girl who works in the village bakery? She's moving into an apartment over the bookstore and I promised I'd make a Home Blessing potpourri for her. Would you mind helping?"

Pooka liked Matilda... and he especially liked the bits of broken cookies she always saved just for him! Besides, he knew that one of a familiar's most important duties is to aid his witch in casting her spells - and Pooka took his duties Very Seriously.

"I'll be glad to help," he said cheerfully. As he trotted alongside Elsie through the garden door leading into the herb room, he asked, "What do we do?"

"I'll add the ingredients and say what each one is for. You concentrate on communicating with the herb, visualizing what it's supposed to do."

"Okay!" Pooka leaped onto the table and parked himself next to Elsie's big copper mixing bowl.

"Basil for money and prosperity," Elsie intoned as she sprinkled green leaves in the bowl.

Pooka concentrated very hard on money (the paper stuff and round metal bits that Elsie exchanged for his tuna sandwich at the village cafe).

“Pink rose petals for love, friendship and harmony,” said Elsie.

“I love my witch and Matilda's my friend,” thought Pooka . He focused on the warm feeling in his chest whenever he thought of them.

“Lavender for cleansing the space.”

Pooka thought of his witch's bubble baths which often smelled of lavender!

Elsie added some more herbs and then some oils. By the time they were done, the little cat's eyes were slightly crossed from so much focusing and his tummy was growling.

“Lunch?” he asked eagerly.

“Yes,” she nodded, “and then it's time for Lessons.”

After a lunch, Elsie cleared and wiped off the table and then piled it with books, paper, pencils and crayons.

Together they sat and the little witch helped Pooka with his Magical Lessons which included Astrology, Numerology and Runes. He also studied Herbs and Moon Phases and the magical properties of various stones. Pooka enjoyed it but, by the time they'd finished, several hours later, his furry brain was exhausted and his little paw was cramped from taking notes.

Pooka stretched, arching his back to get the kinks out, and told Elsie, “I'm going out to play now.”

She said, “Okay. Don't go far though. Tonight's the full moon and we have a lot of work to do!”

Pooka sighed and curled up in his basket on the hearth. “Maybe I'll just rest instead.”

That evening, Elsie cast her circle and Pooka diligently patrolled its perimeter, reinforcing the barrier and staying alert for any “leaks”. He helped her raise the cone of energy, delighting, as always, in the swirling colors that were clearly visible to his feline eyes. Then, as she lit her candles and incense, he joined her on the altar and lent his own focus to her magic. In fact, he focused so hard his whiskers got singed by the heat from the candles.

It was very late when they finally closed their circle and climbed the stairs to bed.

Pooka was still tired the next morning. Thistle, the fairy, found him shortly after breakfast, his body stretched in a patch of sun on the steps leading to the cottage door.

“There you are!” she exclaimed as though she'd made a Great Discovery.

Pooka wondered groggily if he'd been lost? He decided not since he'd known exactly where he was all morning. The cat yawned.

Thistle leaned against his soft belly fur and began idly braiding his singed whiskers “You're so lazy!” she said. “Do you have any idea how much work it is being a fairy? We have to fly all over and tell the

plants to grow. Sometimes we even have to remind eggs to hatch and make sure the worms in the earth are doing their jobs. It's exhausting!"

She looked up at him scornfully. "I wish I could be a witch's familiar! All **you** have to do is eat, sleep and play in your stupid catnip all day!"

Pooka opened one eye and imagined how a swipe of his paw could send the annoying pixie bouncing down the steps. However, he decided, it wasn't worth the effort. She'd only fly right back up and then he'd have to listen to her scolding him for the rest of the day.

Instead, he went back to his nap knowing that any moment Elsie would be calling him in for his Lessons.









## Elsie's HERB GARDEN

Question: What is the only fruit that has its seeds on the *outside*?

Answer: a Strawberry!

So that already makes the strawberry a unique fruit, right? But, did you know that strawberries are also an herb? They're used for food, flavoring, medicine and magick.

As a food, strawberries are yummy and full of nutritious vitamins to make you strong and healthy. They're also packed with antioxidants that strengthen your immune system, keeping you from getting sick.

Eating lots of strawberries may help your grandmother or grandfather keep from getting cataracts, a condition that effects the eyesight as people get older. The fruit also reduces helps against heart disease, fights cholesterol and any type of inflammation whether inside the body or out.

Grownup ladies often smash strawberries up to use as a face mask. It's great for the skin and even thought to prevent wrinkles. It's also good for teenagers worried about pimples or acne.

Eating strawberries has been shown to help prevent and fight many forms of cancer. (Pet rats are especially prone to tumors. Try giving your little furry friend a strawberry at least once a week as a treat.)

In magick, the leaves of the plant have been used to bring fortune, luck and success. They've also been carried as an amulet and drunk as a tea by pregnant ladies to insure an easy delivery and a healthy baby. (Much like raspberry leaves that help to strengthen, nourish and tone the muscles of the womb where the baby is carried inside the Mommy.)

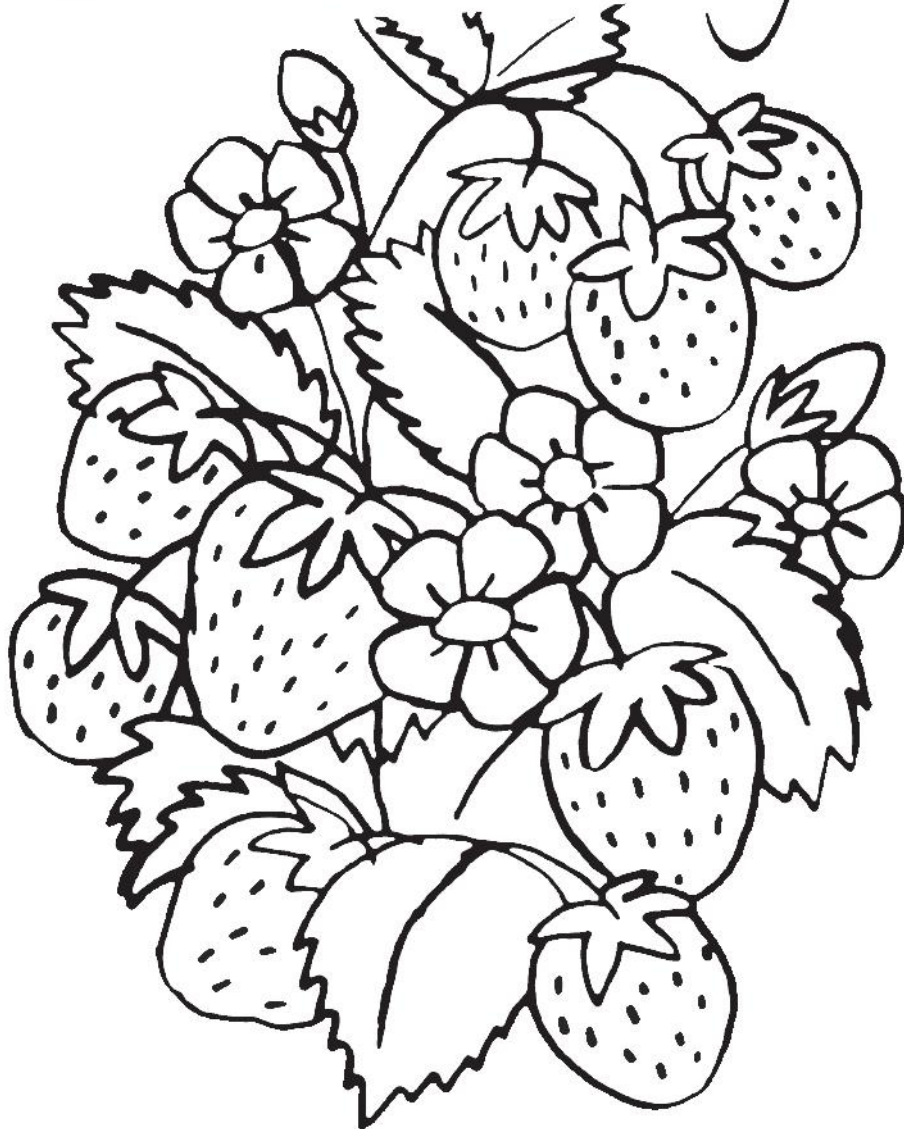
But mostly, the fruit is used in spells and potions for love



and friendship. Strawberries have been used this way since the times of the ancient Egyptians.

If you have a teenage brother or cousin who has a crush on a girl, suggest he invite her for a summer picnic that includes strawberries dipped in chocolate (another Love Herb). He'll wonder, afterward, how a kid, like you, got so smart!

# Strawberry



# Midsummer Nature Mandala

by Carmen Sanchez Bezzard

Have you ever seen a mandala? A mandala is usually a circular diagram symbolizing the universe. However they can be made for other reasons as well, such as meditation and can come in many forms. Mandalas were first found in the 4th century as part of one of the world's great religions, Buddhism. They were used in Tibet, India, Nepal, China and Japan among other countries. Now they are created throughout the world by many faiths and cultures.

Mandalas can be drawn on paper to color or paint. They can also be made with glass, sand and other materials as well. When I see a mandala it reminds me a bit of a kaleidoscope.

Making a mandala can be a very peaceful, insightful, educational and fun project. There is no right or wrong way to make them...you make it completely your own.

Our Midsummer Nature Mandala is made with flowers, leaves and herbs. If you don't have a garden, ask a relative or friend if you can pick some of their flowers and herbs. This is a great project to do with others so you can learn from and help each other.

Just follow the picture steps below and on the next few pages and you will have a beautiful work of natural art honoring Midsummer and the bountiful blossoms it brings. It will be your own personal meditation mandala as you reflect on what all the colors, herbs, flowers and leaves mean to you on this Sabbat.

The Goddess shares her wondrous color pallet of Mother Earth and the God shares his warmth and brightness as you create your mandala honoring Litha/ Midsummer/Summer Solstice.



Step 1—You will need:

- A pie pan or shallow container for water
- A pair of scissors
- About a 1/4 cup water
- A heavy duty paper or Styrofoam plate about 8" - 10" diameter with a narrow edge around it.





Step 2—You will need:

- A basket for gathering flowers
- A scissor for cutting the flowers

Go out to the garden and snip some flowers, leaves and herbs. Don't worry if you gather too many; you can put the extras in a vase. Bring the flowers to your work area.



Step 3—

Snip off the long stems of your blossoms so they are close to the flower head.



Step 4—Sort your flowers by size and color as you snip them.



Step 5— Pour just enough water into the pan to cover the bottom. Place your cut blossoms in the water to keep them from wilting. They do not have to be covered with water.



Step 6—Place a orange or yellow flower in the center of your plate. This forms the first circle of your mandala. The flower I used is called a Cosmos and it came from my Wildflower Garden.



Step 7— It is time for the second circle. I used Blue Bachelor Buttons from my Wildflower Garden. They remind me of the short Midsummer Night. Use whatever you have gathered.



Step 8—Next it is time to fill in the outside edges of your mandala. Chamomile stems from the Herb Garden decorate the edges of this plate and I am reminded of the softness and sweet scent that fills my garden.



Step 9—You can fill in a bit more of this circle with leaves you have gathered or whatever feels right for you. I used some 'feathery' leaves that fell off my Golden Dawn Redwood during a thunder storm. I did not see it as side but as a gift for my Midsummer Nature Mandala.





Step 10—Now the outer edge is starting to take on a nice circle shape and smell. I added lavender from the herb garden and I imagine these being the rays of the sun even though they are not orange.



Step 11—A little more Midsummer color is needed now so I added some orange snapdragons. Each circle created is a wondrous gift of nature that you are helping to form into a beautiful mandala. Think about what the colors and plants mean to you. Take your time and enjoy what you are creating.



Step 12—Another circle is formed by the addition of white valerian blossoms. The valerian is so sweet smelling and brilliant white as a fresh snowfall. It reminds me that Yule is directly opposite Midsummer on the Wheel of the year.



Step 13—You can keep adding circles with your flowers, herbs and leaves or stop when you are happy with it. If you look closely you will see a circle of green sprigs right against valerian. This is thyme and it reminds me that time spent in the garden is never wasted.



Step 14—This last 'full' flower circle is so vivid and bright with more yellow, a yellow African daisy and golden yellow columbine. So bright like the sun and bringing feelings of warmth and earth's bounty at this blessed Summer Solstice.



Step 15— The final touches to my Magical Midsummer Nature Mandala are the petals from a deep orange red blanket flower. The beauty, scents and bright summer colors fill my heart with and spirit with blessings of Litha/Midsummer/Summer Solstice.



Your Mandala will last about four days 'inside' if you sprinkle or spray a little water on it each day. At night just put it in the refrigerator. Your Mandala will last longer inside than outside because the sun and air will dry it out very quickly.

I make mine a few days before Midsummer and keep it in the refrigerator, then place it on my outside altar on Midsummer if it is not too windy. If it is windy I use it as a centerpiece on my inside table or altar.

When your Mandala has started to wilt you can sprinkle the blossoms outside. They might be used by the birds for food or to make nests or absorbed into the earth to help keep the ground moist. Your Mandala is more than just a gift for yourself; it is a gift for the birds and the earth.



## *A Letter from Scotland*

*Dear Little Witches,*

As we move towards the summer solstice, many of us will be enjoying the heat of the sun. It's wonderful to be out in the sunshine, maybe on the beach, feeling the warmth of the sun on our bodies. It's also a great time to gather herbs and dry them for later use. The long days in the sun just makes everyone and everything feel so much better, don't they?

Our ancestors loved this time of year too. The Summer Solstice is the longest day and it is a magical time for all sorts of reasons. One of the magical things is the strength of the sun and the power of those who can use it in their work. Now who do you think uses the strength of the sun in their work?

Yes, that's right! Blacksmiths and metal workers and glassmakers and tinsmiths: craftsmen and craftswomen who are very, very clever with their hands and can make the most beautiful objects out of fire, water, earth and air. But it is fire - the strength of the sun - that is the most important part of the magical craft of the smith.

Some very beautiful things indeed were made by our ancestors. They started off by making things from stone, then bronze and then other metals. You can see some of the things they made here: <http://navanfortapp.com/navan-fort-in-context-irish-artefacts/> . If you scroll down to the bottom of that page, you'll see a lovely model of a boat made out of gold. It's a nice picture but I've seen the real thing. It is very beautiful in real life, much more stunning than the picture. It was made around 2200 years ago, so it is very old indeed. The boat is only small but it is very detailed. People think it was probably left as an





offering to the sea God, Manannan MacLir. I bet he is a bit fed up his boat is in a museum now!

Can you imagine how clever the metal worker was to be able to make something this beautiful that has lasted such a long time? And all made by the strength of the sun - fire.

There are two important people who are the God and Goddesses of blacksmiths and metalworkers: Brigit and Goibniu. Brigit is a very special Goddess in Scotland and Ireland. She watches over the home, the smithy (where blacksmiths and metalsmiths work) and she gives us 'the fire in the head' - our inspiration for creativity. I think I've told you a little about Brigit before, so this time I'll tell you a story about Goibniu (say *gowna* or *govnu*).

The Tuatha de Danann were Gods and who lived in the lands we now call Ireland and the West Coast of Scotland. But they had some enemies and had to defend their land against those who would take it from them. Goibniu was the blacksmith who travelled with the warriors of the de Dananns. It might seem a bit odd taking a blacksmith with you if you are going to fight a war, but in those days people rode on horses, not in cars. And horses need to be shod. They fought with swords, spears and knives. All of these are made from metal, so you can see why they took a blacksmith with them. Goibniu was no ordinary blacksmith either - he used the magic of the sun to forge weapons and horse shoes that helped the de Dananns defend their land. The swords he made never broke in battle, the spears he made never missed their target, the knives never shattered and, best of all, the



horseshoes he made and put on the horses hooves never came loose. He was a handy God to have around if you were a De Danann going in to battle, that's for sure. The de Dananns eventually won Ireland from their enemies - and it was down to the weapons made by Goibniu.

It might seem that telling you about a God who made strong weapons is a bit unpleasant, but life was not always easy for

our ancestors. The other thing about Goibniu is that he was also a healer and he gave great parties. Imagine if people still spoke about your parties thousands and thousands of years later! How cool would that be? Goibniu's party was a great feast called *Fled Goibhnenn* and he served a magical drink that had been made from honey. Everyone who drank it was protected from illness. And that drink had the strength of the fire of the sun in it too - for how else do bees begin to make honey?

Goibniu was indeed a master of his craft and his element was fire. He is at his strongest now as the sun is high in the heavens and we remember the ancient God of Blacksmiths who helped his people survive through the magic of his crafts.

It takes a long time, a lot of practise and a lot of patience to become a master craftsperson. Even our Gods were children once and they had to learn to do things. They got to be so good at it because they learned from their mistakes and never gave up practising their craft. I know lots and lots of you are very, very talented already. Just imagine what you will be able to do when you are all grown-up!

And maybe, when you are working on your craft, you could ask the elements to bless you in your work:

*Power of sun and growing earth,*

*Flow of water and song of wind.*

*Be in my work and be with me.*

Till next time,

*Fiona Tinker*

\*Celtic sun image by  
[www.celticcrossworks.com](http://www.celticcrossworks.com)





# RUNES

by Christine Hostetler-Johnson

Now that you have the complete set of "Futhark" Runes in your Rune Book/Journal (I hope you have been writing them down in the books we made a while back. ) we can go ahead to the next stage of learning with our Runes - Making and Dedicating them.

This will be done in two parts so it's not so overwhelming for you.

Q: WHAT DO I MAKE THEM OUT OF? Well, that has been a subject of debate for centuries! (That's a really LONG time!)

Our ancient ancestors used wood, ivory, and.....oh my, bones! (No, we will not be using bones. Remember, the Ancestors didn't have much; so they wasted nothing). I have seen them made of polished stone, pebbles, petrified tree bark, sea shells, dried clay, dried beans, and animal hide/leather.

Does it matter what they are made of?

No, not really. You use what you are comfortable with. Here is a picture of mine. They are polished wood discs with the runes drawn on them.

As you can see, there are a few blank ones. Why? Because 1) it will be your starting point, 2) it's good to have extra in case you make a mistake, and 3) you can always make a special rune with them. The point is, it doesn't matter what they are made of, as long as no harm to anyone or anything went into making them when choosing your material. Even clay or sculpie will work!

Also, when out gathering your materials; always ask permission from your higher powers & also thank them for letting you use the resources you choose. Always keep your Runes with you AT ALL TIMES ( IF POSSIBLE ) in a pouch of strong material. Examples would be cotton, leather, velvet, etc. (I'm sure if you ask your grown up nicely, they will help you make your pouch.)

Start with a set of 24 blank items of your choosing. While putting all your energies into them, begin to inscribe them. You can take your time, don't rush. Rushing will put negative energy into them. (They say to do this in a 24 hour period or a 24 day timeframe. Since you are little, our Higher Beings will be understanding and be very patient with you; so take the time you need). ALWAYS begin with the first Aett & the very first Rune of Feoh. Follow in order till you get all the Runes completed in all three Aett's.

As you do this, have your Rune Journal by your side and write in there your thoughts and feelings you get for each Rune you work on. You may inscribe any way you feel is right for you and your Runes. (Painting, etching, marker. Some can be engraved or burned; but wait until you are old enough to handle those types of tools so you do not get hurt.)

Well..that is the first part of Making/Dedicating your Runes. Next time, we will finish with Dedicating them and learn which Runes are Birth Runes! In the meantime, enjoy making your set of Runes and remember to use your imagination! There is no wrong way to make a Rune!

Brightest Blessings my wee ones!







## Jimmy has a party

by Evelien Roos

Jimmy was outside in the back yard, playing with Bluebell, the fairy, when Isobel came back from a shopping trip. In her arms she carried a massive load of sunflowers. Immediately Bluebell forgot about the game she and Jimmy were playing and dashed towards Isobel. She was still thrilled that a Grown Person could see her. "Hello Isobel," she piped up. "What's with all the flowers? Having a party?" Isobel smiled as she entered the kitchen with the faery hot on her tail. "Hello Bluebell. No, not really. They are for our Midsummer Celebration. Litha is in a few days, and I always like to pretty the house up before a Celebration."

"Oh no! Litha?????" Bluebell shrieked. "Pan's horns!!!" and she was out the window and off into the forest. Laughing, Isobel arranged the flowers in a few vases and started dinner. Jimmy entered the kitchen. "Where's Bluebell? We were playing outside and now I cant find her..."

"She went zooming into the forest after I answered her question about the flowers." Isobel said. "I think she had forgotten something."

Disgruntled, Jimmy watched Isobel cook.

The next day, Jimmy was still a bit angry at Bluebell for leaving him like that. It was a rainy day and despite Isobel's insuring that the Sun would be there on the day of Litha, Jimmy felt miserable and cold and he was sure Summer would be too. Then, through the rain, he could see a blue and a brownish light zipping to and fro in the yard, getting closer bit by bit. 'Now why on the Great Green Earth would Bluebell and Cricket brave this awful weather?' Jimmy thought to himself. The coloured lights landed on the back porch and Jimmy could see they were carrying a



rolled up piece of paper. Curiousness overcame his grouchy mood and he went outside to see what was going on.

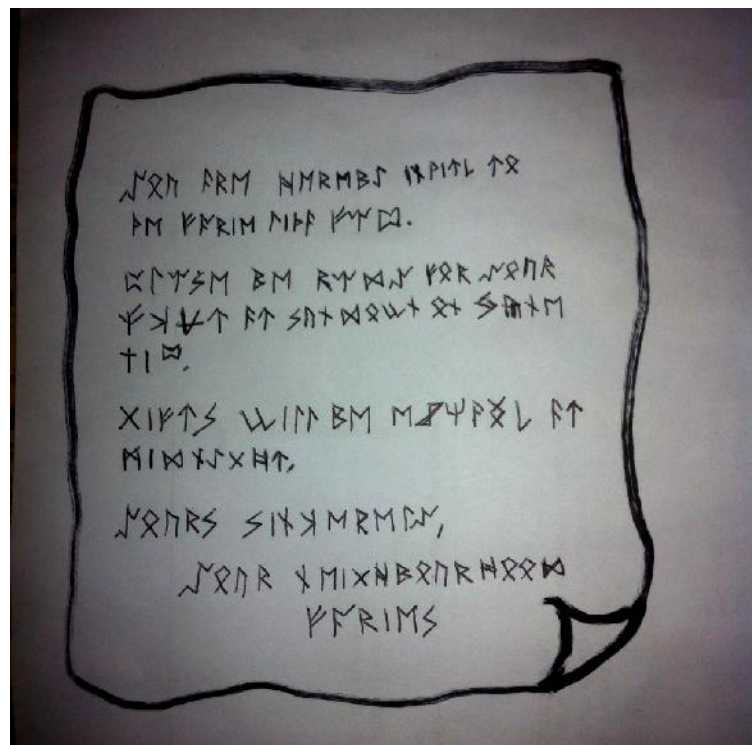
Bluebell was wringing the rain out of her tunic and Cricket shook himself like a wet dog. "I don't know why we couldn't wait until this rain has dried up." Cricket complained. Bluebell opened her mouth to give him a sharp reply, but Jimmy stepped in. He didn't want the two friends to start fighting. "I'd like to know that too, Bluebell." He quickly said. The two faeries started. "Oh! Hi Jimmy... I'm sorry to have left you like that yesterday. I just remembered something Very Important! That had to be taken care of!" Bluebell puffed out her chest. When nothing happened, she nudged Cricket with her foot. He jumped a bit and quickly picked up his end of the paper roll. "Er... Here.. That is for you. Because you have proven yourself such a good friend to us Faeries." He stammered. He and Bluebell raised the roll towards Jimmy's snout. Jimmy was a bit flummoxed. What was all this? The faeries unfurled the roll and this is what Jimmy saw:

Isobel had taught Jimmy to read, but this was such a weird writing... "ISOBEL!!!" Jimmy yelled. Isobel came rushing out. "What's wrong?" she asked, a bit panicked. "Look! The faeries brought me a note, but I can't make heads nor tails from it. Can you?"

Isobel picked up the tiny note. "Oh, Oh my.... Actually I can. These are Runes, an Ancient writing. I bought a book about reading and writing them a few months back. It's the most wonderful workbook! I sent my exam in just a few days back! I hope Miss Storm sends me my Certificate soon!" Jimmy cleared his throat. Isobel was veering off course here. "Oh, Right. Eh, let's see... It says: 'You are hereby invited to the Faery Litha Feast.'" Isobel looked up. "Oh wow! What an honour, Jimmy!" Bluebell beamed and Cricket was staring at his feet.

"Ok, so what else does it say?  
Mmmm 'Please be ready for your escort at sundown on June 21<sup>st</sup>. Gifts will be exchanged at midnight. Yours sincerely, your neighborhood Faeries."

Jimmy was pleased to be invited to the Faeries party, but he did see a tiny problem... "What about the gifts?" he asked Isobel later that night, as they were sitting by the fireside. "Don't you worry your little head. I know just the thing!" Isobel told him.

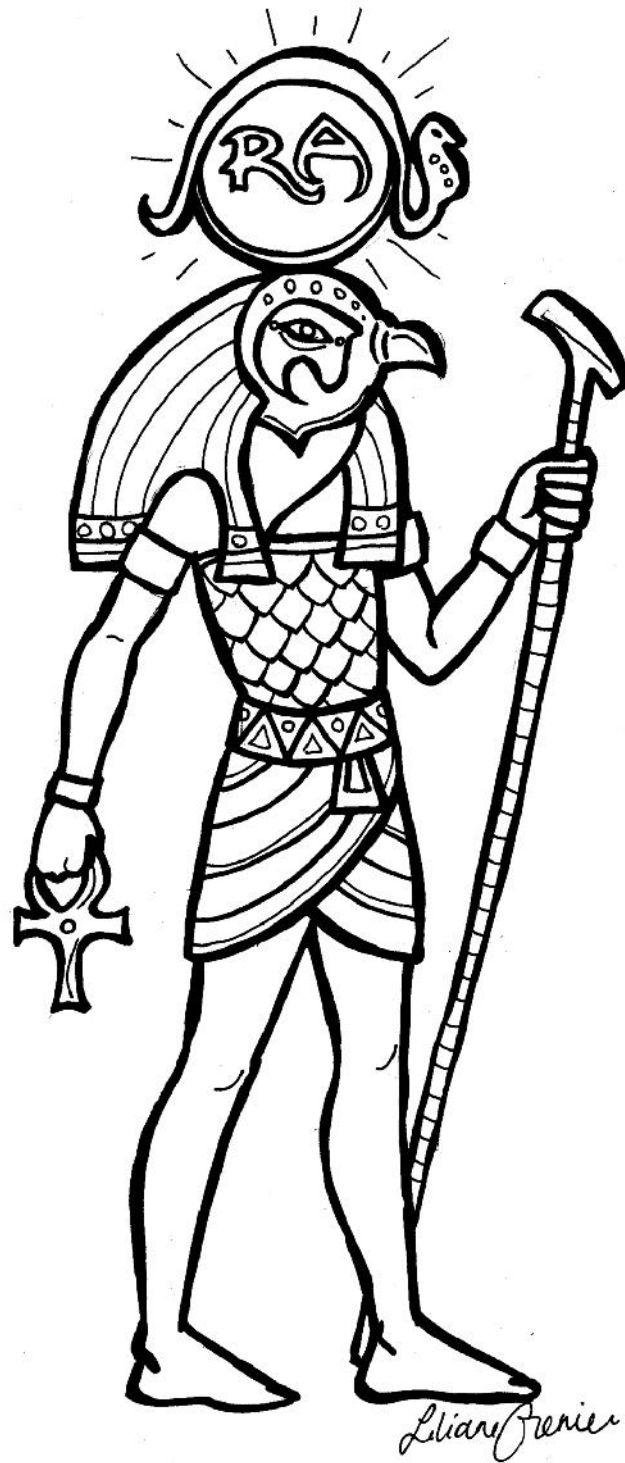


On June the 21<sup>st</sup> Jimmy was escorted to the feast by Bluebell and Cricket. He carried his gift for the Faeries on his back into the forest. They entered a large clearing, and he saw the most beautiful scene he could have imagined. The trees around the clearing were all covered in flowers that were lit up by fireflies. The tree stump tables were surrounded by toadstools for the little fae to sit on and for Jimmy there was a whole stump, covered in hedgehog delicacies, like worm and beetle stew and fresh grubs. In the exact centre of the clearing was a large patch of very smooth grass, where several Faeries were already dancing.

The next morning, Isobel asked him how the party was. “ It was great!” he replied, a bit hoarsely. “And the gift was just perfect. How did you know that a big bag of roasted sunflower kernels would be just right for the Faeries?” He looked up at her, a wreath of flowers still on his head.



Ra was the powerful sun god of ancient Egypt. All forms of life were believed to have been created by Ra, who called each of them into existence by speaking their secret names.



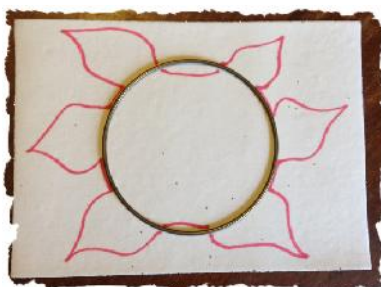
# Witch Crafts



## Butterfly Suncatcher Mobile

What you will need:

- Coffee filters
- Small cups or shallow jars
- Water
- Markers (we used Mr. Sketch)
- Pipe cleaners
- 2 pieces of sparkly gold or yellow stiff felt
- 2 macramé hoops (we used one 6" and one 9")
- Ribbon in assorted summer colors
- Monofilament fishing line
- Clear beads
- Sequins
- Floral stems
- Glue
- Scissors
- Newspaper to protect your work surface (we like to use a cheap vinyl shower curtain so it can be wiped off and reused)



First, take your small hoop and lay it on the wrong side of the felt. Use the outside of the hoop as a guide and draw a sun with rays. At the top and bottom you will want to draw inside the hoop a little so that there will be space to tie the connecting ribbons to the hoop later. (See picture)

Cut out your sun and use it as a guide on your second piece of felt and cut it out. Now you have two identical suns. Now you will want to glue the two suns together with your small macramé hoop in between them. Set it aside and let it dry completely.





Next, you will make the wings for the butterflies. This is very fun and takes a bit of magick. (Make sure you do this part on a protective surface)

Take your coffee filters and using your markers draw a thick circle, making sure to leave a large circle in the middle uncolored and do not color all the way out to the edge of the filter. (See picture)

You can use any colors you want, just use one color for each coffee filter. And don't forget about black and brown, they are surprisingly the most colorful after the magick happens!

Take each colored coffee filter and fold it in half, and then in half again so that the white in the center of the colored circle is at the point and it forms a funnel shape. Fill your cups with just a little bit of water so that when you set the filter in the cup, just the point will be touching the water. Now for each color you will want to say the magick words:



***“(color name, color name) reveal to me,  
the true colors you used to be”.***



After just a little while you will begin to see the color circle spread and change into different colors!

(Hint: make sure only the tip touches the water or the colors will wash out and not be as bright)

Remove them when the color almost reaches the top and set them aside to let them dry.

While you wait for the wings to dry, take your large hoop and wrap it in ribbon. When you get all the way around the hoop, glue the end to the hoop and re-enforce by wrapping and tying thread around the end.







Attach bright colored ribbons and the monofilament fishing line around the hoop. Then string beads and sequins on the monofilament line and tie or use crimps on the ends.

Now let's make the butterflies. Take your colored coffee filters and fold them like an accordion. Fold your pipe cleaner in half and put the folded coffee filter in the middle and twist the ends so that you have a small loop on one end and two "antenna" on the other. Fluff out the coffee filter so it looks more like wings and attach each one to the hoop at different lengths using colorful ribbon.

Next you will attach the large decorated hoop to the small sun hoop by attaching ribbon in three places on the large hoop, evenly spaced. Pull the ribbon together and tie a knot so that when you hold it up, the hoop hangs even on all sides. Now tie that to the bottom of the sun hoop. Add a ribbon hanger to the top of the sun hoop.

Now weave your floral stems around the large decorated hoop and hang in a sunny window.



# The Goddesses First Aid Kit



By Evelien Roos

## Elderflower

This issue I am going to tell you about Elderflowers. My Nanna used to make Elderflower cordial every Spring. And loads of it too. Because she had six children, and all of their children loved the cordial too! None too surprising: It is delicious and very good for your immune system!

It is anti viral and anti inflammatory, and if you happen to have a cold or flu, it helps you sweat out the nasties quickly!

My Nanna used the old one-on-one recipe. A pound of sugar on a pound of flowers and the same amount of water, then boil it down for half an hour, until it has been reduced to half that amount. Then, as we drank it, we often added a squirt of lemon juice.

To be honest, I had all but forgotten the recipe, but my Friend Denise, from the Facebook group Sunshine Hearth Witches posted the following recipe, with the remark that it might be something for the Pages, and I heartedly agreed to share it with you.

The only thing to remember, is that you need to make the Elderflower Cordial pretty much the same day as picking your Elderflowers -as they are a delicate flower and don't keep well. Be ready!

### Elderflower Cordial Recipe:

- 1kg of sugar
- 1.5 liters of boiling water
- 25-30 Elderflower heads
- 4 lemons
- 50g Citric Acid (available online)



Have enough screw top bottles ready for storage – make sure they are sterilised. \*

1) Gently rinse your Elderflowers and put them to one side.

2) Put the sugar into a large pan (a bowl SHOULD be ok, but you MAY need to heat it).

3) Add the boiling water. In our instance the sugar dissolved immediately. But you MAY need to heat it a little to make sure it is all dissolved.

4) Let cool – we let it cool until it was warm (rather than cold) and then proceeded. (We were impatient to make our Elderflower Cordial!!)

5) Grate your lemons and add the zest.

6) Slice your lemons and add.

7) Add your rinsed Elderflowers

8) Add your Citric acid.

9) Cover with a cloth and leave for about 48 hours .

10) Strain through a CLEAN muslin to get all the little bits out and fill into sterilised bottles.



We enjoy Elderflower cordial diluted with cold bubbly water. You can also use it for cooking and puddings.

Thanks to <http://www.lifeatthetree.com> for this recipe!

Well, that's it for this issue. See you in the next Pooka Pages! And remember: any weed can be a healing herb!








## Wee Witchlings Read-Along Story

### Pooka Helps



On  **Litha** morning,  **Elsie** headed out to the  garden. She had her  **basket** in one  **hand** and her  **scissors** in the other.




 **Pooka**, will you help me harvest the  **herbs**?" she asked. "Sure," said

 **Pooka**, "but first I'll just have a quick roll in my  **catnip**."  **Elsie**

cut some  **herbs** and put them in the  **basket**.  **Pooka** rolled in his



 **catnip**. "  **Pooka**," called  **Elsie**, "will you help me?" "Right

away," agreed  **Pooka** and then: "Oh Look! A  **Butterfly**!" and

 **Pooka** began to chase the  **butterfly**.  **Elsie** continued

harvesting  **herbs**. After a while,  **Elsie** said again, "



could really use some help." "Yes," said  **Pooka**. "But first, I need a

**nap**. That  **butterfly** wore me out!"  **Pooka** curled up under a

**rose** bush and took a  **nap**.  **Elsie** sighed and went on harvesting

 **herbs**. A little later,  **Pooka** woke up when their friend  **Nathan**

arrived for a visit. "Wow," said  **Nathan**. "There's a lot of  **herbs** in that

 **basket**,  **Elsie**. You must have really been working hard."

 **Pooka** sat up and told  **Nathan** proudly: "Yes. And I helped!"