

INFUSE



Pohjantuuli

# hawthorn

part I – introduction

*Gathering*  
GROUND



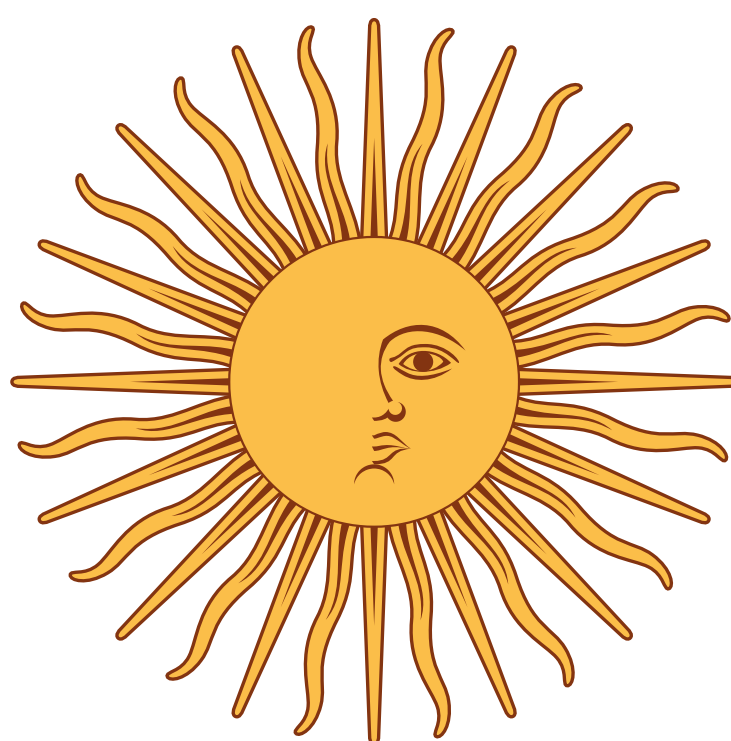
# INFUSE

Welcome to Hawthorn Month!

The blooming of Hawthorn represents an exciting time of year, as those from Celtic and other European traditions celebrate May Day or Beltane. It's a time of creativity, fertility, and rebirth. A time to celebrate the height of the sun as we head toward the Summer Solstice.

This week we will connect with Hawthorn in meditation and explore the role Hawthorn plays in Beltane.

Enjoy with great pleasure,



*Liz*







Let's start with a meditation  
to meet Hawthorn



Click through the image to begin



connect

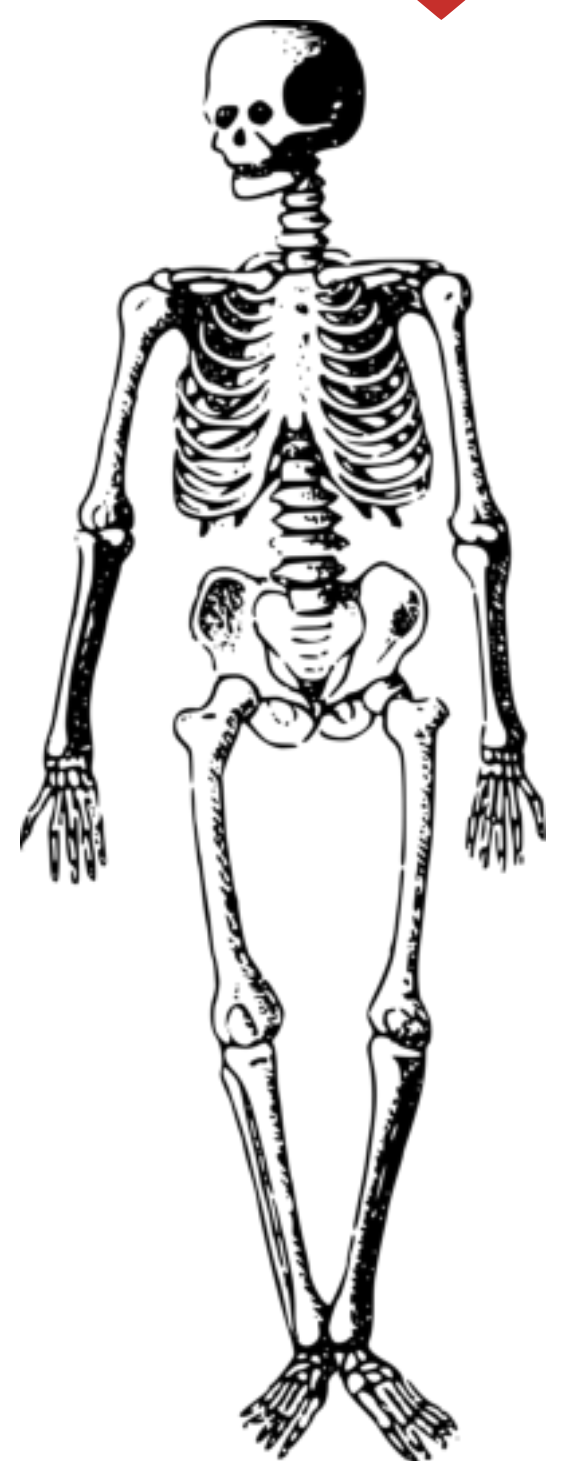
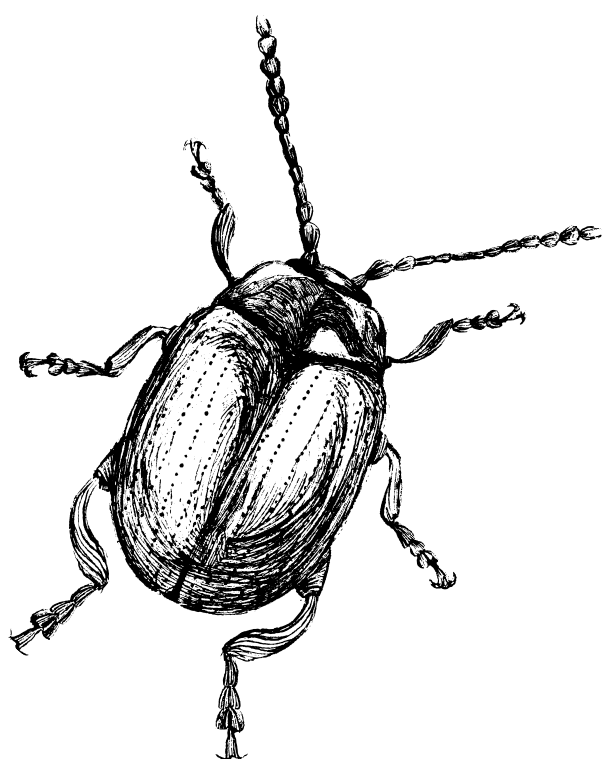


# May

Hawthorn is the May Tree, the Mayflower, and the Fairy Tree.

She is linked with fertility, death, rebirth, love, and marriage.

The odor produced by many of *Crataegus* species blooms is reminiscent of rot and decay – it is the triethylamine (TEA) they emit to attract pollinating carrion insects. It is also said to be reminiscent of the smell of sex. Sex and death are like two sides of the same coin.





# Beltane

The May tree is synonymous with May Day,  
aka Beltane, the sacred Celtic cross quarter  
day for celebrating...

Fertility

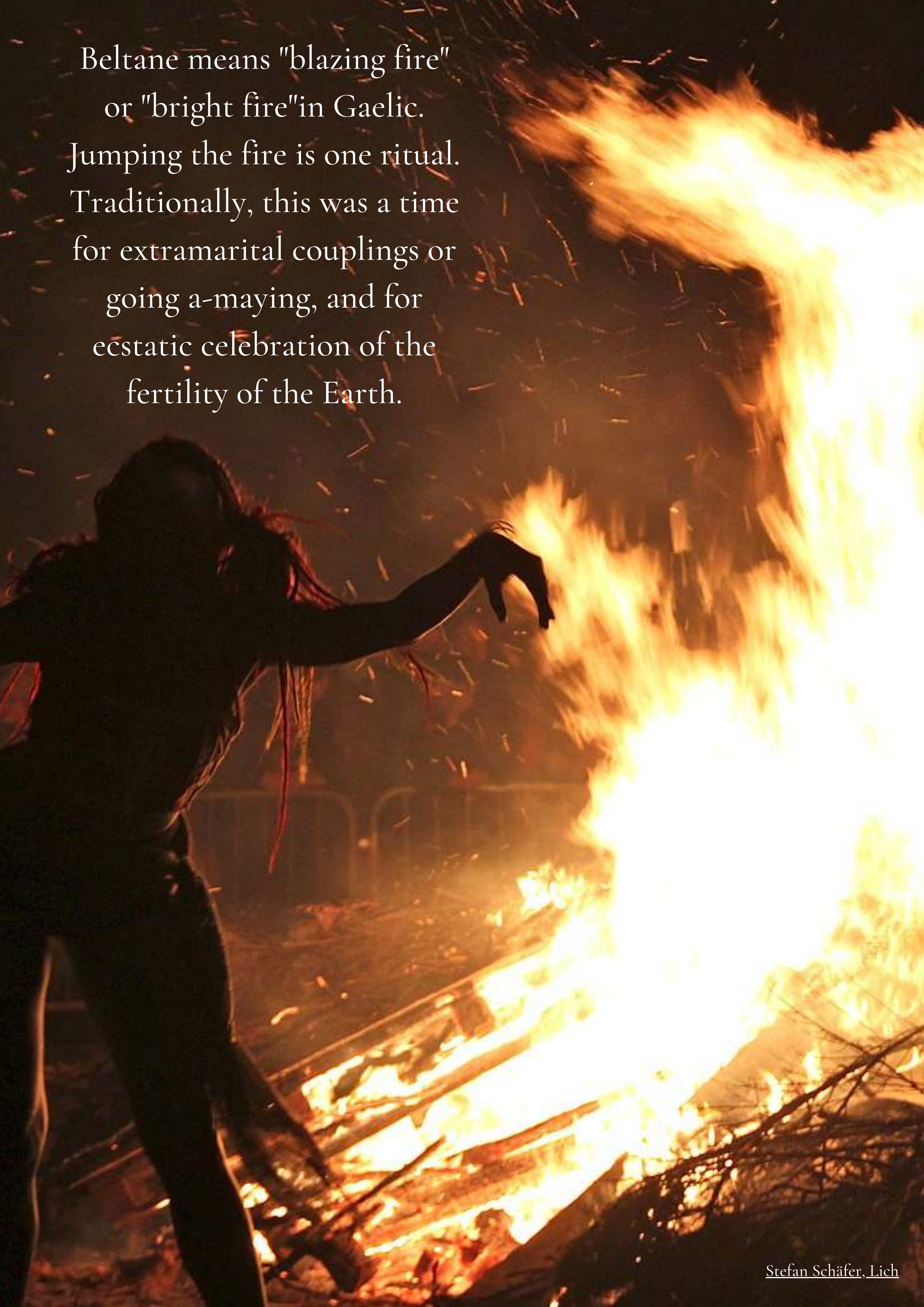
Fires

Fairies

Forest frolics





A person is captured in mid-air, jumping over a large, intense bonfire at night. The fire is bright orange and yellow, with a large plume of smoke rising from it. The person is silhouetted against the fire, with their arms outstretched. The background is dark, and the overall scene is dramatic and celebratory.

Beltane means "blazing fire"  
or "bright fire" in Gaelic.  
Jumping the fire is one ritual.  
Traditionally, this was a time  
for extramarital couplings or  
going a-maying, and for  
ecstatic celebration of the  
fertility of the Earth.

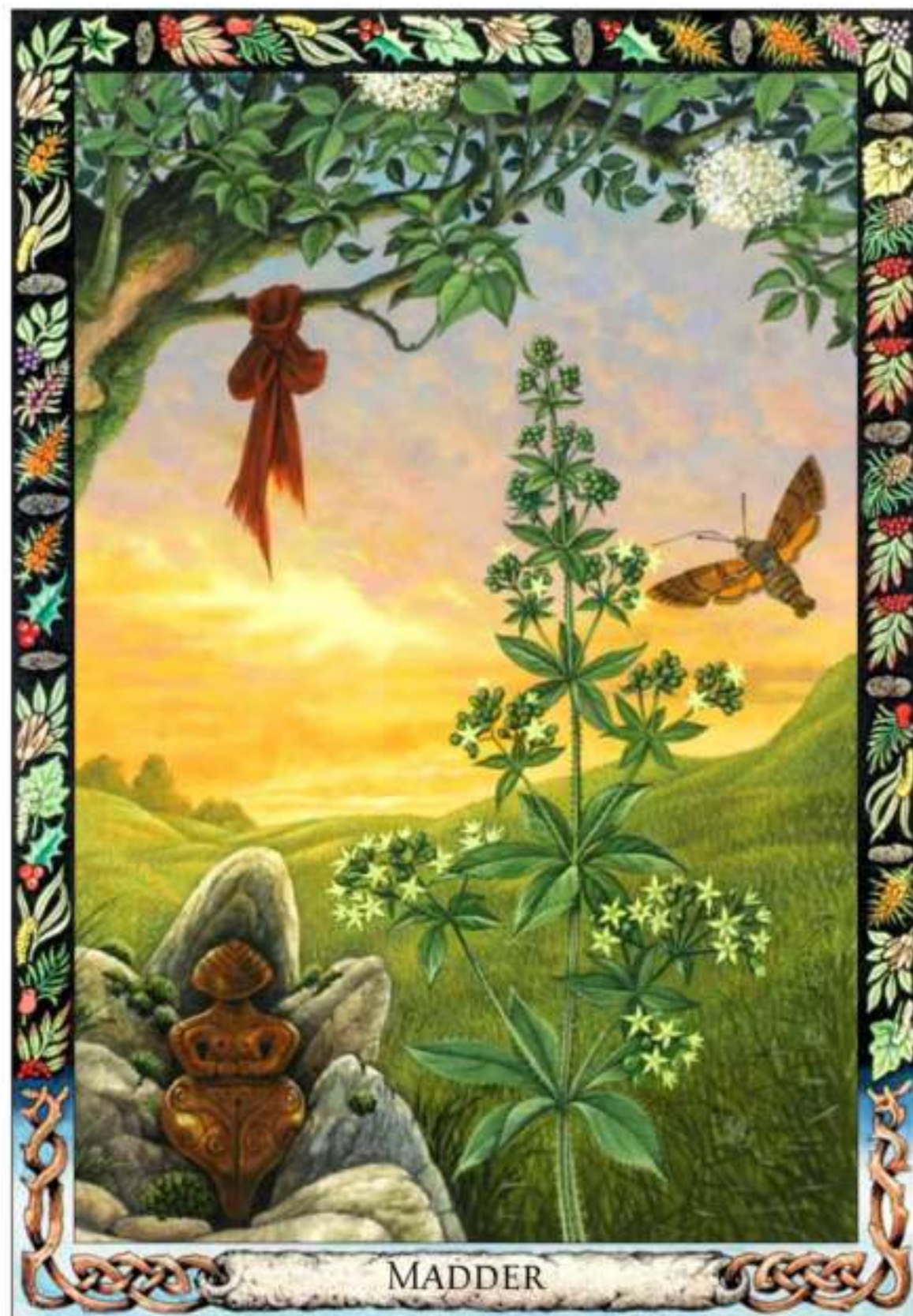


# Clooties

One Beltane tradition in Ireland and the British Isles is to tie strips of cloth or ribbons known as *clooties* (also clouties or cloughties) to the boughs of a tree, often Hawthorn, and also near sacred wells.

They may be dyed red with madder root to represent vitality and fertility.

Clooties may be dipped in water and wiped upon a part of the body that is ailing and then tied to the tree. As the wind and weather shreds the clootie, the ailment so too disintegrates.





Another Beltane or May Day tradition is to dance around the maypole, weaving together ribbons - the pole represents the masculine while the ribbon hoop at the top is the feminine. The dance of interweaving the ribbons represents the union of the two to create something new.



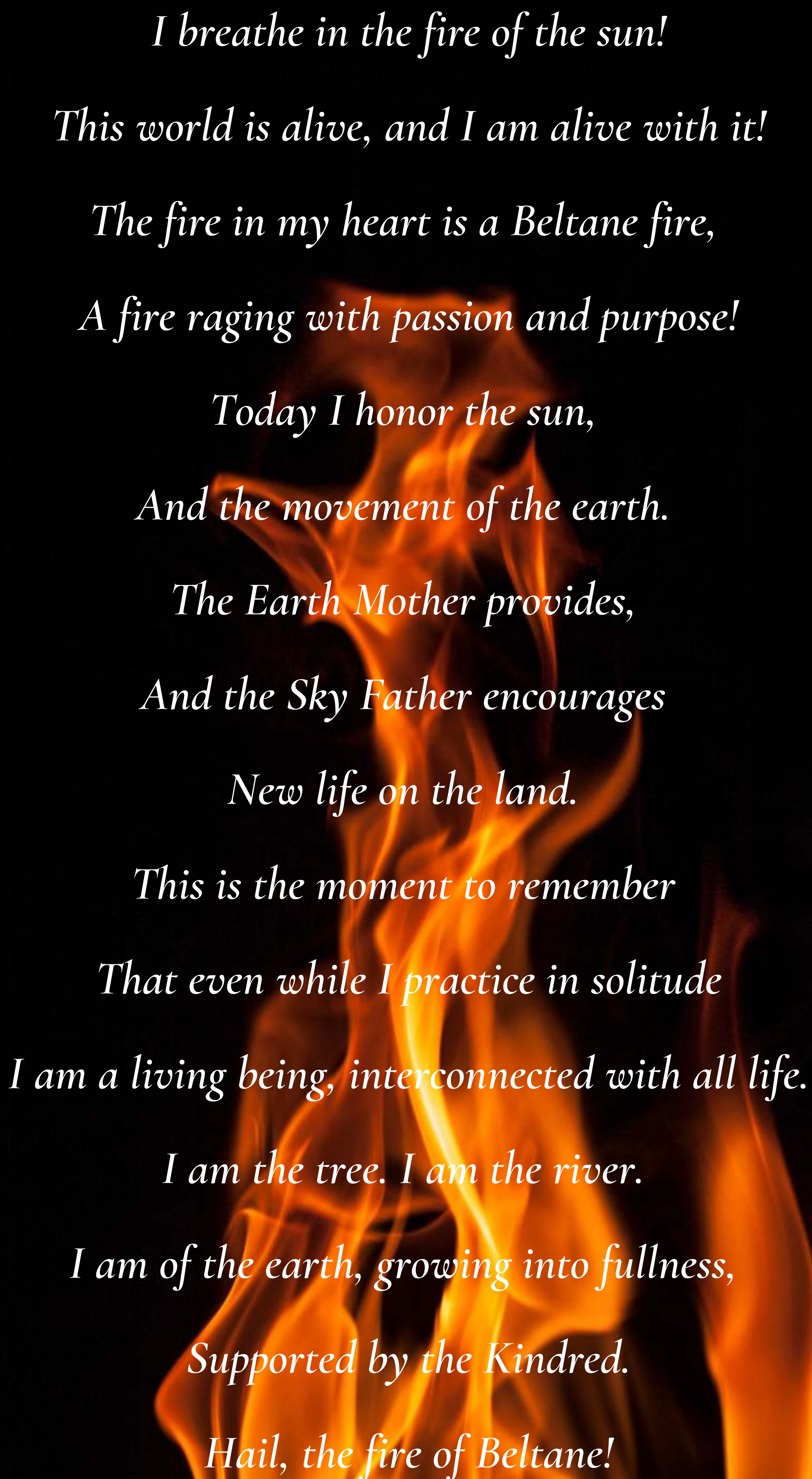
Women may wear crowns of Hawthorn blossoms on this day, too.



The union of two becoming one is represented with the vesica piscis, the center being the portal through which all is born.

from the Herbcrafter's Tarot by Joanna Powell Colbert and Latisha Guthrie





*I breathe in the fire of the sun!  
This world is alive, and I am alive with it!  
The fire in my heart is a Beltane fire,  
A fire raging with passion and purpose!  
Today I honor the sun,  
And the movement of the earth.  
The Earth Mother provides,  
And the Sky Father encourages  
New life on the land.  
This is the moment to remember  
That even while I practice in solitude  
I am a living being, interconnected with all life.  
I am the tree. I am the river.  
I am of the earth, growing into fullness,  
Supported by the Kindred.  
Hail, the fire of Beltane!*



# Offerings

Some offerings for the spirit of Hawthorn to consider at this turning of the wheel:



cakes

milk

honey

coins

beer

mead

crystals

birdseed

flowers







INFUSE



# INFUSE



## hawthorn

part 2 – protection

*Gathering*  
GROUND



# INFUSE

Welcome to Hawthorn Week 2!

This week we are learning how to identify Hawthorn while exploring the theme of Protection.

We'll get up close and personal with thorns and edges. I'll take you to one of my favorite Hawthorn trees and I'll show you how to wildcraft the thorns. Then we'll craft a protective jar with them.

Now let's travel off to Fairy Land to experience the magic and medicine of Hawthorn!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a long, sweeping tail.







# gateway

*"At the beginning of each summer, when the milk-white hawthorn is in bloom, anointing the air with its sweet odour, and miles and miles of golden whin adorn the glens and hill-slopes, the fairies come forth in grand procession, headed by the Fairy Queen."*

- The Story of Thomas the Rhymer  
from Wonder Tales from Scottish Myth and Legend,  
Donald Alexander Mackenzie (1917)



Prince Arthur and  
the Fairy Queen by  
Johann Heinrich  
Füssli, c. 1788



# You'll find Hawthorn in the edge

Being a boundary tree, Hawthorn frequents edges and understories of forests, and is often planted in parks.

Hawthorn is traditionally used as hedgerow and the two words are nearly synonymous when you get to the root of them—“haw” is derived from an old English word for hedge. Hagedorn or Haguthorn are other names with the same etymology.

Do you also notice the word *hag* in there?



Yes! The hag, the hedge witch, the wise one dwelling at the edge – this is also the energy of the wise Hawthorn.

Image: [Storye book](#)

where to find



# habit

Hawthorns or *Crataegus* species are trees or shrubs in the Rose (Rosaceae) family. They are native to Asia, Europe, and North America. According to the USDA PLANTS Database, there are 216 species native or naturalized in North America/Turtle Island.

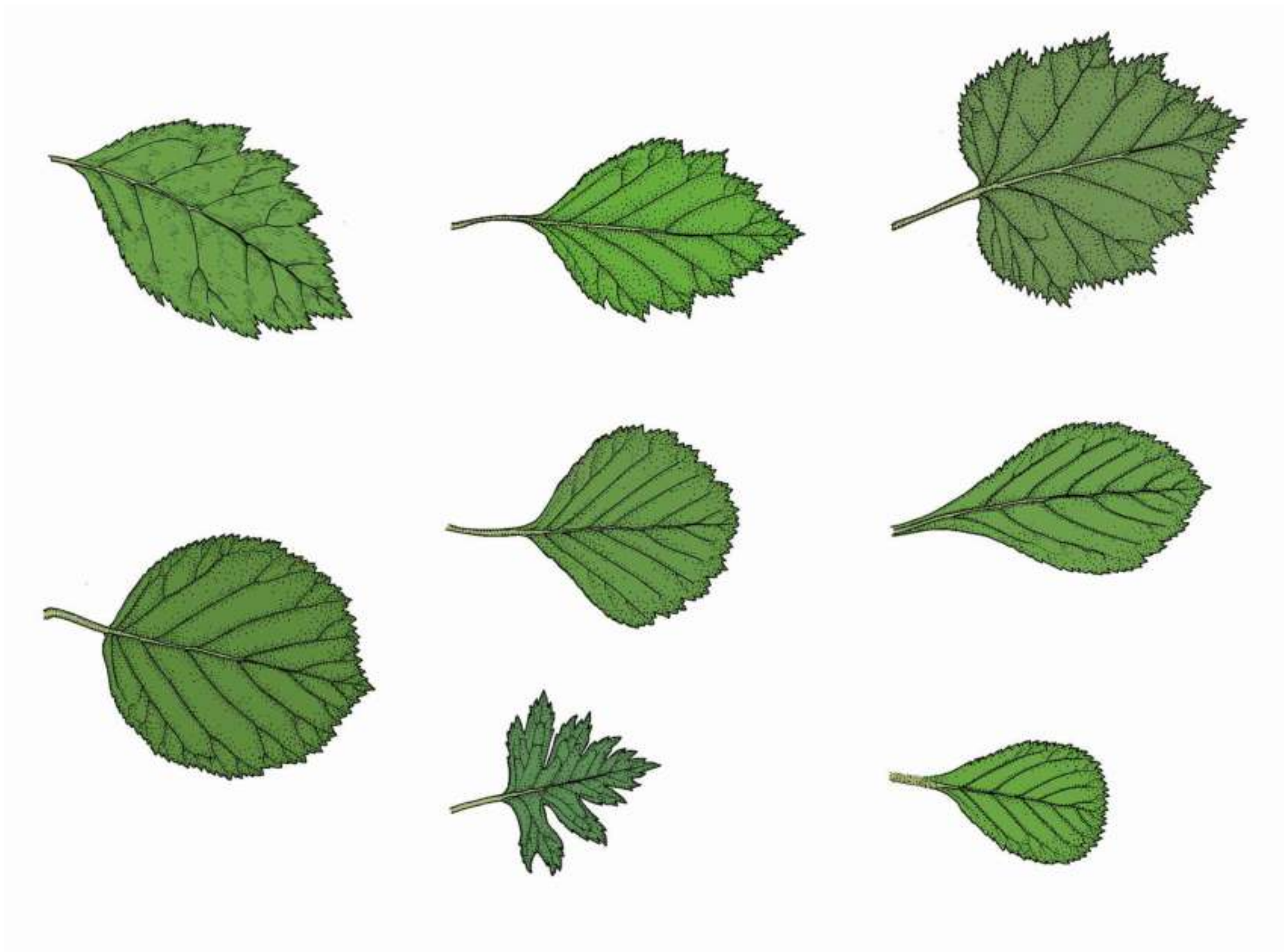
In general, Hawthorn has a crooked, worn shape similar to its crabapple relative. As you get closer to the tree or shrub, you'll begin to see the difference between these kin, particularly the presence of thorns (more on that in a bit).





# Leaf variety

Leaves are fairly leathery, typically ovate, and range from sharply toothed to deeply lobed.



Center: round-leaved hawthorn (*Crataegus margaretta*);  
clockwise from top left: a dry-land hawthorn (*C. sicca*);  
thicket hawthorn (*C. neobushii*, formerly *C. intricata*); Kansas  
hawthorn (*C. coccinioides*); hillside (dotted) hawthorn (*C.*  
*collina*); Engelmann (barberry-leaved) hawthorn (*C.*  
*engelmannii*); parsley haw (*C. marshallii*); succulent hawthorn  
(red haw) (*C. succulenta*)

Image by MDC Staff, courtesy Missouri Department of Conservation.

leaves



Creamy white to pink, five-petaled flowers emerge in midspring, aligning with Beltane or May Day celebrations. The flowers either have a sweet scent with a hint of fruity sharpness (*Crataegus monogyna*), or a scent some describe as a rotting fish odor—thanks to trimethylamine, a fragrance that attracts carrion insects. The color of the anthers varies, often beginning as a deep red and yielding to brown.



Dotted Hawthorn (*Crataegus punctata*)  
is the state flower of Missouri

flowers



# thorns

Hawthorns have true thorns. True thorns have the potential to become a branch. You might even see a thorn that begins to sprout leaves, flowers, and berries!

This speaks to the potential energy held in this tree. There is a strength stored inside, like a powerful secret.

The thorns are also symbolic of Hawthorn's ability to relieve pain and grief.

The generic name *Crataegus* comes from Greek *kratos* "strength" after the tree's strong wood and *akis* "sharp," referring to the thorns.





Look up into the branches of Hawthorn in winter and you're likely to see a bird's nest tucked in safely. This speaks to the protective nature of Hawthorn.

This tree is also a protector of the heart which we will explore a bit more in next week's lesson.



protection





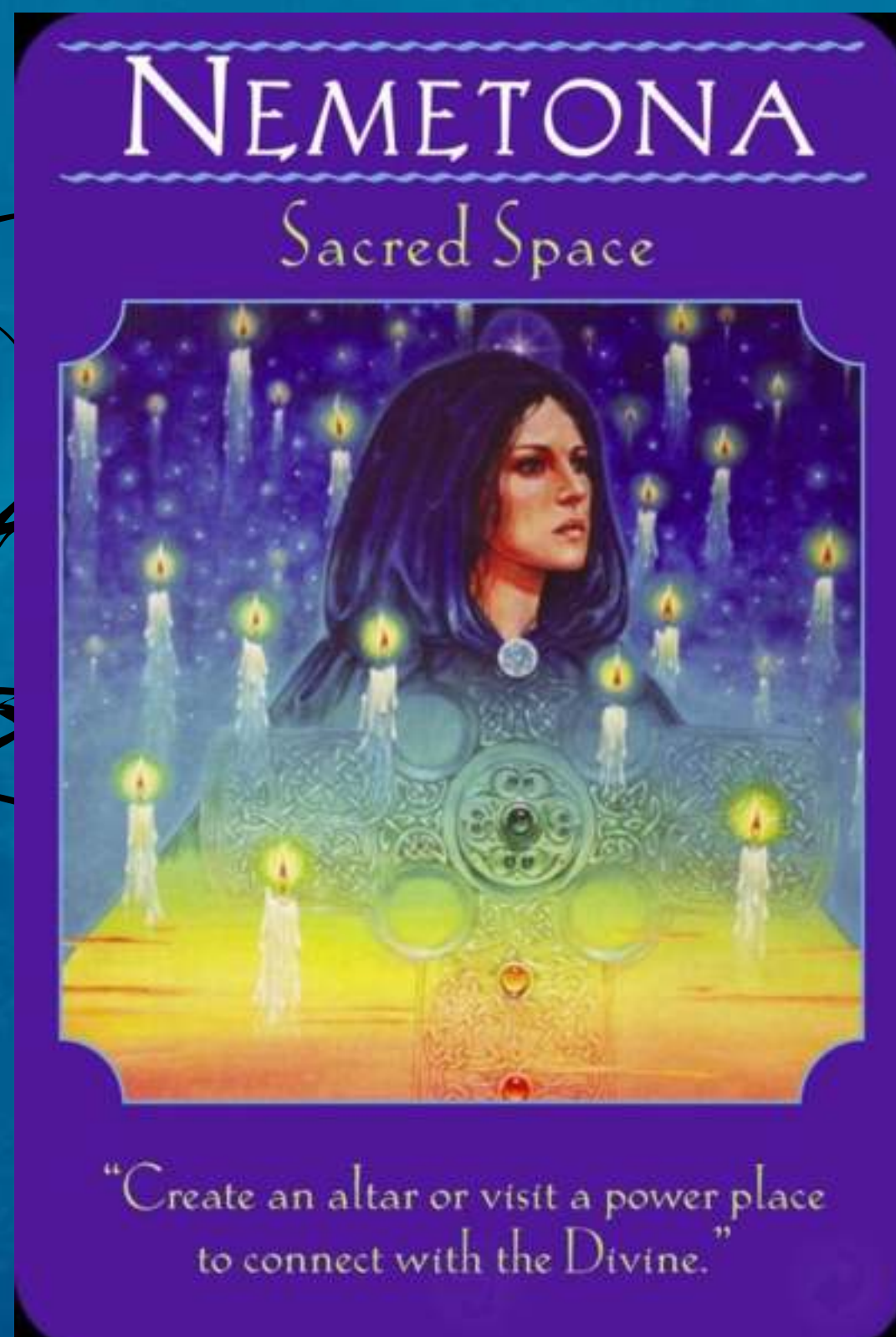
(PSST.... Just to confuse you,  
sometimes ornamental Hawthorns  
don't have thorns, but this is generally  
not true of wild species.)



# Nemetona

Germano-Celtic Goddess Nemetona is a Protector of the Forest, a Guardian of the Trees, especially Hawthorn. She is known as "she of the sacred grove." Her name comes from Celtic root nemeto-, a nemeton is a sacred space for rituals.

Like the Hawthorn tree, there is a lot of mystery surrounding this goddess. Little is known of her. Also like Hawthorn she is known as both fiercely protective and warmly welcoming.



from the Goddess Guidance Oracle Cards  
by Doreen Virtue, PhD.



# Journey of Protection

In this meditation we will travel to a sacred space with Hawthorn and Nemetona, calling on them to help us create healthy boundaries and protection for ourselves, or something or someone we love.

First, I'd like to give thanks to the drum, to my teacher Irma StarSpirit Turtle Woman who was the midwife for my connection with the drum. For the Elk and the tree who gave their lives to bless us with the heartbeat of the Great Mother. I am honored to carry on this ancient and sacred tradition.

(Just click on through the image to begin the meditation...)



journey



## Why Porcupine Has Quills (Anishinaabe)

*Long ago, when the world was young, porcupines had no quills. One day when Porcupine was in the woods, Bear came along and wanted to eat him. But Porcupine climbed to the top of a tree and was safe. The next day, when Porcupine was under a hawthorn tree, he noticed how the thorns pricked him. He had an idea. He broke off some of the branches of the hawthorn and put them on his back. Then he went into the woods and waited for Bear. When Bear sprang on Porcupine, the little animal just curled himself up in a ball. Bear had to go away, for the thorns pricked him very much.*

*Nanabozho saw what happened. He called Porcupine to him and asked, "How did you know that trick?"*

*"I am always in danger when Bear comes along," replied Porcupine.*

*"When I saw those thorns, I thought I would use them."*

*So Nanabozho took some branches from the hawthorn tree and peeled off the bark until they were white. Then he put some clay on the back of the Porcupine, stuck the thorns in it and made it a part of his skin.*

*"Now go into the woods," said Nanabozho. Porcupine obeyed, and Nanabozho hid himself behind a tree. Soon Wolf came along. He sprang on Porcupine and then ran away, howling. Bear came along, but he did not get near Porcupine. He was afraid of those thorns. That is why all porcupines have quills today.*

George E. Laidlaw, "Ojibwa Myths and Tales,"  
cited in Ella E. Clark, Indian Legends of Canada



# Porcupine



# wildcraft

Collect the thorns of Hawthorn to use in protection magic, as a writing tool to inscribe intentions into candles or Birch bark, to make a needle for sewing, or to make a protection jar.

Read more about some of the history of jar and bottle spells magic.





Don't forget to leave an offering!

Hawthorn Fairies like...



offering



# crafting

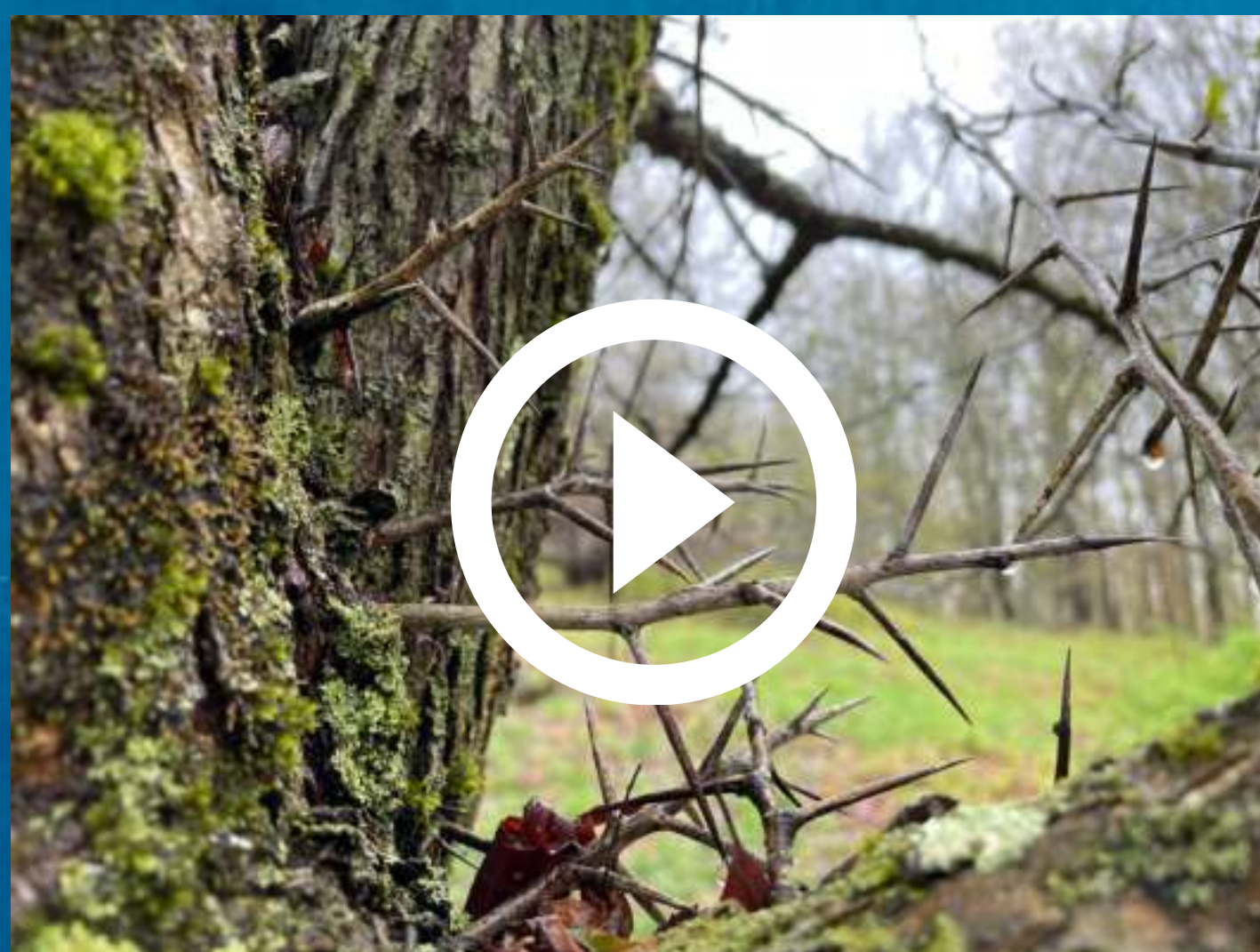
## Craft your own protection jar

Hawthorn thorns are symbolic of protection and maintaining healthy boundaries, particularly around the heart. We'll be adding them to a protection jar (find yourself a small jar or pouch for this project).

Gather an assortment of small meaningful objects that will fit in a jar or pouch. In addition to thorns, here are some other items you could include:

- ★ Dried flowers, fruit, leaves, bark, or roots
  - ★ Feathers, fur, bones
  - ★ Thread, yarn, hair
  - ★ Stones, crystals
- ★ Written intentions, poetry, drawings

Click on through to visit  
Hawthorn and gather her thorns.





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# INFUSE



[Giftzwerg 88](#)

## hawthorn

part 3 – heart

*Gathering*  
GROUND



# INFUSE

It's Hawthorn Week 3!

This week is all about heart healing.

We will explore the trees in flower and wildcraft flowering branches. We'll use dried leaf and flower, plus other supportive herbs to make a heart-healing oil and infusion.

I hope you can take the time to craft and apply these medicines for your benefit.

Much love and abundance,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a smaller "iz" following.







# triple goddess

Hawthorn is representative of the Triple Goddess: Maiden, Mother, Crone. In Spring she is the fertile Maiden, decked in white blooms. At Harvest time she is the Mother, ripe with fruit. And in the darker months, her prominent thorns and twisted trunk stand for the wise old Crone who knows well the cycles of Birth-Life-Death.



Triple Goddess by [Briar](#)



# cuore

The heart is our core,  
essential for our life.

Beating vitality and life-supporting blood through our  
bodies. Pulsing out an electrical current that  
communicates our truest selves.

*Cuore* in Italian, *coeur* in French, the core, the heart is our  
center of courage.

When we act in alignment with our heart it is with our  
best interests, aligned with love and compassion and our  
truth.





# heart



Hawthorn is what is known as a trophorestorative, or an agent that restores order to an organ or system through deep nourishment. In this case, Hawthorn is a cardio or heart trophorestorative.

Hawthorn is also an amphoteric, an herb that brings balance to blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, circulation, and heart rhythm. As an antioxidant, it also helps heal damage to blood vessels.



The fruit, leaf, and flower in tincture or infusion form are what are typically utilized. The bark, twigs, and thorns can be added as well.



The effects on the heart are both physical and energetic. Many herbalists partner with Hawthorn to heal heartache, grief, anxiety, and stress-induced insomnia.





# wildcraft

There are two main times in the year for harvesting from Hawthorn.

In the spring, you can pick leaves and flowers or prune a branch for leaves, flowers, bark, and thorns. In the late summer to early fall, the berries are ready to pick.

In the following video I'll show you a variety of Hawthorns in various stages of flowering and how to prune a branch to collect the abundant medicine available in spring.





# fruit

If you recall from the last lesson, *haw* is another word for *hedge*. Haw is also the name for the fruit, which we call a berry but it's technically a pome, like an apple.

Tart, edible pomes, also called thornapples, ripen to a bright red in late summer to autumn, in time for harvest festivals. Depending on the species, the number of seeds in the fruit ranges from one to five.

Pick them when they easily pop off the stem, or you can collect undamaged or uninhabited fruit from the ground.





# heal the heart

This is a recipe that yields two products. Partnering with Hawthorn and other heart-supporting allies, we'll create both an infusion blend and an oil that you can turn into a salve. Crafting and utilizing both an internal and external application promotes healing within and without.

First set your intention. It can be based on the intention you set in our last lesson around protection, or it may be something else. Healing from heartbreak and grief, setting healthy boundaries in relationships, nurturing self-love – these are all worthy intentions for this medicine.



The herbs you'll need:  
Dried Hawthorn leaf & flower  
Dried Yarrow leaf & flower  
Dried Rose petals





# practice

Creating and applying these remedies is a self-care practice.

Take a moment to yourself to apply the medicine with care, being receptive to the power to expand, heal, and fortify the heart. In this video, I'll show you how I do it, but set your intentions and make it your own.





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# INFUSE



Giftzwerg 88

# hawthorn

part 4 – strength through challenge

*Gathering*  
GROUND



# INFUSE

It's Hawthorn Week 4!

This week we will work with the theme of strength through challenge. Hawthorn is a wise teacher in this regard.

We'll make a tincture with many parts of the tree, both fresh and dried. Then I'll show you how to make a liqueur, using the tincture as a base.

Finally we'll close out Hawthorn month with a meditation to harness your strength in challenging moments.

In good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.





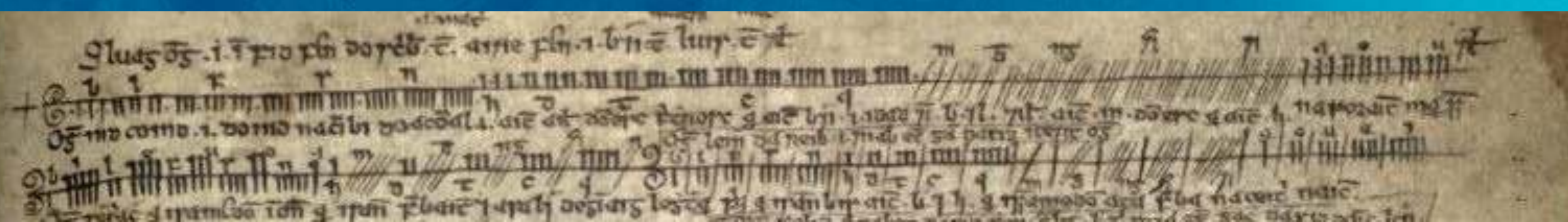


# Huath

In the Celtic Ogham runic type alphabet,  
Huath is the letter for Hawthorn.



Huath represents transformation through purification. Like a spiritual retreatant, one takes the time needed to face what lives in the heart. It is a challenge to look at the truth of the heart, but when we face what is there with pure intentions, we emerge with renewed strength and faith. Like the wise and wizened Crone who has lived and learned from difficult experiences, Huath reminds us that we grow by facing challenges.







Recall the twisted form of the Hawthorn trunk, the way it looks ancient and aged and formidably decked out with sharp thorns. Recall also the etymology of the name *Crataegus*, as strength (*kratos*) and sharp (*akis*).

Hawthorn wood is known for its strength and durability, and is used for tool handles, walking sticks, and wands. In that way the wood is a conduit to action – for mending, fixing, building, mobility, and magic making.

wood



# pop culture

Inspired no doubt by British folklore, in the Harry Potter-verse, the story of Hawthorn wands is complex, much like the magic and medicine of this tree.

*Hawthorn wands may be particularly suited to healing magic, but they are also adept at curses, and I have generally observed that the hawthorn wand seems most at home with a conflicted nature, or with a witch or wizard passing through a period of turmoil.*

*Hawthorn is not easy to master, however, and I would only ever consider placing a hawthorn wand in the hands of a witch or wizard of proven talent, or the consequences might be dangerous. Hawthorn wands have a notable peculiarity: their spells can, when badly handled, backfire.*







## Constituents & Nutrients

Primarily flavonoids (leaf and flower) and procyanidins (fruit), also triterpene and phenolic acids, crategolic acid, citric acid, tartaric acid, sugars, glycosides, pectin, saponins, tannins, selenium, chromium, B vitamins, vitamin C

## Actions

amphoteretic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antispasmodic, anxiolytic, astringent, carminative, cholesterol lowering, circulatory stimulant, digestive, diuretic, expectorant, hypotensive, mild sedative, tonic, vasodilator

features





## Conditions

ADHD, abdominal distention, angina, anxiety, arrhythmia, arteriosclerosis, boils, cough, diarrhea, dysentery, fluid retention, hypercholesterolemia, hypertension, hypotension, indigestion (esp. stuck food, esp. meat), migraines, palpitations, poor memory, stagnation, stones/tumors, tightness and/or weakness around heart, valvular insufficiency

## Precautions

Hawthorn may lower blood pressure so those with hypotension (low blood pressure) should use with caution. People taking Beta-blockers for hypertension may need a dose adjustment – be sure to consult with a qualified healthcare practitioner if this is the case.

features



# actions

Hawthorn, particularly the berries, has been utilized in Chinese Medicine for improving digestion and assimilation, particularly breaking down hard-to-digest meat and fats.

Interestingly there is a parallel with Chinese Medicine and Native American medicinal practices with this herb. For example, in both Cherokee and Chinese herbal practice, Hawthorn berries are taken to increase appetite. Potawatomi people use Hawthorn fruit for digestive complaints, too.







To review, here are some of the  
benefits of Hawthorn:

mildly soporific & anti-anxiety  
antioxidant & anti-inflammatory  
alleviates cold & flu symptoms  
soothes the physical & energetic heart  
encourages healthy digestion  
regulates heart rate  
lowers blood pressure  
lowers blood cholesterol  
relieves angina  
eases grief & heartache

benefits



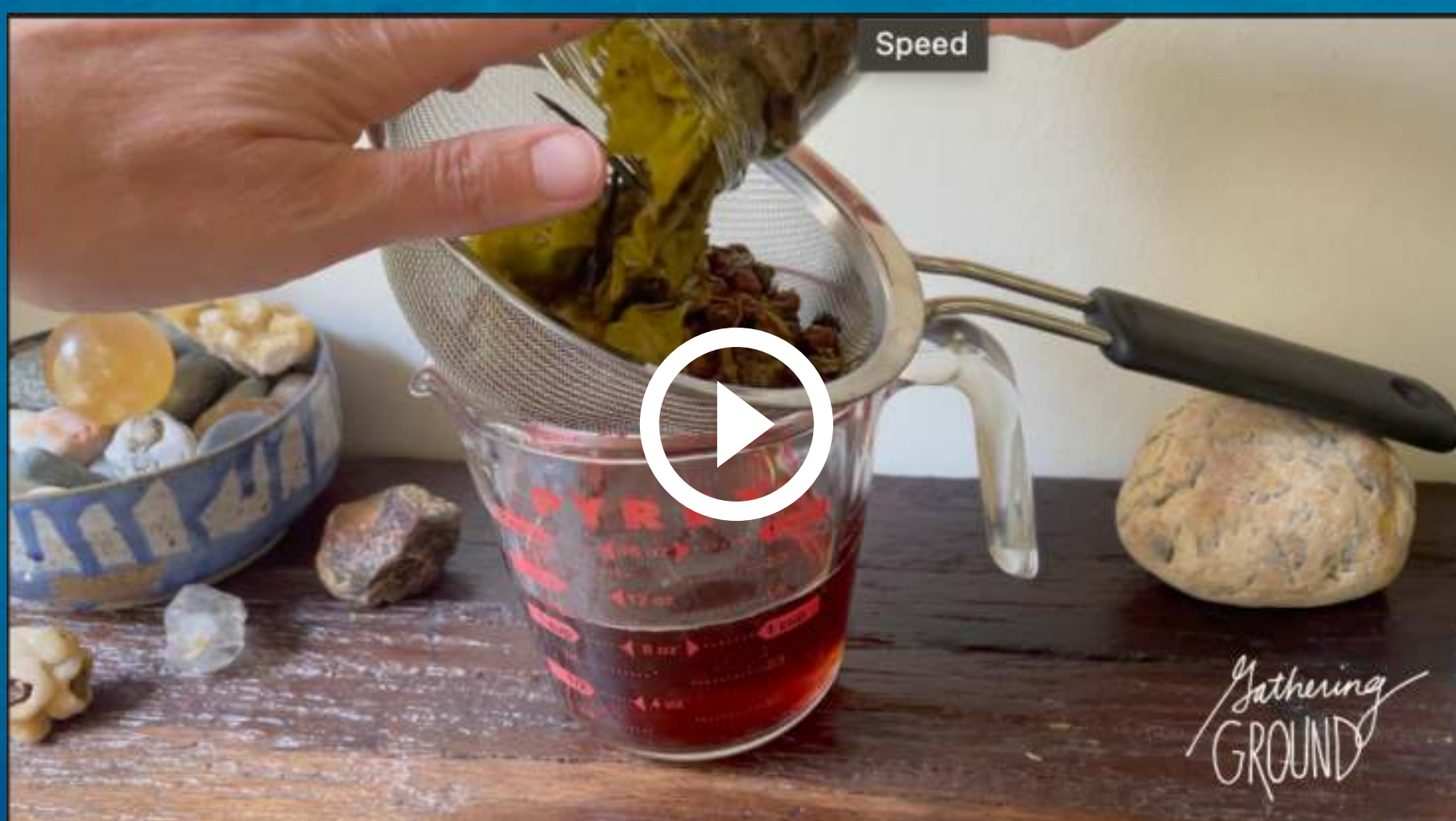
# tincture

## Flower, Leaf, Thorn & Berry Tincture

Tinctures are shelf stable, portable extracts of medicinal plants that make taking herbs more convenient. They are usually alcohol based, but they could also be vinegar or glycerin based as well.

Each menstruum or medium extracts chemical constituents of the plant differently.

In this video I'll show you how to make a tincture with fresh Hawthorn leaves, twigs, and thorns combined with dried Hawthorn fruit, flowers, and leaves in brandy.





# liqueur

Using the tincture recipe as a base, you can craft this liqueur to enjoy as a relaxing digestive before, during, or after meals.

One way to serve it is in a bit of sparkling water over ice.

I was inspired by Rosemary Gladstar's method of liqueur making for this recipe.

Click on through to watch how it's made.





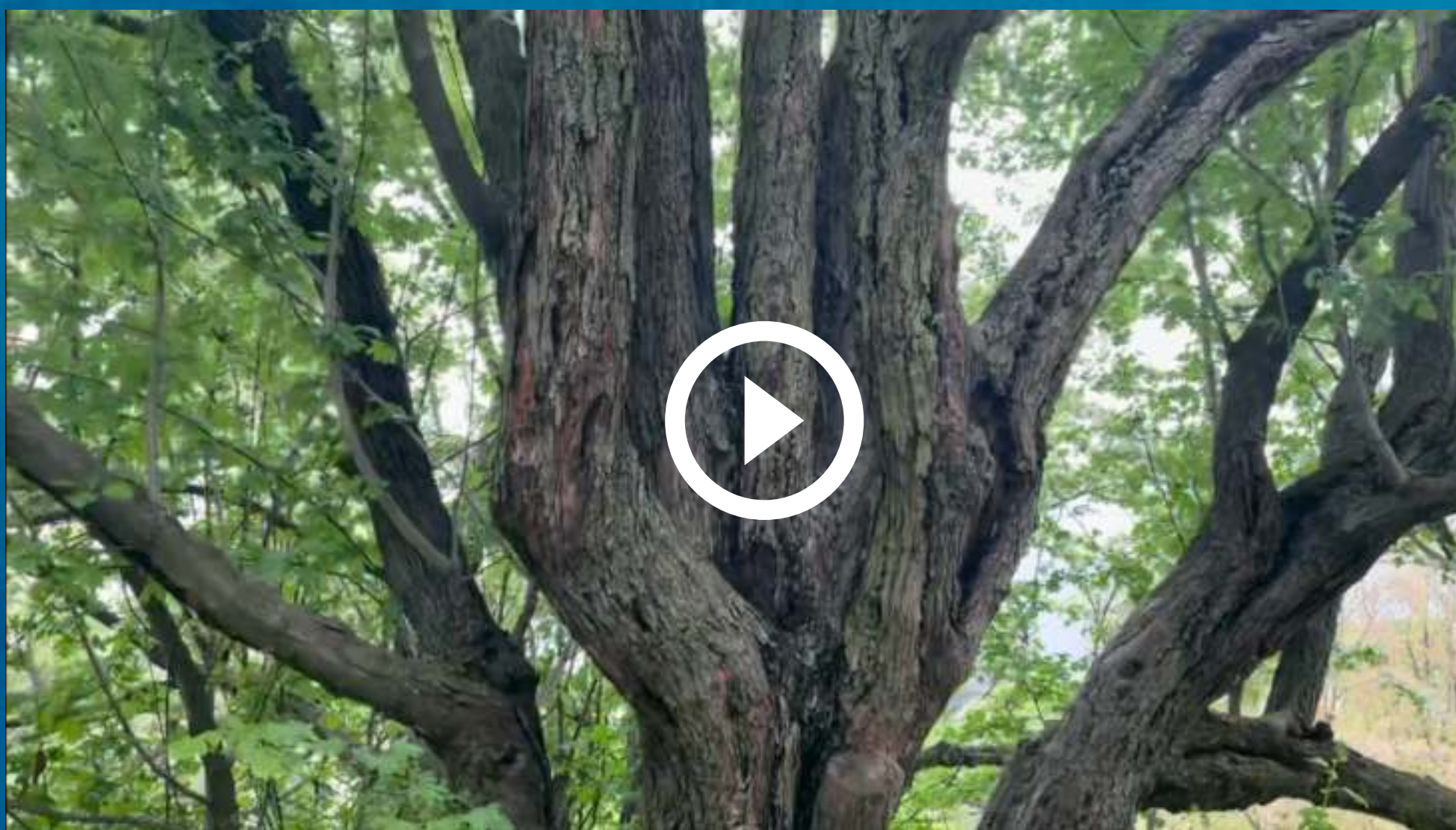
# meditation

Hawthorn has a certain power to soften the hardness built up in our hearts, while almost paradoxically fortifying our hearts with strength.

In this meditation we will take on the perspective of the wise old Hawthorn tree to find strength of the heart in difficult circumstances.

Before you begin, call to mind a challenge you are facing. You may want to journal about it first or write it down.

I will guide you in the meditation to explore this challenge by embodying Hawthorn.  
(Click through the image below to begin...)





# disclaimer

The statements herein have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The recipes and information in this course are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

This course is also not meant to replace medical care. If you are in need of medical assistance, please reach out to a qualified healthcare practitioner.



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