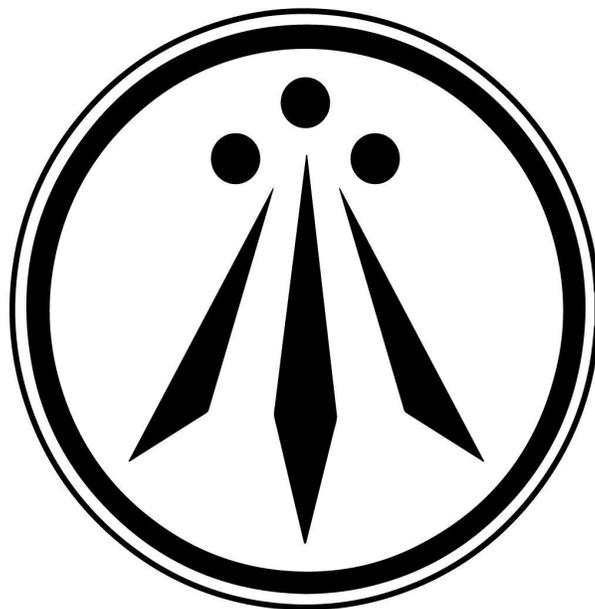


**Temples in the Backyard:  
Druid Home Gardens and the Spiritual Relationship with Plants**



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## Abstract

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Druidry is a neopagan set of nature-based spiritual beliefs and practices formed from shifting depictions of Iron Age Celtic priests and a cultural revival movement in the British Isles from the 18th century onward. By the middle of the 20th century, Druidry was flourishing and saw the rise of various Druid groups like the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. My interest in Druidry lies in the spiritual relationship between Druids and plants, with a focus on the influence that this spirituality has on their home gardens. Over the course of two months, ten Druids' home gardens were visited. Plant inventories were recorded to look for possible key plants, while interviews focused on the influence of their spirituality and the relationship each informant had with their gardens. The classic image of Druids in western media is that of the wise old man separated from society, but the informants that I met with challenge this image. From my garden inventories, a number of key plants were found to be revered as spiritually significant to Druidry, with plant lore from Druidic literature supporting these selections. From the time spent with my informants, there became a clear support to the notion that Druidry has an influence on garden plant selection and feelings toward those plants. I found what I describe as a cyclical relationship between Druidry and environmentalism, and my research may serve as a solid case study for spiritual ecology and the interplay between spirit and nature.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

“Druidry is a spiritual path rooted in a love of trees and the land, of tradition and old stories, but it is not a spirituality that advocates a passive and merely mystical appreciation of these things. Instead it is a way of being in the world, of living one’s life, that is hands-on, that is actively magical without denying the need for times of mystical union” (Billington, 2011). Druidry, Druidism, Neo-Druidry, and Modern Druidry are all terms that can describe the neopagan spiritual path of today. It is a path of reverence for nature, awareness of the seasons, and a love and appreciation for life itself. Most often referred to as “Druidry”, this path is best described as a nature-based spiritual movement born out of Romanticism in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its base is formed from the image of iron age Druids\*, and expanded upon by a revival of Celtic folklore. As Druidry flourished in the 20th century alongside other neopagan movements, groups including the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids and the Ancient Order of Druids in America have more members today than ever before. The Druidic path is one that offers a reconnection to the nature around us, where we can take inspiration from the natural world and Otherworld both for creative pursuits and purpose in life. For my paper, I’m interested in finding whether Druidry has an influence on practicing Druids’ gardens, and what the details of that influence may be. I first had the idea to study the Druids last October, inspired by my excitement for my Samhain in England and enhanced by the experience of a true autumn full of fallen oak leaves. By the time December rolled in, and the time for abstract submissions reared its head, I had already written two other abstracts when the thought entered my mind: “*What do Druids plant in their gardens?*” Moving beyond wanting to find just *what* Druids were planting in their garden, I wanted to understand the role that Druidry might have on the home garden itself. In this case, I’m defining “home garden” as: The green space in a home’s front yard, backyard, or urban patio area where plants are grown, including potted plants and raised beds. While indoor “house plants” may not be part of the garden itself, I chose to count them as being part of a house or apartment’s overall home garden. In looking at the *role* of Druidry in these gardens, my aim was to ask, “Do spiritual beliefs/practices influence plant selection and human-plant relationships in English Druids’ home gardens?”

*\*Based on the books referenced throughout this dissertation and as respect to the title/role, the word “Druid” will be capitalized at all times.*

I aimed to achieve this through the process of visiting Druid informants for plant inventories and semi-structured interviews. From the garden inventories, key plants may be found to be important to Druidry, either as a generally sacred plant or important to the individual Druid. Following the inventories, interviews expanded the discussion on the relationship between Druid and garden. The significance or contribution of this research for the wider realm of ethnobotany could be seen as substantive. To date, I have not found any other academic papers looking into Druidic spirituality and its relationship with / role in gardens. My research provides new information on Druidic gardening, exploring an area previously unstudied. It can also serve to shed light on the wealth of traditional spiritual practices and beliefs, both related to plant uses and in general, that exists and can be researched within Western cultures. Rather than focusing the lens on indigenous religions elsewhere, Neopaganism in the West can offer new insights into human-plant relationships and spiritual ecology. Spiritual ecology, in context with this paper, looks at the relationship between religion and nature. Or, just as Sponsel wrote in his reflections on this field of study, the wording of “spirituality” is meant to broaden research outside traditional definitions of “religion” (Sponsel, 2008). This sentiment meshes well with my study of Druidry, as many Druids stray away from identifying Druidry as an organized religion. Spiritual ecology then may be where the theoretical home of this research lies, with emphasis on the role that spiritual beliefs and practices play in a Druid’s interaction with nature (in this case specifically within the garden). Looking through the lens of spiritual ecology also places value on the meeting point between spirituality and environmentalist efforts. As will be discussed toward the end, many of my informants talked to me about how their spiritual lives play into the way they connect with and seek to aid the natural world, and I will elaborate on my view of a cyclical relationship between environmentalism and Druidry’s nature-based beliefs.

The second chapter of this paper will be describing the methods used during my fieldwork season, looking into the hows and wheres of the actual research being carried out. Chapter three is the background section of the paper, giving relevant ethnographic context as well as an exploration of the history of modern Druidry and more information on the core organized group of which most of my informants were members. The fourth chapter will look at the image of the Druid from western media, and how this image is challenged or redefined by the informants I have met with. Following these background sections, the paper will move into the “results” chapters, looking at key plants from the garden inventories and key practices from interviews. The final chapter of the paper will be built around discussion on major themes brought to light by the topic, supporting the overall thesis: Druidic spirituality plays a role in the selection of and relationships with plants in English Druids’ gardens.

## Chapter 2: Learning From Druids

The central focus of my research was to visit and examine the home gardens of Druids. The primary method at the centre was carrying out inventories of their gardens while asking for plant uses along the criteria of spiritual, medicinal, ornamental, food, and/or if the plant was wild/unintentional. My inventory allowed for overlap of these criteria / multiple purposes for one plant. I planned to visit a minimum of ten informants' gardens across the UK. The usual inventory procedure was conducted by going with the Druid into their back garden first, starting at a corner near the doorway and following a relatively circular direction around the entire garden. During this stage, I took photographs of all plants that the Druids and I were unable to identify at the time. All photos were taken by smartphone. After going through the back garden, we would go through a similar procedure for the front yard as well as adding any indoor plants to the list. Following the inventory, I sat down with each Druid and recorded a brief semi-structured interview comprised of 7 or 8 questions regarding their garden and spirituality. Some of the set questions were altered per individual context, and interviews later in the fieldwork season had more questions than previous interviews as I came up with more questions based on earlier meetings. Despite the set questions, each interview allowed for conversations to move to other (sometimes unrelated) topics in between questioning. All interviews were recorded by the voice recorder app on my smartphone and handwritten notes were taken during our conversations. In between garden visits, I built a spreadsheet with the locations of all informants and cost of each trip in order to keep track of and plan my trips. Garden inventories were written by hand while on my visits, so after all visits were completed all plant lists were typed out on a word document. Next, all recorded interviews were transcribed to a single word document. Using plant keys, websites like RHS.org, and some apps, I was able to identify a handful of the unknown plants. Though some plants remain unidentified, nearly all of these plants were unintentional (wild/self-seeded) or planted by previous owners. I repeatedly sorted through the inventories until I came to a list of the top plants present in at least half of all gardens visited. From these top plants, I looked for spiritual significance in pursuit of what could be seen as "key Druidic plants". I originally considered looking for measurements of "Druidness", such as certain key plants or practices that signify who is "more authentically Druidic". After my interviews and reading further literature, I felt that there was a strong sense that no individual should be labelled as "more Druidic" than another. As mentioned previously, the fluidity of Druidry allows for every individual to define their own kind of Druidic path, so to label one informant as "more druid" than others seems unfair and inaccurate.

Originally, I had hoped to go to all nations within the UK for a broader sense of “UK Druids”. Due to time, cost, and the informants who reached out to me, all ten Druid informants were in England. Over the course of my fieldwork, I visited six different counties: Kent, Essex, Cornwall, Somerset, Warwickshire, and East Sussex. I did not visit any Druid gardens in Somerset, but instead attended an OBOD summer gathering in Glastonbury where I was able to introduce myself and my research topic to some informants. Due to the ease of time and cost, five of my ten Druids lived within Kent and two were in East Sussex (the other counties had one each). Of my core Druids, nearly half were in their early to late sixties, with the youngest informant aged 43 and the oldest aged 72. Most informants have been practicing Druidry for at least a decade, with some counting more than twenty years, and my two youngest informants both practicing Druidry for less than five years.

Over the course of the post-fieldwork writing season, I kept in contact with my ten informants to ask follow-up questions alongside analysis. Given the endless forms of an open spirituality so individually-defined as Druidry, it’s easy to see the limitations that come with visiting ten Druids in total. My results can be heavily changed by which individuals I happened to be able to visit. Finding even ten informants within the given time proved to be a challenge, and most of my Druid-searching was conducted through the use of the internet. Had I been able to find more Druids through finding group meetings in person, or if I’d discovered certain online groups earlier in the summer, I would have had an entirely different group of ten to visit. I also got the sense from some emails and online comments that many opted not to contact me based on their feeling that they lived too far away from Kent for me to visit them. Toward the latter half of my fieldwork, I had worried that I might not find enough people to visit before July came, and actively looked for more Druids in Kent to fit in faster day trips. It was only after my time socializing with OBOD members in Glastonbury that I had been informed of different Facebook group page for OBOD members than the official page, which led to many potential informants sadly reaching out too late. As will become apparent in the second half of the next chapter, it could be said that my research may be limited in its strong affiliation with members of OBOD. I am very grateful for the support I have had via *Touchstone* magazine and the OBOD Facebook pages, but having eight of my ten Druids being members of OBOD (though some less active in the community than others) no doubt affected the type of Druidry I was able to experience. Only two Druids I’d met (with the same garden) had talked to me about the British Druid Order, and there are many groups I’ve had no contact with at all (or might not even know about). For example, while in Cornwall I had attempted to reach out to two separate pages for local Druid and pagan communities, but having only four days in the area limited me to meeting the one Druid I’d made plans with prior to the excursion.

I was hoping to make deeper contact with these groups for a possible second visit to Cornwall, but these plans unfortunately never came to fruition. Some Druids had to cancel plans to meet up, and a bad day of closed train lines cost me a trip to Devon, again changing who became my core ten informants. Following the writing season once fieldwork was finished, I periodically sent more questions to informants via online messaging (as mentioned earlier). I found it easier and faster to communicate with those who I'd been able to contact via social media's instant messaging, again limiting which informants could provide deeper explanations about specific plants and holidays.

Throughout this paper, quotes will be given directly as transcribed from interviews. Pseudonyms have been given to maintain a sense of anonymity, but to keep with the creative spirit of Druidry and add some fun involvement, I decided to ask my informants to create their own pseudonyms. For those who did not give me names, I've tried to come up with names that draw upon themes from informal conversations during time spent together.

## **Chapter 3: Ethnographic Context**

“Druidry” is a neopagan set of spiritual beliefs and practices centered on the historical depictions of Celtic priests of Gaul and the British Isles (thought to have been called Druids) from the Iron Age. Neopaganism, or Modern Paganism, can be seen as an umbrella term to refer to many different spiritual movements looking to revive or take influence from religions of the past (often specifically pre-Christian). Very little information about the original Druids exists, and relies heavily on Greco-Roman writers from the 1st century BCE, expanded upon by written accounts from monks during the Christianization of Ireland and authors from late 18th century Romanticism.

According to Ronald Hutton in *The Origins of Modern Druidry*, the first spark of interest in reviving the Druid archetype likely began during Europe's Renaissance, amid a growing desire for connecting new national identities to a sense of ancestral history. While it took some time for the Druid to reappear in English folklore, the Irish had already been writing about Druids in theirs. They were described as including both Bards and advisors to rulers, while sometimes seen at times as enemies to Ireland's Christianization. From the 15th century into the 18th, ideas about Druids shifted back and forth, featuring as characters in plays and representations of pre-Christian Britain. English science began taking an interest in the many megalithic structures around the British Isles, and ancient Druids naturally became associated.

In Wales, medieval bards were often the central focus, up until similar interest in Druids came alongside Celtic revivalism with the English (Hutton, 2005). The cultural movements toward Druidic identity among the Welsh and English from the 18th century onward is known to some as the beginning of the “Druid revival” period. An antiquarian by the name of William Stukeley became increasingly interested in the Druids during the 1720s, becoming “the first modern person to identify himself completely with them and to take the name of Druid” (Hutton, 2005). By the 1740s, Stukeley published his own book that solidified the connection of Druids to Britain’s Megaliths. From this point on, Stonehenge has been a location often seen as sacred to Druids. While archeology shows that it was constructed long before the time of the Druids (Stonehenge falls within the Bronze Age while original Druids were Iron age), it’s unknown whether this site was a sacred space for Druids until the formation of Neo-Druidry.

In time, the image of Druids started to merge with the popular trend of societies and clubs (some of them having Stukeley as a member). In 1781, the Ancient Order of Druids was first to be founded. It was also during the 18th century that “ornamental hermits” became a popular trend among some wealthy landowners, who would pay for a “hermit” to wear costumes and live in ornamental gardens for added aesthetic. This practice of garden hermitage is believed to have originated somewhere in Southern Europe, but as the trend reached the British Isles it seems likely that these hermits had some role in solidifying the imagery of Druids in popular culture. This phenomenon may also act as an early connection between Druidry and gardening. Eventually some began a shift into religious practice, heavily influenced by a Welsh writer around the end of the 18th century who went by the name Iolo Morganwg. Hutton states in *Blood and Mistletoe* that by the 20th century, Morganwg had been found to have fabricated many of his tales. Still, his influence remained significant in the development of neo-Druidic religion and many choose to look at his works as metaphors for creative inspiration. Others may try to distance themselves and focus on older cultural mythologies (Hutton, 2009).

Druidry flourished in the 20th century with the formation of groups like the Universal Bond or Ancient Druid Order (“ADO”), and later the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. The “OBOD”, as with a handful of other contemporary Druidic groups, are flexible in their self-perception and tend not to claim to be an organized religious group. Within the OBOD itself, there is a sense that individuals of all faiths can join or practice Druidry, seeing its spirituality more akin to practice and philosophy. Despite this wide fluidity of identities and personal beliefs that may come into play for each Druid, all Druidry comes together under a specific respect for and spiritual adherence to nature and the changing seasons.

Spiritual inspiration can come to a Druid from a certain deity (some Druids are polytheistic, others duotheists and pantheists), specific spirits, or simply from connection with nature itself. In Druidry there also exists a divine creativity or energy of inspiration known as “Awen”. The output of this inspiration tends to channel creative output, aiding in one’s poetry or other mediums of art. There exists a Druidic calendar, consisting of important seasonal events that may be celebrated in gatherings or alone. While there are gatherings for the seasonal festivals, many Druids prefer to do their practices at the individual level/from home. Due to this, home gardens have become a way for these Druids to further express and practice their beliefs. Gardens are seen as a place for meditation, inspiration, and a starting-point connection to the nature around us. I have yet to find ethnographic works on Druid gardening, nor specific Druidic texts on gardening methods, but I have found mention of gardens as having value in the lives of Druids. Penny Billington writes on the importance of having a “path from nature table or altar to compost heap or garden” in *The Path of Druidry* (Billington, 2011).

In my quest to find Druids to meet with, the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids was the first major organized group of Druidic practitioners I came across online. Reaching out to the OBOD proved to be fruitful, as those behind the official OBOD email were very supportive. An introduction to my research was published in a magazine run for their members, *Touchstone*, allowing for readers to reach out to me. Additional use of their Facebook page and related Facebook group pages (including “OBOD Friends”) helped with finding many of the Druids that I met with. Out of respect and gratitude toward OBOD, as well as to provide deeper context for some of the terms that will be used later, I wanted to provide further background on the development of OBOD and its three-grade system. The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids was founded by Ross Nichols in 1964. Nichols separated from the Ancient Druid Order (ADO) following the election of a new Druid Chief, and decided to form his own Druid Order (Carr-Gomm, 2006). Over the following decades, Nichols’ new OBOD grew to be one of the largest organized groups of Druids in the world. Wicca (a neopagan spirituality separate from Druidry) is perhaps one of today’s more widely known neopagan belief systems, has its roots close to those of Druidry. The founder of Wicca (Gerald Gardner) was known to be friends with with Nichols, and both were at one point Druid members of the ADO. Like Nichols, Gardner eventually separated from the ADO to develop the Wiccan belief system (Carr-Gomm, 2006).

Nichols passed in 1975, and over a decade later Philip Carr-Gomm was asked to lead as the new Chosen Chief. Carr-Gomm is an author with a background in psychology and psychotherapy, who has known Ross Nichols from a young age and has published numerous works on Druidry and “Druidcraft”, a combination of Druidic and Wiccan spiritual practices. It was under Carr-Gomm that OBOD developed its set of coursework into its system of globally-available distance learning.

OBOD is organized as a three-grade system, which look to have evolved from the “divisions of the Bardic order” described by Iolo Morganwg (Hutton, 2009). In OBOD, each grade is achieved via sets of coursework that is periodically sent out to its members. While the three grades have a relative hierarchy in terms of progression from one to the next, it is explicitly stated in multiple works and by many of my informants that there is no true hierarchy among the Druids. The self-initiatory design of the OBOD grades is built around members completing the coursework mailed to them, eventually graduating/achieving the title of that grade, and then moving to the next grade’s coursework if interested in going further. Some members may move up the grades quickly, others may take their time. Generally, there looks to be no pressure to move through the coursework as quickly as possible. Instead, the idea is to take coursework at your own pace, using the Druid path meld with your personal and spiritual needs. Of the core ten Druids that I visited in person, eight were affiliated with OBOD. Four were working on Bardic coursework, three on Ovate, and one has completed the Druid course. But what do each of these grades mean? Phillip Carr-Gomm once described them as: “Bardic teachings help to develop our creativity, Ovate teachings help to develop our love for the natural world and the community of all life, and Druid teachings help us in our quest for wisdom”, but let’s explore them further.

The initiatory grade for OBOD members setting off on their Druidic journey is that of the Bard. Bards, and the Bardic coursework, are based in the key aspect of creativity. Bards, originally a medieval class of Gaelic and Welsh professional poets, have been for centuries solidified in western culture as the archetypal storytellers and cultural historians. Penny Billington writes that Bards “were the repository of tribal knowledge, which they disseminated through story and performance.” Thus, the Bardic course of OBOD is built around channeling Awen and your inner creativity. Awen, as mentioned previously, is a Welsh-originating term that’s come to be understood as a sort of “flowing spirit of inspiration that can be accessed by the poet.” Iolo Morganwg is thought to have introduced the term in his 19th century work titled *Bardas* (Billington, 2011). The Awen symbol itself, depicted as three rays of light accompanied by three circles or dots above, is a significant symbol in Druidry today.

Many Druids who I've contacted over these past months tend to end their comments or emails with the Awen, depicted as “/|\” in-text. Drawing from Awen, as well as inspiration from nature and Celtic mythology, OBOD members studying the Bardic grade discover and hone this energy through the creative medium of their choice. Bards are traditionally seen as singers and poets, and the coursework within OBOD looks at this while expanding the sources of creative power and self expression to their fullest potential. One Druid I met with, Bee, has been studying as a Bard for nearly a year now and spoke fondly of the creative expression discovered through coursework: *“I started writing poetry while doing the Bard course, and I'd never done it before. What I was finding was that I was putting my poems out there online and people were really loving them. I've always been a visual artist, but I've never found people connect to it [their visual art] on the level that they're connecting when they're reading my words. It's quite spiritual as well, I'm finding that it's really fulfilling.”* It is also during the Bardic coursework that members will be taught rituals and meditation exercises fundamental to Druidry today. On the topic of ritual, Bee had this to say: *“What Druidry has taught me, although it seems strange, I'm learning the significance of ritual. We all have ritual in our daily lives, just a little diluted. Creating that sacred space is a real amazing psychological tool to get yourself into a zone, a learning zone or a calm zone, somewhere where you're able to focus. It is like meditation just in itself, and you know that you're doing something that feels good for you, your soul, your mind and your heart. You know that you're doing something valuable, and good for whatever else you choose to do outside of that, like some of the decisions I'm making in daily life. So I create a little ritual, read a little chapter from the studies, and then they give you a practical exercise to do – it could be a visualization or something like that – and then you write notes down in your journal and reflect on that”* (Bee, informant #2). The Bard is the performer, but they are also the ever-vital keeper of cultural history through stories of past and present. In OBOD the Bard is associated with the Birch tree [*Betula*]. Birch trees are regarded as “pioneer trees”, representing new beginnings and matching well with the energy of those just starting their Druidic path.

The second grade in the Order is the Ovate, referred to in the introductory package as the “diviners and natural philosophers”. It is during this grade that coursework dives deeper into spiritual practices, herbalism, and looking within. Billington writes that while the Bard is still largely tied to the “apparent world”, the Ovate removes themselves to look inward to “Annwn, the place of inner creation.” Of the three Druids I met with who are in the Ovate grade, William was the only one to directly describe aspects of the Ovate coursework.

William listed the encouragement to go out and build a relationship with trees and of breaking yourself down to look at why you are on your Druidic path. In Penny Billington's book, she writes about Ovates' daily walks in nature, preferably in more wild areas if possible. There are sections on the connection between trees and Ovates, learning the Ogham (a medieval alphabet related to early Irish), and of healing magic through herbalism. William described seven sacred herbs, learned through the Ovate course, most of which were planted in his garden. It is interesting when Billington states that Ovates should give themselves the "luxury of time", as William shared with me his experiences in choosing to start the Ovate coursework over for a second run-through. Although technically finishing the coursework early last year, William felt that the content learned as an Ovate should not be rushed. *"Coming from an academic and task-oriented mindset, the decision to intentionally slow down and take time to really go through everything has been a life-changing lesson"* (William, informant #9). Bards are associated with the color blue, and both Iolo Morganwg's descriptions and Penny Billington's book associate Ovates with the color green. To Morganwg, the green worn by Ovates signified the study of science and literature. Green is seen as the powerful color of nature as well, from trees and fields to houseplants and weeds in a city centre. This Green symbolism is personified by figures like the "Green Man" and the "Green Knight of Arthurian legend" (Billington, 2011).

The third and final grade is the Druid itself. All who follow Druidry can informally refer to themselves as being Druids, but some of my OBOD informants felt they weren't yet ready to refer to themselves by this title (calling themselves Bard or Ovate instead). As many OBOD members do not move beyond the Bard and Ovate grades, the sentiment seems to be that the number of those achieving the title of Druid is much lower. From my interviews, and in my general research of OBOD, there is never the impression that Druids are necessarily "better" or "more Druidic" than those remaining in the other two grades. Some informants just stated that the OBOD Druid coursework is significantly harder. In the introductory package, Druids are said to study both "natural philosophy and moral philosophy". When talking about the difference between the grades, William had this to say: *"Somebody once described it to me as, The Bardic Grade gets you to look at what you've got, the Ovate gets you to pull it down, and the Druid grade gets you to rebuild it."* Druids are described as wearing the archetypal white robes, associated with sanctity and dedication to spirituality. They are seen as judges, advisors, teachers, and peacemakers. For Billington, Druids' are tasked with "emerging from the Ovate forest" to use their knowledge for the world. The grade of Druids is one of experience and truth-seeking, drawing from past reflection and taking time to guide others.

## Chapter 4: What does a Druid look like?

If you're like me, the first media to introduce the terms "Druid" and "Bard" in your life was the globally popular game *Dungeons & Dragons*. For this chapter, let's dive deeper into the image or archetype of "the Druid" in Western culture, and how that image compares to contemporary reality. According to Ronald Hutton in *The Origins of Modern Druidry*, the earliest recorded or surviving visualization of Druids comes via a book published in 1676 by Aylett Sammes: "He solved the problem of how to portray the Druids by bringing in help from the Germans. Back in the 1500s one of these, a poet, had described some statues that he had seen in a monastery enclosure in Bavaria, as ancient images of Druids ... It showed an elderly man with a long beard, in a hooded cloak and robe, carrying a staff and wearing an expression at once genteel, wise and compassionate. This was reproduced again and again in publications during the next hundred years" (Hutton, 2005). The reproduction of this illustration played a part in the foundation of both the image of Druids and wizards, claiming a direct line between Sammes and Tolkien's Gandalf. Somewhere in time, both along this line and predating the poet's descriptions, came the Arthurian figure of Merlin. The earliest recorded instances of a Merlinesque figure comes from early medieval Welsh poetry describing a character known as Myrddin. Myrddin, or Myrddin Wyllt, looks to have been described as a wise Bard serving a king (Knight, 2008). In some of the stories, Myrddin becomes the archetypal "wild man", said to have gone mad after witnessing a war and leaving society to live in the forest. It's possible that these images of a chief Bard turned wild man could have played a role in Iolo Morganwg's depictions of Druids mentioned earlier, combining elements of nature connection with keepers of historic knowledge and myths. In time, Myrddin was adapted into today's more famous figure of Merlin, the wizard (or Druid to many) of Arthurian legend. Drawing from these images, we see the foundation of a magico-religious figure and possible hybrid of two archetypal characters: wild man and wise old man. As the wild man, the Druid in Western culture become one who is separated from society, retreating to the forest to act as a connection with and representation of true (wild) nature. This could be tied to instances of the popular "Garden Hermits" of the 18th century. Our friend William Stukeley becomes relevant once again, who according to Gordon Campbell in *The Hermit in the Garden*, was "the central character in the story of the emergence of the hermitage in the garden." In the year of 1726 (possibly around the time that he was researching Druids) Stukeley had written of an "irresistible impulse" to leave London. He left to Lincolnshire to become a country doctor, and by the next year was writing letters to friends describing elements of his home garden that resembled a "Druidic grove".

Some years later, Stukeley constructed a “Druidic” stone circle and hermitage within his garden, a sketch of which can be seen today at the Bodleian Library (Campbell, 2013). Beyond Stukeley, the image of the Druid as both a wise and wild man significantly influenced the look of “ornamental hermits” that had become so trendy in Georgian gardens. For much of this time, Campbell states that Druids and ornamental hermits were overlapped, with stone circles and garden names attributed to being Druidic. These hermits, alongside legendary wizards of the woods, seem to have set the course for western depictions of how Druids may look and act.

Moving into the late 20th century, right around the time that Ross Nichols was founding his Order, a new Druid emerged in western media that grew to international fame: Getafix, or “Panoramix” in the original translation, from a popular French comic series called *Asterix*. Even as recent as the 1960s, the Druid character Getafix fits the classic stereotype: “He is a thin, elderly man with a beard that almost reaches his ankles. Clad in a white robe reminiscent of a monk’s cassock, always carrying the tool of his trade – a golden sickle which he uses to harvest mistletoe ... As a character, Getafix incarnates the Jungian archetype of the Wise Old Sage. His life is a peaceful one, spent on walks through the forest, concocting potions or advising either the village chieftain or the story protagonist” (Anczyk, 2015). Growing up in the American southwest, I had never heard of or seen this Getafix before. My first encounter was in mentions of his character by Druids I’ve met, and a Getafix pin attached to the vest of an OBOD member at the Glastonbury summer gathering. Around a decade after the *Asterix* comics, however, something entered the western world that set in stone the classic image of the Druid and was my first encounter with the term: *Dungeons & Dragons*. Often shortened to “D&D” or “DnD”, *Dungeons & Dragons* is a fantasy themed role-playing game born out of the mid 1970s. This tabletop game is built around one person serving as the game’s storyteller and moderator, guiding a plotline influenced by players’ in-game actions. Among this beautiful blend of casual math and improv acting comes a wide selection of playable races (from elves and dwarves to half-demons and lizardmen) and classes (from wizards and priests to knights and thieves) for players to construct their characters with. Both Druid and Bard are playable classes in *D&D*, arriving in game books as early as the original version but not playable until the late 1970s *Advanced First Edition*. Interestingly, this 1977 version of the Bardic class required a high level thief to leave behind thieving and begin studying Druid spells, stating that Bards must be under the tutelage of Druids. Even in this 1970s American role-playing game, Bards and Druids are found linked together with Druids as the mentor of Bards. While Bards from the start were listed as archetypal storytellers and poets, Druids in *D&D* began as one of two subclasses within the “Priest” class. Druids were seen as somewhere between cleric and magic-user (wizard), with neutral alignment and nature-based magic.

Said to have been loosely based on the true historical Druids, the role-playing class depicted nature-dwelling priests who could communicate (and shapeshift into) with animals. In the 1994 second edition's companion book, *The Complete Druid Handbook*, Druids were described as "Mysterious guardians of a sacred grove, wise counselors to monarchs, cunning masters of many shapes, friends of animals, and terrible defenders of unspoiled Nature" (Pulver 1994). It should be noted that the handbook directly states that *D&D* Druids are *not* the Celtic priests their name comes from, describing them as closer to Victorian Romanticism and separating them from "bloody rites that made the ancient druids infamous in the eyes of Rome." These rites likely refer to the stereotype of Druid practices involving human sacrifice, which seems to have occurred through the shifting image of Druids in Christianized Britain. Throughout the handbook, Merlin is mentioned for reference, but artwork depicts a wide range of what Druids could look like. Druidic orders, groves, and moots are also frequently mentioned; terms still used today by real Druids I've met with. From all these media representations (except perhaps *D&D*'s openness to character creation), the Druid emerges as a wholly male figure. Why, then, were the vast majority of my informants women?

Out of the ten informants whose gardens I visited, eight were women. Including informants' husbands who were also Druids, this number grows to eight women out of twelve. From eleven other Druids who were only contacted online, including one informant whose garden visitation I had to cancel, only three were men. Only one of them emailed back with interview questions answered, moving my total informant count to nine women and two men. This led to including a question about the gendered term "Druidess" in my interviews. All informants answered that the term "Druid" is a gender-neutral term, with Druidess being less common. Many of my informants brought up that original Druids in the past included both men and women. Historically, it is thought that female Druids did exist among the original Celtic priests. According to Hutton, the oldest possible recording of female Druids may be in an account by the Roman Tacitus around 60 CE, and the first possible female Druid by name in a fourth century Roman report. From Irish literature, Hutton found several accounts of "*bandrúí*" (woman-Druid), as in *Acallam na Senorach* and *Tain Bó Cualinge*. "Throughout the twentieth century these texts have featured as evidence that ancient Irish Druids admitted women." The Irish philosopher John Toland also wrote about Druids in a series of letters that were published after his death in 1722, in which he stated that women could be found in all Druidic ranks. (Hutton, 2009). On the topic of male and female Druids, Nahimana Tuwa had this to say: "*The ancient ancient Druids were male, but now it seems they're all female. Whether it's because men think hugging a tree isn't masculine enough, I don't know. To me, being a Druid is very powerful, but they might not think it's masculine enough.*"

*There are probably a lot of male Druids out there, but they wouldn't use that word. I think it's because nowadays it's not macho enough to be gentle and to love plants. The men are missing out, in my mind. If you wanna go hug a tree it doesn't make you less masculine"* (Nahimana Tuwa, informant #6).

During my visit to Glastonbury for the OBOD summer gathering, the group that participated looked to be equally numbered in gender. Due to the limitation of my ten informants and the focus of my paper, I can not confidently say why it is that female Druids were more likely to reach out to become informants. Perhaps with more time for more informants the numbers would balance out, or this could be a topic itself for further research.

## **Chapter 5: Garden Inventories**

After completion of all ten garden inventories, a total number of 230 plants were identified. The largest garden contained 89 different plants that could be identified at genus and species levels, with the smallest garden comprising of only 19 different identified plants. From the ten gardens visited, there was only one garden where all plants were identified by the Druids themselves. By the end of all garden inventories, a total of 48 different plants were unable to be identified. Nearly all of those that were unable to be identified were wild (self-seeded), planted by previous home owners, or were given as gifts. The family *Cactaceae* had about ten different individuals photographed from all gardens, with only the Christmas cactus [*Schlumbergera* sp.] being identified. Many of the 48 were left unidentified, as my focus was on plants with clear spiritual significance that could serve as potential key plants for Druidry. From photographs taken during inventories, none of the remaining unidentified plants looked to be repeats across gardens. The total list of 230 plants will be found at the bottom of the Appendix.

After sorting through all inventories, I cut the list down to 17 individual plants that were present in at least five of the ten gardens. From the 17, I have there were eight plants that were present in at least six gardens, six of which were in at least seven gardens. Only one plant was present in eight gardens: Lavender. The Lavender in the eight gardens is very likely to have been English Lavender [*Lavandula angustifolia* Mill.], while at least one garden identified both English lavender and French lavender [*Lavandula stoechas* L.] in their garden. From these top eight, I selected the top two plants (Lavender and Sage) to discuss further due to their spiritual significance.

Following these, I've chosen four other plants that were regarded as especially sacred, despite having appeared in only four or five gardens. Apple trees were the third highest plant from my inventories, but their main recorded use was as food. There was still some spiritual or existential connection, as with some informants naming their fruit trees or others feeling a strong connection to apple's "feminine energy", but I wanted to give space/priority to plants that had more to be said. The use of Oracle cards has been a significant reason for some plants' presence in gardens, which will be expanded upon later. Due to the prevalence of these cards, I will be citing the meanings for key plants that come from Druid-oriented Oracle decks.

Lavender [*Lavandula angustifolia* Mill.] was the highest recorded plant, appearing in eight of the ten gardens. Though often recorded as an ornamental plant in the inventories, some Druids listed them as spiritual. Two out of the eight lavender-growing informants listed them as spiritual during their inventory, and another two talked with me about spiritual uses for lavender when asked later (post-sorting). For the two informants who mentioned lavender as spiritual during the inventory, one was starting the Ovate course while the other was early in their Bardic course. The two others were also one Ovate and one Bard. All four informants listed the practice of burning lavender, either as part of a "smudge stick" or for other practices. "Smudging", the use of a smudge stick, is the act of burning a small bundle of certain herbs together (or a single specific herb) with the intention to "cleanse" the air or energy in a room (Miss Fernley Oakley, informant #1). Greenfae stated that the act of smudging actually comes from Native American spirituality, and that the practice has been taken into use by some neopagan groups including Druidry. The Scottish equivalent to smudging is known as "Saining", where "water blessed with fire and juniper sticks were used" (Greenfae, informant #10). During the inventory with Miss Oakley, lavender was said to be combined with sage to comprise her smudge sticks. Bee described smudging as something learned when studying shamanism rather than something learned via OBOD coursework. When asked about the lavender in their garden, Murtlemoss said "*It has been burnt in my fire pit during ritual and social pagan gatherings. I also dry and gift it to my pagan friends. From my garden I believe it holds the energies of sacred space*" (Murtlemoss, informant #8). For Greenfae, lavender is a plant used for "purification in bathwater", as well as being burnt for its scent to aid in "raising the spiritual vibration in preparation for ritual work." Additionally, "*Lavender is also burnt as an offering to the gods at midsummer, included in spells and petitions to do with love and relationships, and having lavender in the house encourages a calm environment*" (Greenfae).

Sage [*Salvia officinalis* L.] was the second highest plant from the inventories, appearing in seven gardens. Sage was recorded during inventories for its spiritual use as another component for smudge sticks, sometimes being combined with lavender. For Greenfae, sage is also burnt with mugwort [*Artemisia vulgaris* L.] for purification. Sage can also be a “mild hallucinogenic which allows travel to the Otherworld, especially if used with drumming” (Greenfae). The Otherworld in Druidry is the term for a metaphysical realm existing outside of our physical plane. During a column from Ben Sorensen’s *Druid Garden*, sage was described as a classic medicinal plant, hailed throughout history for its benefits: “Sage can help with many ailments and conditions. It was said by sniffing a fresh sprig of sage and placing it under your pillow it would relieve insomnia. Sage tea is said to be full of antioxidants and prevents strokes, strengthens the body, and helps with disorders of the glands.” (Sorensen, 2012).

The Oak tree [*Quercus*] is perhaps the plant most strongly associated with Druidry. Oak trees were found in four of the ten inventories, accounting for almost half of my visited gardens. At least two oak species were recorded, the English oak [*Quercus robur* L.] and turkey oak [*Quercus cerris* DC.], but it is possible that other oak species were present among the five gardens. A sixth informant expressed that they had an oak in the past that had died. When asked if they’d want another in their garden they expressed reluctance due to the fear that it could be cut down by new owners in the future. The connection that Druids have with oak trees is so significant that traditional belief states that Druids themselves are named after them. According to Philip Carr-Gomm, it is believed that “the term ‘Druid’ comes from the Celtic word for oak - *dru* - combined with the Indo-European root *wid* - ‘to know’ - making the Druid a ‘knower of the oak’ (Carr-gomm, 2006)”. One informant, Herne, had started a habit of collecting and repotting new oaks every time he’d found another self-seeded in the yard. I counted at least ten to fifteen small, potted oaks covering a table in the corner of his garden. It is one of the nine sacred trees, with *The Call to the Trees* [Fig. 1] beginning with listing the “Strength of Oak” (Aibell, informant #4). From the Oracle cards, oaks are associated with knowledge, fate, and prediction. For some, the Oak King is the personification of the waxing half of the year, reaching the height of his power at the time of Midsummer. From this point, the Oak King’s rule is challenged, and he is defeated by his eternal adversary: The Holly King. (Murtlemoss, informant #8).

Next to Oak, the Holly tree [*Ilex aquifolium* L.] is another highly sacred tree for Druidry. As mentioned above, the Holly King represents the waning half of the year, ruling over fall and winter following Midsummer. Opposite the Oak King, his inevitable defeat comes at the time of Midwinter/Winter Solstice. The rise and fall of the eternally battling Oak King and the Holly King's solstice events coincide with the changing of seasons. Days get longer while the Oak King is in power (spring and summer), while days shorten as winter nears and the Holly King rules. Holly's connection to winter is seen outside Druidry and Celtic lore today, becoming a key plant for the Christmas season throughout Western culture. Holly trees appeared in half of my inventories, with three of the five directly listing the tree as a spiritual plant. Miss Oakley referred to her holly tree as "essential to Druids" and Murtlemoss talked to me about the Holly King. Bee once resisted a neighbor's idea to cut down the holly in her garden, deciding that it would be "wrong to get rid of the Holly King." Aibell listed holly as one of Druidry's essential plants, associated the tree with "protection". From the *Spirit of Nature Oracle*, holly is said to "burn fiercest and hottest of all woods", and it is connected to energy and sacred fires. "Tinne", the Ogham for Holly, is said to mean "fire" and again associates this tree with sacred burnings (Matthews, 2003). In Murtlemoss's garden, the holly is associated with the South and was thus planted in the south of her sacred garden.

Hawthorn [*Crataegus monogyna* Jacq.] was described to me by Greenfae as being the "Faery tree": A tree on which faeries reside that brings bad luck to those who kill one. Hawthorn trees were only found in four of ten gardens, but three of the four were regarded by informants as sacred trees. Aibell referred to Hawthorn as a "Goddess tree", while Miss Oakley planted one in her garden due to its meanings in her Oracle cards. As an Oracle card, Hawthorn is associated with facing challenges and new opportunities. The tree is associated with the month of May, in turn connecting Hawthorn with the holidays of May Day and *Beltane*. *Beltane* falls on the same date as May Day (May 1st). The Hawthorn holds local cultural significance for its role in traditional May Day celebrations, where Hawthorn blossoms were worn by "May Queens" as crowns (Matthews, 2003). In an article from OBOD's online library, Mara Freeman described other significant spiritual elements attached to Hawthorn: "Even today many people will not allow the branches inside the house; for it is considered a tree sacred to the faeries, and thus to be regarded with fear at the least, respect at most. As such, it often stands at the threshold of the Otherworld" (Freeman, 2019). Hawthorn is also one of the three "Guardians" in the *Druid Plant Oracle*, an Oracle card and set of trees of high importance to Miss Oakley.

The sixth plant to discuss is the Hazel tree, likely the common hazel [*Corylus avellana* L.] and possibly others in the *Corylus* genus. Hazel trees were present in five of my ten gardens, with at least three informants associating Hazel as a spiritual tree. The Ogham for Hazel is “*Coll*”, and the tree is associated with wisdom and knowledge. During garden visits, one my informant Aibell brought up the story of the “Salmon of Wisdom” and its connection to Hazel: From Celtic myth, this Salmon resided in a lake or pond that was surrounded by sacred Hazel trees. Hazelnuts would fall into the water, and upon eating them, the Salmon gained all knowledge of the world. My informant in Cornwall regarded the Hazel tree as both sacred to Druids and to Celtic spirituality in general. From lore described in *The Spirit of Nature Oracle*, it is said that in Celtic literature there were heroes who ate the flesh of salmon and gained the wisdom that originated in the hazelnuts. Hazel is said to be associated with faeries like hawthorn, and that “two hazel trees growing close together form a gateway to the otherworld, and those who dare to pass between them are likely to find themselves in the faery kingdom” (Matthews, 2003).

The final key plant to discuss is Mistletoe [*Viscus album* L.]. While technically not planted in any of my informants’ gardens, at least four mentioned the presence of mistletoe hanging inside the house. Carr-Gomm writes in *The Druid Plant Oracle* that “Of all plants, Mistletoe is the most commonly associated with Druids. The Roman writer Pliny tells us that the Druids ritually gathered mistletoe from the Oak on the sixth day of the new moon” (Philip & Stephanie Carr-Gomm, 2007). Here, we can see that mistletoe sits beside oak in its significance to Druidic identity. When asked to think of any “essential plants” for Druidry, Bee talked with me about the mistletoe in her home and the annual ritual collection: “*Mistletoe is really important to the Druids, and I have mistletoe here above your head. That was collected in a ceremony in winter this year, where we went down at night and had a ritual, and cut off a load of mistletoe. We caught it in a sheet because it’s never supposed to touch the ground, as it’s unlucky. That will hang in my house all year. I’ve also got a sprig on my altar in my studio.*” Bee and two other informants from my meetings are associated with the same pagan Moot / meetup group, and all three talked about their collection of mistletoe during the winter. William, who I’d initially met at a gathering in Glastonbury and who is not part of the same Moot, also mentioned the mistletoe hung inside his home. *The Druid Plant Oracle* describes the “*Alban Arthan*” or Winter Solstice ceremony involving the lighting of candles and distribution of mistletoe among ceremony members. The ceremony is said to “symbolize the rebirth of the sun and the birth of the Mabon – the divine child that lives in each of us. Mistletoe is distributed to all, since mistle berries symbolize the power of this moment.” Its oracle card is also given associations to healing, fertility, and inspiration.

While I have attempted to select key plants from out of those found in my inventories, the strongest sentiment from interviews was that there are no “essential” plants for all Druids. One of my interview questions asked informants, “Are there any essential plants? What if you were to say ‘every Druid should have X in their home?’” Seven of my ten Druids expressed that there are none. For them, while there are sacred trees and sacred herbs for Druidry in general, the plants in one’s garden are determined by individual practices and environmental factors. Some specifically aimed for a native plants, while others felt it was really down to just whether a particular plant was able to be happy within your garden space. According to Greenfae, “*I think it’s very much a personal choice. It’s very much a personal spiritual choice. You’ll have some who will argue that you need this and that, but no I don’t think so. You go somewhere and build a connection and go, you know what, I need one of these. They have a choice too, and they choose to be happy and grow here. It’s not just because I’m watering them, you know. I’ve got some plants out there that I love very much, and they just die. Sometimes it works sometimes it doesn’t*”(Greenfae). This feeling about plants’ choice determining success was echoed by others, as with one couple I visited who described many plants in their gardens as “survivors” with resilient personalities. Interestingly, two of my three informants who did list essential plants for Druidry were those now studying the Ovate grade. For Miss Oakley, every Druid should try to have an Oak and Holly. For William, Vervain [*Verbena officinalis* L.] was possibly the most important plant for Druids, although he felt that not many Druids grew them in their own garden. It is one of the sacred herbs for Ovates, but was recorded in only two gardens: Miss Oakley’s and William’s. From the *Druid Plant Oracle*, Vervain can “stimulate the flow of Awen”, due to its presence as an ingredient for Ceridwen’s cauldron in the poem *The Chair of Taliesin*. It is associated with Awen and magic in general when drawn as an Oracle card (Philip & Stephanie Carr-Gomm, 2007).

## **Chapter 6: Druidic Practices**

There is a fluidity to Druidry not found in many spiritual paths; a self-aware freedom that allows the individual to shape the Druid’s path to their personal ontology. From the OBOD’s introductory package, Chosen Chief Philip Carr-Gomm states “Please remember that you are not obliged to blindly accept any of the ideas or methods presented to you. If you feel that certain aspects of the teachings do not speak to you, leave them aside” (Carr-Gomm, 2011). Many OBOD members mix other spiritualities into their Druid’s path, as with the Christian Druids of old, those who practice Druidcraft, or perhaps others studying Buddhism and Daoism.

From our interviews, I was able to pick out two practices that seem to be at the core of modern Druidry: Celebration of the seasons and practicing meditation. The maintenance of altars was a third practice that could be seen as key to Druidry, but due to limitations of time I was unable to see all informants' altars and did not ask enough about them. For this chapter, descriptions of each of the eight festivals will be given, followed by a section on Druid meditations at the end.

When asking my informants to think of essential practices for Druidry, half of them specifically brought up celebrating the eight seasonal holidays of the Druidic “Wheel of the Year” [Fig. 2]. Greenfae regarded the seasonal holidays as minimal to practicing Druidry, though the details of their celebrations are up to the individual. One garden I visited had special statues of the four seasons placed in the garden, which were rotated periodically so as to let the current season's statue take centre stage. Murtlemoss had statues that represented the eight festivals placed around the altar in her home. The “eight festivals” are as follows: *Imbolc*, *Alban Eilir*, *Beltane*, *Alban Hefin*, *Lughnasadh*, *Alban Elfed*, *Samhain*, and *Alban Arthan*. First there are four solar festivals, placed in the four cardinal directions on the Wheel of the Year. Winter solstice, or *Alban Arthan*, is set in the north and summer solstice (*Alban Hefin*) is placed in the south. The two equinoxes are *Alban Elfed* in the west and *Alban Eilir* in the east. The other half of the wheel is made out of four “agricultural festivals”, which can also be known as “fire festivals”. In Billington's *The Path of Druidry*, Ronald is quoted from his 1999 *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles* as stating that “the four great Irish quarter days (the four festivals) were celebrated all over the Gaelic areas of the British Isles ... But there is no sign that they held feasts at the equinoxes, nor at midwinter: they were interested in marking the opening of the seasons, not the range of the sun.” The modern festivals now have specific dates to help in organizing celebrations with friends, but those following Druidry should “always look for and mark the times of physical seasonal reminders regardless of date” (Billington, 2011). John Greer's *Druidry Handbook* claims that while many associate the eightfold year with ancient origins, the wheel as it is known now was born out of the 1950s: “*Two English Druids, Ross Nichols and Gerald Gardner, combined the old fourfold Druid calendar with the ‘cross-quarter’ days from medieval Irish texts*” (Greer, 2006). Both Druidry and Wicca follow versions of this calendar and its festivals. Based on seasonal posts I've witnessed on Druid groups online, Druidry keeps one's hemisphere into account. Different dates are given for each festival based on if a Druid is in the north or south, as with Samhain falling around October 31st in the north and May 1st in the south.

While late in the Gregorian calendar, the Celtic Wheel of the Year is thought to start with Samhain at the end of October. Samhain, which grew into the West's Christianized (and now highly commercialized) Halloween, is "a time for settling down to the winter". *The Druidry Handbook* lists November 1st as the date for Samhain, while *The Druidry Path* describes Samhain as a three day festival centered around October 31st. Samhain is a time with strong connections to the ancestors, calling upon us to reflect on the past. Although considered the start of the Celtic New Year, Samhain is associated with deities of death and "clearing away all no longer needed from the old year" (Billington, 2011). Leila Edwards describes Samhain as "a time of communication and and occasionally conflict with the Otherworld ... The closeness of the supernatural world and its inhabitants is the most conspicuous aspect of modern-day celebration and belief." Samhain can be seen as a time for divination, with Edwards claiming that during Samhain "the Irish kings would encourage the Druids to foresee the events of the coming year" (Edwards, 1996). Samhain is thus a time of reflection and possible communication with the ghosts of the past, while also a time of preparation for winter and the coming year. After some follow-up messaging online, Murtlemoss shared with me what their typical Samhain celebration consists of every October 31st. The celebration revolves around decorations of black cloth and candlelight. A table is set for guests, with an extra set left for the "Unknown Spirit" who is invited to join. Gifts and food are brought that represent memories of members' loved ones who have passed, and stories of departed loved ones are shared. A description of the Samhain celebration as told by Murtlemoss can be read in full within the appendices that follow this paper's conclusion.

The next festival in the wheel is *Alban Arthan*, or the Winter Solstice. Falling on December 21st as mentioned earlier, this midwinter festival marks the Holly King's defeat and Druids' mistletoe harvest. From my time spent with Bee, she described winter as the time for metaphorical hibernation: "*Winter is the time for rest and relaxation, allowing yourself to eat a little bit more and keep cozy, and don't be so active because your body's not meant to be active. You feel tired because you're part of nature, and nature is telling you that you need to calm it down and keep warm.*" As it is the longest night of the year, part of this winter festival calls for celebrating the rebirth of the sun and victory of the Oak King. While Samhain was the death of the old year and descent into winter, the midwinter time of *Alban Arthan* can be a time for "firelight, feasting, and rejoicing as the new Sun returns with the promise of summer to come" (Greer, 2006).

*Imbolc* is the first of the Spring festivals, falling around the start of February. It is usually celebrated on February 1st or 2nd, or when the first signs of spring can be felt emerging from winter. For many in Ireland, *Imbolc* is said to have been celebrated at the start of lambing season once ewe's milk for lambs was first observed. According to Greer, *Imbolc* was once spelled "*Oimeic*", and could be translated to literally mean "ewe's milk" (Greer, 2006). Billington describes *Imbolc* as a "hearth festival", where the home is to be celebrated alongside the continued growth of spring. Robert Ellison states that this fire festival is "sacred to women" and there are strong associations with the goddess Brigit (or Brigid) of the Irish pantheon. During the Christianization of Ireland, it is thought that Brigid was granted sainthood, so Irish Christians today celebrate St. Brigid's feast day on February 1st (Ellison, 2005). Penny Billington's *Path of Druidry* chooses to describe "deity forms" rather than specific gods and goddesses for each holiday, placing *Imbolc* instead with any "Goddess of the Hearth". Both Greer and Ellison list meditations and prayers centered around themes of womanhood and a Mother-goddess.

Next comes *Alban Eilir*, celebrating the spring (vernal) equinox on or close to March 21st. Its name can be translated from Welsh as "Light of the Earth", and it takes place during a time of "high fertility" energy. Billington writes that *Alban Eilir* is a time for planting, when one should sow seeds for the future both physically and spiritually. The sun can be felt "gaining strength over the night", and the holiday is associated with the deity form of "the young warrior" (Billington, 2011).

*Beltane*, as mentioned above during Hawthorn's section, is the traditional May Day holiday that marks the start of summer. According to Billington, *Beltane* encompasses both a "May Eve" on April 30th and "May Day" on May 1st. From Ellison's research, Celts traditionally split the year into two seasons rather than four. *Beltane*, as the birth of summer, would mark the start of the "light half" of the year. This festival can be seen as the opposite end of the spectrum from *Samhain*, which was in turn considered the start of the year's "dark half". With the birth of summer comes the sprouting of crops and the outdoors can have noticeably lush vegetation (Ellison, 2005). Some of this holiday's celebrations have already been discussed while focusing on Hawthorn above, as with the wearing of flowers in a "May Queen's" crown. *The Path of Druidry* associates this early summer festival with the deity form of "the youthful flower goddess and god of love and fertility" (Billington, 2011).

*Alban Hefin* marks the celebration of the summer solstice, which tends to fall around June 21st. This day is the longest in the year, when the sun and the Oak King are at their height of power (but also the time of his defeat). From Greer's book, this holiday is named *Alban Heruin*, with *Alban Hefin* being described as the modern Welsh term and translated to mean "the Light of the Shore". Vervain, one of the sacred herbs discussed earlier, is associated with this day, and Greer's *Druidry Handbook* suggests a ceremony that includes the placement of vervain on one's altar (Greer, 2006). Penny Billington suggests "celebrating in high places". Around two weeks before *Alban Hefin*, I made a trip to Glastonbury for an OBOD gathering that took place at the top of Glastonbury Tor [Fig. 3]. I was told by some informants that early in the morning following the Tor gathering, many Druids made a trip from Glastonbury to Stonehenge (arriving in time for the sunrise). For the summer solstice itself, I went with a Wiccan friend of mine to see the sunrise over Stonehenge [Fig. 4 & 5]. We arrived around 1:30 AM and waited inside the stone circle until sunrise came. From what I've been told, the summer solstice and the winter solstice are the only times where visitors are allowed inside the henge, and are even allowed to touch the stones. Despite its history with activism vying for Druids' rights to hold ceremonies at Stonehenge, my experience at the solstice was that this allowance for visitors inside the stones has been co-opted by tourism. Unfortunately, it felt more like a big party than it did as anything spiritual. I did recognize Awen symbols on some visitors, and there were some people who were there dressed in Druid-like robes. From online group forums, I got the sentiment that many practicing Druids tend to avoid Stonehenge at summer solstice due to the crowds that now show up to party. From interviews that took place after *Alban Hefin*, the stones at Avebury and the Glastonbury Tor are more preferred locations for celebrating. According to Greenfae and Sylvarwolf, Stonehenge is a much better location to visit during *Alban Arthan* / winter solstice. During the winter weather, tourists are less likely to put the effort in to visit, leaving a better environment for Druids who have come for spiritual celebration. The wind in the stones at this time are said to make music, and Greenfae states that the area feels much more energetically activated during *Alban Arthan*.

*Lughnasadh*, known to others as *Lammas*, is the end of summer festival falling around August 1st, though Ellison claims that the festival once took place from July 15th to August 15th. Billington lists *Lughnasadh* as falling on August 2nd and Greer August 1st. *Lughnasadh* gets its name from *Lugh*, a sun god in the Irish pantheon. To Greer, this seasonal festival is marked by one once dedicated by Lugh himself, who held the festival "to honor his foster-mother Tailtiu, the goddess of agriculture." Bread plays a large role in the festival and baking bread "fresh from harvest" is listed as a primary activity for celebration (Greer, 2006). As it is a festival to mark the end of summer and the start of

fall, *Lughnasadh* is seen as a time for the “death or transformation of the god of the harvest” (Billington, 2011) and “the beginning of the sun’s decline and the beginning of the harvest” (Greer, 2006).

*Alban Elfed* is the final seasonal holiday in the Wheel of the Year. It takes place on the Autumnal Equinox around September 21st to the 24th, depending on the year. For 2019, this festival will fall on the 23rd. With *Lughnasadh* being the start of the harvest season, *Alban Elfed* is thought to represent the completion of harvest. On this day of the year, day and night are at equal lengths, leading to Ellison’s *The Solitary Druid* associating this festival with balance. Fruits are the main theme or symbol connected to *Alban Elfed*, and all three authors (Billington, Ellison, Greer) call for the harvesting of fruit and/or placement of fruit on one’s altar as the primary activities for celebration.

The second major practice in Druidry from my interviews is the practice of various meditations. Some of these meditations are given through OBOD coursework, but non-OBOD Druids could also learn meditation practices from books and online (or come up with their own). Penny Billington, Rev. Robert Ellison, and John Greer all include detailed descriptions of many meditation practices in each of their books, from seasonal holiday centered meditations (in *The Solitary Druid*) to mental visualizations of what the Druid archetype means to you (in *The Path of Druidry*). From the interviews with my informants, two meditations were described to me in detail. The first was the “Light Body Experience”, mentioned by multiple informants and described by Bee:

*“You’re imagining yourself connecting with the energy of the earth, so you imagine your feet in the soil and you imagine energy from the soil coming up into your body and filling you with light, and you send that light out and connect with the energy from above. It feels very nice to do, it feels very calming and relaxing, and it’s energizing. And that is something that you can take with you anywhere and do anywhere if you want to. If you’re feeling a bit stressed, you can do that and imagine it happening, it can calm and uplift you”* (Bee, informant #2).

Greer’s *Druidry Handbook* lists a similar meditation called “Color Breathing”, where you imagine colored light filling the room around you and then breathe the light into yourself. Visualizing different colors can be done to invoke different effects, from red being used for “energizing and awakening” to blue for “preparing for divination” (Greer). Another meditation from my interviews was the “Grove Visualization” described by William, during which one builds a mental forest to go to for other meditations:

*“The idea is that, because you can’t go out into the woods all the time, and because you can’t always find a space to do these things in the real world, you build yourself an inner sacred grove. Normally it’s in the middle of the forest, like a clearing in the middle of the forest, where you go to start meditations and visualizations from. As the course progresses, you explore that woodland around you further.”*

## **Chapter 7: Druidic Gardens**

Now that key plants and practices from the garden inventories have been explored, the time has come to answer whether Druidry plays a role in the gardening habits of my informants. The answer is simply a resounding “Yes”: From the ten interviews, seven informants directly stated that Druidry had an influence in their garden. The other three informants’ answers came down to either Druidry playing a general role in all aspects of life, or that the garden will become more influenced over time as their experience grows. For Sylvarwolf, *“Druidry helps inform the spiritual, and our spirituality makes the choices”*(Sylvarwolf, informant #10b). This chapter will go through some major examples of the ways that Druidry directly formed informants’ gardens, an exploration of Druids’ spiritual relationships with their plants, and will end with a look at the cyclical relationship between Druidry and environmentalism.

The use of Oracle cards has played a direct role in plant selection, as with Miss Fernley Oakley. Oracle Cards are similar in function to classic divinatory *Tarot* cards, though Oracle decks can vary widely in number, design, and meaning. I sought to own and study the two decks recommended to me by Miss Oakley, which were *The Druid Plant Oracle* by Philip and Stephanie Carr-Gomm and *The Spirit of Nature Oracle* by John Matthews and Will Worthington. The first example of card-led planting in Miss Oakley’s garden is presence of all three “Guardian Trees”. *The Guardians* are three trees presented on a card in the *Druid Plant Oracle*: Silver Birch [*Betula pendula* Roth], Elder [*Sambucus nigra* L.], and Hawthorn [*Crataegus monogyna* Jacq.]. If drawn upright, the Guardians symbolize immunity, strength, and longevity. If drawn upside down, the card could be warning of slowness and suggests synergy. In Miss Oakley’s garden, the trees were planted in locations that formed a rough triangle around the entire garden. She explained to me the purpose of the Oracle cards and associated plants in garden circles (patches of plants grown together to form separate circles within the space of the yard):

*“I look at their meanings, I look at the significance they have, to create the energetic fields. In the garden I’ve got various archways in the garden that I’ve created, and I use those as energy portals [Fig. 6]. Each particular portal will have a particular energy because of what I’ve planted there. The Guardians form the major energy grid and the circles within the major triangle are the different energy fields. You can go through one portal and get a different energy field. They (the plants) protect and look after you as much as you do them, so to me I have that symbiotic relationship.”* (Miss Oakley).

Though Silver Birch did not make an appearance in many of my gardens, it was described by multiple informants as being known for birth and new beginnings. The Birch’s association with new beginnings comes both from its reputation as a “pioneer tree” that is “first to colonize a new forest” (said by multiple informants) and its placement as the first tree in the Ogham alphabet. “*Beith*” is the Ogham for Birch/*Betula* in general, not necessarily *Betula pendula*. The Ogham for Elder is “*Ruis*”, and its oracle card is associated with “protection and sacrifice”. *The Spirit of Nature Oracle* states that the Elder tree is sometimes known to “protect against dark magic”, making it a great member of The Guardians. Aibell had similar feelings about the protection provided by the plants in her garden, saying “*Lots of them are sort of prickly, so it’s like a protection. They enclose the garden and hold the energy in the garden.*”

Beyond the use of Oracle Cards, Miss Oakley stated that Druidry “absolutely” influenced the choices made in her garden and talked about how her garden was very scarce when the house was first acquired. Through her desire to create her own copse and have the “energy of the trees”, Miss Oakley’s garden grew to be the largest or most abundant of the ten gardens. This included herbs planted for tea or spiritual use and making sure to have key Druidic plants. “*I revere certain plants and certain trees, like, you know I couldn’t have a garden that didn’t have an Oak and a Holly in it. They’re incredibly important to have those.*” One of my informants, William, talked with me about how most of the plants in his garden today are directly due to the “seven sacred herbs” discussed in his Ovate coursework. These sacred seven consist of: Agrimony [*Agrimonia eupatoria* L.], Mugwort [*Artemisia vulgaris* L.], Meadowsweet [*Filipendula ulmaria* (L.) Maxim.], Vervain [*Verbena officinalis* L.], Woad [*Isatis tinctoria* L.], Mistletoe [*Viscum album*], and Heather [*Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull]. From Billington’s book, Ovates are mentioned throughout sections dealing with “herbcraft”, and it was Ovate-in-training Miss Oakley who had some of these in her garden as well.

Murtlemoss, my eighth informant, had another of the largest gardens. At the far end of the back yard, a separate “sacred garden” was created, cut off from the rest of the yard by an ivy-covered wooden door [Fig. 7]. Inside the garden was a pond, a space for an altar, and a wooden seats displaying the Awen symbol circled around a fire pit. Ground ivy [*Glechoma hederacea* L.], cut from the sacred Chalice Wells in Glastonbury, had been planted and seemed to overtake the garden walls and floor. Trees sacred to Druids were planted here, with some were placed in specific directions that they are spiritually associated with. A Rowan tree [*Sorbus aucuparia* L.] was planted in the east, though a Silver Birch was also planted in the East. The Birch, again, was connected to new beginnings. Yew [*Taxus baccata* L.] was planted in the north, associated with with ancestors. Holly had been planted in the south, and Murtlemoss noted that it was a female tree despite its associations with the Holly King. Murtlemoss had hoped to have planted a Hazel tree in the west, but the garden’s pond took up the space. To Murtlemoss, the aquatic plants in the pond now represent the west. In addition to plants, other directional symbols were placed.

*“There is an owl in the north, a hare in the east, in the south I light a large garden flame, and in the west an otter. There were four directional stones, mosaics. Sword in the east, flame south, moons west, ancient earth symbol in the north”* (Murtlemoss, informant #8).

Running along similar lines as Miss Oakley’s Guardian Tree grid system and Murtlemoss’s directional trees in her sacred garden, Morgelyn had her garden arranged based on what she described as “sacred geometry”. Living in a more urban setting than other informants, all of the plants at Morgelyn’s home were potted. These potted plants however still had spiritual significance in selection and design. Morgelyn had chosen flowers that represented colors of the associated season, and made sure to have the sacred Hazel tree. In the front patio, Morgelyn had all her potted plants placed in a way that formed two perfect circles which mirrored each other [Fig. 8]. When asked about whether her spirituality had an influence on her garden, she had this to say: *“Well yes it does, and I would say increasingly so. The books that I choose, what I read on the internet, and the words I put inside of myself have an influence on my experiencing of plants. As I read and explore, I’m constantly altering and changing and finding again my relationship with the plants and the plant world that I have around me”* (Morgelyn, informant #3). Another example of sacred geometry from gardens I have visited could be with Herne, who has a labyrinth cut into the lawn at the end of his garden [Fig. 9]. For Herne, walking along the labyrinth lines could be seen as a meditative practice with a space in the center for further meditation.

Expanding upon Morgelyn's words on the "experiencing of plants", Druidry goes beyond plant selection in the garden and plays some role in the spiritual relationship that can exist between a human and their plants. To me, this is a significant connection between a person and the plants around them that resonates on an existential or metaphysical level. The fact that plants can be valued, without the need for any practical or economic benefit, holds a special place in my heart and drives my interest in ethnobotany and spiritual ecology. This connection with plants can be expressed through as simple means as the enjoyment that comes from gardening, or can grow into a more personal relationship. Many informants mentioned the act of talking to their plants and some even named specific trees. *"I talk to the plants, and I kind of get a feeling that they respond to my voice. Not actually, but I feel like there's something there. I feel like they're happy that I'm around, I feel like I'm growing a relationship with my garden. I've named my trees, my fruit trees, partly because I consciously wanted to bring them into the garden and welcome them in, almost like people. Like part of the family. I'm working on making my garden a sacred space, and part of that is talking to them. My understanding is that I have temporary custodianship or guardianship over a plot of land, and I feel that I can help the land to fulfill its potential"* (Bee). Miss Oakley echoed this sentiment: *"I have to confess I even talk to them. I have a very strong relationship in my garden. I know where every single one is, I can go and find it. I do know the uses of the ones that I use on a regular basis. I really value them, and I have a strong connection and relationship with them. If any of them die off I would actually be quite upset. I would mourn them, I have done that before, especially with trees"* (Miss Oakley). Nearly half of the informants I visited brought up the act of talking with plants in their garden, and William stated that his moments of talking to plants came from and increased *after* starting studies in Druidry. For William, this relationship has become one that he didn't have before Druidry, and cites the Ovate course's encouragement to go out and talk to plants (namely trees, but talking started to occur in the garden as well). *"There are two out there that I repotted recently, and you do have a conversation with them as you're doing it. You tell them not to worry and to calm down and all that"* (William).

For some of the Druids I met with, this relationship to plantlife compelled them to write poetry about nature's role in their life. This is at the heart of Druidry, especially within the Bardic grade, where we gain inspiration from the natural world around us and let it flow through or creative expression. As can be seen by the tree and herb lore presented during the chapter on plants found in my inventories, throughout time plantlife has been interwoven into the stories that help form our cultural and spiritual identities. Many of these plants serve medicinal roles, and some others still relate to economic

gain, but the value for ornamentals is a relationship that should not be underrated. The love a plant, simply for its existence, may serve to tell us something about the created meaning and immaterial bond that someone can build nonhuman entities. This could delve into a topic of metaphysics or simply hold value in the way one can gain happiness from an appreciation of existence itself. An example of some poems have been shared with me by my informants, and they can be read in the appendix.

I feel that a large theme in one's relationship to the plants around them comes from awareness of life, or more specifically the sense of gratitude that comes from awareness. I have found that, since my earliest attempts at studying botany, I had opened within myself a certain "new way of seeing the world". I once wrote, "When I walk down the street and see a plant I've studied, when I know what it is, it brings an element of joy. I can be outside anywhere and now find myself captivated by just looking at a palm tree." With understanding comes enhanced appreciation, and with this appreciation comes love for existence itself. "Awareness" has been brought up by half of the Druids I met with when talking about Druidry's role in their daily lives. As with Bee's "new found awareness of the seasons", Morgelyn's "constant awareness of nature", and William's decision to now "tread more lightly", increased awareness of nature was a significant feature in daily life. Something close to this could be the joy in familiarity or nostalgia that can we've linked to parts of our past. For example, during my visits to Kew Garden over the past year, I've tended to frequent the desert room in the Princess of Wales Conservatory. Growing up in the Sonoran desert of Arizona, even the sight of certain cacti species conjures within me a sense of love and pride. Some of the Druids I've met over the summer spoke of plants in their gardens that reminded them of family, friends, or past homes. These plants have become an essential piece within our hearts and minds, acting as avatars of memory and identity.

A spiritual connection with nature has certainly seemed to grow in what may be my own spiritual life as well, from working with the Oracle cards and tree Ogham to discovering an awareness of the seasons not found in the desert where I grew up. In between my trips to visit with Druids, I made an effort to spend more time in the woods outside my accommodation. I took breaks in the day to go sit in the woods for half an hour or more, usually once or twice a week, and even left offerings for the spirits or fae that may be nearby. The only window in my room looks out into that small patch of woods, and I am thankful for the chance I've had to experience the changes that have occurred in the scenery over these past ten months. Even now as I write this chapter, I have to take moments to pause and watch the wind and rays of evening sunlight dance on the trees that have become a familiar part of my daily life. Towering spires of oak, wild cherry, and horse chestnut have grown to be a part of my new family.

One of the strongest themes that seemed to arrive from visits to Druid gardens was informants' emphasis on environmental conservation. Many of them had areas dedicated to allowing wild plants to grow, and Druids I talked with were proud of their efforts toward environmentalism. For Miss Oakley, one of the first things she mentioned when I visited was that the hedges in her garden are home to hundreds of species of insects, and that her garden was a place for nesting birds. Various trees in Miss Oakley's garden had been saved from other sites and re-planted to keep them alive. During the time that I was at her garden, she talked with me about the efforts being made to encourage dormice [*Muscardinus avellanarius*] to move into her garden from the nearby woods. Bee's garden was entirely designed to follow the principles of permaculture, and it was through her studies of permaculture that neopaganism and Druidry were found.

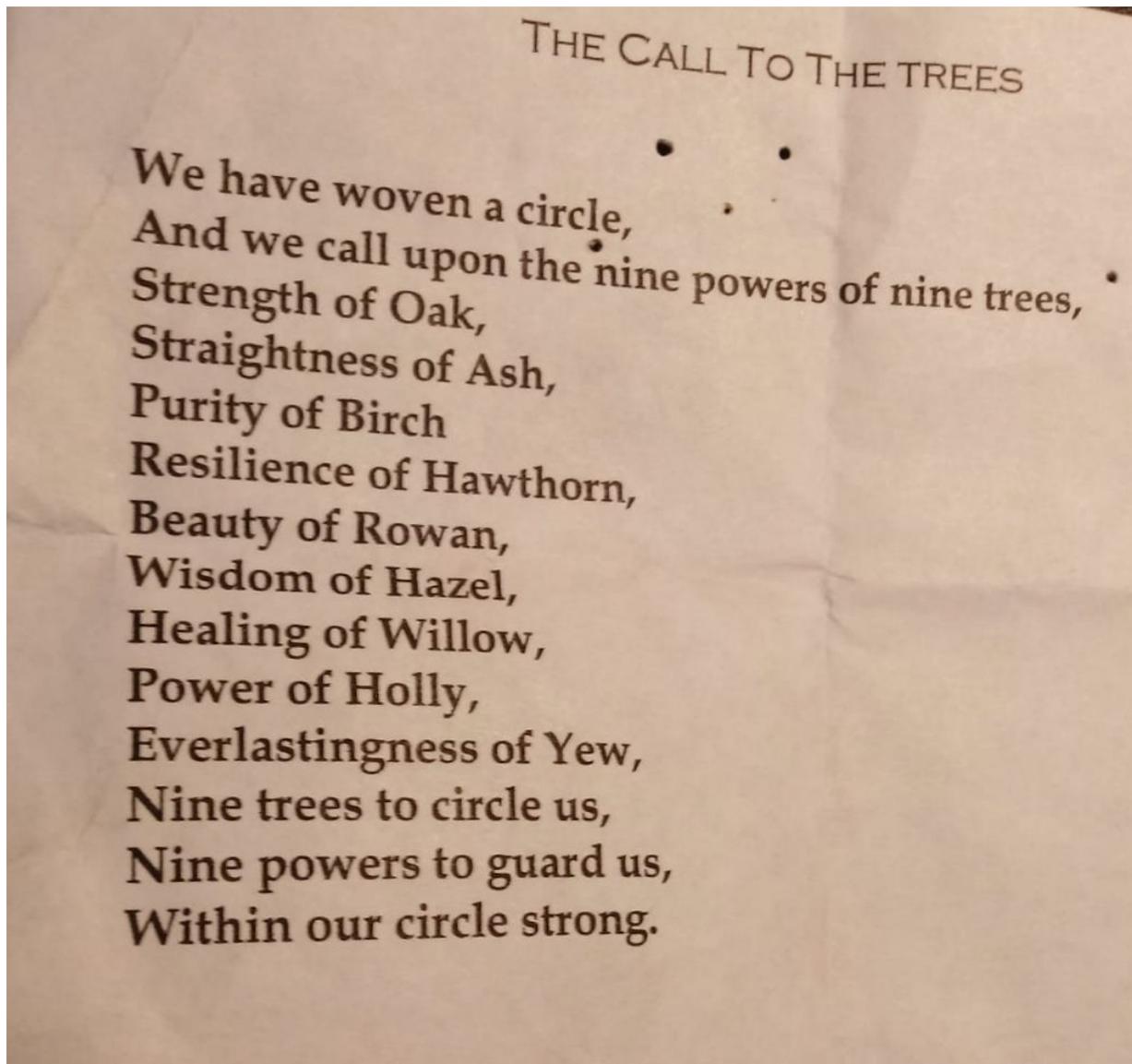
*"When I was studying on a permaculture course, during the summer I went to the permaculture festival in London. On a table of books I picked up 'The Visionary Spirit' by Mick Collins, and the book talked about how if we're going to be able to do anything to save the earth, we need to all wake up to a new spirituality, and find a way of connecting back with nature"* (Bee). Following the discovery of this book, Bee went online to search for more information on paganism, eventually finding Druidry and the OBOD. For Morgelyn, environmentalism was a key factor in which plants chosen for the garden. She would study from books and online prior to purchases, aiming to select plants that come from her local environment and that would be beneficial to insects. In fact, six of my ten informants specifically used referred to certain plants as good for certain animals (usually birds, butterflies, or bees). To me, there seems to exist a cyclical relationship between Druid spirituality and environmentalism. Spiritual ecology becomes relevant once more, where focus tends to lie on this interplay between spiritual practice and environmental collapse. Druidry exists as a solid example for spiritual efforts to increase awareness of and respond to ecological crises. Respect for nature is at the core of Druidic spirituality, and conservation efforts have been a key topic in both my conversations with informants and discussions I have witnessed on Druid social media pages. Philip Carr-Gomm hosts a weekly live video chat through OBOD's Facebook page, sometimes replaced by special guests. Over the past months, acknowledgment of the climate crisis and how to ward off its related despair have been major points of discussion. Any quick scroll down the OBOD page brings countless shared posts relating to efforts toward environmentalism. In Greer's *Druidry Handbook*, there exists a specific "Earth Path" built around dedication to these themes: *"The Earth Path presented here thus has two major aspects: reconnecting with nature through study and nature awareness, and moving toward greater harmony with nature through carefully considered changes in everyday life"* (Greer, 2006).

At the other end, there are some who come from environmentalism first and find the spirituality of Druidry along their quest to reconnect with and help nature. Regardless of which comes first in one's path, Druidry and environmentalism complement each other perfectly. Druidry helps its members seek a more peaceful life with and within nature, both through the love or awareness mentioned earlier, and through dedication to nature's wellbeing.

## **Conclusion**

Neo-Druidry, or simply Druidry, is a nature-based spiritual movement born out of romanticist minds in the 18th and 19th centuries, based around the image of iron age Druids and Celtic folklore. As Druidry flourished in the 20th century alongside other neopagan movements, groups including the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids and the Ancient Order of Druids in America have more members today than ever before. The Druidic path is one that offers a reconnection to the nature around us, where we can take inspiration from the natural world and Otherworld both for creative pursuits and purpose in life. For my paper, I was interested in finding whether Druidry has an influence on practicing Druids' gardens, and what the details of that influence may be. After carrying out a series of plant inventories and interviews with ten informants across six counties of England, I found an overwhelmingly positive result. Key plants were identified based on the amount of gardens they were found in, as well as from sacred plants discussed in interviews and literature. Informants discussed at length the role that Druidry and plants had in their lives, echoing the sentiments of environmentalism and a deep connection to nature. My paper's results may be limited by the amount of informants I was able to visit within the timeframe of my fieldwork, and a bias toward OBOD-affiliated Druidry could be present. My research provides substantive knowledge as a topic not yet explored in ethnobotany, and I hope it can serve as a case study for or step toward addressing the significance of garden-human relationships in the realm of ethnobotany and spiritual ecology.

# Appendix



**Fig. 1**

*The Call to the Trees*

Shared with me by Aibell, and said to be recited during some gatherings.

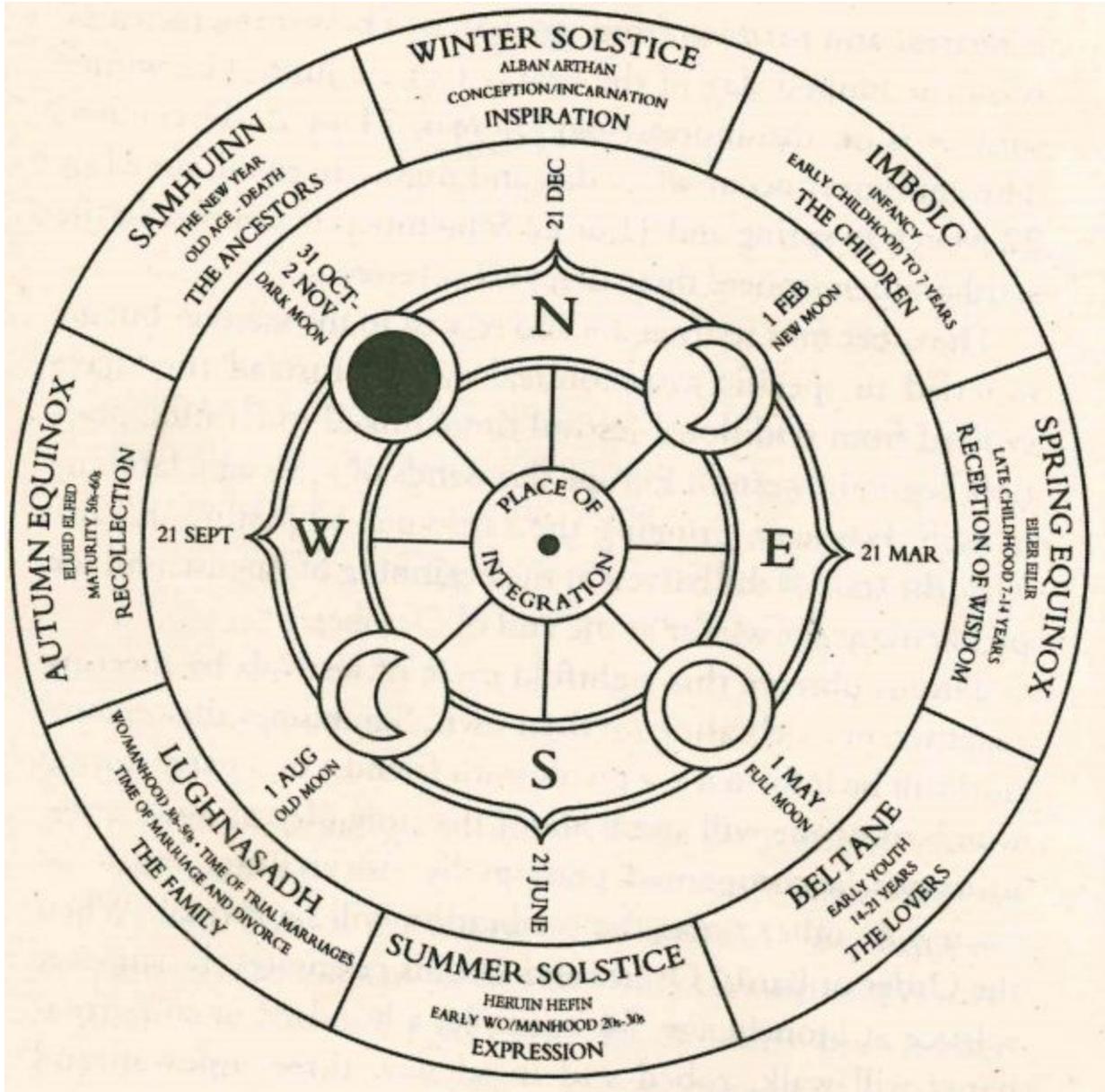


Fig. 2  
 “The Eight Festivals and the Wheel of the Year” from  
 Philip Carr-Gomm’s *What do Druids Believe?* pp. 68



**Fig. 3**  
**Glastonbury Tor, Somerset**  
**Photo taken during my visit to Glastonbury to attend an**  
**OBOD summer gathering. Early June, 2019.**



**Fig. 4**  
**Stonehenge, taken at night during my visit for *Alban Hefin*.**



**Fig. 5**

**Photo taken during the sunrise on *Alban Hefin*, with the sun rising over the “Heel Stone”. (Photo by me, taken via smartphone)**



**Fig. 6**

**Photo from Miss Oakley's Garden, showing one of the archways that can act as portals to different energy fields.**



**Fig. 7**

**Photo of the entryway into Murtlemoss's sacred garden,  
with door displaying the Awen symbol.**

**Photo shared by Murtlemoss (informant #8), photos within the  
sacred garden itself were not to be posted.**



**Fig. 8**

**Photo taken by Morgelyn (informant #3), displaying one of her flower rings as part of “sacred geometry”. To the left of this ring would be another circle, meant to mirror the ring seen here.**



**Fig. 9**  
**The Labyrinth cut into Herne (informant #7)'s garden.**  
**In the past, Herne said that the labyrinth was lined with lights.**

### **Samhain Celebration, by Murtlemoss (informant #8)**

*“The kitchen is set thus: my table has a black table cloth, black candelabras, black candles. Ten places set for nine guests and one for the un named visitor from the spirit world. The large mirror is covered in a green-man drape, the rest of the kitchen only lit by candlelight. Each place setting has a tea light. Each guest is asked to bring:  
A photo of a departed loved one,  
A plate of food that holds a memory of a meal shared with the departed loved one,  
A poem, short story or song relevant to Samhain,  
A new year gift ( Samhain is the beginning of the Celtic New Year),  
And a give away gift ( wrapped). This must be a small gift of no particular monetary value, one that has meant something but now is the time to move on to another.*

*A small altar is positioned in the kitchen, adorned with white flowers. Here the photographs will be placed. I decorate the house with awful Halloween witches etc. for the grandchildren and trick-or-treaters so guests have a full on reception complete with pumpkins, of course.*

*The guests arrive, the room is set, spirit is with us.*

*We take our places at the table and Great Spirit is asked to be with us.*

*For protection against unwanted guests (remember the veil is thin at this time), the unknown guest is invited to our table. We first light the candle of the Unknown guest to welcome them. We then in turn light our own candles in memory of loved ones ( their name is spoken). The crone ( a Druidess ) blesses the food and the meal is shared. We all speak about our departed loved ones, there is much laughter, maybe a tear. After the meal, we share poems, stories , and songs.*

*The Druid Animal Oracle Deck is opened and each take a card. This card may be the card that reflects the new year ahead. The cards are then used in sequence to take a gift from those brought to the gathering.*

*The evening is then brought to a close and the unknown guest bids farewell.*

*Great Spirit is thanked. The flowers from the altar may be shared and the rest I take down to my Sacred garden. Folk depart or stay a while longer for tarot, scrying, or other if they so wish.*

**“Roots”, a Poem by Bee (informant #2)**

This poem was inspired by the Light Body Exercise”  
discussed in the section on meditations.

*Roots.*

*I plunge my hands and feet into the black soil,  
They elongate, bifurcate: thicken and swell  
Reaching ever deeper into the  
Moist and musty  
sweet rotting bark and leaves  
through worm casts, past beetle shells,  
fungal fibres, moles' whiskers...  
Further down, finding warmth  
clawing for comfort  
sensing Mother's heartbeat  
And the gentle swell of her breast  
as Selene swings past again:  
the lunar pull across Earth's crust.*

*I am tree: instrument of life  
liminal, inter-elemental  
dryad and hollow oak  
steadfast but impermanent  
source and dependent  
breath and breathing  
food and feeding  
I am air, earth, fire and water  
touching the sky and  
holding the ground  
I am filled with light  
I am music and midnight silence.*

*Essential, integral, strong and expressive  
I've humus in my nail beds  
and leaves in my hair  
My sap is rising now:  
I must prepare...*

**“Gaia”, a Poem by Nahimana Tuwa (informant #6)**

*Gaia  
Mother Earth*

*You do not know me.*

*My bones are the crystals, gold and ores beneath my skin.  
You rip them from my body with machinery  
You tear them apart with dynamite for profit.  
All I would give you willingly*

*You do not know me.*

*The rivers, streams, lakes and oceans  
All are my blood that flow and undulate.  
You dam them, dry them up for your convenience.  
You fill them with rubbish.  
I would have you see their beauty that I give you.*

*You do not know me.*

*The land is my skin  
It is for you to farm for food.  
It is shared land with all my creatures.  
You destroy it without a second thought.  
with bombs, death and corruption.  
I would have you live in peace*

*You do not know me.*

*I give to you my all and in return I wish only one thing*

*Respect.*

*Now the people come with peace in their hearts.  
Love flows through their souls – Nefwre  
They have walked my land for millenia,  
admiring the rocks and the life therein*

*They know me.*

*The beauty of my landscapes are treasured.  
The rivers teem with life,  
Salmons leaping freely, frogs flourish  
Water lilies, irises, plankton in the sea  
The mighty whale swims in peace*

*They know me*

*Can you see the hare leaping openly in the fields?  
The wolf howls to the Moon  
and the boar snuffles in the undergrowth.  
The raven flies, a free spirit and independent.  
All my creatures know the ranges of freedom.*

*For they know me.  
The Druids of ancient times are still here.  
They flourish and teach the ways of harmony with nature  
They happily give me all that I ask for*

*Respect*

*For they know me*

**"Dances", a Poem by William (informant #9)**

*I look up at the ash tree  
and he sings to me,  
a melody from every bough,  
which stills my heart  
and tells me that I am enough  
to dance among his branches.*

*As the notes cascade around me  
I sit down among the dust  
and crawling things,  
whose legs tap out a rhythm of their own,  
and feel that it is not my time,  
say "I have other journeys I must make  
before I can ascend and dance along".*

*So he stays here,  
meliflous branches reaching high  
into the milky blue of springtime,  
while I walk on,  
tripping carefully between the rhythms  
of six legs and of eight,  
making sure I do not tread on those  
Who dance the path beside me.*

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## Total Garden Inventory

<p>1 English Ivy : Ornamental, good for Robin’s nests, Hedge <i>Hedera helix</i> L. (3/10 Gardens)</p>	<p>11 Cypress tree: grown into guardian archway <i>Cupressus</i> sp. L. Possibly <i>Cupressus</i> × <i>leylandii</i> A. B. Jacks. &amp; Dallim. (Leyland Cypress) Allowed to grow into a “guardian tree” archway with another tree. Archways seen as “portals” to different areas/differing energy fields. (1/10)</p>
<p>2 Honeysuckle: “British traditional”- Miss Oakley, planted for its scent <i>Lonicera</i> sp. L. (5/10)</p>	<p>12 Spindle: Wild/Unintentional, “brought in by birds” <i>Euonymus europaeus</i> L. (2/10)</p>
<p>3 Sedge grass <i>Carex</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p>	<p>13 Lawson Cypress: <i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i> (A. Murray) Parl. or just <i>Chamaecyparis</i> sp. Spach. (1/10)</p>
<p>4 Bluebell: Spiritual, ornamental, “British traditional” <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> (L.) Chouard ex Rothm. (2/10)</p>	<p>14 Yucca: Existed prior to home ownership <i>Yucca</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p>
<p>5 English Arum: wild/not intentional <i>Arum maculatum</i> L. ( Lords and Ladies, Cuckoo-Pint ) (2/10)</p>	<p>15 Rose: rose bush Existed prior to home ownership Ornamental. <i>Rosa</i> sp. L. (4/10)</p>
<p>6 Daisy: Ornamental, planted for seasonal color, <i>Bellis perennis</i> L. (5/10)</p>	<p>16 Lemon Balm: food/herbal, used for tea <i>Melissa officinalis</i> L. (4/10)</p>
<p>7 Aconite (Wolf’s Bane): Herbal, medicinal <i>Aconitum napellus</i> L. Used for shock and/or upset (1/10)</p>	<p>17 Oak tree: Spiritual (Oracle card), energy field, Oaks seen as essential to Druids “British traditional” <i>Quercus</i> sp. L. (2/10) (total <i>Quercus</i> 4/10 including <i>Q. cerris</i> &amp; <i>Q. robur</i> below)</p>
<p>8 Shamrock <i>Trifolium dubium</i> Sibth. (1/10)</p>	<p>18 Foxglove: Medicinal, for heart <i>Digitalis</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p>
<p>9 White Hawthorn: “British traditional”, Spiritual (Oracle Card), energy Another White hawthorn was part of the Hedges <i>Crataegus</i> sp. or <i>Crataegus punctata</i> Jacq. (2/10)</p>	
<p>10 Dog Rose: Wild/not intentional <i>Rosa canina</i> L. (3/10)</p>	

<p>19 Forget-Me-Not: “British traditional”, Wild/unintentional, “brought in by birds” <i>Myosotis arvensis</i> L. - Field Forget-me-not (4/10)</p> <p>20 Honesty Plant: “British traditional”, ornamental <i>Lunaria annua</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>21 Poppy: ornamental <i>Papaver</i> spp. Possibly <i>Papaver rhoeas</i>, <i>somnifera</i> or <i>orientale</i> L. (3/10)</p> <p>22 Rock Rose: spiritual (oracle card), restorative energy, <i>Cistus</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>23 Ground Elder : unwanted weed, wild/unintentional, Damaging to other plants, was pulled out during inventory recording <i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> L. (3/10)</p> <p>24 Dandelion: food (use in salads), Wild/unintentional, <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> (L.) Weber ex F.H. Wigg or <i>Taraxacum</i> sp. F.H. Wigg. (7/10)</p> <p>25 Laurel: Hedge plant, Unintentional, &amp;/or From Previous Owner Probably the cherry laurel/common laurel: <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> L. (5/10)</p> <p>26 Lilac: Hedge plant <i>Syringa</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>27 Chrysanthemum: given by friend, “British traditional” <i>Chrysanthemum</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p>	<p>28 Purple Sage: used as Smudge Stick, spiritual <i>Salvia officinalis</i> L. Smudge sticks are small bundles of various combined herbs, burnt inside the home for the purpose of its smoke’s ability to “clean the energy” (7/10)</p> <p>29 Marjoram: Medicinal (clears nostrils by sniffing it during stuffy nose) <i>Origanum majorana</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>30 Aubrieta: Rescued <i>Aubrieta</i> sp. Adans. (1/10)</p> <p>31 Olive tree: Rescued (found in trash), Food other Olive trees in garden from store / grown for food <i>Olea europaea</i> L. (3/10)</p> <p>32 Maple: Ornamental, planted for color <i>Acer</i> sp. (2/10)</p> <p>33 Rosemary: Food, medicinal, <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L. (6/10)</p> <p>34 Parsley: Food <i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss (4/10)</p> <p>35 Coriander: Food <i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>36 Vervain: Spiritual, “associated with Awen”-Miss Oakley, <i>Verbena officinalis</i> L. “most sacred”-William “Part of Ovate course”-William (2/10)</p>
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<p>37 Chamomile: Food/Herbal, for tea Most likely <i>Matricaria chamomilla</i> L. (3/10)</p> <p>38 Mugwort: Spiritual <i>Artemisia vulgaris</i> L. (2/10)</p> <p>39 Black Grass: Ornamental, “bought in Canterbury” <i>Ophiopogon planiscapus</i> Nakai (1/10)</p> <p>40 Elder Tree: Guardian Oracle tree, spiritual, energy field, <i>Sambucus nigra</i> L. (4/10)</p> <p>41 Lavender: Ornamental, Food, Spiritual Combined with Sage for Smudge Stick <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> Mill. (8/10)</p> <p>42 Wild Garlic: Ornamental, Food <i>Allium ursinum</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>43 Primrose <i>Primula vulgaris</i> L. (2/10)</p> <p>44 Lime tree: Food <i>Citrus</i> sp.L. (1/10)</p> <p>45 Bay tree: Food, Ornamental <i>Laurus nobilis</i> L. (5/10)</p> <p>46 Holly: Spiritual, Ornamental, seen as essential to Druids <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> L. (5/10)</p> <p>47 Hazelnut : spiritual <i>Corylus avellana</i> L. (5/10)</p>	<p>48 Cow Parsley: Spiritual (Associated as being horse tonic &amp; Druid has spiritual connection with horses)  (“my spirit animal is a horse”)-Miss Oakley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (L.) Hoffm. (1/10)</p> <p>49 Pear tree: Food <i>Pyrus</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>50 Cornflower: “British traditional”, Ornamental <i>Centaurea</i> sp. L. (5/10)</p> <p>51 Apple tree: Food, Named Appleston - Bee <i>Malus domestica</i> (Suckow) Borkh.  “Spirit of the tree from the previous home”-  “Heart of the Garden”-  “Feminine energy”- Greenfae &amp; Sylvarwolf^ (8/10)</p> <p>52 Walnut tree: Food, Unintentional <i>Juglans regia</i> L. (3/10)</p> <p>53 Silver Birch: Spiritual, Guardian Oracle Tree, energy field <i>Betula pendula</i> Roth (3/10)</p> <p>54 Gunnera: Shade for other plants <i>Gunnera</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>55 Cherry tree: Ornamental, Food, Named Cherry Nutkins -Bee, Wild <i>Prunus avium</i> L. (5/10)</p> <p>56 Horse Chestnut: Rescue, “grown from Conker”-Miss Oakley <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> L. (2/10)</p>
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<p>57 Marigold: Ornamental, Food, Medicinal <i>Calendula</i> sp. L. (3/10)</p> <p>58 Red Hot Poker: Ornamental, gift from friend - Miss Oakley <i>Kniphofia</i> sp. Moench (1/10)</p> <p>59 Purple Iris: Rescue <i>Iris versicolor</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>60 Spruce: chosen for close resemblance to Scots Pine <i>Picea</i> sp. Mill. (1/10)</p> <p>61 Red Robin Plant <i>Photinia</i> × <i>fraseri</i> Dress. (1/10)</p> <p>62 Fire Moss: Wild/Unintentional <i>Ceratodon purpureus</i> (Hedw.) Brid. (1/10)</p> <p>63 Mint: Herbal/Food, for tea <i>Mentha</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>64 Cowslip: Ornamental <i>Primula veris</i> Mill. (2/10)</p> <p>65 Nettle: Medicinal (relieves joint pain), Tea, for wildlife, Wild/Unintentional <i>Urtica dioica</i> L. (4/10)</p> <p>66 St. John's Wort: Herbal, Ornamental <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> L. (2/10)</p> <p>67 Borage: Spiritual, calming- Miss Oakley <i>Borago officinalis</i> L. (1/10)</p>	<p>68 Lamb's Ears: Grown for comfort/soft leaves <i>Stachys byzantina</i> K. Koch "baby's tears" name given as it was known for rubbing babies' faces- Miss Oakley (1/10)</p> <p>69 Raspberry: Fruit for birds/wildlife <i>Rubus idaeus</i> L. (2/10)</p> <p>70 Ash tree: Wild &amp;/or From Previous Owner <i>Fraxinus</i> sp. L. (3/10)</p> <p>71 Buddleia: "Good for butterflies"-Aibell <i>Buddleja</i> sp. L. (5/10)</p> <p>72 Witch Hazel: Ornamental, Food <i>Hamamelis</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>73 "Bristol Ruby" Weigela: Ornamental, Planted for Bees <i>Weigela</i> Thunb. (1/10)</p> <p>74 Plantain: Medicinal (for bronchitis), tea, Spiritual (oracle card)- Miss Oakley <i>Plantago</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>75 White Campion <i>Silene latifolia</i> Poir. (1/10)</p> <p>76 Lily of the Valley <i>Convallaria majalis</i> L. (2/10)</p> <p>77 Winter Jasmine <i>Jasminum nudiflorum</i> Lindl. (1/10)</p>
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78 Oxeye Daisy (assume different from above Daisy) <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> Lam. (3/10)	89 Hoary Cress : local invasive weed <i>Lepidium draba</i> L. (1/10)
79 Box: "Box hedge" <i>Buxus</i> sp. L. (2/10)	90 Japanese Anemone : planted by previous owner, unwanted <i>Anemone hupehensis</i> var. <i>japonica</i> (Thunb.) Bowles & Stearn Or <i>Anemone x hybrida</i> (hort. Ex. L.H. Bailey) Makino (rhs.org) (1/10)
80 Nasturtian: food, ornamental <i>Tropaeolum</i> sp. L. (1/10)	91 Comfrey : Wild/Unintentional, left for bees <i>Symphytum</i> sp. L. (1/10)
81 Catnip : for cats <i>Nepeta cataria</i> L. (1/10)	92 Blackberry : Wild/Unintentional <i>Rubus plicatus</i> Weihe & Nees or <i>Rubus ulmifolius</i> Schott (2/10)
82 Perpetual Spinach : food <i>Beta vulgaris</i> subsp. <i>vulgaris</i> L. (1/10)	93 Dog's Mercury <i>Mercurialis perennis</i> L. (1/10)
83 Courgette : food <i>Cucurbita pepo</i> L. (1/10)	94 Watercress : food <i>Nasturtium officinale</i> W.T. Aiton (1/10)
84 Tomato : food <i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> L. (2/10)	95 Flag Iris (yellow iris) <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> L. (1/10)
85 Cucumber : food <i>Cucumis sativus</i> L. (1/10)	96 Marsh Marigold (x3) <i>Caltha palustris</i> L. (1/10)
86 Sweet Pea : food <i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> L. (1/10)	97 Common Water-plantain <i>Alisma Plantago-aquatica</i> L. (1/10)
87 Russian Kale : food <i>Brassica oleracea</i> L. var. <i>acephala</i> (1/10)	98 Water Forget-me-not <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i> L. (1/10)
88 Pepper : food <i>Capsicum</i> sp. L. (1/10)	

99 Lupin <i>Lupinus</i> sp. L. (1/10)	110 Herb Robert: “possibly medicinal”-Aibell <i>Geranium robertianum</i> L. (4/10)
100 Sedum <i>Sedum</i> sp. L. (1/10)	111 Salad Burnet <i>Sanguisorba minor</i> Scop. (1/10)
101 Geranium <i>Geranium</i> sp. L. (2/10)	112 Plum Tree : named Michael Burnham- Bee “Masculine energy”- Greenfae & Sylvarwolf <i>Prunus</i> sp. L. (3/10)
102 Thyme : herb, food <i>Thymus vulgaris</i> L. (3/10)	113 Sweet Woodruff : ornamental, food <i>Galium odoratum</i> (L.) Scop. (1/10)
103 Loosestrife : “English native” <i>Lythrum</i> sp. L. (1/10)	114 Money Tree (Jade) <i>Crassula ovata</i> Druce (1/10)
104 English Mace : food, medicine <i>Achillea ageratum</i> L. (1/10)	115 Spider Plant <i>Chlorophytum comosum</i> (Thunb.) Jacques (1/10)
105 Oregano : food <i>Origanum vulgare</i> L. (1/10)	116 Pansy: (5 different colors)-Murtle moss <i>Viola tricolor</i> var. <i>Hortensis</i> DC. (2/10)
106 Chives <i>Allium schoenoprasum</i> L. (2/10)	117 Wallflower <i>Erysimum</i> L. (2/10)
107 Lovage <i>Levisticum officinale</i> W.D.J. Koch (1/10)	118 Cyclamen <i>Cyclamen</i> L. (2/10)
108 Blue Hyssop <i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> L. Possibly <i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> subsp. <i>aristatus</i> (Godr.) Nyman (1/10)	119 Mahonia <i>Mahonia</i> sp. Nutt. (2/10)
109 Goosegrass / Cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> L. (2/10)	120 Gladiolus <i>Gladiolus</i> L. (1/10)

121 Lily <i>Lilium</i> sp. L. (1/10)	132 Woodruff : spiritual- incense <i>Galium</i> sp. L. (1/10)
122 Cornish Daffodil: local, ornamental, <i>Narcissus</i> sp. L.	133 California Poppy (orange) : ornamental <i>Eschscholzia californica</i> Cham. (1/10)
123 Castor Oil Plant : ornamental, good shade, “good friend”-Morgelyn <i>Ricinus communis</i> L. (1/10)	134 Clematis : ornamental <i>Clematis</i> sp. L. (4/10)
124 Camellia <i>Camellia</i> sp. L. (2/10)	135 Climbing Hydrangea <i>Hydrangea petiolaris</i> Siebold & Zucc. (1/10)
125 “Pinks” Carnation <i>Dianthus</i> sp. L. (2/10)	136 Spanish Bluebell : Wild/Unintentional <i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i> (Mill.) Chouard ex Rothm. (2/10)
126 Peace Lily <i>Spathiphyllum</i> sp. Schott (1/10)	137 Wisteria : ornamental, grown by previous owner <i>Wisteria</i> sp. Nutt. (3/10)
127 Boston Fern <i>Nephrolepis exaltata</i> (L.) Schott (1/10)	138 Nigella <i>Nigella</i> sp. L. (1/10)
128 Gloxinia <i>Gloxinia</i> L’Hér. (1/10)	139 Arum Lily (Calla Lily) <i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i> Spreng. (1/10)
129 Tulip <i>Tulipa</i> sp. L. (1/10)	140 Quince tree <i>Cydonia oblonga</i> Mill. (1/10)
130 Goji Berry : food <i>Lycium barbarum</i> L. (1/10)	141 Magnolia : ornamental <i>Magnolia</i> sp. L. (1/10)
131 Fuschia : ornamental, gift, <i>Fuschia</i> sp. L. (3/10)	142 Black Currant : food <i>Ribes nigrum</i> L. (1/10)

<p>143 Hawthorn  <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Jacq.  or <i>Crataegus</i> sp. L.  (4/10)  (total Hawthorn 4/10 gardens,  with white &amp; red listed above  existing in the same gardens as two of the 4/10)</p>	<p>153 Cotoneaster : ornamental  <i>Cotoneaster</i> sp. Medik.  (1/10)</p>
<p>144 Ivy (different from above)  <i>Hedera</i> sp. L.  (4/10)</p>	<p>154 Hellebore  <i>Hellebore</i> sp. L.</p>
<p>145 Primula  <i>Polyanthus</i> sp. Auct. ex Benth. &amp; Hook.f.  (1/10)</p>	<p>155 Lungwort : ornamental  <i>Pulmonaria</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>
<p>146 Aloe vera  <i>Aloe vera</i> L.  (3/10)</p>	<p>156 Red Hawthorn  <i>Crataegus laevigata</i> (Poir.) DC.  or <i>Crataegus</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>
<p>147 Christmas cactus  <i>Schlumbergera</i> sp. Lem.  (1/10)</p>	<p>157 Hosta : ornamental  <i>Hosta</i> sp. Tratt.  <i>Crataegus</i> sp. L.</p>
<p>148 Valerian : used for tea to help sleep-Aibell,  spiritual/sacred herb-William  <i>Valeriana officinalis</i> L.  (3/10)</p>	<p>158 Mock Orange  <i>Philadelphus</i> sp. L.  <i>Crataegus</i> sp. L.</p>
<p>149 Guelder rose : medicinal, “Cramp bark”  <i>Viburnum opulus</i> L.  (1/10)</p>	<p>159 Rowan tree: sacred, “Rowan in the East”-Murtlemoss  <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> L.  (2/10)</p>
<p>150 Pyracantha : from previous owner  <i>Pyracantha</i> M.Roem.  (1/10)</p>	<p>160 Yew tree : sacred to Druids-Aibell, spiritual, “Yew in the  north”-Murtlemoss  <i>Taxus baccata</i> L.  (3/10)</p>
<p>151 Spurge  <i>Euphorbia</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>	<p>161 Hydrangea  <i>Hydrangea</i> sp. L.  (3/10)</p>
<p>152 Hollyhock  <i>Alcea</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>	<p>162 Himalayan Anemone  <i>Anemone</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>
	<p>163 Tamarisk  <i>Tamarix</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p>

<p>164 Mistletoe : collected and hung indoors during seasonal time, should never touch ground <i>Viscum album</i> L. (4/10)</p> <p>165 Forsythia : self-seeded in front yard, moved to back <i>Forsythia</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>166 “Columbine Aquilegia” : ornamental <i>Aquilegia</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>167 Trailing Lobelia <i>Lobelia erinus</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>168 Oak (turkey oak) : Spiritual, ancestor tree, Grown from seed via older oak at grandma’s house, Connection to ancestors <i>Quercus cerris</i> DC. (1/10)</p> <p>169 Peonies <i>Paeonia</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>170 Periwinkle <i>Vinca</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>171 Dogwood <i>Cornus</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>172 Feverfew : planted by birds, medicinal <i>Tanacetum parthenium</i> Sch. Bip. (1/10)</p> <p>173 Canadian Poppy: planted by birds <i>Papaver rhoeas</i> L. (1/10)</p>	<p>174 Mullein : seeded by birds <i>Verbascum thapsus</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>175 Ribwort : seeded by birds <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L. (1/10).</p> <p>176 Toadflax <i>Linaria vulgaris</i> Mill. (1/10)</p> <p>177 Tansey <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>178 Water Iris <i>Iris</i> sp. L. (2/10)</p> <p>179 Crabapple Tree : Named Jacob-Nahimana Tuwa <i>Malus sylvestris</i> (L.) Mill. (1/10)</p> <p>180 Dahlia <i>Dahlia</i> sp. Cav. (1/10)</p> <p>181 Swiss Cheese Plant <i>Monstera deliciosa</i> Liebm. (1/10)</p> <p>182 Zebra Plant <i>Haworthiopsis attenuata</i> (Haw.) G.D. Rowley (1/10)</p> <p>183 Dragon tree / dragon plant <i>Dracaena marginata</i> Aiton (1/10)</p> <p>184 Avocado : potted, ornamental <i>Persea americana</i> Mill. (1/10)</p>
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185 Agave <i>Agave americana</i> L. (1/10)	196 Sweet Potato <i>Ipomoea batatas</i> (L.) Lam. (1/10)
186 Busy Lizzie <i>Impatiens walleriana</i> Hook.f. (1/10)	197 Liatris : purple flowers, “bees love them”-Murtlemoss <i>Liatris</i> sp. Gaertn. ex Schreb. (1/10)
187 Buttercup : Wild/Unintentional <i>Ranunculus</i> sp. L. (3/10)	198 Canterbury Bell <i>Campanula medium</i> L. (1/10)
188 Leek : food <i>Allium ampeloprasum</i> L. (1/10)	199 Privet : had died, replanted with a Rose Quartz (crystal) to help regrow <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> L. (1/10)
189 Strawberry : food <i>Fragaria × ananassa</i> Duchesne (1/10)	200 Pittosporum <i>Pittosporum</i> sp. Banks ex Sol. (1/10)
190 Twisted Willow : ornamental, snake lives in it <i>Salix matsudana</i> var. <i>Tortuosa</i> Koidz. (1/10)	201 Fennel: food, relaxing- Greenfae & Sylvarwolf <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill. (2/10)
191 Nemesia <i>Nemesia</i> sp. Vent. (1/10)	202 Maidenhair Fern <i>Adiantum</i> sp. L. (1/10)
192 Sorrel : herb, food <i>Rumex acetosa</i> L. (1/10)	203 African Violet <i>Saintpaulia</i> sp. H. Wendl. (1/10)
193 Lemon tree <i>Citrus limon</i> (L.) Osbeck (1/10)	204 Bouncing Bess <i>Centranthus ruber</i> (L.) DC. (1/10)
194 Orchid <i>Orchidaceae</i> Juss. (2/10)	205 Bride shrub <i>Exochorda × macrantha</i> C.K. Schneid. (1/10)
195 Begonia <i>Begonia</i> sp. L. (1/10)	

<p>206 Goat Willow <i>Salix caprea</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>207 Jasmine <i>Jasminum</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>208 Bindweed : has “firm talks with bindweed fairies”-Murtlemoss <i>Convolvulus</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>209 Virginia Creeper <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i> (L.) Planch. (1/10)</p> <p>210 Bracken fern <i>Pteridium</i> sp. Gled. ex Scop. (1/10)</p> <p>211 Marsh Pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle vulgaris</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>212 Meadowsweet : Spiritual, sacred herb from Ovate course-William <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> (L.) Maxim. (2/10)</p> <p>213 Cicely <i>Myrrhis odorata</i> (L.) Scop. (1/10)</p> <p>214 Yarrow <i>Achillea millefolium</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>215 Catmint : for cats <i>Nepeta x faassenii</i> Bergmans ex Stearn (1/10)</p>	<p>216 Heather : Spiritual, sacred herb from Ovate course-William <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> (L.) Hull (1/10)</p> <p>217 Agrimony : Spiritual, sacred herb from Ovate course-William <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>218 Oak tree (English oak) <i>Quercus robur</i> L. (1/10) (total <i>Quercus</i> 4/10)</p> <p>219 Peppermint : food, tea, medicinal “for heart &amp; stomach” - Greenfae &amp; Sylvarwolf <i>Mentha × piperita</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>220 Spearmint : same uses as peppermint (food, tea, medicinal) <i>Mentha spicata</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>221 Lettuce : food, good for reducing nausea <i>Lactuca sativa</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>222 Green Beans : food (x 4) <i>Phaseolus vulgaris</i> L. (1/10)</p> <p>223 Pineapple Mint <i>Mentha suaveolens</i> Ehrh. ‘<i>Variegata</i>’ (1/10)</p> <p>224 Snapdragon <i>Antirrhinum</i> sp. L. (1/10)</p> <p>225 Potato (many) : food &amp; ornamental greenery <i>Solanum tuberosum</i> L. (1/10)</p>
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<p>226 Night Scented Stock : ornamental &amp; good for bees  <i>Matthiola longipetala</i> (Vent.) DC.  (1/10)</p> <p>227 Clover  <i>Trifolium</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p> <p>228 Cherry tomato : food  <i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> var. <i>cerasiforme</i>  (Alef.) Fosberg  (1/10)</p> <p>229 Morning Glory : psychoactive seeds, (spiritual)  They don't use the seeds, but it was planted as  a nod to the belief that Old Druids used them.  -Greenfae &amp; Sylvarwolf  <i>Ipomoea</i> sp. L.  (1/10)</p> <p>230 Basil  <i>Ocimum basilicum</i> L.  (1/10)</p>	
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All nomenclature verified with help from the International Plant Index (ipni.org), when not given by informants. Many latin names were found with help from RHS.org & Wildlifetrusts.org

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