

# THE COUNTRY GRIND



**FREE  
TO RURAL ADDRESSES**

**ISSUE #1  
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## THE PEARL OF PUNK: LIVING IN THE BOONIES

By River Wolf

The term punk has always been difficult to define. Some folks will tell you that punks are rebellious teenagers, while others figure that punks are kids with spiky hair and studded jackets. Some think that punk is limited to a style of fast rock n' roll while others believe that punks are drugged-up delinquents. Whether you call "punks" a group of anarchists or skateboarding athletes, one sub-category of punk which is so often ignored is "the rural punk."

The term "rural punk" seems juxtaposition in itself. Due to stereotypes, punks are primarily perceived as urban inhabitants. Didn't Fear sing "We Love Living in the City"? Inner-city squats, graffiti infested skate parks, and downtown punk gigs have helped portray images of an urban punk.

While these factors do not dishonour the definition of punk, they do not represent the rural punk.

Punk has always been deeply rooted as a resistance movement. Living in a rural area is a perfect method for resisting the problems of the city. Your average city is plagued with pollution, cops, traffic, noise, crowds, and consumerism's social ills which punks stand against. All of these issues are found in small or nonexistent quantities in a rural setting. In cities, nature is usually designated to city-maintained parks. The community has no say on how these parks are maintained. These parks are often closed at night. Although parks can be fun, they do not depict nature naturally.

In the country, you have nature for how it is. Forests grow wild. Streams choose their own paths. Animals live without the inter-

ference of humans. Flowers blossom without the aid of manmade chemicals. Nature thrives naturally. Living close to nature encourages humans to take an environmental stance against pollution, because those who are close to nature live with the beautiful powers of nature on a daily basis. Inhabitants in the country watch one another's back. There are few places of wealth to rob. As a result of the lower crime found in rural communities, police forces are small or non-existent. Most rural residents do not arm their homes with security systems. Cities are notorious for rush hours. Road rage, pollution, and car accidents are synonymous with traffic congestion. Car pooling, city buses, and subways have been built, but have not fully combated traffic.

Such a problem does not exist in the country. Few cars are on the road. Tractor driv-

ers do not have to worry about their slow pace. People walk at leisurely speed. Hitchhikers are picked up quickly. Cyclists do not have to worry about being run over. No one ever worries about crowded places such as shopping malls or busy street corners. Many urban inhabitants bicker about noisy neighbours. As soon as people can file legitimate noise complaints with the cops, they will. In the country, no one ever makes noise complaints. People live in tranquility with the pleasant noises of nature. Some even argue that the country is too quiet. If anyone were to say that the city were too quiet, you'd think they were talking about a ghost town.

Cities are strife with consumerism. Factories, corporate headquarters, stock exchanges, shopping malls, and chain stores are always trying to sell you crap that you don't need so you can impress people that you

See Pearl of punk on page 3

By Ragtime Rach

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

This first issue is free to all rural punks in North America. Email me your mailing address and I will send you a copy. City punks can buy a copy off of the website. I would love to see all issues of the Country Grind remain free for RP's, but that is dependent upon receiving more advertisers and donations. Read my intro for more info regarding this.

## ADVERTISING

We will only accept ads from rad folks selling/promoting shit that is in line with DIY punk ethics.

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Holy Mother Fucking Shit! You are holding in your hands the fruits of mine and many other folks' combined labours\*, the first issue (of many) of The Country Grind Quarterly!

My name is Gretchen, I'm an ex-trainhopping, flailing drunk turned sober, hardworking farmer. I live off-grid in central Manitoba. This winter however I'm in northern Manitoba going to school for diesel mechanics. The idea to start a rural punk magazine has been with me for about 4 years since a friend and I came up with the idea while living in the woods together. Over time I noticed that more and more of my friends were settling down outside of the city. I wanted to be able to stay connected with them, but ultimately failed at being a penpal. I really wanted to create this paper, but like I'm sure you know, rural living comes with very little "freetime". But this winter is different. I'm living in a small, super isolated town while I'm taking this 9 month course and I've got oodles of free time, a computer, and unlimited electricity. So I decided that now was the best time to finally get this paper off the ground. With a few mass emails and help from the kind folks at Profane Existence, news of The Grind went "viral" across the webs and now here we are. I've got well over 100 preorders and so many submissions that I couldn't possibly fit them all in one issue.

To me The Country Grind is all about maintaining punk culture in a rural atmosphere. It's a place for punks across North America to network and share stories, experiences, and ideas; where we can connect and not feel so alone like the woods can do to us sometimes. I want everyone to feel welcome to be a part of this zine. That's why I've created a pretty strict No Dogma rule for submissions. I feel like when you get a bunch of vegans and a bunch of hunters together you're just asking for drama, but I'm hoping that we can look past some of our differences and, while not hiding or denying our personal ideologies, keep ourselves from forcing them upon other readers.

Although I've taken a leadership role in bringing this paper to life, it is anarchist at its core. I don't want to be the big cheese "Editor in Chief". I've had pretty good luck in finding friends and strangers to help me out with editing and organizing duties, and all of your submissions have brought so much colour and life to the paper.

Also, this paper is funded almost entirely out of my own pocket, and my pockets aren't deep. There's no way I can afford to shell out nearly a grand for printing and shipping 4 times a year. We need more advertisers; we have a couple ads from some sweet friends that I really encourage you to check out, but they're only paying for a fraction of the overall costs. I plan to start a Kickstarter by mid January to help raise funds for the paper while it's still in its infancy (check the blog for info on that), but without help from donations and advertisers, this paper will have to become a paid subscription (which isn't the worst thing that could happen, but is something I'd like to avoid)

I'd like to take the time to thank a couple people for helping make this paper a reality. Mike and Rachel, for giving me support and ideas from the start. Ian for helping contribute to the blog. Christina and Eliot for helping with distribution in the states. Dandy, for making me cinnamon raisin toast. And a huge thank you to Celeste for busting her ass and helping make this paper so much more awesome.

Anyways, I'll get this intro out of the way to make room for the meat and potatoes of this

In the beginning when a person is trying to get into tanning furs, the recipes and directions seem intimidating to say the least, and internet reference seems to be ever plagued by the know-it-all woods"men" with their products or the anti-d.i.y. folks that basically tell you to give up and send your hide to a tannery. Not so my friends! I've done a lot of tanning in the last little while with a few different methods and I really like this one because its cheap and easy. So i'll begin the instructions assuming everyone knows how to skin an animal and if not, well, I have a subject for another article! The fur that I will be showing in the photos is a rabbit fur, and is a great thing to work with if you are just learning these skills - the skin is very thin so its easier to work, but more likely for you to cut a hole in it. So be careful!

### Step One: Fleshing

Well now, there is writing upon writing about the aches and pains and woe of fleshing, but lets not get all negative right away. Fleshing is quite tedious, but the better job you do, the better the tan so its worth it. Basically what you're aiming to do is take off all the meat, fat, and membrane; there are many ways to do this. Most people know what meat and fat looks like, but membrane is a bit more tricky - if you pinch the skin and you can get a grip on a thin, pinkish layer of skin, that's the membrane. The layer you want will be kinda blueish white coloured, and you won't be able to pinch it away from the rest of the skin. You can get the membrane off with a sharp knife and an away-from-you motion, or a dull draw knife (you have to "start" it with a sharp knife to get to the good layer), or if you're able, you can freeze the skin and when it thaws the membrane will have loosened a bit, and you can literally pull it apart with your fingers.



The main thing to remember is to keep the edge "working", that is, to keep it rolling so you don't have to keep cutting down to find the right layer. This makes a lot more sense

rag. I hope you enjoy it.

\*I live in Canada, up here we spell some things differently then folks do in the USA, but I'm not going to change the way I write just because 2/3 of our readers are south of the border. So if you see center spelled centre or check spelled cheque or a random u thrown into a word, it's not a typo. And also, please, no Canada jokes. It's just annoying and makes you sound like an idiot. ❄️



Your humble and charming editor, Gretchen.



when you are actually doing it. If there are a few bits of membrane left, don't worry about it. You can get them off later. If you were making leather or buckskin, this is the point you would flip the hide over and take the hair off.

I find leaving the skin "cased" or like a sock is much easier for the whole process. Instead of the skin slipping around everywhere when you're trying to flesh it you can stick a smooth log or something sturdy up inside to keep it from moving around.. a cased skin is also helpful for the next steps in the tanning process.

### Step two: Alum and Salt

Alum is the stuff you can buy at bulk food stores or even the grocery store, its the white stuff little old ladies use to make their homemade pickles nice and crispy. Its not too expensive, but it ain't that cheap either.

The salt you want to ALWAYS use for tanning is fine, un-iodized salt. This can be found pretty much everywhere, it may be called "pickling salt", or "canning salt".

Take a MEASURED amount of alum and sprinkle it on the hide and rub it in with a gloved hand, you will know how much to put when it kinda crystallizes on the surface of the hide. Make sure you don't get any on the fur. Rub it in good, then sprinkle the same MEASURED amount of salt on top of the alum, and rub that in too. Make sure you use the same amount of alum and salt, however much you need to use. This applies to every hide that you tan with this method. For example, I used 2.5 cups of both for a sheepskin to get good coverage.

### Step 3: Rrroll it up!

Fold the hide flesh to flesh lengthwise, or if it is a cased skin simply invert it like a sock. Make sure the flesh is only touching flesh and not fur, and roll the whole thing up like a burrito. You may need to put the skin on an angle to let it drain, because the role of the salt is to expel extra water from the hide and tighten up the space between hair follicles. It also acts as a preservative. Leave the furry burrito in a cool place for ten days. I recommend on the fifth day, unrolling the fur and then rolling it the other way, just to be even.

On the tenth day, unroll the hide and wash out the alum and salt, hose off the flesh side first then wash the whole thing in water and dish soap, do it twice for greasy skins like bear, beaver, or raccoon. If the skin is really thick, you can use a sharp knife and carefully thin it if you feel like it...more on thinning later! Let the hide drain somewhere so the fur side dry and the flesh side is still a little moist. You can do this with a cased skin by inverting it so the fur side is out and letting it dry. You can puff up the fur with a brush and your hands, and you can rub sawdust or cornstarch on it to aid drying if you feel like it. You just have to bash it out afterwards.

### Step 4: Breaking

Here's where some more of the back breaking work comes in, but its awfully satisfying! As the hide dries, your aim is to separate the fibers or structure of the skin by "breaking"

basically pulling, stretching, or working the hide as creatively as you can! Some folks who are doing big hides like moose or even deer use old dryers with the heating element taken out, they just leave it on for hours with old shoes or something in there to do the breaking. For tradition and lack of electricity's sake in my case, I'll just say those people are cheaters (while after breaking a bison hide by hand, I secretly am jealous). The back of a chair works well for pulling the hide across it, or if it's a bigger hide a rope outside tied between two trees with you on one side and a friend on the other. You'll know the breaking is working when the flesh turns slowly white and supple. Make sure you pay close attention to the edges because they always dry first. If the hide is tough and dry in a spot you didn't get to, wet a dishcloth so it's just moist and lay it on the spot for half an hour or so, then try again. This breaking process should take place over several days: in the beginning you may only have to work the hide a few times a day or when you have time, but as the hide gets drier you should pay closer attention and work it more often. The hide is done when it doesn't feel cold to the touch. The mistake most people make the first few times is giving up on working it before it's done.

#### Step 5: Finishing

Depending on what you want this hide to be, you may want it to feel softer than it is. Keep in mind professional tanning companies actually shave thick hides in half with machines, which is extremely hard to do with just a knife. I have used a bench grinder with a wire wheel for fleshing and a grinding wheel for thinning and it worked ok, but it will never be the same as the machines and the harsh chemical tans. Take some sandpaper (I cheat and use a cheap orbital sander) and sand the hide down smooth. Here's where you get those pesky little bits of membrane off. When it's smooth, take some oil and rub it in. You can use fancy leather oils or just plain canola oil, that stuff does not rot but it gives the hide a yellowish colour. Let it dry, and you're done!

Happy tanning y'all! ❄️

## HERBS FOR WINTER HEALTH: A BIOREGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

by Juliette Abigail Carr

**Bioregional herbalism.** North America is a big place. Every region has its own potent medicines that fulfill humans' biological needs. Coevolution is a beautiful thing, as is biodiversity. There is no reason to believe that the newest trendy superherb from South America, India, or anywhere else is going to do something for us that we can't accomplish with a plant from our own climate. Humans wouldn't have survived this long without appropriate medicines in the absence of a global economy—and before everyone gets all hot and bothered about life expectancy, let me say that yes of course we're living longer than we used to, but germ theory (the genesis of modern medicine) is a whopping 150 years old, which is literally nothing in the face of tens of thousands of years of coevolution with plants. This is a constant source of frustration for me in my clinical practice, because no, I won't put goji in your formula, since I can't grow or wildcraft it here in Zone 4—how about some nice schisandra, rosehips, or hibiscus? Or (crazy, I know) you could just put down the popstars and eat berries.

Anyway, soapbox aside, I am a bioregional herbalist from New England, so my plants are not necessarily your plants. I will do my best to provide useful information to keep your family healthy with plants that grow widely in North America, but many of you live in a completely different sort of place from me. If you're living in a cabin in the arboreal forest or a yurt in the Mojave desert, listen to the spirit of this knowledge, not the letter of it. There will be good immune herbs in your climate, just take the time to learn who they are—a demulcent is going to act like a demulcent, regardless of what herbs are reviewed in the New York Times. You do not need to send away for herbs from the opposite end of wherever to care for yourself. If you did, we'd all be dead.

**The point.** Immunity is a huge topic and there's no way to go into the details of how human physiology interacts with plants,

nor is it possible to provide you with an exhaustive list of immune herbs and their properties here. Instead, I'm going to draw some broad strokes to help you understand how to organize the uses of herbs in your mind, and provide common examples. From there, the hope is that you will find useful herbs in these categories ("actions") growing in your yard and you can take it from there. This is the format I follow in my classes, because developing a sense of how to think about herbs helps us learn to use all herbs effectively, instead of simply collecting herblore one plant at a time. Learn the categories, and the herbs just fall into place like manna from Valhalla.

**Immune stimulators** get your body into gear. They work in various ways, some through increasing lymphatic filtration, some by stimulating T-cells or B-cells, some through unknown magic passed down through our ancestral folklore. The "how" isn't relevant here, but "when" is: the sooner you take an immune stimulator, the more likely you are not to spend a week miserable on the couch.

There's this idea floating around our enlightened culture that if an occasional little bit is a good thing, you should probably take a metric shit-ton daily because then you'll turn into a superhero and it'll rule. This is not the case. Please don't take these every day, and please don't drink tinctures by the ounce. Immune stimulators are strong medicine and should be treated with respect. If you're buying or bartering for tinctures, ask the herbalist for a dosage; otherwise look it up in your favorite book. I really don't recommend tea for these herbs since the medicine extracts best in alcohol.

It's important to note that stimulating an already over-reactive immune system can be dangerous to some folks; for example, if your immune cells are attacking your nervous system, like in MS, you shouldn't encourage them. People with serious autoimmune disorders, heads up: this might not be a great idea for you.

The most famous immune stimulating herb is Echinacea; there's no need to go into the science—let's leave it at "it works"—but here are some tips. Before you make medicine, eat some of the plant you're going to harvest. It should make your

mouth go numb and tingly, and if it doesn't it's not strong enough. *E. purpurea* is the species I recommend, since it's easier to grow than *E. angustifolia*, has a wider range, and isn't endangered. Please do not use wild *E. angustifolia*, or I will judge you as a jerk contributing to the wholesale destruction of an endangered plant. I like to make several tinctures through the season of different plant parts, then combine for a whole plant tincture. Similar immune stimulators include spilanthes, yellow root, barberry, oregon grape, garlic (eat this, don't tincture it), and thyme (nice in oil). Please don't use wild goldenseal: it's endangered, and then you will be a jerk etc.

Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis*, is less famous than Echinacea but no less fabulous as an antibacterial, antiviral immune stimulator. Use the mature black berries in tinctures, syrups, elixirs—anything with some alcohol in it. It tastes great and is safe for kids. The berries freeze and dry well. Unlike other immune boosting herbs, elderberry is safe for everyday use. Give the kids 10 drops of syrup every day in the winter to protect them from their disgusting little friends (this also works for adults). If you're actually sick, take a bigger dose to fight it off faster. The flowers are a great immune stimulator too, tinctured fresh in summer and used when you're actually sick. Do not make medicine from poisonous red elderberry (*S. racemosa*).

**Energetics for everyone.** Okay, so to avoid getting sick or to get better faster, take immune stimulating herbs. If you get sick anyway, you don't have to choose between unrelieved suffering and DayQuil. First, identify what's actually wrong, using a concept known as energetics. Do you have a dry, nonproductive cough? A wet sore throat with a post-nasal drip? In very simple terms, is this problem a wet problem or a dry problem? Next, do you need to stop something that's happening, like a hacking cough? Or do you need to make something happen, like coughing that junk out of your lungs? In other words, do you have a problem that is stuck or moving?

Once you've identified the energetics of your problem in terms of wet/dry & stuck/moving, it's easier to pick

(continued on next page)

## PEARL OF PUNK

(cont. from cover)

don't care about.

Villages and hamlets tend to be devoid of such capitalistic enterprises. While open markets and trading posts do exist, these businesses are locally owned and operated. Money stays within the community. Many of the sold products are homemade. Local foods are sold. Souvenirs are authentic to local communities. Prices are flexible.

It is a common misconception that land belongs to the government. Governments are nothing but failed human inventions, which have nothing to do with nature. In many cases, governments are directly responsible for the destruction of nature.

Land belongs to nature, to the earth. While out in nature, you emancipate yourself of politicians, police, and parties. Nature knows no politics. What better way to rid yourself of urban politics than by escaping to rural anarchy.

From a spiritual standpoint, there is much to embrace in nature. Many forms of spirituality (Taoism, Wicca, shamanism, etc.) are based around nature, not a supreme-being or strict adherence to doctrine. Time spent in nature offers tranquility which can expel anxiety. Humans evolved from nature, so one returns to the roots of their origin when they spend time outdoors. Nature offers undisputed beauty which triumphs over the ugliness of the city. Days with nature promotes feelings of reflection, euphoria, and inspiration.

Gone are the days when punk was aligned with the heroin era. Nowadays, many punks

have decreased their hedonistic substance use or gone straight-edge. Veganism has steadily been on the rise in the punk community. Punks generally enjoy various physical activities. The rural punk is most likely healthier than the urban punk due to nourishing advantages, which the country promotes for the above-mentioned reasons. Urban fitness options are usually limited to tracks, weight rooms, community centre gymnasiums, and basketball courts. Many of these institutes are costly. On the other hand, nature offers people a plethora of exercise opportunities. Cyclists can go for rigorous rides through thick forests, or coast along the shore. Hikers can trek deep in lands where cars cannot go. Lakes, rivers, and the ocean offer countless forms of recreation and entertainment. Snowfalls give way to cross country skiing, ice skating, snowshoeing, sledding, etc. Fields provide the perfect playgrounds for many games. There is a reason why the great outdoors are synonymous with adventure sports. The next time someone tells you that the country is boring, remind them that in the city unless you have money to go to the bar, cinema, or mall, there is nothing to do but sit inside or wander in between sky scrapers.

Living in the city plagues one with litter, smog, and spilled chemicals; all of which will gradually deteriorate the longevity of even the most health-conscientious individual. Fresh air, clean water, litter-free lands, and wild plants give way towards healthy living and old age. When in the city, one is usually limited to manufactured food bought in supermarkets, while rural folks can grow organic foods in gardens or hunt and fish organic game. The dietary options

of the rural punk lead to DIY action.

It is undisputed that the best way to learn about natural science is to embrace nature-our source material. In the city, one can only see plants which humans have cultivated, while in the wilderness one can explore botany in its most natural setting. Animals roam free in nature while in the city you can only see a limited number of animals which have been incarcerated in unnatural and cruel environments. Urban development distorts and perverts landscape while nature lets the land grow at its own rate. Much undiscovered biological and geographic wonder exists in the wilderness, waiting to come into contact with human research.

Cultural scenes are one of the key reasons why people flock to cities. Concerts, art galleries, museums, theatres, cinemas, and festivals are among the best aspects of city life. Although arts and entertainment thrive within urban environments, one mustn't dismiss the artistic aspects of the country. Many painters are inspired by the beauty of nature. Photographers take some of their best photos in the wilderness. Theatre groups enjoy performing plays under the stars. Music festivals are often held in large vacant fields. Wood carvings and other sculptures are made from materials found within nature.

Some think that the country life is lonely. While having a bit of reclusion can be calming and introspective, people need social contact. In the country, neighbours might live faraway. On walks you might not run into others. Furthermore, you might see the same people continuously and rarely meet new faces or people from backgrounds different from your own.

While these are some of the disadvantages of the isolation of the countryside, one mustn't forget the positive social aspects of the rural lifestyle. Villagers are usually tightly-knit and look out for others as though they are one large extended family. People do not feel threatened by others. Neighbours are quick to help one another in times of distress. Small groups make it easy for people to raise their voice during community meetings. Communal events such as bonfires, end of harvest parties, and market day bring everyone together for fun.

Although many primitive societies have ceased to exist, anarcho-primitivist collectives can still be found in nations such as Papua New Guinea, Mongolia, Myanmar, Russia, Indonesia, Brazil, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Australia, Guyana, Namibia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Kyrgyzstan, to name some. All of these nations have a centralized government, though the folks from these nomadic or landed societies continue to live their own lives' with little to no government intrusion.

The advantages of living close to nature are endless. Outside every door is an adventure, go outside and find one. Entertain yourself, enjoy yourself, embrace nature, get inspired, learn about what you love and feel strongly about. There is no reason why a rural environment can't hold just as strong a grasp on punk as an urban environment. Remember, even if you do live as, or become a rural punk, the city is still there if you want to visit. If you live as a rural punk, you might appreciate the city more if you take it in small doses. Go to the city for the things you like, and then leave before the negative urban aspects drag you down. ❄️

by thinking about how to balance out your problem. Choose an herb that has the opposite effect, like a drying herb for a wet problem. I know this seems simplistic—it is actually a vastly over-simplified version of a really complicated idea—but it works, it's easy, and it's accessible. Right there you've narrowed down your choices of herbs to ones that will actually help. There's this constant theme in my life of people saying "I know herbs don't work, because when I had this gross phlegmy cough I tried mullein and it didn't work." If you can't use water to clean black mold and you can't put out a fire with a log from the woodstove, why would a moistening herb fix a wet cough? Because the article they read in Vogue didn't mention balance at all (not that this is an exhaustive explanation, but still) and they're expecting one-size-fits-all miracle pills, which is not how this works. You, however, are a well-informed person who wants your remedies to work, so you will think about balance.

**Coughs: harbinger of doom.** When we talk about symptoms, we're going to talk about them in terms of wet/dry & stuck/moving. Expectorants are for stuck coughs: they make you cough up the grossness in your lungs. This is very helpful if you happen to have grossness in your lungs. However, if you don't have anything in your lungs, or if you have a hacking, painful cough that won't quit (a moving cough), an expectorant is not a good plan—in that case, you want a cough suppressant ("lung antispasmodic"). So right off the bat, is the cough stuck or moving? Is it dry or wet (think phlegmy versus sandpaper throat)? Choose herbs based on these characteristics of your cough.

For a dry, stuck cough, try a moistening ("demulcent") expectorant like mullein, violet, saffras, or licorice in tea only since alcohol won't pull the goeey goodness out of a demulcent herb. On a side note, please don't smoke mullein—that's not mucous you're coughing up, it's lung.

For a wet, stuck cough, try a drying expectorant like elecampane, prickly ash, or angelica, in whatever preparation suits your fancy; I like syrups, see recipe that follows the article.

For a wet, moving cough (the kind that won't quit), try a drying cough suppressant like good old-fashioned cherry bark, which historically was such a famously effective medicine that when robitussin came out they had to make it cherry flavored or it wouldn't sell. Cherry bark contains cyanide so open a window if you're drying it inside. If your cough is very irritable, combine with another antispasmodic like vervain or coltsfoot.

For a dry, moving cough, use a moistening cough suppressant like marshmallow root. A lot of people use slippery elm, but it's endangered and seriously marshmallow works just as well, I promise—and so will other nice, cooling demulcents in your area. If your cough is very irritable, combine the demulcent with another lung antispasmodic like vervain or coltsfoot.

**Snotrocks for the people.** For nose & sinus symptoms, again think about identifying and balancing your problem: wet/dry, stuck/moving? A stuffy nose is a great example of a stuck condition that can be wet or dry: sinus pressure or a post-nasal drip usually means there's a bunch of wet inflammation in your face, as opposed to when your nose is so dry that you can't blow it. A decongestant increases movement and drains everything, so we use it for stuck conditions. Astringents are herbs that dry and tighten mucous membranes, like the lining of your nose and sinuses, so they work great for wet conditions. Just like with coughs, think about demulcents for a dry condition.

A wet stuffy nose or a runny nose is just begging for an astringent decongestant; also appropriate if it hurts to touch your cheekbones or forehead (where your sinuses

are). Examples are goldenrod (any species of *Solidago*), bee balm/bergamot, thyme, or cayenne (not really astringent, but a strong decongestant). Use these in any preparation, although some say the tea is strongest. Goldenrod and bee balm are great in a netty pot, since they're gentler. Add eucalyptus or thyme to boiling water, put a towel over your head, and breathe those oils deep—you'll thank me.

If you've got a dry, stuck stuffy nose or a runny nose you can't blow, you want something to increase movement and moisture. Combine a less-drying decongestant like bee balm, goldenrod, or thyme with a demulcent herb like mullein or violet to loosen it all up. Again, demulcents should be tea only.

**Hard earned sweat.** Fevers are common with winter illness, and can generally be brought down with herbs called febrifuges or antipyretics. That being said, don't ignore an emergency: if the fever is very high, especially in a child, do the regular stuff (drugs, cold baths), and make sure it's not something scary like meningitis. There are two basic ways to get rid of a fever with herbs: increase body temperature until it breaks into a sweat (most herbs), or cool the body down. The most widely growing herb for fevers is willow bark, which affects temperature regulation in the brain, as well as relieves pain and inflammation. Willow contains salicylates, the compound that aspirin was synthesized from, but it doesn't thin blood like aspirin. You can use any species for medicine as long as the bark tastes bitter and astringent—the yuckier, the better. Meadowsweet, black birch, and wintergreen work like willow. Cayenne, prickly ash, bee balm, and boneset (in small doses, tincture only) make you sweat out the fever. These herbs work best in tea or as tincture added to tea; most of them don't taste great but hot water increases temperature, and dehydration is a fear with fevers.

It's not a good idea to use these herbs with children under 6 with viruses, because they don't have a good temperature ceiling and fevers can go way too high; instead, use cooling herbs to reduce temperature like catnip, borage, and peppermint, together with cold baths (you can add herbs to the bathwater, too).

**See, it works.** So let's say you've got a fever, stuffy nose with post-nasal drip, sinus headache, and a goeey cough but you're not bringing much up. Instead of taking an herb or two for each of these problems, let's look at the whole picture and pick a couple of herbs to do a bunch of stuff. Based on our very simple wet/dry moving/stuck thing, this looks like a wet, stuck condition, so we'll use dry, moving herbs. An example of a reasonable combination would be prickly ash, goldenrod, and bee balm. These herbs are warming and drying, expectorant, decongestant, and will help with the fever. They are also not too strong—you don't want to overdo it and throw yourself out of balance in the other direction. Don't forget to take some immune boosters too, like elderberry, so you can get better faster.

**Goodbye.** Please look up any herb that is new to you to make sure you have the right species and that the contraindications (when not to use it) are okay for you; I'm only listing Latin names where there is a potential for confusion, so double check on your own. Try the recipe, you'll like it. Find me on the internet if you feel like it, or read my article in the spring issue on something related to spring tonics, and maybe how to make tinctures.

Winter Recipe: Cough Syrup

These syrups combine honey, tincture, and tea in near equal parts, yielding a potent, tasty medicine. Substitute everywhere; whatever makes sense for your bioregion. 6 oz=180 ml

1)Boil water in the bottom of a double

boiler. Measure 6 oz raw honey by volume into the top. Turn heat down!

2)Add to honey and stir well: 1 T dried cherry bark, 1 T dried elecampane root

3)Cover and heat on low until fragrant, the longer the better—all afternoon is great. Keep temperature below 110 F.

4)Gently simmer (decoct) 7 oz of water with 1 T dried elderberries. Remove from heat and cover when reduced to 6 oz, dark, and fragrant.

5)When honey is infused, add cherry bark tincture. If you don't have enough, combine a few tinctures. Volume of tincture depends on alcohol proof:

-Add 6 oz tincture made with 80-130 proof (40-65%) alcohol

-Add 3 oz tincture made with 140-190 proof (70-95%) alcohol

6)Combine tincture, honey, & tea; strain. Store in a cool place or the fridge. Lasts months.

*Juliette Abigail Carr RN BSN is a clinical herbalist, teacher, and homesteader in rural Vermont. Contact her at [oldwaysherbal.com/blog](http://oldwaysherbal.com/blog) or [facebook.com/oldwaysherbal](https://www.facebook.com/oldwaysherbal)*

## ROAD DOG GRAVEYARD A LOVE STORY

– BY EMILY KANE

Rowan died November 26<sup>th</sup> 2013, almost one month ago upon the writing of this article. Life hasn't been, even similar, with him gone. Twelve & ½ years. Twelve & ½ years of unconditional love, companionship & protection. Almost half of my life, one gal & one guy. He had always been different. Someone I could depend on, someone I could truly trust.

Rowan was my companion dog & he was my hero. Fuck, he still is. I wanted to do everything, just me & him, where his death was concerned. And I am happy I (almost) did. Rowan's health had been declining for about one year. A hard year, even for a trooper like him. He was the kind of guy who didn't tell me when he was in pain, the kind of guy who wanted his gal to be happy. It all started with a strange lump between his toes. Turned out it was cancer. I had it quickly removed. Then another lump, and another.

Three toe removals later, the worst of the tumours was busting from his flesh. It became so big that he carried around his limp paw, tucked up under his big chest. Something had to give. Against my desire, we went through the difficult process of a full, amputation of his front, left leg.

I got the call from the vet, the operation had gone without a hitch. Arriving at the vet hospital to bring him home, I found him looking not unlike a Frankenstein dog- a very large zig-zag incision, with very large, stitches- too many to count. Although he had operations & toes removed before (leaving him with two front paws looking like terra-dactal feet), I was unprepared for the huge stiches & swelling. This operation made the toe removals look easy.

Being the trooper he was, he healed well all summer long. The adjustment from four legs to three had gone well. Rowan was a Rottweiler/Pitbull mix, so with his giant head & chest, his locomotion had turned to a new kind of; hop-step-step, hop-step-step. Within weeks he was laying around in soft grasses, mastering the art of stick chewing, with one front paw. Not an easy thing!

We live in the northern highlands of Nova Scotia, Canada, on Cape George. A stunning region, just before the Canso Causeway, that leads to the famous Cabot Trail, on Cape Breton Island. Our cape area is often referred to as, 'The Little Cabot Trail'. When the continents divided- back whenever that was, we split from the Celtic Highlands in Europe & ended up over here, across the Atlantic Ocean. The landscape is incredibly similar (& to me, equally stunning). Rowan & myself were born here in Nova Scotia. We,

my family & I, had moved back to the region, purchasing a 6 acres land parcel, on the isolated cape. Buying land that is, let's say, unsavoury to the average land baron, was financially advantageous, to say the least. Often 'problem land' is sold off at very low prices, because most aren't willing to rehabilitate the eco-systems & care for wounded, woodlands that were the result of logging 35 years in the past. Never the less, that was what our plan was. Living on our fully converted, 35 foot, 1986, blue & white school bus, we were in heaven. Work & play. In my dog's 12 1/2 years, I don't think I'd seen him happier to call a place home. Especially a place where he was King of Castle.

Then the real trouble began. His operation has, "gone without a hitch", yeah, like the vet said. Wrong. As the months went on, the incision would heal, then become infected & then heal, then re-open. Puss was ever present. It seemed to start affecting his mood although he didn't seem in visible pain, but was tired. He went a few good months again, then the same issues. By the end of the fall, he was spending a lot of time in bed. Slowly, over time, it became all day in bed. Changing his blankets daily, the puss smelled increasing putrid & seemed to never stop. He had trouble doing most things. Not interested in moving around & having increased mobility issues, his hop-step-step, turned hop-wait-stagger-wait-step. Things weren't so great.

Our first snow came...

Admittedly, I had looked into alternative death methods. Everything seemed scary & unsure. All of the things I read on the topic were risky & ultimately, not what I was looking for.

I called a vet. A new vet. We discussed all of our options. She told me, that when I thought it was time, she would come to our place & give his a needle that would end his struggle. Four or five weeks later, I called her back to make arrangements. She came to our place with a female assistant (Rowan was more comfortable with stranger women, then stranger men). I had played out the next 15 minutes in my head, over & over, until it made me crazy. I wanted to control everything, make every decision, like our life together- a life of what we wanted, how we wanted. Both the vet & assistant were very kind & very quiet. I had asked for this, now it was happening.

Earlier that day, Rowan & I had gone for a truck ride (his favorite) & then gone to a beach that he enjoyed. With sand in his fur, we laid in bed together, he was tucked from our snowy beach adventure that morning. He gave me three intentional kisses across my face, kisses were a high commodity, as he hadn't given them for weeks. He was aware & he meant what he kissed.

The needle went in, the vets left & I was there in bed with my guy. Just like always. His body was so warm & strong. I laid there for a long while, grieving. My cat friend, Rowan's good buddy, was there for it all, & seemed quite affected. Comforting her, she stayed close, wanting to see what had happened to her friend.

I had been told that digging the burial hole would be the hardest part emotionally, so I had help doing that job weeks earlier. It was done. The ground all around the site was cold & almost frozen, but I had covered the hole & the fill mound with a tarp to keep it from freezing up. Turns out the whole, 'six feet under' thing, doesn't apply to dogs- three feet deep was far enough. With a thin 15 centimeters of snow on the ground, the whole woodland look peaceful & quiet. The burial hole stood waiting.

After what seemed like forever, I wrapped Rowan's heavy body in 4 yards of linen, preparing to move him out into the woodland. I left his face unwrapped, so I could still see him, much like a swaddled baby. It wasn't yet time to treat him like a carcass. Having mentally played this part out, I knew that I didn't want his body loose or limp or flailing. I wrapped him tightly, tucking his

tree legs up, as though he were curled up for a nap. For most of his life Rowan held a steady weight of 36 kilograms (80 pounds). But since his amputation & weight loss, he was now about 29 kilograms (65 pounds). I was used to lifting & carrying him due to his mobility issues, but the term dead weight, proved to be a truism. He felt as though he weighed the world.

With tears burning my face, carried him outside. Like a giant baby, his huge, heavy head rested on my neck & shoulder. I had milled over different ways to get him from point A, to point B- a sled, drag a tarp, ect. My plan was to carry him in a sling tied from a bedsheet, out into the woodland. I laid him across the sheet, backed up to it, grabbed the corners from behind my shoulders & tied a knot as tightly as possible around on my chest. Hoisting him on my back, I faltered, not knowing if I could do this crazy, intense, but necessary ritual I was about to do. I stopped many times to rest & reflect & pet his sweet face. The vet had said he would become cold & ridged from rigor mortis within 30 minutes. This certainly, was not the case. He was warm & fuzzy, just as always. Carrying him in the sling across my back, like a baby in a rebozo, I trudged through the deep, muddy bog, around fallen branches & eventually to the spot that we had chose together.

Two months earlier, while I was working on the land, he showed me. He walked slowly, hopping on his three strong legs. Looking back & grabbing my attention, he waited for me to notice. Once he had succeeded, I followed him. He kept stopping, turning & continuing, leading me into the woods- a place where we had never explored together. He stopped near a meadow -like area, rare on our eastern property. It was ringed by tall trees & a mound in the middle of the tree ring. A high, dry area, that I had somehow missed until this moment. He laid down & relaxed. At this point in his health it was hard for him to walk far distances. He was tuckered. This was a message I didn't forget.

After what seemed like the longest walk of my life, I arrived at the burial site. I laid him down beside the hole, not ready to place in it. I sat with him. His face was perfect. No sloppy tongue hanging out like a hunted wolf, no bloody places. He was warm & soft, with his eyes almost closed, not glazed or glassy. I said a lot of thing to him & cried a lot of tears. Mostly I thanked him.

It was noon. The day had been sunny, blue skies, but thin clouds moved in overhead & light snowflakes drifted down to us on the ground. I took this as my call that this was time. Placing him into the burial hole was the hardest part I think. Being by myself, it was a bit awkward. I held both ends of the sling & tried to lower him in gently. My hope with the entire process, was that it would honour him, the noble beast; so doing this all right, was very important to me. Once he was in, I kind of broke down. It's one thing to do what I had done so far, but very different to now cover Rowan in fill soil. The last kiss, the last pat on his still warm face. I stopped to look at the sky a lot.

Then he was gone out of sight...

Taking on the act of death, burial, funeral & wake, by myself in the woods, I remember thinking at the time, "If I can do this, I can do anything". It was empowering to take care of him to last moment, & then onward. It made me feel strong, like he would have been so proud of me. Just me & him, like always, like the hard times & the good times. He had led the life of a Road Dog & was now back home. I believe he knew this; by the smell of the soil & the salt in the air.

I wanted to write this about the passing of my companion, because I have known so many folks who have gone through their dog's death in less than compassionate or ideal or even spiritual circumstances. I couldn't imagine taking him to a veterinarian facility & having that, 'be that'. It seemed far too undignified for such a noble beast, a friend who had changed my life in many

ways. The giant, multi-billion dollar per/year industry, that literally churns out & churns up our domesticated animals, has no place for companion animals. Frankly, it has no place for honour or respect of any animals. Many people cannot afford the hundreds of dollars the industry steals, in simply allowing death. Many folks have no place for legal burial either. I see that I am very privileged to be able to give Rowan a place that is honourable, a place where I can visit & simply give thanks. I have opened up my property to local punks that aren't so lucky- A Road Dog Graveyard of sorts. I want friends who are urban or rural renters, to have the peace of mind to know, that when the time comes for them to go through this, there will be a free place to rest. Free from costs, free from on-lookers, free from the disrespect many of their animals have already gone through in life. To all the Road Dogs, no longer on the road, rest in peace, knowing that one of your brothers is lying where you all deserve to be.

*Emily Kane is an illustrator, environmental educator & animal advocate, currently leading a woodland rehabilitation project & homesteading in backwoods Nova Scotia, with her family.*



## HAYBALES GET RICH QUICK SCHEMES

### #1 Slingin' Stick

Need Money? Love the outdoors? Hate bosses? I've got a scheme for you. Head into the woods and SELL SOME FIREWOOD. It's kinda like rural can picking, you can make just enough for a case of beer, or work until the bills are paid. Here are a few ideas on how to get your firewood business on the go.

- You need a chainsaw.

Super elitist woodsmen swear by this brand or that, and HATE this brand or that, but you don't need to start with anything crazy. Go down to the Walmart and pick up a cheapo saw and learn how it works. Figure out how to keep the chain tight, add oil and gas mix then head back home and get ready for your first haul.

-You need a truck

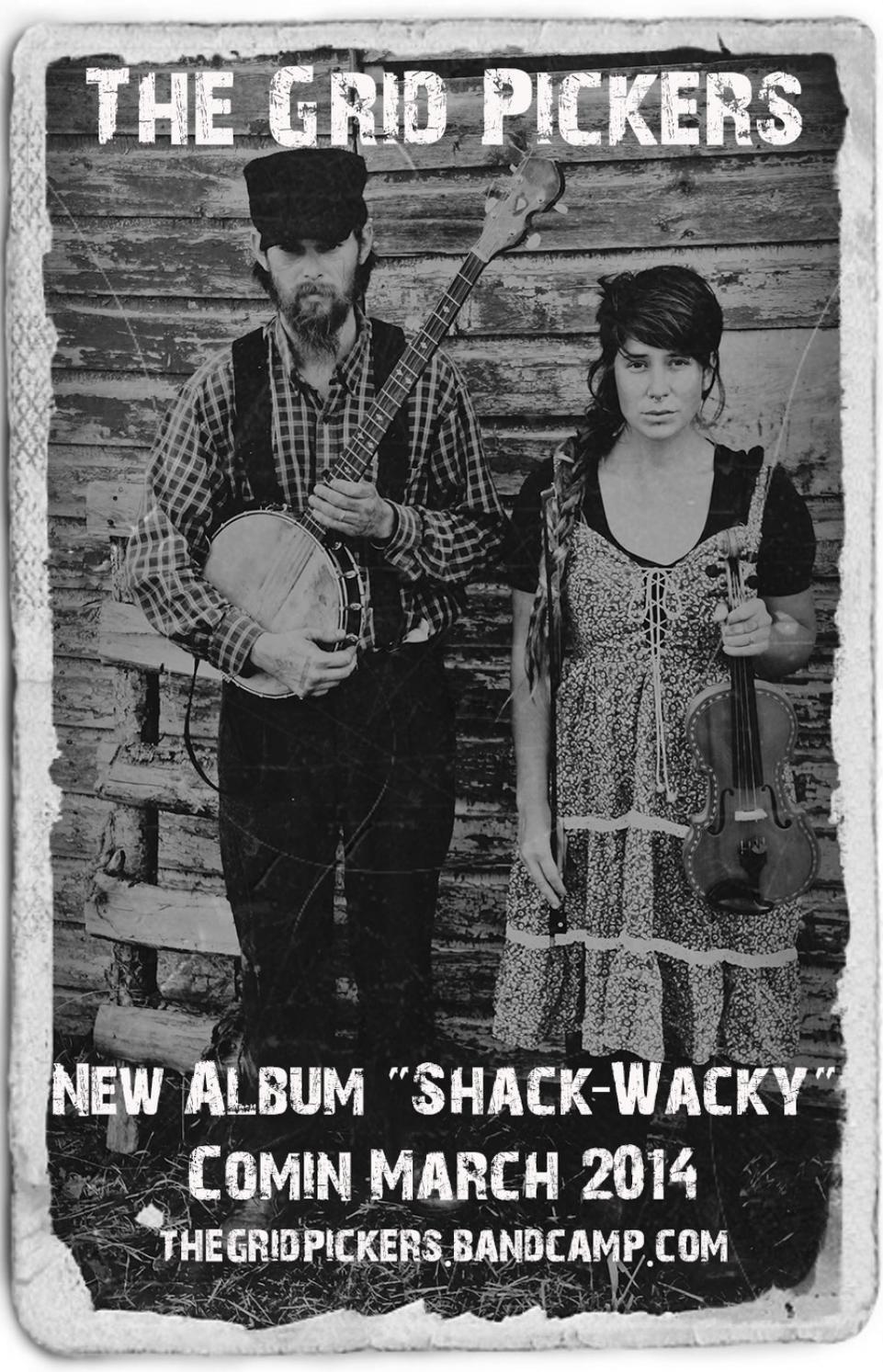
I have never paid more than 450\$ for our stump jumpers, and when it breaks down you can sell it to a scrap yard and get half your money back. Put a piece of plywood or mesh on the back window if you want to keep it intact...trust me on that. In winter it would be wise not to go so far away that you can't walk home or to a neighbour's house.

-Find a wood lot

I don't cut firewood on our own property because there are so many farmers around looking to rid themselves of their "evil bush". A family can sustain their own firewood needs on 11 acres of properly maintained woods, but if you're selling you will need more than that. Ask around and see who's planning on getting bush cleared. Its a favour for you and them, as less trees is easier on the machines.

-Safety first

Always wear gloves and tight fitting clothes



so you don't get tangled up in your saw. I also recommend wearing orange so hunters don't mistake you for a deer. As lame as it sounds, I like to wear eye protection, not from flying wood chips but from poking sticks while you're crashing through the underbrush. I have almost lost an eye from that more times then I can count. DO NOT head out in the wind, as branches can be broken loose and fall on you.

Ok, so grab your saw, gas, oil and truck keys, lace up your boots and take to the woods. Here are some tips for the greenhorn log hunter.

Know your prey. Find out what wood in your area is good to burn, and what kind is shit. Know from looking at the tree if it's good to cut down. Green trees should have bark on them; if there are giant holes that means that birds have been digging for bugs, and it's probably rotten.

Always look to see what way the tree is leaning, where the big heavy branches are, and pick a flight path for if something goes wrong. Even if the tree falls where you want, it could hit a log laying on the ground and spring up at you. Or splinter funny and shoot the tree back at you. Run either way.

Decide what you want to sell. Split? Rounds? 16 inch, 18 inch, 24 inch, 4 foot, 8 foot? Wood takes about a year to season to the point of burning properly, split wood takes shorter to season than lengths. Some hardwoods season slower too. Do your homework.

### HOW TO MAKE YOUR FIRST CUT

Cut a wedge out of the side of the tree in the direction you want it to fall, then cut from the back at a slight downward angle. Once the tree starts to tip, turn your saw off and run the other way.

Don't get pinched! Sometimes when you don't figure the angles out right and pressure is in a weird spot, your saw can get pinched. If this happens on the ground, turn your saw off, get a handsaw or axe and carefully work it out.

I like to keep a 2 inch wedge handy in case you cut mostly through the tree and it is still standing, or you're pinched in a standing tree. Drive your wedge in from behind to help it fall. NEVER turn your back on a tree that is cut and still standing, or leaning.

So now you're learning how to cut some wood. Here are some ways that help my wood business be more productive.

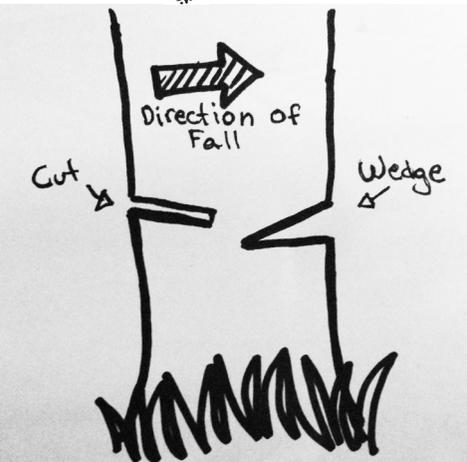
-convert a bale elevator into a wood shooter by attaching scrap wood on the sides, you can pick up old bale elevators for 50 bucks.

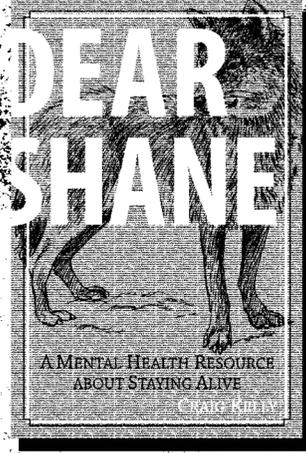
-if you're splitting the wood I recommend a log splitter. You can buy them pretty cheap but make sure it is at least 4 tonnes pressure. Also gas powered wood splitters can be crazy expensive so I bought an electric one and a generator.

-a truck box trailer is perfect for the beginner wood chopper. They are very cheap and you can bring home double the amount of wood.

So now you can make a few dollars on the farm. Don't be scared of talking to the old timers for tips and stories and be VERY CAREFUL. Everyone knows a story of somebody killed in logging accident. Try to keep in touch with two way radios, or let someone know where you're cutting at all times. Now get out there and make some scrilla.

"Money doesn't grow on trees...oh wait, yeah it does."





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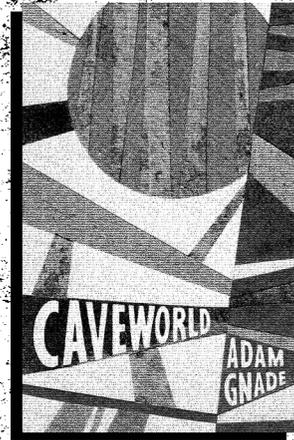
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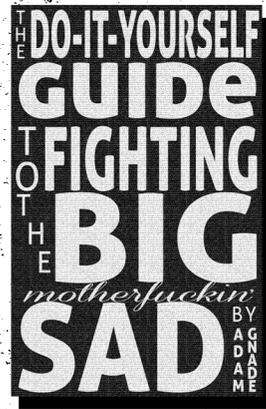
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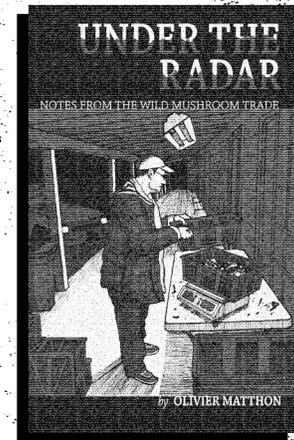
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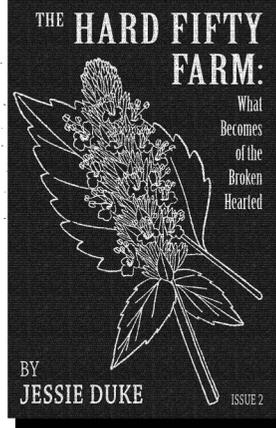
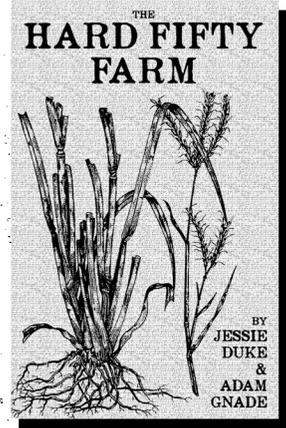
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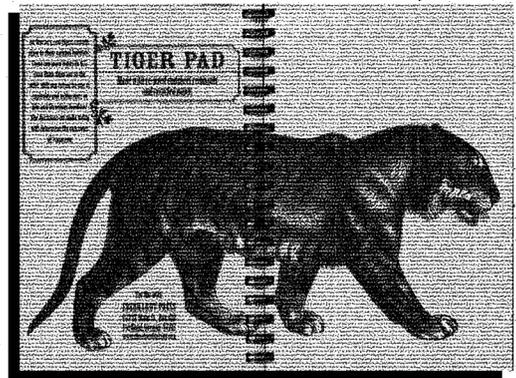
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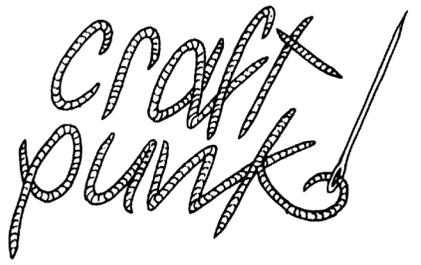
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# YOUR UTERUS AND THE BUSH OR: WHY IS THERE BLOOD EVERYWHERE?

By Cat Meow

“Discourses concerning menstruating as ‘dirty, vile, impure, and pollution’ (O’Keefe 2006) have had significant impacts on women of European descent. Indeed, from the third century onwards Christian religious leaders have maintained that menstrual blood is impure, unclean, and even ‘God’s curse’ (Phipps 1980: 300). Such beliefs played a prominent role within Eurocanadian-derived discourses about women and appropriate activities for women. For example, in the early 1900s, menstruation and women’s reproductive organs were viewed as incapacities. Indeed, according to Lenskyj (1986: 25), menstruation ‘reinforced the existing power relations between men and women: women experienced this monthly “incapacity”, men did not.” \*

An important commonality shared by most female-bodied people that only recently seems to have started to build a platform, but is still left largely undiscussed, is that of menstruation. There are budding resources that now offer support and alternatives to the assumed standard, but only within the context of our current civilization.

I’ll ascertain that if you have your nose in this zine, “the civ” may not be your calling. Of the articles I’ve read on dealing with your period in the back country, none of them were able to transcend the “pack it in, pack it out” approach. Let this, then, be the first dedicated guide to menstruating in the bush, forager style.

Luckily, pre-colonisation, generation after generation of ovary-bearers lived, bred and bled without our current European comforts. There are few written resources outlining these practices, but much of the information I will be sharing comes from that knowledge.

## Cruenta – Stained With Blood

### **Sphagnum flexuosum - Peat Moss**

I learned how to make peat moss menstrual pads (as well as diapers) from a particularly purposeful Tli cho (Dogrib) elder. She took me to a boggy pond and rooted with me for the dry, absorbent, dead byrophyta. As she dug her hands into the moss, her soft, withered fingers became indistinguishable from the earth. She presented me with a packed handful, enough to line my underwear.

Sphagnum is found all over North America, in peat bogs, conifer forests and moist tundra. The brown, dead moss compacts well into a dry, ultra absorbent pad. It’s easy to collect, and can be thrown in the fire once saturated. The only thing you need to be wary of is sporotrichosis, a fungal disease that should be known to gardeners. It enters via small cuts and abrasions and can seriously compromise your immune system. Several months of treatment using potassium iodine can clear things up, but I’d suggest when your symptoms start to kick in at 3 weeks, you seek advice from a medical professional. Unless you are living with an STI that might result in open sores, peat moss is quite safe to use.

### **Lepus arcticus – Arctic Hare**

Inuit women were said to never menstruate in the winter. This was cruel genius on the part of nature; winter months caused the abatement of food sources, impairing ovarian function and lightening the burden brought in with the frost. My mother lived several years in a predominantly Inuit community called Apex, or Niaqunngut. From that experience, she taught me, when I was quite young, that it used to be common practice for women to use rabbit fur as menstrual pads.

Before I get into the specifics of how to use rabbit for menstrual purposes, I would like to implore nonindigenous readers to seek the invitation or presence of a local indigenous person before you hunt or trap in your area. You might also consider your local hunting and trapping laws.

Unlike peat moss, this solution isn’t quick and easy- but it is reusable. Any rabbit will do, you don’t need to travel beyond the treeline to snare a hare. Rabbit fur is best harvested in the winter, it is also easier to find their runs in the snow. It is unlikely you will have any tanning solution on hand, so I will provide a quick, no chemical run through (this is for small mammals only, and will not hold up on larger skins): Skin and flesh the inside of your pelt. If there is any meat leftover, your hide will rot.

Boil the brain, mashing it into water. The emulsified oils are very important.

Scuff up the interior and apply the warm brain solution, let it dry overnight, and repeat the process the next day. Let the pelt set overnight by covering it with damp

North Central Florida, and really much of the un-Miami’d and un-Disney’d landscape that encompasses the rest of the state, is predominantly swampland, cattle ranches, and small residential developments with ranch-style housing that dominated most of the late twentieth century.

Among the swamps and the cattle pastures live what many in pop culture describe as “rednecks.” I was born in upstate New York and I had grown up in rural environments my whole life, but it wasn’t until I moved to the south where I experienced what a “real” redneck is. And, much to my surprise, many of these poor, white southerners embraced the term as a term of heritage and endearment. Even though the more “sophisticated” urbanites and suburbanites tended to use the word as a classist attack against poor, agriculturally and industrially working whites, these guys embraced the term. And rightful-

ly so. Work and soften the hide by pulling and stretching it, this will take long, as you need to work the pelt until it is dry.

Your pelt is ready to be smoked, be careful none of the flames reach it!

Cut strips to use, as needed. Further unstiffening may be required.

Your biggest fear on this one is that you don’t preserve the hide properly and it starts to rot. Luckily, you can throw it away before it passes on any adverse health effects. Be sure to wash these pads well between each use!

### **Et cetera – And the Rest (of such things)**

Grasses, birch bark and other dry, fibrous material can also be used similarly to peat moss. There are many plants that produce cotton like fibres; this could be another solution, though probably messy.

If you are squeamish, or happen to be with someone who is adverse to plant or dead animal material near you, remind them what their clothing is made of. Just kidding! You can use fabric scraps to make pads by tying or sewing them together, just make sure you wash them frequently.

### Poenia par sapientia – Pain Is Wisdom\*\*

#### **Salix – Willow**

Aspirin! You know how your body aches when you’re bleeding buckets? All you need to do is boil some willow bark and leaves, and presto! You’ve made yourself a cup of salicin, which will metabolize into salicylic acid to provide sweet, sweet pain relief. I don’t think I need to tell you that if you have an aspirin allergy, stay away. Otherwise, your worst concern is a mild stomach ache.

#### **Chamomile – Chamomile**

Thank who/whatever you need to for this small, daisy-like Asteraceae. Chamomile carries many different medicinal properties, two of which are important if you’re on your rag- it is known to be a muscle and mood relaxant. A cup of chamomile tea before bed will help relieve menstrual symptoms and ease you to sleep. It’s possible, if you have allergies to plants within the same family (daisy, ragweed, chrysanthemum), chamomile could trigger them, so watch out.

#### **Anethum graveolens – Dill**

Both the leaves and seeds of the dill plant share the same properties. It is a carminative, so it can help to reduce bloating. Use it in cooking, or make tea. Dill is only potentially harmful in large quantities to pregnant women, which is irrelevant to you, at this point.

ly so.

Being the new kid in school, halfway through the hellish years known as “middle school,” proved to be challenging to this Northern transplant. I can’t remember exactly how I met Redneck Mike, but I do remember him approaching me in gym class one day with a simple question of friendship: “Y’all skate?”

And just like that, alliances were made. In middle-of-nowhere Florida, it was hard enough finding somebody else who didn’t wear Wranglers and \$100 boots to school, nevermind somebody who skateboarded (I was, admittedly, a horrible skateboarder, but it was an efficient way to go from place to place back before I could drive).

Redneck Mike would always invite me to his house, which was almost directly under a bridge and literally on a swamp. Him and

### **Pisces crassus – A Fat Fish**

You ever tune into all that crap about how amazing Omega 3 fatty acids are? Well guess what- they are, and fatty fish contain tons. The anti-inflammatory effect of these omegas will help with both cramps and bloating. Fish is also high in vitamin D, which along with aiding in many other functions, is essential for mineral absorption, and subsequently the increased absorption of magnesium and calcium, which reduce soreness. The dangers of eating fish include: getting bones stuck in your teeth, undercooking the damn thing, and having really soft hands from handling the scales.

Ultimately, options like rabbit pelts especially are to be relied on in dire circumstances. There are many ethical, reusable options that exist that can easily be brought into the bush that are significantly safer, easier and cleaner. Above all, I would suggest packing in LunaPads (reusable, cloth pads) or a DivaCup (insertable silicone cup). Just keep a sealed plastic bag or container for storage when not in use. Yellowstone may have compiled data saying only polar bears go after the smell of menstrual blood, but I have seen bears break into outhouses after tampons were mindlessly tossed.

Good luck in your future forays into the woods! May this guide serve you in times of need.

“In the 88 interviews that I conducted between 2002 and 2004, not one participant spoke of menstrual blood as being ‘unclean’. While quite a few participants identified menstrual blood as being potentially harmful to a man’s medicine power ... that harm need not come from exposure to filth, but can instead be considered as being a result of Dene women’s enhanced power during menstruation. The impact of colonisation, too, cannot be ignored in examining menstruation in Dene communities, as some suggest that discourses concerning the polluting aspect of menstruation appeared only when missionaries who did not understand the nuances of Dene culture arrived in the North. Certainly, my findings coalesce with Kristeva’s (1982) understanding that menstruation can be constructed as abject in patriarchal contexts, but that there are also social and cultural contexts that can enable women to play an important role in understanding what counts as proper and improper as well as clean and unclean.” \*

\*Audrey R. Giles – *Abjectly Boundless: Boundaries, Bodies and Health Works* (2010)

\*\*There are other options that exist in the wild to ease menstrual symptoms, these are just a few examples. I suggest consulting books and local knowledge holders for more information. ❄️

I did what normal middle schoolers did, skateboarded, went fishing, scrounged up change to hit up the dollar menu and get twenty five cent sodas at Winn Dixie.

Whenever I describe my adventures with Redneck Mike, I always give him pseudo-super human abilities. This kid would find old pieces of lumber, paddle out into the swamp like he was redneck-surfing, and go chucking homemade spears (“gig-ging”) at catfish, bullfrogs, and alligators. I remember him always having an (extremely helpful) sixth sense for sensing where cops lingered. He felt no pain. He also hulked out when you pissed him off. And he knew the swamps like no other.

I remember one time for his birthday he had a cookout at a lake. He was not the most patient kid, to say the least, and so stand-

(continued next page)

## THE ADVENTURES OF REDNECK MIKE

Mikey McDowell

I grew up in a lazy retirement town in North Central Florida called Inverness. The town followed the pattern of most Florida towns and named itself after another city (this city being Inverness, Scotland).

When people think of Florida, they tend to think of either scenes from *Miami Vice*, *GTA Vice City*, or *CSI: Miami* or about the beaches, timeshares, and theme parks that call the state home. But that only describes one aspect of the state. In Florida, as the famous saying goes, the South is in the North. The more you travel south in Florida, the more “northern” the culture becomes.

continued from previous page)  
 ing on the shoreline and fishing was just too slow paced for him. He would take off his shoes, wade into stagnant, swampy water, and walk over to a better fishin' hole to catch his bream and bass.

I was fishing from a bridge overhanging the lake when I noticed a stick flowing downstream towards Redneck (I normally only referred to him as Redneck; I was also named Mike and he called me Macaque because I looked like a monkey in middle school). Then I realized that this was a swamp and swamps didn't have a "downstream" for the stick to flow down. This "stick" was propelling itself down the swamp, and this "stick" was actually a Cottonmouth.

NOTE: this next segment may contain actions not suitable for all audiences. Animals were harmed in the making of this story. Reader discretion is advised.

As I realized the true nature of this "stick," I yelled out "SNAKE!" to Redneck. "Shit," he uttered with poise and elegance "gotta put down my pole first." He set his fishing pole into the swamp, faced left to where the snake was charging full speed ahead at him. He took one step towards his aggressor, and with a swift movement grabbed the assailant directly behind the head, spun it around a few times over his head, and flung it a solid fifty yards into the deeper section of the lake.

"Bastard made me lose my pole!" he screamed as he undoubtedly sent the cottonmouth packing for easier targets. And just like that, he was back to fishing in the swamp.

This story is just one that I tell my more "cited" friends whenever I tell them that I like rednecks. Most of them give their obvious dismay, and tend to throw in a stereotypical joke about rednecks and incest or something else snarky.

But it's these stories, these firsthand experiences with a "real" redneck that made me realize that rednecks were probably the most punk group of people I'd ever met. Forget what Hollywood or Nashville or MTV tells you about what being a redneck is all about. Forget Blue Collar Comedy Tour or Deliverance or Buckwild or Gretchen Wilson's "Redneck Woman" or Honey Boo Boo's shenanigans. These are about a kid I grew up with, living in poverty, and living life to the fullest. By showing me what "real" rednecks do, Redneck Mike changed my life forever, and forever made me a Rural Punk. I'd like to tell the world about Redneck Mike, and use his stories and his impact on me to maybe dispel some myths about the South and Rednecks and Florida. This story is just an introduction to what I hope to be many more funny, enlightening, and entertaining tales from the swamplands of Florida.



**COMICS**

Above left by Isaac Roylos. Bottom left by Natania Nunubiznez (<http://in-this-life-comics.tumblr.com/>)

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the Stream - which you had to cross to get to our squatted cabin, had no bridge. And of course we didn't want one because it would give away our location and allow others to easily get to our side of the mountain. The stream was a gift - we drank out of it, washed in it, it was our own Ganges, But it started off relatively shallow and when even a little rain came, it swelled up to waist or chest deep sometimes. Which was the wise. (we never got giardia.)

a lot of mornings, i would do yoga 3 then get naked + sun drench my skin after washing in the cold stream.

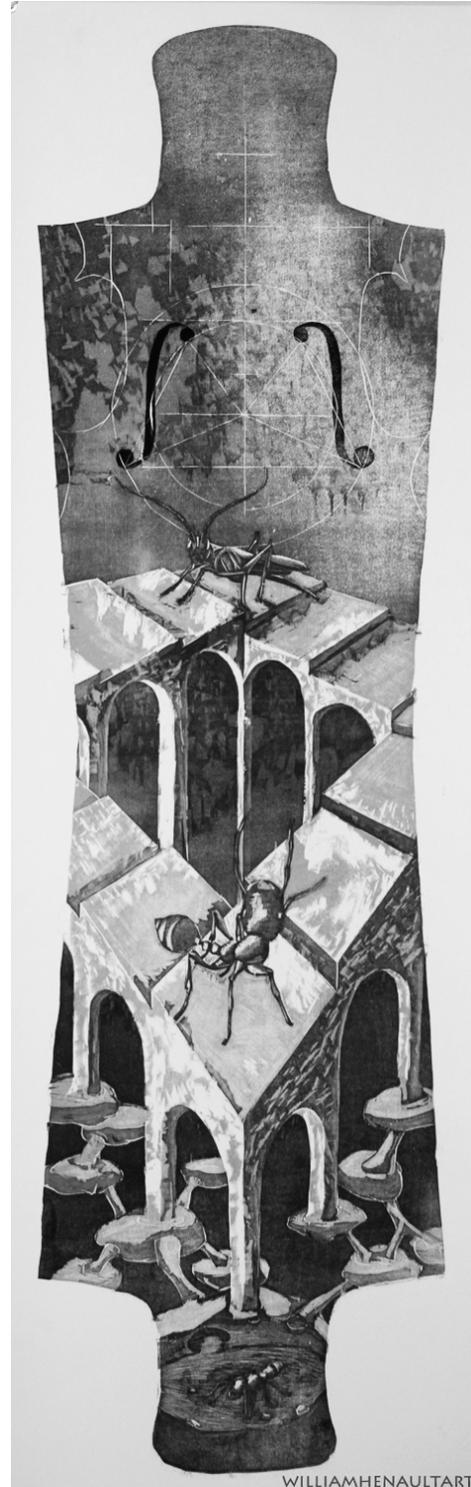
sometimes we would be coming from town and the stream would be difficult. Where you had to get across the stream cause that's where you live but you would attempt the fording across, and your legs would not be able to move because of the force of the current rendering you scared and stuck until you got up the strength and courage to go forward. I remember being in the same position in Tennessee with a raging river and a full back pack and child. There was a rope though. I had to go and cross because the whole place was flooding.



Kairos



Pathos



Ethos



WILLIAMHENAULTART  
Logos

## REDUCTION WOOD CUT PRINT MAKING

By William Henault

Reduction prints are made from a single piece of ply wood which gets carved and inked several times. For the first layer, everything being carved out from the wood will be left white on the print or which ever colour the paper is. Once the first layer is ready, everything that has not been carved out will have ink on it and like a stamp, it will leave an imprint on the paper. For example, the first layer of the Logos print was the light orange covering the majority of the print. Everything that is left white is everything that initially got carved out. Once the ink is dry, the same process is repeated over again, but keeping in mind that this time everything being carved out will show as the last colour printed. So for the Logos print the second layer was a light red, therefore everything that was left orange was cut out of the wood. That is why it is called a reduction print, because ever layer is made by taking away from the plywood.

Each one is shaped like a longboard and each one represents one of the Aesop fables. The idea was inspired by the sense of community and camaraderie that has been growing in our local longboard group. To learn from far better riders than ourselves and to give a hand to those who are just discovering the sport is really what it's about. That's what these wood block prints were meant to capture.

**Kairos** is the Greek word for seizing the opportune moment. Aesop, the Greek slave who became a philosopher, thought that Kairos was a virtue in humans. In the Fox and the Crow fable, the fox sees the crow with a piece of cheese. So when he tells the crow "I'm sure your voice is as beautiful as your

feathers" the crow tries to sing and drops the cheese. The fox then seizes the moment and takes the cheese when the crow drops it from her beak. For those who are competitive about long boarding and race, they know that it is all about picking the right line and seizing the right moment to pass.

**Pathos** is a word used to say how emotions are conveyed, or how an emotion is passed from one person to another. In the Hare and the Tortoise fable, the hare figures he out ran the tortoise and can take a nap. If you put yourself in his shoes when he realizes that the tortoise is about to cross the finish line, you get that gut wrenching feeling that he messed up. The same goes for long boarding, if you get cocky at a race or think you're better than everyone, it's going to end up biting you in the butt.

**Ethos** is the word for character. In the Ant and the Grasshopper fable, they each have a different character. The ant is hard working while the grasshopper is spending all summer playing music. The moral is that you'll freeze and starve if you don't work, but I question that in the print. While we are out riding and having fun, everyone's character is developing and finding what values are meaningful to them as part of a community.

**Logos** is a word used to define a set of ideas or beliefs. For the Logos print the Mouse and the Lion fable best suited the general atmosphere of long boarding communities. The moral of the fable is that you should not underestimate those you think are weaker than you, because one day they might just save you. Like with any other sport it would be pretty absurd to think that you are the best and that you don't need any one's help. When it comes to long boarding, people are always ready to meet up and ride with you regardless of how good you are.

Find the colour photos of William's woodcuts at [countrygrind.net](http://countrygrind.net)



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# BIRTH STORIES

## HOME BIRTH AWAY FROM HOME

By Steven George (Roach)

"Maybe we should take the birth supplies just in case," Amelia said right as we were about to leave for Duluth. So I grab the two bins that she had prepared and threw them in the back of the truck and we were off. We live about 80 miles Northeast of Duluth and we take a day trip there about once a month to run errands and this just happened to be the day we had planned. We met my sister Tori for lunch at The Anchor Bar (my favorite Duluth restaurant) and asked her if she could watch our 2 year old daughter Genavive that evening while Amelia and I went on a date at Chester Creek Cafe (Amelia's favorite Duluth restaurant). She agreed and after I ran errands the rest of the day with Genavive, I dropped her off and picked Amelia up at Tori's apartment for our date.

This was our first night out without Genavive for as long as either of us could remember. It was also a special day because Amelia was exactly 37 weeks pregnant. That was the cut off Amelia had decided on, after 37 weeks, we would have a home birth, but if it happened earlier, we might have gone to the hospital. Amelia had also finally gotten a hold of her midwife and she had assured Amelia from then on she would be on call and easier to get a hold of. Amelia was feeling at ease and in much better spirits than she had been the night before. In fact, she had been having trouble sleeping for the last two nights. We thought we would both sleep well that night, but little did we know what was to come. Anyhow we had a really nice date and we got back to Tori's apartment about 8PM.

Our original plan for the birth was to go to Amelia's parents house in St Paul, MN a month before the due date and wait to have a home birth there. This is what we had done with Genavive and everything had gone really well except that it wasn't ideal for us to just hang around Amelia's parents house waiting for a baby (luckily for us, Genavive had been born 2 weeks early). There's several reasons we had chosen to do this as opposed to having a home birth at our own home. We live 80 miles from the nearest hospital, and the last two miles are up a bumpy, gnarly, old, rutted, unmaintained logging road. Amelia's parents house is only a couple miles from a particularly good hospital (when I say good I mean they have a low c-section rate). We didn't plan on going to the hospital, but emergencies do occasionally occur during childbirth. At the time of Genavive's birth, we didn't have running water or electricity. Although we have solar electricity now, we are still hauling water. At Amelia's parent's house, they would be cooking most dinners, and we wouldn't have to continually stoke the wood stove just to stay warm. We also live 25 miles from the nearest grocery store and 80 miles from the nearest health food store. The twin cities also had a lot more alternative birth resources. That's what it basically came down to, the convenience of resources. I guess I am writing this article under the assumption that most of the folks reading it know that the hospital is a really crappy place to have a baby (unless there is an ACTUAL medical emergency). If you don't already know this, there are plenty of other articles on this subject and a good movie called "The Business of Being Born". Anyhow the hospital would only be a last resort or if the baby was to be born premature.

So we had arranged for a midwife in the twin cities, but Amelia kept going back and forth about it. "I'd really just like

to have the baby here," she had said one day, about a month before he was born. "What you mean in Silver Bay?" I replied. Silver Bay is a town of about 2000 about 25 miles away. It is where we usually do laundry and get groceries. We also knew a midwife from there who had agreed to try to make it to the birth if he was born up here. "No," she said, "I mean here at the cabin." I was surprised by this. Of course I left the decision entirely up to her. I knew the most important thing was that she comfortable during the birth. She continued to be indecisive until about 2 weeks before he was born, she said if it happened before Thanksgiving, we would do it up here, and if it happened after, we would do it in St Paul. This decision was made mostly out of convenience. We had already planned to go to St Paul for Thanksgiving and the due date was December 6th, (coincidentally Genavive's 2nd birthday). Anyhow, after that decision had been made, she continued to be somewhat indecisive about whether to have the baby at our home or at someone else's home in Silver Bay. In the end, and partially because he arrived 3 weeks early, the decision was made for us that he would be born in Duluth.

Back at Tori's apartment, we were just starting to think about getting ready for bed about 9:40 PM when Tori and I heard Amelia call out from the bathroom, "Oh my gosh!" then a pause... "What happened!?" Tori and I asked. "My water just broke! I'm gonna have the baby tonight!" Amelia replied. I made some phone calls and then went down to get the birth supplies from the truck, Amelia laid down with Genavive in Tori's bed to get her to sleep before she went into labor.

When Amelia came out from putting Genavive to sleep around 11:00 she said the contractions had already started, but they were very light. We had talked to the midwife about half an hour after Amelia's water broke, and we probably should have just told her to come right away (she lived just over an hour away) but she told us to call her when the labor was progressing. By 11:30, although Amelia was not yet vocalizing her contractions, they were already coming every 2-3 minutes.... this meant her labor was progressing quickly. We had a little trouble getting a hold of the midwife and finally called her home phone at 12:30AM when it seemed like the contractions were getting pretty intense for Amelia. The midwife said she would be on her way shortly. It was getting difficult for Amelia to cope with the contractions by herself at this point, so I tried reading to her.... that didn't help. She had the idea to go for a walk.

About 1:00 AM Amelia and I walked down three flights of stairs to the street and to the end of Tori's block. Up until that point, Tori and I could barely tell that Amelia was in labor, but that walk sure seemed to speed things along. We had to stop every time she had a contraction and I would help her through it. When we got back upstairs, Amelia asked Tori to leave the room for some privacy. Then it was just Amelia and I in Tori's living room on the bed we had rolled out on her floor. I helped Amelia through each contraction by talking her through it, massaging her back, holding her and doing anything I could that seemed to help. We even kissed during some contractions which she said actually made them less painful! Some of those moments Amelia looked more beautiful than ever to me.

Around 2:00AM the midwife still hadn't arrived, and all of a sudden something changed. In the middle of a contraction, Amelia said she was starting to push. She finally took her pajama pants off, and boy was I relieved. Up until that point I was afraid the baby was going to pop out while her pants were still on! It was right in time because during the next push, I could see the

baby's head. Then about 2:10AM one more push and he was born! Amelia was on her hands and knees when he came out and I was behind her and caught him. He let out a little cry right away and the whole thing brought tears to my eyes. Amelia and I suctioned some goo out of his throat and nose with a sterile bulb so he could breathe easier. There was a big mess covering half the bed and we weren't sure how Amelia would get turned over with the baby still attached by the cord... I yelled for Tori. She came immediately and was a ton of help. I don't know what we would have done without her. Anyway, with me and Auntie Tori's help, Amelia got in a sitting position holding the covered baby. The whole time I was on the verge of crying, but I somehow managed to keep myself composed. About 10 minutes after the birth, the midwife arrived. She set up the cord to be cut (she let me do the actual cutting) and helped with birthing the placenta. She checked his heart rate and lungs and weighed him.

Some people have asked if we were scared. Although I can't be completely sure, (of course its a bit blurry for both of us) I doubt the emotion fear was present in either of us during the birth. I think that any negative thoughts have the potential manifest negative outcome. I believe in the power of positivity, and in Amelia's ability to do what she was designed to do. I also think things happen the way they do for a reason. We don't want to go into things naively, but it never helps to worry unnecessarily. Part of me would like to believe that just me and Amelia did it on our own, but I know there is more to it than that. Fate and self determination have to be balanced. In Amelia's words "By God's grace we had a beautiful birth and a beautiful baby boy. I couldn't ask for more!"



Why we chose Galvin.

When I first saw the name Galvin in a baby name book, it immediately resonated with me before I even read the meaning. The meaning is usually "Sparrow" or sometimes "White". Since the White Throated Sparrow has always been my favorite song bird of the northern forests, I loved the name even more and it quickly became my top boys name. It is unique, but not too "weird". I have never met a Galvin, but it has a familiar sound to it similar to some more common names. It is of Celtic origin which seems appropriate as we know many of my ancestors are from Ireland and both Amelia and I love Celtic music.

About us

We live off-grid in the middle of the northern Minnesota wilderness 5 miles inland from Lake Superior. We own 60 acres of forested land that we hope to someday share with other families. Currently one friend lives on the land with us and we share meals regularly. We always welcome visitors who are able to meet their own basic needs in a primitive camping setting. For more info on our project, please visit [directory.ic.org/23511/Long\\_Haul](http://directory.ic.org/23511/Long_Haul) 🌿

## REFLECTIONS ON PREGNANCY IN THE STICKS

By Ragtime Rach

As women, taking back the births of our children is not only a reproductive rights issue, but a human rights concern. It is important as dissenters of the status quo that we let that attitude of autonomy stay

true when it comes to parenting and birth - and as any parent already knows, the issue of pregnancy, childbirth, and the rearing and education of a child seems to make the mother and later on, the child, possessions of the state. There was a story told in the birthing world where a woman had a caesarean section with her first pregnancy and planned a home birth for her second child against the "policy" of her obstetricians office and her doctor called child protective services on her, claiming neglect. We cannot let the bullying and coercion of pregnant women continue, for when a woman is stressed and in fear, the birthing process is compromised and can be just as dangerous for mother and baby as a forced caesarean section. Nobody knows what's best for a child better than a well informed mother.

The point is, women are powerful, and it's not a power that is measurable in terms of money and status, it transcends all that. A woman's power is subversive and subtle, and however stifled, still exists through our maternal heritage. The point is, all the women before modern medicine and even before midwives could birth their own babies; it was up to the people in their lives to safeguard the birth process, not control it. That is how birth works best, and is the safest.

I had a conversation with one of my neighbours once, a cattle farmer, and I asked him if he had a prize cow that was about to calf, how would he manage it for the best outcome? He got this serious look on his face and told me he would leave her alone with a huge bed of straw in the dark, and made sure things were quiet, then peek on her every now and then. He said he would make sure the calf got its mother's milk. This man's wife had three scheduled c-sections and formula fed her babies, doctor's orders. I laughed and told him he would probably be the best person to attend his wife. He blushed and shook his head.

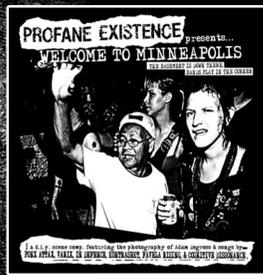
Every birthing woman should have the care or lack thereof she desires. Getting back to basics and using your primal brain has a healing quality that has helped many women cope with past traumas and sexual abuse - birth is a sexual experience, and a powerfully positive sexual experience can give a person a lot of power.

The point is, the most radical thing we can do for this world is show our children and other people that their bodies aren't broken, that a little pain is ok, even if it's hard, and that normal, unhindered births are the foundation for change. We can teach our children the absolute magic of their bodies instead of the shame that the mainstream culture instills, an extremely revolutionary act!

In my birth experience, I had a number of other people warn me and be negative towards my choices, and an obstetrician even threatened me, but fuck those people. I know what's best for my babies. I believe in un-regulated midwifery, as regulation puts a stranglehold on potentially good birth attendants who, as employees of the government, now work for the insurance companies instead of the woman. This is not midwifery, it's "med"-wifery. When a doctor or obstetrician gets paid more money with every intervention, they're not working for the woman either. Screw the capitalist misogynistic system and have your babies where and when you want to, with whoever you want! All the information in the world on birth shows that birth is safe, we just have to learn to trust our bodies. 🌿

# PROFANE EXISTENCE

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### RURAL PUNK AGAINST RESOURCE EXTRACTION

By e. connie

There are land defense battles being waged all over Turtle Island, just as there always have been, just as there always will be (until we win and civilization crumbles!). From the anti-fracking blockade on Wet'suwet'en land in bc to the resistance to the Line 9 project in toronto and surrounding areas, to the Mi'kmaq blockade in new brunswick, humans and other animals\* are resisting the colonization of the land and keeping the real enemy in focus: fuck the corporations who rape the land, the police that protect them, and the governments whose goal is to repress and control the life of all beings!

The most recent call for solidarity that I knew about was the December 2 call-out from the Mi'kmaq land defenders who are blockading highway 11 in Elsipogtog, new brunswick. Their enemy: SWN, a megacorporation who are invading their land to do seismic testing in preparation for introducing fracking to yet another wild ecosystem. The blockade has been fierce and has seen cooperation between Indigenous folks and settlers. There have been huge battles between the RCMP, acting as private security for SWN, and the land defenders, which have resulted in imprisonment, injury, and a reminder of the surveillance and infiltration capacities of the state. The pain of battle has been felt on both sides: SWN has lost hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of equipment to vandalism, and continue to lose approx. \$50,000 each day they cannot get in to survey the land, and the RCMP have had at least six cruisers torched, but on the other side, a number of warriors have been in jail for over a month, people have been run over by SWN vehicles, tear-gassed, shot at with rubber bullets, stalked by RCMP snipers, and independent journalists have been consistently arrested and fucked with for spreading the word

about this resistance.

When I think about the idea of solidarity as an anarchist, I feel I need to clarify a few things. For me, solidarity means identifying the chains, whether structures, ideas, physical entities, or people, that keep me from expressing myself fully and acting on my desires and passions. I'm always going to be struggling against the most deeply embedded ideas and beliefs that have me chained to domestication, but I can clearly see that my struggle towards liberation includes being in conflict with the state, borders, resource extraction and colonization. These are things that the Mi'kmaq are also fighting against, and so I can see that our struggles are connected. I find myself in solidarity with this land defense struggle because the fight is against the very foundations of colonization: the RCMP and the state, two heads of the same beast that impose order and structure (read fascism and colonization) on that which is inherently wild and unstructured. There's no guilt or obligation in solidarity, it is an expression of my own desire to be involved that causes me to feel solidarity with land defense struggles.

The Dec 2 call-out received tons of attention, with rebels across the land responding in various manners. Banners were hung, messages were spray painted onto buildings, marches were held, and even international solidarity was seen.

in the form of a rowdy demo in Ireland. One particularly antagonistic action was seen on Coast Salish Territory, vancouver, where the port was blockaded for an hour, rejecting business-as-usual and forbidding capital to flow through the port. Many of these actions were undertaken by larger groups of rowdies, however, there are many forms of direct action that can be pulled off singlehandedly, or in small groups. Some of the most intense and enchanting actions have been carried out by just a few people in small affinity groups. In the 1980's, five militant geurillas managed to cause \$5 million in damage to a hydro station with a single bomb in the fight against resource extraction, and on a regular basis, individuals and small groups cause serious damage to infrastructure that is domesticating the wild. Engaging in direct action can happen on any scale, from expropriations to graffiti to blockades, and it excites me to imagine the potential for battle around my home. All I have to do is look at the water to see damming projects, look at the forest to see clearcuts, or look at the mountains to see flat-top mining operations. While this is horrifying, the possibilities for resistance are pretty much limitless, and when I think about these disasters, I try to allow the rage in my heart to transform into creative ideas for resistance and empowerment instead of intense depression over racist ecocide.

I heard about the Dec. 2 call-out with enough

time to try to get something happening. I knew that cities across Turtle Island were going to be holding demos and hopefully causing some damage, but it felt neither practical nor inspiring for me to drive in to the nearest city to participate. Instead, the morning of Dec 2 I travelled to an overpass near my home and dropped a banner. While this action was tiny, it was part of a larger resistance that is building daily, and the action's strength was exponentially increased by the actions happening across the world that day. It helped my rural comrades and I get to know each other better, and it prepared us for exploring other forms of resistance together. I feel that every act of resistance has an impact larger than the act itself, and whenever I read about other rebels working towards destruction of the status quo, it stokes the fires inside of me to stay strong and keep fighting with love and rage.

Things are in a bad way, but we've got to keep up the fight for our lives. Solidarity to all who are fighting the violence of domestication.

\*Moose attacking cars, birds downing planes, bears killing loggers, whales killing their trainers, just to name a few forms of resistance non-humans take.

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# D.I.Y. AUTO REPAIR

## WINTER DIESEL CARE BASICS

By Henry Carr

Winter puts the stress test to any older diesel truck, car, or tractor. Here are some basic tips to help keep you rolling. It's easiest if you keep track of maintenance in a notebook. If your odometer or hourmeter doesn't work, get an inexpensive digital hourmeter to wire up the ignition circuit of any machine. An hourmeter is nice because it includes the time the engine spends idling, which is hard on a diesel engine and overlooked by using an odometer only.

**Check for any weak links in your starting and charging system**, meaning your batteries, battery cables, starter, alternator, and voltage regulator (may be inside your alternator). Any weak link in this system will stress the rest of the system, and cost you more trouble and money in the long run. Corrosion is your enemy: buildup should be cleaned off with a wire brush. Wearing gloves is a good way to not get shocked, burned by battery acid or corrosive buildup, or poisoned by the lead battery terminals. Make sure electrical connections are tight, and put some battery terminal spray or dielectric grease on all bare connections to prevent corrosion. Batteries, starters and alternators can often be tested for free at the chain auto parts stores to see if they are too weak. A bad alternator can also over-charge your batteries, which could cause them to leak acid or even explode. If it has multiple batteries, all of them should be in good condition. Diesels require a lot of cold cranking amps to start in the winter. Oversized batteries are usually worth it. Don't leave good batteries sitting on a concrete floor, because it will drain their power. Also, never crank your starter for more than 15 seconds straight. Then, give it a few minutes to cool down before cranking again, because it is an electric motor and it will burn up.

**Many diesel vehicles use cold weather starting aids** such as glow plugs (e.g. Ford, Chevy/GM, Mercedes, TDI) or air intake heaters, a.k.a. "air grid heaters" (e.g. Dodge Cummins). These starting aids heat up the air in your engine, so that combustion of the pressurized diesel fuel can take place. If this system is not functioning, and it can be a pain to fix properly, just plug in your electric block heater for a few hours or even overnight if it's really cold. Either way, using your block heater makes cold starts easier on your engine; the types of block heaters that cycle the coolant are the most effective, especially if you are off-grid and powering it with a generator for an hour or less.

Some older or heavy-duty diesels are not equipped with any starting aids and their block heater must be plugged in, or use a little ether. Ether (starting fluid) can be used in a pinch, but it is not good for a diesel engine. Use without fully disabling glow plugs/intake heater (if equipped) can cause an explosion, which can internally damage your engine. Regardless, with regular overuse, it may accelerate engine wear.

You may also want to get a magnet heater, which is a small electric heater or heating pad that is temporarily placed on an oil pan or intake manifold. These can also be nice for automatic transmissions in cold weather, to turn the fluid from sludge back to a liquid and encourage proper operation.

It is probably OK if your older diesel smokes on startup and until it gets fully warmed up in the wintertime. Excessive smoking can be caused by a lot of different issues. Start by taking note of the

color (black, blue, white), smell (sweet like coolant or raw like fuel) and amount of the smoke, and if any of this changes once the engine is fully warmed up.

**Cold weather causes diesel fuel to gel or wax.** Fluctuating temperatures cause condensation in fuel tanks, which may put water (expensive death) in your fuel. This is why you should try to keep your tank(s) as full as possible. While fuel bought in winter climates should already contain additives that keep it from gelling, it's best to be very sure. You could just use some kerosene, but I recommend using a product called PowerService, which comes in a white bottle. I use this year round in all my diesels. It makes cold startups easier, keeps diesel fuel from gelling, adds lubricity which today's diesel fuel lacks, cleans injectors, repels water from fuel, adds power, and will probably boost your mileage a little. I think they also make a product for biodiesel blends.

While alternative fuels have their place, using 100% fresh diesel fuel eliminates a major variable in troubleshooting any problem, especially in cold weather. Try to get fuel from the same place, and try to find a high-traffic place where the big trucks go. The low-traffic places that don't sell much diesel are notorious for contaminated fuel especially in the wintertime. Most diesels have a way to drain water from the bottom of your fuel filter or even a separate water separator. Also, before changing a fuel filter, or otherwise letting air into the fuel system, it helps to fully warm up the engine first to make startup easier. I carry a spare fuel filter and a quart of "Diesel 911" which you put in your filter or tank if you get gelling, wax, or ice in your fuel. This product should be used sparingly.

**When you check all your fluids**, watch for signs of contamination, including fuel in oil (smell), coolant in oil (milky appearance), or oil in coolant (black oily sheen). Also, take note of any repeatedly low fluid levels, which could mean excessive consumption or a leak (internal or external).

Before winter, you should make sure your coolant (antifreeze) is not going to freeze, which could overheat or crack your engine. The cheap test strips or float testers might work. A good shop may check your freeze point for free with a refractometer, which is the most accurate method. To test my small fleet, I got a decent one online for under \$50. Many engines require a particular type of coolant and/or specific additives to prevent harmful cavitation, corrosion, or buildups. However, you would regret using the harsh cooling system "flushing" products in an engine that has 20 years of gunk lining the cooling system. Don't mix different types of coolant (ethylene glycol / propylene glycol). Also, don't open the radiator cap when the engine is hot - the pressurized coolant may spray out and burn you.

You can suck out a small sample of fluid from a transmission, transfer case, or differential through the fill plug. Contaminated, broken down, or incorrect fluids will destroy this stuff, which is the most expensive part of most machines other than the engine, yet so easy to neglect. Try to avoid mixing dissimilar fluids, even if you are just topping something off.

You can easily check your gear oil (in the rear differential on a truck, also front differential if it's 4x4) or your hydraulic/transmission oil on a tractor. Check to make sure it's full to the proper level, and for water, which should make gear oil or hydraulic oil look gray or milky white. Water often comes in through a faulty breather vent/tube, or through a bad seal on a pan, cover or plug. If

you want to check your vehicle's transmission fluid, many automatics have a dipstick under the hood. Automatic Transmission Fluid is normally red. Many manual transmissions are checked by a sight glass or by parking on level ground, removing the fluid fill plug and a little fluid should seep out if it's full. Manual transmission fluid varies in color.

**Keeping up with oil and filter changes** is the most important thing you can do for your diesel. The brand is not so important, but avoid mixing different brands, because they contain different detergents and additives, which may not be compatible. I have two diesels running conventional 15w40, and one running synthetic 5w40. It depends on the application, personal preference, and what some engines "prefer". Synthetic is more expensive but can be run for nearly two times longer, remains more viscous in cold temperatures, and may give your engine better mileage and slightly more horsepower. It's better to run your oil level slightly low than it is to overfill it.

**While there are some old diesel tractors and equipment you have to literally light a fire under to get started**, just keeping them out of the cold wind and properly serviced will do a lot of good. A big tarp with a "torpedo" heater or even a small woodstove underneath will thaw out most any machine (if you can't pull push or drag it inside somewhere warmer), but it's nice to keep these tactics as a last resort. Also, regularly starting up a tractor or other machine will keep it happier, and help keep the mice out and the batteries charged up. Storing it indoors is not necessarily better because the warmth will be more attractive to mice, which may chew important wires or build nests deep inside your engine, exhaust or air intake system.

One of my trucks is about to turn 20, and I like running a homemade winterfront. A winterfront covers your front grille and helps your diesel engine run warm enough by holding in more heat and shielding it from the wind. This also helps your heater blow warmer. Cardboard and bungee cord works, but you can probably find something better to use like heavy truck tarp or canvas, with zip ties or snaps to make it stay put. On my Ford, I run one on the inside of the grille. On an older diesel try a full winterfront, and if it runs too hot, make it smaller or cut some holes in it. The commercial ones attach with snaps and have flaps to let in some air. If your engine is still not running hot enough, its thermostat is probably stuck open.

**Avoid getting burned on knockoff parts** from dishonest online businesses selling "discount" diesel parts, especially "rebuilt" fuel injectors and injector pumps. Some of these companies are then sending you somebody else's old USED pump or injectors, which they have cleaned and possibly painted. They may still work but they are worn out. Eventually such a company gets a bad reputation, whether it is through selling fake rebuilt parts, poor quality rebuilds, or not sending you your order at all, and then they disappear. Unfortunately, some of them don't disappear: they deny these claims, make excuses, and stay in business. They might have a fancy website and even "real customer testimonials" but all I am saying is if their price seems too good to be true, it probably is.

There is a "Hall of Shame" section at the OilBurners Forum (oilburners.net),

which may help you do your homework. If you're patient, the internet can be an excellent way to learn about diesels, and diagnose your problems, just take all advice/comments with a grain of salt. Do a little research then ask a good question, and you can get a good answer surprisingly quickly. I have received specific advice and even labeled pictures within an hour. Posting pictures of your issue is often a big help. There are also printed service/repair manuals available, such as Haynes manuals and factory service manuals which should contain maintenance intervals and often a chart to help keep track. There may be one book for your specific vehicle/machine, and a separate book specific to its diesel engine.

**I would like to conclude by saying that I am not a diesel technician.** I have learned most of this the hard way through years of running older diesels, farming in WI and running my small tree service here in VT. I do my own service and basic repairs, but often have a professional shop handle the rest. Learning proper preventative maintenance and keeping good records goes a long way. I hope this advice helps you keep your diesel rolling through this winter, or to become better prepared for next winter.

Questions? Please feel free to find me on Facecrack. Maybe I can help, or point you in the right direction. ❄️

## DIESEL REPAIR WITH THE MANIC MECHANIC

By Gretchen Bonegardener

### Oil Change

Living in the city I never had a car. I didn't even know how to drive. The bicycle is what ruled the streets, and if our bikes fucked up we'd fix them ourselves in our basements or at the local community bike shop. Here in the prairies biking isn't super useful as a way of transportation. So me and most of my rural punk friends have parked our bikes in the shed, and picked up a set of keys. Our cars, trucks, tractors, and generators all need the service and care our bikes needed, and a whole lot more.

Every issue I'm going to write about something you can do yourselves on your vehicle. I'll start off with some basics that can save you some cash, and make you more self-reliant.

This is the first issue so I'm going to start with the most basic thing that all vehicle owners should know how to do: an oil change. Changing your oil and oil filter every 5000km (3000mi) is critical to protecting your bearings, journals, and pistons and it will increase your engine longevity.

### Tools of the trade



Fig 1. Oil, filter, filter wrench, oil drain pan

You will need a filter wrench; they make filter wrenches in many sizes, so make sure you get the proper size for your engine. I would highly recommend getting a filter wrench that pivots up and down (Fig 2) as they make life a lot easier when trying to wiggle them into the tight confines under the hood. They

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You will also need somewhere to let the oil drain into. They make little plastic jugs specifically for this. They work really well, and range in cost from \$10-30. You could of course use anything that can hold as much oil as is in your engine, like a washbasin but whatever you use will become irreversibly covered in oil and prettypmuch can't be used for anything but subsequent oil changes afterwards.

Whatever socket or wrench you'll need for taking off your oil pan drain. They vary from make and model.

**Consumables**

**Oil:** You'll need to find out the weight of oil you need. You also need to decide how cheap you want to be on your oil. You can get the cheap stuff, but remember that you get what you pay for and it might end up costing you a lot in the end. Synthetic oil flows better than conventional oil when it's cold, so I would recommend it if you live in a northern climate and your vehicle has a hard time starting in the winter and you can't always plug it in. \$15-50 for 4-5 liters.

**Filter:** You can usually find what oil filter number you need from your friendly salesman wherever you buy your filter and oil. There isn't much difference in quality between brands. It's usually \$7-12 for a vehicle, more for a tractor. (On some larger diesel engines you might have two or even three filters.)

**Down to Business**

Starting off with a warm engine will help the oil drain out a lot faster and drain out more (a film of oil will always stay behind, but if its cold oil, it will be a quite a bit thicker, thus not a full oil change) If your engine is cold let it idle for about 5 minutes. (Although watch out, if the oil gets too hot it can burn you when it comes out. There is a sweet spot you have to find, good luck.)

Open up the cap on top of the engine (where you add oil) to allow air to easily flow in to take up the space of the oil leaving (fig 3). Then crack loose the oil drain bolt underneath the engine (Fig 4). (Make sure you are draining the engine oil and not the transmission fluid!! (The oil pan is right below the engine itself; the transmission is what the engine attaches to.)) Position your bucket, pan, or whatever you're using to drain your oil underneath. Also grab a rag and keep it with in reach. Once the drain plug is cracked, it should come off with your fingers (Fig 5). Take it off and catch the oil coming out with the pan, and wipe off your oily fingers with the rag. Don't drop the plug in the oil, or you will end up having to get your hand a lot more oily.

Let the oil drain for a while, best thing you can do is let it sit for like half an hour or more and really get a full drain, but if I'm in a rush I usually just wait till the little stream turns into drops (about 10-15 min).

Whenever you decide it's done draining, put the plug back in and screw it on tight immediately. (I've seen people both forget to put the plug back in and their new oil drains straight through their engine into their used oil container, and folks just finger tighten it intending to fully tighten it afterwards and the bolt falls out while driving and they lose their oil and kill their engine, very bad!!)

Next thing is replacing the filter. Locate your oil filter (fig 6)(they can be a bastard to find and get to sometimes) Position your oil catch under the filter, cause more oil is gonna come out. Now use your oil filter wrench to loosen off the filter (pay attention to make sure you're not actually tightening it (to loosen, turn counterclockwise when the threaded end of the filter is away from you)) (Fig 7).

Once you crack it with the filter wrench you should be able to take it off by hand. Once you get it off just drop it in your used oil for the time being. Make sure the old rubber seal came off with the filter. Oh yea, have a rag handy, cause you will get your hand covered in oil.

Grab the new oil filter; if you're just changing the oil on a car or light truck, you should just be able to pop the new filter on (be sure to take some clean oil and lube up the rubber seal (fig 8)) But if you're working on a bigger engine or a diesel, be sure to fill up the oil filter(s) with oil, otherwise it'll take 10-15 seconds to get the new oil in the oil pan to the man bearings (that's approximately 200 dry revolutions. Ouch!) When tightening on your new filter, screw it on till the rubber contacts the metal, and then give it an additional 3/4 turn by hand. (that's it, do not over-tighten it, you'll hate yourself next oil change.)

Now you're ready to fill up your engine with new oil. Make sure you know how much oil your engine takes. If you're not sure, your friendly Canadian Tire associate can help you, or you can always consult the Holy

Oracle (Google). I always write it under the hood somewhere on my vehicles. (While pouring use a funnel or just hold the jug sideways to avoid spilling. (fig 9))

Check your oil level. (Fig 10) Be sure not to over fill the engine; your oil pressure will spike and you can blow gaskets (can be very expensive). If you did overfill the engine, open up the drain plug and let a little bit out (save that oil, it's still good).

If your levels are ok, replace your oil filler cap (I forgot to do that once) and clean up. Job well done. Check your oil level again after your first trip with the vehicle, top up as needed, and always keep at least a litre(pint) of whatever oil you use in your vehicle just in case you need a top up.

Thus concludes our first adventure in automotive care. Tune in again next issue while I'll be writing about oil viscosity and weights (ie. What's the difference between 5w-40 and 10w30) Cheers! ❄️



Above: Fig 6. Locate the oil filter  
Below: Fig 7. Removing the filter



Above: Fig 2. Pivoting fliter wrench. Bottom left: Fig 3 Remove the oil fill cap. Bottom Right: Fig 8 Putting a thin film of oil on the rubber seal of the new filter.

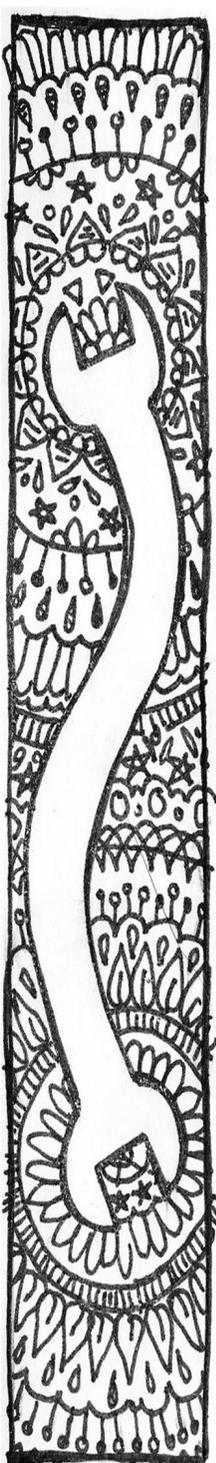


Fig 4. Crack the oil drain bolt.  
Fig 5. Finish twisting off the bolt by hand



Above: Fig 9. Filling the engine with new oil  
Below: Fig 10. Checking the oil level



# GARLIC FOR ALL

By Bretton Foad

Garlic! Essential in almost every cooking experience, its medicinal properties range from anti-inflammatory, antiviral/antibiotic to heart health, and beyond. Garlic is good for everything and extremely easy to grow. Whether I'm living in a city or out in the sticks I've always managed to grow some garlic in almost every place I've lived. For the last 3 years I have been living in rural Michigan. I grew up here and after many years of moving city to city I came back to the land. In these last 3 years I've worked on several organic farms in the area, one of which has a CSA. Seeing how these farms work has helped expand my toolbox of sustainable living. So here's a step by step run through on how to grow one of the most important culinary and medicinal plants out there. Cheers to you garlic!



In more recent years I've gotten my starter garlic (the garlic I plant) from one of the two organic farms I work on. When I was living in the city I just bought organic garlic from the store. It can also be purchased off the Internet by the pound. I prefer to keep it local and organic. Once you have an established patch you can save a little of the harvest each year for planting the next season. One of the farms I work on avoids this practice because of a concern of passing a bacteria/virus on in the re-planted cloves that prematurely turns the leaves yellow and results in smaller garlic bulbs. The other farm re-plants their garlic with no concern. I have not noticed much of a difference and it's easier to save a little of the harvest for re-planting. The cycle that keeps on giving.

Garlic is planted in the Fall before the first frost but not too early where the garlic starts to come up that fall. In south-central Michigan this ends up being the end of October/early November. Garlic is a heavy feeder and does best with good compost mixed in. Garlic also needs full sun and does best in well drained soil. I have been using raised beds for my personal garlic patch and it works well. At the farm we have fields so whatever works for your situation. First prepare the area/ bed for

energy to the bulb for development. When the leaves start to turn brown it's getting close to harvest time. Harvest when about half to three fourths of the leaves are brown. Typically late June/early July in Michigan. Use a pitch fork to gently dig up the garlic.

Then bundle the garlic into bunches of about 8-10 plants for hanging and drying. You can eat the garlic right away but if you're wanting to store it for winter, it must be thoroughly dried for ~ 2 months. A well ventilated area away from the sun but with good air flow (to prevent molding) is ideal.

Once the garlic is thoroughly dry you may "clean" it up for easy winter storage by trimming the roots/whiskers and the main stalk off. Store in a cool dry place for use in winter. Like mentioned at the beginning of the article you may save some for fall planting as well. So that's garlic. Not hard and very rewarding. Garlic for all! 🌱

Before harvest the plant will send up a flower called a scape. The scape is a long stalk that develops from the middle of the leaves. Its known for its wild curly ends that lead to a cone like flower. Bunches of scapes always remind me of Medusa's hair. Any who, this part of the plant is also edible and can be chopped up and used like a slightly milder garlic in most recipes. They are also amazing pickled and used in Bloody Mary's. Its best to pick the scapes so the plant sends

is fairly clean burning re: air quality. Cons: Requires a fair amount of petroleum-based oil, which I need to get somewhere, and so has a high embodied energy. Also, it's easy to break the top glass part.

Candles Pros: Fairly bright Cons: Not very good re: air quality, according to the CMHC and lots of other sources. Candles also burn down too quickly and are mostly petroleum-based. Beeswax candles would be an option if I had bees, but even then it is pretty precious, and I might rather use it for balms and other things instead of light. I experimented with collecting bayberries (a waxy berry that grows on the beach) which technically can be rendered for wax, and the wax used for candles, but based on what I got it would take hours of collecting to get enough for a candle, and I would rather do other things.



# VEGETABLE OIL LAMPS AND OTHER UNPLUGGED LIGHTING

By Reece Steinberg

Right now I am living in a 2-room cabin without electricity. I have an assortment of lighting options in the evening, which are necessary, because as I write this, still over a month away from the winter solstice, it is often dark by the time I make supper and sometimes dark when I wake up.

So, what I have right now is: candles, outdoor solar lamps, a battery-powered LED light, flashlight, and headlamp, a paraffin oil lamp, a wind-up flashlight, a USB-rechargeable headlamp, and 5 vegetable oil lamps. I want to talk about how to make and use the veggie oil lamps in more depth than the other lights, but will touch on all of them because even though they came together in a pretty haphazard way, they actually work really well together to make living with unplugged lighting pleasant.

The vegetable oil lamps are probably the closest to what I would ideally like to use for light, because the materials to make them are free, plentiful, and all garbage: a glass jar with metal lid, a strip of old t-shirt, and used vegetable oil from a restaurant.

To make one, you just need to:

- 1) Fill the jar very close to the top with oil
- 2) Cut a strip of 100% cotton (like an old t-shirt - important not to use synthetic blends) about 4cm wide, and at least as long as the jar
- 3) Soak the whole wick in the oil for a minute
- 4) Drill or punch a hole about 1.5cm in diameter in the middle of the lid, and thread the wick through it so most of it is inside the jar, and about 2 cm is above. Then screw on the lid

The less obvious part of the lamp is maintaining it so that it burns brightly. This requires you to raise the wick around every 3-5 hours of burning, and refilling the oil near the top regularly. I can usually get 3 nights of burning before having to refill, and raise the wick every evening. To raise the wick without having to unscrew the lid and getting all oily, I use a safety pin bent to a 90 degree angle, and stick it into the side of the wick, and gently poke it up, using the unburnt part inside the jar, as opposed to the fragile, ashy part of the wick above the lid of the jar. Maintaining the lamps is a bit of a commitment, and sometimes I fall behind and end up relying on other light sources, but I also try to keep a few extra lamps around, so I can switch them out if I don't get around to refilling them before it's dark.

I am continuing to experiment with other wick materials. Denim is too thick to soak up the oil, and regular lamp wick is also too thick; a lighter cotton would probably provide a brighter light, but the wick might burn down more quickly.

Pros: I can make as many of these as I want, and they use 100% re-used, plentiful and free materials. There is no bad smell, or much smell at all, unless the wick is too long and it smokes, or just immediately after blowing them out, in which case there is a slight smell of fried food.

Cons: In addition to the extra work to maintain them, they don't give as much light as a paraffin oil lamp. I need 2-3 to read by. I don't know for sure, but my guess is that they are OK as far as air quality goes, but not amazing.

Paraffin Oil Lamp

Pros: Brightest light - easy to read by. No smell, except right after blowing out. Paraffin

Outdoor solar lamps These are the little ones that stick in the ground, and people use to light their walkways. I just bring some in, in the evening, and either pull the top with the light part off to use, or stick them in a jar somewhere.

Pros: They don't run out, and if you hold them right by a book they are sometimes enough to read by; they can be as low-priced as \$1.25, and still run on a rechargeable, replaceable AA battery, so really can last a while.

Cons: The bluish light really isn't as nice as fire-based light, and they aren't really that bright. They are also dependent on daytime sun. They are plastic and have a high embodied energy, like all the other plastic, petroleum, and metal things here.

Battery-operated things, USB charging, and crank-charging

I listed a lot of these things, but I guess it's because there is only one of each. I got all of them for free. The headlamps are so essential for me. I didn't intend to have two, but am glad to have a backup. The one is rechargeable and plugs into anything with USB to recharge. I conveniently have a tiny camping solar charger that I also got for free a while back, and use that to charge that headlamp. It takes maybe 3 hours of direct sun to charge the lamp, and then it lasts for

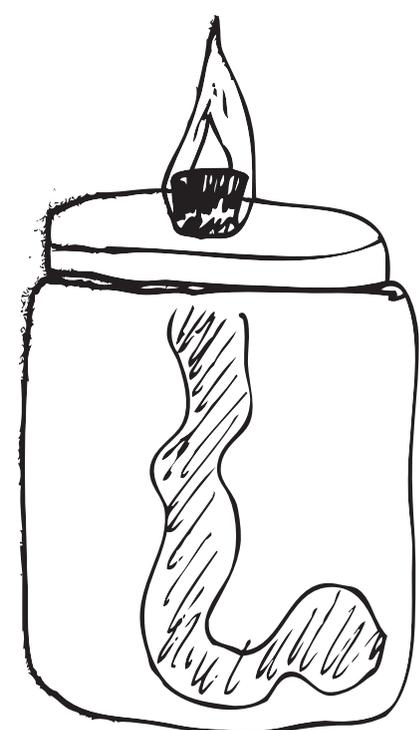
a week+ of heavy use. I use the headlamp for cooking and reading in bed, mainly. The solar charger, along with the battery-powered flashlight and other LED wand light (and the radio and solar lamps) all use AA batteries, so the solar charger charges for all of them (except the solar lamps), and the batteries all rotate around, with the radio being the top priority. The other headlamp is the backup, and uses rechargeable batteries as well. The LED wand is dumpstered, and not something I would have thought to get, but I like it because it has a switch, and if I come home at night, I can flick it on to provide immediate light.

The crank charging flashlight needs to be constantly cranked to provide light but it's great because it won't run out.

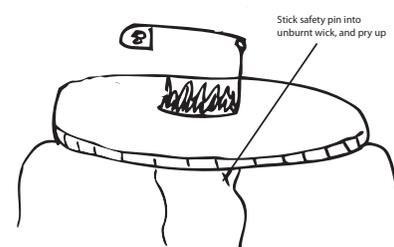
Passive and Reflected Light

Light coloured walls, and windows that are placed to make the most of early (east in the northern hemisphere) and late sun really help extend the time you can use natural light. The height of the window is also something to consider. Low windows provide a more focused light in a smaller area, and a high window dispenses a dimmer light into a larger area. I have some high and some lower windows, though to be honest, this was just an accident in the original room of the cabin. Mirrored or light surfaces can considerably increase the light coming from candles or lamps when placed to reflect them. I have been coveting one of those wall-mounted oil lamps with an attached mirror for years.

Send wall-mounted oil lamps, letters, etc. to: [reeceaxl@gmail.com](mailto:reeceaxl@gmail.com) or 1828 Brothers Rd. // RR5 // Mt. Stewart, PE C0A 1T0 or [peakes.wordpress.com](http://peakes.wordpress.com) 🌱



veggie oil lamp



Raising the wick

Stick safety pin into unburnt wick, and pry up

# SHEET MULCH GARDENING

Ian Petrie

Tired of digging your garden every year? Breaking sod, rototilling, watering, digging weeds and adding expensive fertilizers? Sheet mulch gardening is a great way to avoid all of that. It's a type of raised bed garden that lets you do other things besides worry about your garden, and so lets you have a larger garden, more food and more fun in the summer.

Traditional garden beds take a lot of energy to create and maintain, and the effort put into all of the sod breaking and tilling may have negative effects on the soil you are working. The digging and flipping of soil disturbs the microbes, fungi and bugs within it, disrupting the ecosystem and making it less able to absorb organic material to improve itself. Flipping soil and leaving the earth bare dries it out, destroying organic material and making it harder for soil to conserve moisture and nutrients. These then have to be artificially added back to it, using human labour to make it a viable site for plant and soil life to thrive.

Sheet mulch gardening is a great alternative to destructive traditional gardening practices, and can be applied to any soil, anywhere. A sheet mulch garden is a raised bed garden built on top of the soil by layering sheets of matter you would normally put into your compost bin. Because it does not involve tilling of the soil and breaking up sod, it avoids the soil degradation problems of traditional gardening, leaving its ecosystem intact, happy and ready to devour all the nutrient rich matter you've layered onto it. The building-up approach to this type of gardening means that you do not need to have good topsoil, and it will actively improve poor and compacted soils. One of the ways it does this is by retaining a good deal of moisture in its many layers, making it available as the plants, microbes, fungi, worms, etc need to access it. After the initial soaking of the layers at the start of summer, I didn't water my garden. At all. Everything thrived, even perpetually thirsty plants like peppers. Another side to the benefits of sheet mulch gardening is built-in weed control. Layers upon layers of mulch is very difficult for weeds to penetrate from the bottom up. Anything that does land on the surface and starts to grow, or anything that sprouts from seeds in your layers and

starts to grow is very easy to pull out of the loose mulch. Most times you get the full root system or rhizome to come out, which is something I never was able to do with bare soil gardens I've had in the past.

The trade-off for the lack of energy inputs for maintenance, however, is a bit of work at the beginning. Nothing as physically intense as deep-digging, but still a good bit of work with a wheelbarrow and a shovel. Sourcing the materials and bringing them to your garden site is the biggest challenge with this style of gardening. My bed material took a bit of driving to bring in. This is a one time cost, and the beds don't need as much material for maintenance in the following seasons. Something else to consider is what you will possibly do with all this new free time. Go fishing? Have a social life? Play music? Pygmy goats?

So, how does a person go about building these beds, and what will you need?

Materials:

- Cardboard, newspaper
- Straw, leaves or other carbon rich stuff (think building a compost pile)
- Rotted manure, compost, top soil or other nitrogen rich stuff
- Water

Double the amount of what you think you'll need, and then we're ready to go!

First step is site selection. Figure out a spot that fits what you want to plant. Remember to consider not just weather/sun exposure, but also how efficient a potential site is for you. If you're planning an herb garden for kitchen use, put it closer to your house than things you'll visit less often.

Once you've selected your site, step two is to cut all the vegetation on the area you want your garden to be on, and just let it drop where it was growing. Thoroughly water this area.

Step three is to lay down your weed barrier. This prevents any regrowth from the chop-and-dropped plants competing with your garden. Lay down a layer of cardboard or newspaper about a half an inch thick and soak it with water. The thicker your weed barrier is, the harder it will be for the weeds to try to get through. At the same time, it

will be more difficult for your desired plants to spread their root system through the barrier as it decomposes. Newspaper or cardboard aren't the only thing you can use for the barrier. Old phone books, clothes, sheets, anything you can think of that would provide a temporary barrier and gradually break down into your soil will work. Get creative!

Next put down a layer of carbon. Wheat straw worked great for me. I piled it on about eight or ten inches thick. Water this layer as well.

Then comes a layer of your nitrogen-rich stuff. I had a close source of well-rotted pig manure, so I used that. Prepared compost would work well too. You could put topsoil in this layer in a pinch, as well. This layer should be about six to eight inches thick.

Put another layer of a carbon rich medium on top of that, then water again. The stuff I used for my final layer was oat hulls. Oat hulls are really cheap from grain processing facilities and are a great source of carbon that easily breaks down in composts, etc. Anything organic that you like the look of will work here. Wood shavings, newspaper, leaves, straw, etc. A quick note about using wood: some types of wood (black walnut, cedar, etc.) might have allelopathic qualities, meaning that there are compounds in the wood that could damage plants and slow or prevent seed and seedling growth. I don't have any experience using wood in my beds so I cannot speak to this, but do your research before putting wood shavings or wood chips in your beds. Also, if thinking about using wood chips, consider that they take a long time to break down. This could lead to a lack of oxygen in the wood chip layer in the following seasons that would be detrimental to root growth. Local soil types and weather will play a large part in deciding if this is a suitable medium for you.

The beds you are creating now need to rest for at least a few days. If you are building beds that you are not going to use right away, you can keep layering more nitrogen and more carbon until you run out of supplies. Let it rot down for a while under snow, re-purposed plastic or a nitrogen fixing cover crop like clover, vetches or birdsfoot trefoil. If you use a cover crop, cut it and drop it as another layer when you're ready to plant.

Now we're ready to plant. The first year, transplanting seedlings seems to work the best. Pull back the top layer of mulch, put the seedling's root system into the middle layer and then put the top layer back around the seedlings. If you've let the beds sit for a while and the layers are starting to break down, plant into the top layer, water and add a layer of mulch once the seedlings have started to come up if direct seeding, or immediately around transplanted seedlings.

Now go take a road trip. Or learn to play fiddle. Or go fishing. Or build more garden beds.

Check in on your garden beds once in a while. The direct seeded beds might need a watering or two to get started, but other than that and the occasional easy yank of a weed here or there you shouldn't really have to do anything to them. Come back at harvest time, and enjoy the fruits of your labour.

The next season, add more layers as you see fit. Each bed will act differently depending on a whole bunch of factors. You'll probably want to add at least a layer of fresh mulch each year to help keep in moisture for your plants, but observing your plants and the condition of each bed will be the best guide for you.

This technique can be used to make topsoil anywhere you want, and doesn't need to be used in just a typical garden sense. On our property there is an area where the previous owner would do sloppy machinery repairs and there are nuts, bolts and spare parts all over the place. All sorts of stuff that would kill any animal that grazed through there and accidentally ate it. But, if we just build another layer of topsoil over top of this disaster we could plant forage crops for the animals and use that little piece of our land again. There are a ton of applications for this technique. Build soil everywhere!

If you have any questions or want me to expand on any of this stuff shoot me an email at [ianspetrie@gmail.com](mailto:ianspetrie@gmail.com). Google is always great for research on this stuff too. If building soil and working with nature to do less work seems to be a good idea to you, do some research on permaculture. If you email me I can send you some reading material. I'm always happy to bounce ideas around and hear about projects other folks are working on. Happy gardening! ❁

## SUBMIT TO NO MASTERS (but submit to us!)

Submission Guidelines:

- \* The Country Grind Quarterly is made by rural punks for rural punks. City punx cannot submit.
- \* There is no restriction on who is a "punk". You are a punk if you call yourself one.
- \* This should be obvious, but to be clear there is zero tolerance for any sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, blah, blah.. content.
- \* There will be no dogma in any articles. Points of view and opinions are welcome but you can't force them down our throat or condemn other readers.

Submission Requirements:

- \* text submissions are limited to 2000 words.
- \* submit artwork or photos in black and white, min resolution of 300 dpi, in a separate file from text.
- \* file types in order of preference: .psd .tif .jpg for images, or .doc .odt for text

We would love to see your:

- \* articles
- \* artwork
- \* letters
- \* photos
- \* fiction/poetry
- \* stories
- \* comix
- \* how-tos/DIYs
- \* etc!!!

Next Deadline: March 7th 2014:

more info: [countrygrind.net](http://countrygrind.net)  
email: [punx@countrygrind.net](mailto:punx@countrygrind.net)

# A NEW YEAR'S TALE

By Aura Laforest

Usually, the do-it-yourselfer in me can't help writing about crafting, herbal transformation, soaping, knitting, quilting or cooking, but the holidays seem to evoke some nostalgia and I thought I'd share instead what love can look like out in the boon docks.

This event dates back to December 30<sup>th</sup> 2008, in the first year my husband and I lived



together. We were renting a four-season cottage insulated with warm thoughts and cardboard walls but there was a lot of land, a gorgeous lake right outside the window, a killer kitchen and a wood-burning stove to supplement the struggling electric radiators. Now both of us work rotations at the Raglan Mine in the Arctic (yes, the real Arctic with no trees and cold weather that makes a Moose Jaw winter seem temperate) and that particular year our rotation was ending on December 27<sup>th</sup>, getting us home to the cottage in time for the New Year with a couple of days to spare.

The map below can help give an idea of distance and explain why it takes a Boeing 737 to fly us on and off the site – road service being non-existent. They say (although I still haven't figured out who "they" is) that planes are the fastest way to travel if you have time to wait. This is particularly true in the Arctic where Mother Nature decides when planes take off and land and if she's in a bad mood, well you're just shit out of luck. Chances are you see where this is going already: the weather had it that our scheduled departure was three days following its estimated time of arrival. At that point, the kitchen had run out of milk, yogurt and fresh fruit, and good humor amongst the

South-bound staff was becoming more and more difficult to maintain.

We finally left the site on January 30<sup>th</sup>, despite freezing fog and less than ideal landing strip conditions. The entire airport full of people cheered as the Boeing touched down confirming that home was only a few hours away now. My husband and I, who were watching the plane arrive from air traffic control, both heaved a sigh of relief. The relief lasted until we got home and tried to pour a glass of water. No water. Bathroom faucet. No water. Tub. Still no water. "Do we have beer in the fridge?" my husband asked. I checked and answered "yes," uncapping two brews and handing him one. "We'll be OK for tonight then," he responded.

A couple of beers later, curiosity got the best of my tomcat and he went out in search of the reason for our water woes. The cottage's water supply was drawn directly from the lake via a surface pump located below the house in a crawlspace that I heard both shovel and a string of curses gaining access to. The space was warmed by an electric heater which upon inspection, seemed to have failed at some point during our rotation. My husband came back in and confirmed that the pump had frozen, the cast iron body was cracked and long story short, we needed a new pump. The thought of finding a replacement pump and installing it on New Year's Eve sent us back to the fridge for more beer and not long after, we were both in bed ignoring reality and snoring heavily.

The next morning I woke to an empty bed and stepped into the living/dining room where every pot and pan in the house was out on the floor, on the electric range or atop the roaring slow combustion stove. I blinked a couple of times; after all, we hadn't had *that* much to drink. I looked in the closest pot and saw snow. There was melting snow in all of the pots I surveyed in fact, melting slower or faster depending on the proximity to the various heat sources. That's when my husband came back inside with two more large buckets of snow and declared his intention of drawing me a bath that evening (and I do love my bath before bed). Since he didn't know if we'd be able to locate a pump, nor if the replacement would be successful, he figured that at a minimum we'd need water to flush the toilet and thus the water wouldn't be lost if I didn't want a bath (but he knew I would).

Most people nowadays are blissfully unaware of just how much snow it takes to fill a bath. Or how much time it takes to melt that much snow. I can tell you. It takes about ten hours of filling and melting pot after pot after pot of white fluff to have enough water to fill a bath-tub. Ten hours through which my husband insisted I sit by the fire, knit and relax: because this was his gift for me. He even strained the resulting water through a coffee filter to remove any twigs, dust and leaves from it. Now that's Love.

I can honestly say that that was the very best bath I have ever had. The water was magic and both my husband and I shared it like the water of an oasis after a sand-storm. It no doubt felt different simply by virtue of the time and care that had gone into its preparation. Valuable as it was during those two days without water, we saved it after we were done to wash hands and flush toilets: waste not, want not after all.

By January 2<sup>nd</sup> of the New Year, running water had once again returned to our home with the local Canadian Tire and my hubby's mechanical skills to thank. I also had a memory that will last throughout my lifetime. Although we have since left that cottage and that lake for a better insulated one where the artesian well and heating cable maintain a steady supply of water year-round: we still occasionally prepare a snow-bath to share together during the holiday season and it's still the best bath you can dream of having.

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# HOME-MADE BANJO TUTORIAL

By Powers

What you will need:

- The body (Tin olive oil can, cigar box etc.)
- Instrument neck (ukulele, banjo, guitar, piece of 2 by 4)
- Threaded dowel (Size doesn't matter)
- Nuts and washers, lock washers (Same size as dowel)

A Fork

The concept is fairly simple but the execution depends on what you want out of it and how much effort you want to put into it. Basically you're going to attach an instrument neck to a can with a threaded dowel. That's the long and short of it. Every instrument will be different and for brevity's sake we'll focus on the olive oil ukulele canjo pictured.

Step one: Remove the neck from the uke body. A simple hand saw will suffice but it's nice to have a band saw at your disposal. Take it slow! You can always cut more off later but you can't necessarily put it back on. If your tin has a lip you will have to cut a groove for it. You want the tail end of the neck to fit flush with the can. Remember that the strings will apply pressure bringing it forward. Don't stress too much though, you can always shim it if the action is too high or low.

Step two: Measure to find the centre of the tail of your neck. Find the corresponding placement on your tin on both the top and the bottom. Drill holes here, remember to measure twice and drill once.

Step three: Cut a lip into the back end of the tail of your neck. This will allow the washers and bolt to sit flat on the tail. If you have a small enough drill you can bevel a larger hole here instead to hide the bolt.

Step four: Now you're ready to connect the two. Fit the threaded dowel through the holes and fasten with washers, lock washers and bolts.

Step five: Find a fork with easily bendable prongs. Curl the prongs as best you can with a pair of pliers. Cut the handle off and drill a hole into the forks face the same size as your dowel. This will be your tail piece. Fit your new tail piece onto the dowel and fasten with a lock washer and a bolt.

Step Six: Finally you're ready to string your instrument. I prefer tuning mine to GDAE so I opt for mandolin strings, that way you have an extra set. For a bridge you can either buy one meant for a mandolin or tenor banjo or you can simply use a block of wood or a bolt. Keep in mind though that this is where the majority of sound will enter the body of your instrument. So whatever bridge you choose will dramatically change the sound. If your action is too high or low you can fix this by either raising or lowering the bridge, or by shimming the space between the neck and the body. You can use small chips of wood or cardboard as a shim. Shimming above the dowel will lower your action while shimming below it will raise it.

I've been using old ukulele necks as they are cheap and already fretted. Whatever you can get your hands on will work fine though. You can make your own, or any old, used or broken instrument would be well suited: broken guitars, mandolins, banjos, whatever you've got kicking around and don't mind taking apart. An ad on kijiji or craigslist may get someone to donate something to you.

For the body, I've had success with olive oil tins, cigar boxes and cookie tins. This is where it pays to be creative. Remember a good rule of thumb for setting intonation (correct tuning throughout the fret-board) is that the bridge should be the same distance away from the 12<sup>th</sup> fret as the nut. This should work but isn't always true so it might be worth reading more into. When selecting a body keep in mind it must be long enough to allow proper bridge placement.

With luck you won't have to spend a dime. If you buy everything from stores, the above example should cost no more than 60\$.

# BACK TO THE LAND FOREST RESTORATION

By Travis Cross

The forest community that grows on Prince Edward Island (Epegowit) is known as the Acadian Forest. This forest covers the landscape of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, parts of the Gaspé Peninsula in Québec, and stretches into New England. If you are lucky enough to find a remnant of old growth Acadian Forest, you will encounter trees such as Red Oak, Eastern Hemlock, Eastern White Pine, Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, and Red Spruce. Most of these will be hundreds of years old and quite large. An old growth Acadian Forest, at least one dominated by conifers, bears a passing resemblance to a West Coast rainforest, although the trees are not quite as tall.

Centuries of clearcutting and farming have left the Acadian Forest in a vastly different state from how it existed for thousands of years prior to European colonization. The plant communities that were once common have become rare. The forest that now exists is for the most part much less diverse, and is dominated by quick growing, short lived trees that can grow in eroded, nutrient poor soils. The modern day Acadian Forest is dominated by trees like White Spruce, Paper Birch, Red Maple, and Trembling Aspen. The trees that used to be common on PEI are now quite rare, and have difficulty reproducing under current forest conditions.

I live on a 21 acre property on PEI. A little over half of it is forested. The forest is recovering after being completely clear cut about 10 years ago. The forest on my land is almost totally dominated by Red Maple, Trembling Aspen, and White Spruce, although birches and even a few Sugar Maples can also be found. Since buying the property 3 years ago, I have been slowly reintroducing native trees, shrubs and wildflowers that have vanished from the land. I do this partly because I am a tree nerd, being the son of a forester. In addition though, I believe this helps me connect to my bioregion in a meaningful way. Furthermore, I hope that in a small way I am helping to mitigate some of the damage settler society has inflicted on this island.

So far, my greatest success has been with planting Red Oaks. I have collected many acorns from an oak grove near Charlottetown, and somehow the saplings have managed to escape being eaten. I have planted a few Witch Hazel shrubs, too. They have not done as well though, being eaten almost to the ground by Snowshoe Hares each winter. I have planted many Eastern Hemlocks (my favourite Acadian Forest tree), White Pines, and some Sugar maples. I have also focused on planting native fruit-

bearing shrubs for wildlife, particularly ones that mature fruit just as birds start their fall migrations- Common Elder is an example. I have also planted shrubs that provide animals with winter sustenance- Highbush Cranberry, Staghorn Sumac, and Wild Rose.

There is nothing wrong with the plant communities that have replaced the old growth Acadian Forest. These trees are amazing and I respect them all. They can grow well in harsh ecological conditions that have been brought on by a continuous assault on the landbase for hundreds of years. But it is a far less diverse and healthy forest. I believe that reintroducing native trees and shrubs will help provide diversity and ensure resilience for plant, animal, fungal, and human communities of PEI.

In my experience many rural landowners (and this includes 'radical' back to the land folks) don't give much thought to the indigenous plants on their properties. Some people seem to think nothing of cutting down every last native tree in order to plant an orchard or clear a field. I have nothing against orchards or fields- I have both! But this attitude seems disrespectful to the landbase. It is even, to my mind, somewhat colonial, as plants native to a bioregion are disregarded and replaced by foreign imports. Admittedly, there are many colonial aspects to members of settler society (like myself) owning private land on Epegowit.

I would really like to see more back-to-the-landers plant native trees and shrubs on the lands they steward, in order to increase biodiversity, improve wildlife habitat, and honour their bioregions. Restoring degraded forests, planting windbreaks of native trees, or planting hedgerows of native shrubs around vegetable gardens are some options. Seeds are easily collected (a great excuse to go for a walk in the woods), and books are available at libraries with instructions on how to ensure that they germinate. I love weeding the garden, scything the field, and pruning the apple trees on my property. Beyond these activities though, it gives me immense pleasure (and even a bit of hope) to plant the native trees and shrubs that used to be common in the Acadian Forest, and hopefully assist in the regeneration and restoration of a diverse, resilient, long lived forest community on Prince Edward Island. It is my hope that the trees I plant today will spread their seeds throughout the surrounding forests, and that Hemlocks, White Pines, and Sugar Maples will once again hold prominence in the landscape of PEI. ❄️

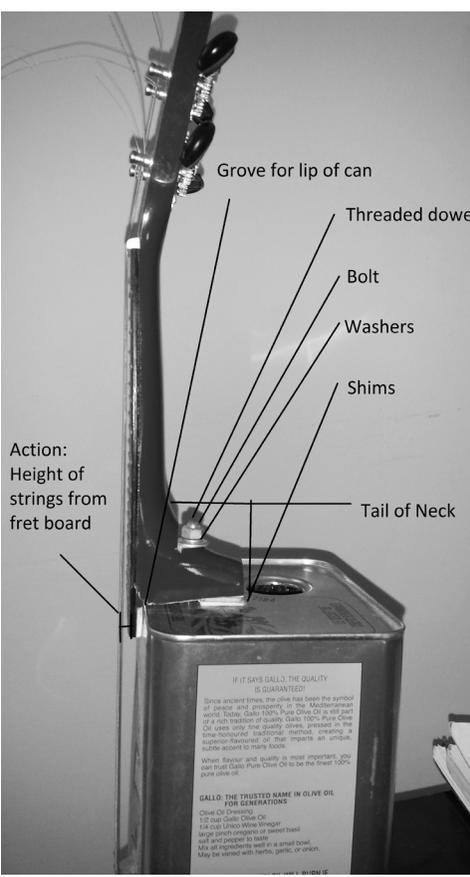
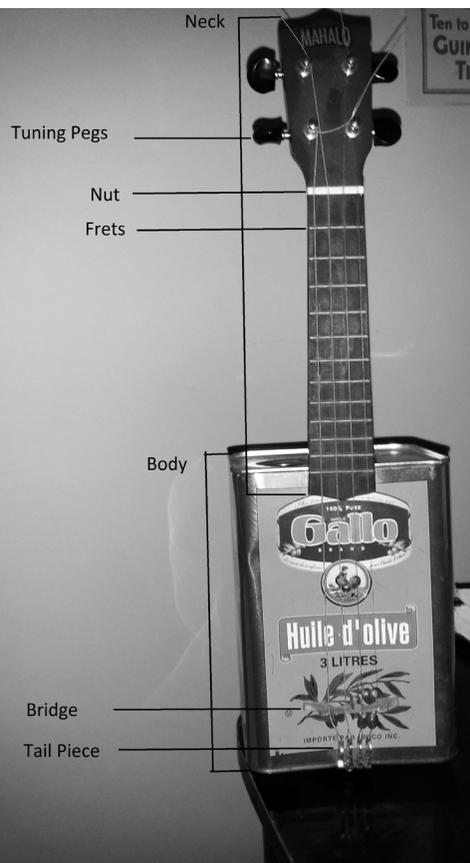
Although, I would recommend rummaging around and free-cycling until you have everything you need.

Like I said, every instrument will be different and you will need to find out what works for you. Using a wooden dowel, for example, would mean you wouldn't need to cut the back of the tail. Just anchor it with a nail on the underside of the tail. Some instrument necks may already have the means to attach it to the body. It's all up to you, have fun, enjoy and happy playing. ❄️

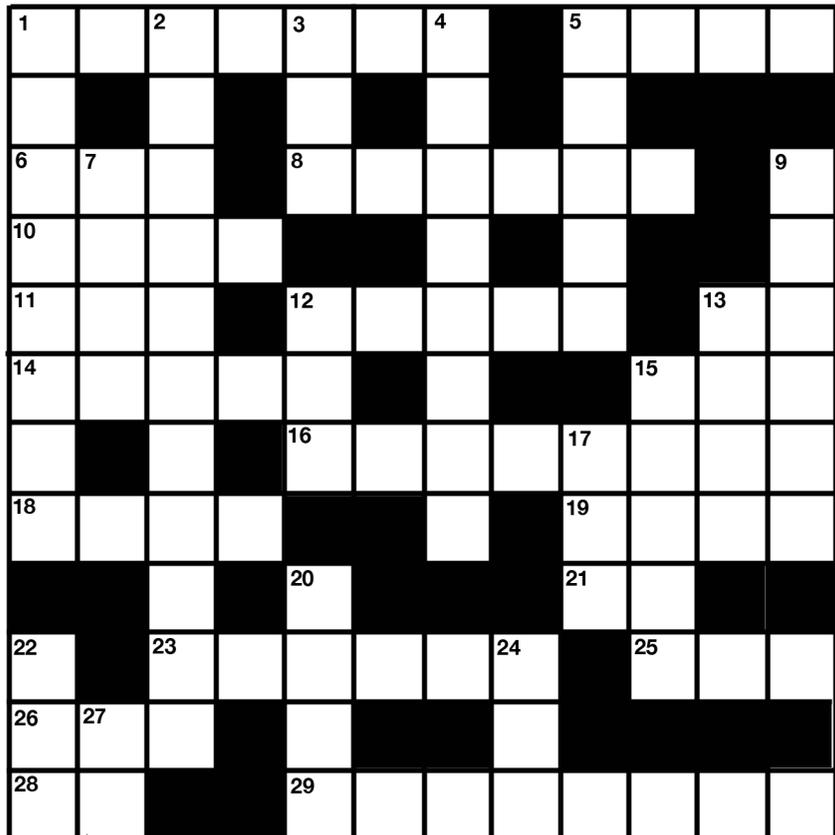
# ARTWORK

So my plan for the artwork was to sprinkle it in between all the articles, but being that I have no idea how to do layout, I kind of forgot. Forgive me.

Credits. Clockwise starting at top left: Skinner Goat by Isaac Roylos; Tincture Bottle by Celeste Inez Mathilda; Close Encounters by Aaron Deshields; Together We are Strong in Pardo Tennessee; Tape Deck by Dandy Denial; Cabin Door by Gretchen Bonegardener; Chaos Skull by Tara Shisler; Respect Hunters by Cat Meow



# Crossword Puzzle



(solution on [countrygrind.net](http://countrygrind.net))

## Across

1. not entirely reliable
5. \_\_\_\_-up
6. wrath
8. "silly boy, \_\_\_\_\_ are for girls!"
10. do it to your banjo, or your apples
11. little 'un
12. the right attitude for everything
13. initials: epic by queen
14. "hey hippie go hug \_\_\_\_\_"
15. iron, in quebec
16. killing time around the woodstove? tell a \_\_\_\_\_
18. \_\_\_\_ the bucket
19. a badass-sounding container, usually for liquid
21. abbr: not a U.S. state, but USPS delivers mail there.
23. a skin or hide can be \_\_\_\_\_
25. "me?!"
26. pig home
28. \_\_ what?
29. "\_\_\_\_\_ creep" (a la nirvana)

## Down

1. coveted truckbed fuel storage
2. inefficient source of heat
3. vermin control and companion animal
4. do-it-\_\_\_\_\_
5. do the \_\_\_\_\_-pokey
7. a good time, or a protest, or both.
9. burning \_\_\_\_\_
12. a group of things that go together
13. starred in dracula and ed wood films
15. \_\_\_\_-rings
17. crumbly dry fake meat stuff
20. ever and \_\_\_\_\_
22. says "hee-haw" or if human, says all kinds of stupid shit
24. 80s vancouver punk band, or a way of getting to the hospital
25. abbr: home of canada's worst mayor-

# OUTRO

Ok, This is the last thing I'm doing before sending this off to the printers. Layout has been a torturous nightmare. But thank fuck it's almost over.

I'm sure you'll notice that the layout is very B-grade (and that there's no page numbers). At this point I don't even care. I've spent literally hundreds of hours (and nearly a thousand dollars) trying to make this paper a reality, and I'm almost there.

Today is December 30th. The past three days

I have been in Dauphin, Manitoba, glued to Dandy and Celeste's couch, squinting at my laptop for hours upon hours while Celeste helped with various crucial editing duties on her laptop across from me and Dandy constantly supplied us with food and tea, and took my neglected dog for walks even though it's -37° outside.

Tomorrow I drop this off at the printers and head back up north to The Pas to work for the rest of my holiday break.

I really hope you enjoyed this. A lot of blood sweat and tears went into making this paper. Expect to see issue #2 out around the spring equinox 2014.

~Gretchen

# CALL OUT FOR SWEET ANTI-SPECIESIST MUSIC

We are a group of miscreants who are wanting to put together a compilation album that celebrates anti-speciesist revolt and all beings' resistance to human existence. We feel that the human domination over this planet needs to end and we love&fight for a world that rejects labels, borders and hierarchy of all kinds. Up da liberated wild!

We're inspired by the flurry of actions that push towards the liberation of all species, in particular the destruction of the police training centre in Portishead, UK which was done in conjunction with the start of a state-sanctioned badger cull, and the new, exciting collaborations happening between ELF and CCF cells in places like Moscow. As well, we cheer to hear about the many actions taken by beings who are enslaved and captured everywhere for the profit of humans; from hens escaping their slaughter - to chimps mauling their captors - to tigers failing to perform their tricks and

instead attacking their attackers - to human prisoners fighting the apparatus from the inside, we celebrate the actions taken by beings towards liberated freedom.

We would love an original submission from you for the album because your creativity inspires us and we think you're great. Pass this call-out around to anyone you think would be excited about this project; we're open to all styles of music, or other audio projects (poetry, etc), and if you feel you'd like to collaborate on this in some other way (album art, etc) then please get in touch! All proceeds from sales on bandcamp and in real life will go towards prisoner support and anti-speciesist projects in the northeast. We're hoping to start compiling everything in early Feb, so if you're wanting to contribute, try to do so before then!

End Civ!

# CLASSIFIEDS

Are you looking for that special someone to share a rural punk life with? Maybe you're a lone punk looking for a place to settle down? Or maybe you have a few extra acres on your land and you're looking for just the right punk to share it with? Well, the Country Grind Classifieds are for you!

Also you can have ad's for other things as well, i.e. selling a truck, buying/selling guns, getting rid of excess building materials, whatever. But if you have a distro or a blog or something that your trying to promote I'm going to say that you should just buy an ad, (\$10 for ad space is fucking cheap!)

Classifieds are totally free!! Each ad is limited to 100 words. But folks can have multiple ads about different things.

email me your classified ad at [punx@countrygrind.net](mailto:punx@countrygrind.net)

**Want to live in (or just visit) the middle of nowhere with other like-minded people?** Do you like the Northwoods? We're a young family of 4 + 1 friend with 60 acres in northern Minnesota trying to start a community/land share. Check out our IC listing: [directory.ic.org/23511/Long\\_Haul](http://directory.ic.org/23511/Long_Haul)

**Epic babe seeks epic babe.** I am looking for the right lady to share my epic rural punk life with. I'm a sacrilegious, queer, bison farmer and diesel mechanic. In my free time I hunt, collect records, work on my trucks, and edit the Country Grind. Email Gretchen at [gbonegardener@gmail.com](mailto:gbonegardener@gmail.com) or call/text 204-647-PUNX

**Let distance not be such the great dissuader that we percieve it to be...** There's nothing you'd love more than a great penpal, right? Someone who will write you lovely letters on the surfaces of interesting bits of garbage and ephemera? Someone who will send you delightful surprises made swiftly and suavely with their own ten digits? Someone who (i promise!) will reply to your own oh-so-carefully crafted mailings? Look no further! Write to: Ruby Lithe P.O. Box 266 Ochre River, MB R0L 1K0

**Wanted: Free trampoline for my goats to play on.** Will pick up in central Saskatchewan. Call Ian 306-269-0285

missed connections:

you: work at extra foods, have purple hair.  
i: shop at extra foods, wear a lot of black and brown, look sort of like a sledneck, or a hippie, but dirtier. i want you to know (or maybe i don't) that i've developed a hopeless crush on you because you're the only alternative-looking person in my whole town. we probably wouldn't even like each other. i'm really sorry this is happening. i'll just keep trying to act normal when i buy groceries.

**If buying a van together means yr punk-married, then that's an institution i can get behind!** let's spend a month eating stale tim ho dough cuz we spent all our cash on petrol! let's spange our way across the excited states! let's book a tour and develop our performance skills along the way, possibly more towards the end. let's blow our head gasket at the top of anarchist summit, give up on road life, and build a shack in the bush not too far from the trans canada! if this is yr dream, hit me back through the country grind classifieds!

signed: no sleep till brooklyn! no sleep till thunderbay!

missed connections:

to the lovely red-headed lady who works in the post office: maybe you've noticed my beautiful, lively blue eyes or my sophisticated plum lipstick. maybe you've heard i like ladies? maybe.. well... i mean.. oh fuck it, we live in a town of 117 people, everyone knows we're both dykes and everyone probably already thinks we're a thing anyway. what do you say? let's give'em something to talk about?

missed connections:

it was while i was parked on the shoulder of a secondary highway, surreptitiously shoveling goatshit into the ditch, that you passed in your convertible. to be clear, i would love to have kept the goatshit for the garden, but the truck was overloaded and the bottom of the box was rubbing on the tops of the wheels. once they really started smoking i realised i had to lighten the load if i wanted to keep my tires in one piece. and to be clear, it wasn't a convertible so much as a bronco with the top sliced off with a cutting torch. it didn't look like you used a very good torch. please, please feel free to come and use my plasma torch next time you do that. i'll introduce you to my goats.

# Welcome to the TreeHouse

## \*The Lookout\*

### \*The Kitchen\*

~the Easiest PeanutButter Cookies EVER!!!

1 cup PeanutButter

1 cup Sugar (plus some extra in a bowl)

1 Egg

\*Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease cookie sheet

\*In a large bowl, mix peanut-butter, 1 cup of sugar and egg until smooth

\*Roll dough into 2" balls and roll balls in sugar.

\*Place on Cookie sheet, a couple of inches apart and press a criss cross in the top of each cookie with a fork

\*Bake 8-10 minutes and let then let cool 5 minutes before eating.

### \*The Library\*

Can you guess the words we took out of this poem? We gave you a little hint for each missing word....

A   , a free 

A secret you and me 

A high up in the  -y branches

Cozy as can be 

A   , a neat 

Be sure and wipe your 

Is not my kind of  at all...

Let's go live in a  

~Shel Silverstein

~Now can you guess the title?

H	C	A	E	B	T	N	E	R	T	W	N
D	N	F	I	R	U	R	V	O	Z	O	A
U	K	I	E	S	E	I	O	C	U	B	T
O	N	E	A	V	L	G	L	K	Q	N	U
L	U	F	I	T	U	A	E	B	H	I	R
C	L	R	F	U	N	A	N	S	R	A	E
F	L	O	W	E	R	U	I	D	S	R	Z
L	S	N	O	O	M	L	O	T	V	V	P
J	A	S	O	E	G	J	A	M	X	W	T
R	N	K	A	N	E	R	H	A	P	P	Y
R	Q	J	E	R	S	R	R	V	O	S	O
R	D	D	A	E	G	U	G	S	X	Z	K

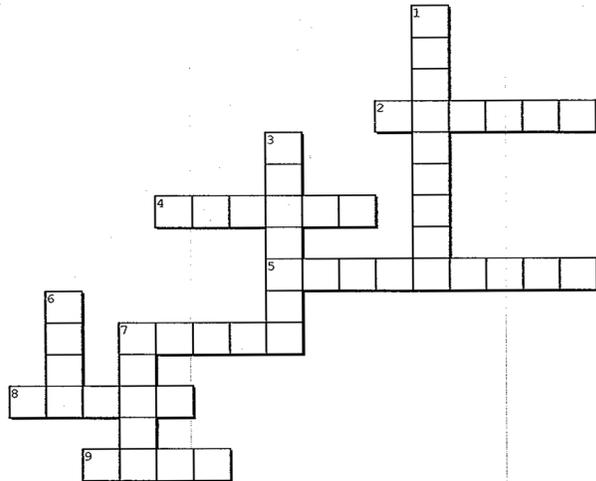
~Can you "spy" these words from your lookout perch?

sun mountain lake rock  
stars tree beach grass  
moon flower island nature  
cloud river rainbow

### \*Which Leaves Are Twins?\*



Can you fill in our crossword scavenger hunt crossword puzzle? All things you might find while playing in your treehouse...



#### Across

2. these make the branches green and keep us shady
4. a climb to the top
5. a friend with colorful wings
7. riding it makes you feel like you can reach the leaves
8. our slowest friend, with his house on his back
9. what we peek into to see the baby birds

#### Down

1. put it in the lookout and see the stars
3. a tiny red friend with black polkadots
6. our light at night
7. the fastest way down!

### \*Scavenger Hunt\*

Get Outside!!!

~How many of the things on our "crossword list" and "Lookout" list can you find in your yard or around your house?

~Then, look deeper and use your imagination. Can you find things that match the list below? (For extra fun, Race with a friend and see who finishes their list first)

~ Something Shiny

~Something Growing

~Something Soft

~Something that Could Be Under Ground

~A Nifty Seed

Created on [TheTeachersCorner.net](http://TheTeachersCorner.net) Crossword Maker

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