

# Whispers from the Willow



Willow Moon Herbals *Quarterly Newsletter*

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Autumn Equinox, 2008

## Autumn Equinox/Mabon

**Autumn:** [aw-tuh m] n. "a colorful dance of balance, plenty and change, marked by bursts of activity followed by sudden silences."

The earth holiday of autumn equinox, also known as Mabon, is one of two times of the year that celebrate a moment of perfect balance when light and dark are equal. From this day forward through the next three months, the nights will be in-

creasingly longer than the days. Traditionally, it is the time to celebrate the earth's bounty and display gratitude for the harvest that will sustain folks through the coming winter.

As swirls of new school-year activity and the flurry of furry creatures rooting through piles of leaves transform into sudden quiet ~ a stillness that lacks insect cadences and children



A photo of trees in a forest in New Jersey, November 2007. Photo by Sodpzzz.

scampering in the house ~ so, too, does the earth slow her rhythms and enter a fallow, restful time of year.

In this season of transition, me-

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## Autumn Herb Walk

**Join us** on Saturday, October 11th in Chubb Park for our annual **Autumn Herb Walk** - part of our continuing education Botanical Awareness Series. Open to all ages, we'll explore the medicinal botanicals that masquerade as 'weeds'. 10-Noon and 2-4PM. \$10/person per session..

We hold our **Autumn Herb Walk** in tandem with the American Botanical Council as they celebrate their 3rd Annual "Herb Day". This nationwide

event is a coordinated series of independently produced public educational events celebrating the importance of herb and herbalism.

Herb Day was conceived of by five non-profit organizations with

interests in herbs and herbalism (the Herb Day Coalition), to raise public awareness about the significance of herbs in our lives and the many ways herbs can be used safely and crea-



tively for health, beauty care, and culinary enjoyment. Greater familiarity with herbs will increase informed use of herbal products and build public support for maintaining personal choice in the use of botanicals.

The Coalition is comprised of the American Botanical Council, United Plant Savers, the American Herbal Products Association, the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia, and the American Herbalists Guild. ☺



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**Willow Moon Herbals** is a women-owned enterprise dedicated to maintaining wellness, health and healing. We are Certified Herbalists, and our approach is rooted in the Wise Woman Tradition: attaining wholeness through supportive compassion, the use of basic, simple ritual, and the gracious assistance of our common, green plant herbal allies. We offer herbal consultations as well as educational herbal workshops, our ongoing Botanical Awareness Series, and much more. Visit our website for more information about us and our products. ☾

## Autumn Equinox/Mabon, *continued*

dicinal botanicals follow the cycles of the earth, and are often bursting forth with seeds while colorful flowers and once-vibrant leaves are fading with the chillier night air.

The herbs of Mabon are many and can vary greatly. Acorns, benzoin, fern, marigold, milkweed, myrrh, passionflower, rose, sage, solomon's seal and thistle are the most common across many traditions.

### Dream Pillow

If you have not grown or harvested your own herbs, these can all be purchased from your

local natural-foods store.

1 cup dried mugwort (*artemisia vulgaris*)

3/4 cup dried lavender blossoms (*lavender officinalis*)

1/4 cup dried, crushed rose petals (*rose sp.*)

Choose a natural fabric like cotton, silk, linen or velvet is especially soft. Cut out matching squares and pin right sides together. Sew a simple running stitch on three sides 1/4" in from the raw edge, leaving a 3" gap. Turn pillows right-side out, poking the corners with a pencil. Stuff with about 2 cups

of mixed herbs, then sew the gap shut. When the scent diminishes, simply squeeze the pillow roughly to release more fragrance from the herbs. Place the dream pillow close to your regular pillow, or even under it as you sleep. Mugwort, lavender and rose are soothing and calming. Other herbs can be used according to your preferences: agrimony, anise, bay leaves, chamomile, clove, hops, lemon balm, peppermint, sage, thyme or yarrow. ☾

*[Dream Pillow loosely adapted from Celebrating the Great Mother]*