

Central Brittany

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ISSUE 14

A black and white photograph of a damselfly resting on a fern frond. The damselfly is positioned in the lower-left quadrant, facing left. Its wings are spread, showing a delicate, veined pattern. The background is a soft-focus field of ferns, creating a sense of a natural, outdoor environment.

**Life is Buzzing
in Brittany**

2 Recipe

**Spanakopitta
(Greek Spinach Pie)**

Ingredients:

Pastry:

- 2 teaspoons dried or rapid action yeast
- 5 fl oz (150 ml) warm water
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 10 oz (225 g) wholewheat flour (T110)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Filling:

- 1 onion
- 5 spring onions
- 1 lb (450 g) spinach
- 2 tablespoons parsley or dill

- 2 oz (50 g) feta cheese (optional)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Freshly-ground black pepper salt



Method:

1. Add the yeast to the warm water, stir in the sugar, and leave to ferment for 10 minutes.
2. Sift the flour and salt into a medium-sized bowl. Make a well in the centre and pour in 3 tablespoons of the olive oil. Stir in the yeast mixture.
3. Stir the ingredients together with a knife, and then press into a ball. Add more water, if necessary. Knead the dough for 7-8 minutes, by which time it should be smooth and pliable. Cover with a tea towel and leave to rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about an hour).
4. Chop up the onion and the spring onions. Finely chop up the parsley. Wash and chop up the spinach. Crumble the cheese and set aside in a small bowl.
5. Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed pan, and add the onion and spring onion. Cook until soft. Add the spinach, and cook for five minutes, adding a little water if it starts to stick to the pan. Remove from the heat, stir in the cheese and the herbs. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Knead the dough two or three times and divide in half. Roll out one of the halves into a circle and place it in a greased 9 inch (23 cm) pie dish. Spoon in the spinach filling, and then roll out the second piece of pastry in the same way, and place it on top of the filling.
7. Flute the edges of the pastry together, using the fingertips, and pressing them down onto the rim of the dish. Brush the pastry with the remaining tablespoon of oil. Make two slits in the top of the pie to allow steam to escape.
8. Place the pie in the oven and cook at 180°C (350°F) Gas Mark 4 for 15 - 20 minutes, or until the crust is puffed up and golden. Serve warm.

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Oak, Glory of Brittany



Oak *Quercus robur*

French: **Chêne** Breton: **Tann**

There is no other thing, in this area of the world, which supports as many different forms of life – and in particular insects – as the common oak. It is estimated that there are over 900 different invertebrates, which live off it. Among others are the gall wasps – tiny winged creatures whose larvae eject poisons which make the tree swell up around them, creating the familiar ‘oak apples’ and marble galls at the ends of branches, as well as currant galls on the catkins, and cherry galls on the undersides of the leaves. Oaks also support numerous different butterflies and moths, including the beautiful Purple Hairstreak butterfly; the Oak Tortrix Moth, more familiar from its caterpillars, which hang from the branches on great silken threads; the Winter Moth, whose caterpillars devour the young leaves, giving the trees a wintertime appearance; as well as the Oak Beauty, and the rare Purple Emperor, which flutters elusively in the branch tops. It would seem then, that a lover of Nature could not do better than to plant an oak tree – or, perhaps more to the point, give protection to a mature tree.

There is nothing quite like an oak tree; in North-Western Europe oaks have co-evolved with the landscape, and are the heritage of the land. Oak trees are one of Brittany’s greatest natural resources, and have always been a backbone of life in the region. Oak wood is strong and durable, and has been used by the inhabitants of Brittany to build boats long before even the time of Caesar, yet it has also been employed for making furniture, farm implements, posts, barrels and also in building.

Given the importance of oak trees, why have so many been cut down over recent years? It is said that within an acorn lies a mighty oak tree. Within an oak tree lies the means of supporting native animals, birds, and insects. Without the oak tree, life in Brittany would not be the same.

Perhaps the time has come for us all to take a more active role in protecting those trees that have managed to survive, and to plant acorns in our gardens so that there will be new trees able to enrich the lives of the Bretons of future centuries.

Facing page, clockwise from top left: the Oak of Tronjoli at Bulat-Pestivien, one of Europe’s oldest oak trees; a pleasant place to sit - the massive oak at St Catharine’s church, nr. Carhaix; catkins and leaves burst forth in early Spring; young acorns; an oak ‘apple’; and a beautiful oak tree near Duault.



*Above: for minimal shade, oaks may be pollarded.
Right: two year old oak sapling.*



*Below: oaks provide a home for countless different lichens.
Below top right: Common oaks bear their acorns upon long stalks.
Below bottom right: dormant twig.
Below bottom left: the familiar lobed oak leaf.*



6 Tea Shop Review

Tea Shop REVIEW
The Château de Kerminaouët



In the middle of the countryside, not far from the town of Pont Aven, is the Château de Kerminaouët. On Sundays it is open to the public, and tea is served in the dining room. The cakes are sometimes made by a local pâtissier, and sometimes by Mrs Speicher, who helps at the castle. On the day of our visit, there was a tarte tatin, a plum tarte and a Quatre Quarts cake with cherries. They were all delicious and really tasted home-made. There are three large, circular tables in the tearoom, each of which can seat up to eight or nine people. The long windows overlook the garden, and the décor and furnishings are very attractive. A wide range of drinks is served.

The château is on the D783 between Pont-Aven and Trégunc, and is well signposted. The teashop is open on Sunday afternoons during the summer. 02 98 50 19 68

French proverb:

Le soleil luit pour tout le monde.
The sun shines for everyone alike.

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The Best Selection of English-language Publications in the Region?



Annie and Luciano Proia at the maison de la presse in Callac have recognised the potential of the market for English-language journals and now provide the best selection in the region - they even have a stand dedicated to that venerable organ of British culture, The Sun newspaper!

Literary Festival Callac: Luciano is also the moving spirit behind Callac's first literary festival from 20th to 28th August. The theme is stories and legends, and over the course of the event Callac will be playing host to many of the region's best-known authors. (See What's on page 21)



Galerie Hirondelle

Mick Hamlin will be displaying his work and offering it for sale at affordable prices at his gallery in Berrien, nr. Huelgoat during the month of August. Galerie Hirondelle Tue., Thur. & Sat. in August 12.00 - 5.00 Well signposted in the village.

Editorial 7

Editorial

The article on page 11, The Black Market and the Global Economy, was prompted by a trip that I had to make to Dublin in July. The city has been transformed over the past few years, and now provides a rather sobering example of the global economy in action: office blocks and housing developments are springing up everywhere, there is a new tram system, a new road system, people are pouring in from all over Europe to work there, and there seems to be unlimited work available for anyone with any enterprise. Coming from Brittany, I felt like the poor country cousin, and it made me realise how ill-prepared this region is to cope in the world at large.

I was dismayed to read headlines in local papers recently along the lines of '6000 homes sold to British people'. These sorts of surveys and headlines surely belong to a previous era. A region such as ours, which has suffered such devastating depopulation over recent years, and which still cannot provide work for its young people, has to be able to welcome people from anywhere and everywhere. It is the new arrivals who bring economic regeneration and hope for the future, and we should not be counting them and categorising them according to where they happen to come from.

On a lighter note, there are plenty of new arrivals who will never be counted or categorised. This month's main article is on the incredible variety of insect life in Central Brittany. Readers are welcome to send in pictures of locally-seen insects for future issues.

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Map showing location near Pontivy, St Brieuc/Loudeac, Auray/Lorient, Inter-marché, Réseau Pro, and Brocante Le Chineur (2 km from here).

8 News & Services

Technival 2005

Teknival, or Tek-Noz, 2005 was held in Carnoët in June. The Teknival is a 'rave' which has become an annual event, each year being held somewhere in Brittany. It attracts up to forty thousand people.

This year, local government authorities took over the running of the event to ensure that it happened in a supervised rather than in an unsupervised way. This involved requisitioning land belonging to local farmers which was then used as the site for the Technival.

The decision to do this was based on previous experience which has shown that if forty thousand people are determined to descend on Central Brittany there is nothing that can be done to stop them, even with all the resources of the police and armed forces at one's disposal; furthermore, tolerance is a virtue, particularly when exercised by the majority in favour of a minority.

Most readers will have heard that a young woman was tragically murdered at the Technival. Perhaps a different attitude on the part of the authorities would not have saved her life; perhaps there would have been an even greater loss of life if the authorities had had less involvement: no one will ever know. Maybe it is unfair to blame local officials for their response to the Technival: they are not responsible for people wanting to hold a rave, they were simply trying to respond to a problem which has its origins outside the region.

How is it that young people could have become so disillusioned with life that three days of loud music and drugs should appeal to them? Pending an answer being found to this question, the people of Central Brittany will probably find themselves having to endure more such raves in future years.

Book Sale, Corlay: Cancelled

Ray and Yvonne Constable are taking a break from organising the used book sales that have become a feature of local life over the past year. They are looking for a new venue with log fires and good food in the Carhaix area, with a view to restarting the event in the autumn.

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News & Services 9

Travel Deals

Increased competition has led to much lower prices on the northern routes across the Channel.

Speedferries, which runs from Dover to Boulogne, (www.speedferries.com) have led the way with standard one way fare costing just 37€; the Channel Tunnel has adopted a new approach to trying to deal with its enormous debts - it has dramatically cut ticket costs and its new website (www.euro-tunnel.com) is easier to use. The tunnel is the quickest way of getting a vehicle across the Channel. It is also good for people who suffer from sea sickness (but not for claustrophobics!); a 'short stay' one way ticket costs from 69€. The traditional ferry companies - P&O and Sea France - have responded to the challenge by also offering very cheap fares, and a simplified fare structure - a day return on P&O now costs 28€ for a car with up to 9 passengers, and a standard return only 130€.

Brittany Ferries may like to imagine that it has no competition on the southern routes, but will be forced to think again if people travelling to London and the South East start choosing to make the drive up to Calais instead of paying its high prices.

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The Language of Shakespeare

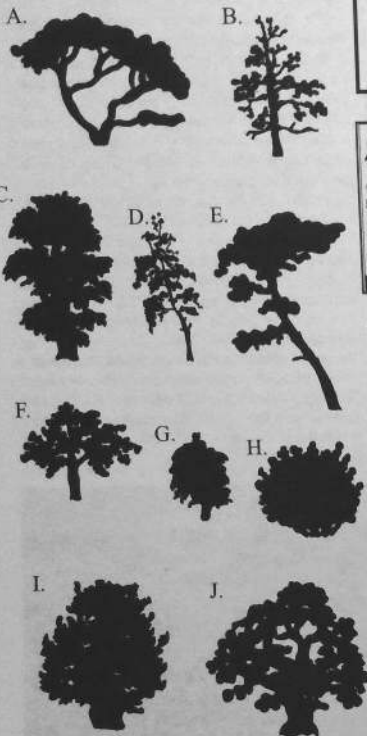
"This above all - to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow,
 as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Hamlet

10 Quiz

Tree Quiz

Match the silhouette to the name of the tree. Solution page 36



- Alder
- Apple
- Beech
- Hawthorn
- Hazel
- Oak
- Scots Pine
- Silver Birch
- Stone Pine
- Yew

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Working on the Black & The Global Market 11

Working on the Black & the Global Market

'Working on the black': what does it mean?

People from outside France can have difficulty in understanding the term 'working on the black'. In other countries the phrase is used to describe working while claiming benefits, or not declaring earnings to tax authorities. At present, in France, people require authorisation from a government office before they can offer any products or services or run any sort of business. Providing a service, without first having gained authorisation, is known as 'working on the black'.

The reasons for the controls and regulations

The regulations have been introduced for two reasons: firstly, they are meant to ensure that every tradesperson and business in France provides a defined level of service and expertise; and, secondly, they ensure that every business pays its dues in terms of taxation and social charges. Thus, in a sense, the regulations are meant to guarantee a certain level of service for customers, and to protect businesses from unfair competition.

The Free Market

The problem with this system of business management is that it has proved to be less efficient and less economically successful than the free market. In countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and, now, many Asian countries, there is less regulation of business: responsibility rests with the customer to ensure that the businesses with which they deal are reputable and fulfil their promises. Far from this creating an irresponsible business culture, it has forced businesses to listen to their customers and to provide them with what they want; in a free market, customers are quick to desert inefficient and unhelpful businesses and to switch their trade to more responsive businesspeople.

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The Global Economy

The free market has proved to be bigger and more successful than any single nation state. It is primarily associated with the United States, but ideas that originate in one part of the world can now be taken up and developed by people in any country. This global economy is very fast moving: new ideas, new technologies, and new business methods are transmitted from one business to the next as they compete with each other across borders and across continents. It is particularly marked in the fields of technology, entertainment, finance, transport, retailing, and engineering, but its effects touch every area of life.

Continued overleaf

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12 Administration

The Problem for France

The regulations and controls that operate in France are incompatible with this fast-moving global economy, and businesses that operate under these controls have proved unable to compete worldwide with those that don't. Furthermore, whereas fifty years ago, the French economy was more or less closed to foreign imports, it is now increasingly open, so that not only are French businesses losing out in foreign markets, but they are now losing market share at home as well. Thus, nearly all the computer hardware and software upon which modern life depends originates outside France, a high proportion of the clothes sold in the supermarkets are made in the Far East and an ever growing proportion of cars sold in France are manufactured abroad. In fact, anything in the shops that comes from abroad will have been made by people who do not have French-recognised qualifications, and by businesses that do not comply with French regulations – i.e. businesses which if they were actually in France would be operating 'on the black'.

The Moral Debate

Much time has been devoted to debating whether or not the global economy is a good thing or whether life is better when all businesses are closely regulated and every worker has an accredited qualification for the job that they do. Clearly, the free market has led to some very unpleasant phenomena: many people are appalled by the activities of multi-national companies; the excessive hours that people work in countries such as the UK undoubtedly contribute to a breakdown of family life; unacceptable levels of road traffic seem to be a side effect of free market activity; and, perhaps worst of all, modern work and business ethics seem to encourage selfishness and greed. The hard truth, however, is that, even though all this may be true, the only people who are able to do anything about it are those who are managing to succeed in the environment of the free market and the global economy; businesses that are inefficient go bankrupt, and countries that cannot respond to the challenge lose control of their own destiny as they sink into debt and dependency.

The Implications for Central Brittany

These are not simply questions for philosophical debate; they affect the day-to-day reality of trying to earn a living. At present, in order to establish a business in Central Brittany, one not only has to be skilled in one's chosen field of activity, but one also has to gain permission to start work from a government office, and then one has to make large financial payments which are appropriated to support this bureaucracy. Added to the financial difficulties is the danger that one may expect the regulators to protect your business from competition: pleasing the regulator can start to take precedence over pleasing the customer.

The Opportunity

Difficult though it undoubtedly is to run a successful business at present, the current situation is still one that offers opportunities for the future. New people will almost certainly continue to move here, and, sooner or later, regulations will have to be relaxed so that local businesses have a fair chance to compete with overseas competitors. Anyone who is able to establish a foothold in the market now, and who is able to build up a business based on the old-fashioned principles of good service, flexibility, and customer satisfaction, will find themselves in an enviable position when the global economy finally does come to our part of the world.

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Insects in Brittany 13

Life is Buzzing
An introduction to insect life in Brittany



A female stag beetle walks over the grass on a warm summer's evening.



A metallic blue damselfly rests on a fern frond.



A hoverfly on a bramble leaf. Its wasp-like markings protect it from birds, but not from humans, who sometimes mistake it for a wasp. But hoverflies don't have a sting and they are welcome in the garden, where their larvae eat hundreds of greenfly. You can tell them apart from wasps by the way they hover when flying, something which wasps cannot do.



A tiny orange flower bug on groundsel.



The flowers and seeds of hogweed provide food for many insects, including this striking shield bug.



A bumble bee feeding on heather flowers.

Above: A turquoise damselfly, known as a common coenagrion, alights on a grass stalk.

Right: This little hoverfly mimics the markings on a wasp, and is here seen on a bramble flower.



14 Life is Buzzing

The red admiral; a beautiful butterfly with velvety black wings splashed with red.



The magnificent swallowtail butterfly feeding from lavender flowers.



An orange-tip butterfly with closed wings. Only the males have orange tips, the females being white, but both have mottled wings on the underside, which resemble lichen.



A 'wall brown' butterfly basking in the sun.

Below: A small tortoiseshell feeds on oregano flowers - a favourite with butterflies.



The caterpillar of the mullein moth feeds solely on mullein, buddleia and figwort. Here, it is eating the seeds of a figwort plant.



A 'silver washed' fritillary, often seen soaring round treetops or bramble patches

Life is Buzzing 15

Insect Life in Brittany

Due to its long, warm, humid summers, Brittany has an extraordinary wealth of insect life. Many of these insects are quite spectacular - it is not uncommon to see dragonflies up to five inches long, and there is a wealth of unusual moths and butterflies.

Insects are not everyone's favourite creatures, and it can take a little time and study before one comes to appreciate the indispensable role that they play in the natural order of life.

Nature's Waste Disposal System

Fortunately for us, Nature has taken the whole question of waste disposal a lot more seriously than human beings have done over recent years. When going for a walk in the countryside, one may see debris such as cigarette packets, plastic bags, and old bottles, but, thank goodness, all the material produced by Nature over the previous millennia has been meticulously cleared away, broken down, and reused, many times over.

Insects play a significant role in this process: many of the insects that people find least pleasant are in fact playing an indispensable part in keeping everything neat and tidy. Perhaps flies provide the most striking example of this phenomenon: their young larvae (maggots) help to ensure that the world is not littered with dead bodies.

If one succeeds in viewing flies in a positive light, it is then relatively easy to appreciate the work done by ants and wasps. These tireless

workers are amongst the most efficient scavengers in Nature, searching for material that they can take back to their nests to feed their young. Similarly, many of the beetles and small insects living in the soil are involved in breaking down plant material.

Garden Pests

When one understands the value of the clearing up operation performed by insects, it helps one to become less bitter about the activities of garden pests. Insects such as aphids and caterpillars are designed to prey upon weak plants, and upon parts of the plant that are dying back naturally, - thus allowing the stronger plants to prosper and to grow to maturity. It is not the insect's fault if, in our gardens, we choose to grow flowers and vegetables that are unable to look after themselves: which is why it is preferable to adopt organic techniques, that strengthen plants, rather than to swamp the garden in toxic, insect-killing chemicals.

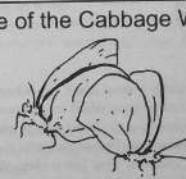
No Insects, No Flowers

Nature is full of paradoxes: insects are seldom regarded as the most beautiful element of the creation, but without them, there would be no flowers. Technically, one could say that plants that use the wind for pollination (i.e. plants such as grasses and cereals) do have flowers, but they generally go unnoticed; it is the flowers that have been designed to attract insects that human beings treasure.

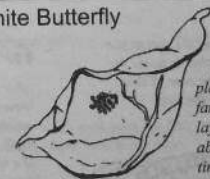
Like everything in Nature, flowers display perfection in the way in which they combine function and design: the insect is attracted to the flower in its search for food, the flower secretes a small amount of a dilute sugary syrup at its base. In order to get at this nectar, the insect

The Life Cycle of the Cabbage White Butterfly

Most of us learnt about the life cycle of insects when we were children, but, since then, have perhaps given little thought to how remarkable they actually are.



When one sees groups of butterflies chasing and spiralling round each other, they are probably 'courting'. After courtship, a male and a female remain in the mating position for several hours.



The female is remarkably skilled at finding leaves of plants of the cabbage family on which to lay her eggs. She lays about 60 eggs at a time.

has to crawl into the flower, or reach into the flower with its proboscis, in doing so, it brushes against the male part of the flower and a few pollen grains become attached to it. The insect then flies on to another flower of the same species and, while it is feeding on the nectar in this flower, some of the pollen grains may be rubbed off onto the female part of the flower. When this happens, the pollen grain combines with an egg cell in the female part of the flower and a seed and fruit develop.

Why a flower which is designed to attract insects should appear so beautiful to us, is a mystery.

What Do We Really Know About Insects?

Everyone is agreed that we know remarkably little about insects, but few people stop to consider how little this little might be.

In terms of scientific endeavour, the insect world provides an impossibly complex task. Before starting to study a subject, scientists have to be able to establish definitions that allow them to agree on what they are talking about.

So far, this has not been possible with insects: it is assumed that insects can be categorised into species in the same way as birds and mammals, but scientists have estimated that in Brittany alone there may be up to a million different species of insect, many of them different from species found in the rest of France or in the

UK. Attempts have been made to categorise a few thousand of them, but to complete the task would require an unimaginable amount of work - and then of course it would be impossible to get agreement about whether a particular insect belonged to a new species or was simply a variant on one that had already been identified. The very idea that insects can be categorised into species may itself be erroneous.

Given that there is no overall understanding of insect life, scientists have had to concentrate their limited resources in specific areas: protecting endangered species of butterflies for example, or upon studying recognised agricultural pests. It would probably be a mistake to extrapolate what has been learnt about these isolated examples to insects as a whole.

Over the course of history, beekeepers are the people who have spent most time studying insect life. Our knowledge of bees does not, however, provide a framework for understanding insects as a whole; if anything, it simply serves to demonstrate how little we understand about the subject: experienced beekeepers consistently say that their bees often behave in a way that is quite different from that described in the books, and that they are surprised by the behaviour of their bees, even after decades of experience.

There appears to be a versatility in the insect world that defies definition, and there is probably little that people can do with regard to the insect world except observe it, admire it, and treat it with respect.

The Life Cycle of the Cabbage White Butterfly continued



The first thing that the caterpillar does when it hatches is to eat the remains of the egg case. It then sets about eating the leaf.



After moulting several times, the caterpillar leaves the plant upon which it has been living and searches for a sheltered spot. It attaches itself to the trunk of a tree, or under the eaves of a shed, and then turns into a chrysalis. The caterpillar appears to reduce itself to a liquid within the chrysalis, before re-forming as a butterfly.



Beekeeping

Brittany has a very good climate for beekeeping, and this ancient art has provided a means of supplementing the income of country people for as long as anyone can remember.

In years gone by, people kept bees in skeps which were made of straw, basketwork, or wood. These skeps consisted of a simple enclosed space in which the bees built their combs: their disadvantage was that it was difficult to remove the honey from them without harming the bees.

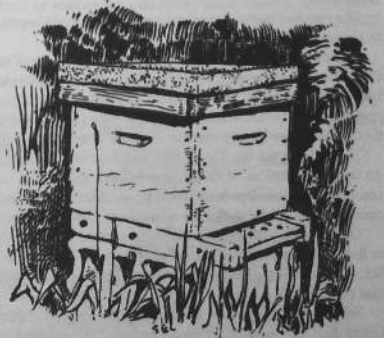
Nearly all beekeepers now use modern hives which have removable frames that house the honey comb: these frames can be taken from the hive, uncapped, spun, and then replaced in the hive the following year. If the hive is well managed, the honey that is removed is surplus to the bees' own requirements, providing a rare example of husbandmen working in partnership with nature - the beekeeper provides a colony of bees with a home, and in return the bees are able to provide the beekeeper with honey.

Some of the reasons that make the Breton climate so good for beekeeping are that the bees are able to start flying, and collecting nectar, early in the spring, and, that in the autumn, they are often able to forage amongst ivy flowers late into October or November. This means that the winter period, during which they have to survive on their honey stores, is

relatively short.

The high level of rainfall means that the countryside is verdant and that many of the bees' favourite flowers - such as clover and brambles - grow in abundance. Trees such as sweet chestnut and lime are also a rich source of honey.

Many local agricultural suppliers (for example the larger Gamm Vert stores) carry a good selection of beekeeping material. The initial cost of a hive, bees, protective clothing, a honey extractor, and various accessories, such as a smoker, is high, but it is repaid over a few years if you succeed in harvesting a few good crops of honey.



The butterfly emerges from the chrysalis and hangs upside down, drying its wings.

The mature butterfly flies off in search of flowers on which to feed, and of a mate: the life cycle begins over again.



There are two generations of the cabbage white each year, the first, in early spring, hatch from chrysalises that have hibernated over winter.

There is a slight irony in the fact that cabbage white caterpillars are regarded as an annoying pest, but that the butterfly itself lends a grace and beauty to a hot summer's day in the garden.

18 Count Conomor of Poher

Stories relating to the Breton saints date back around fifteen hundred years. The saints appear to have been men and women, greatly respected in their own lives, but having little to do with the established church of the time.

Count Conomor of Poher: Part 1

In the days when the Seven Saints dwelt in Brittany, there lived a man called Conomor. He was count of the region of Poher, but, greedy for greater power and influence he ambushed and slew the King of Domnonée, and seized the throne for himself. The young prince Judwal, who was the real heir, was forced to flee, and he took refuge in the court of the French King, Childebert.

Henceforward no one could stand in Conomor's way. He tyrannised the people and engaged in endless hostilities with the surrounding noblemen.

Not far from Conomor's castle there lived a sage, called Saint Gildas. He had sailed over from Cornwall some years before, and his reputation had quickly spread throughout the land. Conomor decided that he wished to speak with him, and Saint Gildas travelled with some of his companions to the court.

The two had many conversations together, and Conomor derived so much pleasure from them that he asked St Gildas to prolong his visit.

One day Conomor confided to St Gildas the source of his discontent. Not long before, he had visited Count Guerok of Vannes, and had fallen in love with his eldest daughter, Lady Trifine. He had asked for her hand in marriage, but her father had refused. Conomor had already had several wives, and it was rumoured that he had slain them all. As soon as they had become pregnant he had lost all affection for them, and Count Guerok did not wish the same fate to befall his own daughter.

Since that time the Count had had only one thought, and that was how to obtain Lady Trifine. At last, he turned to St Gildas and begged him to use his influence with Count Guerok. If Guerok consented, Conomor promised that he would cease the hostilities which had raged on between them for many months, and also that he would treat Lady Trifine with the greatest honour and affection.

Gildas wished to bring an end to the warfare, and agreed to travel to Vannes. He explained everything to the Count, and Guerok agreed to give up his daughter to Conomor, on condition that if he mistreated her, she could return to her father. St Gildas also promised Lady Trifine that he himself would ensure that no harm came to her.

When he returned with this message to Conomor, the Count was filled with delight, and gave St Gildas permission to return to his retreat. The marriage was celebrated, and for the first few months Trifine and Conomor lived happily together. One day, however, Conomor perceived that his wife was with child. His manner towards her changed, and poor Trifine became afraid. She decided to fly to her father's court and to return to her husband after she had given birth to her child. Next morning she rose early, saddled her horse, and set off with a few attendants for Vannes. Not long after, Conomor also awoke, and finding his wife gone, guessed what had happened, and set off in pursuit.

Although Trifine had had a head start, Conomor rapidly gained on her and, on the outskirts of Vannes, the poor lady saw him approaching. She dismounted and hid amongst some bushes in a nearby copse, but her husband soon found her. Trifine fell on her knees and, with tears running down her cheeks, begged for mercy. Conomor paid no heed to her words. He seized her by the hair, and struck her in the neck with his sword. Trifine fell down on the ground, and Conomor rode home.

At the sight of Conomor, Lady Trifine's attendants had fled to the court of her father, and Count Guerok had immediately despatched a large party of men. They did not arrive in time, and the Count brought back the body of his daughter and laid it out in the great room of the "Château de la Motte". Giving instructions that no one was to bury it until his return, he set out for the hermitage of St Gildas, on the banks of the river Blavet.

When he arrived he fell at the saint's feet, and asked him to remember his promise and to restore

Count Conomor of Poher 19

his daughter to life. St Gildas comforted him, and after they had eaten, they both started out on the road to Vannes.

On their way, they passed near to Castel Finans, the home of Conomor; Gildas bade Guerok to remain where he was while he went to see the Count of Poher. Conomor had suspected that Gildas would come to reproach him for his cruelty, and had drawn up the drawbridge and fastened all the doors.

When St Gildas arrived at the edge of the moat, he called to the sentinels to let him in, but they had been given orders not to reply to him. Seeing this, Gildas walked around the castle and then prayed that the Count would be punished for his ill deeds. Next, he took a handful of dust and hurled it at the castle; the whole castle came crashing down to the ground, seriously wounding Count Conomor. Without waiting to speak to him, Gildas turned and rejoined the Count of Vannes.

On their return, they entered the great room together, and Gildas asked all the people to entreat the kindness of God. This done, he drew near to the body of Trifine, laid his hand on her neck and said:

"Trifine, arise."

At the sound of his voice, Trifine recovered consciousness.

The Count of Vannes thanked Gildas, with tears of joy, and Trifine said that henceforward she would never leave the saint.

"No, my daughter," said Gildas. "It would not be seemly for a maid to follow a hermit like myself. Stay with your father until you have brought your child into the world, and then I will help you to fulfil your wishes."

Lady Trifine obeyed, and when her son was born, Gildas christened him Tremeur.

Trifine founded a retreat on the outskirts of Vannes, and dwelt there for the rest of her life.

However, Count Conomor was still alive, and fearing that he would wreak vengeance on Gildas and his companions, Guerok gave them the island of Rhuys¹.

Here, St Gildas built a retreat that soon became a centre of learning. As soon as Tremeur was old enough Gildas sent for him and brought him up with the greatest care.²

It would take the efforts of another man to finally overthrow Conomor, and it was some years before he came to liberate the people of Brittany from the tyrant who ruled over them.

End of part 1. In the next issue, part 2: The arrival of St Samson.



¹ Now a peninsula off the coast of Vannes.

² Tremeur grew up to become St Tremeur after whom the church in Carthax is named.

What's On

Wed. August 3rd - Sat. August 6th

7th Blues and Jazz festival (open air) at Binic (nr. St Briec), Joe Cocker (4th Aug. at 7.30 p.m.); Dr Feelgood; Jimmy Cliff (6th Aug. at 7.30 p.m.). Plus many more.
More information: 02 96 73 60 12
www.villebinic.fr

Weds. 3rd August & 7th September
Chateau de Kerminaouet, 29910 Tregunc (nr Pont Aven). For painters, sculptors and photographers - 12.50€ - Bring your lunch and something to drink.

Teas, drinks, refreshments and selected pastries also served on Sun. afternoons.
02 98 50 19 68 kerminaouet@wanadoo.fr
www.chateaubretagne.info

Fri. 5th August - Sun. 14th August
35th Interceltique festival, Lorient. 4500 artistes from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Isle of Man, Cornwall, Asturia, Galicia and Brittany. Bagpipe competitions, dancing, concerts, workshops etc. etc. This year, Ireland is the country of honour and an evening concert on August 6th hosts Irish singers, dancers, fiddle players and the Uilleann pipes.
www.festival-interceltique.com
02 97 21 24 29

Sun. 7th August 3 p.m. - midnight
Jazz & Blues festival. New Orleans comes to Châteauneuf du Faou. In 4 locations around the town and river. 8 bands including Pikey Butler's Jumping Five; Good Time Jazz; Alfonso Jazz; Canal St. Stompers.
10€ / 5€

Sun. August 7th
Table Top Sale. Carolann's, Carnoët. (On left as you enter village.) Well marked. 10 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. Free tables. Hot food available till 2.30 p.m. Special: Ploughman's lunch 6€. Friendly atmosphere. 02 96 21 54 62

August / September every Wed. evening
Celtic Bar: Music sessions of Irish and Breton music at the Celtic Bar, Le Fournil, Bataval, Cleden Poher from 9 p.m. onwards. Musicians welcome!

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La Chapelle St Jean, Guerlesquin
02 98 78 11 01 or 02 98 99 80 37

Tues. 9th August & Tues. 23rd August
Guided walks (6 km.) on the Monts d'Arée, in English. Organised by Adde assn. 8 € / adult; 4 € / 7-14 yr old. Refreshments on return to Craft centre.
Walks go via St Michael's Mount & megalithic alignment. Flora, fauna, myths & legends.
Tel: Katell 06 62 28 10 08
contact@arree-randos.com

Fri. August 12th and Sat. August 13th
Perseids Meteor shower will peak on these nights, just after midnight.

Sat. 13th August - Sun. 21st August
Festival of Breton dance & fête de Saint-Loup. Open air Breton traditional dance festival, Place du Vally, town centre, Guingamp. Includes the National Breton Dance championship. One of the oldest of the Breton festivals.
www.dansebretonne.com
or Tourist office: 02 96 43 73 89

Sunday 14th August
Carhaix. 13th Troc et Puces fair (Flea market). 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Les Halles (by St Trémeur church). Admission free.

Sunday August 14th
Karaoke. Calanhel - La Détente (4km from Callac, direction Lannion). Admission free. Sausage & chips menu 5€. 8 pm onwards. 02 96 45 06 88

Sat. 20th August - Sat. 27th August
28th Douarnenez Film Festival. Film workshops, music, exhibitions etc. This year's featured country is Mexico. Many English & VOST(original language with English subtitles) films e.g. Ken Loach's "Bread and Roses", and Sam Peckinpah's "Bring me the head of Alfredo Garcia". More information: Douarnenez Tourist Office: 02 98 92 13 35 or tourisme.douarnenez@wanadoo.fr

Sat. 20th & Sun. 21st August
Irish Music and Dance Workshops - Trévou Tréguignec (22) (in the old salle polyvalente): accordion, harp & singing, fiddle & flute, Irish set dancing.
Contact: O'Neill 02 96 47 26 55
or 06 19 48 33 30

Sat. 20th to Sun. 28th August
1st Literary Festival, Callac - The theme for Callac's first literary festival is 'Contes et personnages merveilleux bretons'. There will be an exhibition on the tradition of storytelling in Brittany in the library from Sat. 20th to Fri. 26th Aug. and on Sun. 28th Aug there will be a chance to meet modern authors in the Salle des fêtes, plus stories told by Anne Risacher and an exhibition of documents on the theme of Breton stories and legends.

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Sun. 28th August
Christ Church Brittany, at Chapelle St Jean, main street, Guerlesquin, 11 a.m. Communion followed by picnic.
Tel: Rory Johnson 02 98 78 11 01
or Nigel Lemon 02 98 99 80 37

Sun. 28th August & Mon. 29th August
Film in the English language. "My Summer of Love" 9 p.m. Callac cinema (dept. 22) (by the Church). 86 min. Winner of British Academy Best English film in 2005.

What's on in your area? Entries included free of charge in the What's On section.
cbj22956@aol.com 02 96 21 52 21

Letters

French Registered

I notice in some of your adverts the term "Fully insured and registered Artisan" and I can't help wondering if your readers realise that being registered to the "Chambre des Métiers" does not guarantee the quality of the work nor the technical or professional ability of the artisan; it only means that he or she is now paying taxes and social contributions.
Giuseppe Di Bello

Chess or Bridge Clubs?

As an avid reader of the CBJ I would like to say well done, it's a fantastic magazine. Can I make one suggestion, why not do one article in French as well as English, or if you are really adventurous a brief explanation of the Breton language with some useful phrases (I only know Kenavo, gwinn rouge etc.). Finally as an avid chess player I am often looking for a game when in Plusquellec. I still play competitive chess in England but would welcome a social game when in France. At a push I can also play a passable hand of bridge, again if anyone is looking for a fourth...

Malcolm Body
chrisandmalbody@yahoo.co.uk

New iMac

I have recently replaced my "Windows '95" with an up-to-date Apple Mac iMac G5 - SUPERBI I would be extremely grateful to anyone with similar who would be kind enough to pass on the benefit of their early learning experience.

Tim 02 96 43 34 15

Water Quality

Firstly we want to thank you for the positive attitude displayed in the CBJ, particularly towards Breton culture and nature.

Special thanks for having dealt with the subject of water in your June issue. We would like to take the opportunity offered by your article to introduce our association to your readers - EAU & RIVIÈRES DE BRETAGNE.

For thirty-five years, it has been endeavouring to preserve the water resources and the purity of the water in the five Breton departments. Our aim is to protect everybody's right to a water of quality and to preserve or to restore the natural environment and the landscapes of Brittany.

We try to increase public awareness of the issues involved by providing information, education of the young, participation in government projects, and through militant action. It might be useful for people living in Central Brittany to know that ERB runs the "Centre d'Initiation à la Rivière" in Belle-Isle-en-Terre, a place where people can discover and marvel at the world of the river.

For more information:
ERB, 25 rue Olivier Perrin, 22110 Rostrenen
Tel./Fax: 02 96 29 09 24
delegation-22@eau-et-rivieres.asso.fr
Best regards,
Michel le Billan

Please send letters to: info@thebj.com
or by post to, CBJ, BP4, 22160 Callac

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Directory of businesses featured in this issue of the Journal.
Entries include the page number of the advert.

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French proverb:

Il ne faut pas laisser de semer par crainte des pigeons.
 Do not let fear of the pigeons put you off from sowing.

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Breton Story: The Kind-Hearted Prince 27



Once upon a time there lived in Paris or thereabouts a king, who had an only son. He brought him up with the greatest care, and as the child grew he became more and more handsome, like a rose tree that bears more blossoms every year. However, while the boy was still young he was stolen away by gypsies. His happy life in his father's court was soon forgotten, and he had to wander from fair to fair with the gipsy folk, dressed in rags, and earning what little he could.

When the leader of the gypsies was dying, he called the boy to him. "Your place is not among us, young man," he said. "You are the son of a king. Take this ring. If you show it to your father he will recognise you as his son."

The young prince set forth, with a hunk of brown bread in his pocket to feed him on his journey. He walked as long as the sun was in the sky, and the crickets sang in the corn. When night began to draw on he saw a poor beggar seated on a milestone. He was holding out his hand to passers-by and seemed to be in great pain.

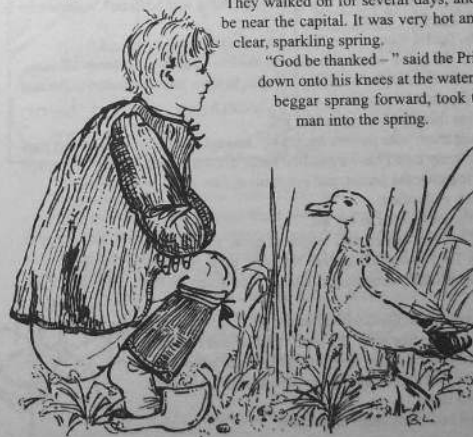
The young man was filled with pity. "Why are you sitting on that milestone?" he asked. "The travellers cannot help you. Come with me to the city and I will find some way to heal you. The physicians will refuse nothing to the son of the King."

He drew forth his ring, and showed it to the beggar. "Look," he said, "I will show this to my father and he will soon recognise me. Then I will be able to command whomever I please."

The beggar arose and set off at the young man's side. He was full of gratitude and thanked the Prince again and again. However, his intentions were evil.

They walked on for several days, and began to think that they must be near the capital. It was very hot and they stopped to drink from a clear, sparkling spring.

"God be thanked -" said the Prince, "I am very thirsty." He fell down onto his knees at the water's edge and began to drink. The beggar sprang forward, took the ring, and pushed the young man into the spring.



Fortune protected the poor prince and he managed to scramble up the bank. He walked on with wet clothes, and eyes full of tears. He was wondering how he could recover his ring when he saw a crowd of ants. They were in great distress because a horse had trodden on their nest, and they were doing all they could to rebuild it. Their predicament moved the Prince's heart, and he knelt down, and helped the tiny creatures to repair their home.

28 Breton Story: The Kind-Hearted Prince

This time his kindness met with the gratitude it deserved. The ants formed a circle around him and their queen bowed gracefully and began to speak.

"Handsome young man, my people and I do not forget. No matter where you are, if you call on us we will come to your aid."

The Prince walked on and soon came to a pond, where some ducks were making a loud commotion. One of them had broken its wings and feet, and was being swept away by the current. The Prince lifted it out of the water and set it down on the bank. The ducks were amazed at this act of kindness from a man, and one who seemed to be their leader began to speak.

"A father never forgets a kindness done to his son," he said. "Wherever you are, O Prince, if you are in need, the King of the ducks will come to your aid."

The Prince walked on towards the walls of the capital, which could now be seen against the sky. Suddenly he saw a magnificent steed struggling to free itself from its chain, with which it was entangled.

"If I do not help the poor creature, it will harm itself," said the Prince. He ran over to the horse and set it free.

"Thank you," said the steed. "I belong to the King, your father, and if you are ever in need I will do all I can to serve you."

The Prince thanked him and walked on until he reached the city.

"If I could only see the King," he thought, "maybe he would recognise me without the ring."

His wish was soon granted. When he entered the palace he caught sight of the King, surrounded by a splendid entourage. A young man walked by his side; he was wearing the ring and the Prince recognised him as the beggar.

"Sire," he cried, "that man is an impostor. The ring he wears was stolen. I am your real son."

The King looked angry and the beggar ground his teeth. "If you wish to be believed, you must pass three tests," said the King. "Otherwise you shall not leave here alive. My most beautiful crown has fallen into a pond, and no one can find it for me, for they say the pond is bottomless. You must retrieve it!"

The poor prince went to the edge of the pond and began to weep. What was he to do? Suddenly he remembered the promise of the King of the ducks.

"King of the ducks, King of the ducks," he cried. "Come to my aid." Immediately the pond was covered with ducks. They arrived from all sides, some on foot, some through the air, and began to dive into the water. Soon one appeared with the crown in its beak.

The King was filled with surprise and joy.

"Truly, young man, your powers are great," he said. "Let us see if you can pass the second test. In my barn I have a hundred sacks of corn, which have been gnawed through by rats. You must gather together the grains, and put them in new sacks before sunset."

The young man went to the barn and called:

"Queen of the ants, Queen of the ants, come to my aid."

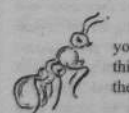
The words had barely passed his lips before ants began to cover the ground, never were so many seen at once. They gathered together the corn, grain by grain and filled the new sacks in an hour. All the young man had to do was fasten up the tops.

The King was once again filled with amazement.

"Truly, there is no one like you," he said. "I hope you can pass your third test. This year has been very dry and all my people are thirsty. I wish you to make three springs in this meadow, at which they can quench their thirst."

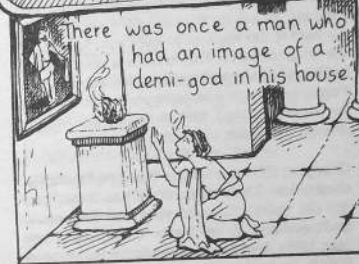
The young prince raised his voice and called:

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Aesop's Fable 29

Aesop's Fables



There was once a man who had an image of a demi-god in his house.

Every morning and evening he offered it rich sacrifices



Give me a long life, good health, prosperity and riches.

But one night the demi-god appeared...



My friend, stop squandering your wealth in sacrifices. For if you spend everything and become poor, you will only take it out on me.

"King's horse, King's horse, come to my aid." When the King's horse heard these words it burst out of its stable and ran like lightning to the Prince's side. The young man mounted its back and in three leaps, the fiery steed had reached the other side of the meadow. At the spots where it had touched the ground there bubbled up springs of sweet, clear water. The thirst of all the people, and even of their animals, could now be quenched.

This time all the King's doubts were removed. "These tests have proved that you are my real son," he said. "Let the beggar be chased from the city like a thief." The command was carried out, and the kind-hearted prince ruled for many years in great happiness, over the people in his care.



The 'Kind-Hearted Prince' is a traditional Breton story, retold by Bethan Lewis.

F. A. Q. 9



Q.: "In an earlier article you recommended Tiscali as an ISP. I've tried to find a Tiscali start-up disc in supermarkets but there aren't any. How can I subscribe to Tiscali?"

A.: Firstly, I don't recommend any particular ISP. The questioner refers to my contribution to the December 2004 issue of CBJ. You do keep your back copies of CBJ? Most ISPs have their good points and their bad. The only real difference is with the tariffs that they offer. These change regularly so it pays to be watchful.

It is true that you will, in general, only find "Start-Up Packs" for Wanadoo and AOL. If you are using an English language version of Windows it is better to avoid these as they try to install software written for French versions. Unless you're using Windows XP and set up a Restore Point (pray that it works) before commencing it can be difficult to remove this stuff later.

When subscribing to an ISP it is best to do it online. That way you get to see all the promotions and special offers. Yes, I know the web sites are all in French but you're going to have to learn some if you intend to stay here! Start now.

I can already hear you saying there's a Catch 22. How can one surf the web if one doesn't have an ISP. Good point. Well, there are Internet Cafés - not many in Central Brittany, bien sûr. Otherwise, try one of the computer shops. They would be sure to help. Alternatively, you could ask a friendly resident who is already connected. Finally, you could use one of those Wanadoo disks to get started then change to someone else. You never know, you might get to like it and not bother to change. They prefer such laziness.

When signing up to an ISP, you will need to supply names, addresses and telephone

numbers. If you go for a "forfait" they will want a valid French Credit/Debit card number. If you go for "Accès Libre" or "Accès Gratuit" (they like to use different names for the same thing) you will not be required to pay anything up front and they will not ask for financial details. When you connect to the Internet you will pay the cost of the telephone call. This is quite a good way of getting a "free" email address that you can use from anywhere. It also gives you a chance to try the service without obligation. You can always change to another ISP later.

Changing ISPs is a bit like changing insurance companies. They really don't like to let you go. Do not just cancel your standing order (prélèvement) at the bank. You must check your ISP's Terms and Conditions of business (CGU). Be prepared to send a letter, in French, and by recorded delivery.

Isn't life complicated? What are you doing indoors anyway? Go to the beach and enjoy the summer. The Internet will probably still be there when you get home.



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Website Workshop

Last month we looked at static and dynamic websites, this month we shall be looking at image optimisation for your website.

Q - What do you mean by image optimisation?

A - When you create or manipulate images for use on the Internet - whether it be for your website or sending photographs of the grandchildren via email - you will find it useful, or even necessary, to reduce the physical size of the images.

Q - But I want the images to be large enough to see properly...

A - Using images on the Internet is always a compromise between quality and size; if an image is very good quality but extremely large this will increase the time it takes for your web page to display in the viewer's browser. Too small, and the picture quality will be just too badly degraded.

Q - What do I use to optimise my images?

A - Most professionals use the industry-standard Adobe Photoshop. This is an excellent program but it is very expensive and the learning curve is very steep. You are probably better off using the free trial offers available for products like Paint Shop Pro (www.corel.com) - a much easier-to-use programme.

Q - So how do I optimise my images?

A - First, you need to reduce the image resolution; most computer monitors display at 72 dpi (dots per inch), so you need to resample images to match this screen resolution. The default image resolution for print and other media is much higher than this - greater than 300 dpi, which is a much

larger file size. Choosing the file format to save your images to is also important; each uses a different method to compress an image and it's important to choose the right one for the right job. There are two main image formats you can safely use on the Internet - Gif (.gif) and JPEG (.jpg, .jpeg).

GIF Image File Format:

Gifs compress images by discarding colours; the less colours in an image the smaller the file size. The maximum amount of colours that Gifs allow is 256; this can be compressed all the way down to just two. Gifs are best used for compressing images that contain areas of flat colour. With Gifs you can also include transparent parts to your image; this allows you to place Gifs over background elements, which allow them to show through.

JPeg Image File Format:

JPeg compression uses an algorithm that causes the quality of the image to degrade. This is often referred to as 'lossy' compression. In other words, the higher the compression ratio the worse it will look. Almost opposite to Gifs, the JPeg format is good for compressing photographic images and those that contain gradients.

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32 Word Search

Word Search: the Saints of Brittany

Find the 69 Breton Saints hidden in the grid below. (In the list, the seven founding Saints appear in bold.) Words can run forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally

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

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| AARON | ETHBIN | JOSSE | PATERN |
| ALAIN | GILDAS | JUDICAEL | PATRICK |
| ARMEL | GONERI | KE | POL DE LEON |
| AZENOR | GOUEZNOU | LERI | RIOK |
| BENOIT DE | GOULVEN | LUNAIRE | RIVANON |
| MASSERAC | GUIREC | MAEL | RIVOARE |
| BRENDAN | GUNTHIERN | MAGLOIRE | RONAN |
| BRIAC | GURVAL | MALO | SAMSON |
| BRIEUC | GWENAEI | MARTIN DE VERTOU | SEVE |
| CADO | GWENNOLE | MAURICE DE | SULIAU |
| COLOMBAN | HERBOT | CARNOET | TANGUY |
| CONGAR | HERLE | MEEN | THELO |
| CONOGAN | HERVE | MELAINE | THURIAU |
| CONVOYON | IDUNET | MILIAU | TRIFINE |
| CORENTIN | ILTUD | NENNOK | TUGDUAL |
| DAVID | IVY | NOLWENN | VENEC |
| EFFLAM | JACUT | NONNA | YVES |
| ENORA | JAOUA | ONENN | |

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Gardening 33

August in the Garden

August is traditionally expected to be the warmest month of the year, but it is also often one in which many plants do not grow at all, due to the fact that the ground has become parched. This year, levels of rainfall in the spring and early summer have been very low, so, unless August turns out to be particularly wet, there is quite a serious risk of drought.

Newly-Planted Shrubs and Trees

Shrubs and trees planted over the past year have not had time to develop a full root system. They are therefore vulnerable to drying out, wilting, and, if the weather is very dry, to dying. They should therefore be given priority when watering the garden.

Fruit Trees

The roots of fruit trees with modern, dwarfing root-stocks are slow to develop, and are often not up to the job of supporting the tree through long, dry summer periods. Trees up to five years old benefit from being watered; also, keep a radius of one metre around the base of the tree clear of grass and weeds so that it does not have to compete for available water.

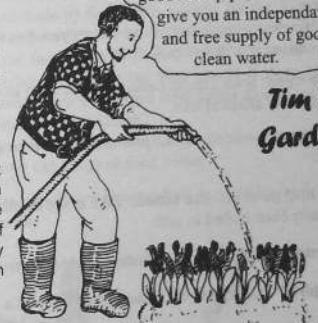
Vegetables

Dry weather is the biggest threat to summer vegetables. Many - such as lettuces, spinach, Chinese cabbages, onions & celeriac - are liable to start flowering if the plant becomes too stressed due to lack of water, with the result that you will lose your crop. Others simply stop growing. The more water you can put on your vegetable garden, the happier it will be.

Lawns

Lawns in Brittany tend to stop growing in August, which is a relief for many gardeners. However, in very dry weather they often turn brown. If you have your heart set on a lush, green lawn over the summer, then you will probably have to water it during August.

If the weather is hot, your garden will really benefit from regular watering. If there is a well nearby, it might be a good idea to invest in a pump and a good hose pipe, as that will give you an independent and free supply of good, clean water.



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Healing Herbs

In 1794 Jacques Cambry made a tour of Finistère, collecting material for his classic description of Breton life: "Voyage dans le Finistère". In his travels he met a man from the commune of Plounévez-du-Faou, called Julien-le-Mentheour. He was one of the self-taught doctors of the region, who cured their patients using a mixture of ancient herbal remedies and old beliefs and superstitions.

Julien-le-Mentheour preferred to use the recipes handed down to him by his forefathers, and at Cambry's request proceeded to describe them:


"For sore eyes: Soak greater celandine overnight in spring or rain water, next morning use the water to wash the affected area.

For swellings: Boil the root of broom in a chopine (half litre) of water, and give the juice to the invalid.

For wind and pains in the sides: Take in the evening, before going to bed, sweet chervil that has previously been boiled in milk.

For dysentery: Eat one or two clusters of elder berries.

For leg pains: Take charcoal, a handful of salt and a handful of soot; pound them together or make a plaster out of them, and apply to the wound.



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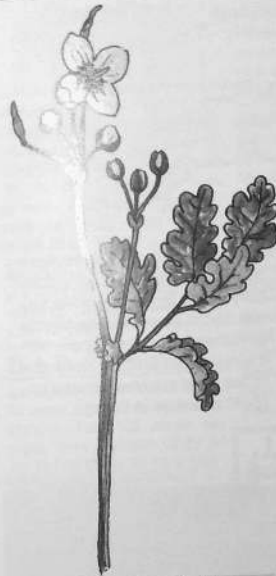
For cuts: Grate the second bark of broom and apply to the cut; there is no need to renew the plaster.

For bruises: They are healed by mixing with crushed verbena, a handful of salt and the white of an egg."

Chicory

Chicory Month by Month: August

August is the month in which the chicory plants make their greatest growth. They look like lettuces but the leaves are very bitter (which is why they are not used as a salad crop) and should be cared for in the same way as lettuces. Thin the plants so that they are six inches apart, weed round them and mulch them with as much organic material (compost or grass cuttings) as you can spare, and water during dry periods.



Greater Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) is found beside water. Its flowers are yellow like the buttercup, and it is easily distinguished from other plants by the bright orange liquid it exudes when broken.

"These are the remedies used with success by Julien-le-Mentheour in his district; these recipes should not necessarily be looked on with contempt, they are the result of experience. The man who despises them knows not that the medicine of Boerhaave and Linaeus is merely made up of a million observations, identical to those made by the country people. All the doctors living in the districts of Brest and Landenneau were powerless in the face of an epidemic which a peasant was able to eradicate... Besides, who knows if these remedies, passed down unchanged from father to son, are not part of the druidic tradition? I am struck by the simplicity of these remedies; only a doctor can judge of their value."

Translated from *Voyage dans le Finistère* by Jacques Cambry



Broom (*Saxifraga hypnifolia*) is found in wet places. Its flowers are small, yellow, and come out after the gorse has blossomed. At this time of year it may be seen covered in its black seed pods.

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Beg-Léguer



Brittany is famous for its wonderful beaches. The unpredictability of the Breton summer has resulted in most of these beaches remaining undeveloped, with the result that Brittany has some of the most spectacular and unspoilt coastline in Europe.

Beg-Léguer, is south of Trébeurden, close to Lannion. It has a good-sized car park which overlooks the ocean; the beach itself sweeps round a large bay, and there are cliff-top walks in both directions along the coast.



Directions: From Lannion follow signs for Trébeurden (D65); take the first left turn for Serval. Follow the road through the village and follow signs for Beg Léguer. In the village follow signs for 'plages' and the road eventually ends in the car park for the beach.

Answers to Tree Quiz (page 10)
 A. Stone Pine. B. Alder. C. Beech. D. Silver Birch. E. Scots Pine. F. Apple. G. Hawthorn. H. Hazel. I. Yew. J. Oak.

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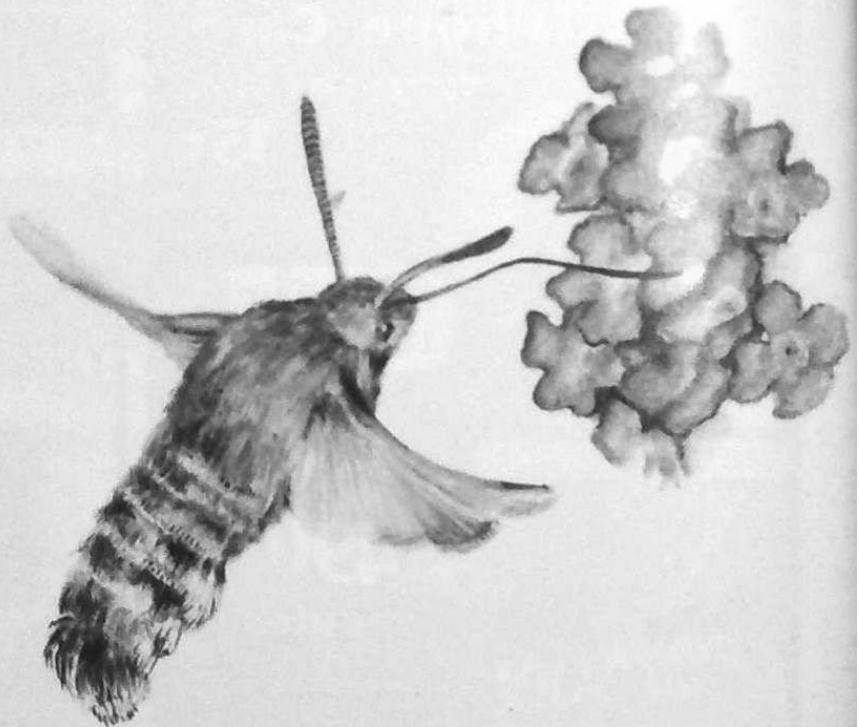
Hummingbird Hawk Moth

(*Macroglossum stellatarum*) French: Moro-sphinx Breton: Balafenn sinns

Anyone who has spent a summer in Brittany may well have caught a glimpse of the hummingbird hawk moth, and even thought it was a hummingbird!

An excusable mistake, for this beautiful day-flying moth hums loudly and hovers in front of flowers just like a hummingbird. Whilst drinking nectar it remains poised in the air with its body perfectly still and its wings beating so fast that they are barely visible. The accompanying humming sound is said to be more audible to women than to men, although it would be hard to ever verify this fact.

It is attracted to many flowers, particularly to those which are pink or purple. In the wild it will feed on periwinkle and honeysuckle, and in the garden geraniums, buddleia, and petunias are favourites. Unlike a bird it is not scared away by humans, meaning one can often get a good look at this beautiful creature before it darts away to another flower.



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