



bodhi eco-project
mindful living

Bodhi Eco-Project Newsletter • October 2011

www.bodhi-eco-project.org.uk • info@bodhi-eco-project.org.uk

tel: 0141 946 8096

Company number 310132

Charity no. SC096376



Contents

Welcome from the Editors	
Larry Butler	3
Simon Gwynn	4
Events	
Dates for your Diary	5
Sustaining Resistance, Empowering Renewal	6
Remembrance for Lost Species	6
Shorelines Symposium	7
Touching the Earth with Margot Henderson	7
Ecopsychology: A Revolution at Home	8
Heartfood for Hardtimes: A Winter Retreat	8
Connection Corner	9
The Positivity Ratio	
Widow's Land Proposal	10
A model of sustainable living	
Ecodharma Centre, Spain	12
Ratnadevi and Larry Butler share experiences from the Catalan Pyrenees	
Things to Consider and Do Before I Die	14
A contributor discusses some important considerations in preparing for death	
Recipes	16
All things acorns	
Poems	
From Dark to Light	18
Turning East the Earth Returns	20
Letting Go	22
Dead or Alive	23
To Death	23

Welcome From the Editors

Autumn is upon us with Winter soon to follow. What have you harvested? Bodhi has found a new admin worker - Robin Adair will replace Juana who has kept track of our resources and membership for three years.

Bodhi directors Larry Butler & Ratnadevi recently spent nearly a month on a solitary retreat at the EcoDharma Centre in the Pyrenees and highly recommend their programme of courses and retreats:

<http://www.ecodharma.com/>

Crab apples were harvested from newly planted trees along the river Kelvin, mixed with rowan berries then made into jelly. This newsletter covers the Winter Solstice so there is a song called from Dark to Light.

We are applying for a grant to upgrade this newsletter to a quarterly journal following the seasons, with more in-depth articles on Deep Ecology, Mindful Living, the Work that Reconnects and the Great Turning towards a life-sustaining culture and away from the industrial growth society that is trashing our earth. Please let us know if you would like to contribute.

With more and more species becoming extinct we offer you a list of things to consider before you die.



If you can, do support one of the events of Remembrance for Lost Species, or consider hosting an event yourself. The Great Auk will finally have a funeral on the 12th November.

Death is an everyday occurrence, and we would like break the taboo of talking about death - have a look at The Natural Death Centre: <http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk/>.

We are still waiting to hear from Fife Council about land we might buy or lease - there is an update of the project and a questionnaire to fill in if you would like to be kept informed or get involved in any way.

Last but not least, have you heard about the positivity ratio? Our Auntie Em (Empathy) suggests ways Compassionate Communication can help in achieving it.

Larry Butler
Go Slow Arrive Early



This issue we have based some of the contents around the theme of 'death'. Much of the time this seems to us to be a morbid and depressing subject but as the article on page 14 illustrates, talking and thinking about it from time to time can help to make it a more comfortable part of existence.

Most of the poems we have included use death as their subject matter, and take a number of approaches to exploring the issues around it. The picture on the front of this newsletter is of a great auk, a species of bird that became extinct in the nineteenth century. On 12 November, it will receive a funeral, as a worldwide event held

by Feral Species remembers those species we have lost and acknowledges that this loss is as significant as the loss of an individual.

Over the next few weeks, Larry and I will be applying for funding to improve the quality of the newsletter and allow us to pay writers to contribute more substantial articles. Right now, we would like to hear from you if you have any comments or contributions that you would like us to mention in our application. E-mail info@bodhi-eco-project.org.uk with your input.

We would like to make the new journal as interactive as possible, use it to generate dialogue and debate, and make it accessible to as many readers and contributors as we can. To help achieve this, I want to know how you would like to interact with us. If Bodhi had a dedicated web forum, would you post, and would you comment on **others' posts?** **Are you on Facebook** and/or Twitter, and are these platforms you would use to hear from and keep in touch with us? Or are you happier just using e-mail, or even post? Whatever your thoughts might be—I'd like to know.

Simon Gwynn

Dates For Your Diary

Event	Date	Location
Sustaining Resistance, Empowering Renewal	Saturday 29 October—Sunday 6 November 2011	Ecodharma Centre, Abella de la Conca, 25651, Provincia de Lleida, Catalonia, Spain
Remembrance for Lost Species	Saturday 12 November 2011	Various Locations
Shorelines Symposium	Tuesday 15 November 2011	The Maclaurin Galleries, Ayr, KA7 4NQ
Touching the Earth with Margot Henderson	Sunday 27 November 2011	Maggie's Glasgow, Western Infirmary, 10 Dumbarton Road, Glasgow, G11 6PA
Ecopsychology: A Revolution at Home	Monday 28 November—Friday 2 December 2011	Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EA
Heartfood for Hardtimes: A Winter Retreat	Friday 23 December 2011—Saturday 7 January 2012	Ecodharma Centre, Spain

Sustaining Resistance, Empowering Renewal

Saturday 29 October - Sunday 6 November 2011

Tools for Effective-Sustainable Activism: A 10 day workshop in the Catalan Pyrenees

This workshop, in a remote and wild valley in the Catalan Pyrenees, offers a range of tools, collective and personal, which can make our activism more effective. These methods can help us stay in it for the long haul, adding continuity to our movement building. They can

be used to ensure the collective and organisational dimensions of our **activism exemplify the values we're** struggling for. And they can help us stay inspired, nourished, & more creative in our tactical approach.

The workshop will use methods of holistic and participatory learning: cognitive, critical, emotional, and visceral. And the event will model direct democratic social forms.

<http://www.ecodharma.com/courses-events/2011/02/07/sustaining-resistance-empowering-renewal>



Remembrance for Lost Species
Saturday 12 November 2011

Remembrance for Lost Species: lest we forget. Three species are lost to eternity every hour.

Extinction is studied by scientists. Culturally, however, we risk forgetting the beauty and distinct life of extinct species and our historic relationship with past life forms. Feral Theatre's Funeral for Lost Species considers the social significance of extinction, and commemorates it as a social tragedy.

Feral Theatre invites you to hold a remembrance event for lost species on Saturday 12 November 2011. Remembrance events might take any form - a theatre piece or a ceremony, or something playful like a puppet show, celebratory like a wake, or intimate like a meal, planting a seed, or simply lighting a candle. It's up to you how you choose to remember and celebrate lost species.

We ask that you tell us about your event, then document it and share this with us to post online.

www.feraltheatre.co.uk

Events already planned:
Brighton Beach, 4pm
Coast of West Wales, 4pm
Kelvingrove Museum Glasgow, 4pm
Bergen, Norway

Shorelines Symposium
Tuesday 15 November 2011

Keynote Speakers:
Iain McGilchrist, psychiatrist, writer.
Chris Drury, land artist.

This one day academic symposium is part of a wider SHORELINES Exhibition and Residency programme.

The Symposium will explore inter-connections between creative spaces or locations and physical and emotional wellbeing. It will seek to bring together a multidisciplinary audience to present cutting edge research in their fields to foster discussion and further understanding about the significance of place in the creative process and its poten-

tial to enhance the quality of human experience.



Academic papers and visual presentations have been invited to address the themes of the symposium, which include 'Place', 'Creativity' and 'Wellbeing'.

<http://www.publicartscotland.com/events/shorelines-symposium>

<http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/events/Shorelines-A-one-day-international-symposium-exploring-place-creativity-and-wellbeing.aspx>



Touching the Earth with Margot Henderson
Sunday 27
November 2011

We invite you to join with Lapidus Scot-

land in developing our community of practice across Scotland and the UK through shared learning and collaboration. Together we can have a dialogue around what we mean by "creative words for health and wellbeing".

Touching The Earth is a creative writing workshop based on a mind-

fulness practice in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Zen master and poet. It explores **our connections to 'more than us'**, a healing process that helps us to connect with all that sustains us in life, a creative way of acknowledging our ancestors and relations.

Margot Henderson is a Poet and Storyteller of Scots Irish origins. She has been working as a community artist for the last 20 years.. She is currently Expressive Writing Tutor **for Maggie's Highlands.**

Booking & further information contact Alison Reid
01355261237 or 07531239367
email: alisonareid@hotmail.com

Ecopsychology: A Revolution at Home Monday 28 November—Friday 2 December 2011

David Key & Mary-Jayne Rust

If we are to survive, we must align who we think we are with the ecological reality of what we are: our psychology must fit our ecology. To achieve this, we need a revolution in our sense of self, and in how we relate to planet earth – our home.

Ecopsychology has a fundamental role to play in our responses to our current social and ecological challenges. From denial to inspired action, our motivations are governed by our emotions and what we believe about our place in life.

Through this course participants will explore the ecological self, the ecology of the unconscious, and anthropocentrism – the perceived hierarchies of power and control that influence our relationships to each other and the rest of nature.

Accessing psychological wisdom helps us to understand the process and nature of change. This can help with communications, conflict resolution within groups and communities working towards change, guarding against burn out, and the cultivation of resilience.

www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/ecopsychology-a-revolution-at-home



This year's winter retreat will focus on the emotional resources and resilience required to turn towards the world. We will nourish ourselves with the heartfood we need to bring forth the best within ourselves and others.

Anyone who is paying attention can sense that we are living amidst a great transition. The curve of growth and expansion that depicts the ascendancy of modernity and

the industrial growth age is peaking out and beginning to trend towards decline. As the poet William Carlos Williams wrote, **"The descent beckons as the ascent beckoned."** But what does that mean for us? What does it mean for our communities?

Much of that remains uncertain. But what is clear is that the core challenges of our uncertain futures are spiritual challenges. The key to being able to respond creatively lies in knowing the deeper resources of our heart.

<http://www.ecodharma.com/courses-events/2011/02/07/heartfood-for-hardtimes-winter-retreat>

Connection Corner The Positivity Ratio

Have you heard about the [positivity ratio](#)? Researchers have found that if you have at least 3 positive things in your life to 1 negative, you'll hit the 'tipping point' and flourish better.

There are lots of things you can do to increase positivity in your life. You can spend less time reading or **listening to the news (unless it's Positive News)** or gossip, and more time practicing gratitude or giving sincere compliments. Compassionate communication can also help in several ways. It can help you break out of negative cycles, or head them off at the pass.

By making observations rather than evaluations, we can choose to not go to a place of judgment. It's a lot like mindfulness, simply noting what is happening without putting a 'good' or 'bad' label on it. The other day, when an acquaintance broke my guitar string, she immediately went into worry and concern. I simply observed that the string needed replacing, and together we looked for a spare. By focusing on the observation and not going into evaluation, it was a neutral if not pleasant interaction, with no shades of negativity.

Of course, sometimes we do have negative judgments, and CC can help us translate them. An old friend, Person A, told me that Person B was 'an evil person' for kick-

ing his 17-year-old daughter out of the house. I knew the story, and part of me also longed to rail against Person B. But CC helped me to find another way. I asked Person A what needs Person B might be meeting by his actions. He sat in stunned silence for a moment, and **then said without doubt, "Peace with his wife."** We talked about peace, various strategies for creating more of it, and how sometimes those strategies are great and other **times tragic. It wasn't long before** we moved onto another topic, having avoided a lot of negativity.

Want to have a go at estimating your own positivity ratio? Try identifying observations, feelings and needs to help pull yourself away from negativity. Connect with the simple observation and the beautiful, universal human need underpinning words and actions. And do let us know how it goes!



Widows' Land Proposal:

A Model of Sustainable Living.

SCI (Sustainable Communities Initiatives) and the Bodhi Eco Project are working to develop a plot of land in Burntisland known as The Widows' Land.

The group are planning to build a development with a low environmental impact that provides numerous benefits for Burntisland, such as affordable rented housing, community allotments and food projects, woodland walks, wildlife areas and a play area.



Map 1

There are 2 proposed designs for the site and below there are a list of elements that could be included in the development. We would like to ask to you take two minutes to complete the questionnaire overleaf and/or come along to our open day at the Toll Centre on 12th November 10am in order to help us finalise our proposal.

If you can't come along on the 12th Nov and would like more information please contact us or visit our website for a more detailed proposal.



Map 2



CONTACT US: Tel: 01592 891884 Email: paula@sci-scotland.org.uk Web: www.sci-scotland.org.uk

Widows' Land Proposal: Questionnaire.

PLEASE RETURN TO: Sustainable Communities Initiatives, Earthship Fife Visitor Centre, Kinghorn Loch, Kinghorn, Fife KY3 9YG or drop off points at Burntisland Post Office, Toll Centre, Masterton Health Centre, Potter About café David Sands or Burntisland Library.

Where do you think the best position would be for the housing:

South West of the site (Map 1) or North East of the Site (Map 2)

Which of the following do you think Burntisland would benefit from and should be included in the site:

Affordable Housing yes no Education Centre yes no

Allotments yes no Managed Woodlands yes no

Artist Studios yes no Office Space yes no

Children's Play Area yes no Workshop Space yes no

Community Food Projects yes no

Do you have any other comments about the project?

If you wish to be kept informed on the proposals please provide you contact details. These details will only be used to keep you updated about the proposals to develop The Widows' Land.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

CONTACT US:

Tel: 01592 891884 Email: paula@sci-scotland.org.uk Web: www.sci-scotland.org.uk

Ecodharma Centre, Spain

Ratnadevi and Larry Butler share experiences from the Catalan Pyrenees



Clear, cloudless skies for days and days – the heat deepens. I go for walks early and late, and otherwise very contentedly spend my time on the deck of the cabin, pursuing my various disciplines: yoga, meditation, painting, writing.

The surrounding sound world created by birds, insects, the occa-

sional red squirrel - hacking its claws into the pine bark, as it rapidly ascends and descends the trunks - shows itself in my paintings, in a loose, cascading rhythm of marks. Repeatedly I paint sunlight pouring over the cup-like dip in the mountain line – stimulated by watching almost every red, orange, peach, golden, sunset and rise.



An understanding of elemental fluidity and interconnectedness (such a cumbersome word for it) grows with every pee for which I squat on a slightly sloping part of the forest and watch how far the glistening golden trickle meanders around twigs and cones before it peters out. I delight in the simplicity of living like this. A memory arises of being inclined towards ebay buying of clothes I don't really need – how long will this joyful asceticism last at home?

10 September 2011, Ratnadevi

Sunset from the Collada del Feixanet – half hour walk from the yurt to the summit. A slow writing meditation with a focus on the sky, while occasionally waving arms to keep the flies flying. I mark the gradual changes word by word, breath by breath, breathe in the colours.

From behind a dark gray sweep of thin cloud she sinks – yes tonight she is she – a warm glow halos the horizon of mountain summits. Ravens cry from the cliffs. A distant jet's quiet rumble. Now full intense she's in my face. Rocks glow red. The lake's a creamy white – she's coming down and I feel drops of rain splattering my warm skin – maybe there's a rainbow. I don't see one. Am I in it?

Only the highest peaks catch the last light as she descends passion-

ate gold. The wind picks up, fewer flies, less need to wave arms. I sit and do nothing. Stripes of cloud cut through her perfect circle. Another jet eastbound trailing pink exhaust to warm our atmosphere. She's turning orange now – turquoise spots, mini suns, dance from my eyes. There she goes dropping intense red into a cradle of cloud. Now vermilion stripes the clouds from her pulsing circle. How blessed am I to be here, and how impossible to describe what I have witnessed.

Dancing down the mountain – quick short steps tapping sticks and singing, as I zigzag down the rocky path back to the yurt – there lounging on the crags the new moon – and I can almost hear him laughing.

1 September 2011, Larry Butler

The Eco-Dharma Centre is situated in a beautiful and wild part of the Catalan Pyrenees and offers courses, events and retreats which support the realisation of our human potential and the development of an ecological consciousness honouring our mutual belonging within the web of life – drawing on the Buddhist Dharma and the emerging ecological paradigms of our time.

Our courses and retreats take place in a context of sustainable low-impact living, closely woven within the web of elemental nature. These meditation retreats, study seminars

and training camps are intended to help people to empower themselves to make changes in themselves and the world consistent with a life-affirming vision.

We seek to develop practices which honour the inseparability of the transformation of the self and the world; to support the shift from a destructive industrial growth society to a life-affirming future; to evolve spiritual practice where courageous compassion and a deepening realisation of our radical interconnectedness helps us to live in solidarity with life.

Things to Consider and Do Before I Die

In this article, a contributor discusses the difficult subject of preparing for death and talks through some important actions and decisions

1. What priorities do I have - what should each of us have - for the time remaining to us? Each new friend I make, each journey I take, each book I write - or read - might be my last. Sooner or later they will be. Are these really the ones I want to fit in to the time remaining? To make room for those priorities I should sift out possessions, projects - and a few friends - I cannot give priority to. Dying is saying goodbye. I must learn to live my dying day by day, not just wait for it to happen.

2. How about enemies? How can I avoid, or at least minimise, time and stress wasted on enmities of any kind, while still resolutely defending things that are important to me?

3. What unfinished business do I have with my children and other friends and relatives? They probably have better answers to those questions than I have. My main task should therefore be to help them to think through, to ask and to say, the things they will otherwise regret having left unsaid when I'm gone. I began this process with two of my four children, who welcomed practical points of the sort that appear

in the next paragraph, but were reluctant to tackle the more personal question in this one. I shall have to give them time; work gently towards those things.

4. What can I do to help them cope with the immediate tasks facing them after my death? I should discuss - perhaps write down for them - practical things: the addresses and phone numbers of an undertaker, my solicitor, my doctor, my bank; and the names of one or two people who might write an obituary. I should tell them about the kind of funeral I would like and who among our friends might lead the **'congregation' and speak for them.** That must be for them to decide, but I may be able to help with some suggestions. My wife, who died 18 months ago, even specified the sausage rolls and the singing of *The Red Flag*. And it was helpful. The catastrophically bereaved are in a state of shock, operating on automatic pilot, and anything that reduces their burdens of decision making is helpful.

5. I should let those closest to me know what my will says - at least the things in it which affect them

and are least likely to be changed. There should not be painful or embarrassing surprises in it for them. Neither should it create avoidable enmities.

6. I want to take responsibility if necessary, and if I get the opportunity, for the timing and manner of my own death. That seems to me to be a basic duty. I don't want to become a burden to others, or to become dependent on loved ones or on strangers for help to meet painful or humiliating needs. That will call for practical preparations on my part, and also for careful discussion with my children, my doctors and my solicitor so they all understand what I want and what I am likely to do. I must prepare, distribute and discuss copies of an advance directive or living will - and keep it up to date. People change their minds as death approaches.

7. Dementia is the fate we all most want to avoid. More than 20 per cent of my age group are dementing; that figure steadily increases as we grow older. I have learnt that those beginning to dement do not have much time left for taking decisions about their death. They soon

become incapable of acting on their intentions, or even recalling what those intentions were. So, having lost my wife, with whom I had a pact to monitor our mental decay, I have found others who promise to keep an eye on my progress, including the Memory Clinic in Glasgow, who tell me my memory is normal for my age and class, and stable; but I know it is deteriorating. I must not just rely on friends to do this, but ask them from time to time to give me a reality check.

8. I should find someone who is likely to survive me and whom I can trust to write a sensible, accurate obituary for me, ask them if they are willing to do that, and give them the basic data and sources that they will need. Even if nothing comes of this it will give me an interesting opportunity to reflect on the meaning of my life. Perhaps we should all write our obituaries?

9. When I have time I must go through my papers and my wife's. Some should be sent to appropriate archives, others destroyed, and the rest carefully filed to help others, who will be busy people, to deal with them.

Recipes All things acorns

I was taught these recipes by a girl from South Korea, who was stunned to see all the acorns going to waste; she told me that in South Korea they are collected as often as we collect blackberries here. They're used in the following ways.

Method for Acorn flour

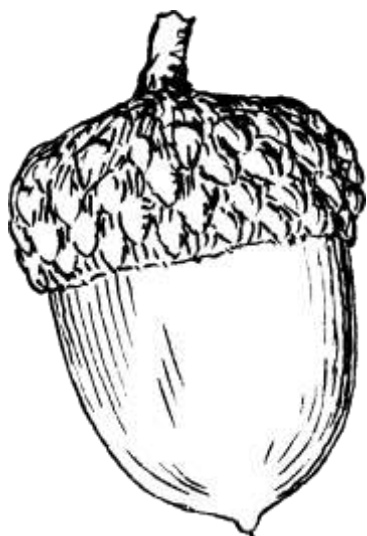
1. Dry the acorns under the sun until the shells crack. (Or you **can dry them inside, if you're in Scotland**. You want them as dry as you can get them.)
2. Remove the shells.
3. Dry them again under the sun/ in the oven.
4. Place the acorns in a pillowcase and submerge them in water for four to five days. Change the water twice a day to remove the astringency and tannins, which are fairly poisonous. Alternatively, leave them in the cistern of the loo.
5. Remove the acorns from the pillowcase, and grind them in a blender.
6. Put the acorns back into the water again, and leave them until the scum rises to the surface. Strain through a clean pillowcase to remove the scum.
7. Leave the acorns in water for a further three days, with the container tilted to one side.
8. Drain off the water, leaving the blended acorns.
9. Mash up the pulp and leave it to dry.

Acorn pancakes

Ingredients: **1½ cup acorn flour**, 1 cup water, ½ tsp salt, carrot, cabbage, cucumber

1. Julienne the carrot, cabbage and cucumber.
2. Mix the acorn flour with the water and salt.
3. Heat some oil in a frying pan.
4. Pour in the mixture and allow to spread around the pan. When the edges turn brown, turn it over.
5. Once cooked through, cool the pancake.
6. Put some of the julienned vegetables on the pancake and add your favourite sauce (eg. cinnamon, mustard, soy)
7. Roll the pancake up and cut into bite-size pieces.





Method for Mook

Mook is a South Korean dish, fairly like tofu, and with more protein per gram than steak.

Ingredients: 1 cup of acorn flour, 6 cups of water, ½ tsp salt, 3 drops olive oil.

1. Mix the flour, water and salt in a saucepan.
2. Stir with a wooden spoon over a medium heat. Continue for five minutes, until the mixture boils.
3. When you see bubbles turn off the heat. Wait for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the oil. Turn on the heat again, and stir for another three minutes.
5. Transfer to a glass or ceramic container. Cool for two hours in the fridge. The mixture will set to a jelly-like consistency.

You can use the mook however you might use tofu. Here is a suggestion.

Acorn salad

Ingredients: Acorn mook, cucumber, lettuce, carrots, nettle, sorrel - or any other vegetables you fancy

For the dressing: 2 tbsp soy sauce, ½ tsp cayenne pepper, ½ tbsp finely chopped spring onion, ½ tbsp minced garlic, ½ tbsp sugar, 1 tbsp sesame oil, 1 tbsp whole sesame seeds, black pepper, salt.

1. Cut the mook into rectangles.
2. Tear the lettuce, nettle and sorrel. Slice the cucumber and carrot.
3. To make the dressing combine all of the ingredients and shake.
4. Mix the mook, vegetables and dressing.

Adam Weymouth

Soran Books

adamweymouth@gmail.com

From Dark to Light

Let your heart open to the East .

Let your heart open like water .

For the replenishing of the world's oceans,

For the quenching of all thirst .

From dark to light
Go strong and clear
your vision bright
transforming fear

Let your heart open to the South .

Let your heart open like Earth .

For the flourishing of the world's forests,

For the maturing of tender seeds .

From dark to light
Go strong and clear
your vision bright
transforming fear

Let your heart open to the West .

Let your heart open like Fire .

For the nurturing of the world's people,

For the feeding of their souls .

From dark to light
Go strong and clear
your vision bright
transforming fear

Let your heart open to the North .
Let your heart open like Air .
For the purifying of the world's skies,
For the pleasure of every breath .

From dark to light
Go strong and clear
your vision bright
transforming fear

Let your heart open to the Centre .
Let your heart open like Space .
for the sharing of the world's wealth,
For the cherishing of our dreams .

From dark to light
Go strong and clear
your vision bright
transforming fear

Lyrics by Linda France & Ratnadevi

Turning East the Earth Returns
Solo Renga
25th August to 15th September 2011
Pyrennes near Abella de la Conca

hotter & hotter
clothes soaking with sweat
slip sliding on scree

flies buzzing in the yurt
they love me – want to eat me

fit as a fish
swimming up the mountain
vultures lead the way

when grasshoppers jump flashing
turquoise blue – I breathe deep

top of the world
looking down on birds of prey –
we pray for the dead

ascent easier than descent
go slow – arrive alive

three dips in rock pools
soothing scratches cooling skin
ends a days' long walk

peeling tatties licking lips
tummy rumbles out of tune

singing with crickets
while chewing rosehips
what else is there to do?

make tantric love in long grass
– gift of a lift up the hill

late night visitor
new moon sitting on a crag
lightens our distress

lightning & rain last night
relief after a week of heat

crawling the valley
this haar reminds me of Fife –
I break sticks for a fire

harvesting brambles & figs
yes there will be crumble

swaying white reeds
whistling pine needles
I'm almost asleep

mixing sage fennel lemon balm
drinking tea I taste the land

earth water fire air
space & consciousness dissolve
into who knows what

midnight pee a shooting star
owl swoops near my head

nose to nose with a mouse
unblinking two statues stare–
who will move first?

rising east dawn mountain glows
west a sinking white circle

Larry Butler

Letting Go

In that room the curtains did not blow
there was no wind, no thunderstorm
no dramatic applause
only your dying
and us beside you holding your hand
your warm fingers

then the cliches fluttered in
and I couldn't reach you for all those dead butterflies

those butterflies that just got in the way

The nurses entered in their soft shoes
and lit a gentle lamp
a bible propped up in the corner at a psalm
that was so familiar
the lord's my shepherd I shall not want
he maketh me to lie down
and the fresh plastic flowers in a vase drooping

So soon you froze,
head thrown back, nose, knife-edged bone thrusting upwards
your mouth a black hole dragging me into a darkness i had never known

Yet, you brought the outside in
made it smaller somehow, more manageable
giving us strength to bear the inevitable
cooling down of skin
silencing of heart

Your absence
a presence in that room
where the sky is still

Alison Reid

Dead or Alive

These yellow leaves are brighter,
half translucent,
lighter,
than the heaviness of green.

They're caught like startled rabbits
in the extra autumn light,
that's slanting at them
from a low down sun.

Even gray skies help to emphasise,
their brightness,
drizzle gives them gloss.
No loss.
In dying, they are even more alive.

To Death

It is not death, that sometime in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight;
That sometimes these bright stars, that now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night,
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below;
It is not death to know this, -but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft, - and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

Thomas Hood



www.bodhi-eco-project.org.uk

info@bodhi-eco-project.org.uk

tel: 0141 946 8096

Company number 310132

Charity no. SC096376