



# Hopping toward Spring

Nevermind Imbolc's calendric start of spring on February 1st, nor shadow casting and prognosticating groundhogs on February 2nd, the orbiting season's cross quarter moment – halfway to the vernal equinox – will occur at 21:20 MST on February 3rd. A rotation or so prior to that, the second New Moon since the solstice will occur at 19:31 MST on February 2nd, kicking off the Chinese New Year (already February 3rd in China) and the Year of the Rabbit.

Rabbits have been in the news rather a lot recently ... the feral kind. Canmore is to begin a culling program next summer for its rampant bunnies which are becoming tempting morsels, inviting cougars and coyotes to come padding about town and causing all the McGregors to shake their garden hoes in vain. The Vancouver Rabbit Rescue is overrun in its noble attempts to save the cuddly bundles and educate the public about responsible pet ownership. Victoria and Vancouver Island are infamous for their escapees, now nibbling away at endangered plants and otherwise wreaking havoc on campuses and in communities. Although sanctuaries have been set up, inclusive of sterilization, there is the matter of just who is paying for the trapping, transport, veterinarians, and upkeep of these cute little critters.

Where is the cottontailed bottom line for conservation for the greater environment regarding invasive species? One suggestion, as mentioned in a recent New York Times article by James Gorman, A Diet for an Invaded Planet, is to become an invasivore – one who eats invasive plants and animals as a path toward sustainable food choices. Jackson Landers has nearly completed, Eating Aliens. Do you know any good recipes for the smooth brome, creeping bellflower and thistle, or other

plants relentlessly invading our neighbourhood, Whispering Woods, and Nose Hill? Maybe one for an infusion of scentless camomile tea?

Year of the Rabbit Hippy Hoppity Spring Challenge: How many visual images or text references are there of rabbits or hares in the three Brentwood Murals and the thirty-four Whispering Signs in greater Brentwood? What are the differences between these two lagoon morphs anyway, and which are native?

Environmentally yours, Polly Lee Knowlton Cockett, [environews@shaw.ca](mailto:environews@shaw.ca)

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