

Despite some blustery days and occasional scattered snow flurries, spring's awakening and quickening energies have arrived here, and we see signs of renewed life almost everywhere.

The buds on the lilacs and forsythia bushes are swelling, daffodils and crocuses cheer us with their bright blooms, the grass in our lawns and the sagebrush on the desert are greening up, and the leaf buds on the trees grow large with the promise of new growth.

And of course, the animal world is bursting out, too. Even several weeks ago, the fields and orchard between the Main House and the Centrum were alive with rabbits, both cottontail and jackrabbits. Little ground squirrels and other rodents run across the roads in our headlights.

Our mornings and evenings are filled with bird activity. The melodic trill of the meadowlarks is especially delightful, and the song of the red-winged blackbird, along with its dramatic appearance, is one of the hallmarks of our Great Basin springtime. The hammering of the flickers punctuates part of each day, and the local magpies patrol the fields, gathering twigs to build their large nests and flying back to their homes with unlucky worms and other choice bits of food in their beaks.

Another sure sign of spring here at Home Farm involves gardening activities —

planning the garden, choosing the vegetable varieties, ordering the seeds, etc. The community gardeners spent a wonderful evening at the Main House last week sharing ideas and making plans for the upcoming season. Our crew this year will be about the same size as last year, with 11 or 12 enthusiastic gardeners anxious to get started on this season's activities.

Several days later, we spent a cool sunny Saturday in the garden, working in the west end tiers. The garlic plants that were planted last fall march in sturdy rows, healthy, green, and already six or seven inches high. Once the adjacent bed was tilled, we transplanted the delicate onion sets that one of our community gardeners started from seed back in February's cold, dark days. Then, a little farther east, we prepared the just-tilled beds for blocks of early spring vegetables—beets, lettuce, spinach, and other greens such as chard and kale.

Some of us planted, some raked, some weeded, one tilled, and another made a careful map of which vegetables were planted in which block. The sense of harmony and enjoyment that came from working toward a shared goal and being outside on that spectacular spring day was lovely.

It's not just the garden beds that are being readied for summer activity. Our guest quarters — beds, décor, furniture, etc. — have crews working on them, too. These guest spaces include not only individual bedrooms but several trailer homes as well. These guest preparations will include new paint, carpet, and furniture, so we are drawing up estimates and inventorying supplies currently on hand to minimize expenses.

Our publishing/literature program has a great deal of activity, too. Volumes I, II, and III of the Natural Order Process are currently being proofread prior to being republished in a different, more user-friendly format. The Thursday class continues its reading and proofreading of Six Days of the Creating Process. Our website (www.sno.org) has been updated and given a new look. And we now have our own Facebook page as "School of the Natural Order" — Check it out and "Like" our page!

Based on the early reservations we have received, we expect good attendance at our summer seminar this coming August. Several past attendees are bringing friends this year. We are particularly pleased with

the quality of this year's classes, and we look forward to sharing Vitvan's teachings with another group of interested students.

Whether we are gardening, maintaining the Home Farm infrastructure, working on the literature, or working on ourselves, we remain aware that the objective level is a classroom for 'larger' lessons and 'deeper' understanding.

As we move from late winter into early spring, the words of Jane Truax give us this same perspective:

Biologists say that trees need the powerful March winds to flex their trunks and main branches so the sap is drawn UP to nourish the budding leaves. Perhaps we need the gales of life in the same way."

- Jane Truax

This wonderful time of year, with its dynamic qualities, helps make us aware once again of Vitvan's wise admonition: "Where you focus your attention, there will your energy go."

May our energies go towards positive growth, renewal, and self-awareness.

Susan Wetmore and Jane Murray, April 2013