



The School of the Natural Order

Around the Place

November-December 2019

The lovely Indian summer days that accompanied us into mid-November ended abruptly on the day before Thanksgiving, when snow fell steadily all day long and left Home Farm covered with a white blanket. Thinking about the next day's festivities, and the guests we were expecting for Thanksgiving dinner, we were grateful to have the snowplow out late in the day clearing our roads. However, the snow began again after nightfall and didn't stop until the next morning, so early on Thanksgiving the snowplow made several more passes along Home Farm roads and out to the highway, clearing the roads and giving our guests a safe access to the Main House.

Thanksgiving dinner was delightful, with a potluck dinner providing delicious food, and our guests providing wonderful conversation and shared friendship. The tables sparkled with linen tablecloths and our best china, and candlelight bathed the entire room in a soft glow. As the meal drew to a close, snow once again began to fall, and most of our guests left to get home before the snow became too deep for them to travel safely on the highway.

Our white Thanksgiving ended up giving us about 12 inches of snow. Thanks to yet more snowplowing, we were able to easily move around, and the snow outside made us feel cozy and warm inside. We stoked our wood stoves and turned up our heaters, and put on another few layers of clothing. Our last six months have been very dry, so we welcome the moisture that this snow provides.

Winter, with its short days and long nights, is an in-drawing time. It offers an opportunity to do all those things we have put off during the busier days of summer and fall—sorting, cleaning, fixing and repairing, perhaps reading some of the books we have stacked next to our beds or working on a writing project.

The deer that were here a month ago seem to have moved on for the time being. Prior to the snowfall, there was still one buck who liked to forage underneath the plum trees, but he hasn't been around lately. The cottontails are tucked away in their burrows for the winter, and even the jackrabbits are not as evident. The small winter birds busily search for seeds in the native vegetation, and they enjoy landing on the cleared roads once the snow has been scraped away.

Practically every day our Great Basin vistas and landscape offer us something beautiful to enjoy. Perhaps there is a halo around the waxing moon, or the sunset glows in peach tones behind a snow-covered Wheeler Peak, or the sunrise illuminates ground fog down in the valley that glows silver and shifts as the air currents ebb and flow.

Susan Wetmore
December, 2019