There are four annual dates that are especially linked with nature. They are fall equinox (around September 21st), winter solstice (around December 21st), spring equinox (around March 21st) and summer solstice (around June 21st).* 

Astronomically, the equinox refers to the two days of the year in which the sunrise and sunset are twelve hours apart, with equal hours of day and night. The summer solstice is the longest day of the year, and the winter solstice is the longest night of the year.

But there is something else that makes these four days important, especially to a co-creative gardener or farmer. About twenty years ago a soil scientist tested the Perelandra garden soil and verified my suspicions about an annual energy cycle that is tied to the equinox/solstice rhythm. After testing the soil on and around those four days for over two years, he discovered that life vitality was released to the soil at the precise moment of each equinox and solstice.** He also discovered that the level of life vitality that was released was different for each of the four days and created a consistent pattern that was repeated annually. When he tested several non-Perelandra soil samples, the same thing occurred, indicating that this is something that happens globally and is not unique to Perelandra.

Nature's new year and the beginning of its annual growing cycle begins at the fall equinox.*** It hits its high point at the summer solstice. And then at the next fall equinox, a new cycle begins. During the fall equinox, the smallest amount of life vitality is released. At the winter solstice, a greater amount is released. At the spring equinox an even greater amount is released. And at the summer solstice, the greatest amount of life vitality energy is released. Within twenty-four hours after each solstice/equinox release, the life vitality reading of the soil changes to a level corresponding with what is released. The amount of life vitality that is “captured” and held in the soil during these releases directly relates to the level of the soil’s health. A healthy soil holds a higher amount of available life vitality. A depleted soil holds a lesser amount.

---

* You can find the exact date and time of an equinox or solstice posted on our website or you can consult an almanac—or you can Google it.

** All this testing was done using a radionics machine.

*** If you're in the southern hemisphere you'll need to reverse the order of the cycle—our fall equinox and the beginning of our cycle is your spring equinox. The levels of life vitality released in the northern hemisphere are reversed in the southern hemisphere to coincide with the different growing season.
A high level of life vitality indicates that the soil contains the action elements required for efficiently producing and releasing nutrients to whatever is living and growing in that soil. Let me put this a different way: The average production cost for planting corn in central Illinois in 2010 was $533 per acre. Fertilizer alone was about $250 per acre—and rising. If you raise the level of life vitality in that soil, the fertilizer and seed costs can be reduced by as much as 45%. A high level of life vitality makes the entire soil process and activity that much more efficient. In short, the field with the higher life vitality levels provides more bang for the buck.

Over the years I’ve observed in my garden that the different life vitality levels correspond to what is happening at each stage of the garden cycle.

- The fall equinox activates the new year’s cycle. The environment in which the new cycle is “born” (the garden) is quiet and at peace. The general garden feels “relaxed.” The lower life vitality level with its lower activity creates the perfect environment for the birth of the new cycle.

- At the winter solstice the cycle begins to come into focus by taking on organization and form. It’s the time when the plans and designs (devic level operation) come together and, to facilitate the task of getting the devic information, I always wait until after the winter solstice to get the new garden plans.

- At the spring equinox the garden is preparing for planting (the nature spirit level operation). All the different parts of the garden are being moved around and readied by the gardener and nature. This stage ends with the garden planting.

- At the summer solstice we have a garden that is fully realized. It is growing, producing and demonstrating its strength. It needs all the life vitality it can get and the greatest amount of life vitality is released to it at the summer solstice.

The release of life vitality that triggers each stage of the equinox/solstice cycle happens with or without human awareness or attention. It’s part of Earth’s natural rhythms. But we co-creative gardeners can choose to actively participate with nature at these special times. Nature once said to me that nature is powerful beyond belief and humans are powerful beyond belief. But when nature and humans act together, that combined power is intensified a hundredfold. As with the nature sanctuary, this is another one of those times where a small gesture on our part can do a lot for the moment.
Observing the Equinox and Solstice

1. Your participation begins with finding out the exact day and time of the next equinox or solstice.

2. Fifteen minutes prior to the precise moment,* step back from your day’s (or night’s) activity, sit quietly and shift your attention to nature, your partnership and what is about to occur from nature. You do not need to be in the garden for this.

   For the **Fall Equinox**, focus on nature’s infusion of the life vitality that initiates and triggers the new year’s cycle.

   For the **Winter Solstice**, think about the second stage of the cycle and the life vitality that is being poured into the planning and design of the year’s cycle.

   For the **Spring Equinox**, focus on the physical preparations that are required to bring the garden into form and fruition.

   For the **Summer Solstice**, think about the fully realized garden that is now moving through its final stage. It is the coming together of the plan and design (devic) with the matter, means and action (nature spirit). And it is the full reflection of the Pan function and your co-creative partnership. Surely this day calls for chocolate!

   *Note: Sometimes at the precise moment you may feel or sense the energy shift. However, if you feel nothing, know that the release and the benefits from your participation will occur whether you sense it or not.

3. Remain quietly focused for fifteen minutes after the precise time. The amount of quiet time you spend prior to and after each solstice or equinox moment can be as long as you wish but not shorter than the required fifteen minutes.

4. When you are ready, return to your day (or night).

---

**Bells, Candles, Frigid Swims, Dances and Songs**

Some folks like to add something special to an equinox or solstice. Over the years I’ve been known to light a candle. I’ve also been known to not light a candle when the moment arrives in the middle of the night. This way I won’t forget to blow it out before falling back to sleep and burn the house down. These days I feel comfortable striking a note for simplicity by just sitting in silence and focusing my attention on what is happening. But if you’d like to do something like light a candle, ring a bell,
do a little dance or sing a special song, go right ahead. But keep this in mind: You are observing a moment that is happening on its own. You are not there to try to create the moment. So if you choose to add something a little special, make sure it doesn’t interfere with your ability to focus on the actual solstice or equinox moment. If you want to sing or dance, plan to do it after completing step 3.

Winter solstice add-ons. Just after the winter solstice moment, I draw two cards from the Perelandra Nature Cards* deck. I request (state out loud) that the first card give me insight into the new garden cycle.** Then I request that the second card focus on this year’s personal life cycle. (See p. 39.) The cards give me the first glimpse at the direction of each new cycle.

And for those of you who want to celebrate the winter solstice by jumping into a frigid lake or ocean for a short swim — the operative word here is “short” — well, you’re crazy. But if you insist, I’m sure nature will appreciate your nutty gesture. Just make sure you’re not experiencing brain freeze while the winter solstice moment is occurring.

* The Perelandra Nature Cards are explained on p. 104.

** If you are including a garden, a soil-less garden and your personal life cycle, draw three cards, one card for each focus. Request insight for each focus prior to drawing its card.
Incorporating Personal Life Cycles

Along with the annual growth cycle in nature, we humans also have a growth cycle. It’s more like an annual evolutionary cycle. Growth in this case doesn’t mean getting taller or gaining weight. Instead it refers to the cycles we participate in that involve our relationships, home, work, education and general activities in life. As you’ve probably guessed by now, you may align your personal cycle with the equinox/solstice rhythm. Nature’s life vitality infuses all form and patterns automatically at the time of the equinox/solstice, and this includes the various elements that make up your life. By including your personal cycle with nature’s, you intensify the infusion of life vitality to the personal cycle as well as the garden cycle. As a result you move through your own life more efficiently and with greater ease. One might say that nature, through the equinox and solstice rhythm, provides the wind at your back as you move through your evolutionary process each year.

To include your personal life cycle, you need only state the following each time you sit down and begin step 2 (p. 37):

I wish to include my garden (and/or soil-less garden) and my personal life cycle in the solstice/equinox rhythm.

I can’t give you hard evidence that there has been a drastic change in how I move through my personal cycle each year. However, I feel that there has been an enormous amount of clarity added to that process, its purpose and direction—and this could certainly be attributed to including my personal cycle during each equinox and solstice moment. It seems like the pieces of my life and the direction I am taking are appropriately energized and enhanced four times each year, and the result is that those pieces fall into place more smoothly and with more clarity.

**IMPORTANT:** Often when I activate the new year for my personal life cycle at the fall equinox, I haven’t a clue about what I’m activating or what’s in store. Of course, if I’m in the middle of a project that extends into the new year, I’m aware that these things are ongoing and that I’m activating their next stage. It’s the unknowns I’m talking about. I make it a point not to artificially create or guess about an unknown at the fall equinox. I have faith that whatever gets activated is next in line to be activated. This way I stay out of my own way mentally, keep the surprise element in my life and allow my evolutionary process to unfold more naturally. Life vitality isn’t withheld from what is unknown. Whatever defines the current cycle we are activating in the fall—the known and unknown alike—becomes infused with nature’s life vitality at the moment of the equinox.
Nature on the Equinox and Solstice Cycle

In general it is important that you consider the power and impact of action when performed within a state of conscious awareness. The recognition of the equinox and solstice rhythm is a perfect example of the fusion between human awareness and nature's action. In this particular case, we have two examples:

- First, there is the recognition of the special energy released during these four days that is directly linked to the planet's natural rhythms.
- Second, by taking a moment to stand back from your day-to-day schedule to consciously consider your life and its process, you revitalize your commitment to your life and that process.

What I am saying is very similar to the relationship a believer has to a religious festival. He may be challenged on a day-to-day basis to live his life within the context of his faith in any given moment or situation. A festival enables him to step out of the forest, as it were, where he has been busy concentrating on each of the trees, and gives him the chance to see an overview of what he is doing. The result is a revitalization of his commitment to the day-to-day process that, in turn, enables him to step back into the forest and once again work more easily with each tree.

The annual solstice and equinox cycle functions much in the same manner for those individuals who choose to participate. It does not matter if you are actively working in some area of nature. The overriding commitment during these times is to the natural process that exists throughout the entire planet. Of course, if you are actively working in a natural environment, your participation during such a moment revitalizes that co-creative partnership with us and directly enhances this work in every way.

The equinox and solstice cycle has existed on the planet since the establishment of the patterning between the planet and its moon and relative positioning within the solar system. I say this to remind you that cycles such as this go on around you whether they are recognized by humans or not. The elements making up the planet are naturally aligned to such cycles and automatically receive the beneficial energies these cycles release. Those who have no conscious awareness of the equinox and solstice cycle also receive benefit by the mere fact that they are present on the planet at the time of a release and by the fact that they are directly linked to the three kingdoms in nature through their physical body.

If left alone, if not consciously recognized, energy is still released, resulting in a general revitalization on the planet. But when humans enter the picture and add to it their
conscious choice to actively participate in the moment, they strengthen that moment many times over. This, in turn, strengthens the natural revitalization not just for the individual but for the planet as well.

Human awareness is a vital dynamic within the broad picture of reality. It is not some random, minor personality trait, as many seem to feel. It is a dynamic with its own power that can be used for the benefit or detriment of humans. And it can be directly linked with the planet’s natural cycles, thus benefiting both and becoming another example of co-creative partnership.

So, as you consciously link your awareness to nature’s cycles, and your awareness and understanding about those cycles broaden and deepen, the activity triggered by the event is strengthened to the degree directly proportional to your level of awareness. With this, the released energies permeate the planet and all that exists on the planet more directly and clearly.

In the case of the annual equinox and solstice cycle, it is appropriate to include your personal evolutionary cycle because that which is inherent in the process steps of the personal cycle* is precisely that which is being infused and revitalized by the equinox and solstice cycle. If you did not recognize this similarity, there would still be beneficial infusion of life vitality into your personal evolutionary cycle. In order for your personal process to become accessible and its goals successfully achieved, it must move through the natural laws of your environment. Therefore, when on Earth, you demonstrate your personal process in physical action and form. The key to physical action and form (order, organization and life vitality) on Earth is nature. Therefore, when you include your personal cycle with nature’s cycle, you are in fact taking a specific dynamic (your personal cycle) and consciously linking it to nature’s rhythms (the equinox and solstice life vitality cycle), thereby strengthening and clarifying it many times over.

* Personal process steps include nature’s order, organization and life vitality that are required to keep our life goals (direction, definition and purpose) in balance.

From *The Perelandra Garden Workbook* by Machaelle Wright. © 2012 Machaelle Small Wright. All rights reserved.