

Winter Folklore and Information

Information for December:

The name 'December' is believed to derive from the Latin word for 'ten' which is 'decem' so the name literally means the 'tenth month' and last month in the Roman calendar.

The Saxons called December 'winter-monat' or winter month and 'heligh-monat' or holy month from the fact that Christmas fell within it.

Native Americans called December 'cold moon'.

December 21st of December is the date of the winter solstice, when the sun reaches the tropic of cancer.

December's flowers are poinsettias for the English, narcissus (or daffodils) for Canada and hellebore for the Irish.

In Celtic traditions, this was a time to keep light alive in the darkness, to maintain the burning fires and a time for families to reunite as the light began to return following the winter solstice.

December's colors are beige, bronze, denim blue, indigo, rich purple, red and violet.

December's birthstone is the turquoise.

Folklore for December:

As the days lengthen, the cold strengthens.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

In December keep yourself warm and sleep.

As the holly dies, the oak is born.

Information for January:

Named for the Roman god Janus, who is represented with two faces looking in opposite directions, - as retrospective to the past and prospective to the coming year. He is known as the god of doors and gateways.

The Old Dutch called this month 'Lauwmaand' (The frosty month)

Native Americans called this month 'Wolf Moon' because amid the cold and deep snows of midwinter, the wolf pack howled hungrily outside Indian villages. The Old Saxons called the month 'Wulf-monath' or wolf month for the same reason.

January's flower is the white carnation for both the English and Canada, but snowdrops for the Irish.

January's birthstone is the garnet.

Colors of January are jet black, purple, and white.

Folklore for January:

A traditional belief amongst farmers in the British Isles said that a mild January was an omen of wet weather to come (from February through to May) and would give a bad crop in the field.

A wet January, a wet spring.

If the grass do grow in Janiveer
It grows the worst for it all the year.

The blackest month of all the year
Is the month of Janiveer.

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow. - Sara Coleridge

Information for February:

This month derives its name from the word februare, to purify, or from Februa, the Roman festival of expiation, which was celebrated the later part of the month.

Celtics considered the month 'Ice Moon'.

Old Celtics considered the month as Solmoneth (sun month) and Kale-monath (named for cabbage).

The Native Americans called the month 'Snow Moon' since the heaviest snows usually fall during this month.

Colors of February are amethyst, white, and blue-violet.

February's flowers are primrose for the English, violet for Canada, and narcissus for the Irish.

February's birthstone is the amethyst.

Folklore for February:

February will fill a dyke
Be it black or be it white (rain or snow)

Of all the months of the year
Curse a fair Februeer.

If Candlemas Day (Groundhog Day) be fair and bright
Winter will have another flight
But if Candlemas Day (Groundhog Day) be clouds and rain
Winter is gone and will not come again.

If the groundhog sees his shadow on February 2nd, there will be six more weeks of winter.

In February, if you hear thunder
You shall see a summer wonder.

February brings the rain
Thaws the frozen lake again. - Sara Coleridge.