

# The Blue Strand

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



"Brown Thornbill (Acanthiza pusilla)" by patrickkavanagh is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

## Our Wingéd Neighbours

Some of my favourite local birds

———— OLIVIA LA HALCONERA

The populace of Kraé Glas is made up of many good gentles and crafty Collegians. But our Barony is also home to a populace of feathered persons. These are, of course, the birds. In the interests of promoting hospitality and good fellowship towards our wingéd neighbours, I here present a dramatis personae (though incomplete) of some of the lesser known amongst them.\*

**Brown Thornbill:** One of the LBBs (Little Brown Birds) which can be hard to tell apart – a spyglass is recommended. They are really very small, with streaking on their breast. Although they are little, their voice is surprisingly loud – often while out walking, I hear them before seeing them. They flit from branch to branch in canopies or hedges, usually in groups, and are a tiny delight once one learns to notice them.

**White-browed Scrubwren:** Another LBB. As their name suggests, they have a white eyebrow – but also a white sideburns moustache! In consequence of the eyebrows and moustache, and their harsh buzzing call, they have the mien of an angry little old man. Whom amongst us has not such a neighbour? One of their calls is a harsh *tzzz*, hard to tell apart from the Brown Thornbill.

**Grey Fantail:** A little bird, but rather than brown they are an elegant grey. Like the Scrubwren, they also have a white eyebrow that gives them permanent grumpy face. I tell the two apart through their different styles of hirsuteness: the Fantail has no moustache, but rather a white beard about the neck. The Fantail is also quite an aerial acrobat and likes to flit their tail about.

These three birds all have some similarity of appearance or song: I hope that by enumerating their features, the good gentles of Kraé Glas will now better recognise them and will consider the needs of our feathered neighbours by enclosing feline companions in our keeps by day and night and enriching our gardens with local greenery. These birds’ names also all, by curious happenstance, derive entirely from Old or Middle English words.

\*I have consulted, for the details of appearance and song\*\*, an almanac by the name of *The Compact Australian Bird Guide*. Other details are anecdotal, and any mistakes are my own.

\*\* I recommend listening to recordings or real birds if you desire to train your ear. Nonetheless, reading transcribed birdsong is a merry pastime: my recent favourites include the Weebill, whose call is *I’m a Weebill!*, and the White-throated Nightjar’s ‘weird laugh’ and ‘staccato gobble’.

## WHAT’s ON?

### July Activities

- ☞ Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Fighter Training + A&S
- ☞ Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July – Fighter Training + A&S
- ☞ Friday 11<sup>th</sup> – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Inter-College War
- ☞ Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July – Crafthall and Potluck
- ☞ Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Fighter Training + A&S
- ☞ Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July – Archery Training
- ☞ Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July – Fighter Training + A&S also Council Meeting online
- ☞ Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July – Fighter Training + A&S

### Coming Soon!

- ☞ Date TBA – Ironbeard Challenge

More details:

<https://kraeglas.lochac.sca.org/>

## Poetry Corner:

A Filk to the Star Wars Imperial March

———— JOANNA OF BREADWOOD

Mon-i-cans out of bed, out of bed.  
Mon-i-cans out of bed, out of bed.  
Mon-i-cans, by shenanigans, we’re led,  
But we’ll still kill, you dead,  
Out of bed, out of bed!  
Mon-i-cans, fill your college up,  
with dread,  
While you listen to, us tread  
Back to bed, back to bed.

Additional last line options:

- ☞ *On the battlefield, we’ve bled, paint our enemies, in red*
- ☞ *Never mind what, I said, fight the Hermanites, instead*
- ☞ *We’d do anything, for bread, we only fight when, we’re fed*
- ☞ *Our catchy tune, will spread, it’ll never leave, your head*



The A&S Officer encourages A&S within the Barony. Above, the outgoing A&S officer teaches a class on hat making.

# Seeking New Arts and Sciences Officer

Please apply if you are interested!

———— JOANNA OF BRAIDWOOD

Hello everyone, it is I, the Arts and Sciences Officer for the Barony of Krae Glas (not to be confused with the editor of this newsletter).

I have now been in this role for quite a while and my warrant is coming to a close. As such, we are seeking a new Arts and Sciences Officer!

Key requirements:

- You will need to be a current SCA member, 18 years or older
- Reliable and responsive access to email
- Ability to keep on top of a variety of A&S-related administrative tasks

Key elements of the job:

- Managing local displays and competitions, including by local Guild members
- Being available to the populace to answer their questions on A&S, and listen to ideas on how we could be better
- Promoting the amazing artisans in Krae Glas, so more people can hear of their skills - especially via the KG Newsletter "The Blue Strand"
- Organising monthly A&S classes for Craethall

You don't have to do everything -- there are plenty of people able to help. And there are lots of useful resources on competition guidance and procedures and notes and ideas available. You'll find more detailed information about this role in the Officer Job Descriptions Document at <https://seneschal.lochac.sca.org/resources#officer>.

Please send your applications by 16 July 2025 to [artsandsciences@lochac.sca.org](mailto:artsandsciences@lochac.sca.org), with a courtesy copy to [joannabraidwood@gmail.com](mailto:joannabraidwood@gmail.com).

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me, I will help however I can. This role is an excellent way to dip your toe into the life of a KG officer and to give back to our community. I hope to hear from you!

Yours in Service,  
Joanna of Braidwood

***New Officer Progress:***

*Applications Opened <<< we are here (closes 16 July 2025)*

*Consideration Period*

*Shortlist for Commentary*

*Consultation Period*

*Notice to Candidates & Scheduling*

*Confirmation & Handover schedule*





# ✦ This Month's Uroscope ✦

What the colour of your urine today says about how your month will go

—ARES HUMNOIDOS, *IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE POWERS THAT BE*

	<p><b>White as wellwater / clear</b></p> <p>There be naught holding thee back! Lack of tincture of thy urine shows vast opportunity. Consider travelling to a neighboring village and see what fate bringeth.</p>		<p><b>Slightly red as occidental saffron</b></p> <p>Jealusee doth brew withyn thee or thy crosse circle, be wary.</p>
	<p><b>Grey as lucid horn</b></p> <p>Akin to a hard worked ox, thou mightst have issue resting. Mayhaps thy job bringeth thee overmuch straine, thou shouldst rid thyself of thine woes.</p>		<p><b>Red as oriental saffron</b></p> <p>Luckie in love? A good gentle mayhaps have thyre sights set upon thee, but thou muste make the first move to spure them on!</p>
	<p><b>Milky as whey of milk</b></p> <p>Art thou sure thyne urine beeth urine? Mayhaps thyne body bringeth signals that it be time to seek betrothal. If thou hast alreadie been wed, consider cosing up to thy wif!</p>		<p><b>Slightly red as a lowered flame</b></p> <p>Thou art fizzling out, as a lonesome ember. Thy vigour hath been lost. Fight thy nearist basketmakker to reïgnyte thy lighte!</p>
	<p><b>Bluish grey as camel skin</b></p> <p>Great misfortune is to befall thee. Make haste und get thy affairs sorted, brace thyself for oncoming toils.</p>		<p><b>Red as a flame not lowered</b></p> <p>Thou art as a roaring flamme, too haesty und angrïe. Fyght thy closset blacksmythe to let off thy steem.</p>
	<p><b>Slightly pale as unreduced juice of meat</b></p> <p>Too muche hectic energy in thy life. Pale pottage and ales wilt soothe the unbalanced humors within. Prithee visite The Tabard, where for shorte tyme thou mayst have a bowle of pottage for every two ales purchased!</p>		<p><b>Wine-red as animal liver</b></p> <p>Untrustworthïe people surrounde thee. Check yn on thy spouse.</p>
	<p><b>Reduced pale as reduced juice of meat</b></p> <p>Thy power is increasing! Place thine energy elsewhere mayhaps through a new hobbie such as weaving or recreacional fencing!</p>		<p><b>Deep blue as very dark wine</b></p> <p>The Lady of the Sea doth calle for thee! If thou fealst troubbled, the answers thou seekst may lie upon her watyrs.</p>
	<p><b>Pale yellow as of a not reduced lemon</b></p> <p>Restlessness? A simple solusion be to take a brisk run after supper until thou'rt fully exhausted, twill alleviate thy excess energy and thou wilt sleepe as soundly as a lamb!</p>		<p><b>Green as green cabbage</b></p> <p>Hwat a healthsome tincture! As a leef! Perchance 'twould provyde health benifets to others if solde.</p>
	<p><b>Yellow as of a reduced lemon</b></p> <p>Thou art too phlegmatic, thou hast ill energie in thy soule. Consume a brothe with plenty of mustard seede and sage to warme thy humours.</p>		<p><b>Livid as lead</b></p> <p>There be not a syngle thinge wrong in thy lyf. How viry uninteresting thou art! Thou shuldst woo a new lover in secrett.</p>
	<p><b>Slightly ruddy as an alloy of gold</b></p> <p>Thou feelest as yf thou hast not dunne thy best reasently. Teech the persone who hath bested thee a greavious lesson.</p>		<p><b>Black as ink</b></p> <p>Thy humours are imbalanced. Get thee to an apothecary or phyiskcian and DEMANDE fïften of thyir beste leeches, thou knowest what thou must do from there.</p>
	<p><b>Ruddy as pure intense gold</b></p> <p>Wondrous gud fortune doth comme! Consider beginning that busyness thou hast long wished to trye.</p>		<p><b>Black as very dark horn</b></p> <p>God is angry at thee!! While thou still hast breathe, gather thy speare, hunt and sacrifyse as large a beast as thou mightst. SLAYETH!</p>

DISCLAIMER: If your urine is any colour other than the clear to bright yellow spectrum, SEE A DOCTOR. The above publication is intended for humour ONLY.



Making lard by hand, since modern shops no longer sell it. Photo by Blythe.

# The Tragedy of Modernity

## A lament for the loss of easily accessible lard

———— BLYTHE VENELL

As part of our Current Middle Ages we spend a lot of time recreating historical processes, but the mundane society we live in does not make it easy. Recently the last local retail producers of lard stopped production, which is a tragedy for those like me.

Before the why, what is lard? Lard is the rendered fat from pork. Rendering is the process of cooking the pork fat over a very low temperature over a long time separating the fat from the impurity and remaining animal tissue. If done well it can create an odorless, white, cream textured oil.

So why am I grieving the loss of accessible lard? Well simply, the cream-like texture of lard makes it an ideal carrying oil for early modern cosmetics (15-18<sup>th</sup> century, possibly earlier). Compared to tallow made from sheep and cow, it is far softer at room temperature and sticks to the skin quite well.

In comparison to most plant oils it's still solid, greatly reducing the mess made and allowing more control for putting on the makeup and not dripping. People always ask about the smell, but this is not much of an issue in my experience. Even with my homemade lard which is worse purity the smell is minimal and requires my entire nose in a jar of it to smell. Additionally most pre-modern cosmetics were as scented as they are today. Our ancestors wanted nicely scented lip balms as much as you do, and as such the negligible smell of lard was quite often overpowered by sweet scents.

However with the movement away from saturated fats and into plant-based diets lard is on the way out and now I must spend multiple hours cooking lard myself when I wish to make historical cosmetics.

Society always has the last laugh. A moment of silence for the lard I can no longer buy.

## From the editor

Technically it's all from me, but still

Hello.

Are you like me and interested in going on a newsletter related power trip?

You could have an article about whatever niche topic you want added to this very newsletter!

You could be as unhinged as me. It could happen.

Send any write ups (between 100-400 words) completely without context to [joannabraidwood@gmail.com](mailto:joannabraidwood@gmail.com). Make it happen.



## About the editor

Joanna of Braidwood is probably a little mad.

If you made it this far, thanks for joining us.

That's all folks!

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