

Spring and summer offer abundant opportunities to contemplate the sacredness and interconnectedness of life in your neighborhood and beyond. I offer here some examples.

Sitting in the midst of very tall trees in morning's early light, I heard a low hum far above me. Three large swarms of anonymous insects were circling the tree tops. I watched, intrigued and wary, as an energy I did not understand drove them round and round the trees. I was glad for the distance between us.



One mystery led to another. A single bee fell from the swarm landing backside with a metaphorical thud on the cement patio on which I was seated. Not two feet from me, my attention was riveted as it twisted and struggled in vain to right itself, to find its legs and wings. The bee is dying, a voice within me said; stay with it; be present to its final struggle. I chose to stay and found myself alternating between presence and distraction, ready for the end long before the bee was.

When finally the bee's body went still and remained so, relief crawled into me along with a quiet unexpected grief. It was over—but not really. Within a minute or two, a small platoon of ants, nature's pallbearers, arrived to carry the deceased to its final resting place on their "lunch table". This is of course nature's way and clearly I was meant to see this literally and viscerally. What dies becomes food for others in the web of life. Nothing is wasted. Death enables continuing growth or new life

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