

Dear Catamounts,

We are looking forward to meeting all of you and working together at Twilight Covening. In addition to covering some practical details, there are a couple of points about preparing yourselves magically and emotionally for our long mountain lion weekend. We will be connecting intimately with nature, no matter what the weather. Whether this is your first time working outdoors this way, or something that you have been drawn to for years, we hope that everyone can leave their ego behind, and focus on the essential experience.

Please leave your expectations and your expertise at home, too. Come to our clan with open eyes and an open mind. Spend some time thinking about the things that frighten you or that make you uncomfortable. Are you afraid of the dark? Of insects? Snakes? Wild animals? Heights and cliffs? Hypothermia? Physical injury? Be aware of these fears as you participate in the clan.

As you prepare yourself magically for this weekend, consider how being a part of nature connects, or could connect, with the work in your magical tradition or personal magical practice. In this advanced clan, we will not spend a great deal of time discussing the background of the exercises we learn. We will focus on the exercises themselves and the magical experiences they evoke in us. The clan leaders will be available outside of clan time to answer other questions. Mealtimes are an excellent opportunity for all of us to discuss this integration.

Our clan will be working a kitchen shift, helping create rituals, and doing our own clan-specific work. We may have a clan cabin for our indoor meetings. Please bring things to help create a clan altar and to adorn the space. You can also bring catamount-related items for our clan table in the dining hall. Over the weekend we will be hiking, building fires and shelters, sleeping outside in our shelters one night, and sitting outside meditatively together and alone. We will also have a concealment exercise, using natural materials like dirt and mud.

Attached is a list of items that we recommend you bring. These are focused on being prepared to take care of yourself. Taking care of yourself in between clan times is *extremely* important. You will need to make sure you are warm, dry, well-fed, and rested. While you should feel free to bring other things that you think we might have forgotten, do not bring fancy outdoor gear—this is not a weekend survival workshop! Keep it simple. Also, leave your library of field guides at home. We will be observing plants and animals, but identifying them is a different workshop for a different weekend.

If you have a choice in your warm clothing, try to bring solid colors, especially greens, browns, tans, or black. Wool, silk, and fleece are highly recommended. Do not bring camo, unless that is all you have for outdoor clothes. Expect that everything you bring could get wet and dirty, so bring extras.

When you arrive Friday night, go through registration and find our clan table. Try to arrive on time, so we can get our weekend started right! It is important to meet early, since we will be helping out with the evening ritual.

Anyone who has ever watched any of the great cats knows they combine keen hunting skills with a sense of play. Their comfort, confidence, and connection with their place in the wilderness is something that we are awed by and to which we magically aspire. As Catamounts, we will use our relationship to the environment around us as a tool to explore our magical relationship with nature.

See you there!

Rowan and Carolyn Hawthorne
Catamount Clan leaders

Things to bring

Many pairs of warm socks (wool or polypropylene, not cotton)
Sturdy, over-the-ankle hiking boots
Fleece or wool jackets or sweaters
Good rain gear
Hat and gloves
Several wool blankets or sleeping bag and pad
Knife (preferably locking blade or sheath knife)
Insect repellent and tick removal tool, if you have it
Small journal for drawing and writing (weatherproof or bring a Ziploc bag)
Writing pencils and colored pencils
Binoculars (optional)
Dry towels
Warm, dry clothes
Rattle
Items for clan table and clan altar/cabi