

Dear friends

May is an interesting month as no matter where in the world you are and in any given year, no month ever begins or ends on the same day of the week as May does. Also, the first day of May represents International Workers' Day and was created to raise awareness of poor working conditions. Some traditions include dancing around the maypole celebrating the start of summer, flowers are blooming, and its hope that as global restrictions ease families can finally begin to enjoy Barbeques and family gatherings. However, like so many other countries here in the UK we are still in an extraordinary, bespoke lockdown life whilst we are nonetheless uncertain of what is ahead regarding lifting of restrictions. Also, it remains heart breaking that so many lives are still being lost globally due to the virulence of the virus and it is impossible not to feel compassion and grief that binds us together as human beings. Butterflies have deep and powerful representations of life and around the world many people view the butterfly as symbolising endurance, change, hope, and life with some cultures associate the butterfly with our souls hence my photo signifies thoughts for those experiencing such heartbreak and loss. *"With genuine compassion you view others as more important than yourself" Dalai Lama*



Here in East Anglia, we experienced early morning frost with temperatures dropping below freezing. Spring frosts are not unusual but what marks out the episode this year, is that it has covered large parts of northern Europe impacting on farmers and the vast wine growing regions including the UK. As someone who enjoys a glass of wine and with some excellent vineyards close to home it will have an impact on vineyards making this year's harvest. France has already declared the frost damaged vineyards an 'agricultural disaster' and according to an English grape grower it is currently too early to properly assess the damage to the UK as the vigneron's hands are completely tied when confronted with mother nature!

While out in the garden enjoying some warm spring weather, I was able to capture a honey bee seeking pollen which was so rewarding as honey bees in East Anglia are declining because of the lack of local habitat. Concerns have been raised locally about the extensive use of a 'bee-killing' pesticide leading to unease that British honey bees could be extinct within five years.



With so many of us are enjoying creative hobbies, cooking or gardening I have recently learnt that some of my friends have embraced the world of open water swimming since the nation's swimming pools remain closed due to coronavirus. According to a close friend it is something he and his partner have undertaken, and both find it therapeutic, promoting a feeling of relaxation, contentment and general wellbeing. However, for an individual who enjoys the sunny weather I fear it would be a nightmare for me!!

As I close, please remember to consider the plight of those less fortunate who are experiencing unimaginable challenges and the global impact on the socially disenfranchised whose lives have been drastically changed. Also, those close to you who may be lonely, depressed and / or socially isolated who would appreciate a simple telephone call as a means of communication and find time to support those in need. *"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive" Dalai Lama*

Warm regards and stay safe and well.

*Ellie*