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Get Wild: Our lives are measured by the Moon

News [FOLLOW NEWS](#) | Mar 29, 2024**Joyce Mosher**
Get Wild

A full moon lingers above the mountains from a vantage point in Silverthorne during sunrise on April 7, 2023. The Moon holds significance in human life and culture.
Ruth Carroll/Courtesy photo

The Earth and the Moon co-evolved from spinning discs of dust and gas that orbited a young sun, over four and a half billion years ago. Through the eons, the Moon helped to form life on Earth in many ways. Acting as a counterweight to the Earth's own heft, the moon has kept our planet's axis from lurching all over the place, thereby preventing extreme climate swings over millennia.

Besides stabilizing Earth's orbit and its tilt toward the sun, the tides pulled our ocean-confined ancestors out of the water. Extremes between high and low tides in the distant past kept beaching marine life; those that could breathe in air or developed limbs for walking became the earliest landlubbers. Drawing nutrients to the surface of the primordial ocean, the evolution of complex life continued, eventually leading to an explosion of terrestrial plants, animals and all forms of life.

The Moon continues to influence animal migration and reproduction, plants' movements and Earth's climate. The Moon pulls on our oceans and drives the tides. Lunar gravitational pull could also sway human behavior because we are mostly water ourselves.

The Moon's ever-changing nature and its connection to life cycles have given it a prominent place in our collective consciousness. Whether we see the full, crescent, or eclipsed Moon, each phase holds unique symbolism that has captivated humanity for centuries.

This mysterious ornament of the sky gave rise to humanity's earliest religions and cultures. If the Sun was seen as unchanging masculine fire, the Moon became a divine feminine symbol of continual physical and spiritual change. Her departure and return



helped early humans grasp abstract concepts such as counting, becoming, changing, disappearing and reappearing. Early in the human experience, the 28-day moon cycle was recognized as harmonizing with the 28-day human female reproductive cycle. From there, calendars were developed to coordinate hunting, harvesting and rituals that allowed societies to form.

Through time, these religious and cultural developments inspired by the Moon began to hold sway over the first sciences. From the origins of human civilization to the monumental Apollo landing in 1969 and up to the present, observations of the Moon have led to important discoveries in art, astronomy, philosophy and geology.

Today, there is concern about billionaires treating this priceless satellite of Earth as just another piece of real estate, a source of private income and a resource to exploit. Do we really want profit and politics to hold sway over this ancient ally that should belong to all beings on Earth?

It's not too late to rescue our silver sister from human greed. Let's not exile the ancient Moon magic, interpreted not long ago as a partner in Earth's creation with power over birth and death, renewal and transformation.

The Blackfoot tribe held the Moon, Komorkis, as a child of the sacred Sky People, the wife of the sun god and mother of the stars. She is said to be the grandmother of several heroes of Blackfoot legend, like Star Boy, Morning Star's mortal son, and an important figure in the Blackfoot Sun Dance. As half-mortal, half-deity, Star Boy journeys to the Sky World to gain his father's divine favor. The Sun sends Star Boy back to the earthly world with the sacred knowledge of the Sun Dance, a ceremony of thanks for the creator's blessing.

Such legends retain the essence of human understanding of the many relationships between earth and space. Like all world myth, these tales record timeless insight into human origins, cultural values and the creation of a sense of order in what is often a chaotic world.

"Get Wild" publishes on Fridays in the Summit Daily News. Joyce Mosher is a longtime Breckenridge resident, a professor of literature and sustainability and a supporter of Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance, an all-volunteer nonprofit that helps the U.S. Forest Service protect and preserve the wilderness areas in Eagle and Summit counties. For more information, visit EagleSummitWilderness.org.



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