

May 2023

THE MONTHLY GAZETTE

*"Hail bounteous May that doth inspire
Mirth and youth, and warm desire
Woods and groves, are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale, doth boast thy blessing."*

~ John Milton, "Song on May Morning"



Bird of the Month – **Nightingale**

The nightingale is a European songbird with a rather plain appearance but possessing a particularly lovely song. In fact, these special birds, which feast on a diet of invertebrates like beetles and flies, can produce over 1,000 different sounds. This is remarkable considering that many other birds of similar size can make only one-third to one-tenth as many noises. They're able to do this because the part of their brain dedicated to making sound is much larger than is typical. Interestingly, despite their name, nightingales most often sing during the day. They primarily sing at night



only during their mating season. Doing so can attract predators, which is why they usually don't risk it unless they have a chance to attract a mate. The light brown birds can be quite aggressive during this time and will defend their territory if they feel threatened or encroached upon. They are shy and elusive birds, preferring thick, tangled habitat.

Special Days

May Day
May 1

Cinco de Mayo
May 5

Mother's Day
May 14

**Armed Forces
Day (U.S.)**
May 20

**Victoria Day
(Canada)**
May 22

Memorial Day (U.S.)
May 29

Flower – Lily of the Valley



May's flower is a lovely, delicate, fragrant plant that is highly prized for making perfume. Lily of the valley water was once considered so precious that it was kept in gold and silver containers. In folklore, it is believed that the scent of this flower in spring air is the signal for the nightingale to begin its seasonal mating song. The lily of the valley is known by several other names, including Our Lady's Tears. According to legend, the tears Mary shed at the cross turned into the flower we know as lily of the valley.

Birthstone – Emerald



Emeralds are considered the gemstone of spring due to their rich green color, but officially, they are the birthstone of May. These beautiful stones have long been a favorite of royalty; Cleopatra favored them and had them mined extensively during her reign. Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj Mahal, wore an emerald talisman inscribed with holy text for luck and protection. Emeralds are the gift associated with a couple's 55th anniversary and are said to symbolize enduring love.

The Animal in You: Birthday Critters

May 1–7: Dog

You are loyal, loving, and fiercely protective of your friends and family. You have the uncanny ability to know how to cheer people up. While you love to be active, you're also a pro at relaxing.

May 8–16: Monkey

You love having a fast-paced lifestyle; even a bit of boredom drives you crazy. You tend to enjoy being the center of attention but can also laugh at yourself. Always upbeat, your personality wins people over every time.

May 17–23: Turtle

Your happy-go-lucky approach keeps you centered no matter what life throws your way. Even when times get tough, you are upbeat and spread joy wherever you go. You are a very good listener and are known to give good advice.

May 24–31: Lion

With your peaceful but intense nature, you feel most at home when you are outside. You exude strength and kindness. A born leader, your gentleness helps you earn others' trust. You make friends easily.



Eye Love May

Now is the perfect time to take care of your eyes, as May is Healthy Vision Month. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, age-related vision impairment can be reduced by getting regular eye exams.

May Zodiac

Taurus (the Bull)
May 1–20

Gemini (the Twins)
May 21–31

May is the fifth month of the year and one of seven months with 31 days. There are several theories about how May got its name. The most widely accepted explanation is that it was named for Maia, the Greek goddess of fertility, spring, and growth. The name *Maia* also means "mother" in Greek. The Roman poet Ovid, however, provides a second etymology in which he says that May is named for the *maiores*, Latin for "elders" or "ancestors," who were celebrated during this month.

May Openings

Brooklyn Bridge: May 24, 1883
Lincoln Memorial: May 30, 1922
Empire State Building: May 1, 1931
Golden Gate Bridge: May 27, 1937

What's Lucky in May?

Lucky Colors: Teal and Pink
Lucky Animal: Seal
Lucky Letters: *N* and *W*
Lucky Day: Tuesday
Lucky Plant: Begonia



May Birthdays

Frankie Valli (singer) – May 3, 1934
Nellie Bly (journalist) – May 5, 1864
Bob Seger (singer) – May 6, 1945
Edward Gibbon (historian) – May 8, 1737
Martha Graham (dancer) – May 11, 1894
George Lucas (filmmaker) – May 14, 1944
Margaret Sullavan (actress) – May 16, 1909
Cher (singer and actress) – May 20, 1946
Fats Waller (jazz composer) – May 21, 1904
Bill Robinson (tap dancer) – May 25, 1878
Sally Ride (astronaut) – May 26, 1951
Rachel Carson (biologist) – May 27, 1907
Clint Eastwood (actor) – May 31, 1930