



[Click here](#) to return to the **Medicine Wheel** page.

[Click here](#) to see our **Native American Note Cards**.



THE LONG SNOWS MOON

ELK

The Long Snows Moon (November 22 to December 21) is the last moon of Mudjekeewis and the final moon of the year. Moving clockwise, the stone representing this position is three-quarters of the way between the western and northern stones of the wheel. Obsidian is the mineral totem, the black spruce is the plant totem, and the elk is the animal totem. The color is black and the elemental influence comes from the Thunderbird Clan.

From Obsidian, the people experiencing this position can learn about their ability to perceive and mirror the thoughts and feelings of others. The black spruce teaches how to be soft and strong at the same time, and the elk demonstrates the power of beauty, majesty, and cooperation. This is the position in which to learn about your desire for justice, and your ability to live with the dualities of nature and life. The Long Snows Moon teaches about mental strength, deep fear of emotions, relationships, teaching, and communicating. People in the elk position are insightful, independent, fearless, determined, and open hearted. They need to guard against being overly argumentative and erratic in intimate relationships.

ANIMAL:



Elk is the animal totem associated with the Long Snows Moon. The elk, also known as wapiti, is the largest and most regal member of the deer family. Elk antlers can resemble tree branches.

Elk live in the woodlands and seem to have a sense of responsibility for one another. When snows are heavy they will take turns breaking the trail. Sometimes elk form a big circle; prance around, sometimes breaking into a gallop of joy; and seem to dance together. Elk are fast: able to go at thirty miles an hour for short distances. They are also able to leap fences as high as ten feet.

Elk have few natural enemies. Cougars, bears, and wolves will sometimes succeed in bringing down a calf, or a weak or sick animal. None of them are a match for the bull in his prime. Before 1900, however, most of the elk in the United States were slaughtered by hunters. Often the only reason for the killing was to make two of their teeth into jewelry valued by a fraternal organization.

Most of the year elk, like deer, live in same-gender herds. When the mating season is about to begin, bull elk try to get as many cows as they can into their harem, and they will fervently defend their harem from the approach of any other bulls.

In the spring, when it is time to calf, the cows go to the valleys. Calves are hidden for the first part of their lives while their mothers go out to browse. Like fawns, calves are born without a smell to afford them protection.

Native people had great respect for the elk: for her speed, her beauty, her strength, and concern for her people. In some tribes if a man dreamed of an elk, or saw one in a vision, it made him one who could attend and speak in the council of women.

From working with elk you can learn about strength, responsibility, joy, speed, agility, possessiveness, protection, regality, justice, and wisdom.

PLANT:



Black Spruce is the plant associated with the Long Snows Moon. Apart from providing beauty, wood, and oxygen, the black spruce has other uses. The tips of this tree are high in vitamin C and can be used as a tea or nibbled on. A tea made from the leaves is good as an antiseptic and helps to loosen mucus in the throat and chest. The gum can be applied to cuts and wounds to clean them and can also be used as an inhalant both in and out of the sweat lodge. The tree gum can be made into a plaster for setting bones. A tea from the twigs makes a good bath and is helpful in curing colds. Black spruce can help you explore lofty ideas, your earth connection, and your unique ways of reaching to Spirit. It can teach you about a deep inner strength that encourages softness.

MINERAL:



Obsidian is the mineral associated with the Long Snows Moon. Obsidian has the power to ground people to the earth energy, teaching them how to respect and use this energy within their own beings. Obsidian reflects the thoughts of another person to the one wearing it, bestowing on the wearer a sort of clairvoyance. It also helps people to see into the future. Obsidian is a strong protective stone and is also good for clarifying your inner state. Obsidian helps you to center your being with the earth energy, and thus provides the protection of stability.

