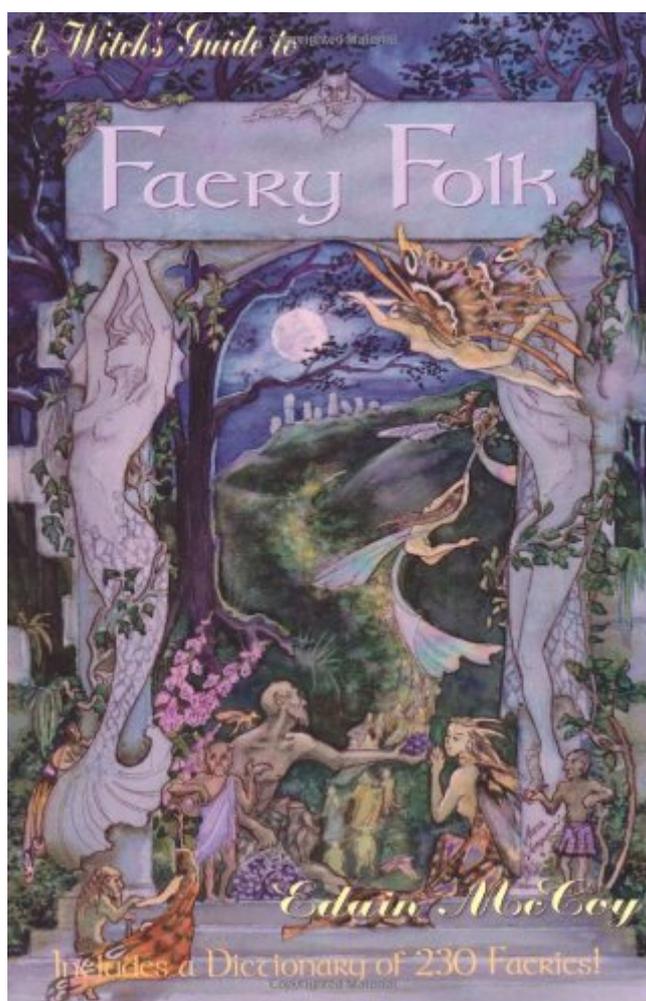


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A Witch's Guide To Faery Folk: How To Work With The Elemental World (Llewellyn's New Age)



Synopsis

Work magick with help from the little people All over the world, people have reported encounters with a race of tiny people who are neither human nor deity. This book reclaims that lost, rich heritage of working with faery folk that our Pagan ancestors took for granted. Edain McCoy teaches how to work with faeries in a mutually beneficial way. Practice rituals and spells in which faeries can participate, and discover tips to help facilitate faery contact. These capricious creatures can help with divination, past life recall, scrying, and spiritual quests. Also included is a dictionary of more than 230 faeries that include goblins, gnomes, elementals, seasonal faeries, and angels.

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Customer Reviews

I am an academic folklorist, and my specialties are fairy lore and classical fairy tales (which are related, but not identical areas of study). Speaking as a scholar, I have to say that her scholarship, while not outstanding, was better than a lot of New Age fairy books. She occasionally indulges in the fluffs, but she has the sense to list most of the fairies in her rather interesting "Dictionary" as dangerous, and not to be contacted. In this aspect, I found her to be better than Ted Andrews, and even the otherwise excellent Patricia Telesco; most of her fairies aren't adorable, and she advises

respect at all times, even with benevolent fairies. The breakdown of the steps involved in spell and ritual construction were useful, and she included a halfway decent bibliography. On the other hand, this book definitely has problems. Her sections on the fairies of various lands are generalized and sloppy. She doesn't footnote -- her scholarship is strongest when she's referencing Katharine Briggs, but she doesn't credit her. To top it off, she commits one big, blistering error, which, if contact was attempted, might get some dumb fluff bunny killed: the bannik -- the Russian spirit of the bath house -- is most definitely a "Contact not advised!" entity. Folklore relates that, while banniks have occasionally been known to do good deeds, in general they are considered among the nastiest spirits in the Russian fairy pantheon; one of their favorite activities is skinning unwary bathers alive (see Russian Folk Belief, by Linda Ivanits). In general, I agree with the person who stated that if you want accurate fairy lore, go to Katharine Briggs (I would also suggest Carole Silver and Maureen Duffy); however, this is the most useful book for Neo-Pagans interested in making contact with the fairies in a ritual context. Just be sure to cross-check fairy types with Briggs' Encyclopedia of Fairies!

I used to own a metaphysical bookstore, and was duly excited when this book came out. However, upon reading it, I sent every copy back to the distributor, with the exception of one copy I kept as an example of a badly researched book for neophyte witches. The author did not do her homework on the subject very well. In her view, the Good Folk are little, friendly creatures who are glad to be contacted and in some cases, ordered about by neopagans and witches. The bulk of extant folklore does not bear out these white-light, fluffy-bunny cutsie-wootsie beliefs. In the traditions of the British Isles, and among the Native American tribes, the Little People were considered to sometimes be allied with humanity, but were more likely to be at odds with humans or at the least, uncaring of humanity. Rituals were developed, and a complex set of rules were followed on how to propitiate these beings and to keep human relations with them on a safe level. The powers that these beings were said to wield were considerable, and not to be trifled with. As a witch for over 17 years, and as someone who has studied the folklore of the Good Folk for around 20 years, I refuse to believe that someone who has obviously not bothered to do her homework on a subject could be qualified as an authority on it. No, thank you, I will stick to the tried and true methods developed by people over hundreds of years when dealing with unknown entities such as the Good Folk, and ignore the advice of someone who likely hasn't seen one in her life, and who probably only wrote the book for the money it would bring her. If anyone wants to learn more about the Little People, I would suggest that they read Katherine Briggs' work, "The Encyclopedia of Fairies," which is a far more interesting

book, written by someone who has made the study of the folklore and beliefs about the Good Folk her life's work.

Written in fourth-grader style, not well researched, and frequently inaccurate. Author quotes books of nursery rhymes, Mother Goose, Brian Froud, the 'Enchanted World' series of Time-Life books, and her own works in the bibliography; the closest this book gets to genuine research is an abridged version of Frazer and a speculative work of Joseph Campbell's. Use this book for magic at your own risk! Or, save yourself the trouble of having to relearn the right information later, and instead buy a copy of Alexander Porteous' *The Forest in Folklore and Mythology*.

No book is perfect, and there are several flaws to McCoy's work, but all and all, this is a fine book. The premise is the witch working with the faery, an excellent idea, and a valuable collection to any collector of books on witchcraft, wicca, and faerylore. The introduction is wonderful, and the source list is valuable. The book also includes a dictionary of some 200 plus faery creatures. If I have a complaint, it's that McCoy does not write enough on the German, French, and Bohemian experience, where faery creatures existed as surely as they existed in Ireland, Scotland, and England. McCoy's background is basically Celtic, as with many in the witchcraft community. Love the book, its premise, but I sure would have liked more on the French, Italian, and German folklore. A must for collectors.

This book is very good for reference. The dictionary of faeries is very useful and accurate. However, I did not like how most "How to contact" said "Contact not advised." The spells in the book are very effective, and the guided meditation is a wonderful journey to the faery realm. The book is a little disorganized with bits and peices of information thrown around here and there. Overall though, this book was well written.

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