

# Gillespie Creek Journal

The history of Groundhog Dog according to the Farmers' Almanac dates the celebration to the medieval feast of Candlemas. Its pre-Christian predecessor, Imbolc, a Gaelic festival, foretells that sunny weather on February 1 brings a long winter as told in this Scottish poetry:

*As the light grows longer  
The cold grows stronger  
If Candlemas be fair and bright  
Winter will have another  
Flight  
If Candlemas be cloud and snow  
Winter will be gone and not  
Come again  
A farmer should on  
Candlemas day  
Have half his corn and half his hay  
On Candlemas day if thorns hang a  
drop  
You can be sure of a good pea  
crop.*

This week's photos are all mine, taken in 2022. At the Gillespie Creek Farm we try to live in cooperation with natural animals. Deer, skunk, black bear, porcupine and a woodchuck family have been in residence off and on over the 52 years of our property ownership. In respect for Chucky's family who have always been present, we ignore them as they take a proportion of our harvests...I'm sad to give up the beautiful fragrant Phlox flowers, however.

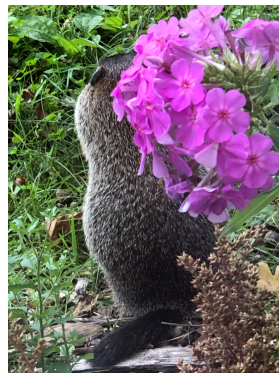
Engage Your Senses



**Gillespie Creek  
"Chucky"**



**Chucky Lives in Our  
Woodshed Until the  
Garden Romain Lettuce  
and Broccoli are Prime.  
He Then Moves into the  
Raised Bed Where  
Meals are more  
Convenient**



**Chucky is Especially  
Fond of Purple Phlox  
Flowers**

Earth's Treasures Abound

## Tomorrow we will celebrate Groundhog Day 2023

Once again I'm driven to write about the family of our beloved Gillespie Creek pal, Chucky. February 2 his relative living in Pennsylvania, Punxsutawney Pete, will be dragged out of hibernation, set above ground to predict the length of the remaining winter weather.

A review of the Farmers' Almanac website reminds us that they use a mathematical and astronomical formula to make long-range weather predictions, not folklore. Their predictions are accurate 80-85% of the time.

How does Pete make his predictions? Simply by being above ground. If the sun is shining and he sees his shadow, winter will not end early...there will be 6 more weeks of it.

If Pete doesn't see his shadow (a cloudy day) we'll have an early spring.

Statistically Pete has a 35% accuracy record.

Groundhogs and Woodchucks Or "Whistle pigs" are a member of the squirrel family. There are six species of woodchucks and marmots that inhabit in the United States.

(From Pest World.org.)

This solitary mammal spends 80% of its life below ground. Having poor eyesight they make a whistling sound to alert others around them of a predator in the area.

Their young are called pups are born in 3-8 sized litters and may live as long 15 years.

Herbivores, they are prey to coyotes, badgers, black bears

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