



National  
Trust

# Spring, An Inventory

To celebrate the start of spring, we asked nature lovers to share their reflections on the arrival of the new season for this poem by nature writer **Elizabeth-Jane Burnett**. The numbers refer to the frequency of words appearing in the submissions from the 400 people who took part.

Fifty-four hopes in the hardwood held,  
slow, the hour brightens  
through damp roots and fused shoots the pressure wells,  
fifty-one blossoms on the cherry swell,  
tiny beech leaves ripen.  
Fifty-four hopes in the hardwood held  
slow, the hour brightens.

Forty-four trees in the waking woods,  
forty-one spilling gardens.  
Five cherry trees where the blackbirds stood,  
thirty-five joys through their gleaming broods,  
thirty-eight buds nectar-guarding  
in forty-four trees in the waking woods,  
in forty-one spilling gardens.

Thirty-four lights in the dark wood spots,  
thirty greens, fizzily fruiting  
thirty-five suns in the speckled moss,  
three daylights, four pink lights blush the docks,  
twenty-two bees new-moving –  
thirty-four lights in the dark wood spots,  
thirty greens, fizzily fruiting.

Twenty-eight songs sing eleven blackbirds,  
twenty-three mornings in chorus.  
Sixteen skies, six skylarks stirred,  
Five rains, four wrens, two herons surge,  
four bluebells, two curlews, two horses.  
Twenty-eight songs sing eleven blackbirds  
Twenty-three mornings in chorus.

One moon and one mouth, one sea and one star,  
only one cuckoo, one car.  
One silence of engines and suddenly choirs  
in the grass, in the soil, on the branch.  
Four hundred notes singing out of one bar,  
four hundred lungs breathing one fresh start,  
one moon and one mouth, one sea and one star,  
only one cuckoo, one car.

