

## ADVANCE WEATHER PREDICTION WINTER 2018/9 (DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY)

Welcome to the Winter 2018/9 advance prediction; of necessity it is compiled from late August through to October, in which time it has the wind direction on the 29<sup>th</sup> September quarter day and the St Luke's little summer period around 18<sup>th</sup> October. It does not however have the wind direction on the all important St Martin's Day – November 11<sup>th</sup> – that gives the wind direction certainly up to Candlemass – 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019 and possibly further to 21<sup>st</sup> March – St Benedict, Quarter day; neither does it not include the wind direction for 21<sup>st</sup> December, the Quarter day between September and March. Of necessity however, due to several newspaper comments about the bitterly cold winter about to hit us (again?), I have decided to release this in early October without the benefit of the St Luke's little summer reports – these will be contained within the November website entry

The wind direction on 29<sup>th</sup> September was however variable for different regions; for the SE it was SSE; therefore dry benign weather, cold at night but dry days and fogs too early mornings. For east Anglia up to the Humber it was Easterly with weather similar to the SE: – beyond the Humber to the borders E/NE, maybe for the fells some dampness but dry for the greater part. For the west of Scotland NW wind that extended down in to the NW, therefore some wet weather and if cold enough in the usual places, then snow; Cheshire down to mid Wales westerly with some dampness. Mid Wales to south Wales westerly; and South Wales and the SW of the UK then W/SW, therefore some dampness – but normal for the region for the time of year.

Despite numerous newspaper and some 'weather pundits' claims of 4 months cold winter and snow to come, with even cold and snow in the first week of October, I stick with the previously advertised autumn predictions and reinforce them here with a similar outlook for the winter.

I base a lot of my methodology on walking the countryside, looking and seeing; if the winter was going to be very cold with months of snow, my experience tells me that squirrels would be hoarding acorns and nuts – I see no evidence of this. Jays, great hoarders of acorns – who also can recall exactly where they hoard such supplies – have not been seen doing any such hoards. Horses, cattle and sheep would by now be growing thicker winter coats, but though their coats are growing nothing like I would expect for a long hard cold winter.

Normally the huge displays of nuts, fruits, hips, haws, seeds and berries would indicate a long hard winter; however though there is a magnificent display of all such items this year, there is another reason – an acute water shortage in many places, with dried streams, brooks, springs and ponds; low rivers and reservoirs, boreholes in many places bone dry, being visual evidence there for all to see. So nature in its wisdom provides extra such foods, food that contain liquids, that help alleviate the acute water shortage, food that contains extra energy too; masses of quince, medlar, bullace and damsons, juniper fruits rarely seen (or for some even heard of) yet in masses this year; rose hips also come into this equation. It is being able to see what nature does – nature is never wrong, nature looks after its own, nature gives the weather 90 to 180 days down the line.

Christmas day will give you the weather for May then June to August; it is a matter of looking and seeing. It matters not one iota how brilliant the computer models are that some 'experts' use to tell us what results such computations produce; such computers do not feel the air on the face, see the berries etc, do not see how the farm stock prepares for the season ahead. With such 'eye-ball' evidence I see not what such computer models predict, I see what nature predicts, and the methodology then produces the results. You can now read the winter the methodology has produced. Enjoy the read.

Whilst many millions may have enjoyed the heat and dryness of the summer, sadly for all of us, there is a massive price to pay in the coming months. It was lovely whilst it lasted and most hoped for it to continue, but here in the UK we are not used to such weather, nor are we equipped to deal with it either, and as such we just treat it as a bonus. More than half of the world survives on precious little water, here in the UK we must learn too, to respect water.

I get many e-mails from growers, farmers, producers and those that work the land, and for such mails I am eternally grateful, please keep them coming. I work a whole year ahead, this gives me a vital foresight of what is to come, and why sometimes current weather is as it is; it also gives me the opportunity to supply advance weather for those who ask for it. The methodology here is as good as I can get it, I trust it implicitly, but the June weather 'cock-up,' was due to human error; nature warned me many times and I mis-read the warnings, but nature did tell me of problems ahead in 2018 – hence the 'spits and farts' reference on TV, radio and in many newspaper articles. Nature warned me of the heat – I mis-read it.

Working as far ahead as I do, sometimes the methodology highlights something major, that will adversely affect us all weather wise; the long hard cold winter past was the classic, this was highlighted a whole year ahead, and, against all the perceived wisdom, knowledge and understanding of the other weather bureaux, I stuck with it. The result was clear for all to see.

Because I work so far ahead I can see another possible massive problem for 2019 ahead – again I may well be out on the proverbial branch or head above the parapet – but I will stick with it, the methodology I trust, it is tried tested and proven. I can only tell you what it says, it is then for each person to make their own judgement. So before I tell you the problem, I will highlight some of the problems raised by the hot summer just passed.

Some of you, as you read on, may recognise what I am getting at, but it is essential to read through and then I will divulge what the methodology here has highlighted. A bit long-winded for sure, but not everyone lives in rural areas, and those that do will understand exactly.

The heat and dryness of June 2018 caused untold damage to crops that in due course will manifest it over the next few months by rising prices for most foodstuffs in the shops, and sadly since prices when they rise, never really reduce more expense for all of us. [Damp warmish weather is vital in June to establish crops- especially grain – they have shallow roots and water is vital; other crops too need water, this June there was hardly any water at all – the result is for all now to see].

The simple reason for them staying higher is that until new home grown crops are produced here in the UK, expensive imports must fill the gaps. The affected crops were/are all vegetables, salads, some fruit, grain and oil (rape and vegetable) products.

However further damage was done, especially in the east Anglia and SE regions by the continued heat and dryness that went from June into much of August without a break, in places with no rain for 56 days continuously and excessive heat too. Other parts of the UK suffered less and for the greater part after June had near normal temperatures with sun and rain too, and were not so badly affected.

Having said that, for farmers and growers it's indeed been a really hard time, with thousands of acres lost or ploughed back into the soil due to lack of water, heat and also the unsustainable cost of water and electricity to irrigate such crops. When you see a kg of carrots in supermarkets for 45pence, however can a farmer survive, with all his costs, on such low prices? The simple answer is that he cannot – therefore since he cannot produce crops at a certain price ratio, then he has to abandon the crop – that is just one reason why we will have to pay more for our food, since that crop has to be replaced with expensive imports.

The cattle and animal farmers too have their problems; no grass means that winter fodder now has to be used to feed cattle and sheep – this begs the question, 'where does winter feed come from then?' For some it does not, and they have to sell their cattle to survive, and maybe a lifetime's work is destroyed by excess heat and lack of water. Sheep too suffer, they survive but do not grow fatter, again a loss for the producer.

Pig farmers have their problems, in that pigs suffer badly from excessive heat too, therefore costs rise in the husbandry of the animals, and shortages too later for pig meat.

Milk producers have their problems; no grass means less milk but also no grass again means using vital winter fodder – therefore production, already low by the lack of grass, suffers too because of the increased price of feed – so the price of dairy products rises.

Poultry farmers also face massive problems with heat and lack of rain, it costs more in electricity to keep the growing sheds ventilated and watered; plus too the cost of feed goes through the roof, therefore production drops and prices inevitably rise to cover costs.

It was a poor year for the hay harvest; too wet, then too cold, and then too hot. The crop when it came, and it came from a very slow start very quickly indeed, was thin and lacked the normal ingredients and nutritional value – likewise for the cost of hay also, as the heat and dryness went on to rise rapidly, therefore higher costs again for such users.

Grain: above 25C grain loses 1% of its crop, with June so hot and then July, the crop ratio was well below the norm, not only is there therefore a possible shortage of grain looming in places, but the price of straw (as with hay) also rises exponentially, again massive unexpected costs for users.

So what has all this to do with the weather I hear some ask? Everything is the reply.

Any farmer will tell you that he grows crops on a rotation: crop rotation is the practice of growing a series of dissimilar or different types of crops in the same area in sequenced seasons. It is done so that the soil of farms is not used for only one set of nutrients.

It helps in reducing soil erosion and increases soil fertility and crop yield. This year some farmers lost their winter wheat crop, replanted with beans and lost these too, other crops had to be ploughed back into the ground; therefore the normal crop rotation sequence has been/is now broken, and as such, it will be the skills and expertise of the producer/farmer to get back to some sort of rotation as a matter of urgency. That is easier said than done, for unless you do such work then the complications and regulations of this regime are not known or understood.

The heat and dryness also prevented many insects and invertebrates from laying eggs/larvae in the soil (it was far too hard) as normal; therefore come springtime there will for sure be a shortage of such insects and invertebrates; such small creatures all have their part to play in enriching the soil in so many ways. With excessive heat and dryness it will take a lot of steady rain for nature to recover the damage done by this unpredicted and unpredictable hot summer; maybe a lot longer than many think or envisage too.

Water is our life blood, for without water life becomes very difficult. Here in the UK, sad to say, we do not respect water, we disrespect it, we abuse it, we do not value it; it is not until it starts to run short that the penny drops, and we learn just what such a commodity it is.

Having bored everyone stupid with the above - but unless I try to ram home the implications, some may not understand; overkill? I think not! - So why have not other weather bureaux mentioned this? Maybe computer models do not understand nature, maybe not enough attention is paid to walking across fields to see what is happening, but all the answers are there, loud and clear.

So the answer to the problem I raised earlier is that very likely, we have a water shortage looming...maybe you now realise why I highlighted the above problems... I know I'm a lone voice in the wilderness, but as with the last winter, I stick with the methodology.

Today is August Bank Holiday weekend; already United Utilities that serves the NW has been granted emergency powers to extract extra water from rivers, bore holes and other such sources, since they have a shortage of water already; please bear in mind that this region includes the Lake District – renowned for and dependent on water for its designation. When such a region goes short, then the alarm bells are already ringing.

Autumn will be dry, a little warmer than normal, but with precious little rainfall. The autumn prediction has been on the website for all to see for many weeks now, therefore it is not new news; the warnings are there and have been there, loud and clear for many weeks.

Precious little snow, if any, except in the normal places, will fall this winter. There will be a lot of dry weather, yes, frosts at night, especially in February – this to be expected since the previous June was exceptionally hot and there is a tried and tested saying on this. But with no rain in February, then for sure this will activate the rainfall drought warning that is alerted in that month and into March for problems later in the year.

Christmas Day will be dry with sunshine – this indicates too a good fruit and grain harvest, therefore hot dry sunny periods for both harvests, and propitious growing conditions prior to the harvest. [Christmas day 2017 was wet and stormy, indicating a poor fruit and grain harvest, and the grass was growing on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 too – all signs that showed the problems ahead for 2018 and once again nature warned 6 months ahead – I mis-read the signs.]

The UK onion crop 2018 was not good, the planting was late and production not brilliant; I understand that the skins will not be thick either – a sign of a benign winter indeed. No robins yet staking their territory in the back garden – yet another banker for a long hard winter and finally not so many white dead-nettle flowers either. This last sign is important, for the nettles harbour the eggs of the tortoiseshell butterfly over the winter; however, due the hot dry summer, many butterflies without sufficient food perished; many invertebrates that lay larvae in the ground during a normal summer were not able to do so this year, hence a shortage in the spring of some insects and butterflies – is it any wonder there appears to be a surfeit of birds, hips, haws etc now – nature knows what lies ahead.

#### DECEMBER 2018

NEW MOON = 7th @ 0720hrs = Stormy

1st QUARTER MOON =15th @ 1149hrs = Cold & high winds.

FULL MOON = 22nd @ 1748hrs = Fair.

LAST QUARTER MOON 29th @ 0934hrs = Cold rain

21<sup>st</sup> = December/Winter Solstice @ 2223hrs

13<sup>th</sup> + 14<sup>th</sup> December = Geminids Meteor Shower

21<sup>st</sup> + 22<sup>nd</sup> = Irsids Meteor Shower

DoP = 21<sup>st</sup> St Thomas's + shortest day of year + Quarter day

Highest spring tides 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>

APOGEE 12<sup>th</sup> @ 1227hrs: PERIGEE 24<sup>th</sup> @ 0953hrs

MET OFFICE NOTES: Stormy carried forward from 24<sup>th</sup> November to 14<sup>th</sup>.

Quiet period 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> : Stormy 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>.

BUCHAN NOTES: 3<sup>rd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> warm period

Looking at December, there's a breezy start to the month, then for the Christmas period a fair moon which equals calm, some sun and fair weather = a dry Christmas day with some

sunshine, which in turn predicts reasonable fruit harvest, therefore no severe May frosts to kill the fruit blossoms, plus propitious weather too for fruit growth production and harvesting. This day with sun also predicts a good grain harvest, which in turn indicates a reasonable summer with excellent growing conditions, some and rain but also dry and sunny for harvest time. It is therefore quite easy to see that nature is putting out advance weather signs from May onwards of a good summer.

Note too that the Christmas week will not be that cold, which if the ground is still 6C then grass will be growing, so cold rain on the 29<sup>th</sup> onwards (when it is also a Met Office Stormy period) will not affect such growth, but the significance here is that if the grass is growing on the 1<sup>st</sup> January (highly likely), then there will be just one hay harvest in the year – and this will be normally, dependent on location, June into July. Again another warning 180 days ahead from nature of future weather.

*To summarise December 2018: No frost or snow, a stormy start but never that cold, possible warmer than the average too with a dry fair Christmas day and no real weather problems as such.*

#### JANUARY 2019

NEW MOON 6th @ 0128hrs = Frosty

1st QUARTER MOON = 14th @ 0645hrs = Stormy

FULL MOON 21st @ 0516hrs = Rain - Supermoon

LAST QUARTER MOON 27th @ 2110hrs = Snow (if cold enough otherwise rain)

DoP = 25th St Paul.

HIGHEST SPRING TIDES 21<sup>st</sup> to 25th.

Apogee 9th @ 0429 hrs. Perigee 21st @ 1958hrs

Partial Solar Eclipse 6<sup>th</sup> @ 0141hrs

Total Lunar Eclipse 21<sup>st</sup> @ 0512hrs

**A combination of the Full moon, a perigee, highest spring tides and a total Lunar eclipse on the 21<sup>st</sup>, could, for tidal and coastal regions be a time of concern for some.**

MET OFFICE NOTES: 5th to 17th Stormy. 18th to 24th Quiet. 25th to 31st Stormy again.

BUCHAN NOTES: NONE.

January 2019 starts wet with rain carried over from December 2018, a warmish start to the month with grass growing too (not a good sign for later in the year – especially for those that rely on a good hay harvest); then the first frost of 2019 gives way in turn to breezy stormy conditions and ending the month with rain. With the lack of rain toward the back end of 2018 into 2019 such rain will be more than welcome. Maybe for the regular snow spots some snow, but for the rest of the UK, precious little snow – if any.

For those in coastal or flood plain regions a warning of the full moon/perigee/highest spring tides (in red above) is given, better to be forewarned and prepared must be the watchword.

*To summarise January: Not that cold, hopefully some much needed winter rains, some early frost and stormy in the middle (but mid-January is always stormy), I think again a touch or two warmer than average – but not as warm as January 2018.*

## FEBRUARY 2019

NEW MOON = 4th @ 2103hrs = Snow – if cold enough, otherwise rain.

1st QUARTER MOON = 12th @ 2226hrs = Fair & frosty

FULL MOON = 19<sup>th</sup> @ 1553hrs = Fair & mild +Supermoon

LAST QUARTER MOON 26th @ 1127hrs = Cold & high winds

DoP = 2nd = Candlemass

Highest Spring Tides 19th to the 24th

Perigee 19<sup>th</sup> @ 0906hrs; Apogee 5<sup>th</sup> @ 0926hrs

MET OFFICE NOTES: 24th to 28th stormy.

BUCHAN NOTES: 7th to 14th cold period.

**A combination of the Full moon, a perigee, highest spring tides and a total Lunar eclipse on the 19th, could, for tidal and coastal regions be a time of concern for some.**

Yet another month devoid of snow but also lacking in rainfall too; it will be a cold month since the coldest days in June the preceding year always give the coldest days the following February, and June 2018 was indeed very hot for the whole month. So, whilst cold at nights with frost, this has the advantage of giving dry sunny calm days, therefore February will be for the greater part quite benign but dry too.

Nature is very good at giving advance warnings of problems ahead; there is a massive warning this month – and to emphasize this I have also included, albeit technically being a spring month, March. If the total rainfall for the last 18 days of February and the first 10 days of March exceed the norm for the location (here it is exactly 100mm), then a wet year ahead by however much it exceeds the norm; if it is lower than the norm then a dry year ahead i.e. drought conditions but again dependent on the total. With precious little rain – if any – from the 12<sup>th</sup> onwards and with this dry spell extending right through to the 28<sup>th</sup> March, then another set of warning signs starts to be highlighted for a dry summer to come.

So, dry Christmas day with some sunshine, grass growing on 1<sup>st</sup> January and now a shortage of rain from 12<sup>th</sup> February for some six weeks through to the end of March: nature is sending

a very loud and powerful message of problems that lie ahead. Add to this that several regions in the UK already have looming water problems, and that with good cause there are predictions ahead of another hot summer in 2019 ahead, then to fail to take notice of such warnings might be seen as sheer stupidity.

An aside here, just to show how the June/July heat and dryness in 2018 came out of the blue, both unpredicted and unpredictable; the rainfall here for the last 18 days of February into the first 10 days of March was exactly 100mm – the norm. With the early arrival of the cuckoo and other such signs, there was no inkling anywhere that such heat was even contemplated, and as such, no heat warnings were even thought of.

The Met Office summer forecast for June, July and August 2018 was:

“Britain is ‘moderately’ likely to enjoy warmer and drier than average conditions. It is also moderately likely that there will be less rain than average over the period, however despite the positive prediction, there could still be daily and weekly changes throughout June, July and August.”

On the same day as the above publication in the Telegraph newspaper, the respected correspondent in The Times Paul Simons predicted ‘damp and warm, with odd warmer period every now and then, but no firm dates as such, for the summer period.’

Therefore even the real experts were confounded by the unpredictable and unpredicted summer of 2018.

As with the advance cold long winter forecast I gave for winter 2017/8 months ahead, against the generally conceived opinions and expertise, I again will put my head over the parapet/on the line, and using the tried, tested, reliable and proven methodology here, by suggesting that winter 2018/9 here will be dry, a little above the average temperature wise, but that the signs are already in place for a drought/drought conditions to manifest itself during the summer of 2019 – in addition to any heat, as in 2018. I may be wrong, but the methodology here is now as good as I can get it.

*To summarise February: A very dry month, with some hard frosts overnight, a lot of sunshine, no snow but nothing of any consequence. Another benign month.*

March 2019

NEW MOON = 6th @ 1603hrs = Fair

1st QUARTER MOON = 14th @ 1027hrs = Cold & high winds

FULL MOON 21st @ 0142hrs = Frost.

LAST QUARTER MOON 28th @ 0409hrs = Rain

MARCH/VERNAL EQUINOX 20th @ 2158hrs

DoP = 21st St Benedict AND Quarter Day 21st

BST Starts 31st March 2019 @ 0100 hrs.

Highest spring tides 18th to the 24th

Perigee 19th @ 1947hrs: Apogee 4<sup>th</sup> @ 1125hrs

MET OFFICE NOTES: None.

BUCHAN NOTES: None.

A combination of the Full moon, a perigee, highest spring tides and a total Lunar eclipse on the 21st, could, for tidal and coastal regions be a time of concern for some.

March is considered the first month of spring, and as such would not normally appear here with the winter predictions; however, as explained above there are extenuating circumstances to include March in this prediction, in that February will be exceptionally dry and that March will be likewise.

It is easy to see that the dry February extends right through to the 28<sup>th</sup> March, hence giving rise and substance to the methodology here that with two exceptionally dry months, the fears of Water GB PLC over a dry autumn and dry winter could well be the harbingers of a water problem arising in 2019 are well founded.

Again I add the caveat that the methodology here might be wrong, this I doubt, therefore on the evidence I have I stick with the warning of possible water problems in 2019 and produce the methodology for such a claim.