

ADVANCE PREDICTIONS DECEMBER 2015 – FEBRUARY 2016
WINTER 2015/2016

This data continues from the earlier autumn 2015 advance predictions.

All the signs from nature in 2015 indicated a hard long winter to come 2015 into 2016, the easiest seen signs being the abundant fruit and grain harvests, the wonderful hay harvest and the optimum growing conditions for such produce through the year.

The wind direction here in the SE on 29th September (Michaelmass/Quarter Day) was N/NE, therefore the predominant wind direction up to the next such Quarter Day (21st December) will be N/NE, which means that cold dry air will flow eastwards from the near continent, with precious little precipitation, but in slacker periods will also produce frost. However, though here in the SE that was the wind direction, it is quite possible that other areas had a different wind direction, which will produce a different air flow (and prediction).

The first Bewick swan arrived at the Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust on 11th October, some 25 days earlier than the previously recorded arrival from Russia, due to very cold temperatures of 5 to 10C lower than average there flying ahead of these cold easterly winds that will surely follow, prompting warnings of a long hard very cold winter. (Russian proverb; "The swan brings the snow on its bill.")

Already here on the lagoon in Edenbridge there are Scandinavian Wheatear, arctic starlings, brambling, a few redwing and a few fieldfares, plus too some mallard, pochard, goldeneye, gadwall and treal, all earlier than usual from northern climes, all indicators of a cold long winter being not that far away.

The next Quarter Day on 21st December I fully expect to be from the same direction, which will reinforce all the signs of a hard long cold winter nature has been preparing for these last six months.

The seed, fruit hips, haws and berry trees and bushes also showed magnificent growth and produce too this year, nuts of all sorts, acorns, seeds such ash, hornbeam etc, brambles and sloes, all for animals, birds and in some cases humans too. Everything that nature produced in 2015 pointed towards a long hard cold winter.

The four absolute bankers for a hard cold winter were present in September, they being:

1. The robin marking and taking up territory in the garden adjacent to the back door of the house – the source of food crumbs.
2. Hedgerows filled with white dead nettle flowers – an indicator too of a good spring, for such plants also are where the tortoiseshell butterflies lays its eggs.
3. Sheep already have thick coats.
4. The skins of new season ENGLISH onions have thick hard skins this year.

To the above four must be added the abundance of acorns this year – last year hardly any, and a mild winter resulted.

It was therefore no surprise that Australian scientists produced a report that El Nino would cause climate changes during the next few year, and indeed in July, parts of sun-drenched Australia experienced for the first time for many years, deep snow and ice, which would tend to prove such predictions correct. However a senior scientist from UK stated that (September) it was too early yet to determine the exact effects of El Nino on the UK for the winter.

There was also a report from the UK Met Office acknowledging that the sun-spots on the sun were lessening and this too was likely to have an effect here in the UK, making temperatures cooler.

Then in July a well publicised report across the whole media spectrum for newspapers to radio and TV, from Northumberland University assisted by other such bodies across the world predicted a 'mini ice-age' from about 2030 to 2040, where the heat of the sun would reduce by some 60% causing severe bitter winters, last seen in 1645 to 1715 and known as the Maunder Minimum.

This report would tend to confirm earlier reports concerning the Dalton Minimum that I commented on in this website in both 2014 and 2015, plus too the data from the much maligned Astrophysicist Piers Corbin and research from respected Russian Universities.

Therefore with such august bodies making such pronouncements, we must accept that such events will take place. [Which as a constant sceptic, I pose the question, 'so what happened to global warming then?']

When I sat down and did the weather template for the whole of 2016 (yes such an undertaking is quite possible using tried and tested methodology) it was not surprising to see that cold over the three months above, very prominent. A lot of frost around and precious little rain and or snow. (**see below)

With frosty moons predominant and such frost lasting well into the second week of April, which then gives a dry but cold clear Easter 2016 – the first dry Easter for a few years too?

Besides the above there are also some very reliable tried and tested sayings that also give excellent indicators of the winter months ahead.

'A cold August after a warm July is said to signify the approach of a hard dry winter.'

'As in August, so next February.'

'Plenty of Buzzards and Kestrels in August indicate a dry (cold?) winter.'

'First week in August was very warm, therefore expect white and long winter(see below)**.'

'If acorns abound in September, snow will be deep in December (see below again**)

My methodology uses many such tried tested and proven sayings as part of the collating and assembly of these advance predictions, and although described by many as 'mumbo-jumbo' with no scientific basis, such sayings prove year in year out to be reliable, therefore they stay as part of the methodology.

Of necessity, this data is assembled months ahead, but some vital details cannot be included. In particular the wind direction on 21st December (Quarter day/equinox/St Thomas'/shortest day of the year) therefore it will be for the individual reader to assess the wind direction that day to give the predominant direction until the next such day on 21st March (St Benedict/Quarter Day/Equinox). I will however put such detail in the January website data-sheet.

Going back to autumn, the saying 'a wet autumn follows a very dry spring,' again proved correct.

'Above average rainfall in May indicates that September could also be above average rainfall' – again proven correct.

'Ascension Day was cold and wet; therefore autumn will be the same,' another proven saying.

'Abundance of acorns, dead nettles and thick onion skins in October indicate a hard winter,' all present already.

'Heavy crop of haw-berries and beech nuts indicates a bad winter to come,' yes proven again.

'If the hare wears a thick coat in October he shows his wisdom.' Local hares have very thick coats, as do the rabbits.

If the reader refers to the October data sheet on the website, just look and see how many of similar sayings to the above are effective this year, the same will apply to November data sheet too. The few examples above are indicative, but proven. Some of these sayings are over 800 years old, they were good then and are still good now, 'if ain't broke then don't fix it.'

A quick reflection on the sayings that had a major effect on 2015 so far and proven correct, were the excellent fruit and grain harvest; the good pea harvest; the bountiful sugar beet crop too breaking all records; the sole excellent hay harvest; the dryer period in early August; the rains in July ('impossible to predict' from the Met Office; The severe storms at the end of August and beginning of September. I did however; fail to highlight the major storm at the end of July.

It is worth remembering too, that the hottest days in June give the coldest days in February.

***** The asterisks above, I will expand here. Last winter the methodology, though primarily SE based, tried to give a general winter weather outline to the UK. Simple reason is that since I also do BBC Radio shows

too, the data goes far and wide, and therefore I have to extend my knowledge and understanding, and it is very challenging, but I hope helpful too.

I divide the UK into three distinct weather regions for the winter to come;

Region One: Scotland, the north of England, the NW and north Wales. Here, as last winter and spring too the effect of cold polar air will be noticeable – with snow in parts of the Cairngorms in August – cold snowy and wintry conditions I think will prevail for this region. However there is a possibility that the extreme NE coast and parts of eastern Yorkshire will have the effect similar to the east and SE below due to effect of the cold winds blowing of the mainland continent – wind/weather that originates in the Urals and accumulate cold as it travel across Europe.

Region Two: The west of England, south and central Wales the west midlands and parts of the south coast and central southern counties to the west of the M3/A3 corridor. Here I think the influence of the Atlantic will be paramount and will give wet stormy weather but also with a caveat, that being that where the cold air travelling west from the eastern regions meets the warm air from the Atlantic then the possibility of snowfalls, maybe heavy will be a major consideration; hence the reason for the asterisks above.

Region Three: The SE, home counties to the east of the M3/A3 corridor, London, East Anglia and the extreme east coast of Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Northumberland. Here the methodology points to a very dry but very cold frosty long winter, not a lot of precipitation but a lot of hard frosts due to cold air arriving from mainland Europe. In some built up areas, where surface heat is enough to influence the cold (A11/M11 A12 corridor) then some snow may arrive. Elsewhere I think it will remain cold, frosty and dry, and precious little snow in this region.

True a bold prediction – and as always I may be completely wrong – but nature is a superb guide, and all the signs out there, so far back up all the old, tried and tested, reliable and proven saw/sayings, and since they are more than 90% correct year in year out (it is the presenter that sometimes misinterprets what the data shows –but not so often now) then I stick with the above. I appreciate there are many micro-climates in certain regions, but for the greater part this is my prediction for the winter 2015/6.

Any pertinent comments concerning the above are always welcome, please remember I am not claiming to do exact weather, I am endeavouring to give an advance general weather situation of the months to come, which, may well be of help to those who need such information. I have been doing this long enough to accept adverse comment, but also to establish some ‘street cred,’ for accuracy working at least three months ahead. Any useful comment therefore to further this credibility is welcome, I do not however need ‘sensationalism headliners,’ wasting my time. I will always reply to the website contact form.

Two forward pointers predicting a good dry spring 2016. First the preponderance of white dead nettles at the road sides – these harbour the eggs of the tortoiseshell butterfly plus too the sunny dry weather on the 29th September (Michaelmass).

If the weather on 29th September(Michaelmass) and 16th October (Gallas) are dry and fair then this is the sign of a dry propitious spring.

THE WINTER MONTHS IN DETAIL NOW FOLLOW

DECEMBER 2015

NEW MOON = 11th @ 1030hrs = Cold & high winds
1st QUARTER MOON = 18th @ 15.15hrs = Fair & mild.
FULL MOON = 25th @ 11.12hrs = Cold & high winds
LAST QUARTER MOON 3rd @ 0741hrs = Stormy.

DoP = 21st St Thomas's

Solstice 21st @ 04.38hrs

Highest spring tides 25th to 29th

Apogee on the 5th and perigee on the 21st

Met Office stormy period from 24th November continues to 14th December, with a Met Office quiet period 15th to 21st; a further Met Office stormy period from 25th to 31st.

There is a Buchan warm period 3rd to the 14th.

[note that all the above correlate more or less with the moons themselves]

As can be seen the immediate view is of a windy month with stormy Christmas period. Equally too not a lot of precipitation predicted.

There is too – and worth noting especially in coastal tidal areas the period 25th to 27th, that potentially dangerous combination of Full Moon, Perigee and highest spring tides.

The quarter day on 21st is important for this will give the predominant wind direction until 21st March; I expect it, at least for those on the east coast, for it to be from the east or SE.

I think a stormy non sunny Christmas Day this year too – no sun, and as the December sayings prove, some serious repercussions for rest of year – but as the October website preamble warned – from the oak apples – a changeable unreliable year ahead. On the upside, a dry sunny, maybe cold, Easter Sunday 2016.

So to summarise the month, a stormy month, not particularly wet, just windy and mildish, but the tides and storms around Christmas are dangerous.

JANUARY 2016

NEW MOON 10th @ 01.31hrs = Frost
1st QUARTER MOON = 16th @ 23.27hrs = Fair & frosty
FULL MOON 24th @ 0146 = Frost
LAST QUARTER MOON 2nd @ 0531hrs = Rain.

DoP = 25th St Paul.

HIGHEST SPRING TIDES 11th to 15th

APOGEE 2nd and 30th & Perigee 15th

Met Office stormy 5th to 17th AND 25th to 31st.
Met Office quiet 18th to 24th.

The predominant weather feature this month is frost. The 'fair & frosty' moon is one of daytime sunshine but still frosty.

No tidal warnings this month and no precipitation indicated [caveat here is that is a SE/E identifier and may well be different in the other two regions mentioned in the preface to this commentary] so dry cold month with no winds, per se, indicated, therefore frosty.

If the wind is from the E/SE or N/NE on 21st December then this will confirm all the above.

To summarise the month, a dry cold frosty quiet month with below average precipitation here in the SE - though other regions may well have variations

FEBRUARY 2016

NEW MOON = 8th @ 14.40hrs = Fair & mild.
1st QUARTER MOON = 15th @ 07.47hrs = Stormy.
FULL MOON 22nd @ 18.20hrs = Fair & frosty
LAST QUARTER MOON 1st @ 23.21hrs = Fair & frosty.

DoP = 2nd = Candlemass

Highest Spring Tides 8th to 14th

Perigee 11th & Apogee 27th

Met Office stormy 24th to 28th

Buchan cold period 7th to 14th.

Another month where frost predominates, but more daytime, though still cold, sunshine, again precious little precipitation and predominantly dry, therefore frost more than likely to remain all the month with hardening soil too. No foreseeable precipitation.

Interest will remain with firstly 2nd, Candlemass 'cold weather at Candlemass means colder weather after the feast than before;' and 9th Shrove Tuesday since 'So as the sun shines on Shrove Tuesday, the like will shine every day in Lent;' plus too 10th Ash Wednesday 'where the wind lies today it will remain for all Lent. A dry Lent spells a fertile year.'

Hottest days in preceding June give the coldest days in the following February; From this data the coldest days will be 3rd to 6th; 12th to the 14th; and from 18th to the end of the month into the first week of March.

To summarise the month, again mainly dry, frosty, cold but with bright sunshine in daytime, maybe a windier period 15th for a few days; otherwise no real problems for month.