

## Weather without technology.

December 2013 Preamble

Welcome to the December issue, and hopefully too, a drier month.

Before I progress, please dear reader look back at the saws/sayings from October, especially those concerning leaf-fall and the coming winter, these will surely help to reinforce all the warnings I have been giving for many months now on a harsh hard winter. Look too at the recently added saws concerning nuts, sloes and Christmas day sunshine; all very apposite.

Some comments on November, St Martin's little summer – what little summer? Precisely. The expected (normally very true) saw did not materialise, some unusually mild weather, but no sunshine or dryness, just rain and yet more rain. So, once again nature threw a 'curler.' However the wind, though not directly easterly did blow from the SE, therefore the cold will originate not for northern Europe but from southern Germany and the Alps, still however cold, therefore the methodology holds up.

The 'severe snow' warnings '19<sup>th</sup> November, as in some alarmist national newspapers, gave rise to several e-mails, 'You never warned us of there did you?' Simple reply, is the only snow maybe, just maybe to affect us here in the SE was about 6<sup>th</sup> November, and the snow did fall, but further north, therefore good prediction. No further snow predicted during month either (for this region), therefore the reason why no second snow warning for month, was that no snow would fall. If the data says something positive it goes into the data sheet, I do not report negatives.

Now to the current month

The main day of interest this month is the 21<sup>st</sup>/St Thomas/Day of prediction/Winter Equinox/Shortest day of the year/ Quarter Day.

Of these the Quarter day is the important day, for where the wind blows this day, it will be the predominant wind direction until at least May 25<sup>th</sup>/St Urban. Therefore, as I expect this to be an easterly wind, then the cold springs (easterly winds) of the last two years will continue.

Will it be a white Christmas? I do not think so in the SE, however north of the Watford gap, you may well see some snow. There is however a saying "If ducks swim at hallowtide (31<sup>st</sup> October) (and they did as it was very wet with localised flooding and rained most of the day) then the same ducks will slide at Christmas – indicating ice." The moon on Christmas day holds the clue, which is why I have been saying for months now, that the snow will commence around Boxing Day – and with the stormy conditions around this time (remember the horrendous winds last year?), any snow, will drift and cause some problems on the roads – and of course, it will always be the 'wrong sort of snow,' for the railways. A glance at the advance forecast January to March 2014 will see why I predict such a snowbound cold period and why.

Go out into the lanes – or even your garden and look at the abundance of Ivy fruits. How so many this year? I maintain another sign of a harsh long cold winter, for Ivy fruits are the only winter fruit that contains nectar at this time of the year – vital for insects and birds. Others will say optimum growing conditions – we all have our opinions. The other use for Ivy is a safe, secure, windproof and waterproof haven for the wren, robin and tits too. The other plant in profusion this year is the greater plantain, aka ribwort, plantain exceptionally rich in vitamins and minerals, yet another sign of a hard long harsh winter. Even after November leaf-fall still the trees retain their leaves – another harsh winter sign.

One for the observant, where have all the grey squirrels gone this year? I saw many column inches on the absence of the tortoiseshell butterflies earlier in the year (reason is simple, the eggs are laid on nettles, with the drought in 2012 not many nettles survived, hence a shortage of eggs, and the result fewer such butterflies); however not a single column inch on the shortage of grey squirrels this year; So why not? You tell me (hundreds of dead nettles this year – so good butterfly summer to come 2014).

I harp on about the importance of the Oak tree to the countryside, the acorns and leaf cover, all vital nature pointers; last winter, very mild (SW wind on 21<sup>st</sup> December too) but a total absence of acorns, sloes and other such essential fruits, so, who, apart from the Jay, stores acorns? The squirrel, therefore with no acorns equals no food, equals starvation, equals death. That is why there is a shortage of squirrels this year. The Jay takes green acorns for the tree and buries them for later, and, it will always find such stores even in snow covered ground. Look too and amongst the boughs and branches you will see the nuthatch and tree creeper using the oak as a winter home, plus too the occasional spotted woodpecker.

One comment about the 'Big Blow,' on the 28<sup>th</sup> October, made great newspaper headlines, but nothing like 1987, and was never ever going to be so either. The simple fact being that nature having spent all year building up food and supplies for the winter was hardly likely to let it all go to waste in fallen trees, nature is not that stupid.

So a few boughs crashed down, a few trees blew over, but nothing really spectacular happened, this storm was predicted, St Jude has always been a wet stormy day and will always be thus.

It gave a few newspapers licence to sensationalise again, but no such warnings came from this column; not even the moon charts gave such warnings. When it is going to be stormy, very stormy indeed, as from Boxing Day 2012, then the warnings will come loud and clear from here. There is rhyme said to come from Roman times "hells bells and buckets of blast," that aptly described this weather.

And whilst on sayings, yet another "When frost and snow are both together, sit by the fire and spare shoe leather." Maybe good comment for the winter to come, however, the snow is not all bad, since a snowy year is said to be good for the farmer," (snow will cover and protect winter wheat – amongst other such plants from the severe frosts).

The sharp eyed will have noticed three vital clues for a good summer ahead here, the first being that it may well be a sunny day at Christmas Day (see December saw about this and also the newly added saw (verified too) concerning snow in May! – snow in May will protect the fruit buds and blossoms from the severe frosts of the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> May) and also for the farmer to have a good year, the grain needs good growing and harvest conditions, therefore the reasons for the good August weather I have forewarned of, slowly begins to build, and the butterfly connection.

A suggestion for a Christmas present to you, from you, one of the superb nature books by Trevor Beer – never heard of him? Google the name and you will be rewarded with a treasure trove of country life, flora, fauna, plants, animals and observations. "Trevor Beer's Nature Watch," ISBN 978-1-906551-31-5. Trevor has a shop in Barnstaple, Devon and will send you a signed copy too, a superb read and you will be truly rewarded by the content. There are three to the series – so far – I have given you the third. Price £9.99 a paperback.

Annual moan – nature spends the best part of the last six months populating the hedgerows and field boundaries with hips, haws, berries and fruit for the winter – and in an hour the dreaded flail tractor arrives and demolishes the lot, hedge by hedge. How destructive man is, in his ignorance.

Finally at this festive season I wish you all whatever you wish yourselves at this season and thank you all for your interest and encouragement, Merry Christmas to you all.

@ David King

Edenbridge, Kent.

November 2013.

## DECEMBER 2013

DAY OF PREDICTION: 21<sup>st</sup>

QUARTER DAY: 21<sup>st</sup>

NEW: 3<sup>rd</sup> = 00.23 hrs = Frosty & Fair

1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER: 9<sup>th</sup> = 15.12 hrs = Fair & mild

FULL: 17<sup>th</sup> = 09.29 hrs = Changeable

AST QUARTER: 25<sup>th</sup> = 13.49 hrs = Snow/rain

EQUINOX: 21<sup>st</sup> WINTER SOLSTICE

1st	Advent Sunday	
4 <sup>th</sup>	Perigee 10.16 hrs	
6th	St Nicholas	The northern European Father Christmas arrives.
8th	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Advent	
15th	3 <sup>rd</sup> in Advent	
20 <sup>th</sup>	Apogee 23.50 hrs	
21st	St Thomas's	Winter Solstice. Astronomical shortest day of year. Weather up to 2nd February. Quarter Day Mid- Winter Solstice Day. The wind at noon this day will remain for the next lunar quarter Day of Prediction. .
22nd	4th in Advent	
25th	Christmas Day	Holly and Ivy flower about this time.
26th	Boxing Day (St Stephen)	
27th	St John	
28th	Childermass Day/ Innocents Day/Bairns Day. See below. Unluckiest day of the year when no work should be started.	
31st	New Years Eve./Hogmanay.	Commemorates the solar divinity of Hogmagog.

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### General Notes and Comments

Expect gale force winds. The portents generally threaten a nasty month, but a hint of better things to come with the worst over. It ought however to be over by the end of January.

21st - 31st normally/traditionally a stormy period.

Day of Prediction (21st) portends weather until 2nd February and the direction of the prevailing wind up to the vernal equinox on 21st March. If it freezes this day the price of corn will fall - which implies a good harvest - but also a hard winter.

If however mild, the price of corn will rise.

If Christmas falls on a Sunday, it shall be a warm winter, the summer hot and dry.

If Christmas day and Thursday be - a windy winter will shall see.

If it rains on the first Sunday of December, before mass, it will rain for a week.

Christmas can be Green - in the old sense of 'bright' (clear/light and bright) - yielding a good harvest (proven) - a peaceful year of plenty.

Black - will bode ill for next year's weather. White - a muddy Easter. Warm - a cold Easter. Wet - empty granary and barrel. Windy - trees will bring much fruit, but if the weather grows stormy before sunset, it betokened sickness in the spring and summer quarters. Snow - good hay crop next year.

But if the Milky Way shows clear you may safely count on a fruitful year.

[This can be a good indicator]

If it snows during Christmas night, the crops will do well.

Light Christmas, light wheat sheaf - dark Christmas, heavy wheat sheaf (if full moon about Christmas Day)

If Christmas ice hangs on the willow, clover may be cut at Easter.

A windy Christmas and a calm Candle mass are signs of a good year.

Thunder in December presages fine weather.

Thunder during Christmas week indicates that there will be much snow during the winter.

A Green Christmas means a full churchyard.

If Christmas Day be on a Saturday, the weather be great with wind, snow and cold, the summer good and there shall be war in many lands. (except the last, quite accurate)

If berries on trees at Christmas, they'll stay 'til snow is down. If gone then a mild winter.

St Thomas Day is always grey. the longest night and the shortest day.

A dull Christmas with no sun, bodes ill for the harvest.

When the sun shines through the apple trees on Christmas Day, when Autumn comes, they will a load of fruit display. [reliable - also indicates a good Spring with few late frosts, frost-free May and a good Autumn.]

If ice bears before Christmas, it won't bear a goose afterwards.

Christmas in snow, Easter in mud. Easter in snow, Christmas in mud.

If much rain during the 12 days of Christmas a wet year to come.

If on a New Years Eve the winds blow south, it betokened warmth and growth.

If west, much milk and fish in the sea. If north, cold and storms there will be.

If east, the trees will bear much fruit. If north-east, then flee it man and beast.

26th - If windy, bad for next years grapes.

28th Childermass Day - if lowering and wet there will be scarcity. If fair it promises plenty.

Much rain in October. much wind in December. [check October readings]

In December, keep yourself warm, and sleep.

A winter fog will freeze a dog.

Every mile is two in winter.

25/12 to 5/1. These 12 days are said to be the keys of the weather for the whole year.

MET OFFICE NOTES:-

Stormy carried forward from 24th November to 14th December.

Quiet period 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>

25th to 31st stormy period.

BUCHAN NOTES:- 3rd to 14th warm period.

THE FULL MOON THIS MONTH IS CALLED THE HUNTING/COLD MOON.

The tree up-to the 22nd is the Elder. There is no tree on the 23rd. The Birch then becomes the monthly tree.

#### MONTHLY AVERAGES FOR EDENBRIDGE (USING 1981-2010 FIGURES)

Mean Max:	8.1C	Mean Min:	1.9C	Mean Avg:	5C
	Rainfall:	85.8mm	Sunshine:	64.6hrs	

Whilst I appreciate the above are local figures, it will be an indication of what the averages are, and, of course there will be local variations. Such variations can be found by trawling the various weather websites, or by using the superb data found in the Climatologists Observers Link website.

The following figures are for the average temperature at 12 noon and again at 4pm, taken at the beginning and again at the end of the month.

1 <sup>st</sup>	7.7C	6.96C
31 <sup>st</sup>	6.05C	5.4C

		Moon	Weather	DoP	December Saint/Holy Day	2013 Other day	Quarter day	Appogee Perigee	Met Off Stormy/quiet	Buchan warm/cool
1	S	Last quarter	Fair (frost)		Advent Sunday				stormy	
2	M							24/11 >14/12		
3	T	New	Frosty & Fair					stormy	warm period	
4	W					St Nicolas		perigee 1016hrs	stormy	3rd > 14th
5	T							stormy	warm period	
6	F							stormy	warm period	
7	S							stormy	warm period	
8	S				2nd in Advent			stormy	warm period	
9	M	1st Quarter	Fair & Mild					stormy	warm period	
10	T							stormy	warm period	
11	W							stormy	warm period	
12	T							stormy	warm period	
13	F							stormy	warm period	
14	S							stormy	warm period	
15	S				3rd in Advent			quiet 15>21st		
16	M							quiet		
17	T	Full	Changeable					quiet		
18	W							quiet		
19	T							quiet		
20	F							quiet		
21	S			YES	St Thomas	winter solstice	YES	apogee 2350hrs	quiet	
22	S				4th in Advent	4th in Advent				
23	M									
24	T									
25	W	Last Quarter	Snow/rain		Christmas Day				stormy	
26	T				St Stephen	Boxing Day			25 >31st	
27	F							stormy		
28	S					Childermass day		stormy		
29	S							stormy		
30	M							stormy		
31	T					Hogmany		stormy		