

AUGUST 2017

PREAMBLE



Tree of the month up to the 4th is the holly (see previous month), thereafter the hazel.

This year the hazel has a wonderful display of fruits/nuts - these are traditionally harvested on St Filbert's day - 18th August. Sadly yet another sign of long hard winter to come as nature prepares for it. You do not have to look hard to find the tell-tale signs.

Welcome to the August 2017 website entry. I start with a look back at June, and immediately from the many e-mails I have received the hot period in then third week was not for all, indeed for many north of that mid-Wales > Birmingham > Norwich line, it was an overcast, relatively cold and damp month with a lot of cloud; for those to the south, some mixed fortunes; approximately the west and south west did not have the heat that those in the East and South East experienced.

For the record here in Edenbridge, the warmest June since 1976, the wettest ever June day (61 mm on 27th) the hottest day recorded at 33.8C on the 21st, the warmest ever highest minimum of 16.9C on the 22nd; the highest daily sunshine total of 15.2 hours on the 19th. The 18th to the 21st all exceeded 32.3C. The rainfall for the month was however at 114.05mm, 217% of the norm with 61 mm falling in just 16 hours.

Compare this with parts of Yorkshire and Cumbria, where the temperature at best was 22C and sunshine levels well below the monthly average.

With such weather it is not surprisingly that the beaches and resorts here in the SE are filled with people from those areas and the midlands.

Having said all that, it does not bode well for the winter, those stifling hot days in June will give the coldest days in February. The early spring brought early growth, this early growth now manifests itself with a bumper cherry crop, plums and apples too are laden on the trees; the blackberry blossoms, very early this year are yielding a massive blackberry crop too. Acorns, crab apples, hawthorn, spindle, ash, hornbeam, whitebeam, sorbus, sycamore and maple to name a few full of fruits and berries; the teasel, hogweeds, burdock are all plentiful and very tall this year. Already the sloes are purple - all signs of an early autumn and hard winter.

Slowly the prediction of an early autumn and long hard early winter starts to come to fruition with every bit small piece of data building to form the complete picture, nature is forewarning and supplying well ahead too, of such matters.

The cuckoo that arrived some 20 days early here, departed too 20 days early - at the height of the hot spell, when plenty of food was around; Another nature warning that came true. There is a colony of swifts here, a small flock of about 15 arrived, and this now stands at about 25 or so, the flock has increased with the parents teaching the young how to hunt and fly, a truly magnificent sight and sound in the evenings, alas I fear that by the time this is published at the end of July they will all have departed, since they too do not like wet and cold, and the end July into August will be both - it is a Buchan cold period too. Slowly the summer pleasures such as the swifts depart and we are the poorer for such.

The house martins and swallow here have just one brood this year, it was too dry at first for them to build their mud nests, and when the rain arrived the ensuing weather did not leave sufficient time for, as last year, a second brood. I think therefore that come 16th August, lines of these birds will found on the telegraph wires deliberating what route to take for their return to Africa, via Malta or via Gibraltar. The 16th being the last day of the hot Buchan August period.

A good year, the best for many a year, for skylarks too, however on the 7th July they disappeared and despite looking each day never returned; I can only surmise that the reason for this was the absence/lack of sufficient insect ground food, ants etc. The soil here is marl clay (brick making clay) and with dry hot condition bakes solid, therefore no worms or such appear and a distinct lack of ants and other such creatures is noticeable, their song will be sorely missed.

What a year though for rooks, crows, jackdaws and magpies! As smaller birds, bullfinch and chaffinch seem to diminish these ugly brutal carnivores multiply exponentially.

Good year for robins - but sadly again with the hot dry baking conditions many appeared to be thin and emaciated, this I also put down to the lack of sufficient or suitable insect life, since these birds are primarily ground feeders; shortage of such foods accounts for

the rapid consumption from the bird table, and to help compensate, then a second refill during the day is necessary, however with the early onset of autumn I suspect that such birds will be staking their territory adjacent to the back door (where the tablecloth is shaken) in early September, one of the winter signs.

I sit here the same day as the start of Wimbledon - and as expected, it is grey, dull, overcast, windy and none too warm, but it is a Buchan cold period, plus la change. Not only are the blackberries flowering and fruiting, but I picked and ate the first 2017 crop on July 3rd. Sloes are all turning purple too. What a magnificent year for nuts too, I think that nuts will be ready harvest 1st August as everything is running some 17 to 20 days ahead this year. The early cuckoo was the first sign, since then many other such signs. However, Wimbledon tennis plagued with flying ants on the 5th - what is unusual about this is that flying any day (when they hatch out and plague us) is 19th July - yes truly so - another hidden true fact - therefore even the flying ants are some 14 days ahead of schedule - no real surprise, since much else is ahead too. People look but they do not see, maybe they do not know, but to 'geeks' like me, the early appearance of ants is significant and important. However as the tennis continued the weather appeared to be the hottest for many a year - as the scorched grass there testified

How did I not see the hot weather in July coming???? Like everyone else, I did not see it, the same tried tested and proven methodology, here in the SE failed - for once, no-one is perfect. However, in mitigation for the rest of the UK, and I have checked the records too, I was spot on with the rain and lack of sun. I give a partial explanation for the SE; this SE corner is influenced more by the weather on the near continent than by the rest of the UK weather. I look at the weather charts daily and see SW winds sweeping the southern UK - yet my four wind instruments here record N/NE winds. The rains stay away, but at the same time we pick up the hot dry sunny weather across Alsace - hence the hot dry conditions here. One only has to look at the Tour de France to see the heat and sunshine (and thundery conditions) on the first week - and it is identical to the SE weather here. It happens very regularly all year round too, so a partial explanation that is proven by events.

I use Buchan as a template, I tried and tested it well before such use; however, this year it has been askew here in the SE - the first occasion this has happened. I compared it to the Edinburgh notes (which Buchan was designed for) and found it to be spot on. Maybe the time for some serious reconsideration of its use - or maybe just a momentary aberration from the norm; time will tell.

June and July are both acknowledged as 'wet' months; June exceeded the average, and here (22nd July) the July average has been exceeded too. The damp and warm summer prediction, for the greater part, holds up well.

Enjoy your summer where-ever you are, make the best of it for I fear a hard long cold winter ahead.

AUGUST 2017

NEW MOON = 21st @ 1930hrs = Rainy
1st QUARTER MOON = 29th @ 0912hrs = Rain.
FULL MOON = 7th @ 1910hrs 0214 = Fair.
LAST QUARTER MOON = 15th @ 0214hrs = Cold & rain showers.

DoP = 6th Transfiguration Day(maybe) AND 24th St Bartholomew.

Highest spring tides 21st to 24th

APOGEE 2nd @ 1756hrs: AND 30th @ 1126hrs
PERIGEE 18th @ 1316hrs

- 1st Lammas (loafmass) - after Lammas the crop ripens as much by night as by day. First grain harvest of the year. Camomile flowering day.
- 2nd Apogee @ 1756hrs
- 6th Transfiguration Day ?DoP. As the weather this day of Transfiguration, so it will be for the rest of the year. This over-ambitious at best, unreliable, out of sequence, and as far as I am concerned cannot seriously be considered as a DoP.
- 10th St Lawrence If sunshine and fine, good autumn and much wine. Virgins Bower flowering day. Apogee @ 0006hrs.
- 12th St Clare
- 15th Assumption Day If sunshine, much and good wine.
- 18th St Filbert Harvest day for cob-nuts.
Perigee @ 1316hrs
- 24th St Bartholomew DoP. 1st day of Autumn. Maybe, on experience, 5th September is a better day of prediction. Sunflower flowering day.
- 28th End of Dog days.
- 30th Apogee @ 11236hrs

MET OFFICE NOTES: none.

BUCHAN NOTES: 6th to 11th cool period.
12th to 15th warm period (can be very hot)

Full moon for this month is called Sturgeon/Corn Moon.

Tree of the month up to 4th is Holly, thereafter is Hazel

General Notes and Comments

The harvest month.

Statistically, August, in this area, is the wettest month of the year.

If two full moons then sure to be wet

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

When a hot dry August follows a hot dry July it portends an early and cold winter.

Can also be a 'Disaster' month. Lynmouth Flooding 1952 (15-16th). Fastnet Yacht Race Storm (1979). Folkestone Flooding 1996 (12th). East Devon Floods 1997 (8th). Boscastle Flooding (2004) 17th. Quite cold and sunless 2007

Dog-Days - the moist sultry days in a period of 20 days before and 20 days after the rising of the Dog-Star Sirius. If we are to have a summer at all, this is the most likely time.

Roughly from mid-July to the end of August, or, corn harvest time. Sirius is the brightest star in the heavens, and is one of those in the southern constellation Canis Major.

As the Dog-days commence so they end. Bright and clear indicate a happy year, but accompanied by rain, for better times our hopes are vain.

Observe on what day the first heavy fog occurs, and expect a hard frost on the same day in October.

A fog in August also indicates a severe winter and plenty of snow. [very reliable and proven]

As August. so next February. [but also the hottest days in June give the coldest days in February on the same dates (13th to 26th)]

So many August fogs, so many winter mists.

In the first week of August is unusually warm, the winter will be white and long. [reliable and proven]

All the tears that St Swithun (15th July) can cry St Bartelmys (24th) mantle WILL dry up. [be warned however that this can be out by as much as +/- 3 days]

If St Swithuns is dry:- If Bartholomews be fine and clear, then hope for a prosperous Autumn that year. [after this day expect dull or fine weather, but not, as a rule, much rain]

August fills the barn and September the loft.

Dry August and warm does the farmer no harm.

A wet rainy August makes hard bread crust.

St Bartholomew's Day - a most important day. Brings cold dew (campers beware).

The day to start collecting honey, and the day delicate flowers should be brought indoors. If the weather is settled this day, a fine Autumn is promised.

If however it rains this day, then it will rain for 40 days thereafter (to 3rd October). If misty and a morning hoar frost, the cold weather will come soon with a hard winter too.

There is however a distinct possibility that 5th September will be a better Day of Prediction than 24th August, and, by experience is a better predilictor.

A warm dry August surely means a snowy winter.

August thunder promises fat grapes and fine vintages. [fairly shaky for hail will damage the grapes]

Late August, when 3 kestrels fly - 'twill be dry. [reliable]

Too much August sun disappoints the maid, the priest and the host, for it scorches up the vegetables.

A warm Autumn is usually followed by a long winter.

A poor forecast for wheat indicates wet weather in July and August.

A heavy apple crop points to a fine August and September.

When the dew is heavy in August, the weather generally remains fair. Thunderstorms in the beginning of August will generally be followed by others all the month.

Thunderstorms after the 24th are generally violent.

FULL MOON FOR THIS MONTH IS CALLED STURGEON/CORN MOON.

Tree of the month up-to 4th is Holly. Thereafter is Hazel.

MONTHLY AVERAGES FOR EDENBRIDGE (USING 1981-2010 FIGURES)

*Mean Max: 24C Mean Min: 12.1C Mean Avg: 18.15C
Rainfall: 66.1mm Sunshine: 198.2hrs (day = 6.39hrs)*

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.

1st
31st

21.8.C
20.2C

23.2C
21.4C

DATE	Chandler & Gregory Barry & Perry	Brooks	Lamb	Buchan	Met Office	Season
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August 01
August 02
August 03
August 04
August 05
August 06
August 07
August 08
August 09
August 10
August 11
August 12
August 13
August 14
August 15
August 16
August 17
August 18
August 19
August 20
August 21
August 22
August 23
August 24
August 25
August 26
August 27
August 28
August 29
August 30
August 31

13th July - 7th August
high risk period
for
high mean temperatures

10th - 15th highest mean
temperature
period

20th - 30th stormy

peak day

30th July - 6th August
Thundery
cyclonic
weather

16th - 30th First storms
of autumn
though
anti-cyclonic
may
persist
in
south

6th - 11th
cool period

12th - 15th
warm
period

NONE

18/6 - 9/9
high
summer