

# EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

HEARTY WINTER SOUP RECIPES

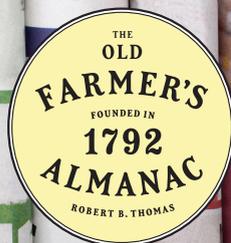
GROWING FROM SEED

WHEN THE WHIPPOORWILL CALLS

REUSING THE NEWS(PAPERS)



JANUARY 2018



## FEATURES

### LIVING NATURALLY

Reusing the News(papers)

### GARDENING

Growing From Seed

### FOOD

Hearty Winter Soup Recipes

### FOLKLORE

When the Whippoorwill Calls

## DEPARTMENTS

### CALENDAR

January Birthdays, Holidays, History, and More

### ASTROLOGY

Best Days to Do Things

Gardening by the Moon's Sign

### ASTRONOMY

Sky Map for January

### HOT PRODUCTS

Winter Specials!

### WEATHER FORECASTS

How We Make Our Predictions

January U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts

Weather Update

### WIT

Humor Me  
*Grins and groans from the Almanac*

### WHAT'S NEXT

See what we have in store for our February issue!



Fun wasn't in the forecast. But when snow fell and the electricity failed, confidence was **powering** us through. Instead of filling **your life** with worry during an outage, we say grab your mittens.



Cummins Connect Series  
home standby generators

Safeguard against power line failure with a Cummins standby generator. Call your authorized Cummins dealer today so you are prepared for when the next storm arrives. Learn more at [powertohomes.com](http://powertohomes.com)

*Powering your life.*



# THE MONTH OF JANUARY

## BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS, HISTORY, AND MORE



### MOON WATCH

**Full Wolf Moon:** January 1, at 9:24 P.M. EST

**Last Quarter:** January 8, at 5:25 P.M. EST

**New Moon:** January 16, at 9:17 P.M. EST

**First Quarter:** January 24, at 5:20 P.M. EST

**Full Old Moon:** January 31, at 8:27 A.M. EST

*Note: This year, January has two full Moons. The second is commonly called a blue Moon.*

### ANNUAL EVENT

Earth is at perihelion on January 3 (EST), when it will be closest to the Sun.



TAP FOR MORE MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT  
JANUARY'S FULL MOONS



### MONTHLY MUSE

*Janus am I; oldest  
of potentates;*

*Forward I look,  
and backward,  
and below*

*I count, as god of  
avenues and gates,*

*The years that  
through my portals  
come and go.*

—Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow, American  
poet (1807–82)

### HOLIDAY HAPPENING: HANDSEL MONDAY

According to Scottish custom, the first Monday of the new year (January 1 this year) was the time to give children and servants a small gift (handsel), intended to bring good luck. The handsel was popular as a new year's gift from the 14th to 19th centuries, but it also had the broader application of marking any new situation. It continues today in the form of presenting a housewarming gift to someone moving into a new home.



## FASCINATING FIRSTS

Who was the first explorer to cross the Antarctic Circle?

- a. James Cook
- b. James Clark Ross
- c. Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen
- d. James Weddell



Answer: a, in January 1773.

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

### 50 YEARS AGO (1968)

Jan. 6: John Singleton, American film director

Jan. 14: LL Cool J, American rapper



Jan. 22: Guy Fieri, American chef

Jan. 24: Mary Lou Retton, American gymnast



### 100 YEARS AGO (1918)

Jan. 21: Maj. Richard Winters, U.S. Army officer

Jan. 25: Ernie Harwell, American sportscaster

Jan. 26: Philip José Farmer, American writer

Jan. 27: Elmore James, American musician

Jan. 29: John Forsythe, American actor



### 200 YEARS AGO (1818)

Jan. 28: George S. Boutwell, American statesman

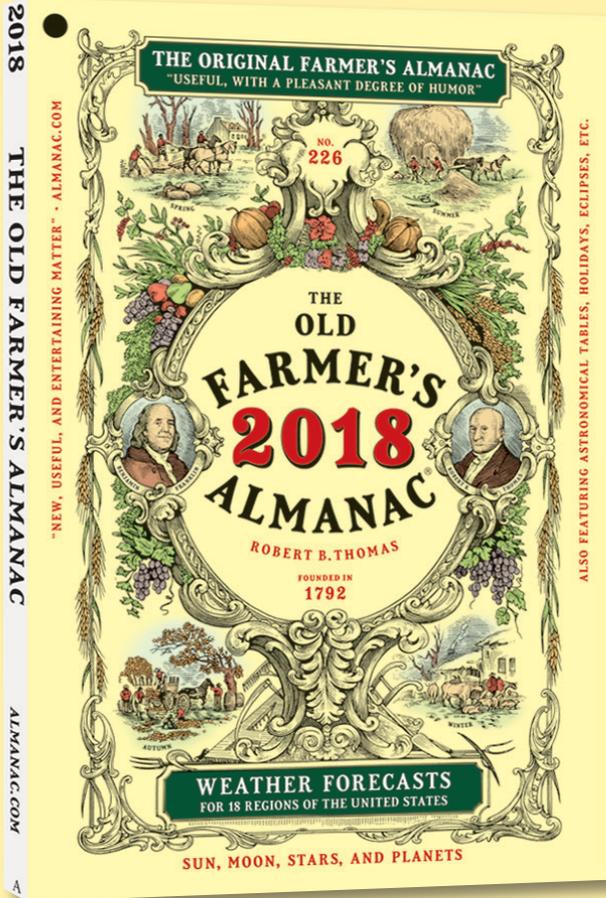
### 300 YEARS AGO (1718)

Jan. 7: Israel Putnam, American Revolutionary War general



# Shipping Now!

## THE 2018 OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC



**SHOP NOW**



## BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These January dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

### PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 24, 25

Ask for a loan: 6, 11

Begin diet to gain weight: 21, 25

Begin diet to lose weight: 6, 11

Buy a home: 21, 26

Color hair: 24–26

Cut hair to discourage growth: 7–9

Cut hair to encourage growth: 20, 21, 24–26

Get married: 7–9

Have dental care: 5, 6

Move (house/household): 27, 28

Perm hair: 17–19

Quit smoking: 6, 11

Straighten hair: 12–14



Travel for pleasure: 3, 4, 31

Wean children: 6, 11

### AROUND THE HOUSE

---

Bake: 1, 2, 29, 30

Brew: 10, 11

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 10, 11

Demolish: 10, 11

Dry fruit/vegetables/meat: 3, 4, 12, 13

End projects: 1

Lay shingles: 3, 4, 31

Make jams/jellies: 20, 21

Paint: 7–9, 24–26

Start projects: 3

Wash floors: 20, 21

Wash windows: 22, 23

### OUTDOORS

---

Begin logging: 15, 16

Go camping: 12–14

Go fishing: 1, 16–31

Set posts or pour concrete: 15, 16

### IN THE GARDEN

---

Destroy pests and weeds: 22, 23

Graft or pollinate: 1, 2, 29, 30

Harvest aboveground crops: 24–26

Harvest belowground crops: 5, 6, 15

Mow to decrease growth: 10, 11

Mow to increase growth: 22, 23

Pick fruit: 5, 6

Plant aboveground crops: 20, 21, 29, 30

Plant belowground crops: 10, 11

Prune to discourage growth: 3, 4, 12–14

Prune to encourage growth: 22, 23

### ON THE FARM

---

Breed animals: 10, 11

Castrate animals: 17–19

Cut hay: 22, 23

Purchase animals: 1, 2, 29, 30

Set eggs: 8, 9, 26, 27

Slaughter livestock: 10, 11

Wean animals: 6, 11



## GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the January dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

**PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT:** Cancer, Scorpio, Taurus, or Pisces

**HARVEST:** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

**BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS:** Capricorn

**CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED:** Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

**PRUNE:** Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

### THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN JANUARY

<b>1</b> Cancer	<b>9</b> Libra	<b>17</b> Aquarius	<b>25</b> Taurus
<b>2</b> Cancer	<b>10</b> Scorpio	<b>18</b> Aquarius	<b>26</b> Taurus
<b>3</b> Leo	<b>11</b> Scorpio	<b>19</b> Aquarius	<b>27</b> Gemini
<b>4</b> Leo	<b>12</b> Sagittarius	<b>20</b> Pisces	<b>28</b> Gemini
<b>5</b> Virgo	<b>13</b> Sagittarius	<b>21</b> Pisces	<b>29</b> Cancer
<b>6</b> Virgo	<b>14</b> Sagittarius	<b>22</b> Aries	<b>30</b> Cancer
<b>7</b> Libra	<b>15</b> Capricorn	<b>23</b> Aries	<b>31</b> Leo
<b>8</b> Libra	<b>16</b> Capricorn	<b>24</b> Taurus	



TAP FOR  
MERCURY IN  
RETROGRADE  
DATES



**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP FOR  
JANUARY  
MOON PHASES

## MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

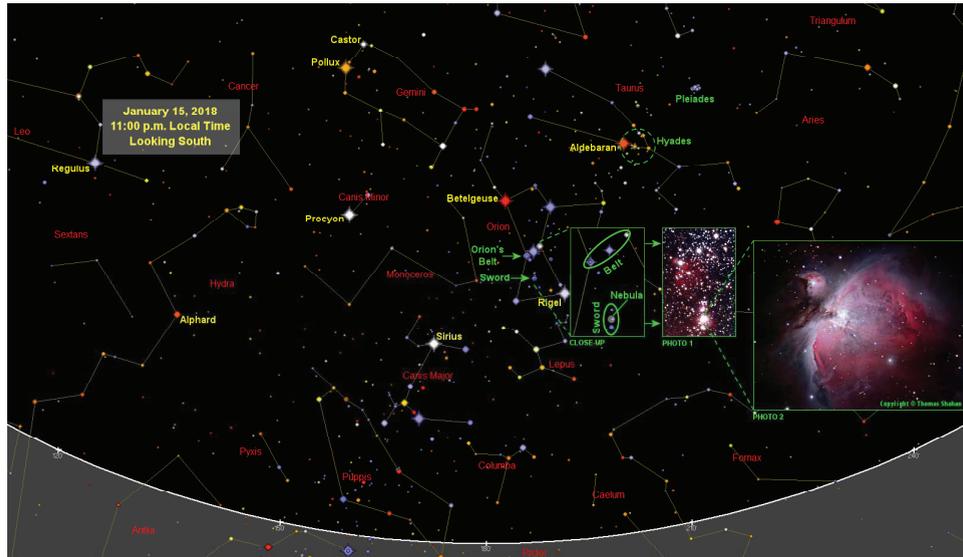
Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

**In 2018, Mercury will be retrograde during March 23–April 15, July 26–August 19, and November 17–December 6.**

—Celeste Longacre



## THE GREAT ORION STAR FACTORY

**E**ver wonder where stars come from? Stars form within great clouds of interstellar gas and dust composed mainly of hydrogen. Think of these clouds as star factories. Ever so slowly, over tens of millions of years, portions of a cloud begin to collapse due to its own gravity, forming tenuous clumps of material. Every particle in the clump exerts a tiny gravitational pull on every other particle. As gravity pulls the clump together, collisions between the particles heat them up. When the hot core of a clump becomes sufficiently heated, the hydrogen atoms begin to fuse, releasing colossal amounts of energy . . . and a star is born!

Amazingly, the nearest of nature's fabulous star factories is visible (albeit barely) with your unaided eyes. It lies in the constellation Orion, the Hunter, which is ideally placed for observing on January nights.

Refer to this month's Sky Map to find Orion standing tall

**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP TO GET  
A PRINTABLE  
JANUARY  
SKY MAP

**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP TO  
FOLLOW  
OHIOAN JEFF  
DETRAY'S SKY  
ADVENTURES



and proud in the southern sky. Across the middle of Orion lie three bright stars at an angle: Orion's Belt. Directly beneath the middle star of the belt is a vertical line of three dimmer stars, popularly known as Orion's Sword. From a dark location away from city lights, you can see that the middle star of the sword is actually a small, glowing cloud. This is the Great Orion Nebula, the closest major star factory. The close-up on the Sky Map shows where to look.

In Photo 1 is a time-exposure I made of this region with an SLR camera. Photo 2 is a highly magnified time exposure made by astrophotographer Thomas Shahan through his telescope. Please note that you will not see any colors when observing the Great Orion Nebula with your eyes alone or even if you use a telescope. A long exposure with a camera is required to capture the exquisite colors of the nebula.

**T**he Great Orion star factory is relatively close to us—a mere 1,400 light-years away. It's practically next door! Several hundred new stars (aka protostars) are in various stages of formation within the nebula. The youngest of these are thought to be only a few hundred thousand years old—just babies!

While observing the Great Orion Nebula, be sure to look for other wonderful objects in this part of the sky.

To the upper right of Orion is a pair of clusters that are easy to see unaided. Near the bright star Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus, the Bull, is a loose cluster of stars called the Hyades. In mythology, the Hyades were the daughters of Atlas, the being whose task it is to hold up the sky for all eternity. Nearby are the Pleiades, the seven half-sisters of the Hyades. The Pleiades are a tight cluster of stars that are an interesting test of your visual acuity. If you can see all seven Pleiades, you have the eyes of a warrior. Many people see only five of the seven stars.

While Orion is the brightest of all constellations, with at least seven noteworthy stars, the brightest star of all is located to the lower left of Orion. It's Sirius, the Dog Star, in the constellation Canis Major, the Greater Dog.

Take a moment to enjoy the best sky highlights of the winter: the Dog Star, the Hyades and Pleiades, and the Great Orion star factory.

*—Jeff DeTray*

# WINTER SPECIALS!

## ALPACA FLEECE SOCKS

The cure for cold feet!  
So cozy and soft, too!

**\$15.95-\$24.95**

**SHOP NOW**

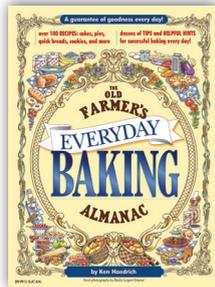
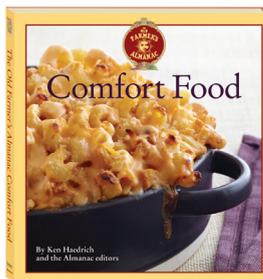
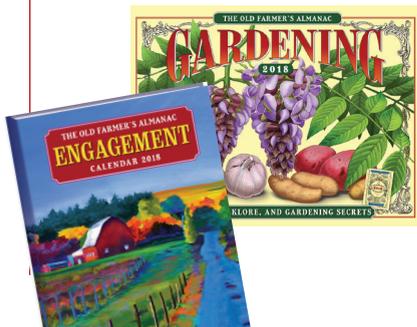


## WALL, DESK, AND PLANNING CALENDARS

It's that time again! Order your genuine Almanac calendar before they're gone like the holidays!

**\$9.99-\$14.99**

**SHOP NOW**



## ALMANAC COOKBOOKS

Loaded with prizewinning recipes, our readers' best dishes, and our food editor's favorites!

**\$9.99-\$19.95**

**SHOP NOW**



## LOBSTER ROPE DOORMATS

Feet and wind won't move them! They're great at cleaning shoes, and they clean up easily with just a hose. Virtually impervious to wear and weather, they'll last for many years.

**\$59.95**

**SHOP NOW**

LIVING NATURALLY



# Reusing the News(papers)

We subscribe to our local daily newspaper and a couple of Sunday papers, devouring all of the sections, including the funnies, the TV schedules, the want ads, and the police log. And then there are the weekly shopper-type publications, too.

PHOTO: BOHBEH/SHUTTERSTOCK



LIVING NATURALLY

**E**ven though hard times have rendered newspapers a lot thinner than they used to be, the papers tend to build up.

### **ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO EAT**

With two woodstoves in continuous use from late November through April, we use most of our winter newspapers as fire starters. What ashes we don't use to provide traction on icy walkways, we add as a pH-raising amendment to our garden soils.

The papers have other

horticultural uses, too:

- During the growing season, we use newspapers as a **weed-suppressing mulch**. We lay them down several pages thick and cover the paper with a thin layer of hay, pine needles, or wood chips to make aisles between our garden beds.

- To **create a new garden spot** without mechanical tillage, I lay down a thick layer of newspapers (flattened cardboard boxes work well, too); top it off with a thinner layer of hay, straw, or leaves; and let

the space sit a year. By the following spring, the grass underneath will have died, and *voilà!*—a soil ready to fertilize, amend, and plant.

- I also **protect young vegetable seedlings** from cutworms by wrapping the lower stem with a tight collar of wet newspaper that extends an inch into the soil and at least an inch above the soil line.

- To **ripen green tomatoes indoors**, I harvest blemish-free fruit when frost threatens, wrap each in a piece of newspaper, and set them



in a cool, dark cellar. Sometimes they last through Thanksgiving.

During many years of freelance writing for newspapers (and always tending a big vegetable garden), I often joked about the fun of eating my words. But since this isn't a gardening blog, allow me to share a few of the 101 other ways in which I use newspapers around the house.

- **Cleaning windows:** Crumpled newspaper and white vinegar make an unbeatable combo for washing windows and

other glass surfaces.

- **Wrapping paper:** Very chic, especially if you select the right news for the occasion or decorate the newspaper with potato prints.

- **Cut-flower holder:** Torn or shredded, moistened, and stuffed into a vase, old newspapers will hold cut flowers, greens, or branches in place. Add more if you need to.

- **Shape-holders:** Crumple newspapers and stuff them into shoes, handbags, and hats to help them hold

their shapes.

- **Funny hats:** I once worked with a colleague who'd previously spent many years as a daycare worker and was a master of newspaper-hat making. He had a hat for every occasion. Retirements, marriages, promotions, failed budget negotiations—Tom always came out with a news-hat that spoke to the occasion!

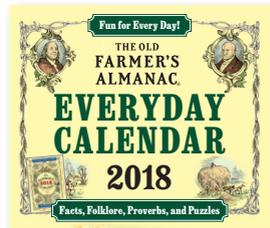
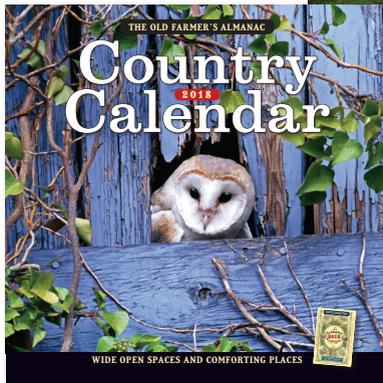
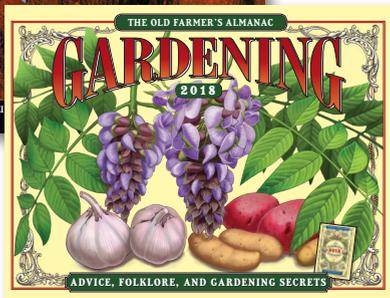
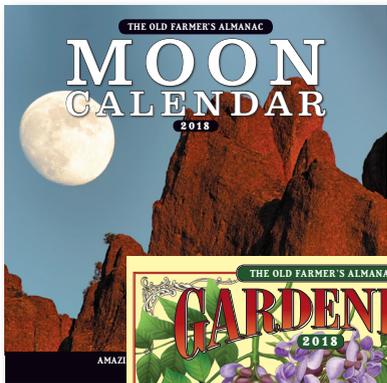
—Margaret Boyles



TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG

# SHIPPING NOW!

## 2018 Old Farmer's Almanac Calendars



**JANUARY 2018**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**Quick Notes**      **Birthdays**      **In The**      **Not To Be**

This is the first of the year, and the best time to start your resolutions. The weather is still cold, but the days are getting longer. The first snow is usually here by the end of the month. The first frost is usually here by the end of the month. The first snow is usually here by the end of the month. The first frost is usually here by the end of the month.

**SHOP NOW**

\$9.99 - \$14.99

GARDENING



# Growing From Seed

As you peruse seed catalogs and browse seed kiosks,  
plan to make this a bountiful year.

PHOTO: KRAM9/SHUTTERSTOCK



**Remember that the garden is actually one-quarter the size that you think it is.**

### **Be seed savvy.**

Obtain catalogs from several companies and compare their offerings and prices. Some of the small, regional seed sources carry heirlooms and special varieties best suited to your area. Avoid discounted seeds sold at chain stores. You may find germination to be spotty.



TAP TO LEARN YOUR  
FROST DATES



TAP TO LEARN ABOUT  
STARTING SEEDS



TAP TO WATCH A SHORT  
SEED-STARTING VIDEO

### **Make a list of what you'd like to grow.**

And remember that the garden is actually one-quarter the size that you think it is.

### **Pay attention to the number of days to maturity.**

Note this in the catalog description or on the seed packet. Get the approximate length of your growing season by checking your average last (spring) and first (fall) frost dates.

### **Buy enough seeds to sow them thickly.**

Inevitably, you'll suffer some losses, and you can always thin later.

### **Be prepared to start setting seeds.**

If you are starting seeds for the first time (or have had mixed success), learn more from this Almanac advice.

### **Make sure that your garden soil is ready when you are.**

Grab a handful of your garden soil. If you can form it into a ball, the soil is too wet for planting. If it crumbles through your fingers

and reminds you of chocolate cake, it's ready for planting.

Or, make a ball of soil and drop it. If the ball crumbles, your garden is ready for seeds. If it holds its shape or breaks into two clumps, it's still too wet for planting.

Or, step into the garden and then step back and look at the footprint that you've left in the soil. If it's shiny, there's too much water near the soil's surface to allow for digging and planting. If it's dull, then excess water

has drained away and it's time to plant.

Or, use the old farmer's method: When the weeds start to grow in your garden, it's time to plant your hardy vegetables.

### **Get your soil ready for planting.**

Rake it well and let it sit for several days. Then top-dress it with compost or well-rotted manure and get to work.

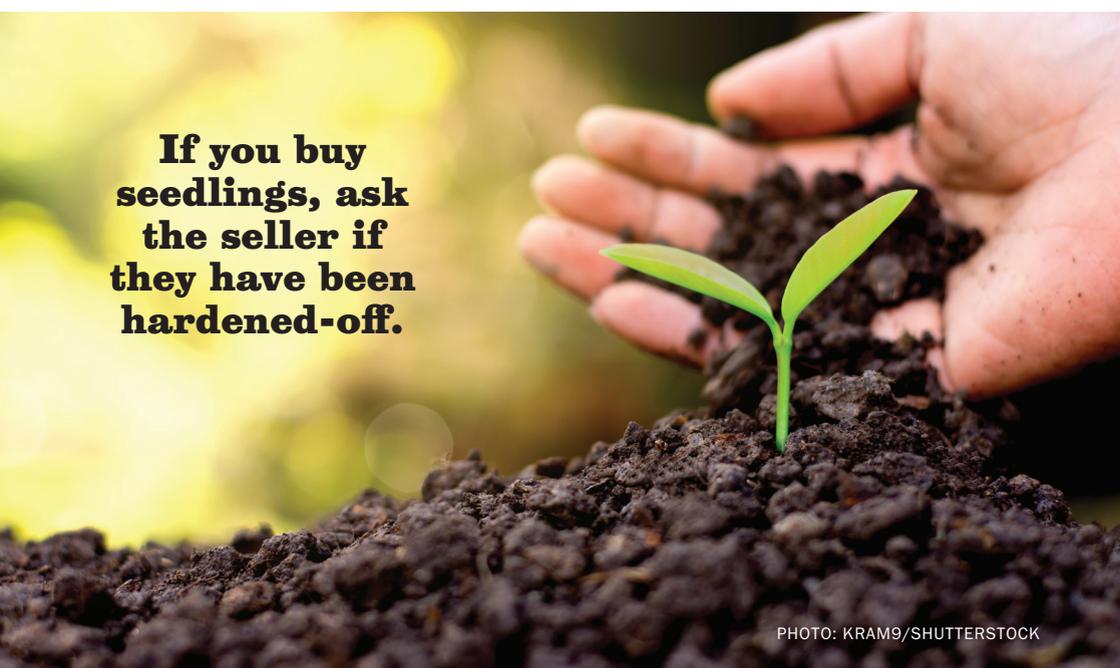
### **Don't lose your seedlings when you move them.**

If you start vegetable

plants indoors from seeds, be sure that they gradually get used to an unsheltered life outdoors. If you buy seedlings, ask the seller if they have been hardened-off. If not, do this:

During their last week indoors, withhold fertilizer and add water less often.

Seven to 10 days before transplanting, set the seedlings outdoors in dappled shade that is protected from winds for a few hours each day, gradually increasing their



**If you buy seedlings, ask the seller if they have been hardened-off.**



**Get guidance  
throughout the season  
with *The Old Farmer's  
Almanac Garden  
Planner*.**

exposure to full sun and windy conditions. This is called hardening-off the plants.

Keep the soil moist at all times during the hardening-off period. Dry air and spring breezes can result in rapid transpiration. If possible, transplant on overcast days or in the early morning.

**Set transplants into loose, well-aerated soil.**

Such soil will capture and retain moisture, drain well, and allow easy penetration

by seedling roots.

Soak the soil around new seedlings immediately after transplanting.

Spread mulch to reduce soil moisture loss and to control weeds.

To ensure the availability of phosphorus in the root zone of new transplants (phosphorus promotes strong root development), mix 2 tablespoons of a 15-30-15 starter fertilizer into a gallon of water (1 tablespoon for vining crops such as melons

and cucumbers), and give each seedling a cup of the solution after transplanting.

**Keep the growing going.**

Get guidance and plant problem-solving advice throughout the gardening season with *The Old Farmer's Almanac Garden Planner*. Sign up now and try it free for 7 days—and make this garden your best ever!

—*Almanac editors*



TAP FOR MORE ON THE  
GARDEN PLANNER

# Grow Better, Naturally!

New from *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, the 2018 digital *Garden Guide* to help you to grow greener, cleaner vegetables, fruit, herbs, flowers, even scent-amentals!

**DIGITAL EDITION AVAILABLE JANUARY 23, 2018!**

## GROW FOOD YOU LOVE!

- tomatoes, peas, peppers, eggplants, cucumbers, and more
- citrus for porch, patio, or playroom
- asparagus, ramps, onions, and more

## GROW QUICK AND EASY!

DIY in a weekend:

- make a plant tower
- pot up herbs for indoors
- start veggie seeds successfully

## GROW YOUR SENSES!

- electrify with color
- surround yourself with fragrance
- master your microclimate

## GROW YOUR SKILLS!

- test your soil 5 ways
- curtail critters kindly
- plan a pleasing pathway
- bring chickens home to roost

## FEAST ON FRESHNESS:

Recipes for dip, soup, salad, snacks, even dessert, using the harvest.

**PLUS:** the latest trends, time- and money-saving tips, gardening by the Moon, new products, and more! Grow with the 2018 *Garden Guide* and grow better!



**AFTER JANUARY 23, 2018 ORDER YOUR DIGITAL COPY AT  
ALMANAC.COM/GARDENGUIDE**

FOOD



# Hearty Winter Soup Recipes

This is the perfect season for soups. Warm and satisfying in wintertime, soups serve as a delicious lunch, side, or light dinner with some good bread and salad. We welcome you to try some of our favorites.

PHOTO: NATASHA BREEN/SHUTTERSTOCK

FOOD

 TAP FOR RECIPE

# Slow Cooker French Onion Soup

PHOTO: BECKY LUGART-STAYNER

SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

## SLOW COOKER FRENCH ONION SOUP

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
- 3 large onions, thinly sliced
- 4 cups hot water
- 2 tablespoons instant beef bouillon or 6 beef bouillon cubes
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 slices toasted French bread
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Melt butter in a skillet over low heat. Add onions and cook slowly, up to 45 minutes to release maximum flavor, or until nicely browned, stirring frequently. Transfer to a slow cooker. Add water, bouillon, Worcestershire sauce, and salt. Cover and cook on low for 4 to 6 hours.

To serve, top each bowl with 1 slice of bread. Sprinkle each with 2 tablespoons Parmesan.

**Makes 4 servings.**

FOOD



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# Potato Kale Soup

PHOTO: GAUS ALEX/SHUTTERSTOCK

## POTATO KALE SOUP

- 4 strips bacon
- 4 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, chopped
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 2 cups firmly packed chopped kale leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

In a large soup pot, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon and set aside. Lightly sauté potatoes, onions, and garlic in bacon drippings. Add stock, kale, salt, and pepper and simmer for 1 hour, or until potatoes are soft.

In batches, purée soup in blender until smooth. Return to pot and thin with more stock, if desired. Crumble bacon and pass at the table for topping.

Makes 6 servings.

SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

FOOD

# Chicken Tortilla Soup



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

## CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 3 to 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeño, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup frozen or fresh corn kernels
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) diced tomatoes, with juice
- 1-1/2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts or skinless thighs
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons fine yellow cornmeal
- 3 corn tortillas, cut in half, then into thin strips

SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

Heat olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Add onions and bell peppers and cook for 5 minutes, or until onions are soft. Add garlic, jalapeño, chili powder, cumin, and smoked paprika. Cook for 1 minute more, then add 2 cups of water plus stock, corn, tomatoes with their juice, chicken, and salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 25 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer chicken to a plate. Add black beans and black pepper to soup pot. Cut chicken into bite-size pieces and return to soup.

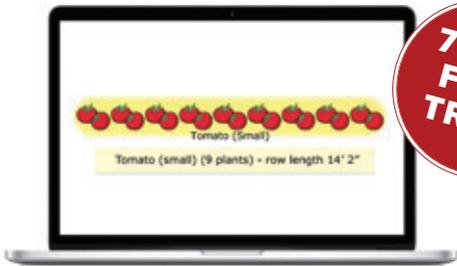
Put cornmeal into a small bowl and add 2 to 3 tablespoons of water (more, if necessary), stirring to make a thick slurry. Add to soup and simmer, stirring often, for 20 to 30 minutes, or until soup thickens slightly. Adjust seasonings, if desired. Prior to serving, add tortillas to soup and stir.

**Makes 8 servings.**

# Plan Your BEST Garden

*Good luck is the result of good planning.*

And we've done the homework for you! Described as "the world's best garden planning software," the *Almanac Garden Planner* helps you create the best layout for your plant beds right on your computer!

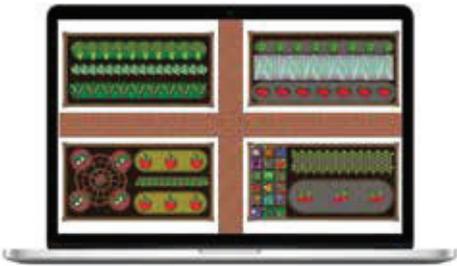


**7-DAY  
FREE  
TRIAL!**



- shows how many plants to set in a space, plus when to sow, plant, and harvest

- contains 250 vegetables, herbs, fruits, and flowers



- works for raised beds, square-foot gardens, and traditional rows



- customizes planting dates to YOUR location, based on local weather history

## PLUS:

- keeps track of your planting to ensure proper rotation every year
- emails you twice a month, with details on which of your plants you need to sow now

**GET GROWING NOW: USE THE GARDEN PLANNER  
FREE FOR 7 DAYS!**

The no-obligation 7-day trial gives you access to all the features of the software for one garden plan. If you like the *Almanac Garden Planner*, subscribe for only **\$29 per year**. Or subscribe anytime—the *Planner* will remember your plot!

**PLAN TODAY AND PLANT TOMORROW! SIGN UP AT [ALMANAC.COM/GARDENPLANNER](http://ALMANAC.COM/GARDENPLANNER)**

FOLKLORE



# When the Whippoorwill Calls

It could mean many things, according to the wealth of myth surrounding this night flyer.

PHOTO: LAURA GOOCH/Flickr CREATIVE COMMONS



## FEW BIRDS HAVE SPUN SUCH A CRAZED WEB OF MYTHOLOGY AND MYTH-INFORMATION.

*The note of the  
whippoorwill borne over  
the fields is the voice with  
which the woods and  
moonlight woo me.*

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU,  
AMERICAN WRITER (1817–62)

**D**oes the whippoorwill suck goat's milk? Does it foretell death, marriage, or woe? Can your aching back be cured by its call? Few birds have spun such a crazed web of mythology and myth-information. At the heart of this confusion and misdirection is a

medium-size bird, aka goatsucker.

Merit or blame for this bird's name belongs to Aristotle. The wise philosopher took a frivolous side trip into illogic to report a ridiculous story about the whippoorwill: "Flying to the udders of she-goats, it sucks them and so it gets its name," he reported.

Probably whippoorwills (or even more likely their crepuscular cousins, the nighthawks) were snagging insects as the insects congregated around the thin-haired bellies of goats. But

Aristotle's authoritative nonsense stuck with the *Caprimulgidae* family (the Latin word comes from *capri* for goat and *mulgere* to milk), and the common name for the bird family is the inelegant "goatsucker."

Old wives worked overtime to whipstitch the tattered fabric of whippoorwill folklore. Here are some examples . . .

- When a single woman heard her first whippoorwill in springtime, she must have felt her heart lurch in panic, for if the bird did not call again, she would



## KEEP AN EAR COCKED FOR THE WHIPPOORWILL'S CALL AND BE PREPARED TO MAKE A WISH.

remain single for a year. If the birdsong continued, she was fated to remain single unless she had been quick-thinking and made a wish upon hearing the first call. If she kept that wish secret, she ultimately would be married.

- Whippoorwills singing near a house were an omen of death, or at least of bad luck.
- A man could rid himself of an aching back if he turned somersaults in time to whippoorwill calls.
- If an Omaha tribe Native American heard a whippoorwill's called invitation, he or she was advised to decline it. If the bird then stopped calling, a person who had

answered would die. But if the calls continued, the person would have a long life.

- The Colorado Utes believed that the whippoorwill was one of the gods of the night and could transform a frog into the Moon.
- The Iroquois believed that moccasin flowers were the shoes of whippoorwills.

Whippoorwills range east of the Mississippi and from southern Canada south to northern Louisiana. The night is theirs, although in both daylight and dark the birds depend on their superb camouflage to see them through.

Whippoorwills do their courting after sunset. The male's spring ritual is an elaborate one, involving strutting, throat-puffing, and a variety of noises designed to convince the silent female that he is The Male among a woods swarming with calling males. It's almost impossible for a spring woods traveler to escape the questionable music of one of the family to which the whippoorwill belongs. If you venture into a forest in the weeks ahead, keep an ear cocked for the whippoorwill's call and be prepared to make a wish, do a somersault, or see the Moon in a frog pond.

—Joel M. Vance



# WEATHER FORECASTS

IF JANUARY CALEND BE SUMMERLY GAY,  
IT WILL BE WINTERLY WEATHER TILL THE CALEND OF MAY.

## HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

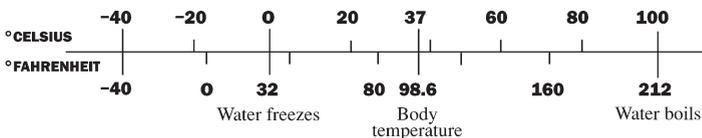


TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY



LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

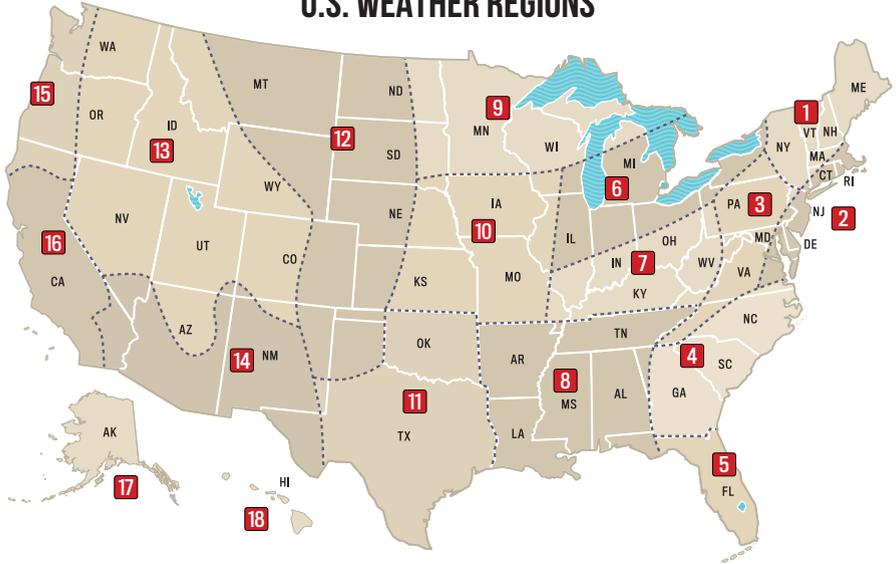
### CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



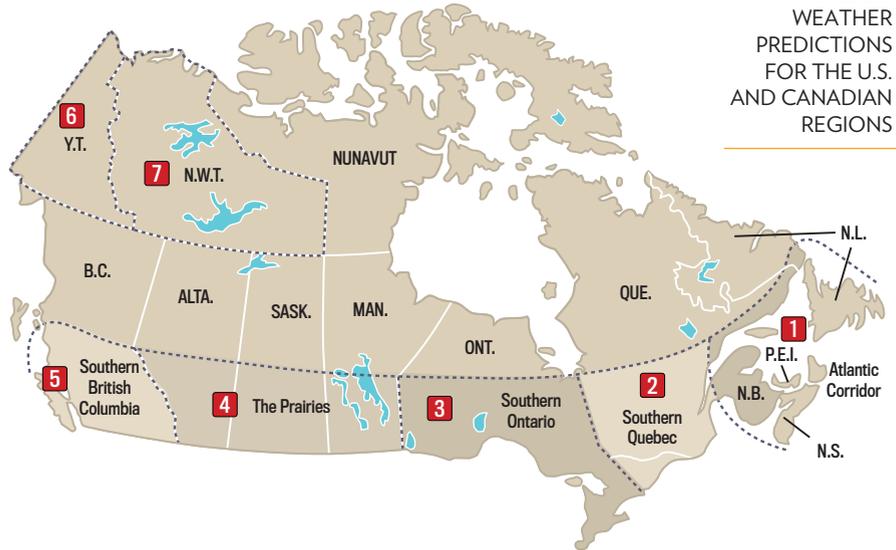


# WEATHER FORECASTS

## U.S. WEATHER REGIONS

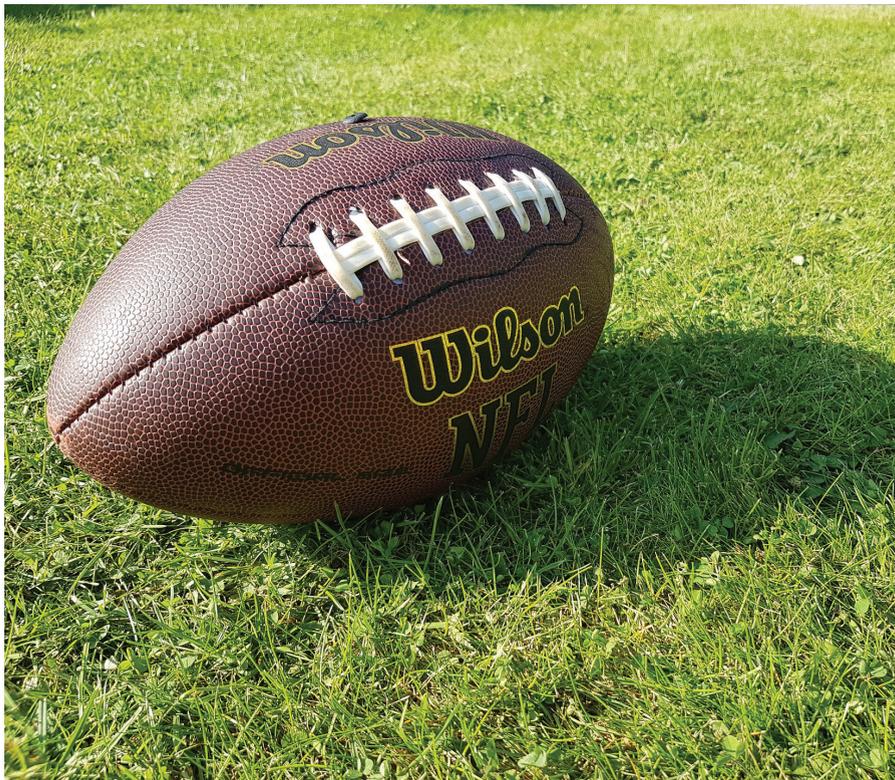


## CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



CLICK HERE TO FIND JANUARY WEATHER PREDICTIONS FOR THE U.S. AND CANADIAN REGIONS





## SUPER BOWL WEATHER THROUGH THE YEARS

**S**uper Bowl® LII will be played on February 4, 2018, at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Although it's always possible that weather could impact travel to and from the game, the contest itself will be free from any weather effects, as it will be played indoors. *The Old Farmer's Almanac* forecasts clear and cold for that day.

Not all Super Bowls have been played indoors. In fact, only 18 of the previous 51 have been in domed stadiums, while 32 have been outdoors in “warm weather” cities. The 2014 Super Bowl was the only one held in a “cold weather” city without a domed stadium.



That 2014 Super Bowl was held at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, on February 2, 2014, and, although the weather was mild for that location with a game time temperature of 49°F, 8 inches of snow fell the very next day.

It had been in the previous year's Super Bowl that the environment most affected the game, as a power blackout in the third quarter delayed the contest for 34 minutes.

Some other interesting facts from Super Bowl weather history include:

- 20 had a trace or more of rain at the nearest reporting station on the day of the game
- 2 had snow reported on game day (1982, 2006)
- 1 was played during an ice storm (2000)
- The warmest high temperature on game day was 82°F (1973, 2003)
- The coldest high temperature on game day was 16°F (1982)
- The coldest high temperature for an outdoor game was 43°F (1972)
- The wettest Super Bowl was in 2007, with 0.92 inches of rain
- 5 outdoor games had high wind gusts (1980, 1984, 1989, 2007, 2016)
- The 1972 Super Bowl VI between the Dallas Cowboys and Miami Dolphins was the coldest ever played, with a game time temperature of 39°F at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans. Miami lost that game, but won the following year at Super Bowl VII against the Washington Redskins in the L.A. Memorial Coliseum, where the game time temperature was 84°F, the warmest of any Super Bowl.
- The average kickoff temperature of an outdoor Super Bowl game is 65.2°F. Indoor temperatures are generally 70° to 72°F.

—*Michael Steinberg*, Old Farmer's Almanac *meteorologist*



# HUMOR ME

## GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC ARCHIVES



### Too Far

An Arkansas man on trial for stealing a saw told the judge that he had done so only as a joke.

“But then you took it too far,” observed the judge.

“Only about 2 miles,” said the man, before getting sentenced to 3 months.

### FAIR WARNING

The good Reverend Macdonald was recounting how, when

he was courting Miss Brown—the lass who would become Mrs. Macdonald—her father, the good Reverend Brown, was injudicious enough on one occasion to enter the parlor without giving any warning of his approach.

The consequence was that he found the sweethearts occupying a single chair. Deeply shocked by this spectacle, the old man solemnly said: “Mr. Macdonald, when I was courting Mrs. Brown, she sat on one side of the room and I on the other.”

Said Macdonald: “And that’s what I too would have done had I been courting Mrs. Brown.”



WIT



## CHANGE AND REST

While sojourning in Bermuda, celebrated wit William R. Travers of New York City came down to the wharf one day to see the arrivals on the steamer.

Meeting an acquaintance, he said, "Ah, Merrill, what brings you down here?"

"Oh, just came for a little change and rest."

"Sorry to discourage you," said Travers, "but I'm afraid you'll go home with neither."

"How's that?" asked Merrill.

"Well," Travers

responded, "the waiters will get all the change, and the hotel will get all the rest."

## Objection

Wife: "But Henry, you mustn't scold so much about mothers-in-law. There are good ones."

Husband: "My dear, I haven't said anything against your mother-in-law. It's mine I object to."

## HERE TO STAY

A Vermont farmer looked over his wall at the hopelessly stuck horseless carriage,

around which its helpless owners were fussing futilely.

"Well," he remarked, "it looks like the automobile is here to stay."

## Caught in a Lie

Fisherman (to fishmonger): "Just throw me a half-dozen of those trout."

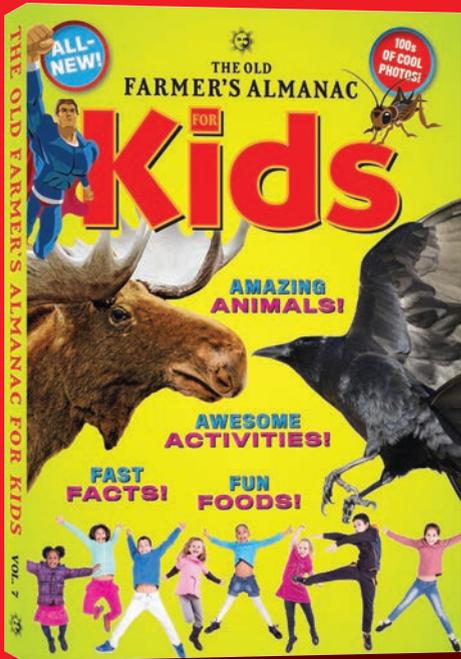
Fishmonger: "Throw them?"

Fisherman: "Yes—then I will have caught them, don't you see? I may be a poor fisherman, but I'm no liar."

## THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Mrs. Hix: "I don't take any stock in these faith cures brought about by the laying on of hands."

Mrs. Dix: "Well, I do. I cured my son of the cigarette habit in that way."



**NEW!**



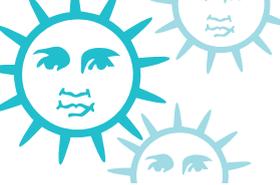
# THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC FOR KIDS

**Kids love it! Adults can't put it down!**

Inspired by the wit and wisdom of North America's favorite "Old" friend, the Almanac for Kids features a treasure trove of fun facts, creative activities, and great ideas that will keep kids of all ages loving learning the whole year through.

**LEARN MORE!**

\$9.95 | Printed in the USA



# WHAT'S NEXT



## GARDENING

Easy-grow, early-harvest veggies



## CALENDAR

Monthly Muse, February birthdays, Shrove Tuesday, U.S. Electoral College



## LIVING NATURALLY

Herbal soup for health



## AMUSEMENT

The Bank That Broke the Mailman's Back



## FOOD

Chocolate recipes for Valentine's Day



## ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map

Plus: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Best Days to Do Things • Humor • and much more in the February *EXTRA!*

**CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 226TH YEAR!**