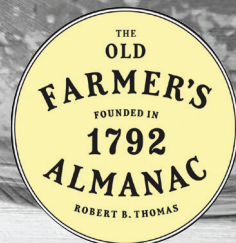


EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

MAKE A MINI-GREENHOUSE

PLUS: • Best Days to Do Things • Gardening by the Moon's Sign
• Monthly Calendar • Astronomy • Weather



JANUARY 2024

PHOTO: AFRICA STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

JANUARY

Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Jan. 1: New Year's Day

Jan. 6: Epiphany

Jan. 7: Orthodox Christmas
(Julian)

Jan. 8: Elvis Presley's Birthday

Jan. 15: Martin Luther King
Jr.'s Birthday

Jan. 17: Benjamin Franklin's
Birthday

JANUARY BIRTH FLOWERS

- Depending on its color, the **carnation** may have different meanings, including affection (pink), regret (striped), and innocence (white).

- The **snowdrop** can signify hope, beauty, or compassion.



EYE ON THE SKY

JANUARY'S FULL MOON NAMES

Wolf Moon, Greetings Moon,
Severe Moon

MOON PHASES

Last Quarter: Jan. 3, 10:30 P.M. EST

New Moon: Jan. 11, 6:57 A.M. EST

First Quarter: Jan. 17, 10:53 P.M. EST

Full Moon: Jan. 25, 12:54 P.M. EST

SPECIAL EVENT

January 2 is the time of **perihelion**, when Earth is closest to the Sun for the year: 91,404,095 miles.



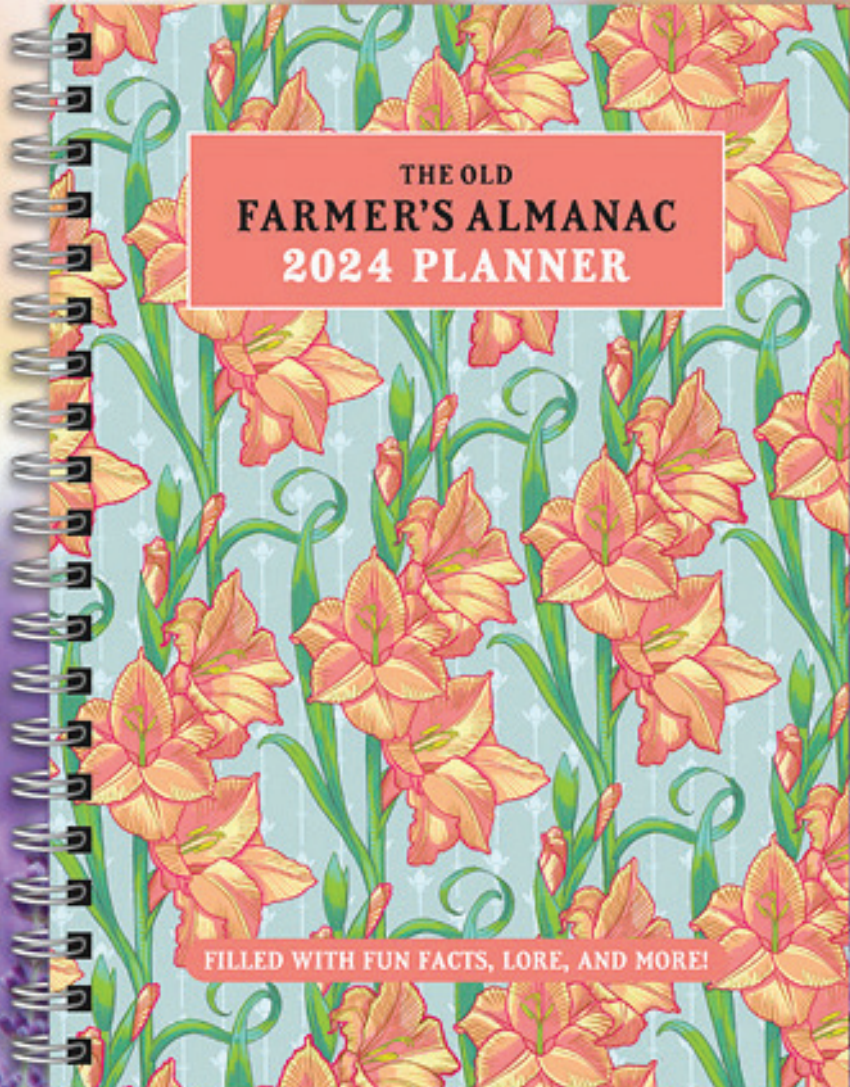
TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT JANUARY'S
FULL MOON

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Everything you need to stay on track in 2024



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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*

AROUND THE HOUSE

Bake: 23, 24

Brew: 5–7

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 5–7

Demolish: 5–7

Dry fruit, vegetables, or meat: 8, 9,
26, 27

End projects: 24

Lay shingles: 25–27

Make jams or jellies: 14, 15

Paint: 3, 4, 30, 31

Start projects: 12

Wash floors: 14, 15

Wash windows: 16, 17



PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 18, 19
Ask for a loan: 5–7
Begin diet to gain weight: 15, 20
Begin diet to lose weight: 2, 7
Buy a home: 18, 19
Color hair: 18, 19
Cut hair to discourage growth: 3, 4, 30, 31
Cut hair to encourage growth: 18, 19
Entertain: 25–27
Get married: 3, 4, 30, 31
Have dental care: 1, 2, 28, 29
Move (house/household): 20–22
Perm hair: 12, 13
Quit smoking: 2, 7
Straighten hair: 8, 9
Travel for pleasure: 25–27
Wean children: 2, 7

OUTDOORS

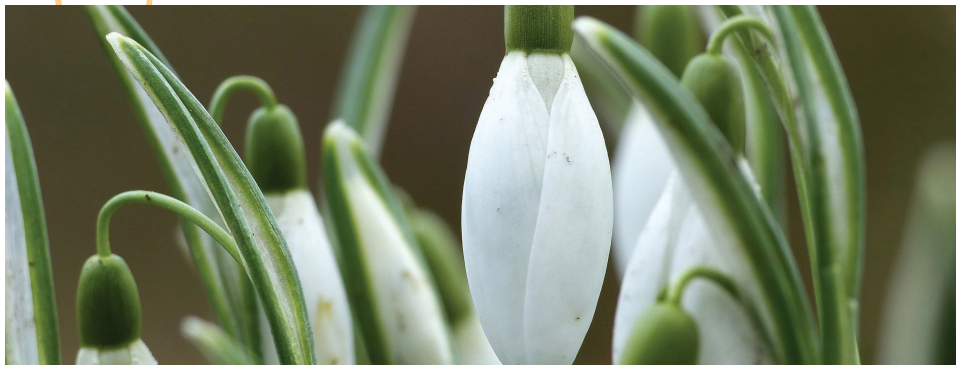
Begin logging: 10, 11
Go camping: 8, 9
Go fishing: 11–25
Set posts or pour concrete: 10, 11

IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 16, 17
Graft or pollinate: 23, 24
Harvest aboveground crops: 18, 19
Harvest belowground crops: 1, 2, 28, 29
Mow to promote growth: 14, 15
Mow to slow growth: 5–7
Pick fruit: 1, 2, 28, 29
Plant aboveground crops: 14, 15, 23, 24
Plant belowground crops: 5–7
Prune to discourage growth: 26, 27
Prune to encourage growth: 16, 17

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 5–7
Castrate animals: 12, 13
Cut hay: 16, 17
Purchase animals: 23, 24
Set eggs: 2, 3, 20, 21, 29, 30
Slaughter livestock: 5–7
Wean animals: 2, 7



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, Pisces, or Taurus

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

1 Virgo

2 Virgo

3 Libra

4 Libra

5 Scorpio

6 Scorpio

7 Scorpio

8 Sagittarius

9 Sagittarius

10 Capricorn

11 Capricorn

12 Aquarius

13 Aquarius

14 Pisces

15 Pisces

16 Aries

17 Aries

18 Taurus

19 Taurus

20 Gemini

21 Gemini

22 Gemini

23 Cancer

24 Cancer

25 Leo

26 Leo

27 Leo

28 Virgo

29 Virgo

30 Libra

31 Libra



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



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*.

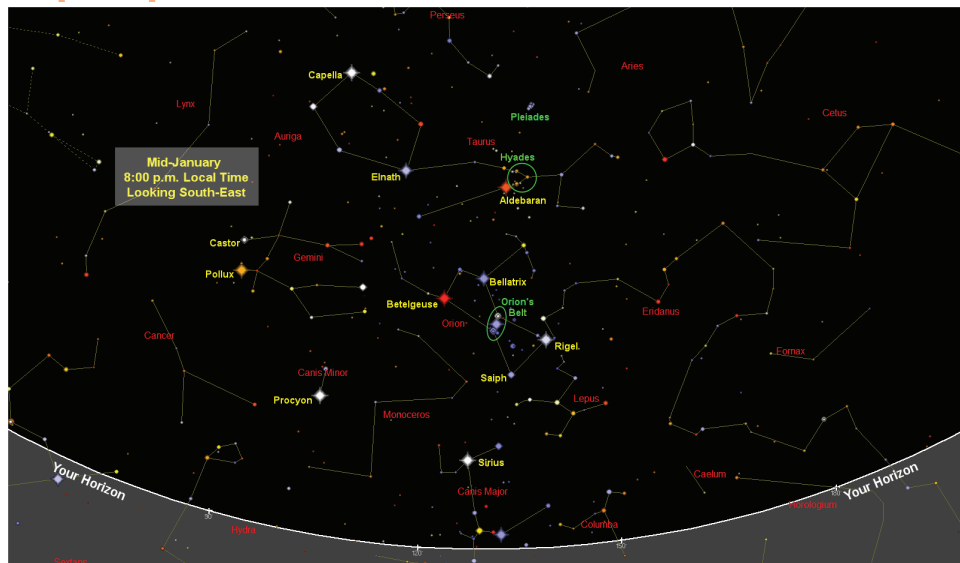
Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

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.

Mercury's 2024 retrograde periods: **(December 13, 2023)–January 1, April 1–24, August 4–27, and November 25–December 15.**

–*Celeste Longacre*

Celebrating its 47th anniversary in 2024, the best-selling *Old Farmer's Almanac* Gardening Calendar is filled with beautiful art, helpful tips, insightful quotes, and an easy-to-use grid with holidays and Moon phases. Order yours today at [Almanac.com/Shop](https://www.almanac.com/Shop).



THE BRIGHTEST SKY OF THE YEAR!

The combination of crisp, clear winter nights and a southeastern sky filled with celestial wonders makes it well worth bundling up and scanning the heavens in January.

Orion, the Hunter, is not the largest constellation, but it is unquestionably the brightest. It's home to a pair of the sky's Top 10 brightest stars, ruddy Betelgeuse and blue-white Rigel. Star colors are notoriously difficult to discern, but on a clear night, the differing hues of Betelgeuse and Rigel are plain to see at Orion's right shoulder and left knee, respectively.

Somewhat less luminous are Bellatrix at the Hunter's left shoulder and Mintaka, Alnilam, and Alnitak, which comprise Orion's Belt. Saiph, at his right knee, would be a noteworthy star in any other celestial neighborhood, but it doesn't even crack the Top 5 in mighty Orion.

Above Orion stands Taurus, the Bull, his long horns

TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
**JANUARY
SKY MAP**

TAP TO
FOLLOW
OHIOAN JEFF
DETRAY'S SKY
ADVENTURES



jutting to the left and one baleful eye represented by the reddish star Aldebaran. Nearby lies a group of stars that make up the Hyades star cluster. The members of the Hyades lie fairly close together in space, but despite its apparent proximity, Aldebaran is *not* a part of the cluster. It is much closer to us than the Hyades (one reason that it appears brighter) and just happens to lie along the same line of sight. This is one of countless examples where celestial objects appear near one another from our point of view, but vast differences in distance mean that they are actually far apart.

Above the Hyades are the Pleiades, also known as the Seven Sisters, which are among the most famous of star clusters. This cluster is so distinctive and its location so prominent that dozens of ancient cultures found a place in their mythologies for the Pleiades. Most people with good vision can spot five stars when they gaze at the Pleiades. However, if your eyesight is especially acute and the sky is wonderfully clear, you may see seven or even more. If you do, you have “the eyes of a warrior,” as ancient lore decreed.

Off to the left is the five-sided figure of Auriga, the Charioteer. The star Elnath is shared between Auriga and Taurus, making it one of the few stars that belongs to two constellations.

Swinging downward, we find Gemini, the Twins. Their names are Castor and Pollux, with stars of those names representing the heads of the reclining twins. They lie holding hands, their legs and feet stretched out toward Orion.

Continuing counterclockwise around the sky, we reach Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. Its only bright star is Procyon, a name meaning “before the dog.” This refers to the fact that on any given night, Procyon rises above the horizon a few minutes before the bright star Sirius, whose nickname is “the Dog Star.” Thus, Procyon rises “before the dog.”

We’ll skip over the dim constellation Monoceros to reach Canis Major, the Greater Dog. This figure is home to the aforementioned Sirius, which just happens to be the brightest star in the night sky—almost twice as bright as any other! Sirius appears so bright to us because it is both extremely luminous and relatively nearby.

Enjoy the January sky—the brightest of the year!

–Jeff DeTray

GARDENING



Make a Mini-Greenhouse

Terrariums take container gardening in a whole new direction.

PHOTO: NESOLENAYA ALEXANDRA/SHUTTERSTOCK

GARDENING

Winter, when gardening season still seems so far away, may be the best time to create a terrarium. This is when I get the urge to get growing. Contemplating and creating such a planter carried me through a New Hampshire “mud season” (aka rainy spell) and closer to our last frost-free day.

Whatever the weather—and no matter the season—a terrarium is a fun and colorful project that can bring years of pleasure.

The basic components for making a beautiful terrarium—container, dirt, plants, decorative objects—are simple and easily obtained or found. Just add your own imagination and willingness to experiment. Here are some pointers for success.

CONTAINER CONSIDERATIONS

Terrariums may be entirely enclosed (with ventilation options); partially open, without a lid; or having only a bottom and sidewalls. The options are almost endless; any clear glass (or plastic) container big enough to hold a small plant or two or three is a candidate: large canning or pickle jars, vases, brandy snifters, apothecary and cookie jars, candleholders, lantern cloches (“chimneys”), old aquariums. Look around your house, scavenge at recycling centers, or seek out at resale/consignment stores. Wash thoroughly.

Large containers have better airflow and more root space and are less likely to overheat. They are also easier to get your hands into for planting.

Closed containers

work best for plants that love high humidity, like ferns, mosses, and most tropical plants. The glass creates a warm, humid environment for the plants inside. If a closed container fogs up, you need only take off the top or open a vent.

Open vessels need less monitoring than closed ones and offer space for plants to peek above the top as they grow. Air plants (look for tillandsias), orchids, and succulents are good candidates.

THE SOIL

Lay down a base of gravel, crushed stone, and then sand for good drainage. If the gravel or rocks come from outdoors, wash them first. Purchase a small bag of desert sand from a garden center; it will already have been washed, screened, and heat-dried.

GARDENING

A closed environment benefits from a layer of activated charcoal on the gravel; it adsorbs bacteria and/or chemicals and mold that accrue in the container and can harm the plants.

Potting mix should be free of wetting agents (little beads that retain moisture) or fertilizer. You can make your own from equal parts compost, peat or coconut coir, and perlite or else purchase a small bag of cactus or orchid potting mix from a garden center.

Add a top layer of sand or moss, if desired. Mosses are grown for the floral industry and can be ordered online or purchased in garden centers. A layer of moss on top of your terrarium landscape helps it to retain moisture. If you harvest moss from your own yard, take only small pieces, since moss regrows slowly.

THE PLANTS

Plants that grow large quickly or love hot and dry conditions (think pelargoniums and most garden annuals for sunny locations) will not do well in terrariums.

Woodsy, tropical, shade-loving, slow-growing plants are best, including ground covers and creeping plants like stonecrop and sedum. African violets and dwarf impatiens are charming and colorful. Remove spent blooms so that they don't become moldy.

Here is a baker's dozen of other suggestions for terrarium plants: fairy washboard plant (a succulent), aluminum plant, strawberry and other small begonias, baby spider plant, asparagus fern seedlings, peperomias (many varieties), creeping fig, pitcher plant (for open containers), silver squill (looks like a tiny palm

tree), maidenhair fern, old-man's beard lichen, jade plant (small rooted cuttings), stonecrop.

Sheet moss can be used to wrap the root ball of moisture-loving plants (not succulents or air plants) so that you don't need to keep them in containers inside your terrarium.

THE TOOLS

- A funnel, chopstick, and tongs or long tweezers will help you to set plants and objects and spread sand, especially if your vessel has an opening that's too narrow for your hand.
- An artist paintbrush or cork on a stick (e.g., chop- or shish kebab stick) can help in tamping down soil around a plant.
- A turkey baster can direct water onto the root balls of plants.

THE OBJECTS

Scour your house and

GARDENING

yard for small decorative objects like shells, polished stones, sparkly crystals, tiny ceramic figurines—whatever strikes your fancy and will add interest to your created landscape. Feathers, spent robin eggshells, dried tree fungus, seed pods, driftwood, bark, gnarly roots, and even dried grasses can add interest to your terrarium.

Personalize a glass planter with meaningful objects and memorabilia for a special person in your life. For a birthday or Valentine's Day, weave reminders of the recipient and some of your shared experiences into the mini-landscape of your terrarium. Pin a ticket stub from a concert to a twig. Dress a pipe cleaner figure in a favorite color or style. Tuck in a piece of old costume jewelry from

a favorite relative. Add a miniature rose as a symbol of love.

Wash or dust anything before adding it to the terrarium.

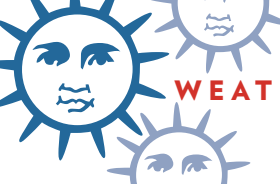
TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- After planting, mist off any soil on plant leaves, accessories, or container sides. If necessary, repeat the next day, but not before checking the moisture level in the bottom soil, which should not extend down more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the surface. Allow plants to dry before covering.
- Water sparingly—by the spoonful. Never let the soil become soaked. Because terrariums do not drain, a little water goes a long way. You may need to add only a small amount of water every 10 to 14 days. Closed terrariums require less frequent watering than open

containers.

- Never put your terrarium on a sunny windowsill or in direct sunlight. (Think how hot your closed car gets on a sunny day, even in winter.)
- Bright but indirect light is best. Depending on the plants inside, many containers will thrive in a shady location in your house. This makes a terrarium a great choice for apartment residents.
- Fertilizer is not necessary.
- Keep your terrarium at least 12 inches away from fluorescent lights (they're too bright). A small desk lamp or table lamp nearby is fine.
- If your terrarium outgrows its container or ceases to flourish, don't hesitate to start over. Wash the container well and start amassing new plants and objects for a new look, a new season.

—Susan Peery



FOG IN JANUARY MAKES A WET SPRING.

HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

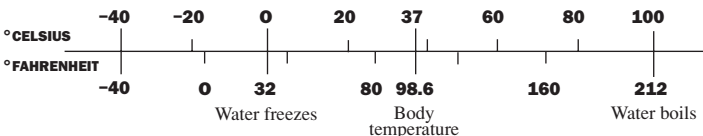
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

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. Our forecasts are based on the tabulations that span the period 1991 through 2020.

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.

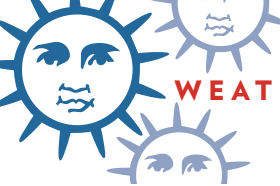
CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY

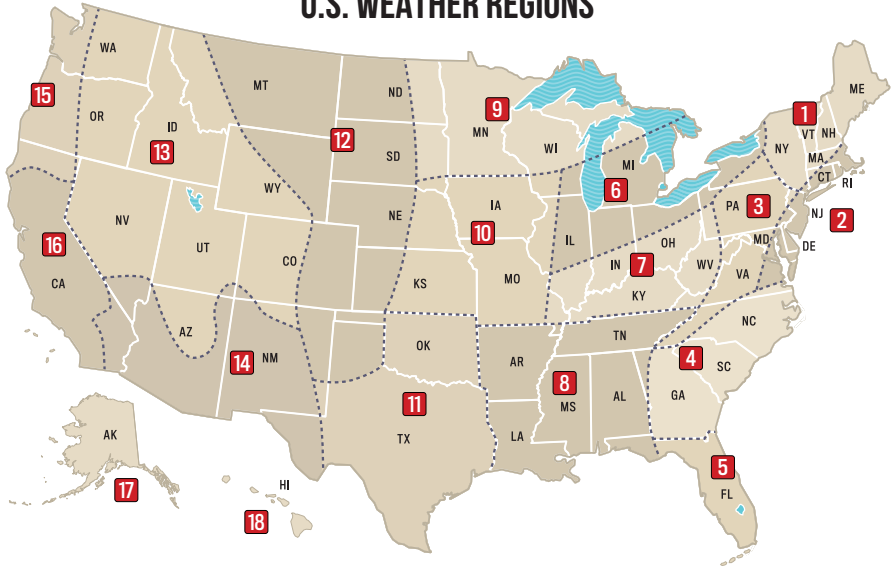


LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY



WEATHER FORECASTS

U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



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





WELCOME TO YOUR EL NIÑO WINTER!

As 2024 gets started, there will be the potential for snow on New Year's Day from New England out through the Great Lakes, with rain and/or snow also likely across portions of the mid-Atlantic and Appalachians. Some showers will move across the Southeast. Dry weather and sunshine are expected from the Deep South up through the Plains and Upper Midwest, although temperatures will be cold despite the sunshine. Snow showers will impact the High Plains and Rockies, while there will be the potential for some rain and mountain snow toward the West Coast. Much of Alaska will be dry, while some heavy rain is possible across Hawaii. In Canada, there will be some rain and snow across the Maritimes, as well as additional pockets of snow and rain across southern Ontario and southern British Columbia. It will be quite cold from the Prairies up through the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Looking at temperatures across the U.S. for the month of January, we do expect enough pushes of cold air to dive southward to keep much of the country below average for the month. The areas most likely to perhaps have above-normal temperatures will be New England and Alaska. In Canada, we expect above-normal temperatures across the Maritimes, southeastern Quebec, and the Northwest Territories, with temperatures running near or below average elsewhere.



Much of the eastern third of the U.S. will likely see above-average precipitation, which will run close to or even a little bit below average from the Upper Midwest through the Heartland. The Pacific Northwest will likely be drier than normal, as El Niño helps to keep storm tracks farther south in the West—a phenomenon that will also lead to above-normal precipitation across California and the Southwest. Above-average precipitation will be pretty common across Canada as well, although western British Columbia will have below-normal precipitation. This lack of precipitation in western British Columbia is again due to storm tracks being shifted farther south due to El Niño.

Looking at the winter forecast overall, we see that after three straight years of La Niña, the El Niño that has come on fast and furious in recent months will indeed be with us throughout the winter. However, there is still some question as to exactly how strong the El Niño will be. An area of cooler-than-normal sea surface temperatures just to the north of the primary ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation) region (where the temperature departures are measured to determine whether there is an El Niño, La Niña, or neither) can shift southward and influence the strength of El Niño as winter progresses. This El Niño supports our forecast of another wet winter across California, with a drier season foreseen for areas from the Pacific Northwest up into western British Columbia. We are expecting the winter to be warmer than normal across much of the U.S. East Coast, the Southeast, the Gulf Coast, and Alaska.

Elsewhere, we are predicting below-normal temperatures due to the increasing potential for shots of arctic air to come southward due to the polar vortex being displaced. The QBO (Quasi-Biennial Oscillation) is an alternating cycle of westerly and easterly winds that descend through the stratosphere above the equator. The direction of the winds can have an impact on the strength and placement of the polar vortex during the winter. Easterly winds are currently descending through the stratosphere, which should help to dislodge the polar vortex at times this winter, sending cold pushes down into the U.S. The key to the colder forecast in many areas will be whether the magnitude of these cold pushes is intense enough to outweigh the magnitude of stretches of above-normal temperatures.

—Bob Smerbeck and Brian Thompson, *Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologists*