

# EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

RECIPES WITH CHEESE, PLEASE!

TALL TREE TALES

LET'S HEAR IT FOR HEIRLOOMS!



MARCH 2022

PHOTO: JONATHAN SLOANE/GETTY IMAGES

## FEATURES

### GARDENING

Let's Hear It for Heirlooms!

### FOOD

Recipes With Cheese, Please!

### HISTORY

Tall Tree Tales

### LIVING NATURALLY

Attention, Knuckle-Crackers!



### WEATHER FORECASTS

How We Make Our Predictions

March U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts

Weather Update

## DEPARTMENTS

### CALENDAR

March Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More

### ASTROLOGY

Best Days to Do Things

Gardening by the Moon's Sign

### ASTRONOMY

Sky Map for March

### WIT

Humor Me  
*Grins and groans from the Almanac*

### WHAT'S NEXT

See what we have in store for our April issue!

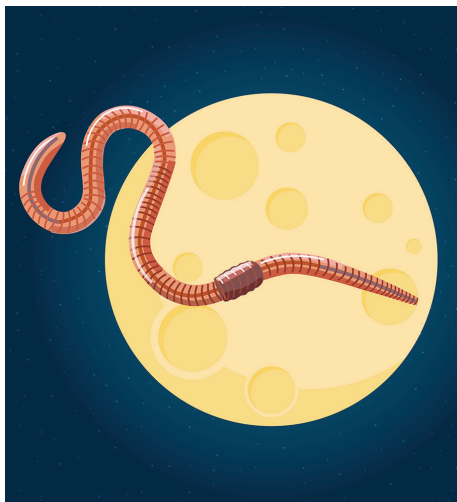


FOLLOW US:



# MARCH

*Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More*



## EYE ON THE SKY

### MARCH'S FULL MOON NAMES

Worm Moon, Crow Comes Back Moon, Wind Strong Moon

### MOON PHASES

**New Moon:** Mar. 2, 12:35 P.M. EST  
**First Quarter:** Mar. 10, 5:45 A.M. EST  
**Full Moon:** Mar. 18, 3:18 A.M. EDT  
**Last Quarter:** Mar. 25, 1:37 A.M. EDT



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MARCH'S FULL MOON

## MARCH'S BIRTHSTONE: AQUAMARINE

The aquamarine, a type of beryl, can be pale to dark blue, greenish-blue, or blue-green; deep, intense blue versions are more valuable. The word “aquamarine” comes from Latin words meaning “water” (*aqua*) and “sea” (*mare*). Early sailors believed that aquamarine talismans etched with the likeness of the sea god Neptune protected them against ocean dangers.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

**Mar. 1:** Shrove Tuesday  
**Mar. 1:** Mardi Gras  
**Mar. 2:** Ash Wednesday  
**Mar. 7:** Orthodox Lent begins  
**Mar. 8:** International Women’s Day  
**Mar. 13:** Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 A.M.  
**Mar. 17:** St. Patrick’s Day  
**Mar. 20:** Vernal Equinox  
**Mar. 31:** César Chávez Day

Order your 2022 Old Farmer’s Almanac calendars at [Almanac.com/Shop](http://Almanac.com/Shop).



## BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These March 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*

### IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 4, 5, 31

Graft or pollinate: 11–13

Harvest aboveground crops: 6–8

Harvest belowground crops: 20–22

Mow to promote growth: 4, 5

Mow to slow growth: 20–22

Pick fruit: 16, 17

Plant aboveground crops: 2, 3

Plant belowground crops: 20–22

Prune to discourage growth: 23, 24

Prune to encourage growth: 4, 5





## ON THE FARM

---

Breed animals: 20–22  
Castrate animals: 1, 27, 28  
Cut hay: 4, 5  
Purchase animals: 11–13  
Set eggs: 17–19  
Slaughter livestock: 20–22  
Wean animals: 22, 30

## PERSONAL

---

Advertise to sell: 6–8  
Ask for a loan: 20, 21  
Begin diet to gain weight: 3, 8  
Begin diet to lose weight: 22, 30  
Buy a home: 6–8  
Color hair: 6–8  
Cut hair to discourage growth: 19, 29, 30  
Cut hair to encourage growth: 6–8  
Entertain: 14, 15  
Get married: 18, 19  
Have dental care: 16, 17  
Move (house/household): 9, 10  
Perm hair: 1, 27, 28  
Quit smoking: 22, 30

Straighten hair: 23, 24  
Travel for pleasure: 14, 15  
Wean children: 22, 30

## AROUND THE HOUSE

---

Bake: 11–13  
Brew: 20–22  
Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 20–22  
Demolish: 20–22  
Dry fruit, vegetables, or meat: 23, 24  
End projects: 1  
Lay shingles: 14, 15  
Make jams or jellies: 2, 3, 29, 30  
Paint: 18, 19  
Start projects: 3  
Wash floors: 2, 3, 29, 30  
Wash windows: 4, 5, 31

## OUTDOORS

---

Begin logging: 25, 26  
Go camping: 23, 24  
Go fishing: 2–18  
Set posts or pour concrete: 25, 26





## GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the March 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 MARCH

**1** Aquarius

**2** Pisces

**3** Pisces

**4** Aries

**5** Aries

**6** Taurus

**7** Taurus

**8** Taurus

**9** Gemini

**10** Gemini

**11** Cancer

**12** Cancer

**13** Cancer

**14** Leo

**15** Leo

**16** Virgo

**17** Virgo

**18** Libra

**19** Libra

**20** Scorpio

**21** Scorpio

**22** Scorpio

**23** Sagittarius

**24** Sagittarius

**25** Capricorn

**26** Capricorn

**27** Aquarius

**28** Aquarius

**29** Pisces

**30** Pisces

**31** Aries



TAP FOR  
MERCURY IN  
RETROGRADE  
DATES



TAP FOR  
MARCH 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.

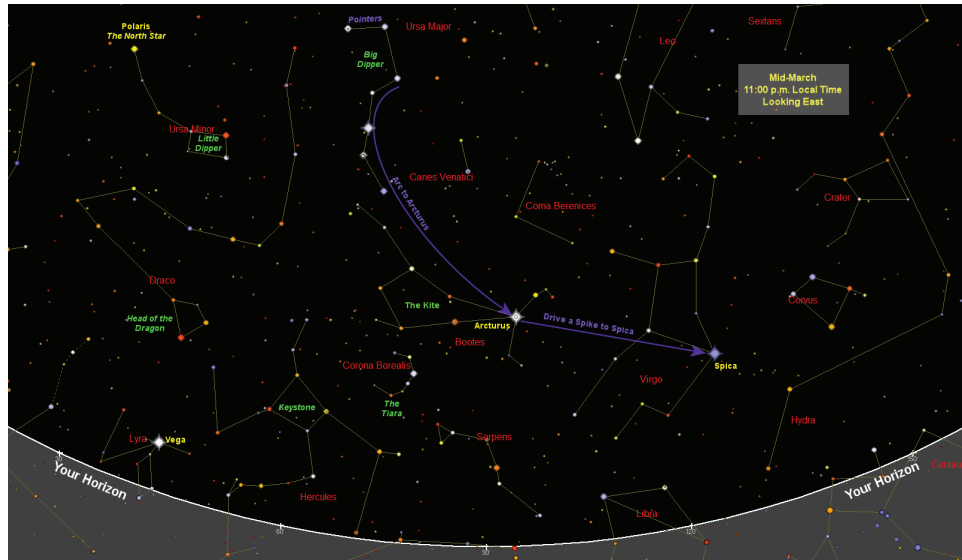
Mercury's 2022 retrograde periods:  
**May 10–June 2, September 9–October 1,**  
and **December 28–(January 18, 2023).**

–*Celeste Longacre*

---

Celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2022, 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).





## POINTERS IN THE SKY

Getting your bearings under the night sky can be a challenge, even if you have a sky map or star chart to help you. Star gazers of every experience level—from newcomer to expert—typically begin an evening of observing by finding a single familiar star pattern (asterism) and using it to point the way. On March evenings, there is no better place to start than with the Big Dipper.

The Big Dipper asterism is composed of the seven brightest stars in the constellation Ursa Major, the Greater Bear. The shape of the Big Dipper never varies, but its orientation changes constantly. This month's Sky Map shows the Dipper as it appears during March in the late evening, when it seems to be standing upright, precariously balanced on its handle. Come back just a few hours later, and the Dipper will have moved so that it is upside-down as if pouring out its contents. Return at a different time of year, and the Big

▶ TAP TO GET A PRINTABLE MARCH SKY MAP

▶ TAP TO FOLLOW OHIOAN JEFF DETRAY'S SKY ADVENTURES



Dipper might be to the left of Polaris instead of on the right as it is in March. Learn to recognize the Big Dipper no matter what its orientation is.

The Dipper's stars always point the way to other celestial sights. The two stars that form the front end of the Dipper's bowl are known as the Pointers. They point directly toward Polaris, the North Star, in Ursa Minor, the Lesser Bear. Because Polaris points the way to true north, it has long been a vital guidepost for navigation on both land and sea. When you use the Pointers to find Polaris, you'll be doing the same thing as countless explorers and sailors have done in the past.

The stars of the Big Dipper's handle form a graceful curve or arc. If you extend this curve past the end of the handle and follow it two more "handle lengths," you'll end up at the bright star Arcturus in Boötes, the Herdsman. The main stars of Boötes form a somewhat lopsided kite shape.

Once you've reached Arcturus, straighten out the curve and make a beeline for Spica, the brightest star in Virgo, the Virgin. The journey from the Big Dipper to Spica has given rise to a popular astronomer's refrain: "Arc to Arcturus, then drive a spike to Spica." Once your gaze has wandered from the Big Dipper to Arcturus to Spica, perhaps you'll remember the refrain the next time you spot the Dipper.

**U**sing the Big Dipper to orient yourself helps to overcome a problem that's common to all star gazers: grasping the scale of the sky. Translating what's shown on a sky map to what you see in the sky can be difficult. Distances in the sky seem greater than what they appear to be on a map. Starting with a bright asterism such as the Big Dipper and then extending your view to encompass Arcturus and Spica can help you to relate your map to the sky that it represents.

Once you understand the scale of the sky, it becomes much easier to find other stars and constellations. On our March map, look for points of interest such as the sinuous body and distinctive head of Draco, the Dragon; the beautiful Tiara shape of Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown; and the Keystone asterism at the heart of Hercules, the Roman Hero.

*—Jeff DeTray*



GARDENING

*Amaranth*

**Let's Hear It for  
Heirlooms!**

PHOTO: FOTOLINCHEN/GETTY IMAGES

**D**o you have any heirlooms—in your garden, that is? Heirloom plants are usually defined as varieties that have been around for at least 50 years. Because they've evolved over time, most have good resistance to pests and diseases. Heirlooms are also open-pollinated; unlike many hybrids, heirlooms are pollinated naturally by wind, birds, and insects. (Many produce lots of nectar and pollen, which makes them ideal for pollinator-friendly gardens.) And they're often taller, more graceful, or more fragrant than hybrids.

Heirlooms are almost easy. No catch, just a caveat: Before you buy, read about the heirlooms that you want to grow and be sure that you can give them the garden conditions that they need. You'll love them all the more for it.

• **Amaranth**  
(*Amaranthus*):

Amaranth dates from the Incas and Aztecs. For a strong visual impact, try 'Dreadlocks' (*A. caudatus* var. *gibbosus*). This drought-tolerant annual is a scene-stealer, with long, knotty, claret-red blooms. Grow it with dahlias, cleome, and fragrant woodland tobacco, aka starflower (*Nicotiana glauca*). 'Chinese Giant Orange' (*A. hypochondriacus*) is another showstopper, with golden-orange flowers on plants that grow to 8 feet tall.

• **Kiss-me-over-the-garden-gate** (*Polygonum orientale*): This rare beauty is also known as prince's feather or ladyfingers. The plant dates from 1737, when it was first grown in Virginia. It has bright pink flowers that sway on long stems.

• **Poppy** (*Papaver somniferum*): 'Imperial Pink' is a single-flower heirloom with fringed pink blooms brushed with pale lavender at the

centers. Sow the seeds outdoors in very early spring or plant them in the fall if you live where winters are mild.

• **Cosmos** (*Cosmos sulphureus*): Cosmos may look delicate, with their daisylike blooms, but they can thrive even in poor soils and withstand dry spells. These annuals hail from Mexico, are ideal for cutting gardens, and are beloved by butterflies. 'Diablo' was introduced in the 18th century and takes its name, the Spanish word for devil, from its fiery orange and scarlet flowers.

• **Sweet scabious** (*Scabiosa atropurpurea*): These pincushion-shape annuals lure butterflies and bees. 'Summer Fruits' is a mix of raspberry and blackberry colors, while honey-scented 'Black Knight', grown in England since the 1600s, has dark maroon flowers tipped with white.



• **Larkspur (*Consolida ambigua*):** Thomas Jefferson grew larkspurs at Monticello, where the flowers still flourish today. These annuals aren't as demanding as look-alike delphiniums, but they dislike transplanting; sow the seeds where you want them to remain.

They're best planted while the weather is cool. 'Imperial Larkspur French Alouette' is an heirloom variety with lacy leaves and double flowers in pink, purple, lilac, white, and rose on 3-foot spires that are great for cutting.

• **Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*):** Once grown by the Aztecs, zinnias started popping up in European gardens in the 1700s. Sow these heat-loving annuals directly in the garden once the soil temperature warms to 55°F. All are excellent cut flowers, but 'Giants of California', which date from 1919, bear white, yellow, cherry-

red, pink, violet, and orange blooms that are 4 to 5 inches in diameter. Imagine that bouquet!

• **Four o'clock (*Mirabilis jalapa*):** You can't set your watch by these flowers, but they do open their blooms in the afternoon.

Botanists believe that four o'clocks were once grown by the Aztecs (the plants are native to Peru), and we know that Thomas Jefferson grew them in the late 1700s. These tuberous-rooted, tender perennials, hardy to Zones 9 to 11, like sun but can tolerate some shade. (Lift in fall and overwinter in a cool, frost-free area, then replant in spring to hasten bloom time.) 'Teatime Mix' has a sweet perfume scent.

• **Peony (*Paeonia*):** Peonies are ancient flowers, cultivated in their native China for thousands of years. While some peonies can be started from seeds, Itoh peonies are

created through a process called "tissue culture." Vigorous, with large, colorful flowers held on thick stems, Itoh peonies may bloom for up to 5 weeks, if conditions are right. When the flowers stop, the fernlike foliage continues to add texture to the scene.

'Bartzella' is a recent introduction in the Itoh class. Its big yellow flowers are brushed with red at the base and have a spicy lemony fragrance.

Itohs may live 75 to 85 years, so these peonies aren't heirlooms just because of their origins. They're plants that your grandchildren can tend during their lifetimes.

—Lynn Coulter

---

We all love flowers but—for a change—think about putting foliage bouquets front and center: They're fun, festive, and fit in anywhere! Learn more about how in the annual *Old Farmer's Almanac Garden Guide!* Get a copy—or join the Gardening Club for even more—at [Almanac.com/Shop](http://Almanac.com/Shop).

FOOD



# Recipes With Cheese, Please!

*Cheese can be used in countless ways. You can whip up a pot of melty cheese fondue or toss pasta with butter and Parmesan for an instant meal.*

*A slice of cheese added to a sandwich or crumbled into a salad can greatly enhance your lunch experience. Here you'll find a collection of our favorite recipes using a variety of cheeses to inspire your next meal.*

PHOTO: BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER



FOOD

# Spinach Artichoke Stuffed Pasta Shells

PHOTO: SAMANTHA JONES

## SPINACH ARTICHOKE STUFFED PASTA SHELLS

36 jumbo pasta shells

1 container (16 ounces) cottage cheese or ricotta

1 can (14 ounces) artichoke hearts, drained and coarsely chopped

1 box (10 ounces) chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

4 ounces cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1/3 cup sour cream

1/3 cup mayonnaise

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon onion powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg, or to taste

1-1/2 cups french-fried onions

1 jar (24 ounces) red pepper pasta sauce or favorite pasta sauce

1-1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13x9-inch baking dish.

Cook pasta shells for 2 minutes less than package directions, then drain and rinse in cold water.

In a bowl, combine cottage cheese, artichoke hearts, spinach, cream cheese, Parmesan, sour cream, mayonnaise, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Fold in french-fried onions.

Cover bottom of prepared baking dish with a layer of pasta sauce. Stuff shells with artichoke mixture and place in baking dish. Spoon remaining sauce over shells and top with mozzarella. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake for another 15 minutes, or until sauce is bubbly and cheese is melted. Garnish with parsley.

**Makes 8 to 10 servings.**



FOOD

# Dressed-Up Crab Rangoon Dip

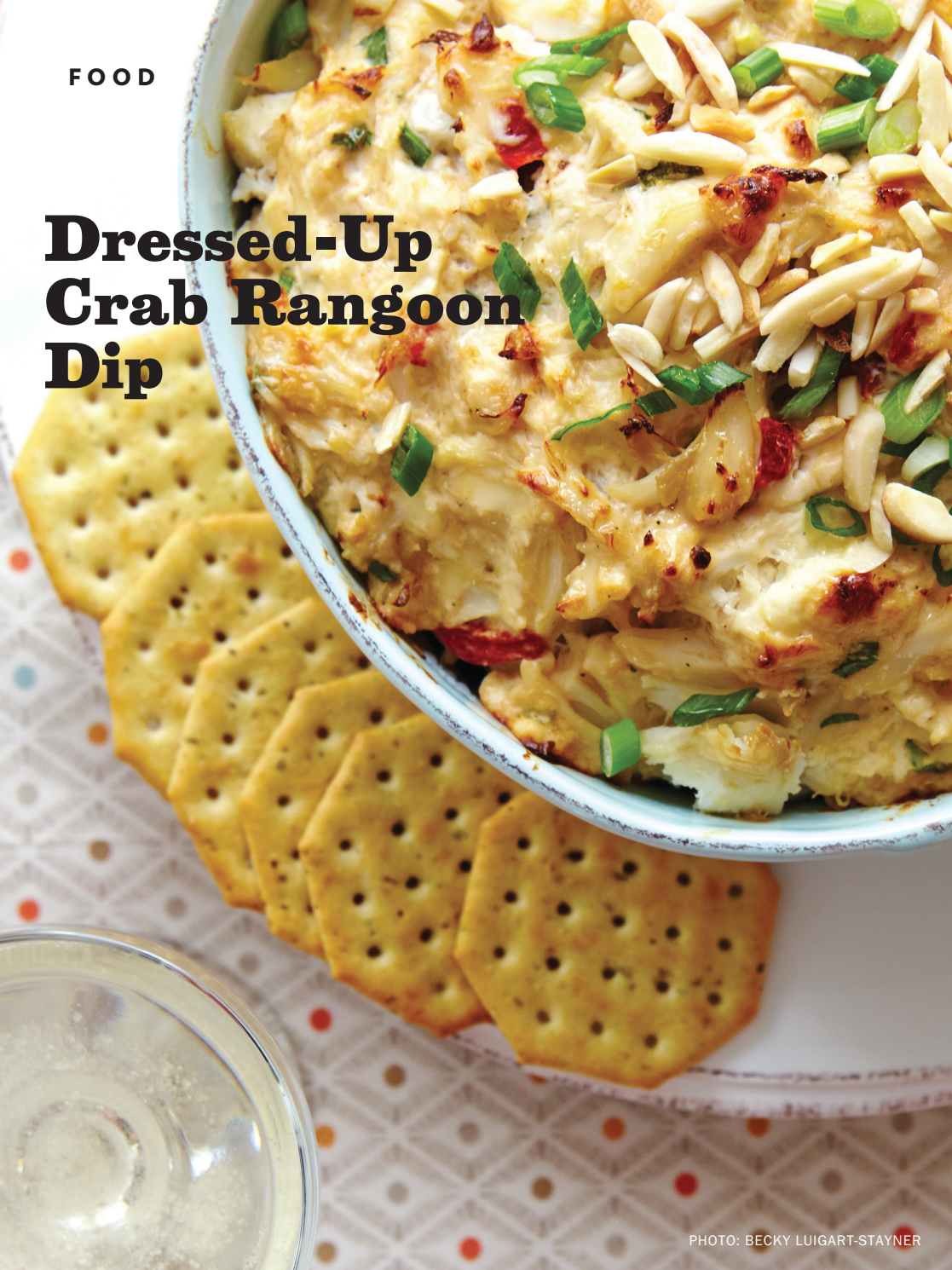


PHOTO: BECKY LUGART-STAYNER

## **DRESSED-UP CRAB RANGOON DIP**

- 12 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) crabmeat, well drained and picked over for shells**
- 3 scallions, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons chopped roasted red peppers**
- 3/4 cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1 teaspoon prepared horseradish**
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- 1 tablespoon milk**
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 tablespoons chopped slivered almonds**
- 1 scallion, green part only, chopped, for garnish**

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray an 8x8-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray; set aside.

In a bowl, mix together cream cheese, crabmeat, scallions, red peppers, Swiss cheese, Parmesan, horseradish, Worcestershire sauce, milk, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Place crab mixture into prepared baking dish and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until bubbly around the edges. Top with almonds and cook for 5 minutes more. Garnish with chopped green scallions.

**Makes 25 servings.**



# Fried Chicken With Cheese





## FRIED CHICKEN WITH CHEESE

- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 4 thick slices Monterey Jack cheese
- 4 sprigs fresh sage or 1/2 teaspoon dried sage
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter

Cut a deep pocket in each chicken breast, being careful not to cut all the way through. In each pocket, place a cheese slice and a sprig of sage. Cover and chill for 2 hours or longer.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray a baking sheet with nonstick spray.

In a bowl, combine eggs, Parmesan, parsley, salt, and pepper. In a separate bowl, place flour. Roll chicken breasts in flour, shake to remove excess, then dip in egg mixture; repeat twice.

In a heavy skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Cook breasts until crisp on both sides, then place on prepared baking sheet. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, or until juices run clear when meat is pierced with a fork.

**Makes 4 servings.**



# Add a pop of color to your wall with the 2022 Old Farmer's Almanac Gardening Calendar



**ORDER NOW**



HISTORY

*Lahaina banyan tree*

# Tall Tree Tales

*... rooted in history*

PHOTO: EJS9/GETTY IMAGES

**N**orth America is dotted with millions of trees. These stand apart for their age, size, and/or story.

- **The Witness**

**Tree**, a sycamore, was present for the Battle of Gettysburg (Pennsylvania; July 1–3, 1863), a key event in the Civil War. On November 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln rode past this tree on his way to Cemetery Hill to deliver the Gettysburg Address and memorialize the soldiers who had died in the battle. Today, the Witness Tree stands on a busy city street, while up to 200 more trees present during the conflict still stand on the Gettysburg battlefield.

- The oldest known stand (group) of trees occupies more than 100 acres in Utah and is really just one organism: a single clone of quaking aspen known as **Pando** (Latin

for “I spread”), or the Trembling Giant. Each tree in the stand lives to be about 130 years old, on average, but the giant root system is estimated to be more than 80,000 years old.

- One of the oldest trees in the world is a famous bristlecone pine in Inyo National Forest in the White Mountains of California. Named **Methuselah**, the tree has been around for 4,915 years and grows about 1/100 of an inch each year. Methuselah’s exact location is a carefully guarded secret so that the tree is not damaged by visitors.

- Near the entrance of the Hampton University campus in Virginia stands the **Emancipation Oak**, with a crown that is more than 100 feet in diameter. In 1863, Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation was read beneath its boughs. After

the Civil War ended on May 13, 1865, Mary Smith Peake taught the children of newly freed (formerly slave) men and women in its shade.

- The **Lahaina banyan tree**, the largest banyan in the United States, stands in the courthouse square of Lahaina on the Hawaiian island of Maui. It was 8 feet tall when it arrived from India for the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first Protestant mission in Hawaii and was planted on April 24, 1873. Today, it is over 60 feet tall and covers an area of more than 200 square feet. A banyan’s roots grow out of its branches toward the ground, where the roots attach to form new trunks. The Lahaina banyan tree has 16 main trunks and several smaller ones.

- A plaque in middle Tennessee marks the site of a hollowed-out **sycamore tree** 12 feet



in circumference. In the winter of 1778–79, the tree was home to Thomas Spencer. One of the first settlers in the area, he constructed the first cabin, planted the first corn, and helped to build a fort in Sumner County.

- The world’s tallest living tree, at nearly 380 feet, is a coast redwood called **Hyperion**. It stands in Redwood National Park in a protected forest in northern California. Its location is known by only a few people.

- The largest tree by volume on Earth is the **General Sherman**, a 275-foot-tall sequoia in California. Approximately 2,700 years old, the General Sherman has a circumference of 102.6 feet at the ground.

- In January 1971, on NASA’s *Apollo 14* mission to the Moon, astronaut Stuart Roosa,

a former firefighter with the U.S. Forestry Service, carried with him nearly 500 tree seeds, including those of loblolly pine, sycamore, sweet gum, redwood, and Douglas fir. Upon their return to Earth, the seeds were planted around the country, including at the White House. Most of these “**Moon trees**” are still alive today in places of honor across the United States (two were planted in Brazil). Stuart died in 1994. A Moon sycamore graces his grave at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

- The most photographed tree in Canada stands tall but is no longer alive. **The Burmis Tree**, a limber pine named for a long-gone coal mining town in southern Alberta’s Crowsnest Pass, was more than 300 years old when it died in the 1970s.

Limber trees are

known for their hardiness in harsh climates and are long-lived in Alberta. When the Burmis Tree began to fall down, citizens put up braces to support the branches.

- A royal gift, a **royal oak tree**, grows near an Anglican church and cemetery in Surrey, British Columbia. In 1937, royal oaks were planted in many British Commonwealth countries to commemorate the May 12 coronation of English king George VI and his wife, Queen Elizabeth, the mother of the current queen and Canada’s head of state, Elizabeth II. The monarchy chose the oak tree because it is a symbol of strength.

- Canada’s tallest tree, at over 182 feet tall, is the **Cheewhat Giant**, a western red cedar on Vancouver Island. It is estimated to be over 2,000 years old but was discovered only in 1988.

–Sheryl Normandeau



LIVING NATURALLY



# Attention, Knuckle-Crackers!

*Most of us know folks who intentionally and constantly crack their knuckles (necks, backs, wrists, etc.). Ever wondered why some folks crack their joints more than others, if it's helpful or harmful, and how to avoid popping those joints? Let's get cracking on some answers . . .*

PHOTO: ANDREYPOPOV/GETTY IMAGES

## IS CRACKING YOUR JOINTS BAD FOR YOU?

Let's get the main question out of the way. Luckily, the consensus among the medical community is that normal joint-cracking does *not* cause arthritis or harm, no matter how often or for how long you do it. The old saying that cracking knuckles will give you arthritis is an old wives' tale.

However, the clinical literature does contain a few reports of knuckle-cracking causing injury to ligaments or tendons, swelling in the joint capsule, or gradual weakening of the grip. And, obviously, if you feel pain or swelling, a trip to your doctor may be warranted.

But even if habitual joint-cracking doesn't injure your joints, it can annoy others to the point of straining relationships with family members, friends, and coworkers. If you can't curb the practice at work, it can

have negative effects, too.

Compulsive knuckle-crackers often lose awareness of their habit. If others keep mentioning that it bothers them or if you have only recently become aware of how annoying your habit is to others, seek help from one of the many Web sites offering tips on breaking bad habits, ask for help from a close friend or family member, or consider getting help from a licensed therapist.

## WHY DO JOINTS CRACK?

What we do know is that knuckles are full of fluid that keeps the bones from grinding on one another. Think of the fluid as a lubricant. This fluid contains gases—mostly carbon dioxide, but also oxygen and nitrogen. When the bones separate, there's a drop in pressure in the joint, which creates little gas bubbles.

However, what causes

the sound is subject to a little debate. One older theory is that the collapse or popping of these bubbles in the joint makes the sound. Another newer theory says that the bulge appears in the knuckles when you're cracking them, and the bubble creates some kind of pressure wave in the fluid that produces a sound.

The answer? Scientists figured out that the first theory seems true; it's the bubble collapsing that makes the popping noise, although the bubble does not have to completely collapse to make the sound. Their next step would be to record the entire process from start to finish to see if bubble formation (not just collapse) contributes, too. Oh, the things we do to find out what makes us tick!

## WHAT CAUSES JOINTS TO CRACK MORE OFTEN?

Grating, popping, or

## LIVING NATURALLY

cracking sounds may also occur under a variety of circumstances, especially when . . .

- **You make a sudden change to the joint's position.**
- **Tight muscles release**, allowing joints to snap back to their usual position.
- **Cartilage wears away**, exposing joint surfaces that rub and grate against each other.
- **Ligaments or tendons move over bone surfaces.**
- **You undertake repetitive movements or exercises** at the gym with tight muscles, which causes friction around the bone.

As you can tell, many of the reasons that joints start to crack more often are related to our bodies aging.

### **WHY DO PEOPLE INTENTIONALLY CRACK THEIR JOINTS?**

Some folks say that joint-cracking relieves tension, boredom, or pain, often emerging as a childhood coping behavior. But

**If your habit bothers you, the main way to avoid the issue is to get moving! Movement is your body's way of lubricating itself.**

mostly, they say, it just feels good—so good that it becomes habitual to the point where many people have difficulty stopping.

One commenter in an online forum for joint-crackers (no kidding!) identified himself as a recovering opioid addict who'd found that knuckle-cracking released the same burst of pleasure as a hit of heroin, albeit much briefer.

### **HOW TO STOP CRACKING JOINTS**

If your habit bothers you, the main way to avoid the issue is to get moving! Movement is your body's way of lubricating itself. This means . . .

- **gentle stretches** in the

morning

- **warming up** before and after exercise
- **avoiding long periods of repetitive movements** like weeding
- **not staying in one position for more than 20 minutes**—get up and stretch your body, walk, get a drink
- **even while sitting, gently rotating** your neck and head, your ankles, and wrists
- **drinking plenty of fluids**—hydration aids joints

Now we know! What do you think of this? Know any knuckle-crackers? Or, are you one yourself?!

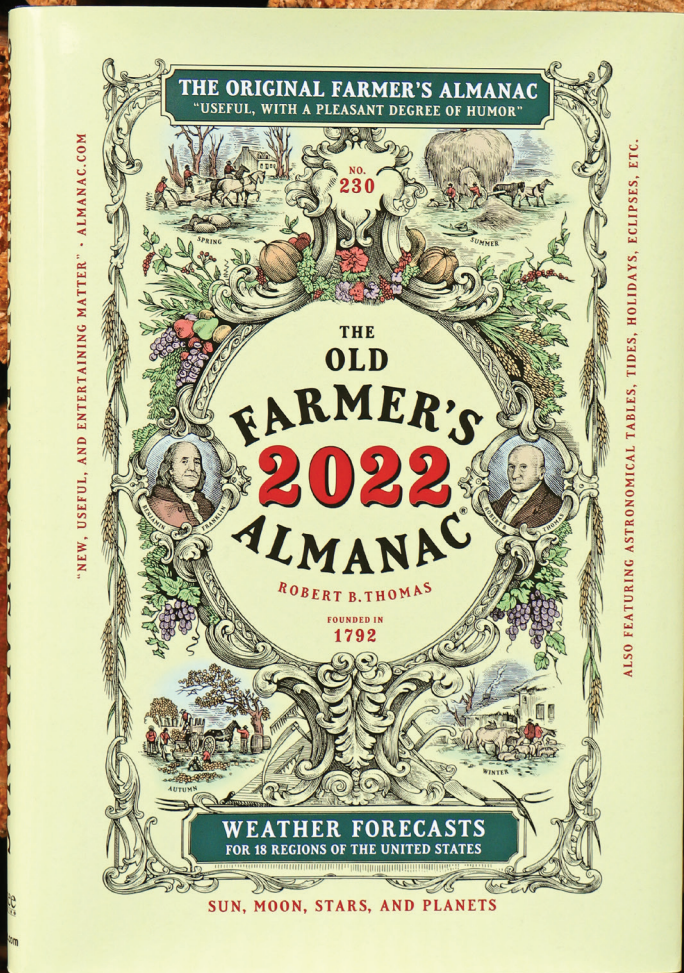
—Margaret Boyles



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

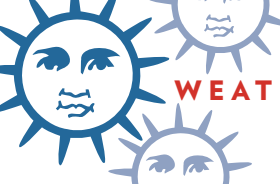


# The 2022 Old Farmer's Almanac Collector's Edition



**ORDER YOUR TIME CAPSULE OF THE YEAR!**





SNOW IN MARCH IS BAD FOR FRUIT AND GRAPE VINE.

# HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

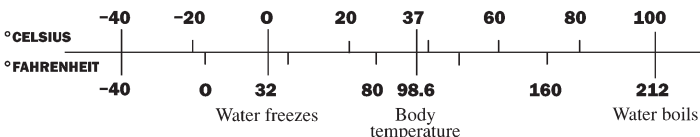
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

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 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.

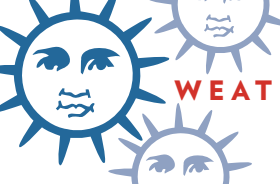
## CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY

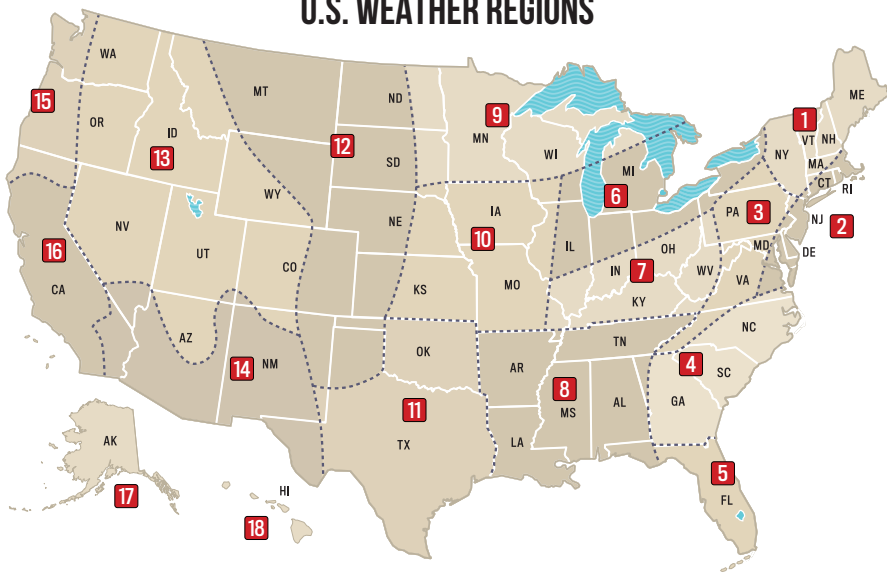


LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

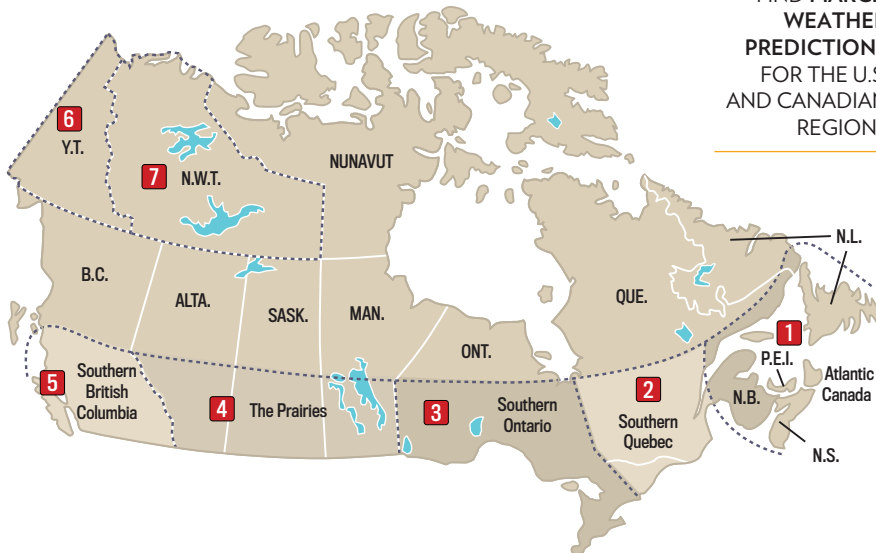


# WEATHER FORECASTS

## U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



## CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



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





## EARLY SPRING? EARLY SPRING!

**T**he month of March will start off with Mardi Gras on March 1, which looks to be a celebratory sunny and mild day in New Orleans. Just off to the west, Texas Independence Day on March 2 will be warm with a few showers.

March 8, International Women's Day, will be sunny and warm from the Gulf Coast to the Southeast. Rain and mild weather are expected from the Northeast through the Midwest, with rain and snow showers from the High Plains to the Rockies. The West Coast will see some rain at times, while rain and snow showers will be found across much of Canada.

We'll "spring forward" by setting the clocks ahead 1 hour on March 13, but



many areas will not get to enjoy that extra hour of daylight in the evening. Rain and snow showers will move across the Upper Midwest, Great Lakes, Northeast, and mid-Atlantic states, and temps will be on the colder side of average. Sunshine will be common across the western United States, but temps will be on the cool side here, too. Even across southern Canada, there will be snow showers around, with a little rain mixed in along the western shore.

Folks heading to St. Patrick's Day celebrations on March 17 will want to bundle up across the East and in the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley regions. Most areas will be sunny and dry, but there will be a few rain and snow showers from the Northeast back through the Great Lakes. The weather will have the luck of the Irish across much of the Plains, with sunshine and a warm day foreseen. There could be a few thunderstorms across Oklahoma and Texas. Unsettled weather with rain and mountain snow will impact much of the western United States. Snow showers will continue to be moving across much of southern Canada, with some rain mixed in near the B.C. coast.

On Seward's Day in Alaska on March 28, flurries will be flying across northern areas, with rain and snow across southern parts of the state.

Looking at the month of March as a whole, we see that spring will get off to an early start, with above-average temperatures across much of the central and eastern United States and nearly all of Canada outside of the Northwest Territories. The western United States will experience below-average temperatures and near- to below-average precipitation. It will also be on the drier side from the southern Plains eastward to the Southeast and from southern British Columbia to the Canadian Prairies. Most other areas will experience above-average precipitation.

Heading into the heart of spring, much of the eastern United States and Canada will experience warmer-than-normal temperatures with below-normal precipitation. The exception to this will be Florida, where it will be cooler than average with near- or above-normal precipitation. It will also be a warm and wet spring across much of the western United States and Canada. Across California, though, the weather will turn out cooler than normal with near- to above-normal precipitation.

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





WIT

# HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC



## BY ANY OTHER NAME

“Well, now, how did you sleep last night?” asked the landlady of her new boarder.

“I didn’t get much rest,” replied the man. “I was troubled all night by insomnia.”

“Sir!” came the landlady’s indignant

riposte. “I’ve never heard such a complaint before in my 22 years as a housekeeper, and I’ll have you know that I’ve had far your betters as my boarders.”

“Moreover,” she continued, as he began to mumble an explanation, “I do not

believe you, sir, and am willing to board you for free if you can find a single one in that bed!”

## A SIGHT UNSEEN

A student at an ophthalmic school was requested to examine and report on the condition of



a man's eye. Having ceremoniously adjusted the ophthalmoscope, he looked long and carefully into the orb.

"Most remarkable!" he exclaimed, in a tone of surprise.

Then, having ceremoniously readjusted the instrument, he made a further careful examination.

"Very extraordinary, indeed! I have never heard of such an eye. Have you ever had a professional opinion on it?"

"Once," came the laconic reply. "The man who put it in said that it was a fine piece of glass."

### **BETTER LATE THAN EVER**

Mabel's aunt was expected on a visit. Just as she was almost due to arrive, a telegram

came: "Missed train. Will start same time tomorrow."

Mabel rushed home from school, expecting to see Auntie. Instead of doing so, however, she was shown the telegram. After reading it through carefully and laboriously, she then remarked:

"How silly of Auntie, Mama."

"Why, dear?"

"Don't you see? If she starts tomorrow at the same time, she'll miss her train again."

### **A GOOD LINE**

"Now, class," said the schoolmaster during an examination in geography, "what is the axis of Earth?"

Johnny raised his hand.

"Well, Johnny, how would you describe it?"

"The axis of Earth,"

said Johnny proudly, "is an imaginary line that passes from one pole to the other and around which Earth rotates."

"Very good!" exclaimed the teacher. "Now, could you hang your clothes on this line?"

"Yes, sir," came the reply.

"Indeed!" said the examiner. "And what sort of clothes would these be?"

"Imaginary clothes, sir."

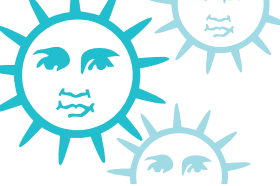
### **COMMAND PERFORMANCE**

Sunday school teacher: "How many Commandments are there, Billy?"

"Ten."

"And suppose that you were to break one of them . . . ?"

"Nine?"

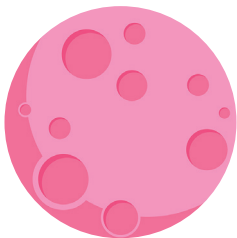


# WHAT'S NEXT



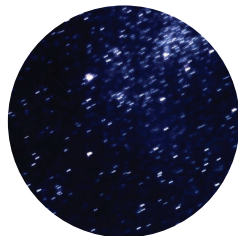
## AMUSEMENT

Go Fly a Kite!



## CALENDAR

Moon phases; April birthstone, holidays, and full Moon names



## ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map



## HUSBANDRY

Stock Options for Small Farms



## FOOD

Change Up Your Chicken Recipes



## LIVING NATURALLY

Eat Your Dandelions!

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 April *EXTRA!*

**CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 231ST YEAR!**