



A picture of the seasonal. Apples were ripening in an orchard at Sole Street, Kent, Sept. 6, 2020.

Prime Meridian (129) September 21, 2020

We look back at our world's second warmest August in a record which began in 1880.



Seasons in South East England

AUGUST 2020

The provisional UK mean temperature was 15.9°C, which is 1.0°C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. The figures for England were 17.4°C (1.3°C). Our region England SE & Central S was the second warmest for the UK at 18.9°C (1.9°C), with its adjacent region of East Anglia was the warmest (19.1°C; 2.0°C).

The first day of August 2020. Above: Bales after harvest and wheat at Ash, Kent. From the same location Ashleigh Wise provided a spectacular sunset. Below: On the same evening, the waxing Moon was close to the giant planets Jupiter (near centre) and Saturn, seen through trees to the left. New Ash Green, Kent.





Above: On the evening of August 3, the Full Moon, blotched by clouds.

Below.: The reflection of a bright waning Moon on the surface of a pond had been disturbed by fish. August 5.

Right: In the early hours of August 5, the planet Venus has risen above the horizon, with the stars of Taurus, Auriga and Perseus. *Stellarium* view.

Photos from New Ash Green and its environs, Kent.





The UK's warmest temperature 36.4°C was recorded in our region at Heathrow and Kew Gardens (London) on August 7. The coldest temperature (-0.4°C) was far beyond our region, at Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty, Scotland) on August 24.

Harvest in progress. Top and left: Longfield August 2, with bales on August 4. Below right: August 23 at Ash, Kent.

Next page. Top: Sunset on the Gallops, above Longfield . August 9. Centre left: Moon and Mars in the dawn sky. August 9. Sunset August 11, Ash, Kent (from Ashleigh Wise). Early morning August 21. New Ash Green. Venus is rising in Gemini, and Orion (right) is also rising.







Above: August 17, 2020. A cloudy day near West Kingsdown, Kent.

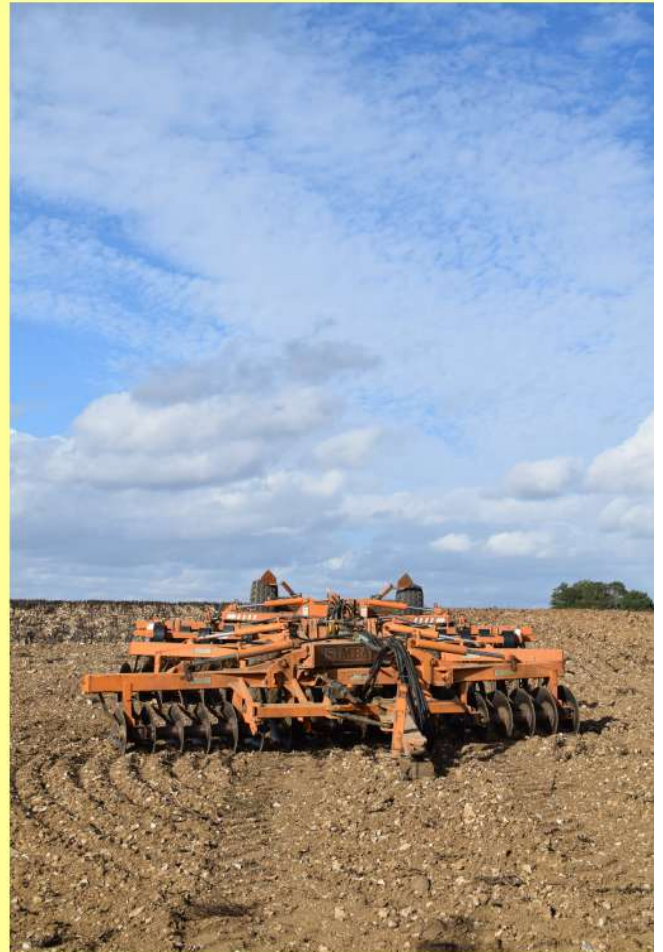
Right: After harrowing with disc harrows; Near West Kingsdown. August 22.

Below: Clouds at New Ash Green, Kent, August 28, 2020.

Monthly means for SE and central S England. Max. temp.: 23.6°C (1.7°C); min. temp.: 14.1°C (2.0°C). Hours of sunshine: 187.2 (92%). Rain: 76 mm (132%). Anomalies re. 1981-2010 norm in brackets. Date obtained from Met Office online monthly reports.

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/regional-values>

Next page. Top left: Lavender field at Lullingstone, Kent (August 9). Top right: flooding and water lifting a drain top in the aftermath of intense rain. Stansted, Kent. August 13. Centre: Huge bales on Longfield Hill, August 15.





Below: It was August 23 and on the hills above Fawkham Green, the trees appeared to be showing already a hint of autumn; a reminder of the seasons.

On the final day of August, 2020, the waxing Moon rose almost full. This view was from New Ash Green, Kent.



Global climate: August 2020 was the 2nd warmest in a record since 1880.



The USA's NOAA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration stated in its Global Climate Report - August 2020 "Averaged as a whole, the August 2020 global land and ocean surface temperature was 0.94°C . . . above average and the second highest August temperature since global records began in 1880. Only August 2016 was warmer with a temperature departure from average of +0.98°C . . . The 10 warmest Augusts have all occurred since 1998; however, the five warmest Augusts have occurred since 2015. August 2020 also marked the 44th consecutive August and the 428th consecutive month with temperatures, at least nominally, above the 20th-century average."

Data is provisional. All the anomalies quoted are positive. Check out NOAA data on:

<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/202008>

Above left: Britain was smothered by clouds on August 16, 2020, at 13:04:36 UT. The image was taken by the Deep Space Climate Observatory space craft (NASA/NOAA), using its EPIC (Earth Polychromatic Imaging Camera) system.





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Left to right. Waning Moon on August 10.

Sunflower and bees (Ashleigh Wise) August 13.

Rain, August 17. Views from New Ash Green and Ash, Kent.

Prime Meridian.

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This newsletter looks outwards from the Prime Meridian. It follows the cycle of the seasons in South East England alongside global environmental issues. At the same time, it steps back to look at the Earth in its astronomical perspective and the search for other habitable worlds, which help us to understand the Earth in its larger context.

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Left: Hedgerow near West Kingsdown, Kent. Black bryony (*Dioscorea communis*) among common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). August 15, 2020.