

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

End Of Summer

It seems that our British summer has come to a rather sudden end, with a week of mist, drizzle and rain. We have had plenty of hot weather during July and August, and although we dream of it going on forever, we know that is not going to happen, nor would we really want it to. Our weather is unpredictable and a hot sunny period may last a week or more, or maybe just for that day, with a sudden change in conditions occurring without warning. Here in Britain we tend to want to make the most of such days, getting out in the sunshine and enjoying ourselves, talking about it endlessly and making sure that we do not waste a single moment of it. A longish spell of summery weather can produce an untroubled lazy easiness with no sense of rushing or being hurried about, which is just the right attitude for the necessary rest and relaxation for those whose working days are busy and high-pressured. Remembering the coming grey or rainy days of autumn and the short days of winter, I generally plan my activities around the weather, and save indoor duties for the less appealing days. This applies equally to sunny winter days, which can still be enjoyed even if they are not warm. I resist sitting at the computer doing things that are not needed immediately, especially when the sun is shining and the fresh air beckons.

The garden is still full of flowers, the grass is greener than ever, and the snails and slugs are still travelling across the lawn when morning comes, after their night-time forays. I think the frogs are having a good time too, being able to roam around in more comfort when it is wet, but as most of them are this year's new batch, they are very small and remain unseen. They will be finding dark damp corners to hide away for the winter. The fine pond netting that we put over to safeguard the fish, after an unwanted visit from a pair of passing ducks earlier in the year, is now collecting leaves. On the misty mornings it has a grey appearance instead of almost invisible black, matching the spider webs nearby. Unlike previous years, this time I am well prepared for "putting the garden to bed" for the winter. All but one bag of daffodil bulbs have been planted. All the plants in the big ceramic pots are actually in plastic pots inside, so the ceramic pots remain safe from frost cracking. If there is another spell of warm dry weather after this, there will be a sense of urgency to ensure that everything is sorted and tidy before the onset of chillier days. In wintry weather there is no great desire to attend to those things, and the cosy computer corner, hot drink and fluffy slippers win every time. (482 words)