

WARE'S LANGUAGE NOTES

What's the Weather doing?

They say it's the English who are always talking about the weather, but certainly Limousin folk do it just as much as we do, and it's always a useful means of establishing contact and exchanging cheerful (or otherwise) words with the postman or baker.

You've probably noticed, the weather is often a bit more determined here on the Continent than it is back in our temperate little island.

It's reflected in the language, as the French refer to the weather as *le temps qu'il fait* – the weather which it is doing. When it's raining, snowing or hailing, then *il pleut, il neige* or *il grêle* (eel grell) in a decisive way. Otherwise it tends to *faire quelquechose*.

Il fait chaud ('eel fay show' - It's hot)

Il fait frais ('fray' – cool, fresh)

Il fait froid ('frwah' - cold)

Il fait du soleil ('dew sollay' - sunny)

Il fait du brouillard (' dew brewyar' - foggy)

Il fait du vent (dew vahng' - windy)

Il fait vingt degrés ('van degray' - It's 20 degrees out there).

Il gèle (eel jell - It's freezing)

Il y a un orage/une tempête (eel ee ah an orahj/tahmpett – there's a storm/hurricane)

The trouble is apart from complaining about the temperature this tends to be a bit like pointing out the obvious, and there may be more mileage in: *Il va pleuvoir, neiger, grêler, geler* ('eel vah plervwahr, nejjay, grellay, jerlay' – it's going to rain, snow, hail, freeze) or *il va faire froid* etc ('eel vah fair frwah' – it's going to be cold etc) or *il va y avoir un orage* ('eel vah ee avwahr an orahj' – there's going to be a storm), suggesting that you know what the weather is going to do. You can also add when it's going to happen – *cet après-midi, ce soir, demain, après demain, la semaine prochaine* ('set appray meedee, ser swahr, demang, appray demang, la sermenn proshenn' - this afternoon, this evening, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, next week)

Or if you're talking about the day or week before, you can say *Il a plu* ('eel ah plew'), *il a neigé* (eel ah nejjay), *il a grêlé* ('grellay'), *il a gelé* (jerlay), *il a fait* ('fay') *du vent*, *il y a eu* (eel ee ah ewe) *un orage*. And when it did it could be *ce matin* ('ser matang' – this morning), *hier* ('yair' - yesterday), *avant hier* ('avaunt yair' – the day before yesterday), *la semaine dernière* ('lah semenne dairnyair' – last week), *vendredi* ('vahndredee' – Friday) etc

At this time of year, you can say: *le printemps arrive* ('le prantahng arreev' – Spring is here) or *l'hiver ne veut pas lâcher* (leevair ner ver pah lahsher' – winter won't let go) Or if the weather is really bad, say *C'est la saison* ('Say lah sayzong' – It's the season), with a gallic shrug, of course! or *C'est l'effet de serre* ('Say leffay de sair' – it's the greenhouse effect)

By the way, you use these same expressions when you talk about the temperature in a room or anywhere else – *il fait froid ici* – it's cold in here etc