
Technical Explanation of the Threadfall Calendar

by *Lynne Brigant*

The calendar is based on the idea that Thread falls somewhere in the southern hemisphere every 29.5 hours, and that succeeding Falls are spaced 142.5 degrees longitude apart (that's nine and a half time zones.) I came up with these numbers through trial and error, because they produce a Fall about every three days in Kadanzer territory and keep the pattern of Falls from repeating too neatly. I added a bit of an extra random factor that moves the schedule around occasionally.

Each Fall starts near the equator and follows a 45 degree track heading southwest. (Yes, I know this is not what's described in the books or the DLG. For what it's worth, AM contradicts herself here too; the charts in *_Dragonflight_* are described as having horizontal lines, while the Falls in *_Dragonsdawn_* follow a 30-degree diagonal. If we need to justify the change, we can say it was an effect of the efforts to stop Thread in ATWoP, or else that a conjunction of planets is making Thread behave this way, or whatever other explanation we care to pull out of wherever we want to pull it from. :-}) The calendar divides Kadanzer territory up into 20 overlapping bands that span ten time zones, but a single Fall is not as wide as the whole zone and may snake back and forth within it, or even into other zones if the winds are strong. Because Kadanzer territory is ten time zones wide but Threadfalls occur 9.5 time zones apart, a Fall in the farthest west zone is followed just over a day later (28.5 hours, to be precise) by another Fall in the far east of Kadanzer territory. I figured this is not an undue burden as both of these are short Falls; the far west because it's mostly over ocean, and the east because it's mostly over Eastern Weyr territory. The rest of the time, Falls in Kadanzer territory occur either 57 or 85.5 hours apart.

Starting times of Falls are given both at Kadanzer time and local time. Since the Weyr is in time zone six, a Flight rising to fight Thread in the far west may easily take off in broad daylight but arrive when it is not yet dawn where Thread is to fall. Note that the Flight will not usually have to take off at the exact start time given, since in most zones Thread will fall over the ocean for at least an hour before making landfall. This amount of time is stated in the description for that day. Also note that times are not exact; start times are given in terms of how close they are to morning or evening rather than as clock hours, since clocks are hardly ever used on Pern. The calendar also takes into account the changing length of days between summer and winter. Thus a Fall that starts at 7 in the morning may be described as 'predawn' in winter and 'morning' in summer. (Don't forget, we're in the South so the seasons are reversed

from the northern pattern that most of us are used to: Turn's End day comes in midsummer.)

The calendar includes a random storm chance as well, to provide some extra excitement; within each month there is a certain chance that any fall will be a high-wind situation that requires two flights to fight. In each fall, the Flight that is due to fight the next Fall is on deck for backup; should they have to fight that day, the Flight after them will take the next Fall instead.

All this is done with a program I coded up. We can now generate Thread calendars for any year in the future, provided we know how fast the Falls will speed up as the height of the Pass approaches.

Any questions or problems with this calendar may be addressed to me at morgav@kadanzer.org.