

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

AUGUST**1984**

VOLUME 101

NUMBER 8

Mainly dry, sunny and warm with thundery outbreaks

On the 1st the area of high pressure that had covered Great Britain during the previous month moved away over France, while a depression off south-west Ireland moved slowly eastwards to become centred over the British Isles. There it remained until the 4th, when it moved away northwards. In its turn it was replaced by a low-pressure area slipping southwards from Scandinavia on the 5th, then eastwards into the Low Countries on the 7th. After the passage of a frontal system associated with a depression in the area of Iceland on the 8th, high pressure built across Scotland on the 9th and then drifted south over the rest of the United Kingdom. In the afternoon on the 15th and 16th thundery showers affected the eastern half of England. With high pressure declining during the 17th and 18th, fronts associated with a depression to the west of Ireland moved over Scotland. Between the 20th and 24th high pressure became established over the North Sea and northern Europe, affecting Scotland and northern England; southern England and Wales remained under the influence of a depression to the south-west of the British Isles and its associated frontal troughs. During the next four days, as the continental anticyclone moved away eastwards, the British Isles was again influenced by a complex low-pressure system until, in the last few days of the month, high pressure once more built northwards to affect southern and eastern areas, while western and northern areas were crossed by fronts associated with the low-pressure area to the north.

Weather

Much of the United Kingdom was dry, sunny and, especially around the 20th, very hot. There were scattered thunderstorms in many areas during the first week. Thunderstorms between the 13th and 16th covered much of central Wales and southern England except the south-west. On the 20th there were further thunderstorms over west Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, extending on the 21st to most of Devon and Cornwall; on the 22nd eastern and central southern England were affected. Further outbreaks occurred on the 24th, 25th and 26th.

During the afternoon of the 15th in the scattered thunderstorms over eastern and southern districts there were reports of hail at Denmark Hill, Greater London and heavy rain at Andover, Hampshire, while lightning wrecked a computerized signal box at Westbury, Wiltshire causing a two-hour delay to trains. In the south-west, on the 21st, lightning affected pumping stations, left thousands of households without electricity and telephones, struck homes, disrupted police communications and brought half a ton of masonry crashing down at the railway station at Newton Abbot, Devon.

Wind

During the first week winds were moderate to fresh and strong in places in the west. Thereafter winds became predominantly light. Cowes Week regatta in the Isle of Wight quietly petered out when 20 out of 25 races were abandoned because of the lack of wind and many of the yachts that did start gave up. Wind directions for the first two or three days were southerly in the south and easterly in the north, becoming generally northerly and then north-westerly on the 7th and 8th. A period of

variable direction followed, then between the 19th and 23rd the direction was easterly. There followed three more days of variable direction, then westerly or south-westerly for the last five days.

Temperature

The month as a whole was very warm with mean temperatures above average everywhere. Most of the Midlands, Wales and parts of central southern England had temperatures more than 2 °C above average. Elsewhere temperatures were generally around 1.5 °C above average except in some isolated places which had less than 1 °C above average. The month began warm but on the 4th temperatures dropped to around normal until the 10th. From then until the 18th it warmed up again and was then very hot until the 22nd. It then remained very warm for the rest of the month. Some noteworthy diurnal temperature ranges on the 20th were: Aviemore, Highland Region, minimum 8.1 °C, maximum 28.4 °C; Abbotsinch, Strathclyde, minimum 9.6 °C, maximum 29.2 °C; Madley, Hereford and Worcestershire, minimum 9.2 °C, maximum 28.8 °C; and Hurn, Dorset, minimum 9.7 °C, maximum 28.3 °C. St Helier, Jersey had temperatures above 29 °C on three consecutive days from the 18th, including the month's highest maximum of 31.7 °C on the 20th.

Rainfall

Although all areas had some rain during the month, the mostly small amounts of rainfall were still not sufficient to raise the levels of the reservoirs in those areas, mainly in the western half of Great Britain, suffering an acute shortage of water, the period February to August having been the driest since 1976 and the third driest this century. During the first week rain or showers occurred in most places and during the second week there were small amounts here and there. On the 15th there were moderate falls in western Scotland, and in southern and eastern England there were thundery outbreaks which gave heavy rain at times. Showery activity in south-west England on the 21st became more widespread between the 22nd and 24th. After some rain in Scotland on the 27th, frontal rain crossed all parts on the 28th; but apart from some heavy falls in

western Scotland, in remaining districts amounts of rain were small.

On the 1st Milford Haven, Dyfed had a fall of 46 mm, while Dolydd, Powys had 35 mm and Brynamman, Dyfed had 31 mm. At Coningsby, Lincolnshire 35 mm fell on the 2nd. On the 3rd Dunkeswell, Devon had 36 mm and Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire 32 mm. During the thundery outbreaks on the 15th Wisley, Surrey had 54 mm and Writtle, Essex 49 mm of rain. The next noteworthy falls were in Devon on the 21st: Melbury, Okehampton and Torbay all measured 37 mm, while Yarnor Wood and North Wyke had 35 mm and 31 mm respectively. Other places in Devon reported about 20 mm of rain.

Sunshine

Sunshine totals were above the monthly average everywhere apart from parts of Devon, East Sussex, Kent, and the western half of Northern Ireland, all of which had sunshine amounts just below the average. The highest totals were at Onich, in the Highland Region of Scotland, with 154 per cent of average, and Watnall, Nottinghamshire with 147 per cent. The 19th and 20th were sunny nearly everywhere with between 10 and 13 hours of sunshine. The maximum duration in a day was 15.3 hours at Morecambe, Lancashire on the 11th.

Fog

There was extensive overnight fog formation during the month. Fog was most widespread between the 13th and 17th and the 22nd and 28th. On the 16th and 17th fog was dense in places. After the first week there was a good deal of sea fog, especially on eastern coasts of Scotland and England, and small amounts on western coasts from time to time. Hill fog occurred on a number of occasions, mainly in the west and south-west.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

At Gotham, near Nottingham on the 2nd a whirlwind was reported to have ripped off roofs, uprooted trees and smashed garages. On the 13th a dust devil was reported by Jersey Airport, Channel Islands.

Table 1 District values

District	air temperature °C					mean 30 cm soil temp °C	rain- days	rainfall	sun- shine
	Highest Max*	Lowest Min*	max.	min.	mean				
	difference from average					% of average			
0 Scotland N	28.7	0.2	+2.1	+0.6	+1.4	+1.0	-6	42	126
1 Scotland E	28.7	1.7	+2.3	+0.8	+1.6	+0.7	-8	30	122
2 England E & NE	27.7	2.4	+2.2	+1.0	+1.5	+1.3	-5	77	119
3 East Anglia	29.5	4.4	+2.0	+1.0	+1.5	+0.9	-4	68	120
4 Midland Counties	30.3	4.5	+2.9	+1.1	+2.0	+1.2	-4	82	122
5 England SE & Central S	29.8	6.1	+2.0	+1.2	+1.6	+1.0	-2	46	105
6 Scotland W	29.7	-0.6	+2.7	+0.5	+1.6	+1.1	-8	50	121
7 England NW & Wales N	30.9	4.5	+2.9	+1.1	+2.0	+1.4	-7	67	127
8 England SW & Wales S	29.3	5.6	+2.1	+1.3	+1.7	+1.4	-5	64	105
N Ireland	28.1	5.0	+2.0	+1.1	+1.6	+1.6	-6	76	109
Scotland	29.7	-0.6	+2.4	+0.6	+1.5	+0.9	-7	42	123
England & Wales	30.9	2.4	+2.3	+1.1	+1.7	+1.2	-5	67	116

*Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations