

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

Met. O. 861

UDC 551 506 1(41-4)

SEPTEMBER 1973

VOLUME 90

NUMBER 9

Warm with sunny periods at first; stormy later

Frontal waves moved eastwards across central areas of the United Kingdom during the first 4 days but between the 5th and 7th pressure rose and a large anticyclone became established over the country. This anticyclone remained in the area until the 14th. Thereafter, active depressions or troughs of low pressure predominated.

Weather

Although rain or showers affected many areas at first with isolated thunderstorms in England and Wales, there were also some warm, sunny periods. The second week was mostly dry and sunny but it became a little cooler after the 9th. The weather changed radically around the 15th and the second half of the month was very windy generally with frequent outbreaks of heavy rain or thunderstorms. Temperatures declined slowly and during the fourth week there were a few reports of snow falling in Scotland.

Wind

Strong winds or gales were confined almost entirely to the second half of the month when they occurred frequently in all areas. On the 18th and 19th an intense depression moved north-eastwards across southern districts and gales were widespread in England and Wales. In the south-west they were severe and gusts of 60 kt or more were measured at a number of coastal stations. Noteworthy gales also occurred in many areas during the last few days with gusts exceeding 60 kt in Northern Ireland, western Scotland and in north-western areas of England and Wales on the 27th.

Temperature

Mean monthly temperatures in England and Wales ranged from 0 to about 1.5 degC above average with the warmest areas in the Midlands and the south-east. Elsewhere mean temperatures were within 1 degC of average. The first 9 days were mostly very warm, particularly in the east and south where daytime temperatures often exceeded 25°C. On the 5th the temperature rose to 31.0°C at Gillingham (Kent), the highest September temperature recorded there since 1953. On the 10th, cooler air spread to all districts but day-time temperatures again reached or exceeded 25°C in inland areas in the east and south around mid-month. Following the onset of stormy weather on the 14th and 15th temperatures declined slowly and all areas became rather cold towards the end of the month. Scattered air frosts occurred on one or two nights throughout the month but ground frosts were more frequent and widespread. At Buddon Ness (Angus) a minimum temperature of -4°C was registered on the 24th, the lowest September temperature there for at least 30 years.

Rainfall

Except in parts of northern England, the Midlands and in central southern England

rainfall was generally above average, indeed, in a small area in east Kent it exceeded five times the average. By contrast some places in the Midlands and in areas near the Scottish border had less than half of average. In Shetland rainfall reached 150 per cent of average and other parts of north and north-west Scotland were also wetter than normal. Kirkwall (Orkney) had its wettest September since 1950. Remaining areas in Scotland were drier and in the south some places reported less than 25 per cent of average. Northern Ireland was also mostly drier than average. Periods of rain or showers occurred in many districts at first but they became rather scattered later and the second week was mostly dry. Falls were seldom heavy although one or two places in Wales had over 70 mm of rain in the 24 hours from 09 GMT on the 2nd and a 'daily' fall of 70.6 mm occurred at Cononish (Perthshire) on the 6th. There were isolated thunderstorms in England and Wales during the night of the 4th/5th and again over south-eastern districts on the 8th. After the 14th, outbreaks of heavy rain or thunderstorms were frequent and widespread and hail was occasionally reported. On the 15th a golfer in Birmingham was injured by lightning and there were also reports of damage by lightning to buildings in Derbyshire and of local flooding in the south-east. Further severe local flooding occurred in south-east England following very heavy rainfall on the 20th and 21st. According to Press reports an elderly woman was drowned when her house in Westgate-on-Sea (Kent) was flooded. Floods also disrupted road and rail communications in a number of places. Among the copious falls recorded in Kent was one of 190.7 mm in the 24 hours from 09 GMT on the 20th at West Stourmouth and another of 167.0 mm in the 13 hours from 20 GMT on the 20th at Ashford. Both of these are classified as 'very rare' falls. Local flooding again occurred in the

south-east on the 23rd. On the 27th and 28th a number of places in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland had 'daily' falls exceeding 50 mm.

Sunshine

In most districts monthly sunshine totals were near or above average but parts of northern and eastern Scotland were rather dull. During the first two weeks there were long sunny periods in eastern and southern districts of England and Wales but prolonged sunshine was less frequent in other areas. Despite the stormy character of the second half of the month sunny periods occurred quite often in all districts.

Fog

From the 1st to 17th hill fog occurred at times in north-west Scotland and in western and southern areas of England and Wales. Sea and coast fog was also reported on a few days mainly on the coasts of south Wales, south-west England and the Channel Islands but occasionally around Shetland and in coastal areas of eastern Scotland and north-east England. During the same period overnight fog patches developed fairly frequently in England and Wales but less often in other districts. Fog was occasionally extensive but usually dispersed before midday except on the 12th when it persisted into the afternoon in places in the central lowlands of Scotland. After the 17th fog patches occurred on a few nights in central and eastern areas of Scotland, England and Wales.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

The aurora was observed in Scotland on 11 nights.

Table 1 District values

September 1973

District	air temperature °C					mean 30-cm earth temp °C	rain- days	rainfall	sun- shine
	Highest	Lowest	max.	min.	mean				
	Max. †	Min. †	difference from average					% of average	
0 Scotland N	21.2	3.0	—0.5	—0.5	—0.5	—	—1	101	86
1 Scotland E	24.0	2.9	0.0	+0.3	+0.2	+0.7	0	60	91
2 England N E	25.6	—0.3	+0.2	+0.2	+0.2	+1.1	0	101	104
3 England E	30.2	3.1	+0.7	+0.4	+0.6	+0.5	0	139	118
4 Midland Counties	28.6	2.8	+0.7	+0.5	+0.6	+1.0	—2	91	113
5 England S E	29.6	3.2	+0.9	+0.6	+0.7	+0.4	—2	157	118
6 Scotland W	21.7	—1.6	—0.1	+0.1	0.0	+0.6	—4	63	103
7 Eng N W & Wales N	24.7	1.8	+0.3	+0.5	+0.4	+1.0	—2	97	107
8 Eng S W & Wales S	26.6	0.0	+0.5	+0.5	+0.5	+1.0	0	109	109
N Ireland	22.9	1.5	+0.5	0.0	+0.2	—	—4	81	105
Scotland	24.0	—1.6	—0.2	0.0	—0.1	—	—2	74	93
England & Wales	30.2	—0.3	+0.5	+0.4	+0.5	—	—1	114	111

† Highest max. and lowest min. of the District Value Stations