

August 2006

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Mean temperatures were slightly above average in most places. Monthly average maximum temperatures were over 5 °C lower in the Midlands area than was recorded in July. Exceptionally above average rainfall across East Anglia, where around double the average rainfall was recorded. Sunshine levels generally close to or below average.

England and Wales diary of highlights

An unsettled month with some heavy, thundery downpours especially in the second and third weeks.

1st to 4th: Northern England and the north of East Anglia had heavy showers on the 1st with 23.6 mm of rain falling at Warcop Range (Cumbria) 0900-2100 UTC. Elsewhere over England and Wales the showers were well scattered. There was further rain on the 2nd over northern parts and this edged south through the day into central areas, with thunder in places. Eastern England was unseasonably cool and windy with just 15 °C recorded at Scarborough (North Yorkshire). Cromer (Norfolk) recorded 47.8 mm of rain in the 24 hours to 1600 UTC. Eastern parts remained cool on the 3rd while the west had sunny skies and then eastern areas had the sunshine on the 4th.

5th to 7th: A ridge of high pressure sank southeast on the 5th and 6th and then rain, initially over western and northern parts, spread south. A cold front brought some heavy rain overnight into the 7th to East Anglia and then to East Sussex and Kent in the morning and as temperatures lifted, thunderstorms developed here with flash flooding reported in Eastbourne (East Sussex) town centre. Pershore (Worcestershire) reached 29.7 °C, the highest temperature for the month across England and Wales.

8th to 14th: The 8th started fine as another transient ridge of high pressure moved south across England and Wales, but rain spread to northern England during the afternoon and to Wales and the Midlands in the evening. Overnight rain cleared early on the 9th to leave most places fine. Showers developed through the 10th especially across eastern parts with thunder in places. Showers affected western and eastern fringes overnight into the 11th with further showers through the day especially for eastern counties from Yorkshire to Essex. The 12th was cool in the east with just 12.2 °C at Fylingdales (North Yorkshire). There was heavy rain overnight in East Anglia. Thundery showers developed in a convergence line from Suffolk to Hampshire in the afternoon of the 13th, with torrential downpours in places. There was localised flooding in the Aldershot to Farnham to Bagshot areas where possibly as much as 100 mm of rain fell. Durham reached just 13.0 °C. Another band of rain spread down across eastern England overnight, clearing Kent by early afternoon on the 14th, while western parts had sunny spells.

15th to 19th: An Atlantic low centre and its associated fronts slipped south across Ireland to be off south-west England on the 16th. This brought some rain to western parts of England on the 15th and some heavy showers to Wales, the West Country and south-west England overnight. Cudrose (Cornwall) recorded 24 mm of rain in the 12 hours to 0900 UTC on the 16th. The showers developed more widely on the 16th. Further bands of heavy and thundery showers moved into southern England overnight and through the 17th. A tornado was spotted near Leamington Spa (Warwickshire) and at Market Deeping (Lincolnshire). There were further thundery downpours overnight which started on the south coast and spread north to Yorkshire to south Wales by dawn. Thundery showers developed over southern parts through the day while northern England and north

Wales bore the brunt of the persistent thundery rain. Torquay (Devon) had 48.6 mm of rain in the 24 hours to 1600 UTC. Southern parts had showers on the 19th, thundery in places and then later in the day rain over northern parts edged east clearing eastern counties by midnight.

20th and 21st: There were a few showers mainly in eastern parts on the 20th and overnight across the south. Rain overnight in northwest England spread to Lincolnshire. Some heavy and thundery showers developed over East Anglia, south-east England and other eastern counties through the 21st.

22nd to 24th: Many places were dry on the 22nd but Suffolk to Northumberland had some fog patches to start the day. Atlantic fronts over western parts on the 22nd edged east becoming slow moving across eastern areas on the 24th. There was some heavy rain, hail, thunder and gusty winds on the 23rd as the cold front of the system moved east. There were hourly reports of 10 to 20 mm of rain in places and this rain continued overnight over East Anglia and the south-east and for a good part of the 24th in east Kent, Essex and Suffolk. Bognor Regis (West Sussex) logged 47.3 mm of rain in the 24 hours to 1600 UTC.

25th to 29th: Rain spread into western parts on the 25th with a more showery day on the 26th. There was heavier rain again over north-west England and north Wales on the 27th with thunder for north-western parts. This rain spread east in the early hours of the 28th. Blustery north-west winds and showers followed with thunder in places later and through the 29th.

30th to 31st: After a bright start on the 30th, thicker cloud and some patchy rain spread east through the afternoon and evening. There was some significant rain over north-west Wales and north-west England with 63 mm at Capel Curig (Gwynedd) in the 24 hours to 2100 UTC on the 31st.

Scotland diary of highlights

Unsettled conditions prevailed throughout most of August with low pressure never too far away from Scotland. However, most of the rain fell as showers so that in most places amounts of rain were not large. Sunshine was well up to average in the south but a northerly component to the wind on many days kept northern districts dull.

A depression in the North Sea on the 1st and 2nd kept most places cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Tulloch Bridge recorded 42 mm of rain on the 1st with Carterhouse registering 35 mm the next day. Northerly winds gusted to 53 knots at Inverbervie on the 2nd.

High pressure to the south and west of the British Isles brought brighter and drier conditions between the 3rd and the 7th. Fronts crossed the country but they were weak and separated by spells of fair weather. Warm and humid air from the south-west covered the country on the 6th, allowing the temperature at Aboyne to rise to 28 °C.

Between the 8th and 14th a low pressure area tracked from the Faeroes through the North Sea to Germany and then Denmark. Northerly winds blew across Scotland bringing cloudy weather with outbreaks of rain in the north at first. On the 9th Loch Glascarnoch recorded 28 mm of rain and winds gusted to 49 knots at Lerwick. It was much cooler than before with a maximum temperature of 12 °C at Loch Glascarnoch on the 10th. Later the weather improved with the temperature rising to 25 °C at Strathallan on the 14th.

Between the 15th and 20th a depression moved south from the Hebrides to Biscay before returning north to Scotland. Its associated band of rain moved north across the country between the 17th and 19th, giving heavy falls in places. Prestwick recorded 57 mm on the 18th and Kinloss 28 mm on the 19th.

From the 21st onward a mobile westerly pattern of weather affected Scotland as depressions passed from the Faeroes to Scandinavia. Bands of rain crossed the country every few days, but the majority of the time was spent under broken cloud with scattered showers.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

A more typical summer month - changeable and much cooler with frequent rain or showers.

The first three days of the month were often bright with some sunshine but appreciably cooler than much of the previous month with temperatures typically 17-20 °C. Some sharp showers affected eastern areas on the 1st when north-westerly winds were quite strong and gusty.

On the 4th a warm front moved east bringing low cloud and light rain and drizzle to many areas. Very warm and humid air arrived in the wake of this front and overnight temperatures remained around 18 °C in many areas. Saturday 5th remained cloudy but some bright or sunny intervals did develop. Despite cloud, temperatures reached 23-25 °C. This warmer spell however was short-lived as a cold front brought light rain and lower temperatures on the 6th.

The period between the 7th and 14th was often rather cloudy, changeable and quite cool. Showery rain affected the Province on several days and northerly winds kept temperatures frequently between 16 and 18 °C.

Heavier rain developed on the 15th with 10 mm widely and locally 15 mm in parts of Co Fermanagh but the 16th and 17th by contrast were mostly dry and quite sunny with temperatures up to 20 or 21 °C in some areas.

The 18th had some sunshine but heavier rain spread eastwards in the evening giving a very wet night with 15 to 20 mm of rain in places. The 19th soon brightened however with some warmer sunshine but also scattered heavy showers in the afternoon and early evening. One such shower gave around 14 mm in a few hours over south Armagh.

The 20th was similar with some warm sunny spells and temperatures up to 21 °C but an active trough gave heavy evening showers for a few hours. The 21st was mostly dry with some bright or sunny spells but relatively cool with temperatures between 17 and 19 °C.

A weak weather front gave some patchy light rain on the 22nd but the 23rd was brighter with warm sunny spells. Afternoon temperatures of 22 °C set off heavy showers in southern counties with some local short-lived downpours.

The morning of the 24th was very cool with some early mist or shallow fog and temperatures down to 4 or 5 °C. Sunny spells soon developed through lifting temperatures once again to 19 or 20 °C. An active front then moved slowly north across the area on the 26th bringing some heavy outbreaks of rain with 10 mm in some areas during the afternoon.

The closing days of the month remained changeable with further rain or showers at times, locally heavy, and thunderstorms developed quite widely on the afternoon of the 27th.

Although much cooler than June and July, the mean temperature for August was slightly above average, thanks in the main to night-time temperatures. Daytime average maximum values were around 4 °C lower than in July, giving the month a distinctly cooler feel for most people. Despite this however, provisional figures suggest that this was the second warmest summer overall in Northern Ireland with only summer 1995 being warmer.

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