

Very changeable at times with some heavy rainfalls.

With the exception of a few days from the 15th to 18th the British Isles were dominated by relatively low pressure. Notable was a series of mobile depressions which crossed England and Wales from the 10th to 14th.

Weather

Generally changeable weather resulted in a dull month in most areas except in north Scotland where it was less unsettled. By the end of the month water levels in certain Scottish reservoirs were reported to be very low. During the first week there was heavy rain at times in many areas and the wet spell continued in England and Wales for a further week. The second half of the month was less changeable.

Wind

Strong winds with local gales occurred on a number of occasions. Gales in north Scotland on the 9th, with a gust of 48 kt at Kirkwall (Orkney), began a spell of 6 windy days. Gusts recorded during this period included 49 kt at Aberporth (Cardiganshire) on the 10th and 66 kt at Hunterston (Ayrshire) on the 13th. The last week also was windy at times in the west and north; gusts of 54 kt at Stornoway Airport (Hebrides) and 52 kt at Bell Rock (Angus) were recorded on the 26th and 31st respectively.

Temperature

Monthly mean temperature was below average almost everywhere but only in a few places in Scotland did the deficit approach 1 degC. Mean temperature exceeded the average in Devon and Cornwall and in a few areas elsewhere but generally by very small amounts. It was very cool in Northern Ireland and Scotland towards the end of the first week, and on the morning of the 8th the air temperature fell to -1.9°C at Carnwath (Lanarkshire). The period 10th to 20th was generally cooler than average, although it became warm in the south on the 18th. The next day was very warm in East Anglia and south-east England and a temperature of 28.2°C occurred at Writtle (Essex). Temperatures were generally near or a little above average from the 21st to 30th but it became cool again on the 31st.

Rainfall

In Scotland, except in some southern counties, rainfall was mostly below average, and less than half the average occurred in a few eastern areas. Elsewhere, rainfall was above average in general and in England there were wide variations in the percentage recorded because of the thundery character of the rain. More than twice the average rainfall occurred in a few areas, notably in County Durham and Northumberland, on the Cheshire and Shropshire border and in the south Midlands.

The number of days with thunder reported was above average in some localities and a few places in England and Wales experienced thunder on 6 or 7 days. Details of local damage due to floods and lightning strikes were common features of Press reports. During thunderstorms in Northern Ireland on the evening of the 4th a rainfall of 63.4 mm in about 78 minutes was recorded at Creggan reservoir (Co. Londonderry); a rainfall of this intensity is classified as 'very rare'. Some hours later heavy rain with thunder spread into south-east England and in the 7 hours up to 09 GMT on the 5th London Weather Centre had 49.9 mm of rain, an amount which exceeded even the greatest 24-hour fall recorded there since records began in 1940. Thunderstorms occurred widely in central and southern Scotland on the 5th and in England and Wales on the 6th and 7th. A very wet 5-day period began overnight on the 9th/10th when the first of a series of mobile depressions approached from the Atlantic. In the 12 hours ending at 09 GMT on the 10th Brynamman (Carmarthenshire) recorded 42.8 mm of rain and in the 24 hours ending at the same time Neath (Glamorgan) had 82.8 mm. On the 13th and 14th flooding occurred in cities as far apart as Bristol, Durham, Londonderry and York. Among heavy rainfalls in the 24 hours up to 09 GMT on the 14th were 104.9 mm at Ballypatrick Forest (Co. Antrim) and 86.1 mm at Smiddy Shaw reservoir, in Durham. On the 14th a boy was struck and killed by lightning at Cardiff and hailstones about 2 cm in diameter fell at Rugby (Warwickshire). On the afternoon of the same day a violent thunderstorm at Little Weighton (East Riding of Yorkshire) gave strong

Table 1 District Values

District	air temperature °C					mean 30 cm earth temp °C	rain days	rain- fall	sun- shine
	High Max. *	Lowest Min. *	max.	min.	mean				
			difference from average						
0 Scotland N	23.3	3.0	--0.1	--0.9	--0.5	—	--2	74	104
1 Scotland E	22.8	4.4	--0.5	--0.2	--0.3	--0.1	--1	85	93
2 England N E	23.3	2.8	--0.8	+0.1	--0.3	+0.4	+4	159	85
3 England E	26.8	5.0	--0.7	+0.6	0.0	--0.1	+5	135	81
4 Midlands	25.0	4.4	--0.9	+0.3	--0.3	+0.2	+3	150	80
5 England S E	26.2	4.9	--1.1	+0.8	--0.1	--0.3	+4	107	75
6 Scotland W	23.8	4.3	--0.5	0.0	--0.3	0.0	--1	93	84
7 Eng NW - Wales N	24.0	6.0	--0.8	+0.2	--0.3	--0.1	0	134	86
8 Eng SW - Wales S	25.9	2.8	--0.6	+0.4	--0.1	+0.4	+4	121	72
N Ireland	23.0	5.1	--0.7	--0.1	--0.4	—	--1	110	86
Scotland	23.8	3.0	--0.4	--0.4	--0.4	—	--1	84	94
Eng - Wales	26.8	2.8	--0.8	+0.4	--0.4	—	+3	137	80

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

winds, torrential rain and a large fall of hail which did costly damage to buildings and growing crops in the neighbourhood. Further thunderstorms affected southern England on the 18th and 19th; on the latter date a man was killed by lightning in Gloucestershire.

Sunshine

The mainly changeable weather resulted in below-average sunshine amounts nearly everywhere. Some stations in the southern counties of England and Wales had their lowest August sunshine total since 1958, for example Brighton and Worthing (both in Sussex) and Rhosce (Glamorgan). In Scotland most of the north and parts of the east had more sunshine than average and, although excesses were not large, Dyce (Aberdeenshire) had its sunniest August since 1955.

Fog

Fog did not feature during the month to any great extent. Sea fog affected the coasts of extreme north-east Scotland for much of the 3rd and there were a few occurrences of inland fog patches around dawn, mainly in England and Wales, during the second half of the month.

Miscellaneous phenomena

Whirlwinds were reported from Stanwell (Surrey) on the 5th, Haverhill (Suffolk) on the 7th and Pensnett (Staffordshire) on the 14th. At Haverhill, according to an estimate in the Press, the destructive wind caused damage to crops and farm buildings amounting to £10000. The aurora was seen by observers in Scotland on 11 nights and it was observed from Thirsk (North Riding of Yorkshire) on the 11th.

August 1971