

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

APRIL

1973

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Changeable and cool

Active depressions or troughs of low pressure from the west affected all districts at first. Later, troughs crossing the country in a general northerly airflow were mostly rather weak but during the last ten days low pressure systems became increasingly active and affected the whole country first from the east, then from the north and finally from the south-west.

Weather

Most of the first fortnight was very windy and there were frequent showers or outbreaks of rain which were heavy at times especially in the west and north. Occasional snow, hail and thunder were also reported. Similar weather predominated during the last ten days although it was not so windy. Scattered and mostly slight showers or periods of rain occurred during the third week.

Wind

Gales occurred on more days than average in the Hebrides, in many coastal districts of England and Wales and in some exposed inland areas in England and Northern Ireland. Elsewhere days of gale were near or below average. Winds were often fresh or strong particularly in the north but gales were most frequent during the first two weeks. Except in Scotland, gales were widespread on the 2nd and gusts of 60 kt or more occurred in the Midlands and in eastern and southern England. According to press reports, two men died when a tree was blown down and fell on their car at Scoulton (Norfolk) and another man was blown off his bicycle and killed in Cambridgeshire. Property damage was reported from a number of places in East Anglia and the London area. Gales were severe in north-west England and south-west Scotland on the 4th and there were further reports of damage to houses and of trees blown over. During the following few days gales continued in the north and north-west and on the 6th a gust of 70 kt was recorded at Stornoway.

Temperature

Monthly mean temperatures were generally between 0.5 and 2.0 deg C below average. Some of the higher day-time temperatures during the month were recorded on the 15th and among these was a maximum of 19.2°C at Buddon Ness (Angus). However, daily temperatures were mostly below average and the period from the 19th to the 23rd was very cold in eastern districts. Night frost often occurred in inland areas in the east and north but it was less frequent elsewhere. On the 29th a minimum of -9.9°C at Eskdalemuir (Dumfriesshire) was the lowest temperature recorded there in April

since 1917 and in Northern Ireland the overnight frost on the 28th/29th caused widespread damage to the apple crop in Armagh and to other crops throughout the province.

Rainfall (including melted snow)

Many districts were wetter than average particularly in small areas of north-east Scotland and north-east England where rainfall was more than twice the average. In contrast, parts of west and central Scotland, western Wales, southern England and much of Northern Ireland has less rainfall than average, a few places receiving only about half the average. Periods of rain or showers occurred throughout the month in many areas. Some of the showers were of hail and there were scattered thunderstorms. Snow or sleet (snow mixed with rain or drizzle), fell mainly in the north and north west where there were some substantial falls on high ground but occasionally snow showers were reported in the south. The heaviest and most frequent rainfall occurred during the first week. Places in Wales and south-west England received more than 50 mm of rain in the 24 hours from 09 GMT on the 1st; a fall of 85.4 mm was measured at Moel Cynnedd (Montgomeryshire) and 62.1 mm fell at Winstitchen (Somerset). Another notable 'daily' fall of 64.6 mm occurred at Laggan O'Dee (Kirkcudbrightshire) on the 3rd. During the next two weeks rainfall was mostly slight and scattered but from the 21st onwards it became heavier and more widespread especially in the north and north-west. Baltasound (Shetland) reported a 'daily' fall of 51.4 mm on the 28th.

Snow

Snow or sleet fell on more days than average in Northern Ireland, Scotland,

northern England and north Wales and on about the average number of days elsewhere. However, it did not lie for very long except on the higher mountains of Scotland. Heavy falls occurred in the north during the first and last weeks. On the 2nd undrifting depths of 9 to 18 cm of snow were measured in the mountains of southern Scotland and northern England and roads were temporarily blocked by drifts. In Shetland 10 to 15 cm of snow accumulated on the 27th and 28th again with considerable drifting. Snow also fell at times in the southern half of England and Wales and on the 8th and 9th up to 4 cm accumulated for a time on low ground and between 8 and 10 cm on high ground.

Sunshine

Monthly sunshine totals varied from about 80 to 120 per cent of average generally except in a few places in western Scotland which were a little sunnier and in eastern districts of Scotland and England where some places were rather dull. There were no prolonged sunny spells but in most areas sunny days occurred fairly often. One of the higher daily totals recorded was 14.5 hours at Glasgow Airport on the 29th.

Fog

Around mid-month and for a few days during the last week there were patches of overnight fog in widely separated areas. Fog also occurred on hills in the west and north and on parts of southern and western coasts around the 15th. During the last week patchy sea-fog affected southern and western coasts and the Channel Islands.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

The aurora was observed in Scotland on 12 nights.

Table 1 District values**April 1973**

District	air temperature °C					mean 30-cm earth temp °C	rain-days	rainfall	sunshine
	Highest	Lowest	max.	min.	mean				
	Max. †	Min. †	difference from average						
0 Scotland N	15.5	-4.4	-1.2	-1.7	-1.5	—	+8	91	89
1 Scotland E	19.1	-2.4	-1.4	-0.9	-1.1	-0.4	+2	102	97
2 England N E	17.1	-7.5	-1.7	-1.0	-1.4	-0.5	+4	129	98
3 England E	17.7	-1.6	-1.6	-0.9	-1.3	-0.8	+2	118	90
4 Midland Counties	17.7	-2.6	-1.4	-0.7	-1.1	-0.5	0	114	109
5 England S E	17.2	-3.4	-1.5	-0.8	-1.2	-1.0	+2	100	86
6 Scotland W	16.9	-9.8	-1.0	-1.5	-1.3	-0.3	-2	84	115
7 Eng N W & Wales N	16.5	-6.3	-1.6	-1.0	-1.3	-0.5	-1	115	100
8 Eng S W & Wales S	18.0	-5.1	-1.0	-1.1	-1.1	-0.3	+1	94	106
N Ireland	16.8	-7.0	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1	—	-1	82	94
Scotland	19.1	-9.8	-1.2	-1.4	-1.3	—	0	94	100
England & Wales	18.0	-7.5	-1.5	-0.9	-1.2	—	+1	113	98

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