

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

MET. O. 837

UDC 551 506 1(41-4)

OCTOBER

VOLUME 88

1971

NUMBER 10

Mainly warm with dry and sunny spells; a stormy third week

During the first week pressure was relatively high over the south and east of the British Isles but troughs of low pressure affected other areas at times. From the 8th to 23rd generally low pressure prevailed although an anticyclone drifted across all areas on the 14th and a ridge of high pressure affected the extreme south from the 21st. The remainder of the month was mainly anti-cyclonic in character, except in the north on the last 3 days.

Weather

During much of the first fortnight and again in the last week or so the weather was generally dry and sunny with morning fog in places. However, snow or sleet (rain or drizzle and snow) occurred in Scotland towards the end of the second week and snow settled briefly in the West Country on the unusually early date of the 13th. The third week, in contrast to the rest of the month, was often stormy with gales and heavy rain at times. During this period swollen rivers caused local flooding but the rain relieved to some extent water shortages in Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England.

Wind

The number of days on which gales were reported was above average in north Scotland; gales occurred on 21 days at Cairngorm (Inverness-shire), height 1090 metres. On the 15th gales in the northern half of the country, with a gust of 70 kt at Benbecula (Hebrides), heralded a general windy spell which lasted until the 22nd. By the 19th strong winds had made seas around all coasts very rough and many small craft were damaged; the crew of a drilling rig in the North Sea off Scotland was temporarily evacuated because of the hazardous conditions. On the 22nd gusts in excess of 50 kt occurred in many parts of Scotland and northern England; at Cairngorm a gust of 93 kt was recorded during a period when the mean wind speed was about 60 kt.

Temperature

Monthly mean temperature was above average everywhere; the excess was small in a few areas but it reached 1–2 degC in most districts. Over England and Wales as a whole this was the seventh successive October with mean temperature above average. This month began very warm, with a temperature of 25.0°C at Bala (Merioneth) and Swyddffynnon (Cardiganshire) on the 2nd, and day-time temperatures remained generally above average until the 12th. However, there were some cold nights in southern England towards the end of the first week with air frost in a few places. Cold weather spread southwards

on the 11th and 12th, and on the morning of the 14th the air temperature fell to –8.3°C at Grantown-on-Spey (Moray) and Crawfordjohn (Lanarkshire). Warmer weather returned to all districts around the 17th and during the remainder of the month temperatures were average or above by day although, at times during the last week, night frost occurred widely in Scotland and locally in England.

Rainfall

It was drier than average over most of the United Kingdom and some parts of the east and south had less than half the average rainfall. On the other hand rainfall reached 150 per cent of average in a few areas in north Scotland. Only small amounts of rain fell during the first 10 days, especially in England and Wales, and generally dry weather returned to the south on the 20th and to the north on the 25th. Many places in southern England had no measurable rainfall until the 13th or after the 19th. The first appreciable rainfall of the month occurred in Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England on the 9th and 10th; a 'daily' rainfall total on the 9th (that is in the 24 hours beginning at 09 GMT) of 97.0 mm was recorded at Glenfinnan (Inverness-shire) and on the 10th a 'daily' rainfall of 96.7 mm occurred at Cononish (Perthshire). During the period 15th to 24th most areas had heavy rain at times, notably from the 17th to 19th when rain was accompanied by thunder in north Wales and northern England. Many 'daily' rainfalls recorded in north Wales and north-west England on the 18th were between 80 and 90 mm while 112.0 mm occurred at Cowlyd, near Dolgarrog (Caernarvonshire). The same 24-hour period was the wettest October 'day' recorded in

the Manchester area since records began in 1877. Heavy rain in northern districts on the 21st and 22nd resulted in many falls of 100 to 120 mm in north and west Scotland. Exceptional among heavy 'daily' rainfall totals on the 21st were 162.0 mm at Dalness (Argyll) and 158.2 mm at Cassley power station (Caithness). Further heavy rain in north Scotland on the 30th contributed to a 'daily' fall of 82.2 mm at Kinlochhourn (Inverness-shire).

Sunshine

Sunshine amounts in all areas exceeded the average and some places were very sunny. The total of 139.3 hours of sunshine recorded at Sheffield (West Riding of Yorkshire) is the highest there in October since records began in 1898. Ross-on-Wye (Herefordshire) had its sunniest October since 1921, and London Weather Centre and Braemar (Aberdeenshire) had their highest October sunshine total since records began in 1929 and 1933 respectively.

Fog

Overnight fog occurred frequently during the first 10 days and again in the last week, mostly in England and Wales. South and east England were the areas most prone to fog but occasionally it was more widespread and it also occurred in central and southern Scotland at times. Although fog was sometimes dense in places, it usually cleared during the morning but throughout the 2nd and 3rd sea fog affected parts of the south-east coast of England.

Miscellaneous phenomena

The aurora was seen by observers in Scotland on 10 nights.

Table 1 District Values**October 1971**

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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	20.5	−3.5	+1.3	+0.2	+0.8	—	−2	115	131
1 Scotland E	20.6	−2.0	+1.6	+0.7	+1.2	+1.1	−4	64	122
2 England N E	22.2	−3.3	+1.7	+1.1	+1.4	+1.5	−7	53	128
3 England E	23.0	−5.0	+1.8	+0.8	+1.3	+0.7	−5	95	133
4 Midlands	23.1	−0.9	+1.6	+0.9	+1.2	+1.1	−6	90	144
5 England S E	22.9	−1.7	+1.7	+0.9	+1.3	+0.7	−8	78	138
6 Scotland W	19.3	−4.8	+1.3	+1.2	+1.3	+1.3	−1	105	119
7 Eng NW - Wales N	22.2	−3.1	+1.6	+1.4	+1.5	+1.6	−6	78	129
8 Eng SW - Wales S	22.8	−0.8	+1.6	+0.7	+1.1	+1.4	−6	69	130
N Ireland	20.9	−4.3	+1.6	+1.4	+1.5	—	−4	53	112
Scotland	20.6	−4.8	+1.4	+0.7	+1.1	—	−2	94	124
Eng - Wales	23.1	−5.0	+1.7	+1.0	+1.3	—	−6	77	134

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