

# MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

# SEPTEMBER 1979

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

VOLUME 96

NUMBER 9

## Changeable in north-west, but mostly dry and sunny elsewhere.

Between the 1st and 3rd a complex low-pressure system moved slowly north-eastwards from west of Scotland to the Norwegian Sea with fronts crossing all parts of the British Isles. A ridge from an anticyclone over Biscay then moved slowly across southern areas as the high-pressure centre transferred eastwards over Europe. Further fronts crossed the British Isles from the Atlantic between the 5th and 9th followed by a ridge of high pressure which persisted over southern areas until the 11th.

On the 12th a deepening depression moved from west of Scotland to the Shetlands with associated fronts crossing all areas. An anticyclone then moved slowly eastwards across the British Isles followed by further frontal systems which made erratic progress southwards between the 16th and 19th. During the 20th a deep depression moved north-eastwards across Scotland leaving a cold north-westerly airstream over the British Isles. Throughout the next week a succession of ridges and frontal systems crossed all areas from the west, but during the 27th an anticyclone moved over England and Wales from the Atlantic and then continued to dominate the weather until the end of the month. However, on the 30th fronts from the Atlantic began to encroach into south-western districts as the centre of high pressure was transferred slowly northwards.

### Weather

Changeable weather affected north-western parts of the United Kingdom for most of the month. Periods of rain or showers, and a few scattered thunderstorms, occurred from time to time but areas away from the north-west were often dry and sunny. Many places in the sunnier areas were also quite warm at times during the first half of the month, but daytime temperatures then became generally lower for the rest of the month and the period from the 20th to 22nd was particularly cool. Night frosts occurred in many areas during the latter half of the month. For a few days from the 27th the weather became more settled generally although rain and drizzle spread to parts of south-west England during the 30th.

### Wind

Winds were frequently fresh or strong in exposed western and northern areas with gales occurring during the second and third weeks of the month. Early on the 13th, during severe north-westerly gales around the northern coasts of Scotland, a gust of 70 kt was recorded at Sumburgh in Shetland. Away from the west and north, however, winds were generally lighter throughout the month. Directions were mostly between south-west and north-west, but were south-easterly at times during the first week and again during the last few days of the month.

### Temperature

In a few widely scattered areas in England and Scotland monthly mean temperatures were above average, but elsewhere in the United Kingdom mean temperatures were around or below average. In eastern Scotland, northern and eastern England, much of the Midlands and in parts of Northern Ireland values were not more than 0.5 °C below normal. In remaining areas values were mostly between 0.5 and 1.0 °C below normal, but a few places in southern England, the Channel Islands and Shetland Isles recorded values of more than 1.0 °C below normal.

Temperatures during the first half of the month were very variable, with some warm days, particularly in southern and eastern England and in eastern Scotland. The highest temperatures occurred on the 6th when a number of places in eastern England and the Greater London area recorded maxima of at least 26 °C. From mid-month onwards daytime temperatures were generally lower and frosts occurred several nights; at Dalwhinnie in the Highland Region of Scotland the temperature fell to -6.1 °C on the night of 14th/15th.

### Rainfall

Over north-west Scotland, Orkney, Shetland and small areas in North Yorkshire and Co Tyrone monthly rainfall totals were above average. The Shetland Isles were very wet with more than twice the normal rainfall for the month being recorded at Baltasound. Elsewhere in the United Kingdom totals were well below average with less than 50 per cent of normal in many areas and below 25 per cent in some places in south-east Scotland, north-east Wales and in parts of southern and eastern England.

In northern and north-western areas of the United Kingdom periods of rain or showers occurred from time to time throughout the month, but away from the north-west the frequency of rainfall decreased sharply. In the north-west of Scotland 25 or more "rain days" (days with 0.2 mm of rain or more) were reported at many places during the month, but in contrast, less than 6 "rain days" occurred in parts of south and south-east England.

### Sunshine

Sunshine totals were above average over most of the United Kingdom with many places in central and

eastern districts recording more than 125 per cent of their normal for the month. At St Andrews in Fife the total of 175.7 hours of sunshine was the highest in any September since records began there in 1913. Only in northern parts of the Shetlands, the Hebrides, western counties of Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and southern coastal areas of Devon and Cornwall were sunshine totals a little below average with values mostly between 90 and 100 per cent of normal.

Despite the rather changeable nature of the weather throughout the month, all areas enjoyed sunny days from time to time. These were most marked in areas away from the north-west during the brief anticyclonic spells towards the end of the first week, around mid-month and again during the last week.

### Fog

Patches of overnight fog in inland areas were reported at times throughout the month, mostly in England and Wales, but always cleared quickly after sunrise. Hill and coastal fog also occurred from time to time, particularly around the coasts of northern Scotland and in south-western areas of England. On the 9th northern and western parts of England and Wales were also affected and in some north-eastern coastal areas of England fog persisted during the day.

### Miscellaneous Phenomena

Three waterspouts were observed off Great Yarmouth on the 21st. Another waterspout was seen off Walton-on-the-Naze on the 22nd and on the same day three more were reported in the Straits of Dover, one of which was estimated to have been drawing a column of water 20 feet in diameter to a height of 200 feet.

Table 1 District values

District	air temperature °C					mean 30-cm earth temp °C	rain- days	rainfall	sun- shine
	Highest Max*	Lowest Min*	max.	min.	mean				
	difference from average								
0 Scotland N	22.7	-0.5	-0.6	-1.0	-0.8	-0.6	+3	103	115
1 Scotland E	21.8	-2.4	0.0	-0.5	-0.2	+0.1	-2	46	133
2 England E & NE	26.3	-1.6	+0.4	-0.7	-0.1	+0.3	-3	51	132
3 East Anglia	26.4	1.9	+0.3	-0.5	-0.1	-0.2	-5	38	127
4 Midland Counties	25.4	-0.1	0.0	-0.8	-0.4	0.0	-5	41	129
5 England SE & Central S	25.2	0.9	-0.2	-0.9	-0.5	-0.4	-6	30	124
6 Scotland W	21.0	-2.1	-0.7	-0.6	-0.7	0.0	+3	91	120
7 England NW & Wales N	22.5	-1.2	-0.6	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	-1	67	110
8 England SW & Wales S	22.9	1.4	-0.5	-0.8	-0.7	-0.1	-4	50	109
N Ireland	20.4	0.0	-0.5	-0.6	-0.6	+0.2	-1	70	100
Scotland	22.7	-2.4	-0.4	-0.7	-0.6	-0.2	+1	80	123
England & Wales	26.4	-1.6	-0.1	-0.7	-0.4	-0.1	-4	46	122

\*Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations