

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

OCTOBER 1993

VOLUME 110

NUMBER 10

Cold or very cold, and rather wet in places; some snow in Scotland

A deep depression was slow-moving near south-west England on the 1st, and it drifted slowly towards the Netherlands, to be followed across Britain on the 3rd by an active frontal system. On the 4th, 5th and 6th, a deep Atlantic low drifted east into south-west England and Wales, and it remained near the south-west approaches until it became absorbed into a new low forming off the coast of eastern Scotland on the 9th. On the 10th, fresh fronts moved into southern England from the Atlantic, and these gradually moved northwards on the 11th into the Midlands and northern England. On the 12th, these fronts and a now complex area of low pressure began to move slowly southwards as pressure rose towards Iceland. By the 14th the low and its fronts lay over northern France and Belgium as a cold front moved southwards across Scotland to clear England and Wales on the 15th, weakening as it did so, while a polar low moved southwards between Scotland and Norway. An anticyclone moved slowly eastwards between the 16th and the 19th. A cold front moved southwards across all parts on the 20th, to be followed the next day by a new anticyclone, which persisted over or near the British Isles for the remainder of the month.

Weather

During the 1st and the 2nd, there were outbreaks of rain or showers, some heavy, in many parts of the United Kingdom, with thunder being reported locally in north-east England and eastern Scotland on the 1st. Much of the 3rd was dry, but rain and drizzle spread into western Britain towards evening and moved quickly eastwards. Showers returned to many parts on the 4th, though more persistent rain lingered in places in Scotland, and this pattern continued into the next two days, with widespread and heavy showers over England and Wales on the 6th, when there were also thunderstorms in the evening. Over Scotland the persistent, locally heavy rain continued into the 7th, but the showers further south became less active. Much of the country became dry for a while on the 8th, but renewed heavy rain, showers and thunderstorms developed over southern England and Wales by afternoon. On the 9th there was again persistent rain over parts of Scotland with showers and isolated thunderstorms in places in south Wales and southern and south-east England. Much of the country was dry on the 10th, except for some rain over northern Scotland during the morning, and over south-west England during the evening. On the 11th and 12th much of England and Wales had periods of rain, locally heavy with isolated thunderstorms; Scotland was drier on these days. During the next day, most of the rain or showers died out. On the 14th there were some showers in eastern England, and round the coasts of Scotland and Northern Ireland, and on the 15th and 16th England and Wales were mostly dry except for a few isolated showers near

the east and west coasts. Over the northern half of Scotland on these two days there were fairly widespread snow and hail showers night and day, giving appreciable accumulations in places. Although these snow showers continued into the 16th, much of the rest of the country now became dry, apart from isolated showers of rain, hail or sleet near the east coast on the 17th and 18th. There were outbreaks of light rain or drizzle over Scotland on the 19th, and these moved southwards into England and Wales on the 20th, followed by showers over Scotland. Showers, locally heavy, affected eastern districts of England and Scotland on the 21st, and again, though less widely on the 22nd. On the 23rd there was some light rain or drizzle in extreme northern Scotland, and a few light showers in East Anglia and south-east England, whilst on the 24th, apart from the odd spot in the eastern half of England, the country was dry. Between the 25th and the 27th there was extensive and persistent light rain or drizzle in East Anglia and south-east England, and on the 28th this extended into many parts of England and Wales before moving north and becoming restricted to the Pennines and north-east England on the 29th. The month ended on a dry note, apart from a little drizzle here and there in Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of northern England.

Wind

Gales were reported at low levels on the 6th in Shetland, Orkney, Outer Hebrides and the extreme north-east of Scotland, and at a few places in the Northern Isles on the 1st, the 5th to the 8th, the 15th and the 16th. The only other occurrences of gales were on the 1st and 18th on Cairngorm, Grampian and on the 12th and 28th on Great Dun Fell, Cumbria. Further south, although no gales were reported, the 14th, the 20th and the 21st were also windy days. The highest gust reported was 59 knots at Great Dun Fell, Cumbria on the 12th and at Fair Isle, Shetland on the 16th.

Temperature

Temperatures were below average everywhere, with monthly mean values ranging from 1.0 °C below normal at Hemsby, Norfolk and at Baltasound, Shetland, to 3.5 °C below normal at Betws-y-Coed, Gwynedd. The highest temperature reported during the month was 18.3 °C at Poole, Dorset on the 3rd, and the lowest was -9.9 °C at Carnwath, Strathclyde on the 17th.

Rainfall

Northern Ireland, western Scotland, north Wales and north-west England were very dry, whilst the eastern side of both England and Scotland were noticeably wetter than average. Monthly totals ranged from 11% of normal at Lisnaskea, Fermanagh to 249% of normal at Coltishall, Norfolk. The highest reported daily rainfall was

67 mm at Gatwick Airport, West Sussex on the 1st, and at Cromer, Norfolk on the 12th. The highest daily fall in Scotland was 66 mm at Ardtalnaig, Tayside on the 1st, and in Northern Ireland was 48 mm at Trassey Slievenaman, Down on the 5th.

Snow

The first reports of the winter of snow or sleet came from Scottish hills on the 12th and 13th, and on the 14th wintry showers fell in places over high ground as far south as the Peak District, with depths up 1 cm being reported in the Cairngorms. Snow showers became more extensive in the northern half of Scotland on the 15th, and there was even a report of sleet near Manchester on the same day. In the north-east of Scotland, snow showers continued into the 16th, giving some places a centimetre or two on the ground by the morning, with Aberdeen having 4 cm in the earliest snowfall there for 50 years. Further wintry showers occurred over Scotland and north-east England on the 17th.

Sunshine

It was a sunny month generally, except in northern Scotland and eastern and north-eastern England. Monthly totals ranged from 158% of average at Kinross, Tayside to only 53% at Kinlochewe, Highland. The highest daily total of the month was 10.2 hours on the 18th at Margate, Kent; the highest monthly total was 160.6 hours at Penzance, Cornwall.

Fog

Apart from on the 19th and 25th, all the occasions of fog reported this month were within the first 12 days. Widespread mist and fog formed early on the 3rd in many parts of England and Northern Ireland, clearing quite readily in the morning. There were fog patches at first on the 5th in places in northern England and Scotland, and again rather more widely in northern and central England on the 6th. On the 8th, patchy fog affected a broad area from the Bristol Channel to East Anglia for a while around dawn, and again further north on the 9th though these were short-lived. Northern England and parts of north Wales had patchy fog around dawn on the 11th, and on the 12th morning fog was widespread from Devon and Dorset to Norfolk. Fog was not reported again until the morning of the 19th, when dense freezing fog formed in places in the Midlands, though it cleared fairly quickly. Some dense fog patches formed for a while in the early hours of the 25th in Northern Ireland and in eastern Scotland.

Miscellaneous phenomena

A mini-tornado was reported at Rothwell, Northamptonshire on the 5th, whilst a funnel cloud was reported off the coast at Worthing, West Sussex on the 9th.