

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

MAY 1993

Rather wet and dull; temperatures not far from average

The month began with pressure low to the north and east of Britain, and a cold front moved slowly south-east across the country on the 1st. Pressure rose from the west over the next few days, and by the 4th a large anticyclone was centred over the British Isles. Weak fronts affected Scotland and Northern Ireland between the 4th and the 8th, but the high gradually drifted north or north-east towards Scandinavia, allowing fronts and low pressure to affect southern England at times between the 8th and the 10th. During the 11th and 12th, the high moved from near Scotland away towards Greenland, and low pressure came to dominate the British Isles. On the 13th, a cold front moved southwards across Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England; as the associated cold northerly airstream engaged the low pressure further south, a vigorous depression developed over Wales and drifted slowly north-eastwards towards southern Scotland on the 14th. After crossing Scotland from south to north on the 15th, this depression slowly moved away north-westwards on the 16th as the fronts of a new, active depression began to move northwards across western England and Wales. As this depression moved north-westwards on the 17th and 18th, its associated fronts moved north-eastwards across all parts of the country. On the 20th, a depression which had formed over northern France moved northwards into south-east England; it then drifted northwards and filled. During the next five days, pressure remained relatively high over the North Sea, and low to the south-west of Britain; fronts made slow progress northwards over England. By the 26th, this pattern had subtly changed; still with an easterly flow over Britain, but with the high pressure moved out towards Iceland, and low pressure and complex fronts stretched east-west across the southern half of the British Isles. Gradually, on the 27th and 28th, the fronts moved northwards and pressure rose over Britain, and by the 29th a new low had developed to the south-west of Ireland. This low then moved north-eastwards across Northern Ireland, southern Scotland and into Norway, and the month ended with further fronts approaching south-west England.

Weather

There was patchy fog first thing in many parts on the 1st, with thundery outbreaks in the Northern Isles and the south-east of England, and outbreaks of rain in Scotland and northern England. Further thunderstorms broke out later in the day in the south-east. Over the next two days there were isolated, mostly light showers in the east and north. Light rain or drizzle affected Scotland and parts of northern England on the 5th, and these outbreaks continued on the 6th and 7th. On the 8th these largely died out, but there were instead showery outbreaks in southern England and Wales. Thundery showers spread into south-east England late on the 9th, and these

spread north-westwards as far as southern Scotland on the 10th before dying out. Further thunderstorms affected south-west and southern England and Wales during the 12th whilst mostly light rain or drizzle fell over northern Scotland. The 13th and 14th were very wet days over northern England, southern Scotland and Northern Ireland, with sleet or snow over hills, whilst in the south the weather was more showery in character. The area of persistent rain moved away northwards on the 16th, to be replaced by showers, but further moderate to heavy rain spread into much of the country, apart from the south-east of England and northern Scotland, later in the day. This rain too moved northwards and became showery in nature on the 17th, with widespread thunderstorms over much of England later in the day. On the 18th the showers gradually died out, but further rain spread across Wales and parts of England on the 19th, and into Scotland on the 20th. Rain was restricted to western and northern parts over the next four days, but there were heavy thunderstorms in south-west England and Wales on the 24th, and on the 26th extremely heavy rain with thunderstorms spread northwards from southern and south-west England into Wales and parts of the midlands. The remnants of this rain continued intermittently over the next two days over north-west England, the midlands and East Anglia, but regenerated over most parts of the country on the 29th. The 30th was a showery day except in the extreme east, but on the 31st showers or outbreaks of rain were restricted to northern and western parts.

Wind

In general, it was not a particularly windy month, the windiest period being between the 14th and the 18th. The highest gust reported was 67 knots at Killough, Down on the 18th. The 30th was the windiest day of the month in southern England with gusts over 40 knots quite widespread, and a gust of 61 knots at Camborne, Cornwall.

Temperature

Monthly mean temperature was near average in western Scotland and in Northern Ireland, rather below in other parts of Scotland, but rather above average in England and Wales. Values ranged from 1.5 °C above normal in parts of Kent and Sussex to 1.3 °C below normal at Nairn, Highland. The highest temperature reported during the month was 25.8 °C at Yeovilton, Somerset on the 24th, and the lowest was -4.6 °C at Lairg, Highland on the 2nd.

Rainfall

Monthly rainfall totals varied widely over the United Kingdom, ranging from 43% of average at Benbecula, Western Isles to 306% of average at Ronaldsway, Isle of Man. The highest reported daily rainfall of the month was a total of 95 mm at Dungonnell Filters, Antrim on the 14th. The highest daily fall in Scotland was 62 mm at Nunraw Abbey, Borders on the 13th whilst the highest daily fall in England and Wales was 73 mm at Lambourn, Berkshire on the 25th.

Snow

A little sleet was reported on the 2nd and 3rd over the Cairngorms and the Orkneys, but snow fell quite heavily between the 13th and the 15th over the Scottish Highlands and the Southern Uplands, with depths up to 5 cm being reported in the Border counties on the morning of the 14th. Sleet was reported on the 15th over the southern Pennines and even as far south as Dartmoor.

Sunshine

It was a dull month over most parts of the country; only in East Anglia were monthly sunshine totals generally above average. The monthly totals varied from 65% of average at Nairn, Highland, to 154% of average at Duartmore Bridge, Highland. The highest daily total of the month was 15.0 hours at Kirkwall, Orkney on the 23rd, whilst the highest monthly total was 249.6 hours at Poolewe, Highland.

Fog

There were widespread dawn fog patches in England and Wales and south-east Scotland on the 1st, and coastal fog in extreme north-east Scotland on the morning of the 6th. Local hill and coastal fog was reported in Scotland and Northern Ireland on the 7th, in north-east England on the 9th, and in northern and central England on the 10th. There were further isolated hill and coastal fog patches in various parts of the country on the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th. Coastal fog affected the Northern Isles on the 19th, with isolated hill fog in northern and western England on the same day. Patchy fog occurred in Northern Ireland, north-east England and East Anglia on the 20th, and again a little more widely on the 21st. Hill and coastal fog affected parts of Scotland and northern England on the 22nd, and persisted in north and east Scotland the next day. Further hill and coastal fog was reported near many coasts on the 24th and the 25th, and in parts of the south on the 26th. There were dawn fog patches in Lincolnshire on the 28th, and some hill fog in Wales and south-west England that morning. Dawn fog was widespread in southern Britain on the 29th.

Miscellaneous phenomena

None reported.