

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

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Generally dry and sunny

An anticyclone centred over the North Sea covered the United Kingdom at the beginning of the month; during the evening of the 4th a cold front moved south-eastwards across Scotland. A small depression developed off northern Scotland on the 5th, extending its influence southwards to much of Scotland and the far north of England by the end of the 6th. The depression was slow moving near south-western Scotland during the 7th and 8th, then drifted southwards across England and Wales during the 9th and 10th and then eastwards over the North Sea. During the 11th the depression over the North Sea continued to affect East Anglia and other eastern coastal counties of England. A ridge of high pressure extended southwards over the United Kingdom on the 12th and 13th. A complex area of low pressure to the west of the British Isles began to push a series of troughs north-eastwards over the United Kingdom during the 14th. A shallow depression was centred over Northern Ireland on the 16th, while a cold front trailing from a depression over Scandinavia moved steadily southwards on the 17th. During the 17th a cold front associated with a complex shallow low pressure area over France touched the far west of Cornwall. By the 19th a ridge of high pressure once again covered the British Isles. However, a trough crossed western areas on the 19th and other areas on the 20th as it moved away eastwards. On the 21st a further warm front crossed Scotland; the associated cold front slowly crossed all parts of the United Kingdom during the following few days, finally clearing south-east England by the 24th. Pressure remained high over the British Isles until the 28th. A series of fronts edged into western areas on the 29th, making very slow progress eastwards during the night of the 29th/30th and finally clearing eastern England early on the 31st, after which a transient ridge of high pressure crossed England and Wales.

Weather

After a hot, dry start a spell of much cooler, showery weather, lasting several days, moved slowly across the United Kingdom from north-west to south-east, though a few places escaped the showers. It became dry again in most places after the 15th although there was further unsettled weather in many areas towards the end of the month. Isolated thunderstorms developed over western Scotland on the 4th and over southern England and East Anglia on the 6th. Showery outbreaks affected most northern areas on the 8th, sometimes accompanied by thunder; during the evening thundery showers crossed the Channel to the Kent coast. Thundery outbreaks occurred on the 9th over northern areas and on the 10th over southern England, spreading later into East Anglia and becoming more widespread during the afternoon, with further thunderstorms developing along the south coast. There were reports of isolated thunderstorms on the 14th and 15th. Hail showers fell over the far north of Scotland on the 24th and a thunderstorm was accompanied by hail over Humberside on the 27th.

Wind

May was a generally quiet month with no very strong winds recorded, although on the 17th gusts

of more than 40 kn were recorded at places in west Cornwall, Cambridgeshire and Hereford and Worcester. The highest gust at a low-level station was 46 kn at Butt of Lewis, Western Isles on the 5th. Wind directions were mainly variable, but occasionally southerly or easterly.

Temperature

Mean monthly temperatures were above normal everywhere and ranged from less than 0.5 °C above normal in north-west Scotland to 3 °C above normal in parts of the Midlands.

Temperatures exceeded 26 °C somewhere in Great Britain on each of the first five days, giving the hottest start to May this century. By the 7th it became cooler in all areas. Although daytime temperatures gradually rose again after the 15th, the nights remained cool. Between the 26th and 28th there was air frost in parts of eastern and south-west Scotland and central Wales and many places in southern England had a sharp ground frost. The highest temperature during the month was 28.6 °C at Barbourne, Hereford and Worcester on the 3rd and the lowest was -3.0 °C at Covenham, Lincolnshire on the 26th.

Rainfall

Monthly rainfall totals were below normal everywhere except for a narrow band from about Prestwick to Newcastle upon Tyne, where totals were above normal. Much of England and Wales had less than half the normal rainfall and parts of the south Midlands and central and southern England had below 10%. Totals ranged from 146% at Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear to 6% at Benson, Oxfordshire and Easthampstead, Berkshire.

The wettest days were the 15th over England and Wales and the 6th over Scotland. The largest amounts of rainfall measured were 48 mm at Scalpay, Western Isles on the 17th, 36 mm at Knockanrock and 34 mm at Kinlochewe, both Highland Region, on the 5th, 34 mm at Newcastle upon Tyne on the 15th, 30 mm at St Clears, Dyfed on the 15th, 28 mm at Kinloss, Grampian Region on the 6th, 28 mm at Glenlee, Dumfries and

Galloway on the 7th and 26 mm at Carlisle, Cumbria on the 15th.

Snow

No snow fell at low level although one or two high stations above 300 m reported snow falling on one or two occasions. However, snow was reported lying above 900 m on up to 9 days and between 20 and 26 days above 1200 m.

Sunshine

Monthly sunshine amounts were above or near average everywhere, ranging from 100% at Dyce, Grampian Region to 157% at Rhoose, Mid Glamorgan.

The sunniest period during the month was from the 1st to 4th when more than 10 hours of sunshine per day was measured nearly everywhere in the United Kingdom, with many places having from 12 to 14 hours. The highest monthly sunshine total was 331.7 hours at Bognor Regis, West Sussex and the highest daily total was 16.2 hours at Dunstaffnage, Strathclyde Region on the 25th and 26th.

Fog

Patchy fog formed frequently overnight during the first half of the month; and was fairly widespread on the 2nd. Fog was persistent over Orkney, Shetland and the far north of Scotland on the 9th. A bank of sea fog drifted on to some coasts in eastern England during the afternoon of the 1st. On the 5th patches of sea fog affected parts of the coasts of northern England and northern and western Wales. Hill fog was extensive over Northern Ireland during the 17th. Hill and coastal fog occurred in the west and south-west on the 30th and on the 31st patchy fog formed overnight over southern parts of England and Wales and near some eastern coasts.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

On the 27th a 20-metre high whirlwind was observed at Towy Castle, Dyfed.

Table 1 District values

District	Air temperature °C					Mean 30 cm soil temp°C	Rain- days	Rainfall	Sun- shine
	Highest Max*	Lowest Min*	Max.	Min.	Mean				
			Difference from average					% of average	
0 Scotland N	27.8	−4.1	+1.4	+0.4	+0.9	+1.6	−5	55	118
1 Scotland E	27.2	−1.6	+1.3	+0.6	+1.0	+1.6	−3	59	107
2 England E & NE	26.0	−1.6	+1.9	+0.7	+1.3	+2.0	−5	63	120
3 East Anglia	26.2	−1.5	+2.3	+0.1	+1.1	+1.9	−9	32	131
4 Midland Counties	28.3	−0.8	+2.7	+0.1	+1.5	+1.6	−8	27	132
5 England SE & Central S	28.1	1.3	+2.9	+0.9	+1.8	+2.1	−10	17	139
6 Scotland W	26.6	−2.3	+1.7	+0.6	+1.2	+2.1	−3	66	114
7 England NW & Wales N	27.0	0.8	+2.0	+1.1	+1.5	+1.8	−7	55	122
8 England SW & Wales S	26.7	−1.1	+2.9	+1.5	+2.1	+2.3	−8	34	135
N Ireland	25.0	−0.1	+1.7	+1.2	+1.5	+1.7	−5	68	115
Scotland	27.8	−4.1	+1.5	+0.5	+1.0	+1.8	−4	61	113
England & Wales	28.3	−1.6	+2.5	+0.7	+1.5	+1.9	−8	39	130

* Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations