

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

APRIL

1990

VOLUME 107

NUMBER 4

Dry and sunny in most places, but wet in western Scotland

On the 1st a complex area of low pressure developed over and around the United Kingdom. On the 4th the Atlantic anticyclone extended a ridge across southern areas of Great Britain, while fronts moved across the north-western half of Scotland. During the 5th and 6th a weakening front was slow moving over southern Scotland and northern England. An anticyclone off northern Scotland became the main centre of high pressure during the 6th and moved southwards over Scotland on the 7th. Between the 8th and 11th, the high pressure slipped southwards across England and Wales into France, while the north-west of Scotland was affected by a further series of Atlantic fronts. On the 12th, a cold front moved south-eastwards across England and Wales while a small depression moved north-eastwards towards Scotland. A frontal system associated with a deep depression near Iceland pushed eastwards into western areas on the 14th, bringing a strong unstable west to north-westerly airstream across the United Kingdom, with occasional minor troughs in the flow. On the 18th a deep depression moved south-eastwards from Iceland towards Scotland and its associated frontal system crossed the United Kingdom from the west. During the 20th and 21st troughs moved westwards across England and Wales. During the 22nd and 23rd a weak cold front edged across Scotland; further weak fronts crossed the far north-west of Scotland on the 24th. During the 25th the belt of high pressure over the British Isles moved away southwards and further fronts, associated with a deep depression near Iceland, crossed Scotland, before continuing their south-eastward course across remaining areas on the 26th and bringing a much cooler, unstable airstream. The airstream continued unstable on the 27th but pressure rose again slowly. During the 28th a weak warm front moved eastwards; between the 28th and 30th another anticyclone developed over England and Wales and drifted slowly north-eastwards over the North Sea.

Weather

Most places had a dry month, although it was wet over western Scotland and east Kent. Much of the south and east of England and Wales and east Scotland had one of the sunniest Aprils this century. After a warm start to the month the first week was generally cool, the coldest spell in the first four months of the year. It became warmer, but less settled during the second week. After rain on the 13th the following week was unsettled, cold and windy although with sunny periods. From the 27th it became sunny and warm once more. Thunderstorms were frequent during the second and third weeks, especially between the 13th and 24th, often with heavy showers and sometimes accompanied by hail. Hail showers were frequent during the month, occurring somewhere almost daily during the first three weeks.

Wind

Although the month was mainly quiet strong winds occurred from time to time, notably on the 2nd in western Scotland, the 10th over eastern Scotland and eastern England and the 14th and 19th over southern England and Wales. The highest gust reported at a low-level station was

60 kn at Butt of Lewis on the 2nd. Wind directions were mainly westerly.

Temperature

Mean monthly temperatures were slightly above normal in most areas, although there were a few places with temperatures slightly below normal, ranging from 1.2 °C above normal at Lowestoft, Suffolk to 0.9 °C below normal at Lowtown, Co. Antrim.

The month began warm, with temperatures around 21 °C in the south-east, but it became cold on the 2nd. By the 3rd temperatures were only reaching 7 °C generally, and as low as 1 °C in parts of Scotland. Severe frosts on the 4th and 5th damaged many plants that were further advanced than normal for early April. Sheffield, Weston Park, South Yorkshire reported the highest April maximum temperature since 1949 on the 30th. The highest temperature during the month was 25.0 °C at Aberdovey, Gwynedd on the 30th, and the lowest was -7.3 °C at St Harmon, Powys on the 9th.

Rainfall

Monthly rainfall totals were below normal everywhere except for northern and western Scotland, south-east England and East Anglia, and ranged from 206% at Fort Augustus, Highland Region to as little as 17% at Hartburn Grange, Cleveland and Leeming, North Yorkshire.

Parts of north-east England had less than 2 mm of rain between the 18th and 30th. The monthly total of 7 mm at Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear is the lowest for April at the station since 1912, when only 3 mm was measured. The only reports of daily rainfall of 25 mm or more are: 25.3 mm at Lerwick, Shetland on the 1st, and 25.0 mm at Holme Moss, West Yorkshire on the 14th.

Snow

On the 2nd there was some snow in northern areas, and on the 3rd, showers were heavy locally and fell mainly as snow, sleet or hail, although some sheltered areas had a dry day. Wintry showers were widespread in Scotland and 11 cm of lying snow had accumulated at Aviemore, Highland Region by the afternoon of the 3rd. From

the 15th to 18th showers, locally heavy and thundery with hail and, over high ground, snow, affected most areas from time to time but were most frequent in the west. Snow lay in the Southern Uplands on the 16th and 17th, with 8 cm of level snow lying at Leadhills, Strathclyde Region. There were wintry showers in northern areas of Scotland on the 26th, and 2 cm of lying snow at Lerwick on the morning of the 27th.

Sunshine

Monthly sunshine amounts were above average nearly everywhere, apart from a few locations in western Scotland and Northern Ireland, ranging from 179% at Writtle, Essex to 87% at Onich, Highland Region.

Aberdeen Airport's sunshine total of 209 hours was the highest there in April since records began in 1946, and Leuchars had 217 hours, the sunniest April since the record began in 1922. The highest sunshine total during the month was 273 hours at Bognor Regis, West Sussex and the most sunshine in a day was 14.7 hours at Wick, Highland Region on the 4th.

Fog

Fog formed overnight on the 1st and was fairly widespread by dawn, clearing during the morning. Patchy overnight fog formed in central and eastern areas of England on the 21st, and many places in Scotland and England and Wales had further patches on the 23rd. Fog, clearing rapidly after dawn, formed early on the 24th over parts of southern and north-eastern England, eastern Scotland and the Forth-Clyde valley, and again in a few places in England on the 29th and 30th. Sea fog restricted sunshine amounts at a few places along the east coast on the 22nd. Sea fog affected north-eastern coasts until midday on the 24th and coasts in Wales and south-west England on the 25th. Some hill fog occurred over eastern England on the 7th, over the Pennines on the 19th and in western areas on the 22nd.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

None reported.

Table 1 District values

District	Air temperature °C					Mean 30 cm soil temp°C	Rain- days	Rainfall	Sun- shin
	Highest Max*	Lowest Min*	Max.	Min.	Mean				
0 Scotland N	22.9	−5.4	+0.3	0.0	+0.2	+0.6	+2	136	113
1 Scotland E	23.7	−4.7	+1.0	+0.1	+0.5	+1.2	−1	68	121
2 England E & NE	24.2	−6.0	+1.1	−0.2	+0.5	+1.1	−2	46	145
3 East Anglia	22.1	−6.2	+1.2	−0.6	+0.3	+1.1	−1	97	158
4 Midland Counties	23.8	−6.6	+1.2	−1.2	0.0	+0.7	−2	62	143
5 England SE & Central S	23.1	−4.8	+1.1	−0.4	+0.4	+0.8	0	93	154
6 Scotland W	23.6	−6.7	0.0	−0.1	−0.1	+0.8	+3	122	105
7 England NW & Wales N	23.5	−5.0	+0.5	+0.2	+0.3	+1.0	+1	74	118
8 England SW & Wales S	23.5	−5.5	+0.6	−0.3	+0.1	+0.6	+1	60	124
N Ireland	21.3	−6.8	+0.1	0.0	+0.1	+0.6	+1	113	105
Scotland	23.7	−6.7	+0.4	0.0	+0.2	+0.9	+1	119	113
England & Wales	24.2	−6.6	+0.9	−0.4	+0.3	+0.9	−1	68	140

* Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations