

# MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

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## A generally cool, dull month, but very dry nearly everywhere

During the first three days a succession of fronts moved southwards across all areas of the United Kingdom. Fronts encroaching on the British Isles from the west became slow moving on the 5th and 7th, while frontal troughs in the north-easterly airstream affected eastern areas of Scotland and England. On the 8th an anticyclone centred over southern Scotland gradually extended its influence to all parts of Great Britain during the day. A succession of fronts moved eastwards on the 9th and became slow moving across northern England on the 10th; a further system, crossing rapidly during the 11th and 12th, trailed a front across Scotland, while a ridge of high pressure extended north-eastwards from the Azores anticyclone to cover most of England and Wales apart from the far south-east. While a wave depression crossed Scotland during the next 24 hours, weak fronts crossed all parts of England and Wales, clearing southern England early on the 14th. Later that day the next system moved to the north of Scotland, while the ridge of high pressure extended northwards to cover most of Scotland as well as England and Wales. A southward-moving cold front crossed parts of northern and eastern Scotland and north-eastern England on the 15th, but became slow moving on the 16th and lay from eastern Scotland to southern England. Early on the 18th the part of the front to the east of Scotland decayed, but the remainder lingered for a time across central parts of England before moving away eastwards by evening, while the following system was already over western areas and crossed Scotland and northern England early on the 19th. Later on the 20th pressure began to rise over all parts of the United Kingdom, and pressure remained high for the rest of the month, although weak fronts moved southwards across most areas on the 26th, 28th and 31st.

### Weather

During the first week troughs gave some rain in the north. A brief spell of fine weather during the second week gave some sharp overnight frosts. On the 7th there were some locally heavy thundery showers over parts of southern England and South Wales. After the 10th the predominance of milder westerly winds prevented night frosts in all but a few locations and it was warm during the period, with some rain, mainly in the north-west. During the second half of the month the weather was mainly anticyclonic, although often cloudy, but became sunny and very warm for a time around the 21st, before becoming cold again towards the end of the month.

### Wind

May was a generally quiet month, although on the 21st mean hourly wind speeds reached 40 kn at Lerwick and Sella Ness, Shetland and Kirkwall, Orkney, with gusts of 60 kn; the highest gust at a low-level station was 61 kn at Lerwick. The only strong wind measured elsewhere was a mean hourly wind speed of 39 kn at Cudrose, Cornwall on the 1st, with a gust to 52 kn. Wind directions were northerly until the 10th, north-westerly or westerly until the 23rd and then north-easterly.

### Temperature

Mean monthly temperatures were generally about average, ranging from 1.5 °C above normal in parts of Tayside Region to 1.6 °C below normal at Greenwich, Greater London and Wye, Kent.

During the first week air temperatures fell to -3 °C in places, with grass minimum temperatures as low as -9 °C locally; in contrast, by the 21st temperatures were in the low 20s Celsius over a large part of southern England and Wales. Parts of Central Scotland sheltered from the easterly winds in the closing days of the month also had temperatures in the low 20s. The highest temperature of the month was 26.0 °C at Barbourne, Hereford & Worcester on the 21st and the lowest was -5.0 °C at Leadhills, Strathclyde on the 8th and 9th.

### Rainfall

Monthly rainfall totals were well below normal everywhere except for the northernmost part of the Scottish mainland where totals were just above normal. The percentage of normal at Cape Wrath, Highland Region, 124%, contrasts with that in parts of western Scotland and much of south-west England and South Wales where amounts were generally less than 10% of normal.

During the second half of the month small amounts of rain were measured in northern parts of Scotland, but elsewhere a spell of more general rain during the 15th and 16th was followed in most places by generally dry weather for the rest of the month. Provisional values suggest that it was the driest May over England and Wales since 1896. Glasgow had what was probably its driest May since 1868. The wettest day generally was the 3rd, and the most rainfall measured on that day was 37 mm at Diabaig, Highland Region. Among other reports of daily rainfall received, the highest value was 35 mm at Inverpolly, Highland Region on the 5th, with 31 mm measured at Poolewe, Highland Region and Dinorwic, Gwynedd on the 3rd. As little as 2 mm of rain was recorded during the month at a number of places, and only 1 mm at St Ives, Cornwall.

### Snow

During the first few days snow fell in places on the northern Pennines, but in general there was little snow lying anywhere except on the highest summits of the mountains in Scotland and northern England.

### Sunshine

Monthly sunshine amounts were below average nearly everywhere, the exceptions being parts of western Scotland, Devon and Cornwall where sunshine amounts were just above average; amounts ranged from 111% of average at Machrihanish, Strathclyde Region to 60% of average at Manchester. Many eastern and northern areas had one of the dullest Mays this century. Most sunshine in a day was 16.1 hours at Benbecula, Western Isles on the 30th, and the most during the month was 221 hours at St Mawgan, Cornwall.

### Fog

Overnight fog patches formed over England on the 9th and 10th, south-west England on the 21st and parts of East Anglia and south-east England on the 24th. Some thick fog patches formed overnight on the 25th in south-east England and East Anglia. Coastal fog patches affected Wales and south-west England on the 12th, 14th and 19th, northern areas on the 17th, the south-west on the 21st, South Wales, south-west England and along the south coast on the 22nd, Scotland on the 23rd, some western and northern coasts on the 26th, Northern Ireland, western Scotland, Wales, East Anglia, and along the south coast of England on the 27th, and the far north of Scotland on the 29th and 30th. Patchy fog occurred over hills mainly in the south on the 18th and in the south-west on the 21st; some hill fog occurred on the southern Pennines on the 27th and over the Scottish Highlands on the 31st.

### Miscellaneous Phenomena

None reported.

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						
0 Scotland N	23.7	−3.2	−0.1	+0.7	+0.3	+0.7	0	61	86
1 Scotland E	21.6	−1.5	+0.4	+1.2	+0.8	+0.9	−4	40	85
2 England E & NE	22.9	−2.4	−0.7	+0.7	0.0	+0.3	−6	29	70
3 East Anglia	23.5	−3.4	−1.6	−0.3	−1.0	−0.5	−5	33	69
4 Midland Counties	25.0	−1.9	−0.7	+0.4	−0.1	−0.2	−8	18	72
5 England SE & Central S	24.6	−0.5	−1.0	−0.5	−0.8	−0.6	−6	27	72
6 Scotland W	21.6	−4.6	+0.2	+0.6	+0.4	+0.6	−6	28	92
7 England NW & Wales N	22.6	0.0	−0.4	+0.4	0.0	+0.3	−8	24	75
8 England SW & Wales S	23.6	0.6	−0.4	+0.3	0.0	+0.2	−8	13	95
N Ireland	21.0	−1.0	+0.3	+0.9	+0.6	+0.4	−7	14	88
Scotland	23.7	−4.6	+0.2	+0.8	+0.5	+0.7	−3	47	88
England & Wales	25.0	−3.4	−0.8	+0.2	−0.3	−0.1	−7	22	75

\* Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations