

# MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

**AUGUST****1985**

VOLUME 102

NUMBER 8

## Unsettled, cool and wet

On the 1st, after a weak ridge of high pressure had crossed all areas of the United Kingdom, during the morning a frontal system moved into northern areas. The cold front finally cleared the extreme south-east of England late on the 2nd. After another weak ridge of high pressure on the 3rd a depression developed off south-west England and moved across central areas of Great Britain during the 4th before moving away into the North Sea on the 5th and filling. A further weak ridge of high pressure on the 6th was followed by further frontal activity on the 7th and 8th. During the night of the 8th a deep complex depression developed off Ireland and became stationary off western Scotland. On the 11th a small but intense depression tracked north-eastwards from south-west England to north-east Scotland. A further depression developed over south-west Ireland and affected all parts of the United Kingdom on the 14th and 15th. The depression finally filled over north-east Scotland late on the 16th, by which time another series of fronts was approaching south-west England. A weak trough of low pressure crossed Scotland on the 20th and moved south-eastwards over England and into the Channel, while a small depression formed over southern England on the 21st/22nd. On the 23rd and 24th a further depression crossed the British Isles. During the 26th and 27th further fronts crossed Scotland, while an area of high pressure formed over most of England and Wales. By the end of the month, however, the high pressure was replaced by a further depression.

### Weather

An unsettled westerly type of weather dominated the month and it was not until the end of the month that the temperature reached 25 °C and then only in southern and eastern England. It was unusually windy for August. Continuous rain, squalls and bad visibility and the forecast of gales led to the cancellation of more than half the races on the second day of Cowes week. This was in marked contrast to August 1984 when lack of wind caused races to be abandoned. Thunderstorms occurred on about 12 days, mainly in southern and eastern areas of England, but with isolated outbreaks in the Western Isles, the northern isles and South Wales. Hailstones between 10 mm and 20 mm in diameter were reported on the 12th and 13th at Long Sutton, Hampshire and Stone, Staffordshire respectively.

### Wind

Although mainly light to moderate during the month, wind speeds were fresh or strong in the west on a number of days, reaching gale force on about five days. Duirinish, Highland Region and Ardrossan, Strathclyde had highest mean hourly wind speeds of 34 kn (gale force) on the 25th, while Fraserburgh, Grampian Region had 35 kn. The maximum low-level gust in Scotland, 59 kn, occurred on the 25th at Duirinish. Highest hourly mean speeds in southern areas included 35 kn at Aberporth, Dyfed and 34 kn at Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, both on the 4th. On the 5th Shoreham reached a highest hourly mean speed of 37 kn and on the 11th Portland Bill, Dorset measured 38 kn; Valley, Gwynedd had 36 kn on the 14th and Gwennap Head, Cornwall 38 kn on the 23rd. The highest gust occurred in somewhat

unusual circumstances at Coningsby, Lincolnshire. In a thunderstorm and squall just before the passage of a cold front on the 14th a gust of 81 kn was recorded, the more remarkable because the mean wind for the hour was only 15 kn. Wind directions were mainly westerly or southerly throughout the month.

### Temperature

Mean temperatures were about 1 °C below normal nearly everywhere in the United Kingdom. Differences ranged from about 0.5 °C above average in the northern isles to almost 2 °C below normal in south-west Scotland and south-west England.

It remained generally cold throughout the month with near normal temperatures in places on only one or two days until the last week, when it began to warm up, becoming generally warm and even hot in places. The highest temperature recorded in the month was 27.6 °C at Cavendish, Suffolk on the 30th. The highest in Scotland was 22.4 °C at Kinlochewe, Highland Region on the 17th. The lowest temperature in the United Kingdom was -0.2 °C on the 29th at Kindrogan, Tayside. In England and Wales it was the coldest August for over 20 years, the coldest August in Scotland since 1979 and in Northern Ireland since 1972.

### Rainfall

Rainfall amounts were above normal in all districts except East Anglia and the Midlands. Values ranged from over twice the normal in south-west Scotland to 86 per cent in East Anglia. Rainfall in the Midlands as a whole was about normal for the month.

No day in England and Wales was completely dry, but all places had a few dry days scattered throughout the month, with parts of the east and south having a spell of five consecutive dry days towards the end of the month. The wettest days generally during the month were the 4th and 23rd. Among the records for August were Swansea, West Glamorgan with 243 mm, the wettest since records began there in 1908, Eskdalemuir, Dumfries

and Galloway with 345 mm, the wettest August since records began there in 1911 and the second wettest month at that station. Abbotsinch, Strathclyde had 162 mm, the wettest August since records began there in 1921. During the 4th, 15 rain-gauges in an area of the South Downs in East and West Sussex each measured daily falls of over 50 mm, the greatest being at West Chiltington, West Sussex with a total of 65 mm. Monthly values at Rustington, Worthing and Brighton, West Sussex were all more than twice the monthly average. It was the wettest August over England and Wales since 1960 and over Scotland since records began in 1869.

### Sunshine

It was a dull month with amounts above average only in parts of central and south-east England and in some eastern coastal areas of England and Scotland. Amounts ranged from 134 per cent of average at Writtle, Essex and 128 per cent of average at Kirkwall, Orkney to as little as 58 per cent at Camp's Reservoir, Strathclyde. Sunny days included the 8th in East Anglia and the 10th when most of Scotland had unbroken sunshine. On the 25th many places in East Anglia and southern England were sunny. On the 26th much of the United Kingdom had a day with sunny periods; in central southern and south-east England sunshine was prolonged. The greatest recorded daily total was 14.1 hours at Fair Isle, Shetland on the 3rd and the highest monthly total was 237 hours at Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

### Fog

Fog formed overnight on only five days in the second half of the month, and mainly in southern and central areas of England and Wales. Apart from some fog on western coasts during the first week, most coastal fog occurred in the third week, mainly on southern coasts. Hill fog, mostly in southern and central areas, occurred at times throughout the month.

### Miscellaneous Phenomena

A whirlwind was reported to have torn off roofs and felled and lifted corn high into the air at Chirton, Wiltshire on the 13th.

**Table 1 District values**

| District                 | Air temperature °C      |             |      |      |      | Mean 30 cm soil temp °C | Rain-days | Rainfall | Sunshine |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------|------|------|-------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
|                          | Highest Max*            | Lowest Min* | Max. | Min. | Mean |                         |           |          |          |
|                          | Difference from average |             |      |      |      | % of average            |           |          |          |
| 0 Scotland N             | 22.4                    | 1.5         | -0.7 | -0.1 | -0.4 | -0.2                    | +8        | 167      | 92       |
| 1 Scotland E             | 21.4                    | 2.5         | -1.1 | -0.4 | -0.8 | -0.3                    | +8        | 174      | 96       |
| 2 England E & NE         | 25.5                    | 5.2         | -1.0 | -0.2 | -0.7 | -0.7                    | +7        | 130      | 92       |
| 3 East Anglia            | 27.0                    | 4.7         | -1.0 | -0.5 | -0.7 | -1.1                    | +5        | 89       | 102      |
| 4 Midland Counties       | 25.0                    | 5.4         | -1.4 | -0.2 | -0.8 | -0.9                    | +6        | 104      | 99       |
| 5 England SE & Central S | 26.1                    | 6.0         | -1.5 | -0.4 | -1.0 | -0.9                    | +6        | 151      | 106      |
| 6 Scotland W             | 21.0                    | 3.0         | -1.9 | -0.2 | -1.0 | -0.6                    | +11       | 222      | 73       |
| 7 England NW & Wales N   | 22.3                    | 4.0         | -1.9 | +0.1 | -0.9 | -0.8                    | +10       | 163      | 80       |
| 8 England SW & Wales S   | 24.0                    | 6.3         | -1.8 | -0.2 | -1.0 | -0.5                    | +10       | 175      | 86       |
| N Ireland                | 21.4                    | 4.3         | -1.7 | -0.2 | -1.0 | -0.7                    | +10       | 196      | 74       |
| Scotland                 | 22.4                    | 1.5         | -1.2 | -0.2 | -0.7 | -0.4                    | +9        | 188      | 87       |
| England & Wales          | 27.0                    | 4.0         | -1.4 | -0.2 | -0.9 | -0.8                    | +7        | 139      | 94       |

\* Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations