

JUNE 1998.

Rather complex areas of low pressure surrounded the British Isles at the beginning of the month. As a consequence a series of frontal systems progressed across the country at intervals leading to some heavy rain in places. On the 1st winds were generally south westerly and light giving a day of good sunny spells and light showers in the morning which became heavier and more persistent in the afternoon, winds backing easterly during the evening. Afternoon temperatures reached 19.1C with 7.4 hours of bright sunshine.

Overnight on the 1st/2nd a slow moving occlusion brought continuous moderate rain to the Midlands just after midnight, becoming heavy during the small hours. By 09.00 UTC the total fall had reached 30.1 mm and it was still raining. Further moderate rain was to continue until 14.21 UTC with embedded heavier rain and showers during the early afternoon. Sunshine was held back to 2.3 hours with air temperatures pegged at 14.8C with a further total fall of 7.6mm of rain for the 24 hour period ending at 09.00 UTC on the 3rd.

By the 3rd an area of low pressure meandered slowly from North Wales across the Midlands towards the North Sea. Slow moving fronts within this brought further rain and very heavy showers to the region, some being almost tropical in intensity amounting to rates as high as 43mm per hour at 12.35 UTC. Sunshine was broken amounting to a total of 5.5 hours by sunset, maximum air temperatures reaching 16.6C in the rather humid air.

By 09.00 UTC on the 4th an additional 7.6 mm of rain had fallen bringing the total for the first three days to 45.3mm. For the whole of May the total had been a mere 13.3 mm !! The presence of a weak area of high pressure in the North Sea helped to ensure a dry day over the Midlands though it was not particularly sunny, just 3.4 hours being recorded.

The rather slack area of high pressure drifted towards Scandinavia early on the 5th introducing a more south easterly air flow over the region. An area of intense thundery activity over the near Continent brought the threat of a thundery breakdown to parts of the south east during the day. The Midlands remained under a predominantly easterly air flow allowing temperatures to rise only to 17.1C during the afternoon and holding sunshine down to just 3.8 hours. Cloud increased early evening to give showery activity around 1900 UTC and more general rain at 2340.

This rain belt introduced heavier precipitation which eventually died out at 0210 on the 6th to give very misty and humid conditions. The fall to 09.00 UTC on the 6th was 5.0mm. Very unsettled conditions continued with low pressure the dominant synoptic feature. Showers or heavier periods of rain occurred throughout the day, only 2.6 hours of sunshine being recorded and an afternoon maximum of 19.9C in the rather humid air.

By the 7th the low pressure centre over Ireland and southern Scotland began to migrate north eastwards towards Scandinavia, weak frontal troughs affecting northern districts. The Midlands continued unsettled with showery activity and generally light to moderate easterly winds. Maximum temperatures reached 18.6C though light showers throughout the day gave a total of 0.7mm of rain by 09.00 UTC on the 8th. A further low pressure area became established in sea area Viking maintaining a broad south westerly air flow over the region. The 8th was a dull and wet day with a spell of moderate rain from 11.30 UTC to 20.00 UTC and only 1.2 hours of sunshine, mostly just after dawn.

The 9th was a better day with longer spells of sunshine and only brief and light showers. There were 7.6 hours sunshine and a maximum temperature of 19.0C making this a reasonable day. The unsettled spell continued into the 10th with further showers in the small hours and a longer spell of rain from 08.00 UTC to 09.00 UTC. Low pressure still dominated the scene on the 11th with a spell of moderate rain from 0430 to 0910 UTC under the influence of a passing frontal system. Once this had cleared the day saw good sunny spells amounting to 5.8 hours, though the northerly wind held temperatures down to a maximum of only 13.2C.