

SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 2000.

December was another wet month, the fourth month in succession this year to produce over 100mm [3.94ins] of rain. With its 142.7mm [5.62ins] it was the wettest since 1965 which had 144.1mm [5.69ins]. There were 21 days with rain, the worst since 1993 and 4 above the 30-year mean. Measurable rain was falling for a total of 120.4 hours, though precipitation in one form or another occurred over a period of 170.6 hours. The wettest day, the 7th, produced 24.8mm [0.98in], just short of an inch, though the intensity of 175mm/hr [6.89ins/hr] on the 12th was the heaviest on record for this station.

Temperatures were rather down on normal, due in the main to the exceptionally cold snap at the end of the month. The mean temperatures were all about average, but the coldest night, December 29th with -11C [12.2F] was 5.4C below normal and the lowest since 1981 with its -14.5C [5.9F]. The lowest grass temperature of -14.3C [6.3F] was 4.6C below expectation and also the lowest since 1981 with its -18.2C [0.8F]. Truly a cold snap!

Frost in the air occurred on 9 days, just below normal, with 13 on the grass which was also a little below expectation both figures due to the warm first three weeks of the month.

Sunshine was marginally up on average at 49.6 hours, the 30th producing 6.6 hours, or 13% of this total. There were 12 days without sun, also a little better than normal for December.

The last 4 days saw lying snow, its maximum depth of 8cm [3ins] occurring on the 28th after a fresh fall. Snow or sleet occurred on 3 days, better than expectation, and with heavy rain setting in on the 31st, the snow rapidly thawed.

Winds were predominantly southerly at 6.8 knots [7.8mph], the maximum gust of 50 knots [57.8mph] occurring on the 12th, the only day to register a gale. Fog was recorded on 3 days but there was no incidence of either hail or thunder.