

THE MONTH IN SUMMARY.

March was a generally miserable month, colder, wetter and duller than on average.

Temperatures were all down on the 30-year means, the lowest minimum by as much as 2.8C. The mean maximum of 8.3C [46.9F] was down by 1.4C, the mean minimum of 1.5C [24.7F] by 0.9C and the mean daily of 4.9C [40.8F] by 1.2C. There were 12 ground and 7 air frosts, about normal for March, but the coldest day on March 2nd with 2.1C [35.8F] was the lowest since 1996. It was not until the end of the month that temperatures reached the reasonable level of 14.1C [57.4F] on the 31st.

Rain fell on 20 days, a fifth above expectation totalling 76.3mm [3.00ins]. In all 14 days were wet and 5 wetter with over 1mm falling in the day. Rain duration at 80.9 hours was also a fifth above normal, with some form of precipitation occurring over a period of 148.2 hours.

Sunshine was down on average with 95% of the expected total. The best day, the 5th produced 9.2 hours and in all 8 days were totally sunless, well above the normal for March.

Snow fell on 5 days and lay on 2 to a maximum depth of 4cm [1.5ins] with snow or sleet on 5 occasions. Fog occurred twice but there was no incidence of either thunder or hail. No gale occurred, the maximum gust of 33 knots [38mph] occurring on the 16th. Not a good month to herald the onset of spring!