

OCTOBER SUMMARY.

October began in an unsettled vein, with local thunder on the 1st at 1115. The prevailing synoptic pattern seen through practically the whole of September, low pressure to the west and high to the east, continued into the new month though this quickly broke down to give a more westerly airflow as depressions moved west to east between Iceland and the UK. The weather of the early month was thus unsettled, ending on the 7th with an intense depression moving from the south west across the country north eastwards bringing gale force gusts [38knots/44mph] and heavy rain. The period as a whole saw 32.3mm [1.27ins] of rain; the heaviest fall of 9.0mm [0.35in] occurring on the 7th. Sunshine totalled 36.6 hours, the maximum of 7.7 hours occurring on the 1st.

Temperatures for the period ranged from a maximum of 19.1C [66.4F] on the 5th to a minimum of 9.5C [49.1F] on the 3rd. Over the same period the minimum over grass fell to 7.1C [44.8F] on the 10th. Thunder occurred twice, on the 1st and 6th, both being of short duration and slight in intensity though rain was falling at a rate of 70mm/2.76in per hour during the storm on the 6th. Throughout the early month winds maintained a westerly direction, briefly turning to the south at the end of the 10-day period. Mean daily temperatures were in the range 10C [50F] to 15C [59F] on 9 days and above 15C [59F] on one day. Early October [1st to 10th incl.] saw 8 rain days and 2 “wetter” days, though in general rainfall was light and fell over an accumulated period of 26.8 hours, the wettest day in terms of duration being the 7th with 6.7 hours.

The start of the mid-month period [11th to 20th] saw little change in the general patterns in the weather. It remained relatively mild for the time of year with daytime maxima reaching as high as 20.9C [69.6F] on the 12th. The lowest air minimum was 8.1C [46.6F] on the 19th. The mean maximum for the period ended at 15.5C [59.9F], the mean minimum 10.9C [51.6F] and the mean daily 13.2C [55.8F], all well above the October values. It was, however, wet with a total of 26.1mm [1.03ins] of rain, the maximum daily fall of 13.5mm [0.55in] occurring on the 19th. During the 10-day period there were 2 thunderstorms with fog occurring on 2 days also. There was no incidence of either ground or air frost, very unusual for this time of the year. In fact, temperature distribution was almost exceptional with 4 days showing mean daily values in excess of 15C [59F] and 6 days in the range 10C to 15C [50F to 59F]. The mid-month period saw 5 days with rain, 2 of which were “wet” and 1 “very wet”.

Winds were from a westerly quarter on just 2 occasions and from an easterly quarter on 5. Pressure patterns showed a tendency to lows approaching from the Atlantic swinging frontal systems across the country from SW to NE, The southerly winds experienced on the 18th brought in large quantities of Sahara dust across much of north western Europe, this being evident on cars and in rain gauges. The mid-month produced a total of 24.2 hours of sunshine, down on the previous 10 days, with 2 totally sunless days and a maximum duration of 9.4 hours on the 12th, making this a “sunny” day.

Late October began with low pressure systems still much in evidence, the broadly south west to westerly air flow maintaining relatively mild, but wet conditions. Wind speeds were light in general, though approaching 24 knots [28mph] on the 25th giving the windiest period since the 7th. Frosts were still absent, nighttime temperatures holding up well, though not now into double figures and nowhere near the 13.8C [56.8F] seen overnight on the 13th/14th. However, as pressure began to rise over the UK and night skies cleared temperatures began to fall appreciably especially over grass. By the night of 28th/29th these were as low as 2.0C [35.6F], with air temperatures following closely behind. A further 4.3mm [0.17in] of rain fell on the 30th though air temperatures did manage to hold up sufficiently to prevent the formation of any frost. It also remained sunny with a daily total of 8.1 hours on the 28th giving the second sunniest day of the entire month. Winds turned into a northerly quarter on the 31st bringing temperatures down to more seasonal levels. With this, and a very clear sky the night of the 31st/1st saw the first ground frost since late spring though this did not fall in October and thus does not influence the figures for that month.