

The final 10 days of the month saw a continuation of the very unsettled weather as frontal systems swept across the country on a daily basis. These brought fresh to strong winds, spells of rain, some quite heavy, and cool temperatures. During one storm on the 24th rain was falling at a rate of 53mm/2.09ins per hour at 11.37 G.M.T. Daytime maxima ranged from 17.2°C/63.0°F on the 27th to a minimum of 4.5°C/40.1°F on the same date with a mean for the week of 11.8°C/53.2°F. During this period grass minima were as low as 1.1°C/34.0°F on the 27th though we saw no ground frosts. Rainfall for the week totalled 24.5mm/0.96in with a maximum fall of 7.2mm/0.28in on the 28th.

Maximum radiation temperatures reached 55°C/131°F on the 27th whilst the maximum radiation level was 1.223 kilowatts per square metre on the 27th. In all 5 days saw radiation totals in excess of 1 kilowatt per square metre during this period. Wins were generally from the W or SW and were light, the maximum gust of 38 knots/46mph occurring on the 24th. Sunshine totalled 49.9 hours with a maximum daily total of 10.7 hours on the 22nd. The month ended with rising temperatures and good sunny days, the 31st giving a total of 13.2 hours, the best of the month.

SUMMARY FOR MAY

May was rather cooler than average with a mean maximum some 0.3°C/0.5°F below the 30-year mean. Despite this the mean daily temperature ended 0.2°C/0.4°F above expectation due to the rather warm nights which gave a mean minimum 1.1°C/2.0°F above the May average. Most soil temperatures also managed to stay above average with the exception of the 10cm and 30cm soil depths. The highest daily temperature of 23.8°C/74.8°F also ended above normal by 0.4°C/0.7°F.

Rainfall was above expectation by over a quarter, ending with a fall of 69.8mm/2.75ins, the duration also being well above average by 31%. This resulted in 18 rain days, up 4.7, with 10 of these “wet” and 7 “wetter” giving a rather depressing month in this respect. Despite this thunder was only heard at a distance on one occasion and both hail and sleet were absent as was frost in the air. Over grass frost occurred on 3 nights amounting to 10.8 hours in duration.

The month was relatively sunny, no day being totally sunless with a total of 201.6 hours of bright sunshine, still some 11 hours below May of last year with the best day, the 31st producing a total of 13.2 hours. Twelve days were sunny and 3 very sunny, both figures well down on recent years.

Winds were mainly WSW at 6.5 knots/7.8mph, the maximum gust of 38 knots/45.6 mph occurring on the 24th. Mean sea level pressures remained down on average, the month being dominated in the main by Atlantic lows.