

Oct 80

# Dripping, depressing October weather

October's weather was, unfortunately, another depressing month to add to the catalogue of failures this year. Rainfall has been well above normal, with both temperature and pressure well down, through sunshine has been, surprisingly, slightly above average.

At the Halesowen

Climatological Station the beginning of the month was very promising with a large anticyclone governing the weather and with daytime temperatures up to 17C (63F) on the first, giving us, as it happened, the warmest day of the month.

Skies were relatively cloud-free, and, with southerly

winds, it did seem as though we might get the "Indian Summer" often expected, but seldom realised.

However, this was not to be, for moderate rainfall associated with a warm front, entered the region at 1.30 am on the fourth and in four hours provided a further 5.6mm (0.22in) of rain to swell the already considerable total for the year to date.

Despite the gloomy and wet days, it was reasonably warm, daytime temperatures being in the region of 15C (58F) over the first week.

Conditions did change, however, on the twelfth when winds backed north westerly and ground frost was widespread during the early hours.

There then followed a week of quite cool weather, four ground frosts being recorded between the twelfth and twentieth.

## DOWNPOURS

Interspersed with these frosts we suffered a long period of heavy rainfall from the fifth to the twenty-eighth.

During this time only five days were rain-free but by far the gloomiest day was the sixteenth when the downpour continued for 21.3 hours producing the heaviest fall of the month at 23.8mm (0.94in).

In fact, the eight days from the fifteenth to the twenty second all had rain, totalling 56.22mm (2.21in) which is itself in excess of the normal for the whole of October.

The gloom was somewhat dispelled on the eighteenth when we had 8.9 hours of bright sunshine giving us the month's sunniest day.

## NEAR RECORD

One frontal system after another crossed the country, raising rainfall totals to near-record levels and rivers to flood.

By the twenty eighth a total of 101mm (3.97in) had accumulated, which is 184% of the expected October fall.

Pressure did finally begin building on the twenty ninth and a large anticyclone developed over the country.

This, at last, brought much clearer, though considerably colder, weather and the final three days produced some of the best conditions of the entire month, though sharp frosts and fresh winds stripped much of the autumn foliage before it could be fully appreciated.

And now to the more specific features of the month. Firstly temperature, which has been well below average in all respects. The range was from 17C (63F) on the first to -0.4C (31F) on the thirty first. So fickle is our climate, that, within 48 hours of having our warmest night of the month 12C (54F), we had our coldest -0.4C (31F). The lowest grass temperature at -4.6C (24F) was also on the last of the month.

Through there were seven ground frosts we only had two air frosts on the thirtieth and thirty first.

Soil temperatures at all depths have been below normal by as much as 1.7C at 2ins to 0.5C at three feet.

Rainfall has again been excessive, 184% of the customary fall having been recorded. Rain fall on 20 days of the month with 15 "wet" days and eight "very wet" days.

## OVER DOUBLE

Rain duration of 104 hours has itself been well over double that of a normal October. The heaviest intensity was on the nineteenth when rain was falling at a rate of 11.4mm/hr (0.45in/hr).

Air pressures have been well below expectation with depressions being the predominant features. Mean barometric pressure was below average by 6.4mb (0.19in) at 1010mb (29.83in). The lowest recorded barometric pressure was on the seventh at 9861mb (29.12in).

Allied to sudden pressure changes are strong winds, which on the sixth and seventh were gusting to 36kts (41mph).

The windiest day turned out to be the twenty seventh when the mean speed over 24 hours was 11.9 kts (14 mph).

In all 6103 "miles of wind" ran over the station averaging 197 miles per day. This gives a mean hourly speed for the month of 7.1 kt (8 mph) and the predominant direction south westerly.

## SUNNIER!

Total sunshine at 96 hours was slightly up on normal by 1.4 hours. The sunniest day, the eighteenth gave 8.9 hours of bright sunshine while eight days were completely sunless.

On 11 days we had completely overcast skies at 8 am and the humidity at 91.6% has been slightly up on expectation. Fog was, fortunately, totally absent.

A depressingly wet and decidedly cool month, but one in which no long-standing records have been broken.