

SUMMARY FOR JULY 2000.

The month began with persistent rain and drizzle falling from a low layer of thick stratus cloud as a frontal system straddled the country. The first week was characterised by low pressure and a mainly northeasterly airflow. The effect of this was to bring much cloud into the U.K. and as a result, low sunshine levels, the maximum sunshine for the week being 6.3 hours on the 7th and the total 17.3 hours.

Temperatures remained reasonably high for the period with a maximum of 23.1C on the 2nd with the coolest day being the 4th with a maximum of just 16.4C. There were three thunderstorms in the area, the one on the 6th leading, yet again, to widespread flooding in the Rubery district of Birmingham though only 12.6mm of rain fell here. In fact, rain fell on every day during the first week though only a trace was recorded on the 7th.

The cool, unsettled weather continued into the second week with a total of 10.5mm of rain falling over the period, 4.1mm of this falling on the 8th. Maximum temperatures were rather low for mid-summer being in the region of 14.0C to 18.4C though sunshine totals were good. The sunniest day in the period 8th to 14th was the 11th with 13.4 hours whilst the total for the week reached 22.4 hours. During this time much of the weather was dominated by low pressure cascading a series of fronts across the area on a regular basis.

Pressure began to rise on the 15th as an anticyclone encroached on the U.K. from the Azores and this quickly settled conditions down. Only a trace of rainfall occurred during the week 15th to 21st, and this on the 15th, the remainder of the week being dry, very sunny and at times, hot.

Temperatures gradually rose during the period peaking at 26.5C on the 21st and with five days exceeding 21C. The 26.5C of the 21st was the first time that the temperature had reached 25C so far this year. Sun was recorded every day, the maximum of 14 hours occurring on the 18th and the weeks total reaching 77.1 hours, which is an average of 11.0 hours each day.

The fourth week began dry and sunny with 8 hours on the 22nd. However, the wind reverted to an easterly quarter and this brought in low cloud from the North Sea with its consequent fall in temperature and sunshine, both the 23rd and 24th recording "nil". The 26th was both brighter and warmer as the wind settled south westerly. The remainder of the week was generally dry and warm with daytime maxima in the range 15.9C to 23.8C with some rain falling, principally in the form of showers, on the 28th to a total of 3mm.

The final three days were generally unsettled with occasional showers as the wind became more southwesterly. This allowed a total of 23.4 hours of sunshine with maximum temperatures in the low 20's C.

The month was thus cooler than average, the mean daily being 0.5C down on the 30 year values giving the second lowest figures since 1980. All soil temperatures were at, or slightly below, normal whilst sunshine was 93% of the 30 year values the best day providing 14 hours on the 18th. Sunless days, at 4, were twice the average for July. Rainfall at 43.3mm was slightly below average at 77% with 12.6mm of this falling in one thunderstorm on the 6th giving the wettest July since 1993.

Much of the problem lay in the fact that the prevailing wind was ENE rather than SW bringing in cooler, and damper, air from the North Sea. July was thus a rather poor summer month.