

NOVEMBER 2001.

The exceptionally mild weather seen throughout October broke down on the 1st November with the onset of high pressure drawing in northerly winds and clear skies. This led to a ground frost of -1.2C [29.8F] overnight 31st/1st with an air temperature of 2.2C [36.0F]. Day maxima dropped off rapidly in the first few days, from 13.6C [56.5F] on the 1st to 5.4C [41.7F] on the 9th. Under the clearing skies and northerly winds on the 8th temperatures fell abruptly resulting in the first wintry precipitation of the season during heavy showers in the afternoon. Both hail and sleet fell with blustery northerlies around 13.30 UTC giving a slight cover, though this did not lie for long. Overnight on the 8th/9th grass temperatures fell to $\text{minus}2.2\text{C}$ [28.4F] though the screen minimum only reached 0.2C [32.4F]. Open-air minima did give a frost with a minimum of -1.1C [30.0F]. The night of the 9th/10th was even colder with a grass minimum of -6.1C [21.0F] and an air minimum of -3.4C [25.9F], the lowest temperatures since last winter. Rainfall for the period totalled 6.7mm [0.26in] with a maximum daily fall of 4.7mm [0.19in] on the 7th. Over the same 10 days sunshine amounted to 36.6 hours with a maximum daily total of 7.4 hours on the 9th. Winds were in the WSW on 8 days reaching a maximum gust of 31 knots [36mph] on the 7th. Mean daily temperatures were in the range 0C to 5C [32F to 41F] on 3 days, 5C to 10C [41F to 50F] on 5 days and 10C to 15C [50F to 59F] on 2 days. A considerable change since October and its exceptional mildness!

Mid November began with a large anticyclone becoming established over the UK in the near north Atlantic. This settled the weather down but brought in colder nights and a great deal of cloud during several days. In the early stages some precipitation did occur with a total of 6mm [0.24in] of rain over the 11th and 12th. After the 13th, which had 6.7 hours of bright sunshine it was relatively cloudy and sunshine sparse, days remaining rather cool. Daytime maxima fell from 12.3C [54.1F] on the 11th in stages and had reached 8.5C [47.3F] by the 15th, nighttimes minima having fallen to -2.5C [27.5F] by this date. The lowest grass minimum over the period was -5.6C [21.9F] on the 14th. Winds were extremely light and variable; some days [14th for instance] seeing a wind run of no more than 50km [31miles] and gusts no higher than 6 knots [7mph] on the 16th. No measurable rain at all fell in the seven days 13th to 19th inclusive, this being broken with a slight fall of 0.4mm [0.02in] on the 20th. Contrary to all expectations, much leaf still hung on trees at this late stage in the year, and some sheltered gardens still supported good exhibitions of summer bedding plants.

The mean maximum for mid-month ended at 8.3C [46.9F], the mean minimum at 2.9C [37.2F] and the mean daily at 5.6C [42.1F], all still significantly above the 30-year means. The mid month rainfall total was 6.4mm [0.25in] with a maximum daily fall of 3.5mm [0.14in] on the 12th. The period saw 5 ground and 2 air frosts though there was no incidence of either sleet or snow. Winds were from a westerly quarter on 5 days, and an easterly on 4 days with a maximum gust of 25 knots [28.8mph] on the 12th. Mean daily temperatures were in the range 0C to 5C [32F to 41F] on 4 days and in the range 5C to 10C [41F to 50F] on 6 days, figures that are still in the "mild" region for this time of the year.

Late November was ushered in by a material change in the prevailing weather. Gone were the anticyclonic conditions that had dominated for the past week to be replaced by a more westerly flow and frontal systems bringing in rain. The 21st saw 6.1mm [0.24in] of rain, the heaviest fall of the month to date, though maximum temperatures still hovered around the 10C [50F] mark. A marked milder interlude occurred on the 24th with a maximum of 13.1C [55.6F] though night time minima were below freezing falling as low as -4.8C [23.4F] on the morning of the 23rd. Sunshine was sparse with a maximum of 4.0 hours on the 22nd, several days seeing no sun at all. Winds remained generally in a westerly quarter and were light speeds being in the region of 10 knots [11.5mph]. An intense solar flare on the 23rd led to some beautiful auroral displays.

A very active cold front moved south eastwards on the 25th bringing a period of heavy rain and blustery winds, gusts reaching 24 knots [28mph]. On the passage of this front temperatures dropped rapidly from 12C [53.6F] around 12.30 UTC to 6C [42.8F] by 15.00 UTC. Rainfall over the day totalled 10.7mm [0.42in], the second highest of the month. After a cool interlude from the 26th and 27th temperatures again rose at the end of the month to reach a maximum of 14.2C [57.6F] on the 30th ending as the highest of the month. The mean daily temperature over late November reached 7.1C [44.8F] as opposed to the 7.4C [45.3F] for early November and 6.2C [43.2F] during mid-month. This late month period also produced the heaviest rainfall amounting to 33.4mm [1.31ins] from the month's total of 46.5mm [1.83in].