SEPTEMBER DATA

The new month was ushered in with continuing settled weather: sunny and warm days with no rain due to the presence of high pressure to the south west of the country. Temperatures continued in the low or mid twenties peaking at 22.7°C/72.9°F on the 3rd. The first four days were rain-free though a gradual falls in pressure and the approach of Atlantic "lows" meant an inevitable end to the dry spell. This occurred on the 5th with just 0.2mm/0.01in of rain in a brief shower lasting 12 minutes, followed by more substantial rain on the 6th with a fall of 3.4mm/0.13in of rain over a period of 6.9 hours, the wettest day in terms of duration, since August 8th. Winds, generally easterly and light at the start, turned towards the west on the 5th bringing in much more variable and "autumnal" weather. A sunshine total of 11.5 hours on the 1st followed by some sunshine each day over the week meant that conditions were still very pleasant. The morning of the 2nd brought a grass minimum of just 2.8°C/37.9°F getting ever closer to the first grass frost of the autumn.

Black bulb radiation temperatures remained in the 50'sC/low 100'sF until the 6th when they fell to 36.8°C/98.2°F with global radiation levels reflecting this gradual fall. The peak radiation level reached during the first week was 0.798 kilowatt per square metre on the 2nd as daylight levels continued their gradual fallback too with values in the 13hr to 13.5hr region. [Peak values in June were reaching around the 17-hour level daily]. Over the week sunshine totalled 46.8 hours with rainfall standing at 3.8mm/0.15in, quite a pleasant start to autumn.

The second week of September saw a continuation in the settled anticyclonic conditions that had been established for much of the earlier part of the month. Daytime maxima remained in the low to mid 20°'sC/70°'sF with ample sunshine and small amounts of rain once a frontal system on the 9th had passed. This produced 11.8mm/0.46in of rain over a period of 9 hours allied to a maximum intensity of 14mm/0.55in per hour. Maximum radiation temperatures peaked at 52.9°C/127.2°C on the 11th with a corresponding peak in global radiation of 0.812 kilowatts per square metre on the 8th. Pressure remained high over Scandinavia and this built gradually to spread its influence across the entire country bringing the settled, warm and dry conditions. Winds remained light and from a westerly quarter for much of the time with a peak gust no higher than 19 - knots/23 mph on the 12th. With the by now, marked reduction in daylight, nights became much cooler if cloudless, and the possibility of ground frost loomed ever larger. In fact, overnight on the 10th/11th grass temperatures did fall as low as 3.1°C/37.6°F around dawn.

Temperatures peaked at 23.5°C/74.3°F on the 13th with a minimum of 5.5°C/41.9°F recorded on the 18th. Grass temperatures under clear night skies fell as low as 3.1°C/37.6°F on the 11th as autumn now begins to approach. Under anticyclonic conditions it remained relatively dry with rain on only 2 days totalling no more than 11.9mm/0.47in of which 11.8mm/0.46in fell on the 9th. Over the same period sunshine reached 55.2 hours with 11.3 hours of this recorded on the 11th. Winds began with a westerly component but by the end of the week had turned predominantly easterly.

The third week was to remain under the influence of a large anticyclone over Scandinavia and this brought settled, if rather cloudy, conditions to the area. Winds were mainly from an easterly quarter and remained light peaking at 20knots/24mph on 2 days. Days remained on the whole cloudy and this depressed air temperatures considerably, a maximum no higher than 19.4°C/66.9°F being recorded on the 21st after a noticeably cool week. The overnight low occurred on the 21st with a screen temperature of 7.5°C/45.5°F whilst the grass fell to 5.1°C/41.2°F. Radiation temperatures rose to a peak of 54.9°C/130.8°F on the 15th with a peak radiation level of 0.801 kilowatts per square metre on the same day. The week was totally dry though it was not particularly sunny, just 17.8 hours sunshine being recorded over the 7 days, some 9.8 hours of this registered on the 21st giving the sunniest day since the 11th. By now the ground was particularly dry with large cracks apparent in many areas. This dryness, if continued, could lead to an early leaf fall with little display of autumnal colour. The best colours normally occur when nights are frosty, the wind is light, and enough rain falls to retain some freshness in the foliage. Very dry autumns are generally much less spectacular in colour.

The final full week of September brought little change in the general weather patterns that had persisted for much of the month to date. Pressure remained high, though it's centre migrated daily maintaining dry and rather warm days with ample sunshine. Day maxima reached 18.4°C/65.1°F on both the 23rd and 28th with a corresponding night-time low of 4.0°C/39.2°F on the 24th, the lowest over grass being 0.3°C/32.5°F around dawn on the 24th, very close to the first ground frost of autumn! After 15 days with no appreciable rain, the drought was broken on the 25th when 0.9mm/0/04in of rain fell, the week's sunshine totalling 43.2 hours with the sunniest day, September 24th providing just 10 hours.

Solar radiation levels are now falling appreciably as the sun moves southwards in the sky, the peak level reached being 0.752 kilowatts per square metre on the 22nd, though the black bulb maximum of 54.0°F/129.2°F did not occur until one day later on the 23rd. Throughout the week winds were generally from a northeasterly quarter and were light, a peak gust of 23knots/28mph being registered on the 26th As the end of the month approached September had presented a very pleasant start to autumn with ample sunshine, little rain and relatively high temperatures.

The final few days of the month remained dry and warm though cloud amounts were more than had prevailed earlier in the month. Daytime maxima remained in the 20's°C/60's°F with ample sunshine giving a very pleasant end to the month which had, in many cases, been a better one that those seen during the summer.