

OCTOBER SUMMARY.

2002

October was an exceptional month "weather-wise", starting with high temperatures, sunny and dry days, but ending with heavy rain, gales and the first frost of autumn occurring mid-month.

The air maximum of 20.5°C/68.9°F occurred on the 1st under anticyclonic conditions which bathed us in warm, continental air giving the fourth warmest October day in a decade. The coldest night, October 19th with a temperature of -2.5°C/27.5°F produced the coolest night since 1997. The coldest day fell on the 20th with a maximum of just 8.2°C/46.8°F, the lowest since 1993. The warmest night, the 2nd, produced little in compensation when the temperature managed to fall no lower than 10.6°C/51.1°F giving the lowest figures in 3 years. In all there were 6 ground and 1 air frosts, the latter lasting for 8.35 hours.

The black bulb maximum of 49.6°C/121.3°F fell on the 2nd and was the highest on record in data covering 47 years. The month produced a total global radiation value of 2408 kilowatts per square metre with the peak occurring on the 3rd with 152 kilowatts per square metre. In general most temperatures now show negative anomalies ranging from minus 1.9°C for the lowest minimum to -0.1°C for the 30cm soil depth.

Sunshine was slightly up on average, the 107.1 hours representing a surplus of 4 hours over a normal month and the highest total since 1999. In all 8 days were completely sunless, well up on the average due to the very dull and dismal end to the month. The brightest day, the 3rd, provided 9.4 hours, about average for October, and enough to make it a "sunny" day.

Rainfall was almost double expectation, and this after the weeks of rain-free days in late August and September. There was a surplus of 54mm/2.13ins, giving the fourth wettest October since 1967. Rain fell on 17 days with 15 of these "wet" and 9 "wetter", with one day, the 13th providing 30.1mm/1.19ins of rain.

Fog occurred on 2 days with thunder heard in the small hours of October 27th with just one clap. Winds were generally from an easterly quarter and were light averaging 5.4knots/6.2mph, though a severe gale on the 27th produced gusts in excess of 54knots/62.2mph, the worst conditions in over a decade. This caused widespread structural damage, uprooted trees in this area and killed 7 people nationwide.