

JULY STATISTICS RECORDED AT LERWICK OBSERVATORY

	July 2009	Averages 1971-2000
Mean maximum temperature	15.5°C	13.9°C
Mean minimum temperature	11.4°C	9.4°C
Daily mean temperature	13.3°C	11.6°C
Mean sea-level pressure	1007.7 hPa (mb)	1013.0 hPa (mb)
Total rainfall	66.8 mm	58.5 mm
Wet days => 1 mm	11 days	11.0 days
Sunshine (electronic sensor)	115.0 hours	120.0 hours
Air frosts	0 days	0.0 days
Ground frosts	0 days	0.1 days
Snow/sleet	0 days	0.0 days
Days with gale	0 days	0.2 days
Maximum daily mean temp.	17.2°C on 3 rd	
Minimum daily mean temp.	11.1°C on 11 th	
Highest maximum	20.8°C on 3 rd	
Lowest day maximum	12.8°C on 11 th & 12 th	
Highest night minimum	15.1°C on 3 rd	
Lowest minimum	7.1°C on 26 th	
Lowest grass minimum	0.8°C on 26 th	
Wettest day	15.0 mm on 17 th	
Sunniest day	10.8 hours on 31 st	
Highest mean hourly wind	28 knots on 9 th	
Highest gust	39 knots on 9 th	

A MILD MONTH WITH NEAR-AVERAGE SUNSHINE & RAINFALL. AS MOST RAIN FELL OVERNIGHT, SHETLAND WAS THE PLACE FOR BBQs!

Though the first few days of the month were anticyclonic and very warm, the remainder of July was - as with the rest of the UK - rather cyclonic, as a number of depressions tracked across the British Isles. Most, mainly moving east or northeast from the Atlantic, were relatively shallow or filling features, but overall brought rather unsettled conditions to much of the UK. However the Northern Isles, sheltered by the bulk of the Scottish mainland, saw little 'bad' weather. Though rainfall totals were not far below normal, much of what fell did so overnight - and so had little effect on sunshine amounts, which were also near average. Fair Isle fared much better, with sunshine totals almost a third above normal.

The month began with an anticyclone just east of Yorkshire. During the first few days the high pressure drifted northwards, allowing an old front - held out to the west by the blocking high - to edge closer. As a result, while inland it might be very warm and sunny, light SE to E'ly winds carried mist, low cloud and fog off the North Sea on to eastern hills and headlands. The 3rd was a very warm day, followed by a mild night. During the 4th and 5th, a depression moved off the Atlantic into mainland UK. As a result, winds tended more E'ly in direction and, with a shorter sea-track from Scandinavia, brought clearer conditions.

However, as that low tracked across the North Sea into Scandinavia - while at the same time high pressure persisted to the northwest - NE'ly winds freshened across the Northern Isles, bringing cooler and clearer conditions with some patchy drizzle for the 6th and 7th.

Between the 8th and 10th, as the low moved slowly east over the Baltic and pressure gradually rose to the west of the British Isles, the strong N'ly winds - gusting to 45 mph on the 9th - continued, with generally cool, cloudy conditions and the occasional light shower. Winds eased during the 11th as the low filled, falling light on the 12th as a ridge of high pressure crossed Scotland from the west. Rain - accompanied by a freshening SE to E'ly breeze - followed overnight, clearing for a time on the 13th as another depression, swinging in off the Atlantic towards the southwest of the British Isles, pushed a front north. Further patchy rain or drizzle accompanied by mist and hill fog followed later in the day, and also on the 14th as the low extended a shallow trough northeast across northern Scotland.

During the 15th and 16th, as the filling low drifted northeast over the UK, the rather misty though mainly dry conditions persisted over the Northern Isles. Freshening NE'ly winds brought clearer conditions on the 17th as a secondary low - tracking east over southern Britain - moved out into the North Sea. As the filling low tracked slowly northwestwards over the Northern Isles, it brought heavy overnight rain. Though this cleared to leave a brighter spell, further cloud and patchy rain followed later on the 18th. As pressure built across northern Scotland, the 19th to 21st were generally bright, mostly dry days, with lighter winds veering SE'ly and later SW'ly.

The next Atlantic low then drifted north to the west of the British Isles, bringing heavy overnight rain and a misty start to the 22nd. Further cloudy conditions with outbreaks of rain or drizzle followed for 23rd and 24th, as the low moved slowly northeast over the Northern Isles and light SW'ly winds backed fresh N to NW'ly. The 25th was a mostly dry, sunny day, with easing NW'ly winds backing SW'ly as a ridge followed from the west. This brought a clear and cold night with a local ground frost, Fair Isle reporting a grass minimum of -1.3° Celsius - unusual but not exceptional, even during summer!

After a bright start, rain and misty conditions followed later on the 26th as the next Atlantic depression, swinging in towards Ireland, pushed fronts north. Rain cleared to brighter conditions with scattered showers early on the 27th, as the low disappeared back out into the Atlantic. Mainly dry and often sunny conditions with a scattering of showers continued through the 27th - 30th, as a secondary low - running northeast - tracked over northern Scotland into southern Scandinavia, cyclonic variable winds ending fresh NW'ly in the process.

The month ended with a dry, sunny day on the 31st, with light NW'ly winds backing SE'ly as a ridge built and later declined, across northern Scotland.

Dave Wheeler

Initial Statistical details for Scotland as a whole (1961-1990 average) for July:

Mean Temperature – °C (°C above average).

Rainfall – mm (% of average).

Sunshine – hours (% of average).

Data from the UK Met Office