

JUNE STATISTICS RECORDED AT LERWICK OBSERVATORY

	June 2008	Averages 1971-2000
Mean maximum temperature	12.2°C	12.2°C
Mean minimum temperature	8.6°C	7.4°C
Daily mean temperature	10.3°C	9.8°C
Mean sea-level pressure	1010.7 hPa (mb)	1013.6 hPa (mb)
Total rainfall	82.3 mm	58.6 mm
Wet days => 1 mm	17 days	11.3 days
Sunshine (electronic sensor)	95.3 hours	148.2 hours
Air frosts	0 days	0.0 days
Ground frosts	0 days	1.2 days
Snow/sleet	0 days	0.1 days
Days with gale	1 days	0.5 days
Maximum daily mean temp.	12.2°C on 29 th	
Minimum daily mean temp.	7.7°C on 13 th	
Highest maximum	15.2°C on 26 th	
Lowest day maximum	9.7°C on 13 th	
Highest night minimum	10.6°C on 5 th	
Lowest minimum	5.5°C on 24 th	
Lowest grass minimum	2.3°C on 24 th	
Wettest day	14.6 mm on 25 th	
Sunniest day	10.3 hours on 8 th	
Highest mean hourly wind	34 knots on 10 th	
Highest gust	46 knots on 10 th	

A CHANGEABLE, UNSETTLED MONTH

After an exceptionally dry and sunny May, June had hardly started before it turned unsettled, a trait that continued to the end of a rather disappointing month. Daytime temperatures were average but, with rainfall above average, cloudier conditions meant milder nights.

As high pressure receded northwards and slack low pressure developed over the UK, the first ten days were relatively mild with generally light winds. An active depression - tracking east to the north of Shetland - brought cooler, showery and stronger NW'ly winds until mid-month.

The second half of the month was cyclonic, with a sequence of depressions tracking northeast. Initially these moved over or to the south of Shetland, but during the last week followed a more northerly track past northwest Scotland as pressure built over southern Britain.

The month began with low pressure over the North Sea and an anticyclone developing between Faeroe and Shetland. The 1st was a bright, mostly dry day with a fresh NE'ly wind. As the high drifted away into the Norwegian Sea, warm humid air moved north overnight. Heavy and thundery rain accompanied by foggy conditions reached Fair Isle during the early hours of the 2nd, As the severe thunderstorms continued slowly north, several places - notably in the West Mainland, and particularly around the Walls and Gruting Voe area - received as many as 5 or 6 strikes in the hours between 5am and 11am. The storms then slowly died out to leave a mostly dry though misty afternoon and evening, with light SE'ly winds. With decaying fronts close to and a slack SE'ly airflow over Shetland, the 3rd remained cloudy with foggy conditions and further periods of rain.

As pressure built across Scandinavia, a slowly filling low then remained slow-moving near Scotland for the next few days. From the 4th - 7th light SE to E winds brought misty, foggy conditions, extensive low cloud and occasional heavy spells of rain as fronts slowly decayed close to Shetland,

Apart from the 8th - which was mostly dry and sunny - during the next few days SW'ly winds brought generally cloudy conditions, with a little patchy light rain or drizzle as fronts - brushing around the northern flank of a high building over southern Britain - affected the Northern Isles.

On the 10th, as pressure declined over Britain, a depression tracked east to the north of Shetland bringing cool and windy conditions, with rain followed by showers as SW to W'ly gales veered NW'ly. The next few days remained cool, with showers - some heavy and with hail reported on the 13th - accompanied by strong NW'ly winds. The showers died out and winds eased on the 15th as a ridge moved east over Scotland.

The ridge declined on the 16th and, after a bright start, cloud thickened as SE'ly winds freshened ahead of fronts driven towards Shetland by a depression, moving towards northwest Scotland. Rain spread east overnight, clearing to brighter conditions by the 17th as winds eased.

The low remained slow-moving to the west of Scotland for the next few days, with a mix of scattered showers or longer periods of rain affecting the Isles. However there were sunny periods and, with 11.1 hours on the 18th, Fair Isle was the sunniest place in the UK. Winds remained generally light but, as the low eventually drifted northeast over Shetland on the 19th, stronger and showery W to NW'ly winds followed. These persisted during the 20th, but then died away to leave the 21st dry and sunny as the low moved away into Scandinavia and pressure built to the west. Though quite a few hours short of the maximum possible, Fair Isle - with 12.2 hours sunshine - was again the sunniest place in the UK on Midsummer's Day.

The 22nd started fine but, as a ridge declined east, another Atlantic low swinging in towards Ireland was already pushing fronts northeast across Scotland. These brought rain or drizzle and strong NE'ly winds. The low tracked northeast over the UK, with a strong NW'ly wind, bright spells and scattered showers following for the 23rd as the low moved into southern Scandinavia and fronts cleared east.

A fine sunny day followed for the 24th, with light W'ly winds backing SE or E'ly as a ridge crossed from the west. Fair Isle, with 13.9 hours sunshine, was the sunniest place in the UK. However it was cool, with Lerwick seeing a high of just 11.4° Celsius, the lowest maximum temperature in the UK on that same day. By evening, yet another Atlantic depression was approaching the British Isles, driving fronts northeast across Scotland. However, the night remained fine in Shetland and - under clear skies and with light winds - temperatures fell quickly, with a grass frost recorded by the Baltasound Automatic Weather Station. SE to E'ly winds increased strong on the 25th ahead of rain-bearing fronts moving north over the Northern Isles. Heavy overnight rain cleared to warm sunny spells and scattered showers for the 26th as winds fell light, Fair Isle was yet again the sunniest place in the UK on the 27th, recording 14.7 hours of sunshine. However, after a bright start, thickening cloud brought rain from the west later on the 28th.

As the filling low moved north just to the west of Shetland, overnight rain cleared to sunny spells and scattered showers with moderate SW'ly winds on the 29th. Further spells of rain followed later in the day and overnight, as decaying fronts lay close to Shetland. These were eventually pushed clear by freshening W'ly winds, and the 30th started bright. However as the main low to the west moved north, it dragged a front across Shetland, bringing cloudy conditions and patchy rain to end the day.

Dave Wheeler

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

Mean Temperature – 11.3°C (0.1°C above average).

Rainfall – 110.1 mm (128% of average).

Sunshine – 153.7 hours (96% of average).

Data from the UK Met Office