

May 2005

The 1st began with a dramatic thunder storm, with the best display of medium level lightning I have seen in many years. The storm was always to the 'west' of Bracknell on a route SW-W-NW of Bracknell Harmanwater and began at 0100hr with thunder last heard at 0200hr. There was no rain at Harmanwater but heavy rain accompanied by large hail was reported in the Winnersh / Reading / Lower Shiplake areas. The night was mild with a minimum of 13.1c which is high for the start of May. The day was sunny with 'thundary' conditions present and large drops of rain fell from time to time, for only about 10 seconds. These drops contained Sahara dust. Max 24.4c The 2nd continued with the very warm spell with a max of 21.6c after another mild night min. 12.0c. Mamma cloud observed at 0800hr. Again, 'thundary' conditions around with lightning detector picking up several strikes during the morning. A much better afternoon as the 'thundary' conditions moved away, with more sunshine. The 3rd was cooler but still warmish with a max of 17.5c. A bright sunny start was replaced by a cloudy day with outbreaks of light rain. The 4th continued with outbreaks of light rain / drizzle under dull grey skies. It felt much colder with temperature at 1445hr only 9.5c. It became brighter late afternoon early evg. With a max of 11.3c occurring at 1830hr. On the 5th the air temperature fell to a minimum of 2.0c overnight with only 0.1c on the ground. However, it was a cloudy start but the sun broke through the cloud just before 0900hr with a 1.7c increase in temperature in 5 minutes. It was a much warmer day with a max. of 19.1c with sunny spells. The 6th began with a cloudy night but mild, however the cloud had begun to break around dawn to allow sunny spells to develop during the day. The NW wind took the 'edge' off the temperature but by the afternoon it felt quite warm. Max 18.5c. The 7th began with another mild night although there was a shower of 1.2mm within 15 minutes at 0515hr. Otherwise the night was dry. The day consisted of sunny spells, but dry during the morning, however Cb and large Cu had developed and there were some showers (only light and short lived) during the afternoon. The lightning detector had picked up many strikes but no thunder heard at Harmanwater. Max 15.6c. The 8th began with a coldish night, minimum 3.1c and grass min. just above 0c. However, with clear skies this allowed a glorious start to the day, but Cu 'bubbled' up quickly but it remained dry until the afternoon. Cb was observed which moved around the area, but hail fell (<5mm) at 1436hr and the end of a light shower and thunder was heard at 1532hr to the NE. Although the lightning detector was quite active, no further thunder was heard. Max 14.6c. The 9th began with a ground frost and air minimum of 1.8c. A cold night was followed by a sunny start to the day, with Cu developing quickly. The stiff NWly breeze took the edge of the temperature, with the max of 14.2 occurring at 1315hr. Thereafter, the temp. fell during showers. Hail fell at 1345hr (<5mm) and a fall in temp. at 1315hr of 2.8c in 30 mins and 3.7c fall in 60 mins at 1530hr. The cloud gradually cleared during the evening. This led to another ground frost on the 10th with a n air min of 1.7c. Again, a sunny start but cloud developed quickly but the Cu and Sc spreadout to restrict the unshine. It felt cold in the N'ly breeze and temp. struggled all day, despite some improvement during the afternoon. Apart from some light showers around midday it remained dry. Max. 13.1. The cloud cleared overnight to allow a ground and air frost, with 1.9hrs of frost recorded. Temperature rose quickly in the sunshine, 4.2c in 60 mins at 0500hr. Although a sunny start, the cloud spread out to restrict the sunshine and it felt cool. It remained dry and the cloud cleared during the evening to leave a red sunset illuminating the Ci. Max 13.7. The 12th was another coldish night with a ground frost. A sunny start but there was a cloudy period

during late morning. The afternoon was sunny, however a stiff breeze made it feel quite cool, max 14.9c. The 13th saw a less cold night as the sky remained cloudy and it had been quite windy. The wind continued during the day, only easing slowly during the evening / night. Some slight damage was observed to trees with twigs broken off. It was milder with a max of 17.0c The 14th was dry generally cloudy and still a bit windy, max 15.9c. The 15th was in complete contrast, sunny and warm after a coldish start with the 10th lowest grass min. (-2.0c) recorded in 35 years. Max reached 19.2 at 1530hr. with RH falling to <30% 1315 to 1715hr. A sea breeze moved into the area at 1730hr as RH dramatically rose from 38 to 50% and wind veered Nth to SE with air temp. falling 1.4c. The 16th started under clear skies, but Ac moved into the area from the SW. However, this began to retreat as a cold front to the Nth moved Sth. A dry and cloudy morning, some large spots of rain in the afternoon that may have contained Sahara dust. This was observed on train windows and cars later. More general rain fell late afternoon which continued into the evg. A fall of 0.7c in temperature at 1700hr probably signalled the passage of the cold front. Max 17.8c The 17th was cooler in the Nth ly air stream with cloud developing quickly, which restricted the sunshine. Max 13.7c. The 18th was coolish at first, dry with sunny spells. Cs invaded the sky late afternoon, which was the start of the frontal systems approaching from the SW. This cloud restricted the sunshine to a 'weak' glow and the cloud continued to thicken into the evg. The 19th saw outbreaks of rain shortly after midnight, which continued into the morning and afternoon. It remained dull, with a max of 14.2c and only 0.04hrs or sunshine. The 20th saw a mild night with a minimum of 12.2c (09-09 min 11.6 at 0900 on 19th), however there were outbreaks of light rain, which extended into the first part of the morning. It remained generally dry in Bracknell after 0900hr. but some heavy showers were around the area. Some sunny spells did develop during the day but did not amount to much. Max. 17.4c. The 21st May began wet with showers, and 3.3mm falling in 35 minute spell commencing at 0845hr. Further showers fell during the morning and into the early afternoon, with the



last around 1245hr. The afternoon was generally cloudy although some sunny spells did develop and a max of 15.3c occurred at 1600hr during a longer sunny spell. The evening saw the cloud gradually disperse, although it remained mild. On the morning of the 22nd, cars and certain surfaces were covered with a moderate to heavy fall of Sahara dust and the photo indicates the coverage on the car roof. The dust deposits were from the rainfall that fell

on the 21st. The 22nd consisted of sunny spells and long cloudy periods. A few light showers fell during the afternoon. Max 16.1c The 23rd was dry with sunny spells. Max 17.2c. The 24th began wet with drizzle, which may have consisted of Sahara dust, as further deposits noted on clean surfaces. The afternoon began cloudy, but late warm sunshine gave a pleasant end to the day. Max 18.1. The 25th began dull and cloudy and these conditions continued until midday, when sunny spells developed. It became very warm with a max of 22.0c. These warm conditions continued into the night with a minimum of only 14.4c, the 6th warmest in 35 years. Although it was generally a cloudy night the cloud was extensively high level allowing the sunshine to raise temperatures during the morning, however extensive Sc Cu formed to produce a

cloudy day from 0900 onwards. The afternoon was sunny spells and dry with a max of 24.1c. The 27th was a sunny day with temperature rising quickly. Extensive sunshine assisted in making this day a record breaker as an 0900hr temperature of 23.0c was recorded the highest in 35 years for May and a max of 29.9c the highest by far for May and the highest in over 50 years locally and maybe since records began in 1904 (101 years). The extensive heat was short lived as a weak front crossed the area during the early hours of 28th allowing fresher westerly air in which was breezy at times. The minimum on the 28th 13.9 was also the 10th warmest in 35 years. However, although the day consisted of sunny spells and it remained dry the max was 10c lower at 19.9c. A cool night on the 29th and during the day it was generally cloudy, but dry conditions and a little sunshine. Max 17.4 The 30th saw similar conditions with a max of 18.9c The 31st faired a little better with much more sunshine and a max of 20.5c

Daily Notes:

Highest maximum temperature 29.9c (27th) was the highest on the 35 year Harmanswater record and the highest on the Local 'Bracknell' record for at least 55 years. The maximum on the 1st, 24.4c was the highest for that day in 35 years of Harmanswater records. The lowest minimum -0.3c (11th) was the since 1997. The highest minimum 14.4c (26th) was the lowest since 1997. The highest daily rainfall total, 7.6mm (21st) was the lowest since 1997.

Monthly Notes:

Mean Maximum and minimum were both above normal but the mean minimum was the lowest since 1997. The rainfall total (21.5mm) was the 5th lowest in 35 years. The number of air (1) and ground frosts (5) were the highest since 1996.

© Paul Fishwick Observer FRMetS 2005

E-mail P.Fishwick@tesco.net.

Web site 1 www.bracknell-berkshire.co.uk/services/weather

Web site 2 www.metlink.org/data