

## April 2023

Storm 'Mathis' which brought such an unsettled finish to last month eased away over the Low Countries through the small hours of the 1<sup>st</sup> leaving the islands in a fresh, showery northwesterly airflow. Pressure built in from the southwest as this storm continued to track away eastward with any residual showers all but dying out locally by dawn on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

As that high became more established over Scandinavia by the 3<sup>rd</sup> our winds veered in to the east drawing in drier but cooler air off the nearby continent. Sunshine was plentiful for the next couple of days but air temperatures were only just making double figures during the day and falling to low single digits by night. Gradually though, that high started to lose its dominance over the UK as weak frontal systems moved in from the west in association with low pressure to the north of Scotland. Those fronts were mostly quite weak affairs by the time they reached the Channel in the early hours of the 5<sup>th</sup> with cloudier conditions prevailing by sunrise, but that cloud thickened and lowered through the day leading to some patchy rain and drizzle later that afternoon.

Dawn on the 6<sup>th</sup> saw the last of those fronts clearing to the east as pressure built once again from the southwest. This new high drifted slowly across the UK over the Easter Bank Holiday with fine and dry conditions prevailing locally until late evening on the 9<sup>th</sup> when deepening low pressure across the North Atlantic introduced some quite active fronts across the country. Periods of rain, heavy at times with mist and hill fog that night, cleared by mid morning on the 10<sup>th</sup> to a scattering of blustery showers through the afternoon.

The charts showed a rather unsettled look as the next low out to the west deepened and barrelled in to the Southwest Approaches with rain arriving across the islands just before noon on the 11<sup>th</sup>. That rain became persistent and heavy at times through the afternoon before clearing to scattered showers later that evening.

By the 12<sup>th</sup> Meteo France had named this system Storm 'Noa' as it swept in across central and southern parts of the UK with winds gusting up to 97mph recorded at The Needles in the Isle of Wight. The southwestern flank of this storm produced the strongest winds and it was through the afternoon that our winds ramped up to a full gale, with gusts up to 53mph recorded at the airport. Squally showers of rain and occasionally hail made conditions quite challenging at times until later that afternoon when those showers cleared away to the east and those very strong winds started to abate. The winds continued to ease off overnight and by dawn on the 13<sup>th</sup> we were down to a gentle 10 knots from the southwest although showers started to bubble up through the morning.

We enjoyed a brief ridge that afternoon but cloud thickened through the evening ahead of the next low approaching from the southwest. The first of the rain arrived around 3am on the 14<sup>th</sup> before turning more drizzly by dawn with mist and hill fog developing. This low was rather reluctant to clear but did so by early afternoon with a few bright spells developing before day's end as pressure built across the UK once more.

We enjoyed over 12 hours of sunshine on the 15<sup>th</sup> but cool northwesterly winds pegged air temperatures back to just short of 12°C as that high sat atop the country. A weak warm front brought cloudier conditions overnight and in to the 16<sup>th</sup> but it did remain dry.

As that high intensified and continued its progress northeast to be over Scandinavia by the 17<sup>th</sup>, a freshening northeasterly flow became established down the Channel. Variable amounts of cloud within the general flow left us with mostly fair conditions for the next few days as temperatures slowly edged up in to the mid teens. A band of showers in the early hours of the 19<sup>th</sup> and again around noon the same day dampened the ground, with further showers overnight in to the 21<sup>st</sup>. By dawn on the 22<sup>nd</sup> though, that Scandinavian high had edged away eastward to allow advancing Atlantic fronts to push in from the west with periods of rain that morning,

clearing to showers that afternoon. Those showers then merged back in to a more cohesive spell of rain and drizzle, with mist, during the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The area of low pressure responsible for that most recent spell of rain was now clearing east to be centered over Eastern Europe, allowing cooler air to be drawn down across the UK from the north. Locally, air temperatures struggled to make 12°C by day, falling to just 6.6°C by night for the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, but apart from the odd rogue rain shower it remained a bright and reasonably quiet spell of weather.

Conditions overnight in to the 24<sup>th</sup> allowed islanders to enjoy a rare and remarkable display of Northern Lights (*Aurora Borealis*) due to strong solar activity, clear skies and good visibility.



Incredible picture of the *Aurora Borealis* from the Shingle Bank at L'Eree in the early hours of the 24<sup>th</sup>.  
Photo credit Wayne Branquet

The next series of fronts started to make their way in to the Southwest Approaches late on the 25<sup>th</sup> with patchy light rain at times overnight and through the next day. By late afternoon on the 26<sup>th</sup> the cloud had thickened sufficiently over higher ground to produce mist and hill fog patches, as well as outbreaks of mostly light rain and drizzle.

The 27<sup>th</sup> dawned dull and misty with extensive fog and drizzle blanketing the islands, lifting only briefly late morning and again mid evening. With little change overnight, the 28<sup>th</sup> dawned much the same as we lay under a very damp, slack, westerly flow. Conditions improved slowly through the morning however, with improved visibility and cloud base by late morning although it did remain cloudy for most of the afternoon. Building pressure from the southwest late in the day saw excellent visibility by the evening but with light winds and clearing skies overnight, extensive shallow fog formed readily across parts of the island.

With less than 15 minutes of sunshine over the last 3 days the 29<sup>th</sup> dawned bright and clear with any residual shallow fog burning off smartly after sunrise. The ridge that built up the previous day declined eastward to allow high cloud to spill in from the west by late afternoon, but we did manage over 11 hours of much welcome sunshine.

That high cloud was a precursor to a narrow, but quite intense north/south orientated occluded front rolling in to the western Channel, arriving shortly before dawn on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Rain, with mist and some hill fog patches, became heavier around 0800hrs before clearing around an hour or so later. It remained cloudy for the rest of the day though as further weak fronts passed by the islands to the north.

A cool start to April was offset by a warmer finish resulting in the average monthly mean temperature to exactly mirror the long term average of 9.7°C. Only once did we reach the higher teens, with 16.0°C on the 29<sup>th</sup> which together with 11.2 hours of sunshine made it arguably the nicest day of the month. Rainfall was slightly above average with 61.1mm making it the wettest April for 9 years. Sunshine fell just short of the long term average at 186.1hrs. Storm '*Noa*' on the 12<sup>th</sup> gave us the first April gale in 21 years and also yielded the month's highest gust of 54 knots (62mph).

DAY	DATE	BAROMETER							TEMPERATURE deg C				WIND				RAIN mm	SUN hrs	WEATHER
		hPa		AIR			GRASS	SOIL		DIR'N	SPEED(knots)								
		at 9a.m.	MAX	MIN	MEAN	MIN	30cm	100cm	9a.m.	9a.m.	MEAN	MAX							
Sat	1	1008.6	11.9	8.9	10.4	7.4	10.9	<u>10.5</u>	290	14	14.2	32	TR	5.6	Mostly cloudy with some fair periods. Occ shw rs				
Sun	2	1025.5	<u>10.0</u>	5.9	8.0	6.6	11.3	10.6	360	11	8.2	19	NIL	0.1	Cloudy. Isol show er early am. Fair late eve				
Mon	3	<u>1028.6</u>	10.5	5.1	7.8	1.9	10.2	10.6	090	13	9.9	22	NIL	11.0	Cloudy bec fine by mid am				
Tue	4	1026.8	11.5	<u>3.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>	1.4	10.7	10.6	090	11	5.5	17	NIL	12.0	Fine				
Wed	5	1022.7	11.0	4.2	7.6	1.5	10.3	10.6	210	06	7.6	18	4.1	0.1	Fair, soon became cloudy, Rain from late afternoon				
Thu	6	1018.1	12.8	7.9	10.4	6.3	10.5	10.6	270	13	11.9	23	NIL	10.2	Early cloud, rain, & fog clrng to become fine				
Fri	7	1021.9	12.3	6.0	9.2	<u>-1.0</u>	11.1	10.6	360	05	5.7	13	NIL	10.7	Fine				
Sat	8	1025.0	13.3	6.2	9.8	2.1	10.7	10.7	100	10	10.6	21	NIL	10.0	Fine with high cloud				
Sun	9	1020.8	14.4	7.8	11.1	5.4	11.0	10.7	140	13	9.7	19	5.5	6.7	Fair with inc high cloud pm, rain late eve				
Mon	10	1013.7	13.2	9.0	11.1	9.7	11.5	10.8	240	17	15.1	27	0.6	1.4	Rain, fog, mist clrg by noon. Cldy occn fair with isol shw r pm				
Tue	11	1016.1	10.5	8.0	9.3	5.5	11.1	10.9	220	13	13.9	30	<u>13.0</u>	NIL	Cldy with rain from late am, occn hvy. Clrng late eve				
Wed	12	1000.2	10.6	4.6	7.6	4.4	10.9	10.9	250	<u>24</u>	<u>24.3</u>	<u>54</u>	5.1	6.4	Fair, isol shw rs am. Cldy pm, frqnt rain/hail shw rs. Gales late am & pm				
Thu	13	1006.5	10.8	4.7	7.8	1.9	<u>9.8</u>	10.8	250	06	12.2	30	7.9	8.2	Fair/cldy am with frqnt shw rs, occn hail. Fine pm bec cldy eve				
Fri	14	<u>997.5</u>	12.4	7.3	9.9	5.6	10.3	10.8	220	10	13.9	31	1.5	2.5	Rain, drz, mist & fog clrng @ midday, some bright spells pm				
Sat	15	1019.6	11.8	7.8	9.8	4.8	10.3	10.7	350	11	8.4	23	NIL	12.1	Fine, cloud increased late evening				
Sun	16	1027.3	13.9	7.1	10.5	3.6	10.7	10.8	180	06	4.4	11	NIL	6.4	Mainly cloudy with fair intervals, mainly pm				
Mon	17	1027.3	14.3	8.2	11.3	6.4	11.5	10.8	080	06	7.2	22	NIL	8.2	Cloudy am, clrng to fine pm				
Tue	18	1026.0	11.4	8.0	9.7	6.9	11.8	10.9	060	11	12.7	27	0.1	5.9	Cldy with early haze bec fair then fine late pm				
Wed	19	1019.8	13.2	8.2	10.7	6.4	11.5	11.1	070	14	14.1	31	TR	10.3	Cldy with shw rs early am and @ midday bec fine				
Thu	20	1019.1	12.7	7.7	10.2	6.4	11.6	<u>11.6</u>	060	16	11.7	29	0.1	<u>12.7</u>	Fine				
Fri	21	1011.5	11.4	6.1	8.8	3.3	11.6	11.2	090	08	8.8	19	1.1	9.4	Cldy with shw rs am bec mainly fair/fine				
Sat	22	1005.0	12.4	7.7	10.1	5.7	11.7	11.3	210	<u>02</u>	9.1	25	9.7	1.7	Cloudy with rain am, fine midday, bec cloudy pm with sct shw rs				
Sun	23	1001.5	11.9	8.4	10.2	8.9	11.9	11.3	330	06	10.9	26	1.1	7.0	Cldy with show ery rain until late am, bec fair with isol shw rs pm				
Mon	24	1011.9	12.5	6.6	9.6	3.7	11.7	11.4	250	11	11.0	25	1.1	8.2	Fair with shw rs late am to early pm, bec fair/fine				
Tue	25	1018.0	11.4	6.6	9.0	4.2	11.5	11.4	070	10	10.3	20	TR	7.8	Fair bec cldy. Light rain late eve				
Wed	26	1014.8	11.1	7.5	9.3	9.4	11.7	11.4	130	12	8.6	18	0.6	NIL	Cldy. Ptchy light rain am. Rain, drz, mist & fog ptchs late pm & eve				
Thu	27	1013.2	13.3	8.4	10.9	5.2	11.9	11.4	150	12	9.8	23	6.2	NIL	Overcast with prstnt rain, drizzle, hill fog				
Fri	28	1014.4	12.9	<u>9.3</u>	11.1	<u>10.1</u>	12.1	11.5	270	12	10.3	24	0.1	0.2	Cldy with drz and thick fog, lifting late morning				
Sat	29	1020.5	<u>16.0</u>	8.7	<u>12.4</u>	2.9	12.2	11.5	010	03	<u>4.3</u>	12	3.3	11.2	Fair or fine. Shallow fog early am, clrng. Mist/haze & sea fog pm/eve				
Sun	30	1021.3	13.5	9.2	11.4	8.4	<u>12.8</u>	<u>11.6</u>	040	<u>02</u>	5.4	14	TR	0.1	Cldy with rain mid am, occn hvy, & fog ptchs clrng late am. Lt drz eve				
MEAN		1016.8	12.3	7.1	9.7	5.2	11.2	11.0	E	10.3	10.3	TOTAL	61.1	186.1	12th - Storm 'Noa'				
30 YEAR AVG 1991-2020		1015.3	12.4	7.0	9.7	4.3	10.4	9.9	NE	11.0	10.6	/////	54.0	200.7					
EXTREMES ARE IN BOLD TYPE		NUMBER OF DAYS WITH	RAIN ≥0.2mm 14	WET ≥1.0mm 12	SNOW/ SLEET 0	HAIL 2	THNDR 0	LGHTNG 0	AIR FROST 0	GROUND FROST 1	FOG 8	FOG 9a.m. 2	GALE 1	NO SUN 3	TOTALS FOR YEAR TO DATE				
RECORDS FROM JANUARY 1947														RAINFALL	325.6 mm	SUNSHINE	445.8 hrs		
WETTEST DAY	34.0mm	DRIEST MONTH		2.9mm	LOWEST MIN		-1.4°C	WARMEST MNTH		12.0°C	SUNNIEST MNTH		285.4	RAINFALL DAYS	65	SUNLESS I		24	
DAY/YEAR	30th/2017	YEAR		1980	DAY/YEAR		11th/1986	YEAR		2020	YEAR		2021	WET DAYS	50				
WETTEST MNTH	130.4mm	HIGHEST MAX		24.5°C	LOWEST GRASS		-7.0°C	COLDEST MNTH		6.4°C	DULLEST MNTH		122.2hrs						
YEAR	1966	DAY/YEAR		11th/2020	DAY/YEAR		5th/1990	YEAR		1986	YEAR		1981						