



Monthly Weather Summary

The Weather of March 2008

Wetter but sunnier than normal everywhere; mean temperatures close to normal

Unsettled conditions during most of March brought rain or showers on most days, with frequent thunderstorms, especially over the western half of the country. Deep Atlantic depressions gave strong winds at times also, particularly during the period between the 10th and 12th, when a number of stations recorded their highest ever March gusts. Rainfall totals for the month were above normal everywhere, with percentage of normal values between 105% at Rosslare and 196% at Casement Aerodrome. It was the wettest March for between 12 and 22 years in many places and the wettest for more than 40 years at both Dublin Airport and Casement Aerodrome. Heaviest falls were recorded during the periods 9th to 11th and 27th to 31st, resulting in localised flooding at the end of the month. Most stations recorded a total of between 16 and 22 wetdays (days with 1mm or more rainfall), compared with the normal range for March of 11 to 17, while 25 wetdays were recorded at stations in the north and northwest. Temperatures were close to normal values for March throughout almost all of the month, but fell low enough for falls of sleet or snow to develop on a number of days, especially in western areas. There was a total of between 14 and 20 ground frosts at most inland stations compared with between 12 and 14 in an average March; Kilkenny's total of 28 ground frosts during the month was its highest for March since the station opened in 1957. Despite being a wet month in most places, it was also a sunnier than normal month everywhere, with sunshine totals around 10% higher than normal generally.

1st to 16th: Deep depressions passing close to or over Ireland brought very unsettled conditions, with strong winds and spells of rain or showers each day. Heaviest falls were over the western half of the country, with relatively little rain in eastern areas at first. All areas received heavy rain between the 9th and 11th, however, as an exceptionally deep depression moved across the country. Shannon Airport's MSL pressure value of 950hPa on the 10th was the lowest atmospheric pressure for March ever measured in Ireland. The same period produced very strong winds, especially over the south of the country, with very high seas on Atlantic coasts; Valentia Observatory, Rosslare and Knock Airport each recorded their highest gusts for March on either the 10th or 11th.

17th to 19th: A short spell of relatively dry and cold weather, as an anticyclone developed to the northwest. There were light winds and clear skies generally, allowing severe frost to develop in many areas.

20th to 31st: Unsettled weather returned, as low pressure became established to the northeast, bringing a cold northerly airstream across the country and light rain or showers each day. Winds turned to a more westerly direction from the 26th onwards, bringing an increase in daytime temperatures. Active frontal systems gave falls of heavy rain in many areas, occasionally accompanied by thunder.

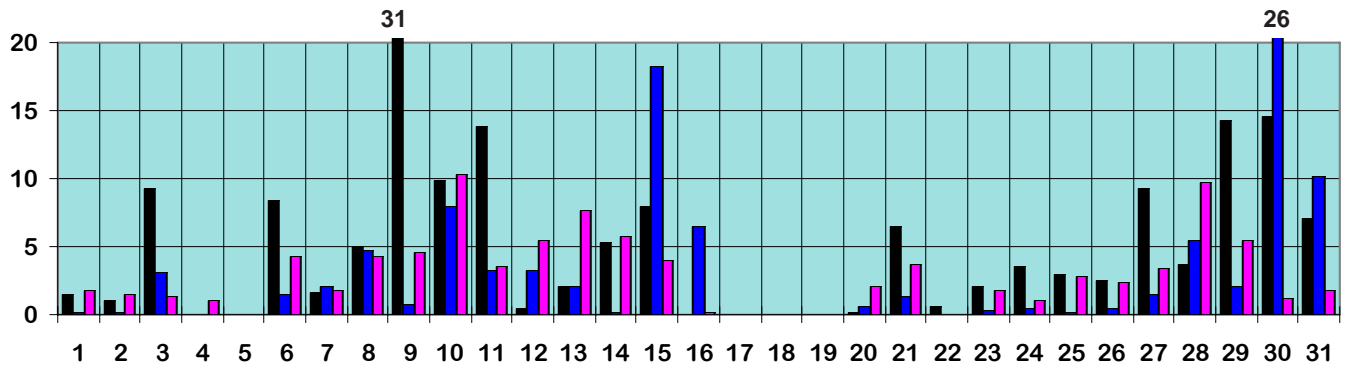
Wind and elements: Mean windspeeds for the month of between 9 and 16 knots generally (*17 and 30 km/h*) were above normal everywhere and were the highest for March for between 13 and 19 years in many places. The strongest winds were recorded between the 10th and 12th, with the highest gust, 73 knots (*135 km/h*), measured at both Valentia Observatory on the 10th and at Belmullet on the 11th; this was Valentia's highest March gust on record. There was frequent thunderstorm activity, mainly in the periods 7th to 13th and 26th to 30th. Hail showers were recorded in the periods 2nd to 4th, 7th to 13th, 20th to 23rd and 26th to 30th, while snow was observed in the periods 2nd to 4th, 9th to 11th and on the 22nd and 28th. Fog was most widespread on the 14th and 15th.

Extreme values

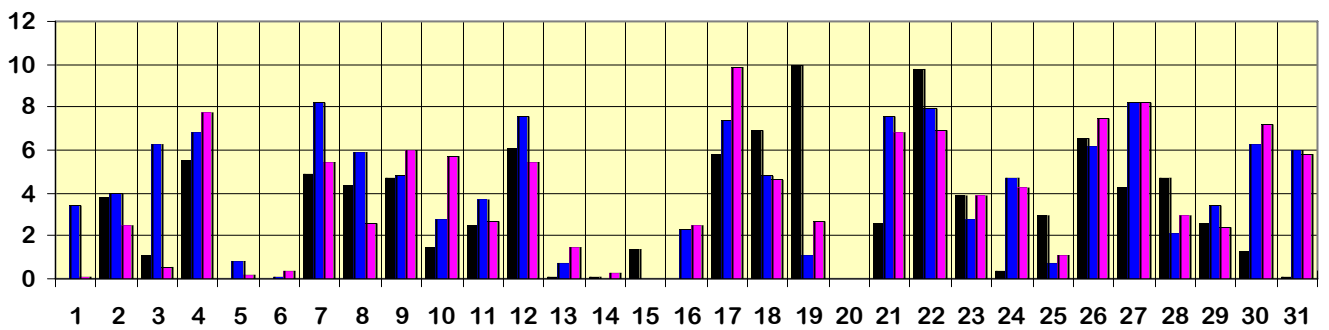
Rainfall	Highest total: 171mm at Knock Airport (<i>its wettest March since 1994</i>) Lowest total: 71mm at Rosslare Highest daily rainfall: 30.8mm at Valentia Observatory on 9th
Temperature	Highest mean monthly temperature: 8.0°C at Valentia Observatory Lowest mean monthly temperature: 5.0°C at Knock Airport Highest temperature: 13.5°C at Shannon Airport on 13th Lowest air temperature: -4.1°C at Casement Aerodrome on 18th Lowest grass minimum temperature: -10.9°C at Birr on 18th
Sunshine	Highest monthly total: 143 hours at Rosslare Lowest monthly total: 98 hours at Valentia Observatory Highest daily sunshine: 10.6 hours at Cork Airport on 26th

March 2008 Daily values at selected synoptic stations

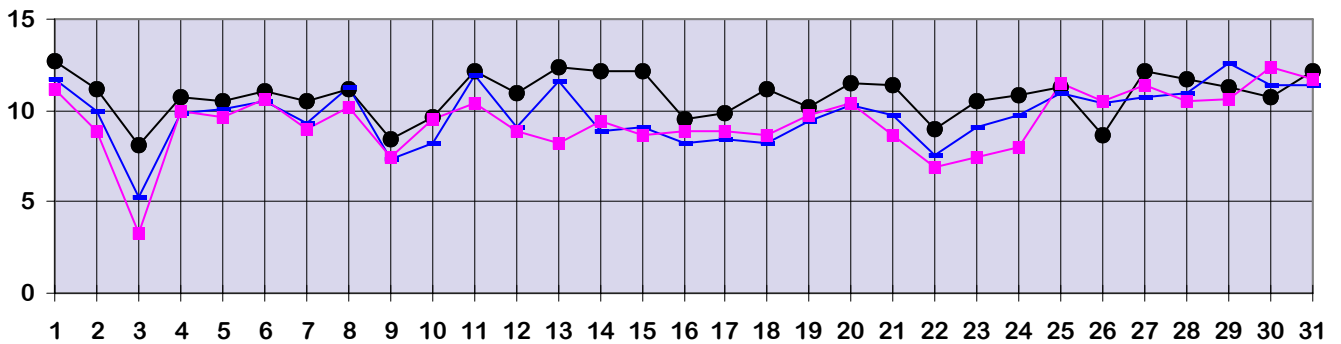
Rainfall (mm)



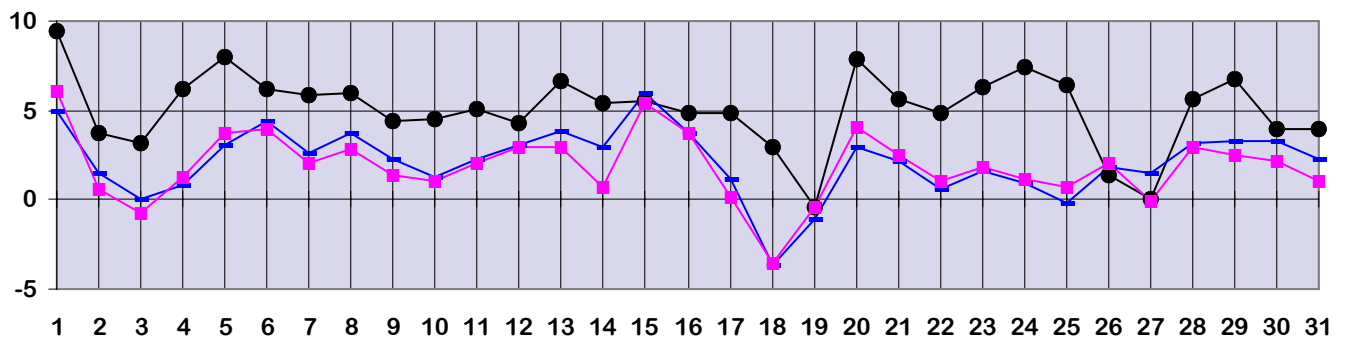
Sunshine (hours)



Maximum temperature (°C)



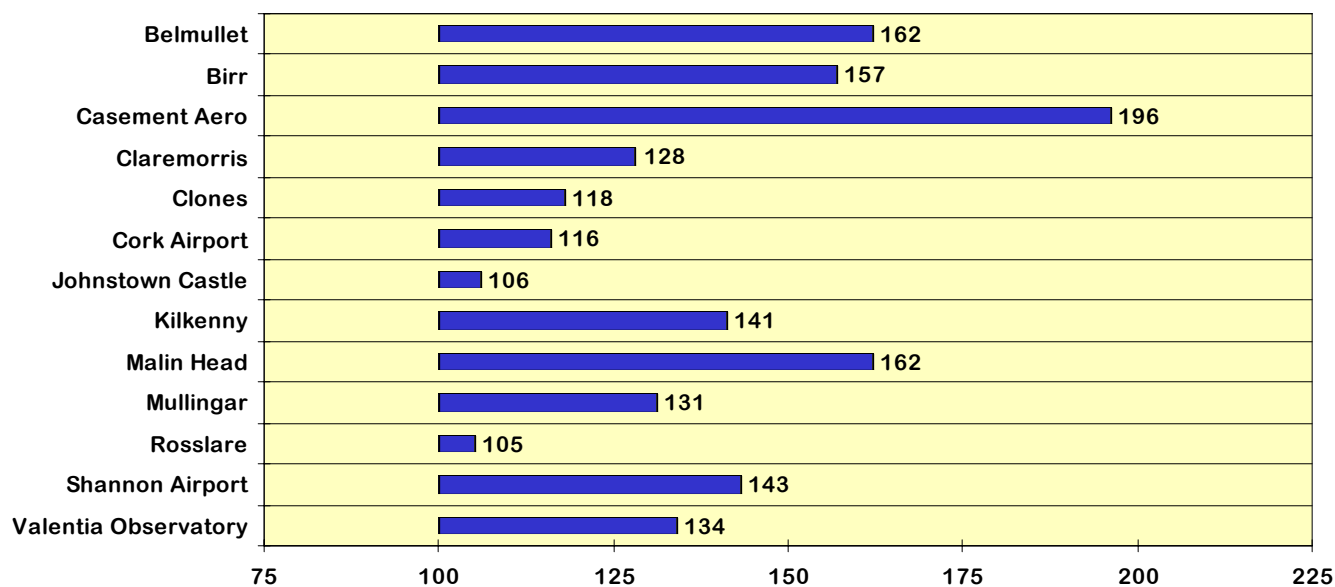
Minimum temperature (°C)



● Valentia Observatory - Dublin Airport ■ Clones

March 2008 Percentage / Difference from 1961-90 monthly normals

Rainfall (% of normal for period 1961-1990)



Temperature (°C difference from normal for period 1961-1990)



Sunshine (% of normal for period 1961-1990)

