

WEATHER 2012

2012 has been an unusual year, although it started very much in the pattern of the previous two (2010 and 2011) in being very dry, but also quite cold with snow at the start of the year. Snow overnight on the 4th of February stayed around for quite a long time due to the cold weather. I recorded the lowest temperature of -9.8 degrees overnight between 10th and 11th of February, but it remained a very cold month, until the just before last week when it reached the dizzy height of 17 degrees. It was however unusually dry with only 16 mm of rain - the lowest I have recorded during the last 15 years - it was also the only month where the mean average temperature was below freezing. March was another very dry month with just under 23 mm of rain, but not as dry as 2011 which had only 13.6 mm., however all changed at the end of March and with the onset of water rationing the skies opened and apart from May and August which were about normal for rainfall we had what could only be described as a bad summer, poor levels of sunlight, no sustained dry periods, and low ambient temperatures.

Statistically, apart from January, February, March and May we experienced rain over $\frac{2}{3}$ of each month, only during the Olympic Games was there any kind of respite.

Since 2000 I have maintained a record of monthly rainfall, and the average recorded rain over that period is 798 mm (31.4 inches). Only in 2000 did we experience more rain (1024 mm or 40.3 inches), whereas in 2012 at 975.3 mm (38.4 inches) so we are 177 mm (7 inches) above the average, and nearly 50% more than that of the two previous years. The winter did have long cold spells and I recorded 52 frosty days, this compares with 40 last year, the average number of frosty days in our area is just over 50 looking at the last 5 years, so again about average.

The chart below represents rainfall and maximum/minimum temperature over the last year, together with rainfall in 2010 and 2011. More data is available on the Link website.

As for 2013 the predictions are for above average rainfall and another cool summer, but as usual the only way we will find out what actually transpires is as the year progresses. At least let us hope for a better gardening year!

