

The Weather of Spring 2006

(March, April and May summary)

Very wet in many places; warmer, sunnier than normal generally

Although rainfall totals for the season were near normal in parts of Dublin, the season was a wet one generally and was very wet in parts of the midlands, west and southwest. It was the wettest spring for between 9 and 20 years in many places and the wettest in over 50 years of record at both Mullingar and Clones. March and May were both wetter than normal months, while totals for April were above normal in the north and west but were well below the average in the south and southeast. The number of wetdays (days with 1mm or more rainfall) measured during the season was well above normal everywhere; there were between 40 and 55 wetdays generally compared with the normal range for spring of between 32 and 42. The heaviest daily falls of the season at almost all stations were recorded on May 21st.

Mean air temperatures for the season were near or a little higher than normal, but it was nevertheless the coolest spring for between 5 and 10 years. March was a cold month generally, while both April and May were a little warmer than normal. Exceptionally low air and ground temperatures for spring were measured during early March, including a grass minimum value of -16.0°C recorded at Birr on the 3rd, its lowest value for spring since such records began there in 1954. In contrast, temperatures rose close to or above 20°C at many stations for a brief spell between May 10th and 12th.

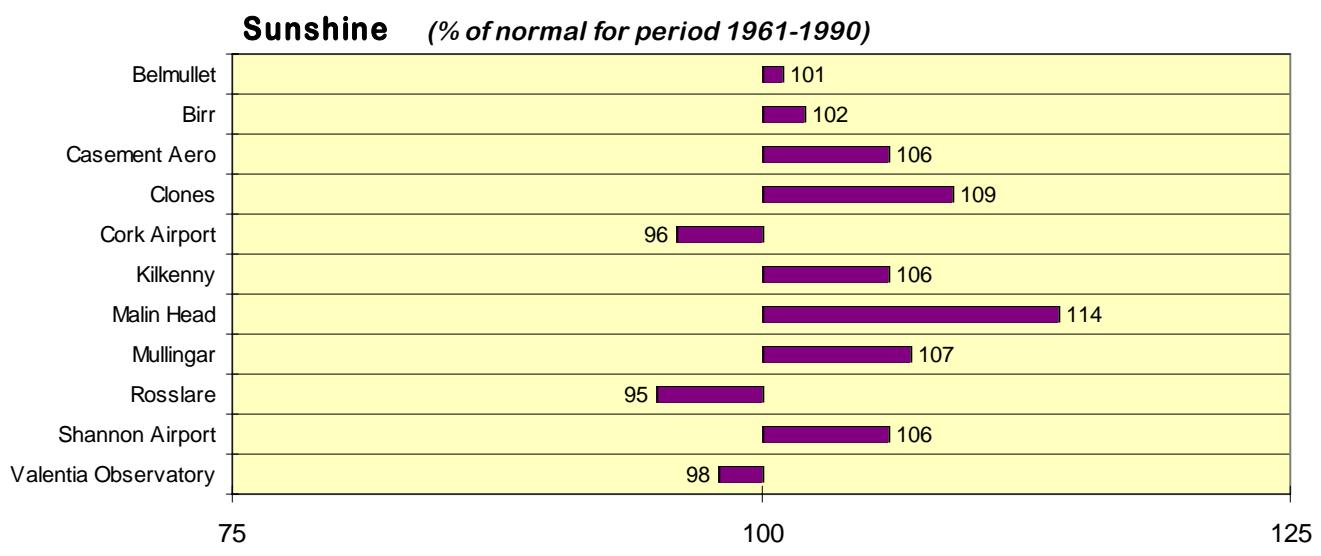
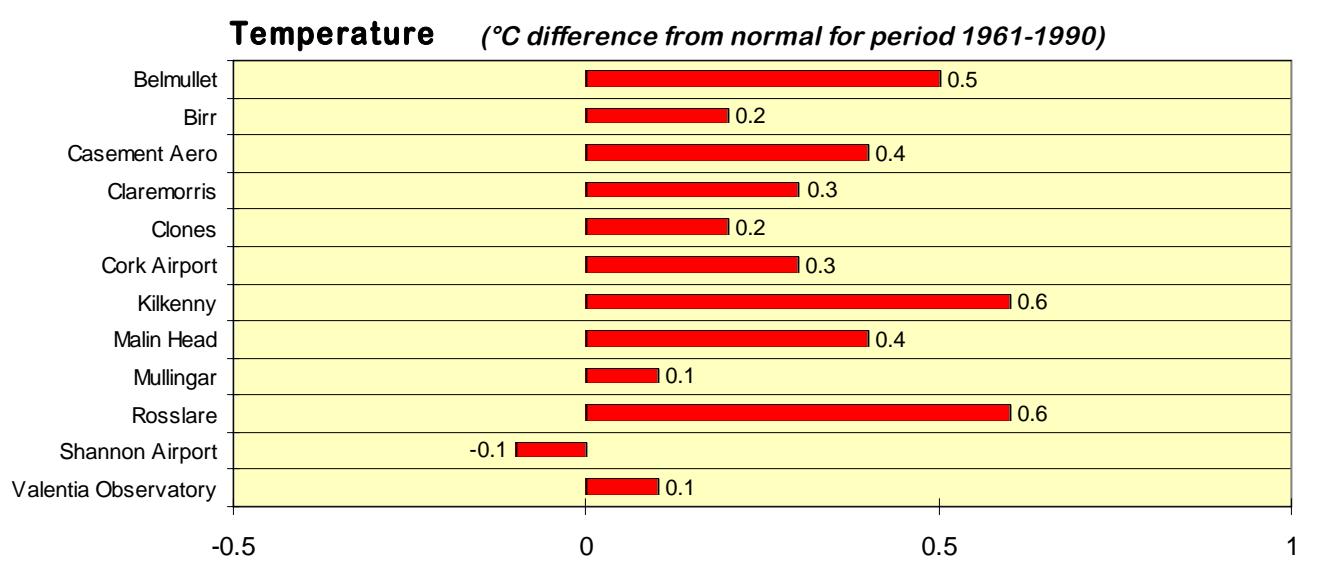
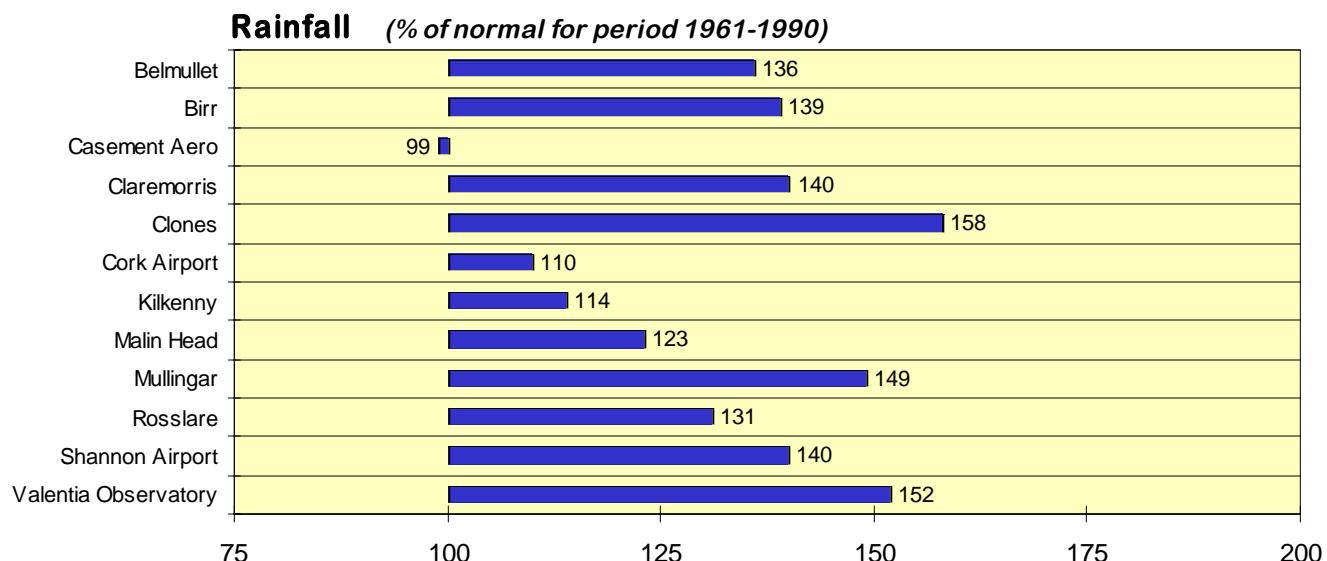
Sunshine totals for the season were close to normal in most places but totals were above normal in the north. April was a very sunny month- the sunniest on record in places, while March was dull and May totals were near normal. More than 14 hours of sunshine were recorded at most stations on the last day of the season, May 31st.

The highest gust of the season, 55 knots (*102km/hour*) was recorded at Belmullet on March 9th.

Extreme values

Rainfall	Highest seasonal total: 440mm at Valentia Observatory <i>(its wettest spring since 1986)</i> Lowest seasonal total: 158mm at Casement Aerodrome Highest daily rainfall: 30.2mm at Cork Airport on May 21st
Temperature	Highest mean seasonal temperature: 9.2°C at Valentia Observatory <i>(its coolest spring since 1996)</i> Lowest mean seasonal temperature: 7.2°C at Knock Airport <i>(its coolest spring since records began there in 1997)</i> Highest temperature: 22.5°C at Birr on May 11th Lowest air temperature: -7.8°C at Birr on March 3rd Lowest grass minimum temperature: -16.0°C at Birr on March 3rd <i>(its lowest value for spring since such records began there in 1954)</i>
Sunshine	Highest seasonal total: 501 hours at Malin Head Lowest seasonal total: 410 hours at Birr Highest daily sunshine: 15.0 hours at both Rosslare and Valentia Observatory on May 31st <i>(the highest daily spring value at Valentia since 1997)</i>

Spring 2006 Percentage / Difference from 1961-90 monthly normals



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This report is based on preliminary data from the synoptic weather stations operated by Met Éireann

A detailed summary is available in the **Monthly Weather Bulletin**

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