The Weather of Spring 2008
(March, April and May summary)

Becoming warm after cool start; sunny with near normal rainfall

Mean air temperatures for the season were between a half and one degree above normal almost everywhere, with highest departures from normal in the west of the country. Temperatures were close to normal values in both March and April, but May was exceptionally warm, especially over the western half of the country. Temperatures rose above 20°C at many inland and western stations during the second week in May, with the highest spring maxima for between 5 and 11 years recorded during this period at many stations. The lowest temperatures of the season were associated with a spell of very frosty weather between March 17th and 19th, when ground temperatures fell below -10°C at Brr; there was a total of 47 ground frosts during the 3-month period recorded at this station, compared with its seasonal average of 32.

Rainfall totals for the season were close to normal generally. Both April and May were relatively dry except in parts of the west, but March was a very wet month in many areas. The number of wetdays (days with 1mm or more rainfall) measured during the season was close to or higher than normal; there were between 33 and 51 wetdays compared with the normal range for spring of between 32 and 42. Many stations recorded their highest daily falls of the season between March 28th and 31st.

Sunshine totals for the season were well above normal generally, with each of the spring months being sunnier than normal. At no station was it as sunny as spring of 2007, however, which was the sunniest on record in many places. Just over 15 hours of sunshine were recorded at Malin Head on May 26th.

The highest gust of the season, 73 knots (135 km/hour), was recorded at both Valentia Observatory on March 10th and at Belmullet on March 11th; this was the highest spring gust at Valentia since 1959. Both gusts were associated with an exceptionally deep depression which passed over the south of Ireland on March 10th.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extreme values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rainfall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest seasonal total: 319mm at Valentia Observatory</td>
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<td>Lowest seasonal total: 146mm at Brr</td>
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<td>Highest daily rainfall: 40.7mm at Valentia Observatory on May 21st</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature</strong></td>
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<td>Highest mean seasonal temperature: 10.2°C at Valentia Observatory</td>
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<td>Lowest mean seasonal temperature: 8.1°C at Knock Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest temperature: 25.0°C at Brr on May 12th <em>(its highest spring temperature since 1997)</em></td>
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<td>Lowest air temperature: -4.1°C at Casement Aerodrome on March 18th</td>
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<td>Lowest grass minimum temperature: -10.9°C at Brr on March 18th</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunshine</strong></td>
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<td>Highest seasonal total: 573 hours at Malin Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowest seasonal total: 449 hours at Brr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest daily sunshine: 15.3 hours at Malin Head on May 26th <em>(its highest daily spring value since 1997)</em></td>
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</tbody>
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Spring 2008   Percentage / Difference from 1961-90 monthly normals

**Rainfall**  (% of normal for period 1961-1990)

- Belmullet: 119
- Ballyhaise: 115
- Birr: 82
- Carlow: 96
- Casement Aero: 106
- Claremorris: 97
- Cork Airport: 97
- Johnstown Castle: 91
- Malin Head: 100
- Mullingar: 87
- Shannon Airport: 100
- Valentia Observatory: 110

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

- Belmullet: 1.4
- Birr: 0.9
- Carlow: 0.6
- Casement Aero: 0.9
- Claremorris: 1.1
- Cork Airport: 0.8
- Johnstown Castle: 0.8
- Malin Head: 1.0
- Mullingar: 0.8
- Shannon Airport: 0.8
- Valentia Observatory: 1.1

**Sunshine**  (% of normal for period 1961-1990)

- Belmullet: 123
- Birr: 111
- Casement Aero: 114
- Cork Airport: 105
- Dublin Airport: 120
- Malin Head: 130
- Shannon Airport: 118
- Valentia Observatory: 113

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