

Table 1: Blenheim Weather Data – August 2005

	August 2005	August LTA	Period of LTA	Deviation from or % of LTA	August 2004
Growing Degree Days for month	26.3	12.2	(1947-1978)	216%	13.6
Growing Degree Days Total from July onwards	50.8	17.7	(1947-1978)	287%	13.8
Mean Maximum (°C)	15.8	13.5	(1932-1980)	+2.3°C	13.0
Mean Minimum (°C)	4.6	3.0	(1932-1980)	+1.6°C	2.8
Mean Temp (°C)	10.2	8.4	(1932-2000)	+1.8°C	7.9
Grass Frosts (<= -1.0°C)	6	15.4	(1932-1980)	9.4 fewer	13
		11.2	(1986-2003)	5.2 fewer	
Air Frosts (0.0°C)	0	7.6	(1932-1980)	7.6 fewer	10
		4.0	(1986-2003)	4 fewer	
Sunshine hours	221.4	177	(1935-2000)	125%	181.7
Sunshine hours – lowest		129.2	1941		
Sunshine hours – highest		225.8	1972		
Rainfall (mm)	14.8	64	(1930-2000)	23%	44.4
Rainfall (mm) – lowest		4.6	1969		
Rainfall (mm) – highest		172.1	1990		
Evapotranspiration – mm	52.8	47.0	(1996-2004)	112%	53.2
Windrun (km)	231.7	253.6	(1996-2004)	91%	270.1
Mean soil temp – 10cm	7.0	6.0	(1986-2003)	+1.0°C	5.7
Mean soil temp – 30cm	9.1	8.3	(1986-2003)	+0.8°C	7.8

August 2005 was fairly remarkable month weather wise for Blenheim.

Temperature

In the met update from one year ago I started by saying, “August 2004 was definitely a cold one in comparison to what has been experienced in recent years”. Nothing could be further from the truth for August 2005. The average temperature for August 2005 at 10.2°C was 1.8°C above the long-term average. August 2005 is now the second warmest August on record for Blenheim over the past 74 years, (1932-2005). Only August 1967 has been warmer recording 10.3°C.

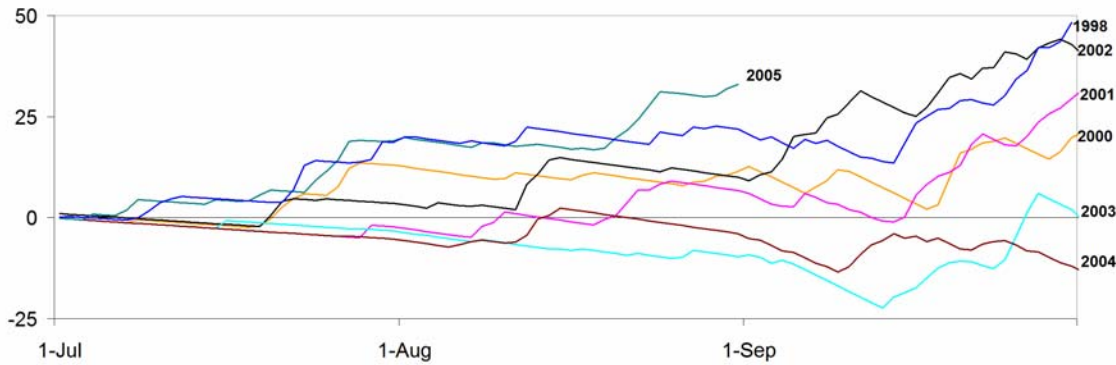
The average temperature January to August 2005 at 13.1°C is also well above the long-term average of 12.4°C.

Winter 2005 (June, July, August), recorded an average temperature of 9.3°C. Only 2002, at 9.4°C has recorded a warmer winter in the past 20 years. The average temperature for June, July and August for the period 1986-2005 is 8.4°C and for the period 1932-1980 the average was 7.8°C. So as I have stated on previous occasions Blenheim’s winters are a lot warmer than they used to be. The warm winter of 2005 is also reflected in the number of frosts. 28 grass frosts for June to August 2005, compared with an average of 38 (1986-2004) and 52 (1932-1980).

Growing Degree Days

I presented a table in last months Winepress outlining growing degree-days for July to September over recent years. As a consequence of the very warm August, the 2005 season has continued its rapid exit from the starting blocks. Total GDD’s for July and August 2005 at 50.8 are already well ahead of any of previous year in recent history. 1998 got off to a fairly warm start and had recorded 39.6 GDD by the end of August. July and August 2005 were so warm that the growing degree-day total for the two months exceeded the total for July to September for 2004. Figure 1 shows the seasonal deviation from the long-term average growing degree-days. It would take a marked cold period of weather in September 2005 to allow the growing degree-days line to fall back close to the long-term average line. Which I would hastily add is not what we want.

Figure 1: Growing degree days for Blenheim July to September
 seasonal difference ahead (+) or behind (-) the long term average total



Sunshine

Blenheim received 221.4 hours sunshine for August 2005. This is now the second highest total on record for Blenheim for the period 1930-2005. 1972 has the highest August total with 225.8 hours sunshine.

Rainfall

Total rain of 14.8mm for August 2005 is the third lowest total on record for the 76 year period 1930-2005. August 1969 recorded the lowest total with 4.6mm and August 1982 is second with 14.0mm. As I have previously mentioned the monthly rainfall for 2005 has oscillated between high and low monthly totals as shown in the Figure 2. At least the total rainfall for 2005 is close to the long-term average.

Figure 2: Blenheim's oscillating monthly rainfall for 2005 compared to the long term average

