

Tip of Cornwall & Scilly - Extreme Weather

Cold and Heavy Snowfall of 28th February / 1st March 2018

From 24th February an increasingly cold easterly wind set in. The 26th saw a few snow flurries, the 27th was then mainly sunny, but very cold.

A convergence zone had been giving spells of heavy snow in the English Channel for around 24 hours, before a slight veering of the wind brought the snow onshore mid morning on 28th February.

The temperature rose just above freezing briefly, before snow set in around 10:30. From 11:00 to 15:00 conditions frequently became blizzard like in Penzance. The wind gusted to > 30mph and the temperature was around -2C throughout the period of the snow. Around 15cm of snow accumulated in this 4 hour period in my garden, nearer 20cm towards Land's End. Even Scilly saw significant snowfall. The convergence zone remained stationary for a few hours, before drifting back south again. Virtually no snow fell on 28th north of Bodmin & Newquay. This was my garden by mid afternoon.



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The following pictures were taken by Andrew Carne of The **Old Boathouse Stores** Sennen, (just 1 mile from Land's End) where the snow was particularly heavy.



Meanwhile, at Marazion.
St Michael's Mount
rarely looks like this.



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The night of 28th February / 1st March, was dry, windy with very low humidity. As a result the snow became more compressed and blew around a lot. The depth of snow in my garden reduced quite markedly by dawn, 7-10cm being typical, with some grass starting to show, although with some significant drifting along all the hedgerows.

The 1st March was exceptionally cold. At no point during daylight hours was the temperature $>-2^{\circ}\text{C}$, and much of the time it was around -3.5°C . Even Scilly was continually below freezing for the 24 hours ending 18:00 on 1st March!

Patchy light snow became moderate from 14:00 onwards. By late afternoon the cover was back $>15\text{cm}$ with significant drifts along hedgerows .



My garden, mid afternoon on 1st March.

Although the snow was continuous for several hours, it never matched the intensity of 28th February.

After a heavy burst of snow around 22:00, the temperature finally edged just above freezing and the snow turned to a very icy sort of rain. At some point in the early hours the temperature rose to 3.9°C , but dropped back by dawn.

The early hours of the 2nd also saw an easterly coastal gale. There were gusts $>60\text{mph}$ at Land's End. This, combined with low pressure and Spring tides resulted in some coastal flooding on the east side of the Lizard peninsula.

The 2nd was a bleak day, with the temperature 1°C to 2°C much of the time, with rain & sleet.

The minimum temperature of -4.3°C on 1st March shattered my previous March record of -2.6°C on 28/3/13. In fact it was almost as low as my lowest ever February temperature, -4.8 on 3/2/12. My records start 1992.

Graham Easterling - Penzance

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