

J. FINDLAY  
Note  
file 1  
in book

65 Meter Radiotelescope Project  
Victor Herrero  
Memorandum # 2  
October 23, 1970

Thermal climatology from Site Survey files, for Performance Evaluation purposes.

To: J. Findlay, S. von Hoerner

On October 21, Sebastian asked me to collect samples of data on temperature fluctuations at locations representative of those currently contemplated as possible sites for the telescope.

I include in this memorandum the following data:

a) Southwest desert plain sites

Annual climatological summary for Tucson  
3-hourly observations for Tucson in July 1970

b) Arizona-New Mexico mountain sites

Weekly temperature fluctuation summaries for Kitt Peak and related Arizona Mountains  
Microthermal fluctuations for Kitt Peak and Junipero Serra (California)  
Thermo-hydrographic record for 6 days in July 1970 at Kitt Peak

c) California mountain sites

Junipero Serra and Piper Mountain monthly temperature fluctuation summary  
Thermograph record sample for Junipero Serra, Piper Mountain and Lick Observatory (Mt. Hamilton)

d) Chilean sites

Monthly summaries for Cerro Tololo, La Peineta and Checo  
Thermo-hydrographic records for Tololo, Copiapo and La Peineta



LOCAL CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
MAURICE H. STANS, Secretary
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
ENVIRONMENTAL DATA SERVICE

TUCSON, ARIZONA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
JULY 1970

Main data table with columns for Date, Temperature (Max, Min, Avg, Dep, Dew point), Degree days (Heating, Cooling), Weather types, Snow/ice pellets, Precipitation (Water, Snow), Wind (Resultant, Fastest), Sunshine (Hours, Percent), and Sky cover (Sunrise, Midnight). Includes monthly and seasonal summaries.

HOURLY PRECIPITATION (Water equivalent in inches)

Hourly precipitation table with columns for A.M. Hour ending at (1-12) and P.M. Hour ending at (1-12) and rows for each hour of the month.

\* Extreme temperatures for the month. May be the last of more than one occurrence.
- Below zero temperature or negative departure from normal.
+ 70° at Alaskan stations.
+ Also on an earlier date, or dates.
X Heavy fog restricts visibility to 1/4 mile or less.
T In the Hourly Precipitation table and in columns 9, 10, and 11 indicates an amount too small to measure.
The season for degree days begins with July for heating and with January for cooling.
Data in columns 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15 are based on 8 observations per day at 3-hour intervals.
Wind directions are those from which the wind blows. Resultant wind is the vector sum of wind directions and speeds divided by the number of observations.
Figures for directions are tens of degrees from true North; i.e., 09 = East, 18 = South, 27 = West, 36 = North, and 00 = Calm. When directions are in tens of degrees in Col. 17, entries in Col. 16 are fastest observed 1-minute speeds. If the / appears in Col. 17, speeds are gusts.

Any errors detected will be corrected and changes in summary data will be annotated in the annual summary.

Subscription Price: Local Climatological Data \$1.00 per year including annual Summary if published. Single copy: 10 cents for monthly Summary; 15 cents for annual Summary. Checks or money orders should be made payable and remittances and correspondence should be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

I certify that this is an official publication of the Environmental Science Services Administration, and is compiled from records on file at the National Climatic Center, Asheville, North Carolina 28801.

William H. Hoggard
Director, National Climatic Center

SUMMARY BY HOURS
AVERAGES
Table with columns for Hour, Max Temp, Min Temp, Avg Temp, Dew Point, Wind Speed, Wind Dir, Sunshine, and Sky Cover.

OBSERVATIONS AT 3-HOUR INTERVALS

Table with columns for HOUR, SKY COVER, CEILING, WIND, WIND DIRECTION, WIND VELOCITY, WEATHER, DRY BULB, WET BULB, REL. HUM., D.W.P.T., WIND, SKY COVER, CEILING, WIND, WIND DIRECTION, WIND VELOCITY, WEATHER, DRY BULB, WET BULB, REL. HUM., D.W.P.T., WIND, SKY COVER, CEILING, WIND, WIND DIRECTION, WIND VELOCITY, WEATHER, DRY BULB, WET BULB, REL. HUM., D.W.P.T., WIND, SKY COVER, CEILING, WIND, WIND DIRECTION, WIND VELOCITY, WEATHER, DRY BULB, WET BULB, REL. HUM., D.W.P.T., WIND. Rows represent 3-hour intervals from Day 01 to Day 31.

NOTES

CEILING COLUMN-- UNL indicates an unlimited ceiling.

WEATHER COLUMN--

- T Tornado
Thunderstorm
Squall
R Rain
RW Rain showers
ZR Freezing rain
ZL Drizzle
ZD Freezing drizzle
S Snow
SP Snow pellets
IC Ice crystals
SN Snow showers
SG Snow grains
IP Ice pellets
H Hail
F Fog
IF Ice fog
GF Ground fog
BD Blowing dust
BS Blowing sand
BN Blowing snow
BY Blowing spray
K Smoke
H Haze
D Dust

WIND COLUMNS--

Directions are those from which the wind blows, indicated in tens of degrees from true North; i. e., 09 for East, 18 for South, 27 for West. Entry of 00 in the direction column indicates calm.

Speed is expressed in knots; multiply by 1.15 to convert to miles per hour.

ADDITIONAL DATA Other observational data contained in records on file can be furnished at cost via microfilm, microfiche, or paper copies of the original records. Inquiries as to availability and costs should be addressed to: Director, National Climatic Center, Federal Building, Asheville, N. C. 28801

STATION: TUCSON ARIZONA

YEAR & MONTH: 70 07



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
 MAURICE H. STANS, Secretary  
 ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
 ROBERT M. WHITE, Administrator  
 ENVIRONMENTAL DATA SERVICE  
 WOODROW C. JACOBS, Director

# LOCAL CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA ANNUAL SUMMARY WITH COMPARATIVE DATA

1969

TUCSON, ARIZONA

## NARRATIVE CLIMATOLOGICAL SUMMARY

Within 10 to 15 miles of the station the terrain is flat or gently rolling, with many dry washes. There is a general increase in elevation from north and northwest to south and southeast. Rugged mountain ranges and jutting hills encircle the valley floor. The higher mountains to the north, east, and south reach up to over 5,000 feet above the airport, and are at distances of 25 to 40 miles. To the west, the hills and smaller mountains range from 500 to 4,000 feet above the airport; all are more than 5 miles distant.

The soil cover is rather sandy, and native vegetation is mostly brush, cacti, and small trees, typical of the low latitude desert climate. The metropolitan area of Tucson lies at the foot of the Catalina Mountains, to the north of the airport. As a result of the lower elevation and more protected location of the City, recorded maximum temperatures are usually higher there than at the airport and minimum temperatures are correspondingly lower than at the airport.

As might be expected from its geographical situation, the climate of Tucson is prominently characterized by a long, hot season, beginning in April and ending in October. From May through September, maximum temperatures above 90° are the rule, with the mean maximum occasionally exceeding 100° in July. Under usual conditions, the diurnal temperature range is large, averaging almost 30°, although it may exceed 40°. Clear skies or very thin high clouds permit intense surface heating during the day and active radiational cooling at night, a process enhanced by the characteristic atmospheric dryness. The average growing season in the Tucson area approximates 250 days.

The distribution of precipitation through the year is such that more than 50 percent of the annual amount usually falls between July 1 and September 15 and a secondary maximum from December through March provides over 20 percent of the yearly precipitation. During the July-September period scattered convective or orographic showers and thunderstorms occur that often fill dry washes to overflowing. On occasion, brief, torrential downpours cause spectacular and destructive flash floods in sections of the metropolitan area, sometimes from short-period falls of over 1.50 inches. Hail rarely falls in thunderstorms, and sleet is an almost unknown form of precipitation. The December through March precipitation is more

general and occurs as prolonged rainstorms that provide much needed replenishment of ground water. During these storms, snow often falls on the higher mountains, but snow in Tucson itself is infrequent, particularly in accumulations exceeding an inch in depth.

Relative humidity shows a pronounced daily oscillation in line with the usual large daily range in temperature. From near the first of the year, the average relative humidity decreases steadily until July and the beginning of the thunderstorm season, when it shows a marked increase. By the middle of September, and end of the thunderstorm season, it decreases again, resuming the upward climb in late November. Only occasionally during the summer is relative humidity high enough to produce appreciable physical discomfort, and then only for short periods. During the hot season, relative humidity values may fall below 10 percent during afternoons, and sometimes below 5 percent. The low average wet bulb temperature during hot weather makes evaporative air coolers effective most of the time.

Tucson lies in the zone receiving more sunshine than any other section of the United States; the persistence of the bright sunshine is one of the most noteworthy features of this desert climate. Cloudless days are commonplace, and average cloudiness, much of it being very thin cirriform clouds, is low.

Surface winds are generally light, with no important seasonal changes in either velocities or prevailing direction. Occasional windstorms cause localized duststorms, particularly in the outlying sections of Tucson where the ground has been disturbed in numerous development areas. During the spring months, winds may briefly be strong enough to cause some damage to trees and buildings. Wind velocities and directions are influenced to an important extent by the surrounding mountains, as well as by the general slope of the terrain. With weak pressure gradients, local winds tend to be in the SE quadrant during the night and early morning hours, veering to NW during the day. Highest velocities usually occur with winds from the SW and E to S.

While dust and haze of local origin are frequently visible, their effect on the general clarity of the atmosphere is not great. Visibility values are normally high; and fog is extremely rare.



AVERAGE TEMPERATURE

Table with columns for Year (1931-1969), months (Jan-Dec), and Annual. Rows contain temperature values in degrees Fahrenheit.

TOTAL DEGREE DAYS

TUCSON, ARIZONA

Table with columns for Season, months (July-June), and Total. Rows contain total degree days for each year from 1931 to 1969.

TOTAL PRECIPITATION

Table with columns for Year (1931-1969), months (Jan-Dec), and Annual. Rows contain total precipitation values in inches.

TOTAL SNOWFALL

Table with columns for Season, months (July-June), and Total. Rows contain total snowfall values in inches.

Record mean values above (not adjusted for instrument location changes listed in the Station Location table) are means for the period beginning in 1900.

# Indicates a break in the data sequence during the year, or season, due to a station move or relocation of instruments. See Station Location table. Temperature and precipitation are from the University of Arizona location through May 1940 and from Airport locations thereafter. Heating Degree Days from Airport locations for the entire period of the table.

# STATION LOCATION

TUCSON, ARIZONA

Location	Occupied from	Occupied to	Airline distance and direction from previous location	Latitude North	Longitude West	Elevation above								Remarks	
						Sea level	Ground								Sea level
							Ground at temperature site	Wind instruments	Extreme thermometers	Psychrometer	Telepsychrometer	Tipping bucket rain gage	Weighing rain gage		
<u>COOPERATIVE</u> University of Arizona	10-1891	Present		32° 14'	110° 57'	2391	a40	b5	b5				3	# 2440	a - 45 ft. to September, 1894. b - 11 ft. to September, 1894. # - Added June, 1946.
<u>AIRPORT</u> Tucson Municipal (Later Davis-Monthan Air Force Base)	1/22/30	10/14/48		32° 11'	110° 55'	2553	c33	g5	g5	f14	d14	e14			Army Signal Service to Nov. 1932. c - Installed 6/17/40 d - Installed 6/17/40 at 3 ft. and moved to roof 7/23/47. e - Unknown to 6/17/40, 5 ft. to 7/23/47. f - Installed 10/1/47. g - Unknown prior to 6/17/40.
Tucson Municipal	10/14/48	10/15/58	4.9 mi. SW	32° 08'	110° 57'	2558	33	5	5	4	5		5		New Airport
Tucson Municipal ††	10/15/58	Present	4500 ft. E	32° 07'	110° 56'	2584	20	5	5	5	3		4		†† Tucson International Airport effective 3/13/63.

Requests for additional information should be directed to the Weather Bureau Office for which this summary was issued.

Sale Price: 15 cents per copy. Checks and money orders should be made payable to the Superintendent of Documents. Remittances and correspondence regarding this publication should be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402

FINAL REPORT  
ON THE  
SITE SELECTION SURVEY  
FOR THE  
NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

March 1, 1958

A. B. Meinel

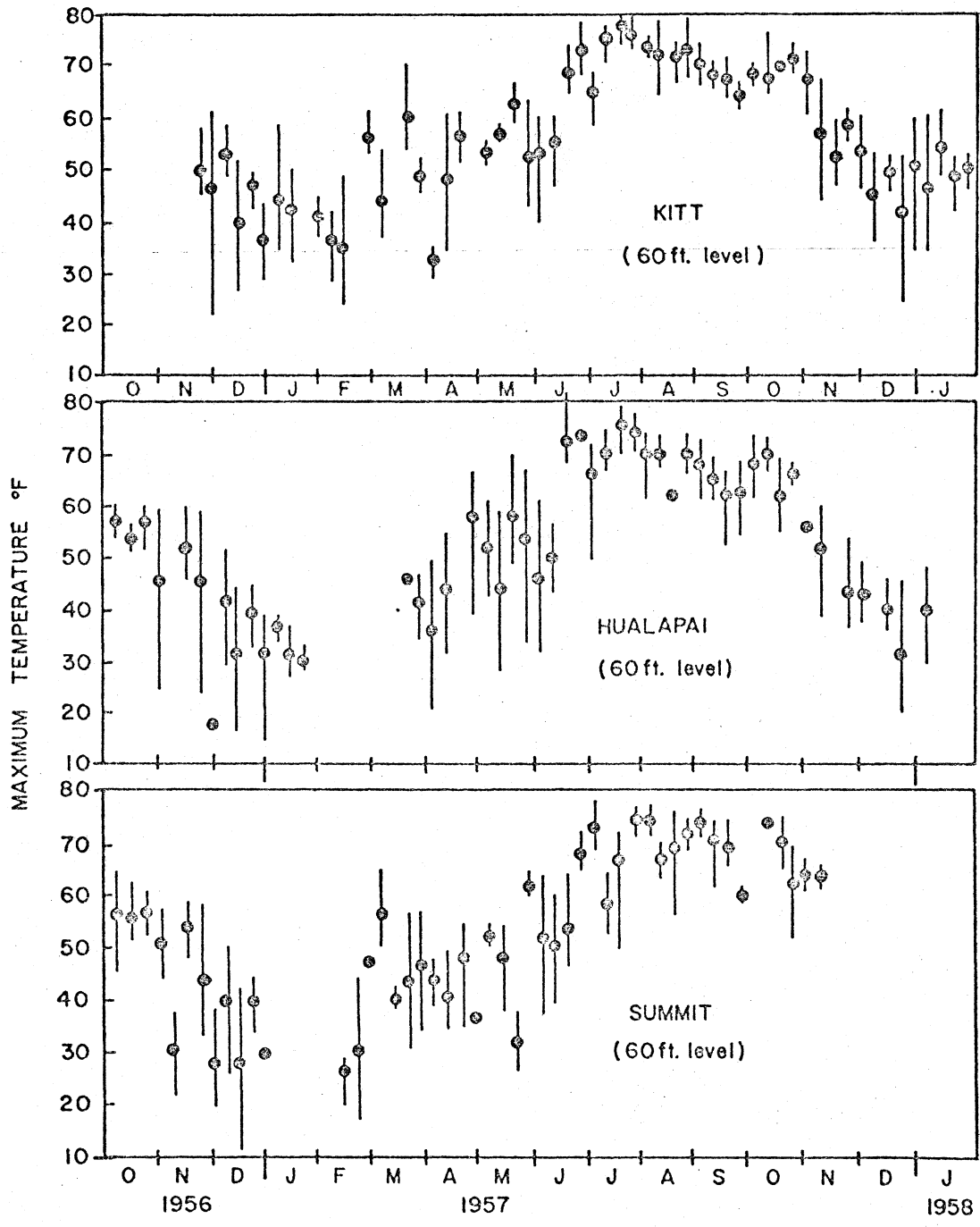
The research reported in this document was performed under grants from the National Science Foundation to the University of Michigan during the three years of 1955, 1956 and 1957, and under a contract with the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, Inc. in 1958.

This new edition was prepared by Helmut A. Abt and Eleanor S. Biggs; new drawings were made by DeWayne Graham and Hugh Ferguson.

Contributions from the Kitt Peak National Observatory, No. 45.

October 1963





WEEKLY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE & DAILY-AVERAGE RANGE

FIG. 23

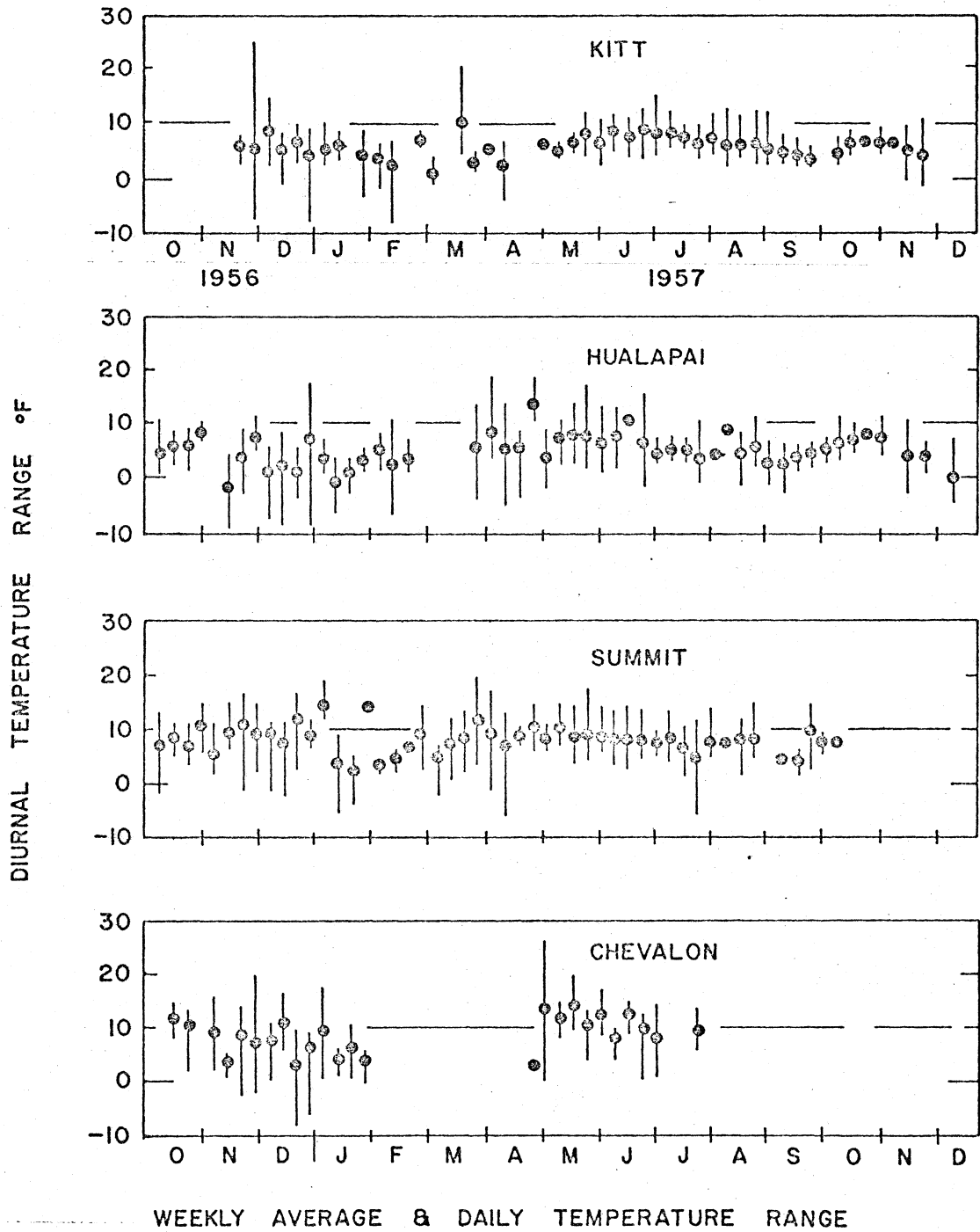
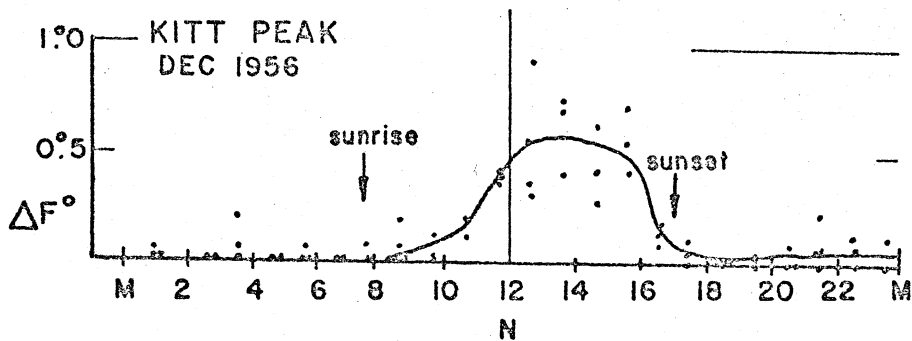
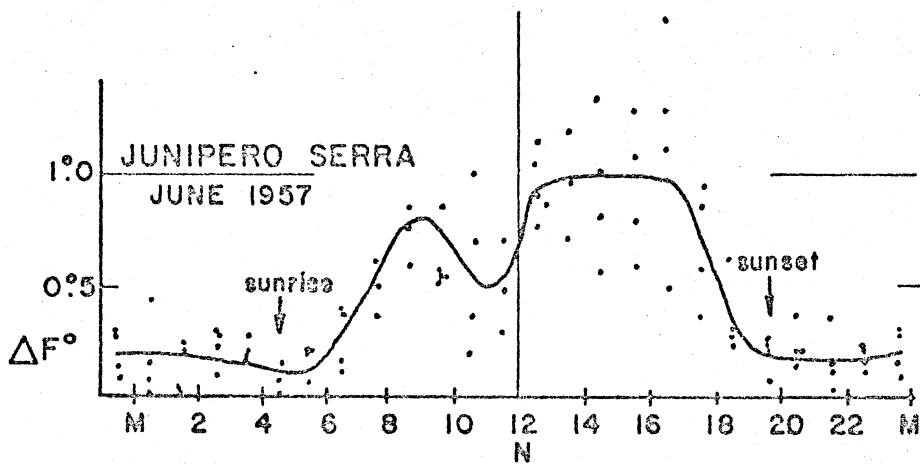
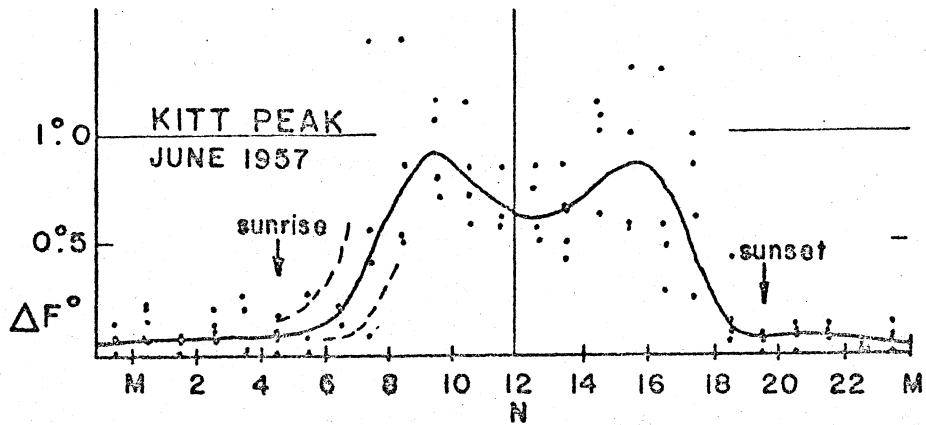


FIG. 24



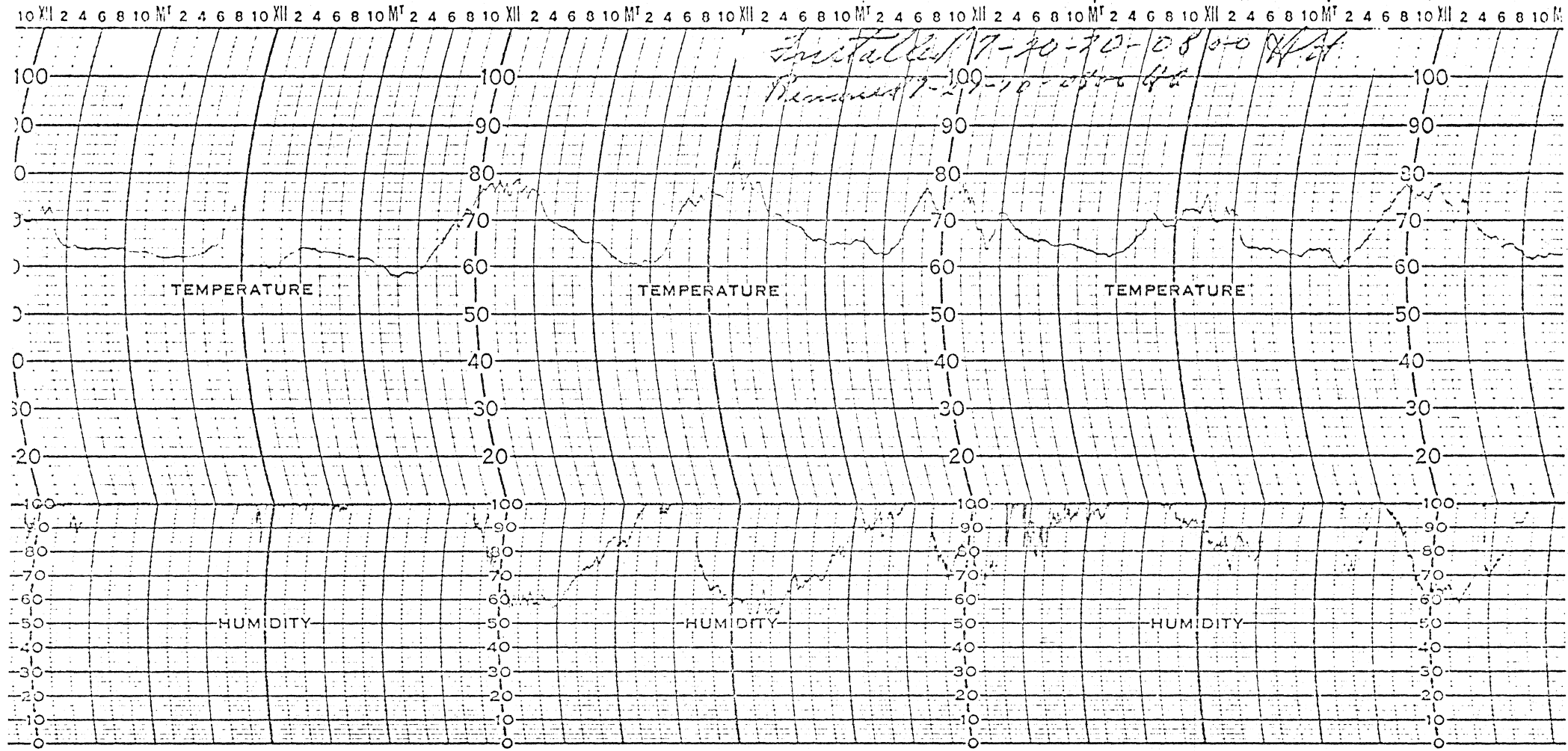
DIURNAL MICROTHERMAL FLUCTUATIONS

$T_{max} - T_{min}$  ( $^\circ F$ ) for 3<sup>m</sup> intervals

60 ft. above ground

FIG. 25

Installed 7-20-70-08  
 Rechecked 7-29-70-05



JULY 1970  
 KITT PEAK

# THE CALIFORNIA SITE SURVEY\*

MERLE F. WALKER

Lick Observatory, Board of Studies in Astronomy and Astrophysics  
University of California, Santa Cruz

Received March 5, 1970

This paper summarizes the results of a two-year survey of potential dark-sky observing sites in California south of the latitude of San Francisco. This survey was undertaken in 1965 to locate a new site for future large optical telescopes since the growth of lights and smog near Mount Hamilton are increasingly limiting the usefulness of that site for observations of very faint objects and for photometry.

The best observing conditions appear to occur along the coast, very close to the ocean where the cold ocean current holds down the height of the inversion layer, and where there exists a laminar airflow off the ocean, minimizing the optical turbulence and placing the site upwind from sources of smog.

## I. Introduction

In describing Mount Hamilton in 1879, S. W. Burnham (1887) wrote: "There can be no doubt that Mount Hamilton offers advantages superior to those found at any point where a permanent observatory has been established." In recent years, however, the quality of the observing conditions at Mount Hamilton has begun to deteriorate due to the increase in lights and smog in the San Francisco Bay area, and, in particular, in the Santa Clara valley. By the early 1960's it had become clear that while certain types of work, such as high-dispersion spectroscopy, could continue indefinitely at Mount Hamilton, a new site would have to be found for observations of very faint objects and for photometry. In 1965, the Regents of the University of California authorized the Lick Observatory to conduct a two-year survey of possible dark-sky sites for future optical telescopes. At the request of the Observatory Director, Dr. A. E. Whitford, I undertook the supervision of this survey.

The characteristics that a new site should possess include:

1. Dark sky.
2. High transparency.
3. High percentage of clear weather.
4. Minimum optical turbulence.

\*Contributions from the Lick Observatory, No. 314.

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TABLE I  
WEATHER OBSERVATIONS AT JUNIPERO SERRA PEAK

	Temperature, °F				Average Δ Temp. During Night °F	Relative Humidity, %			Total Precipitation, Inches	
	Maximum	Minimum	Average	During Night			Rain	Snow*		
				Highest		Lowest			Average	
1965										
Aug	77	72.7	58	60.6	3.8	33	0	20.1	0.00	0.0
Sep	72	60.0	37	51.9	3.6	100	12	64.7	0.00	0.0
Oct	84	69.3	31	54.8	3.3	95	2	29.9	0.02	0.0
Nov	64	48.6	24	39.0	2.1	97	15	65.9	13.35	4.0
Dec	64	39.9	16	31.0	3.4	97	10	57.4	3.63	11.6
1966										
Jan	50	39.6	22	31.5	3.6	100	2	51.4	0.63	12.6
Feb	54	38.6	19	29.6	3.4	98	0	55.4	1.69	0.9
Mar	74	50.8	13	38.4	3.3	98	0	43.7	0.06	7.5
Apr	76	60.0	29	44.4	2.9	100	4	43.4	0.40	0.0
May	76	63.6	35	47.5	2.7	100	11	43.9	0.00	0.0
Jun	85	69.5	39	54.4	2.4	100	2	37.1	0.10	0.0
Jul	84	73.3	44	57.2	2.6	90	13	39.8	0.50	0.0
Aug	86	78.7	43	62.5	2.7	95	8	33.0	0.01	0.0
Sep	81	68.0	39	52.7	3.4	98	12	44.2	0.16	0.0
Oct	76	63.4	32	49.5	3.9	92	10	36.8	0.00	0.0
Nov	71	47.4	24	38.0	3.8	100	14	61.0	6.66	1.0
Dec	62	45.6	19	36.0	3.5	97	2	45.3	15.79	Trace
1967										
Jan	61	45.2	19	36.4	4.2	99	11	47.9	8.78	10.0
Feb	63	49.6	20	38.0	5.4	100	4	35.8	0.00	6.1
Mar	59	41.2	17	30.1	3.2	100	2	69.4	6.31	34.1
Apr	42	32.3	17	24.4	3.0	100	14	86.7	0.00	68.0
May	81	57.3	28	44.5	2.8	98	8	49.9	0.69	0.0
Jun	84	64.8	31	51.4	2.2	96	6	46.1	0.15	0.5
Jul	84	78.9	58	63.9	3.0	77	11	33.9	0.14	0.0
Aug	86	81.5	63	67.6	1.6	50	15	33.8	0.00	0.0
Sep	78	70.3	47	56.8	3.0	96	23	50.8	1.83	0.0
Oct	72	64.0	38	51.5	3.4	98	5	37.5	0.64	0.0

\*Includes sleet and hail

has been a well-known feature over the years and has been one of the great advantages of that site, since the effect of thermal change on the instruments is minimized. This temperature pattern is presumably related to the fact that near the coast the height of the inversion layer is low so that Junipero Serra Peak and Mount Hamilton are above it. In addition to the diurnal changes, Figure 3 also illustrates the slow variations in temperature with amplitudes of five or ten degrees and periods of the order of ten days observed at all three sites. Note that the variation of temperature during the night at

1966  
Mar  
Apr  
May  
Jun  
Jul  
Aug  
Sep  
Oct\*

\*Obse

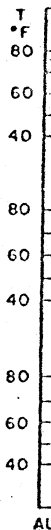


FIG. 3  
Serra

THE CALIFORNIA SITE SURVEY

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TABLE II

WEATHER OBSERVATIONS AT PIPER MOUNTAIN

Year	Total Precipitation, Inches	
	Rain	Snow*
1961	0.00	0.0
1962	0.00	0.0
1963	0.02	0.0
1964	13.35	4.0
1965	3.63	11.6
1966	11.4	12.6
1967	15.4	0.9
1968	13.7	7.5
1969	13.4	0.0
1970	13.9	0.0
1971	17.1	0.0
1972	18.8	0.0
1973	13.0	0.0
1974	14.2	0.0
1975	16.8	0.0
1976	11.0	1.0
1977	15.3	15.79
1978	3.78	10.0
1979	0.00	6.1
1980	6.31	34.1
1981	0.00	68.0
1982	0.69	0.0
1983	0.15	0.5
1984	0.14	0.0
1985	0.00	0.0
1986	1.83	0.0
1987	0.64	0.0

Year	Temperature, °F				Average Δ Temp. During Night °F	Relative Humidity, % During Night			Total Precipitation, Inches	
	Highest	Average	Lowest	Average		Highest	Lowest	Average	Rain	Snow
1966										
Mar	70	49.3	18	38.7	4.4	50	2	17.1	0.00	0.0
Apr	67	54.7	21	40.7	6.7	60	2	16.6	0.00	Trace
May	74	64.1	35	50.9	4.8	78	1	19.8	0.19	0.0
Jun	80	69.1	43	57.4	5.3	42	2	15.1	0.03	0.0
Jul	84	76.0	50	61.9	5.7	94	1	17.3	0.02	0.0
Aug	86	76.6	48	62.0	4.6	50	0	20.1	0.03	0.0
Sep	76	68.1	36	54.3	5.7	94	6	26.1	0.45	0.0
Oct*	66	62.0	41	47.0	7.9	54	17	34.0	0.00	0.0

\*Observations from Oct. 1-9 only

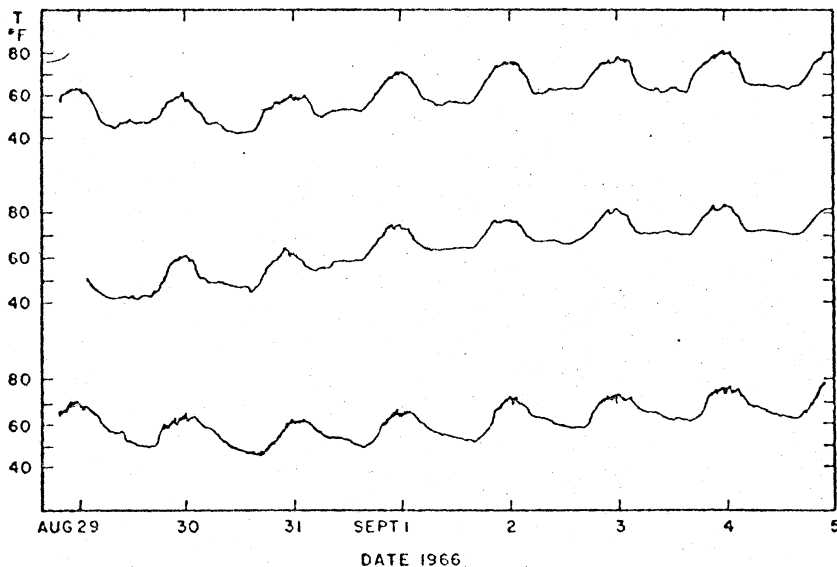


Fig. 3 — Simultaneous thermograph records obtained at (top to bottom): Junipero Serra Peak, Mount Hamilton, and Piper Mountain.

as been one of the normal change on pattern is presum- it of the inversion ant Hamilton are e 3 also illustrates des of five or ten erved at all three ring the night at

Chile Site Survey  
Technical Report No. 2

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ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVING CONDITIONS IN NORTH-CENTRAL CHILE

By

Jurgen Stock

May, 1963  
Kitt Peak National Observatory  
Tucson, Arizona



TABLE VIII  
TEMPERATURE DATA FOR TOLOLO AND LA PEINETA

Tololo

	Maximum Temperature, °F			Minimum Temperature, °F			Average During Clear Nights	
	High	Low	Aver.	High	Low	Aver.	Max.	Min.
August	71	44	61	56	26	46		
September	73	36	62	59	18	46		
October	73	34	63	58	32	47		
November	76	62	70	62	48	54		
December	73	66	71	66	47	56		
January	79	65	71	64	46	55		
February	75	65	72	61	49	56		
March	77	47	70	63	42	55	70	56
April	71	58	65	57	43	51	64	52
May	71	40	61	57	33	49	66	53
June	69	25	45	55	18	36	51	41
July	67	28	52	56	23	43	57	47
August	69	28	54	60	23	42	58	46
September	67	31	48	56	21	37	50	39
October	67	34	57	54	24	44	61	47
November	70	51	60	56	35	45	62	46
December	67	56	62	56	40	47	62	49
January	68	53	62	54	37	48	62	48
February	68	58	63	53	42	49	63	49
March	69	51	61	55	35	48	61	48
April	67	43	58	54	30	46	59	48
May	65	29	53	52	26	42	56	44
June	60	30	45	53	22	35	49	39
July	60	32	48	53	23	38	50	39
August	64	22	51	53	16	39	56	44
September	62	33	50	46	22	32	52	38
October	62	32	52	53	22	40		
November	69	49	58	53	33	45		
December	63	53	59	52	39	46		

TABLE VIII (contd.)  
TEMPERATURE DATA FOR TOLOLO AND LA PEINETA

La Peineta

	Maximum Temperature, °F			Minimum Temperature, °F			Average During Clear Nights	
	High	Low	Aver.	High	Low	Aver.	Max.	Min.
January	65	53	58	51	38	42	58	42
February	65	56	61	50	42	46	61	46
March	65	55	60	49	40	44	60	44
April	67	44	58	50	33	44	59	44
May	63	42	54	49	26	40	56	40
June	60	39	49	46	26	36	50	36
July	59	32	48	46	20	35	48	36
August	60	35	54	46	22	40	54	40
September	62	43	54	46	30	38		
October	64	36	53	48	24	38		
November	64	51	58	47	35	42		
December	61	55	55	48	32	40		

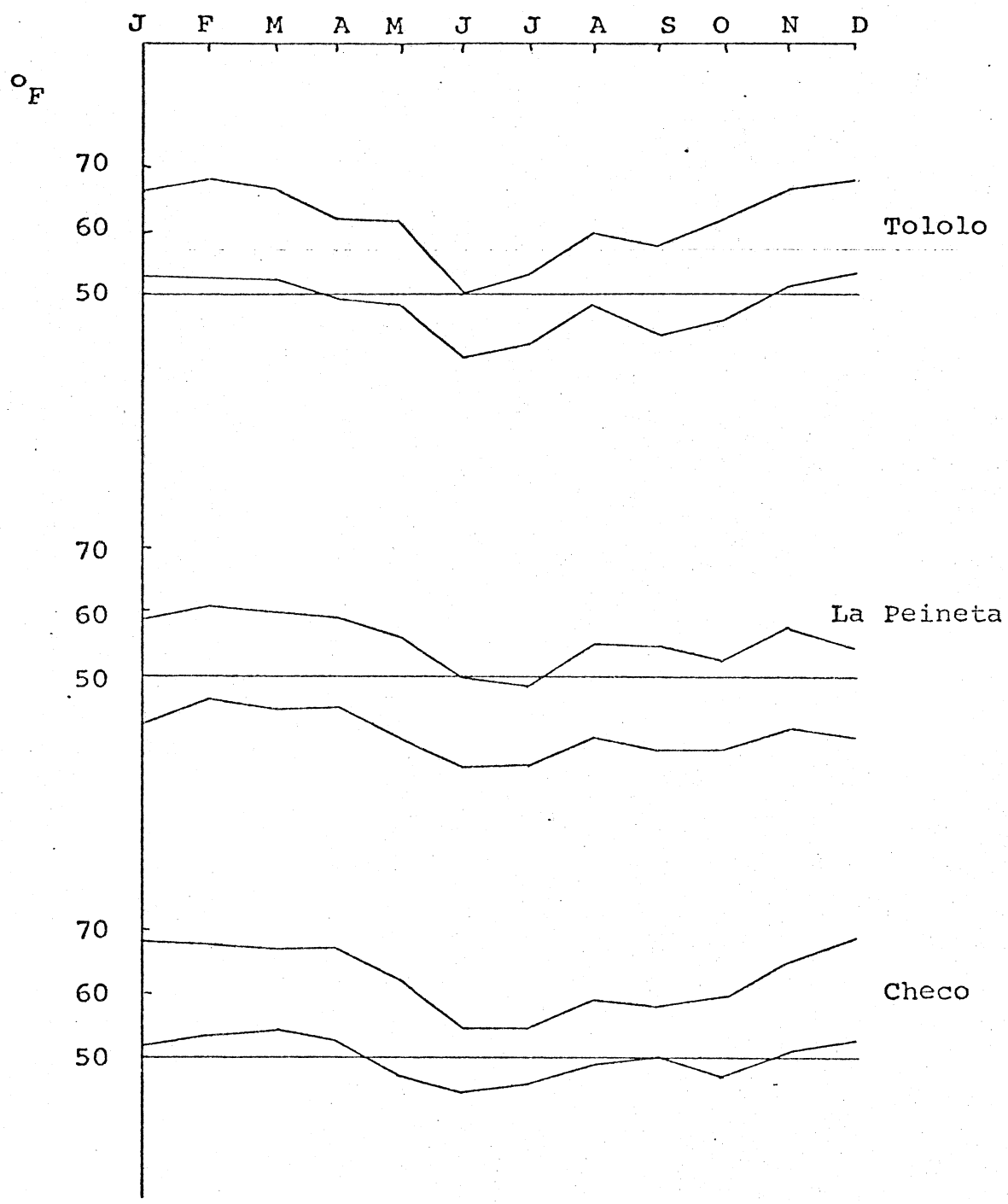


Figure 22. Average maximum and minimum temperatures during clear-weather periods for three sites.

May 1961

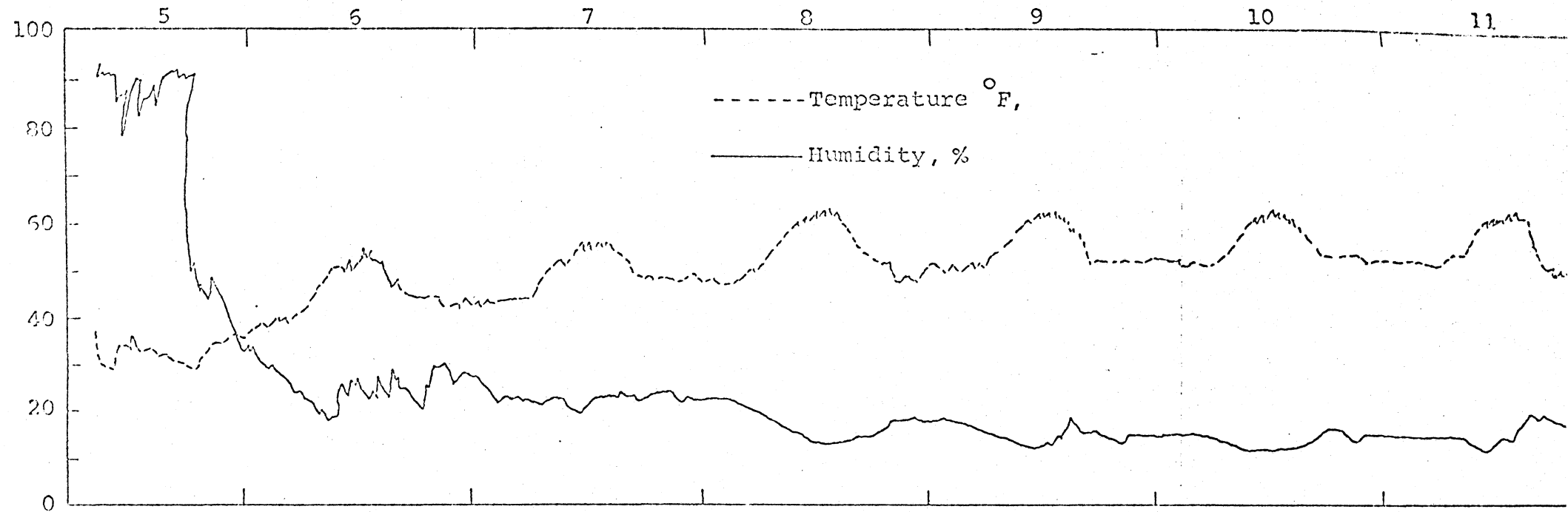


Figure 23. Typical winter thermo-hygrograph record from Tololo.

Jan. 1963

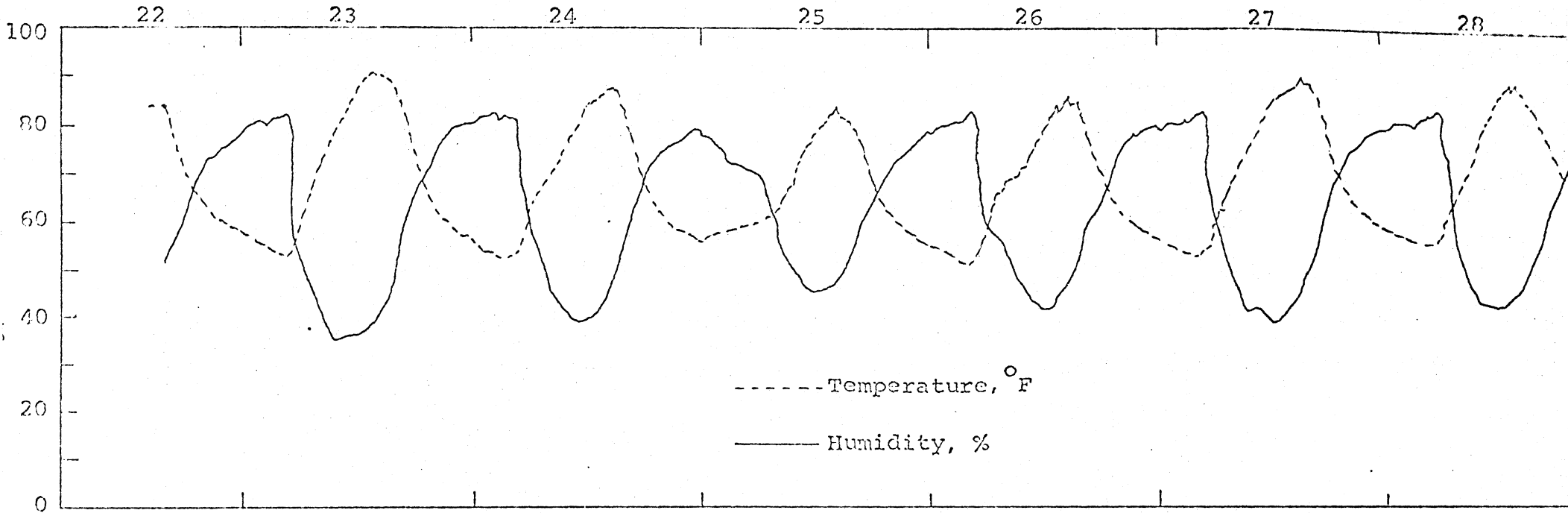


Figure 24. Typical thermo-hygrograph record from Copiapó

Feb. 1963

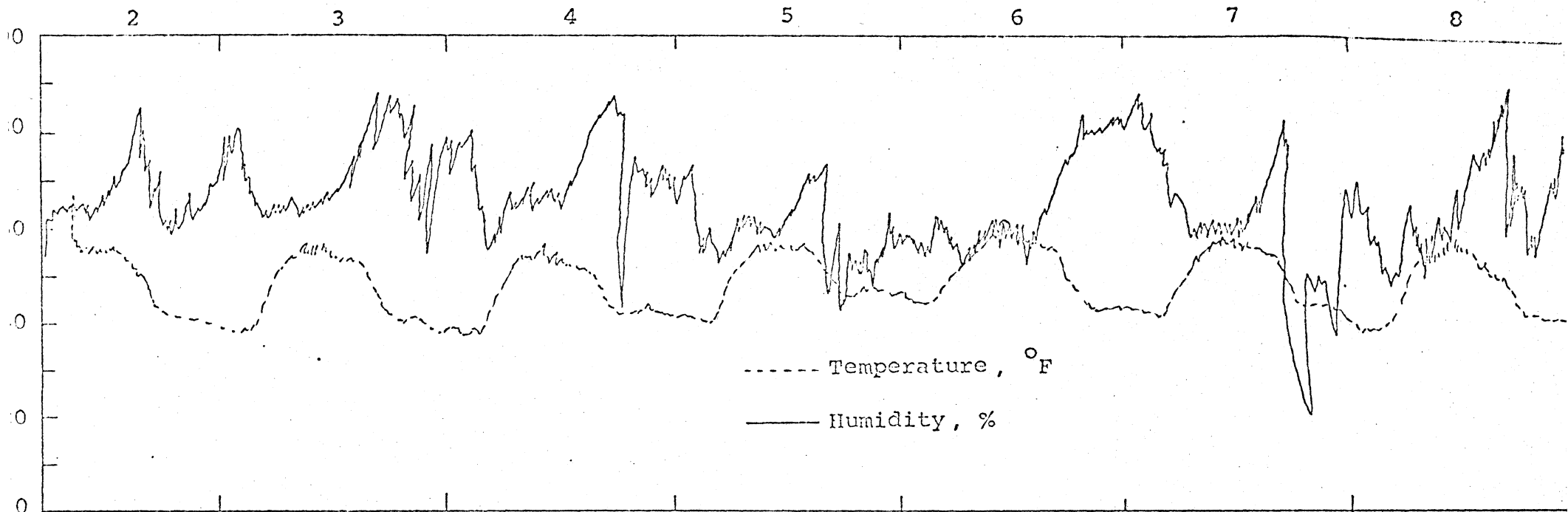


Figure 25. Typical summer thermo-hygrograph record from La Peineta.