Hi!

I've been racking my brains and the web for the best part of a day,
but have not managed to find anything useful to solve my problem,
which is this:

I've got an automatically generated .txt file of rainfall measurements
which I need to read. I'm having trouble with the format of the file,
which looks more or less like this:

```
 ----------------------------------------------------- -----
[block of not-so-interesting information]

     Date Jan  Feb  Mar  Apr May  Jun  Jul  Aug  Sep
Oct  Nov  Dec
     1  0.5  1.4    .  4.7   .    .
0.1   .    .    .    .
     2  0.6  0.3  3.9    .   .    .    .    .
4.0   .    .
     3  5.8  1.6  4.9  0.1 3.1  3.4  4.4  0.2  0.9
1.4   .
     4  2.0  5.1  1.9  0.2 0.5  6.7  3.3    .  1.1
0.1   .
     5  6.8  0.6  9.7    . 2.7  0.8  1.6  2.4
0.7   .    .
```
... and so forth, for an entire year. - a 13x31 table of floats.

[new block of non-helpful stuff]

[new block of data for another year]
```
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```
etc..., for a total of ten years.

The table of figures is actually in straight columns, a column per
month, with a dot wherever a measurement is zero. (There are also
blank spaces at the bottom of each table, for dates such as feb 30th.)
I've managed to work around the headers and identify where a table
starts, and what I wanted to do was to read the entire thing into a
nice structure array I've prepared. However, when using READF, IDL
stops when trying to convert a dot to a float (understandably), and I
haven't managed to solve it with a format code. I have thought about
using STRSPLIT and WHERE to replace them, but then I have to go one
line at a time, and I was rather hoping to make something a little
more elegant.

Does anyone see a way around these dots?