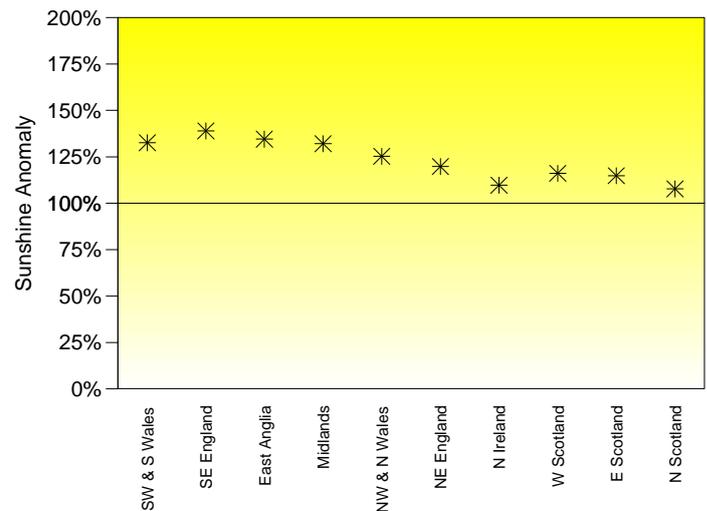
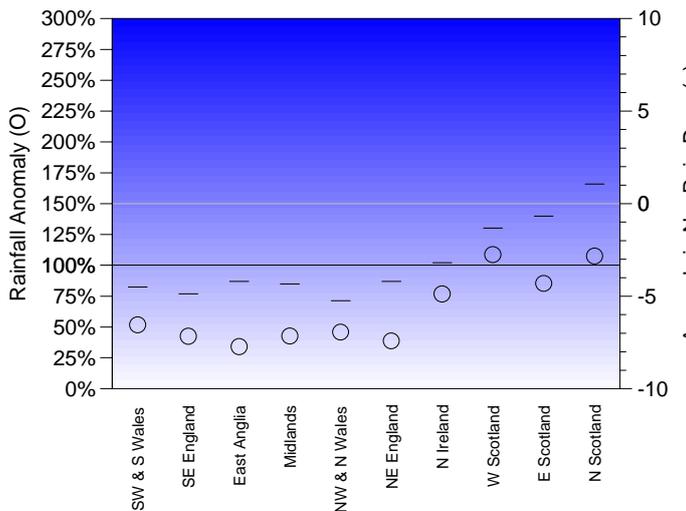


Extremes for April 2010	
Hottest:	23.1°C Leigh-on-Sea 2, Essex, 29th
Coldest:	-7.0°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 2nd
Most Rain:	54.4mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty, 5th
Most Sun:	13.9hrs Coleshill, Warwickshire, 17th
Windiest:	68mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 5th
Warmest:	11.3°C London Olympic Park South, Greater London
Coolest:	5.8°C Loch Glascarnoch, Highland
Wettest:	192.0mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	0.0mm Cambridge University, Cambridgeshire
Sunniest:	281.6hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	108.3hrs Lerwick, Shetland



Despite its reputation for showers, April is often one of our driest months. Night frosts are still common and snow is not unusual - but the sun now has much greater strength and its return, with the profusion of spring flowers, makes a welcome change after the sombre days of winter.

April began rather cold and unsettled following the very wintry finish to March. On the 1st, skiers at Aviemore, Highland enjoyed excellent conditions with 39cm of lying snow. A band of persistent rain on the 2nd was followed by showers on the 3rd but a ridge brought brighter skies on Easter Sunday. Active fronts on the 5th and 6th meant it was wet and windy in the north and west, but sunnier and warmer in the south and east. After clearance of a front late on the 7th pressure rose strongly. It became settled and warm by day although cold at night with some frosts (e.g. -2.9°C (27°F) at Benson, Oxfordshire early on the 8th) By the 11th, a raw north-east wind was picking up in the south - but it remained dry. On the 14th the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland began to spew black smoke and white steam into the atmosphere - and from the 15th, ash from the volcanic plume spread south-east towards the UK. Such was the pattern of upper winds over the following week that unprecedented flight disruption followed for much of central and northern Europe. Amidst all the chaos, the UK continued to bask in settled conditions, though Arctic air, sleet and even snow showers affected Scotland periodically from the 17th. Chilly north-west winds then covered the whole of the UK on the 20th, and frosts were widespread over the next few nights whilst days were brilliantly sunny. It became warm again by the 24th with widespread maxima above 19°C (66°F) over England and Wales but a front moving eastward on the 25th brought showery rain. South-west winds ensured that very warm conditions returned during the final week. Leeming, North Yorkshire recorded 22°C (72°F) on the 28th. Fronts plagued the north and west - and Welsh and Channel coasts were often shrouded in sea fog. During the last two days there was a gradual breakdown to cooler, unsettled weather just in time for the Bank Holiday. For April and the UK as a whole, daytime temperatures were above average but night time temperatures near normal - the result of frequent clear skies. It was a sunny month everywhere and a notably dry one for England and Wales.

In the USA, a heat wave affected the north east. On the 7th temperatures soared to 33°C (92°F) in Providence, Rhode Island and 34°C (93°F) in Hartford, Connecticut, while Boston reported 32°C (90°F) - the earliest ever date for a 90°F reading. Three weeks later, a late-season snowstorm battered New England with over 30cm of snow in an area from New York to Maine, causing travel chaos and numerous power outages. Jeffersonville, Vermont, topped the snowfall totals with 48cm (19in). On the 23rd a tornado hit the south-eastern state of Mississippi, killing at least 10 people. A church in Yazoo City was flattened and houses reduced to rubble and the National Guard was deployed to help in the search and rescue operation. The tornado was unusually large, measuring 1.75 miles wide and followed a 150-mile track from Tallulah, La., through Mississippi, before dissipating in Oktibbeha County in the north-east of the state. In South America, at least 20 people were killed in central Peru after heavy rains sparked a mudslide that engulfed a village in the Huanuco region on the 2nd. On the 4th & 5th 280 mm of rain fell within 24-hours in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - the heaviest rainfall event recorded in 48 years. At least 246 people were killed and thousands lost their homes as the deluge triggered mudslides which cascaded down hillsides and turned streets into raging torrents. On the sub-continent during April, 250,000 people were made homeless by a tornado which tore across isolated rural areas of northeast India and Bangladesh. Meanwhile, the Indian Capital Delhi reeled under heat wave conditions with temperatures soaring to 43°C (109°F) on the 11th. The west of Siberian Russia also basked in some unusual Spring warmth. At Omsk on the 27th temperatures reached 30°C (86°F) - remarkable for April this far north. In contrast, in the southern hemisphere, the world record low temperature for April was smashed (by several degrees) on the 23rd with an awesome -80°C (-112°F) at Vostok, Antarctica!