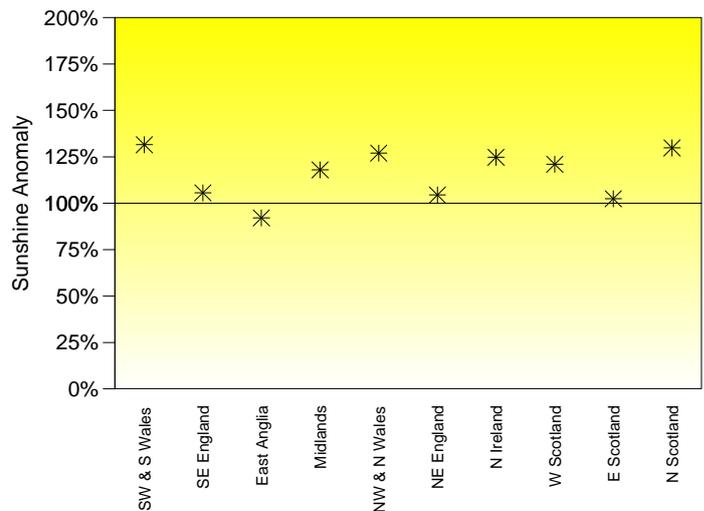
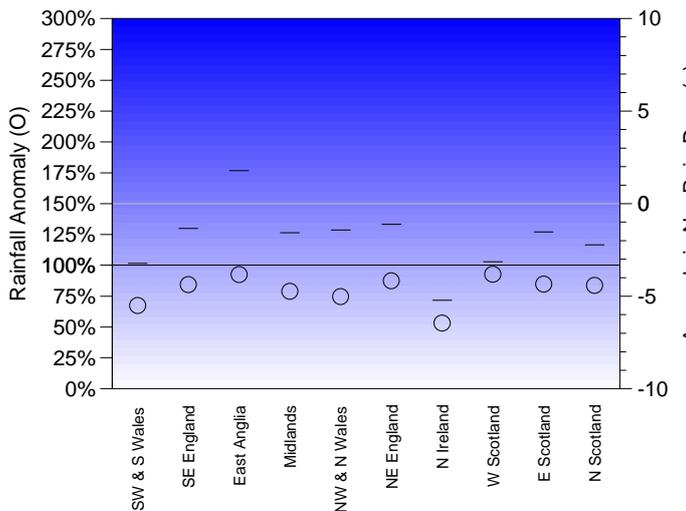


Extremes for October 2010		
Hottest:	23.2°C	Carrefour-au-Clercq, Channel Islands, 9th
Coldest:	-6.9°C	Corsock, Dumfries and Galloway, 25th
Most Rain:	59.0mm	Velindre, Powys, 3rd
Most Sun:	12.9hrs	Lyneham, Wiltshire, 4th
Windiest:	71mph	Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 29th
Warmest:	13.3°C	Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	7.1°C	Braemar No 2, Avon
Wettest:	305.8mm	Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	32.0mm	Gloucester, Gloucestershire
Sunniest:	165.2hrs	Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	39.2hrs	Swaffham, Norfolk



October can display marked contrasts in weather. Rain, gales, frosts and the first snow to whiten our northern hills may all feature, but there can also be golden, warm, hazy days as a reminder of summer just past. As the clocks go back at the month's end, however, it seems as if winter's dark and icy finger is beckoning.

October began wet and windy. 32.6mm of rain fell in 24 hours at Fylingdales, N. Yorks, and severe gales swept Shetland (gusts to 59 knots at Lerwick and Foula). More bands of rain spread northward from the south coast on the 2nd and 3rd but it remained unseasonably warm, and Manston, Kent, reached 19.9°C (68°F) on the 3rd. The mild, unsettled weather persisted as further fronts followed 4th-6th, but by the 7th, pressure was building to the east. A long settled spell ensued and although cloud amounts were variable, there were some warm and gloriously sunny days. Woodford, Greater Manchester, notched up 10.3 hours of bright sunshine on the 7th, while Chivenor, Devon, achieved 23.1°C (73°F) on the 8th. Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire, recorded 22.5°C (72°F) on the 10th. Temperatures fell during the following week in cloudier north-easterlies but the dry weather continued apart from a little light rain near eastern coasts. By the 17th high pressure had begun to retreat west and on the 18th and 19th bands of rain moved south across the UK driven by cold northerly winds. Snow and sleet fell on high ground in Scotland. Tyndrum, Perthshire, experienced a hard frost early on the 20th with a minimum of -5.0°C (23°F). Milder westerly winds briefly resumed but heavy rain on the night of the 22nd/23rd was followed by another surge of Arctic air. Levens Hall, Cumbria, dropped to -6.6°C (20°F) early on the 25th, while West Freugh, Dumfries and Galloway, recorded -5.2°C (23°F) - making it the coldest October night there since records began in 1990. The 25th was a beautiful crisp and sunny autumn day everywhere. The month ended as it had begun with south westerly winds, mild but unsettled weather. The episodic nature of the month meant that mean temperatures and rainfall were very close to average in many areas. The west was drier and also sunnier than normal - especially in Wales and Northern Ireland.

The still warm Mediterranean and Aegean Sea's can be a trigger for severe weather in October. On the 18th-19th flash floods hit the islands of Ikaria and Chios, and two people were washed away in floods and drowned. Houses were demolished, and drivers had to be rescued from stranded cars. On the 25th a massive thunderstorm system passed over the Maltese Islands producing torrential rain and flooding that carried cars away and inundated homes. The highest rainfall totals were at Qormi and Birkirkara with 120mm, while the capital Valletta experienced its wettest October day ever with 105mm. Fierce storms wreaked havoc across the western United States on the 5th and 6th. Phoenix, Arizona, was struck by a microburst (fast-sinking air under a thunderstorm) while baseball-sized hail and 70 mph winds damaged homes. Elsewhere six tornadoes tore through northern Arizona in the pre-dawn darkness damaging more than 100 houses, throwing rail cars off their tracks, and pushing trucks off the highway. Then, on the 26th, 24 tornadoes and 282 reports of damaging high winds came from another spectacular storm system extending from the Dakotas to North Carolina. Eight tornadoes touched down in Indiana, three in Kentucky, and six in Ohio, including one with gusts of over 111 mph that ripped through a village in the northwest of the state, destroying several homes.

Over in Asia, on the 11th nearly half a million people were evacuated after the heaviest rains for decades deluged 90% of the island of Haiwan in the South China Sea. A further 100,000 people were evacuated on the 17th after 200 villages were swamped following 200mm more rain. From the 14th-18th torrential rain battered central Vietnam. Nearly 1m of rain fell in Nghe An, and Ha Tinh. At least 32 people were killed and more than 150,000 homes were flooded. Super Typhoon Megi struck the northern Philippine island of Luzon on the 18th packing sustained winds of 167 mph. Prior to landfall, on the 16th, winds had reached Category 5 strength, with gusts up to 220 mph! Megi later hit Taiwan and was responsible for landslides and devastating floods in Thailand's rural northeast. The antipodean spring was interrupted by some notable rainstorms. On the 11th 250mm of rain fell on the Gold Coast area of Queensland (Australia) while 150mm drenched Brisbane. Meanwhile, the first -30°C (-22°F) reading of the winter was registered at Oymyakon, Siberia on the 20th. By the 26th temperatures had plummeted to a numbing -38.2°C (-38°F) - just 3 months after a July heat wave that had brought the town its all-time high of 34.6°C (94°F)!