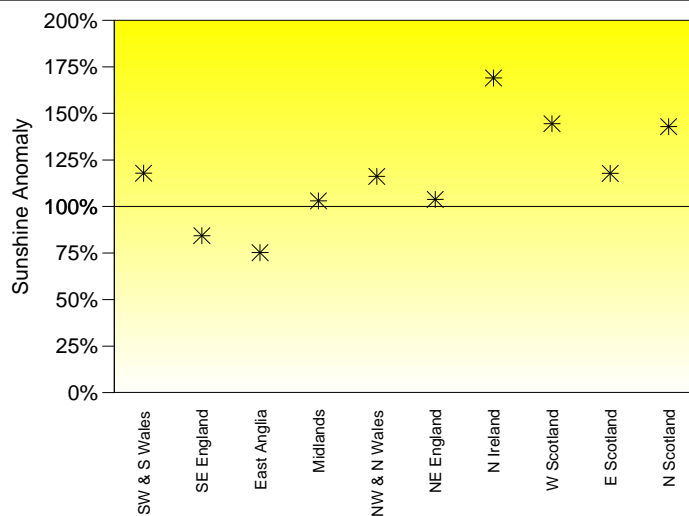
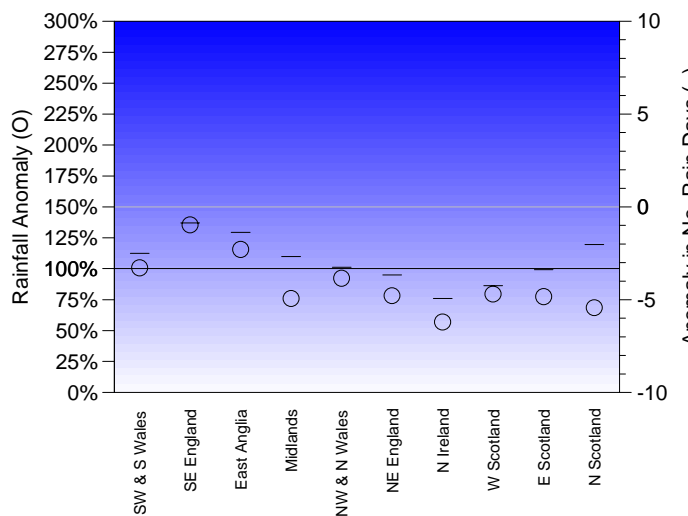


Extremes for January 2011	
Hottest:	14.7°C Great Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, 13th
Coldest:	-13.0°C Altnaharra SAWS, Highland, 8th
Most Rain:	113.2mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 15th
Most Sun:	9.0hrs Douglas, Isle Of Man, 20th
Windiest:	76mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 15th
Warmest:	7.6°C Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	0.8°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	306.5mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd
Driest:	19.9mm Cambridge University, Cambridgeshire
Sunniest:	82.2hrs Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd
Dullest:	13.3hrs Threave, Kirkcudbrightshire



As Christmas fades in the memory and the decorations are taken down, the long, cold nights of January lie ahead. The days lengthen only slowly, since the solstice is not long past and for most places January is the coldest month of the year. The Atlantic weather systems often peak in intensity before mid-month, with more settled conditions resuming by month's end, and such was the case this year.

January began quiet and cold with variable cloud and patchy fog and frost. Pressure then fell heralding more unsettled conditions and northern Scotland saw heavy snow showers on the 6th and 7th, with a biting north-west wind. Meanwhile, milder conditions and rain reached the south on the 7th. At 6pm a temperature of -4°C (25°F) at Glasgow contrasted with a balmy 10°C (50°F) at Salisbury, Wiltshire. As the fronts in the south reached northern areas, 10cm of fresh snow fell at Edinburgh airport by 8am on the 8th, closing the runways. From the 12th, the milder weather completed its advance, with a thaw even over the Scottish snowfields, and tropical maritime air enveloped the UK for 2 days. As often in such situations, there was heavy and prolonged orographic rainfall, including a colossal 149mm in just 48 hours at Capel Curig, Caernarfon. Maxima above 13°C (55°F) were common and Pershore, Worcs, recorded 14.5°C (59°F) on the 13th. More rain followed for most parts before a marked change began from the 18th as high pressure became established. As is common during winter, sunshine amounts were variable with bright crisp frosty weather for some (mostly the west) but dull gloomy conditions for others (especially eastern areas on the 22nd and 23rd - when there was drizzle as the high edged westwards). Colder conditions resumed from the 26th in a raw north-easterly wind, and there was some light snow in parts of the south-east on the 27th. High pressure then controlled the UK's weather until the month's end. It was quiet and rather cold with variable amounts of cloud, local fog and overnight frosts. Milder, windier and wetter weather reached the north on the 31st as the anticyclone began to weaken, but there was a very frosty start further south with -8°C (18°F) widely in Wales and the Midlands.

Overall, January 2011 was an unremarkable month with mean temperatures close to normal, but in most areas away from southern England it was relatively dry. East Anglia and south-east England were dull, but sunshine totals rather above average elsewhere.

The New Year brought more devastating floods to Australia. In Queensland, the town of Rockhampton was completely surrounded by floodwaters and was cut off from the outside world for several days. On the 10th, 152 mm of rain fell in just 30 minutes at Toowoomba, upstream of Brisbane. The Brisbane River burst its banks leaving more than 26,000 homes flooded. Electricity was cut to thousands of homes, and many key roads were blocked. A major concern was poisonous snakes and dangerous crocodiles floating through towns. On the 14th, torrential rains hit northern Tasmania. Yolla had its highest January daily rainfall ever, registering 131mm on the 13th. In Brazil, 305mm of rain fell in just a few hours 11th-12th near Teresopolis and Nova Friburgo. Rivers of mud tore through towns in the mountainous Serrana region 60 miles north of Rio de Janeiro, levelling houses, throwing cars onto buildings and marooning thousands of residents. Over 800 people were reported killed and the flooding caused billions of dollars in damage. On the 20th heavy overnight storms caused renewed flooding in Sao Paulo, toppling cars into buildings, downing power lines and halting traffic. In the southern state of Santa Catarina, flooding drove at least 18,000 people from their homes. A huge winter storm hit the USA 9th- 13th leaving snow on the ground in 49 of 50 of the U.S. mainland states. More than 50cm of snow accumulated over North Carolina and there were blizzards in New England and Connecticut. On 26th-27th a massive thunder-snow storm paralyzed air and ground travel over a vast area from Washington to Boston leaving the area blanketed in more than 30cm of snow. For New York City it was the snowiest January ever, beating the previous record set in 1925. A cold snap during the first week of 2011 brought temperatures as low as -23.6 °C (-10.5 °F) across northern India. Up to 3m of snow across the high mountain passes of Rohtang and Kunzam cut off access to the Kashmir province. By the 16th, frigid temperatures hit Korea with -17.8°C (0°F) in Seoul, -24.3°C (-12°F) in Cheolwon, and -12.8°C (9°F) in the southern port of Busan, a 96-year low.