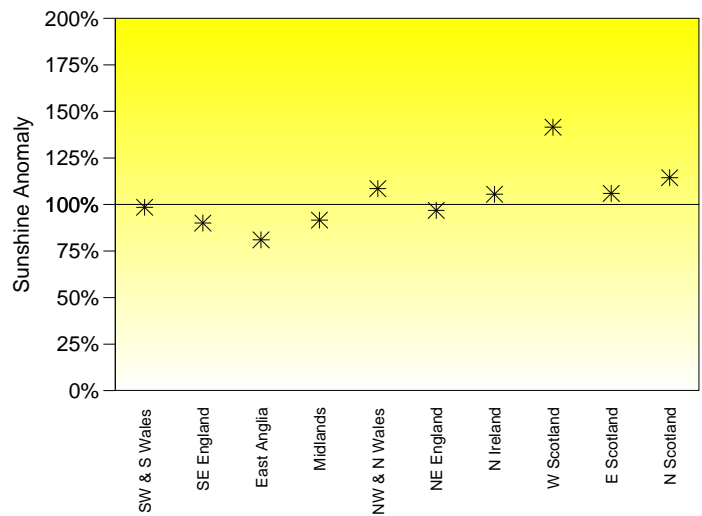
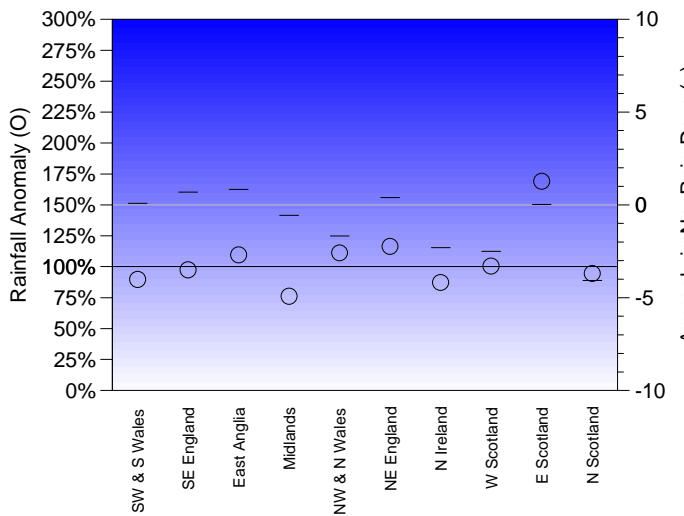


Extremes for July 2011	
Hottest:	29.0°C Culford, Suffolk, 2nd
Coldest:	-0.8°C Kinbrace, Highland, 13th
Most Rain:	73.4mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 17th
Most Sun:	16.4hrs Morecambe, Lancashire, 3rd
Windiest:	61mph Berry Head, Devon, 6th
Warmest:	17.7°C London Olympic Park South, Greater London
Coolest:	11.8°C Lerwick, Shetland
Wettest:	179.7mm Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd
Driest:	3.0mm Cromer, Norfolk
Sunniest:	331.5hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	63.1hrs Lerwick, Shetland



July marks the start of high summer but this rarely heralds a settled month. A spell of warm, sunny weather occurs most years but it can be relentlessly cool and changeable (e.g. 1988). Popular folklore has it that rain on St Swithun's day (15th July) will be followed by forty days of rain. Whilst the saying may not be literally true it holds a kernel of truth - summer weather patterns which become established by the middle of July often persist until the end of August.

High pressure at the start of the month gave some fine days but cool nights. Sennybridge, Powys recorded a minimum of just 3.4°C (38°F) early on the 2nd. The days became steadily warmer during the first week and Gravesend, Kent reached 27.3°C (81°F) on the 5th. By this time, pressure was falling and a period of more unsettled weather followed with rain or thundery showers through to the 10th. Braemar, Aberdeenshire collected 34mm in 12 hours on the 6th and Walney Island, Cumbria, 35mm in 12 hours on the 8th. From the 11th, it became generally drier - albeit rather cool and cloudy with the odd light shower. Nights remained chilly and there was an air frost -0.8°C (30°F) at Kinbrace, Highlands, early on the 13th. Most places saw increasing sunshine and warmth the next couple of days and Heathrow reached 25.3°C (77°F) on the 15th. Any hopes of a long fine spell were dashed on the 16th however as an unseasonably deep depression began to dominate. There was rain for all followed by blustery and sometimes thundery showers. Rain over eastern Scotland was persistent and slow to clear - and flooding was reported from Perth. The showery regime continued until the 23rd as areas of low pressure stagnated over the North Sea and near Continent. Capel Curig, Conwy, recorded 96mm in just 24 hours to 0900 on the 18th and there were several reports of funnel clouds. Temperatures remained very depressed and maxima across the UK for the 18th were widely just 13-14°C (55-57°F) - more typical of October or November. Pressure finally began to rise during the last week and the weather became warmer and more settled. 25°C (77°F) was reached as far north as Aviemore, Highlands, on the 27th.

For the month and UK as a whole, it was rather cool and in terms of night time temperatures it was the coldest July since 1980. Rainfall totals were close to average although there was significant regional variation, reflecting the showery nature of the rain; north-east England and eastern Scotland had double their normal amounts but by contrast, Orkney and the Western Isles were relatively dry. Most places were dull but Northern Ireland and south-west Scotland enjoyed a little more sunshine than usual.

In Europe during July, intense heat affected eastern states from the third week. Gjirkastrain, Albania recorded 42°C (108°F) on the 16th and destructive thunderstorms followed across southeast Poland on the 19th with hailstones 75mm (3") in diameter recorded at Ranizow. In Sweden violent thunderstorms overnight 21st-22nd produced 40,000 lightning strikes and the entire Baltic island of Gotland lost power. Heatwaves scorched the central and eastern United States for most of July with over 1000 daily maximum temperature records smashed. Interstates and highways in several states buckled from the heat. Raleigh, North Carolina, recorded at least 38°C (100°F) every day from the 20th-24th and Newark, New Jersey sweltered through its all-time highest temperature of 42°C (108°F) on the 22nd. Sizzling heat also broke records across Canada. On 20th, Markham, Ontario, reached an all time high of 35.9°C, breaking its previous record of 35.6°C set in 1991.

Several Asian countries were affected by extreme monsoon rainfall during July. In China on the 5th rains triggered a landslide in the north-western province of Shaanxi which damaged or destroyed 7,000 homes. In South Korea, landslides triggered by up to 400mm rain hit the provinces of South Jeolla, North Jeolla, and South Gyeongsang 8th-10th. Meanwhile, the second typhoon of the 2011 Pacific typhoon season became a powerful Category 4 super typhoon on the 15th, packing wind speeds of up to 132mph. The storm weakened as it made landfall on the southern coast of Japan, but due to its slow-moving nature, exceptional rainfall swamped the region. 851 mm rain fell at Umaji on the 19th - a single day Japanese record and total rainfall from the typhoon exceeded 1,000 mm on the Pacific side of Japan. In the southern hemisphere on the 7th, a cold front brought the heaviest snowfall in nearly two decades to one of the driest places on Earth. Up to 80cm of snow fell in the Atacama desert in northern Chile. Local roads were closed and dozens of people had to be rescued from stranded vehicles.