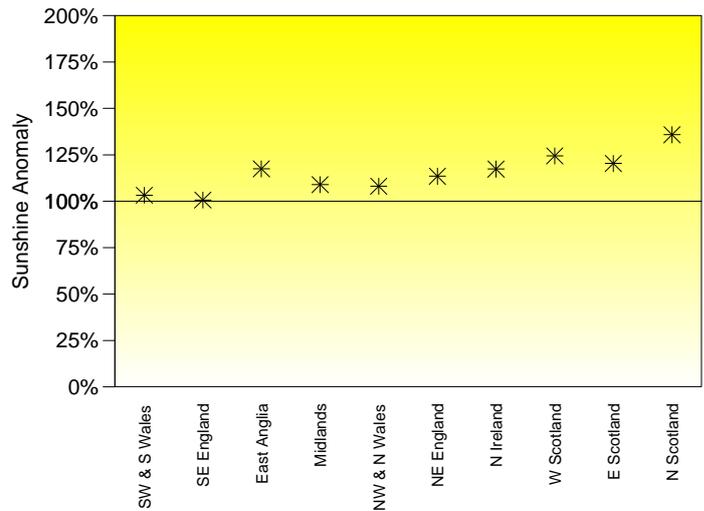
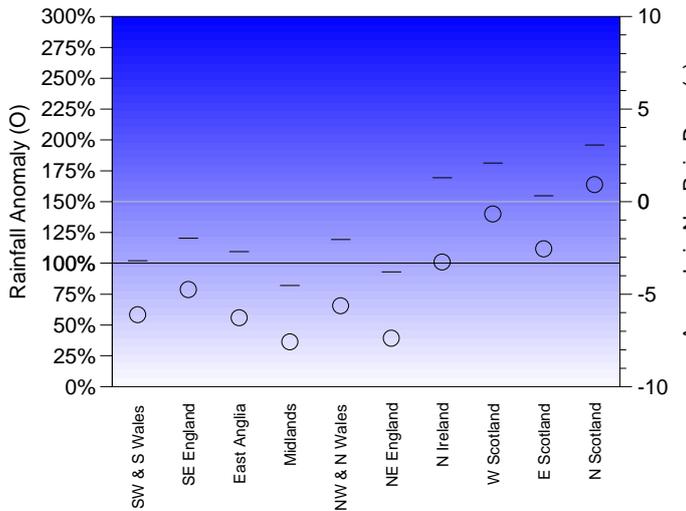


Extremes for April 2013	
Hottest:	23.3°C Leigh-on-Sea 2, Essex, 25th
Coldest:	-9.9°C Aviemore, Highland, 2nd
Most Rain:	63.0mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty, 14th
Most Sun:	14.2hrs Morecambe, Lancashire, 30th
Windiest:	81mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 17th
Warmest:	9.5°C St James Park, Greater London
Coolest:	3.7°C Loch Glascarnoch, Highland
Wettest:	331.8mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	1.0mm Scarborough, North Yorkshire
Sunniest:	271.3hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	99.8hrs Eskdalemuir, Dumfries and Galloway



April is the longed-for time when the garden bursts into life, but the advance of spring frequently suffers many set-backs. Cold weather - and even snow - during April is not as uncommon as might be expected. By contrast, some recent April's, such as those of 2003, 2007 and 2011, have boasted temperatures that would have been very respectable even in the height of summer.

The month started cold (Braemar, Aberdeenshire recorded a minimum of -11.2°C (12°F) early on the 2nd), with chilly north-easterly winds throughout the first week. There was plenty of dry and bright weather but with frosts at night and frequent snow showers in the east. Some longer spells of snow affected the south-east on the 4th - which resembled a typical mid-winter day as temperatures struggled to just 2 or 3°C (36-38°F). From the 8th, the situation began to change. Fronts slowly pushed in from the south-west and these brought milder conditions and rain or showers to most of England, Wales and Northern Ireland over the next four days. Much of Scotland stayed dry and cold with the odd wintry shower before Atlantic south-westerlies made a more decisive breakthrough from the 14th. The 15th was very windy everywhere - but the warmest day of the year so far with 21°C (70°F) recorded in a few places. It remained warm throughout the following week, but was more changeable everywhere with spells of rain interspersed with April showers. The 18th was another unusually windy day for April with many stations reporting gusts in excess of 50mph, and Aberdaron (Gwynedd) notching up 84mph. A mobile anticyclone gave a sunny interlude on the 19th/20th but there were sharp frosts at night. Early on the 21st, temperatures were -5°C (23°F) in parts of East Anglia but as high as 8°C (46°F) under cloud in Moray. A few days of warmer weather preceded an abrupt change on the 26th - as a polar air-mass invaded. Heavy showers were widely accompanied by hail and thunder - and there was snow over northern hills. The month ended with pressure building to give lengthy spells of sunshine - although it was still chilly with frosts at night.

Despite the warmer weather of the second half, overall mean temperatures for April were still below average everywhere. Most areas were sunnier than normal and it was also a relatively dry month for most of England and Wales - although across northern and western Scotland rainfall significantly exceeded the April average.

In Europe, the great chill of March continued into April. In Ireland minima of -5.6°C (22°F) at Dublin Airport and -6.6°C (20°F) at Mullingar on the 6th represented the coldest ever April nights - in series stretching back to 1942 and 1950 respectively. 30cm of snow fell over central and eastern Poland on the 1st, blocking many roads, disrupting flights and cutting electricity to more than 100,000 homes. In Russia, Moscow had its snowiest start to April on record with parts of the city lying 65cm deep. At the opposite end of Europe (and April!) Spain was struck by unseasonal weather on the 29th with late snowfalls blanketing inland areas and blocking roads. A snow depth of 18cm was reported at Navacerrada, northwest of Madrid.

Meanwhile in North America, on the 24th, the Illinois River in central Illinois rose to 9m - a new 70 year record. Roads and buildings in Peoria Heights were flooded and riverfront structures inundated. At the same time, a series of heavy April snowstorms and extreme temperature swings swept the prairies from Colorado to Minnesota. 92% of the Upper Midwest was covered by snow on the 25th - remarkable for this late in the year. In Duluth, April was actually the snowiest month ever with a total fall of 130cm. Rapid City, South Dakota received a total of 110cm of snow in April, more snow than the city typically receives during the entire cold season! Snow and cold made it all the way down into Texas. Childress, Texas, had a high of 33.5°C (92°F) on the 22nd before temperatures plunged close to 0°C (32°F) by the following morning - and were accompanied by snow!

In Argentina, 400mm of rain fell on the city of La Plata in just three hours on the 3rd. Thousands of people were evacuated from their homes and dozens were left stranded on rooftops, treetops and atop city buses. The evening storm also dumped 150mm of rainfall on the capital, Buenos Aires. More than 50 people were killed and more than 3,000 residents had to leave their homes. 80,000 homes also lost power. At least nine people died in Angola's capital, Luanda on the 8th, after torrential rain led to flooding. Four people were left missing and landslides forced the closure of some roads. Between the 26th and the 30th at least 13 people died in flash floods in Saudi Arabia. The rain was the heaviest experienced in the kingdom for more than 25 years.