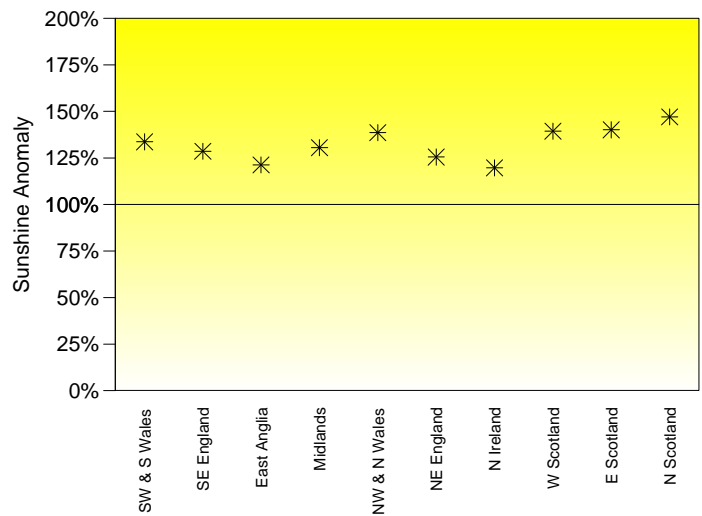
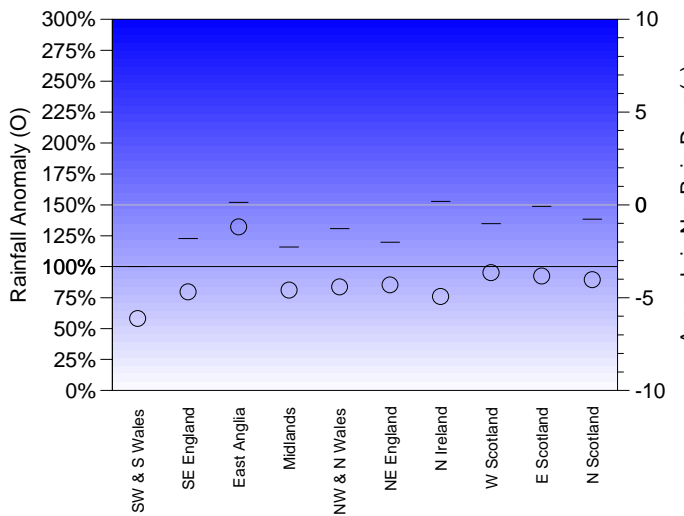


Extremes for July 2014		
Hottest:	32.3°C	Gravesend Broadness SAMOS, Kent, 18th
Coldest:	1.3°C	Aboyne, Grampian, 6th
Most Rain:	78.4mm	Westonbirt, Gloucestershire, 19th
Most Sun:	16.1hrs	Glasgow Bishopton, Strathclyde, 9th
Windiest:	59mph	Warcop Range SAWS, Cumbria, 18th
Warmest:	20.6°C	St James Park, Greater London
Coolest:	12.9°C	Fair Isle, Shetland
Wettest:	132.2mm	Achnagart, Highland
Driest:	12.3mm	Benson, Oxfordshire
Sunniest:	284.7hrs	St. Athan, South Glamorgan
Dullest:	99.3hrs	Lerwick, Shetland



July is most usually our warmest month and nearly half of the time, boasts the hottest day of the year. Several recent Julys such as 2006 and 2013 have featured notable heat waves and an abundance of sunshine is good news for our wine growers who have enjoyed a number of excellent vintages this millennium.

The month started fine and warm over much of England and Wales. Scotland and Northern Ireland were more changeable, and rain spread south-east to most places by the end of the 4th. The east coast had persistent rain for much of the day on the 6th, and another band of rain affected eastern areas from Humberside to Kent on the 10th with very subdued temperatures for mid-July of no more than 15-16°C (59-61°F). Elsewhere it was a showery period and thunderstorms on the 7th - and particularly the 8th caused localised flooding from Shropshire to Sussex. From the 11th to 16th, weak fronts affected the UK at times giving some cloud and occasional rain, but pressure was relatively high and it became warmer everywhere. Hot weather began in earnest from the 17th, and the following day, Gravesend (Kent) recorded 32.3°C (90°F) - the warmest day of the year so far. The atmosphere, however, remained very volatile and there were widespread thunderstorms across the south on the nights of 17th/18th and 18th/19th. A notable storm over the Midlands during the late afternoon of the 19th dropped cherry sized hail over Oxfordshire and walnut sized hail over Buckinghamshire. Temperatures were a little lower on the 20th, but it remained thundery in the east. A colossal downpour at Norwich delivered 49mm (a months average rainfall) of which 46mm fell in single hour! High pressure over Scandinavia led to a fine and very warm spell 22nd - 26th. Ideal conditions graced the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on the 23rd although the easterly flow generated some low cloud down the east coast, notably on the 24th. From the 27th, the weather became more unsettled and thundery showers again reared their anvil heads - especially in south-east England from the 27th-29th. Flash flooding caused disruption to road and rail transport in Sussex early on the 28th.

July marked the eighth consecutive month with above average temperatures for the UK. Although not as warm as July 2013, temperatures were still 1°-2°C above normal nationwide. Rainfall was variable, reflecting the localised, showery nature of the rain, and so while it was relatively dry in the south-west, parts of East Anglia had a very wet month. Sunshine was above normal everywhere and it was the sixth sunniest July since 1929. The warm weather has not been good news for all, since unusually large numbers of insects and garden slugs have been reported, with mosquitoes particularly numerous across southern England.

Heat and storms also featured in European weather during July. On the 2nd, 35cm of hail fell in 45 minutes in Almazan, Spain, astonishing locals and damaging 70% of the houses in the town. Germany and the Netherlands were affected by extremely heavy rain on the 28th. Deelen in Holland received 132mm in 24 hours, including 76mm in a single hour! Meanwhile Scandinavia experienced a prolonged heat wave. At Balnak (inside the Arctic Circle) in Norway, the temperature reached 32.6°C (91°F) on the 3rd. A little further south, Gulsvik, recorded 34.5 °C (94°F). Even warmer was Novosibirsk in Russia's Siberia region, which hit a remarkable 37°C (99°F) on the 12th. That afternoon, bathers cooling by the river Ob were startled by a powerful thunderstorm which unleashed heavy rain, damaging winds and a bombardment of hailstones 25mm across. In contrast, that same day Zlatoust in Russia's South Urals experienced a snow blizzard, the first ever to occur in that region during mid summer, with snow laying 10cm deep.

In the US, Hurricane Arthur, the first of the Atlantic season, smashed into the North Carolina coast overnight 3rd-4th packing winds of 96-110mph. The Outer Banks islands were pummelled with fierce winds and heavy rains, which knocked out power, ripped apart trees and caused flash flooding. Arthur then battered south-east Canada on the 6th leaving more than 200,000 homes and businesses without power in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. On the 4th, baseball-sized hail battered Wilber in Nebraska, leaving vehicles and homes damaged. In Missouri Valley, Iowa, an eyewitness captured the moment when 90mph winds ripped the roof off a petrol station. On the 29th, the Boston-area city of Revere was hit by a rare tornado that knocked out power and damaged homes and buildings.

On the 9th, Typhoon Neoguri crossed Japan's southern Okinawa island chain. Gusts of up to 120mph left a trail of damage. In the Okinawan capital of Naha, trees were split, signboards scattered and a restaurant was destroyed. Schools were closed, air and sea traffic ground to a halt and 70,000 households lost power. Typhoon Rammasun battered southern China and Vietnam 18th - 20th, killing 44 people and destroying tens of thousands of homes. Worst hit was the island province of Hainan, where the storm made its first landfall. By the 21st, 51,000 houses and 40,600ha (100,300 acres) of crops had been destroyed. A few days later, on 24th / 25th, Typhoon Matmo brought torrential rainfall to China and Taiwan. The hardest-hit areas were in the mountains of eastern Taiwan which received more than 650mm of rain.