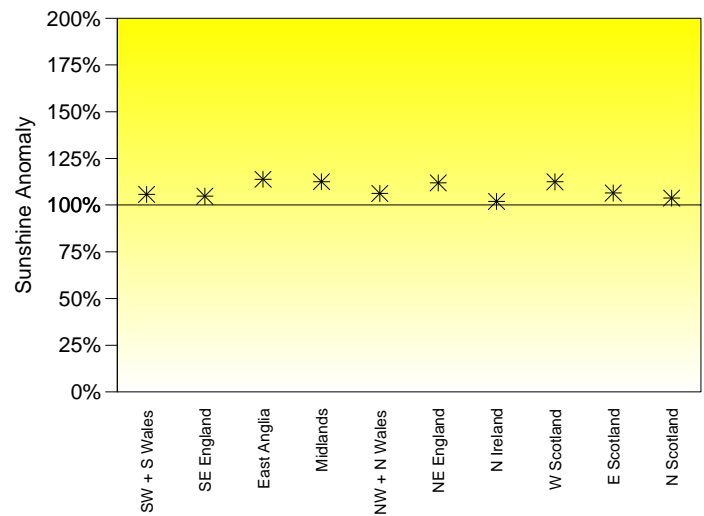
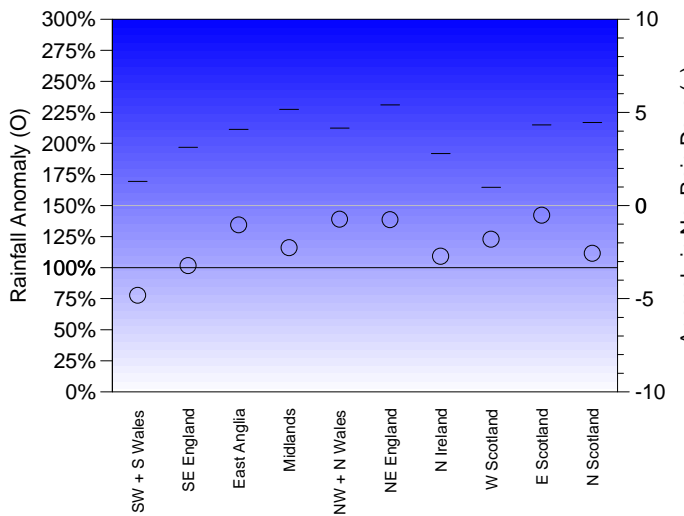


Extremes for April 2016	
Hottest:	19.4°C Levens Hall, Cumbria, 21st
Coldest:	-5.5°C Tain Range SAWS, Highland, 28th
Most Rain:	54.1mm Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall, 10th
Most Sun:	14.0hrs Tiree, Strathclyde, 20th
Windiest:	63mph Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall, 10th
Warmest:	9.8°C Jersey St Helier, Channel Islands
Coolest:	3.4°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	207.7mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd
Driest:	26.9mm Guernsey Airport, Channel Islands
Sunniest:	234.3hrs Jersey St Helier, Channel Islands
Dullest:	109.3hrs Loch Glascarnoch, Highland



Despite its reputation for showers, April is typically the driest month of the year. Our surrounding seas are near their coldest and can not usually generate the amount of moisture necessary for heavy downpours. Droughts in April are not uncommon - and interestingly are well correlated with summers that subsequently prove very wet. Cool stormy periods supposedly recur 10th-15th and 23rd-26th. Snow in April is not unusual and statistically, rather more likely to occur than during November.

April began unsettled and dominated by low pressure, showers and rain. Sligachan, Isle of Skye recorded 104.6 mm of rain to 0900 on the 2nd. Thunderstorms affected East Anglia and Kent on the 3rd and North Yorkshire on the 4th. It continued unsettled into the second week when low pressure to the south west of the UK drew in cool easterly winds. Most days were wet, but there was sunshine between the showers. There were some notable thunderstorms across the south east on the 12th and 13th - and torrential rain in London on the afternoon of the 15th caused surface flooding and long delays to the evening rush hour traffic. The second half of the month was cold, bright and showery in a northerly airstream. There was a brief warm, bright and dry interlude 19th-22nd but cool and unsettled conditions soon returned. The last week was quite sunny nationwide, but showery - and often quite cold. Temperatures rarely exceeded 10°C (50°F) - even in the south, and sleet and snow 26th-29th caused travel disruption on the higher routes in Scotland, Cumbria, the Pennines and North Wales. At Copley, County Durham, the temperature reached just 5.3°C (41.5°F) on the 27th. A countrywide air frost on the early morning of the 28th was particularly severe in Scotland - where the grass minimum dropped to below -10°C (14°F). Crombie Country Park, Angus recorded 9cm of lying snow at 0900 on the 29th. Temperatures at last began to rise on the 30th - causing a rapid thaw and offering the promise of a rather warmer May.

Frequent winds of Arctic origin made April a chilly month overall - especially for the north. The UK as a whole was a degree cooler than normal - and in the last 25 years, only April 2013 has experienced more frost. An abundance of showers, made it a wet month nationwide, especially along eastern coasts which accrued rainfall totals 50% above normal. Entirely dry days were notably rare but despite this, sunshine was a little above average everywhere.

Europe also experienced an Arctic blast during the final week of April. Snowstorms in Austria on the 27th left tens of thousands of homes without electricity and caused serious disruption to rail and road traffic. In the USA, a 100 mile wide dust storm swept over the Texas Panhandle on the 5th and severe thunderstorms battered the southern and central States on the 12th. Baseball sized hail wrecked hundreds of vehicles in San Antonio, and Cole Camp, Missouri. Houston, Texas recorded 252mm of rain on 18th - making it easily its wettest ever day - and triggering catastrophic flooding that left seven people dead, hundreds displaced and thousands without power. Little Mound Creek in neighbouring Harris County was even wetter - recording a colossal 447mm. A powerful April snowstorm buried parts of Colorado 16th-17th. Falls of 50-75cm were widespread and 116cm accumulated near Conifer, just west of Denver.

Asia, sweltered under intense heat during April. In India, on the 4th, 17 towns and cities reported temperatures above 40°C (104°F) - unprecedented for so early in the year. Bangalore recorded its highest ever April temperature, 39.2°C (103°F) and on the 24th, Titlagarh measured 48.5°C (119°F) - setting a new national temperature record for April. Further south and east, national temperature records for April were also set at Seno, Laos - which reached 42.3°C (108°F) on the 13th, and Preah Vihea, Cambodia - which reached 42.6°C (109°F) on the 15th. The exceptional heat triggered devastating hailstorms in Vietnam on the 10th. At Tuyen Quang, hailstones the size of grapefruits peppered roofs, smashed solar panels and injured farmers on their way to work. 1,000 houses were damaged and 100 hectares of vegetable crops destroyed. In the South Indian Ocean, tropical Cyclone "Fantala" meandered off Madagascar, peaking in intensity on the 17th-18th, when it reached Category five level with maximum sustained winds of 177mph. In the Pacific, Fiji was deluged by 300mm of rain, 3rd-4th then a further 150mm on the 7th as Tropical Cyclone Zena struck. Meanwhile, in Australia temperatures in New South Wales hit 38.6°C (102°F) on the 5th - making it the hottest April day there in 30 years.