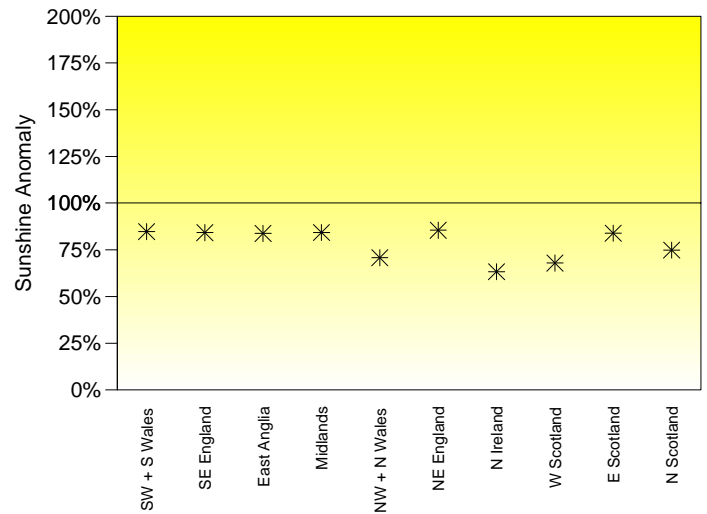
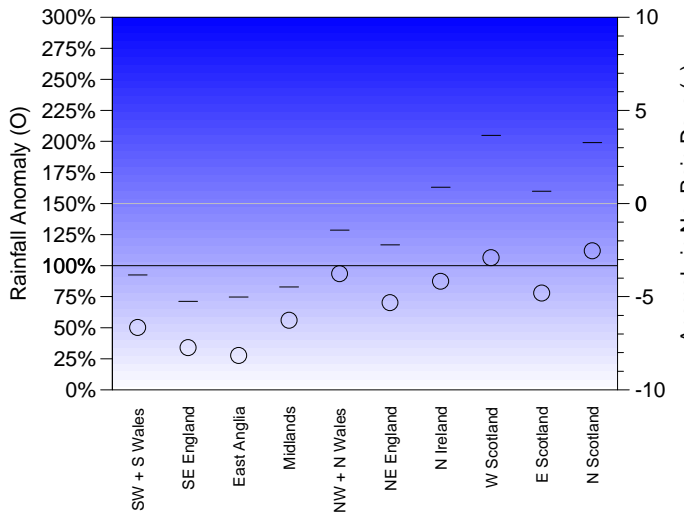


Extremes for October 2017	
Hottest:	23.5°C Manston, Kent, 16th
Coldest:	-5.0°C Tulloch Bridge SAWS, Highland, 30th
Most Rain:	79.6mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 13th
Most Sun:	10.2hrs Boulmer, Northumberland, 2nd
Windiest:	90mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 16th
Warmest:	14.4°C St Catherines Point, Isle of Wight
Coolest:	8.7°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	529.4mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	10.4mm Northampton Moulton Park, Northamptonshire
Sunniest:	98.5hrs East Malling, Kent
Dullest:	38.4hrs Bala, Clwyd



October is notorious for heralding the first of the autumn's storms, and 30 years ago, the 'Great Storm' of 16th/17th October 1987 wrought unprecedented devastation across southern England. On the very anniversary, this October yielded another notable tempest - although this one of rather more exotic origin...

October's weather was dominated by a mild west or south westerly air flow that brought some unusually high temperatures by day - and especially by night. High pressure over France and low pressure over Iceland steered regular fronts over the UK, and this also produced some notable rainfall events in the west. A lingering system around the 11th dumped 200mm rain onto the Honister pass in Cumbria triggering flash flooding that rendered roads impassable, disrupted mainline rail services and caused the closure of nine schools. By mid month, the weather had turned more cyclonic as a series of low pressure systems crossed the British Isles. The first of these was in the form of ex-hurricane 'Ophelia' which tracked northward across Ireland on the 16th and brought severe gales to the west of the UK - and hurricane force winds to Ireland. In Northern Ireland 57,000 people were left without power due to the storm, hundreds of roads were rendered impassable by falling trees and all ferry services with the mainland cancelled. Further south and east, winds were less strong, but much of Britain witnessed extraordinary ethereal skies and a red sun - the result of smoke from Portuguese forest fires entrained in the strong south-westerly airflow. Thanks to its Iberian origin, this air was also remarkably mild - and temperatures reached the low 70's Fahrenheit over much of south eastern England - remarkable for so late in the year.

A few days later, on the 21st storm 'Brian' - a much more typical mid latitude depression - tracked across central Ireland, and brought further gales to western and south western coasts of England and Wales. In the UK disruption was fairly minor although there were giant waves at sea which caused cancellation of various ferry services. England and Wales enjoyed a brief period of very mild weather 23rd-24th and night time felt bizarrely muggy with temperatures in the mid teen's Celsius. Winds turned northerly only in the final weekend - resulting in the first widespread frost of the autumn on the morning of the 30th and a dusting of snow across the Cairngorms - before it became milder once more in time for Halloween.

October was a consistently warm month nationwide, and for most places, barely cooler than September. This was a product of warm days and extraordinarily mild nights virtually devoid of frost. For Central England it was the 13th warmest October since 1659. Despite this it was an invariably dull month - and especially so in the west. Here sunshine totals were typically half the normal - and Northern Ireland endured its 2nd dullest October ever. The north west uplands were exceptionally wet (e.g. some stations in the Scottish highlands recorded >500mm!) but for everywhere else, it was a dry month - and especially so in the south east. Here rainfall totals were a quarter of normal or less, some places struggled to record double digit rainfall for the entire month and East Anglia had its 10th driest October ever.

Europe had a stormy October, starting with 'Xavier' which caused widespread disruption across Germany on the 5th. Storm force winds and heavy rain caused flight cancellations at Berlin, Bremen and Hanover airports, hundreds of rail commuters were left stranded - and numerous road accidents resulted in seven deaths. Ex-hurricane 'Ophelia' became the most damaging storm to affect Ireland in 50 years on the 16th. Roche's Point, County Cork, recorded 98mph gusts and offshore, one wave was measured at an astonishing 26m! 360,000 homes lost electricity, schools and colleges were closed, 140 flights were cancelled from Irish airports - and at least 3 deaths were attributed to the effects of the storm. 'Ophelia' weakened as it travelled north and west to make landfall over Norway, before finally dissipating over Russia. Further south, in Iberia, 'Ophelia's' winds also fanned wildfires that raged 15th-18th. In Portugal, 4,000 fire fighters battled 150 fires - which ultimately caused 45 deaths, with 4 more in neighbouring Spain. Strong winds again battered northern and central Europe on the 29th. Thousands of trees were felled across Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, causing chaos to travel, widespread power outages and property damage. There were at least 4 deaths from falling trees.

Across the Atlantic, storm 'Philippe' dumped 50-100mm rain across the north-eastern United States 29th-30th. In Central America, Tropical Storm 'Nate' brought heavy rains, landslides and floods to Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras 5th-6th. In Costa Rica, 400,000 people were left without running water and at least 22 people died. Further east, in Vietnam, heavy rain 9th-12th triggered floods and landslides which killed 37 people and submerged or washed away 16,000 homes. 2 more people died as a result of prodigious rainfall associated with Typhoon 'Lan' - which struck Japan 23rd-24th. Shingu, southwest of Tokyo, recorded an astonishing 894 mm of rain over 72 hours.

In the southern hemisphere, storms over South Africa on the 10th caused flooding from Durban to Johannesburg - and which resulted in 14 deaths. In Australia, the Queensland city of Bundaberg recorded over 340mm of rain on the 2nd, breaking a 64-year record (and by more than 60 mm!)