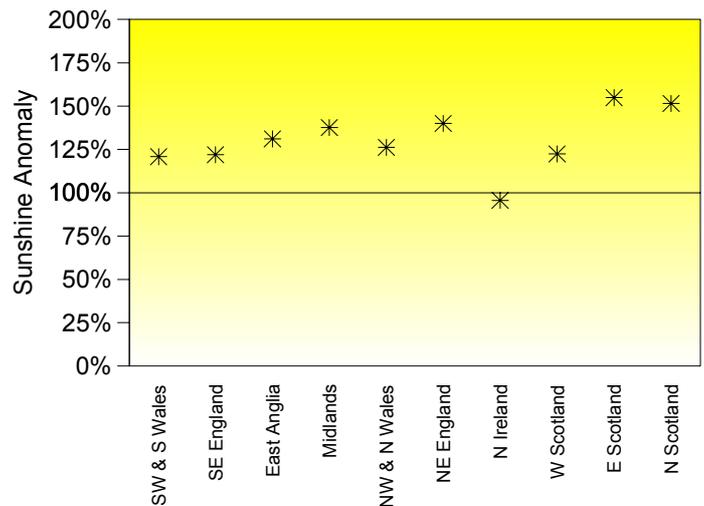
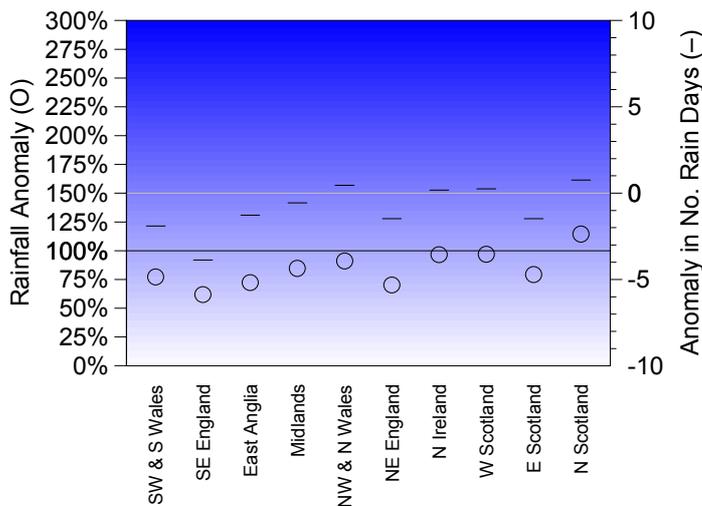


Extremes for January 2012	
Hottest:	13.9°C Exeter, Devon, 18th
Coldest:	-10.5°C Aboyne, Grampian, 16th
Most Rain:	57.8mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty, 4th
Most Sun:	8.2hrs Norwich Airport, Norfolk, 27th
Windiest:	93mph Port Ellen SAMOS, Strathclyde, 3rd
Warmest:	8.8°C Penzance Heamoor, Cornwall
Coolest:	2.0°C Loch Glascarnoch, Highland
Wettest:	479.0mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	22.2mm Charlwood, Surrey
Sunniest:	97.7hrs Hull North, Humberside
Dullest:	15.3hrs Threave, Kirkcudbrightshire



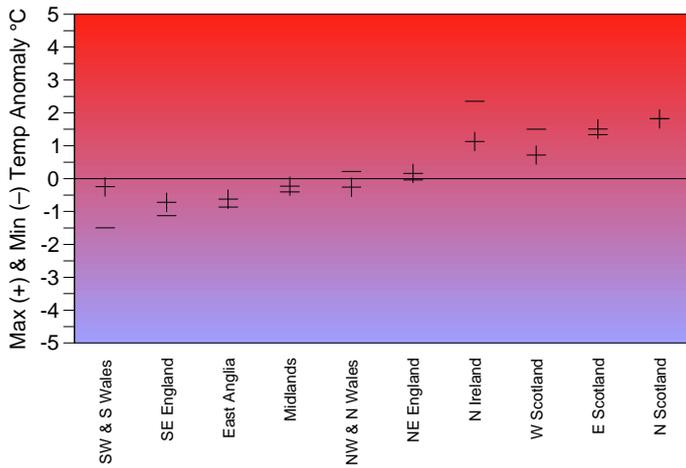
As the Christmas decorations come down, the dark, windy days of January beckon. The length of daylight increases only slowly, since the solstice is still relatively near, and statistically this is the coldest month of the year. According to Lamb's calendar of singularities, the first half is a stormy period, and this year stands as a very good example of this.

The month opened mild but unsettled and the 1st was a very wet day for the south. The 2nd was brighter but showery, and a very stormy day followed on the 3rd as a deep depression raced east across northern Scotland. Gusts in exposed places exceeded 100mph (e.g. 106mph at Great Dun Fell, Cumbria and 102mph at Blackford Hill, Edinburgh) There was widespread disruption to transport with ferries suspended and airports closed, and widespread property damage. A man died in Tonbridge Wells, Kent, when a tree toppled onto a parked van and one crew member aboard a tanker in the Channel was killed when it was hit by a large wave. The storm was fast moving, and conditions quietened down rapidly by evening, but late on the 4th and 5th, more gales battered the country as another deep low zipped south-east into Scandinavia. Great Dun Fell recorded a gust of 112mph - even windier than a few days previously. The weather then became rather less boisterous as high pressure settled close to southern Britain. There was plenty of dry and mild weather, with conditions often spring like in a gentle south-westerly breeze, although fronts continued to affect the north. A cold front moving south on the 12th was followed by five days of high pressure giving crisp, sunny days and sharp overnight frosts. Aboyne, Aberdeenshire recorded -10.5°C (13°F) on the early morning of the 16th. Late on the 17th, fronts edged in from the west and a balmy 11.4°C (52°F) at Plymouth, Devon contrasted with a chilly 0.5°C (33°F) at Dishforth, North Yorkshire. Mild, windy weather then resumed, but after frost overnight 23rd/24th, a cheerless day followed, with widespread rain, drizzle and hill fog. Snow fell on northern hills ahead of milder air - which then extended to all areas on the 25th. Meanwhile, an intense anticyclone was developing over northern Russia and this began to extend its influence westwards across Europe by the 28th. A warm front, battling against this colder air brought rain (and snow over high ground) to western Britain, but this retreated westwards on the 30th, and cold easterlies dominated everywhere by the month's end.

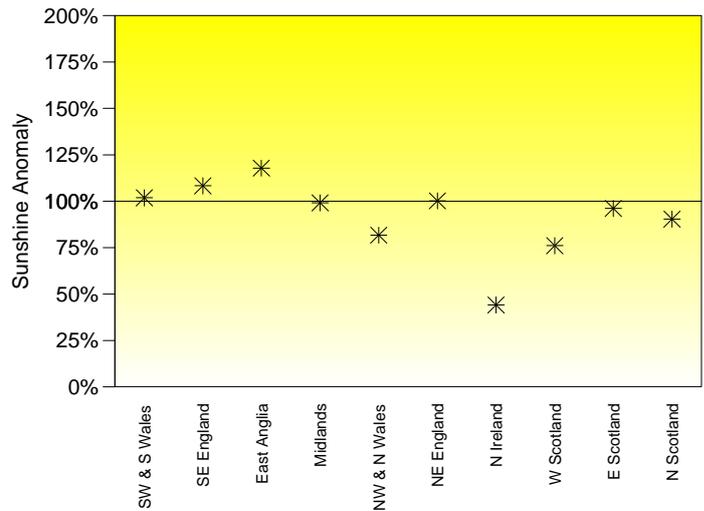
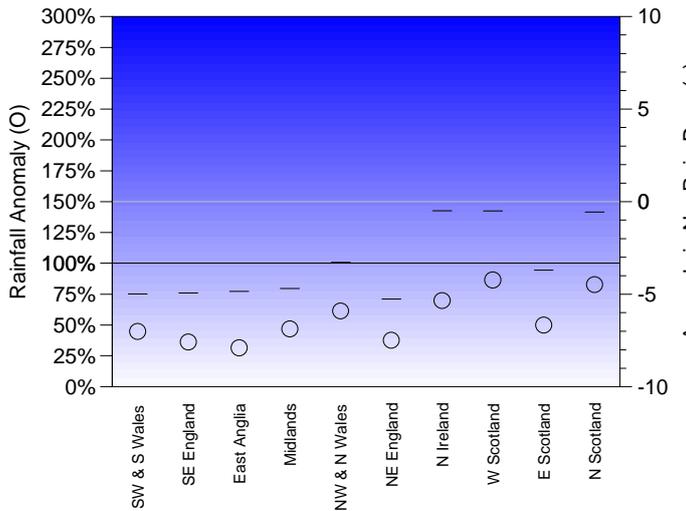
Despite the cold finish, January 2012 was relatively mild, and much warmer than in recent years. Southern and eastern England was dry, but for parts of the north, especially northern Scotland, it was much wetter than normal. As often in unsettled winter weather, sunshine was well above normal away from Northern Ireland and western Scotland and provisionally, this was the sunniest January since 1929.

In Europe, January began mild and stormy in the northwest but ended very cold in the southeast when a huge blizzard swept Bulgaria and south-eastern Romania 25th-26th. In North America, record-shattering warmth engulfed the USA Plains and at Philip, South Dakota, temperatures soared to 23°C (74°F) on the 5th. Severe thunderstorms spawned tornadoes northeast of Birmingham, Alabama on the 23rd, killing two people and injuring over 100. Several homes were destroyed and trees and power lines downed. In the Pacific north western states, successive winter storms hit during the third week and 10cm of snow, followed by freezing rain, left over 200,000 Seattle residents without power. On 18th a new daily snowfall record was set at Seattle Airport with 18cm and on the 19th, 58cm of snow was measured at Mullan, Washington. Further north, extreme cold and snowfall affected Alaska. Between November 2011 and early January, more than 5.5m of snow fell in Cordova, trapping people in their homes, causing roofs on houses to collapse and triggering numerous avalanches. On the 31st temperatures dropped to a numbing -70°F (-57°C) near Fairbanks.

In the southern hemisphere, heavy rains led to flooding and landslides in Brazil at the beginning of the month. At least eight people were killed and over 13,000 forced to evacuate across the states of Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro. In Africa, heavy rainfall from Tropical Depression Dando led to major flooding in southern Mozambique and north-eastern South Africa from the 15th. Ten people were killed, 56,000 others were displaced, and crop and livestock were devastated. Helicopters were called in to evacuate tourists from Kruger National Park as roads became impassable and bridges were destroyed. In Australia, 2012 was welcomed in amidst record-breaking heat. New Years day in Adelaide reached 41.1°C (106°F), the warmest in over 100 years!



Extremes for February 2012	
Hottest:	18.7°C Coleshill, Warwickshire, 23rd
Coldest:	-15.6°C Holbeach SAWS, Lincolnshire, 11th
Most Rain:	47.9mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 22nd
Most Sun:	10.5hrs Portchester, Hampshire, 26th
Windiest:	74mph Foula No 2, Shetland, 24th
Warmest:	8.1°C Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	2.8°C Faversham, Kent
Wettest:	307.2mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	0.4mm Writtle, Essex
Sunniest:	106.1hrs Royston, Hertfordshire
Dullest:	16.7hrs Threave, Kirkcudbrightshire



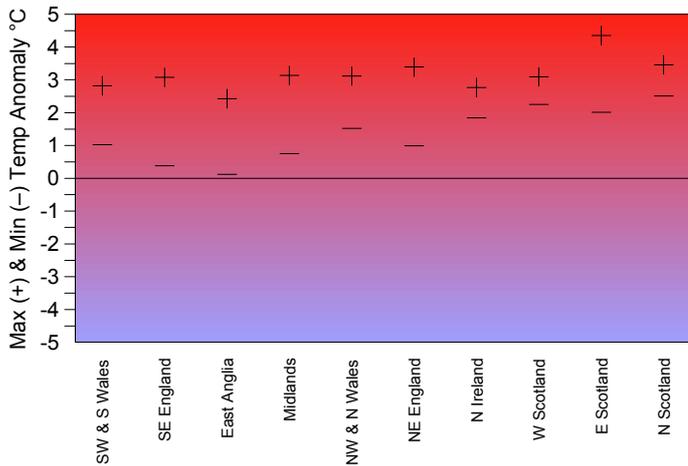
Although February is still officially a winter month, the days lengthen noticeably and daffodils may come into bloom at the end, giving a promise of spring around the corner. Harsh winter weather is not uncommon, but it can also be a very dry month, as was the case this year.

High pressure over north-west Russia and Scandinavia was the dominant feature of the first 11 days. As a result, easterly winds brought frigid weather to the south and east, while the west and north were less cold, and it was even mild at times in western Scotland and Northern Ireland. The crisp continental air was often incredibly dry, and at midday on the 2nd, London had a temperature of 1°C (34°F) and a dew point of -10°C (14°F)! On the 4th, Atlantic fronts made a sortie from the west, bringing mostly rain to the west and north but some substantial snowfalls overnight to central and eastern England. There was disruption to flights at Heathrow and to traffic on the M25 and M40. The occlusion stalled over eastern areas on the 5th and a slight thaw followed on the 6th but the cold conditions set in with a vengeance the next day. Milder weather made another attempt to encroach from the north-west on the 9th, but the weakening warm front brought a spell of freezing rain to northern England and southern Scotland. This caused much disruption to transport, especially on the A66 trans-Pennine route, and there were scores of minor injuries as people skidded on ice. The milder air again failed to reach eastern England and temperatures here were much lower than in northern Scotland. The cold spell reached its climax early on the 11th, when -15.6°C (3°F) was recorded at Holbeach, Lincs. The following night was almost as chilly, but before dawn on the 12th, less cold air reached all but the far south-east. Milder north-westerlies then set in, bringing large amounts of cloud and a little rain, although there was some brightness to the lee of high ground. By the 16th, it was much milder everywhere as the wind backed to westerly, but the 18th saw a short lived plunge of cold air southwards and snow showers on high ground in the north. Snow pellets were observed even on modest hills such as Arnside Knott, Cumbria. A sharp frost greeted the new working week in central and southern England early on the 20th, but a mild westerly regime soon dominated again with copious rain, drizzle and hill fog in western areas. Cloud often broke in the east and to the lee of hills and the 23rd was positively spring-like with 18.7°C (65°F) at Coleshill, Warwickshire. This was all the more noteworthy given the very low temperatures two weeks earlier. Temperatures fell on the 24th behind a cold front, but the final few days of the month were mainly quiet, mild and cloudy. Dyce Airport, Aberdeen, reached 17.2°C (63°F) on the 28th, just 0.7°C short of its all-time February record.

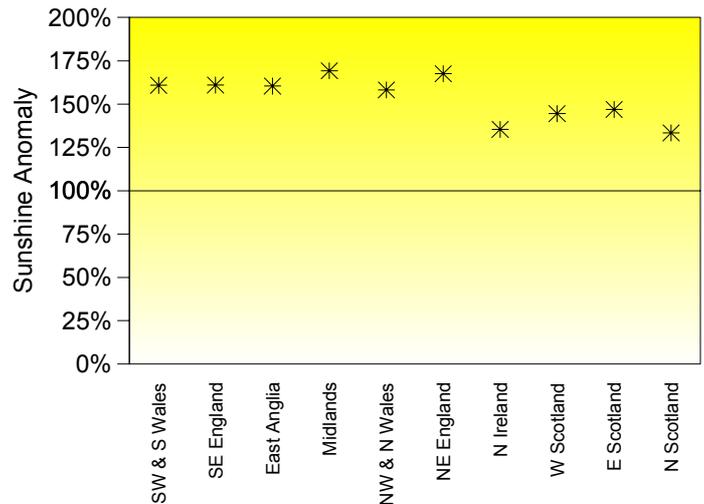
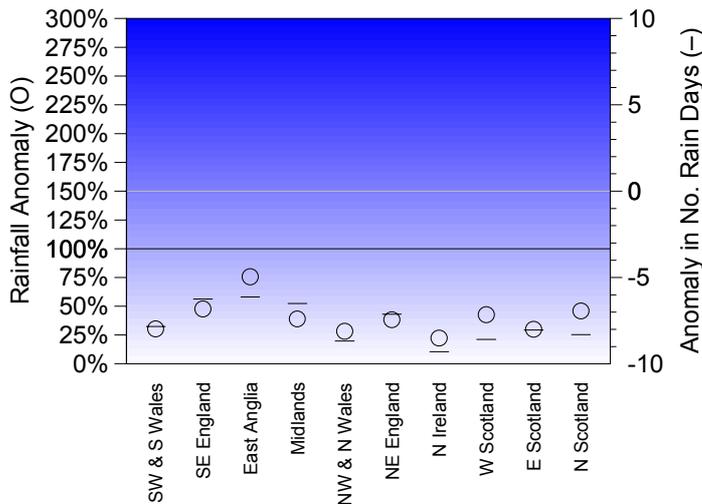
The mild weather counterbalanced the earlier cold spell, so that the average UK temperature was slightly above average, though it was a little colder than normal over parts of East Anglia and southern England, and very mild in northern Scotland. It was another very dry month in much of central, southern and eastern England, and East Anglia and Lincolnshire had one of their driest Februaries ever. Sunshine was above average everywhere except in western Scotland which had been influenced by Atlantic fronts.

Large parts of Europe were affected by a powerful 'cold wave' in the first fortnight of February. On the 3rd, the temperature in Kvikjokk in northern Sweden fell to -42.7°C (-45°F), the lowest temperature in Sweden since 2001! Further south, on the 6th, Samedan, Switzerland, recorded -35.1°C (-32°F) and Oberstdorf in Germany -29.4°C (-22°F). The following day, Kvilda in the Czech Republic plunged to an extraordinary -39.4°C (-39°F). In the Bulgarian capital of Sofia, some residents found their money literally frozen as automated bank and cash machines stopped functioning. In Bosnia, remote areas in the east were cut off and snow piled 5m deep in isolated areas in Romania, Moldova and Albania. Army trucks and helicopters brought food and medicine to 250,000 Albanians in villages left marooned by deep snow. The roofs of about two dozen houses, including that of a 300-year-old church in south-eastern Albania, collapsed under the sheer weight of the snow. Rome received snowfall for only the second time in the past 15 years and the Coliseum had to shut its doors to tourists after bits of the massive structure crumbled. The icy blast extended into North Africa: In Algeria, the capital Algiers was blanketed by snow and at Medea in the Atlas Mountains the snow depth reached 56cm. On the 7th, snow also lay across parts of Libya, including the town of Gharyan, just southwest of the capital Tripoli.

Further afield, summer monsoonal rains brought torrential rain and flooding to Queensland and New South Wales, north-eastern Australia during the first week. Tropical Cyclone Giovanna struck the island of Madagascar in the South Indian Ocean on the 14th. The storm roared ashore on the east coast near the port city of Tamatave packing maximum sustained winds of 143mph - equivalent to a category 4 Hurricane. Tens of thousands of residents lost power and hundreds of rural villages were isolated for more than a week. Numerous trees and power lines were downed and several dozen families were forced to evacuate their homes due to rising floodwaters.



Extremes for March 2012	
Hottest:	23.6°C Aboyne, Grampian, 27th
Coldest:	-8.5°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 18th
Most Rain:	44.2mm Kinlochewe, Highland, 19th
Most Sun:	12.6hrs East Malling, Kent, 27th
Windiest:	67mph Sule Skerry MAWS, Orkney, 6th
Warmest:	10.5°C Portchester, Hampshire
Coolest:	6.3°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	195.0mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	6.8mm Killowen, County Down
Sunniest:	226.1hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	69.4hrs Lerwick, Shetland

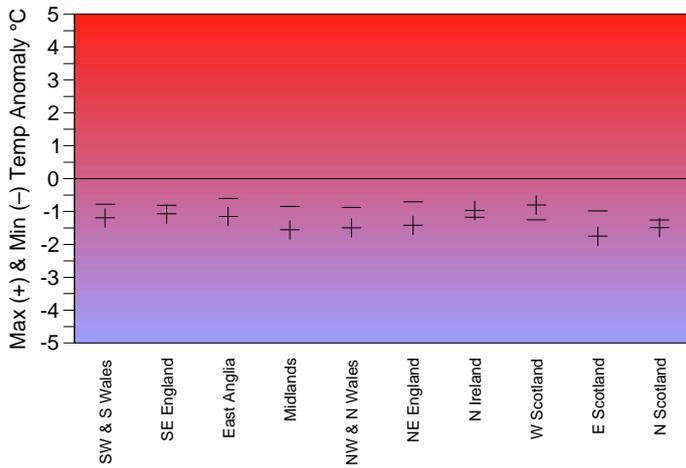


March marks the beginning of the meteorological spring. Snow and frost may still occur but the sun is rapidly waxing - and its heat becomes appreciable on a fine day. Settled spells in spring are often notable for their high diurnal temperature ranges - from chilly nights to balmy afternoons. Such was the case this year in what was an outstandingly dry and sunny month.

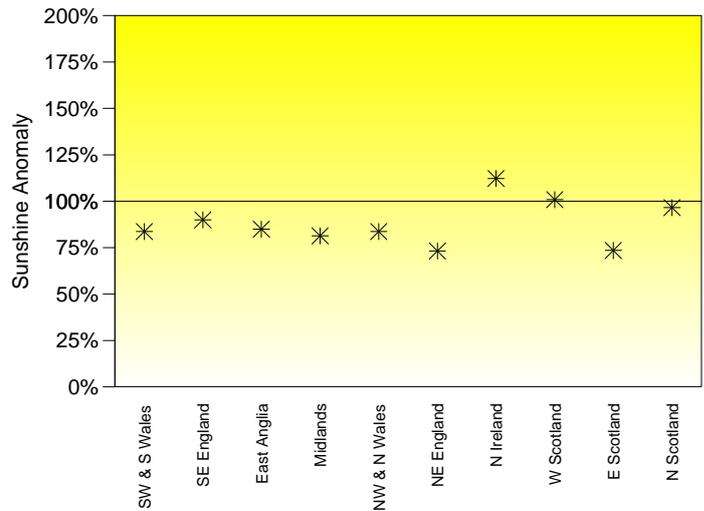
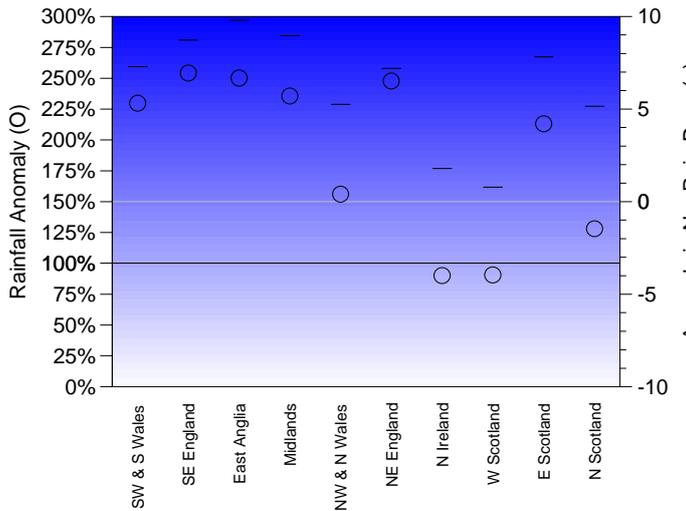
March began quiet and dry. A cold front swept in from the west on the 3rd giving a short spell of rain - and the 4th saw widespread rain over England and Wales which turned to sleet in places. A ridge led to cold, bright weather for the next couple of days before more fronts raced south-east on the 7th bringing rain followed by wintry showers with snow on northern hills. Pressure then rose strongly in the south so that although Atlantic systems continued to affect the north at times, the trend was for settled weather. By the 11th, it felt decidedly spring-like where the sun broke through - and maxima in parts of eastern England exceeded 13°C (55°F). For the following week, high pressure was centred over the UK although copious cloud kept conditions warm rather than hot. However, after a brief unsettled spell 17th/18th, pressure began to rise once more and come to dominate for the remainder of the month. Nights were often chilly with frosts, but with more sunshine, daytime temperatures soared: By the 22nd maxima began to exceed 16°C (61°F) and as the brilliantly sunny skies persisted over the following week, temperature records tumbled across Scotland. Maxima exceeded 21°C (70°F) in places, with 23.6°C (74°F) at Aboyne, Aberdeenshire on the 27th, marking a very warm day for mid summer, let alone March! By the 29th, the anticyclone which had persisted so long began to recede westwards into the North Atlantic allowing weak fronts to approach Scotland from the north. The 31st saw a weak cold front move south, bringing very little of the much-needed rain but more cloud and a sharp drop in temperature. Mean temperatures and sunshine for March were well above normal everywhere, and it was again a very dry month, exacerbating the drought conditions in parts of eastern and southern England. Ireland also experienced record warmth in the latter half of March. The maximum temperatures of 22.2°C (72°F) at Belmullet and 18.8 °C (66°F) at Cork Airport on the 27th were the highest ever for March in 50 years of records.

Across the Atlantic, severe thunderstorms on the 2nd generated one of the worst March tornado outbreaks in U.S. history. A preliminary count of 120 tornadoes left massive destruction across the Midwestern and Southeast states where 39 people were killed and hundreds of homes and businesses destroyed. In Clark County, Indiana, an EF-4 tornado, with winds whipping up to 175 mph, left a 49 mile long path of total devastation, a swath including the unfortunate town of Henryville. From the 12th onwards, central and eastern states sweltered in extraordinary early spring warmth. The onset was spectacular; at International Falls, Minnesota, temperatures reached a low of -26°C (-14°F) on March 9th and then soared to a high of 26°C (79°F) on the 18th - just nine days later! Boston sizzled in 28.5°C (83°F) on the 22nd - its earliest 80°F temperature since 1921. More than a dozen major cities established new all-time highs for March, including Detroit and Lansing, both Michigan, where the mercury hit 30°C (86°F) on the 22nd. Quebec City, Canada, also smashed the March record with 18.5°C (65°F). However the early heat triggered violent thunderstorms across the Southeast USA on the 24th. Hail, in places the size of golf balls, covered the ground 15cm deep in some communities from south-western Virginia through Georgia into South Carolina; Hail also 'hit' the headlines in the 50th state of America, Hawaii which recorded its largest ever hailstone, collected in the Aikahi area. The official measurements were 110mm long and 50mm wide!

A major dust and sandstorm swept over wide areas of the Middle East on 17th/18th. The strong winds and very low visibility spread quickly south-eastwards, enveloping Baghdad, Iraq, through to Kuwait. The choking, blinding airborne dust sent hundreds of people to hospital in Saudi Arabia where schools were shut. The storm disrupted flights through Yemen and in Kuwait, 277 residents on the island of Failaka were evacuated. In Australia, New South Wales recorded its wettest week on record to the 4th March, after a slow moving rain-band delivered a state-wide average of 124mm. Numerous rainfall stations and entire catchments broke records during the event, which culminated with a daily fall of 187mm at Charlotte Pass on the 2nd. Wodonga, Victoria, recorded 88mm within just a few hours and this, astonishingly, broke the previous March monthly record of 84mm set in 1926. An estimated 70% of New South Wales was affected by flooding on the 5th when 13,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes. Thousands of wolf spiders near Wagga Wagga sought higher ground, spinning webs in fields and trees to avoid the deluge!



Extremes for April 2012	
Hottest:	19.7°C Kew Gardens, Greater London, 30th
Coldest:	-8.2°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 5th
Most Rain:	55.8mm Liscombe, Somerset, 29th
Most Sun:	15.1hrs Dunstaffnage, Strathclyde, 29th
Windiest:	76mph Warcop Range SAWS, Cumbria, 29th
Warmest:	9.7°C Portchester, Hampshire
Coollest:	3.6°C Braemar No 2, Avon
Wettest:	248.5mm Ebbw Vale, Gwent
Driest:	29.0mm Newton Rigg, Cumbria
Sunniest:	240.9hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	70.7hrs Dyce, Grampian



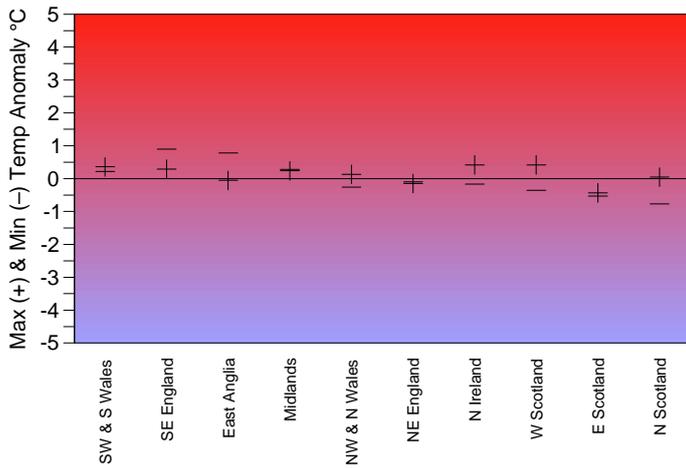
Spring begins in earnest during April but it is a notoriously fickle month. The meandering nature of the jet stream means that cold northerlies can swing to warmer southerlies and then back again with baffling swiftness. Despite its reputation for showers, April is often a dry month and 2011 was outstandingly dry, warm and sunny. This year however was beset by record-breaking deluges....

Following record warm spell of late March, April began cooler and more unsettled. By the 3rd, a complex area of low pressure was situated over the UK and with cold north-easterlies on its upper flank there were substantial snowfalls over northern hills. Snow and ice accumulation, brought down power lines across north-east England on the 4th leaving 10,000 homes without power. The Easter weekend began cold and cloudy for many, before winds backed westerly by the 8th to bring a little warmth. Easter Monday was a wet day virtually nationwide but the 10th was brighter with a mix of sun and showers. As the flow became slack over the next few days, some showers became heavy and slow-moving, giving some torrential downpours with hail and thunder. By the 15th, pressure was rising from the west but chilly northerlies gave wintry showers in the east and night frosts. Another set of fronts approached from the west late on the 16th and rain swept east overnight, followed by the familiar mix of sun and blustery showers. The associated area of low pressure then stagnated over the UK for the next five days. As a result, there was widespread heavy rain with many reports of hail and thunder. A new depression brought more rain on the 24th only to be followed by another more vicious system on the 25th - which was an especially wet and windy day. Thereafter, depressions from the Continent brought further wet, cold and windy weather to England and Wales. During the weekend of 28th / 29th, strong winds across the West Midlands, south-west England and South Wales uprooted hundreds of trees and left 12,000 properties without power. In comparison, Scotland and Northern Ireland were brighter, but chilly with overnight frosts. Warmth finally arrived to southern areas on the 30th with maxima at last exceeding 16°C (61°F)

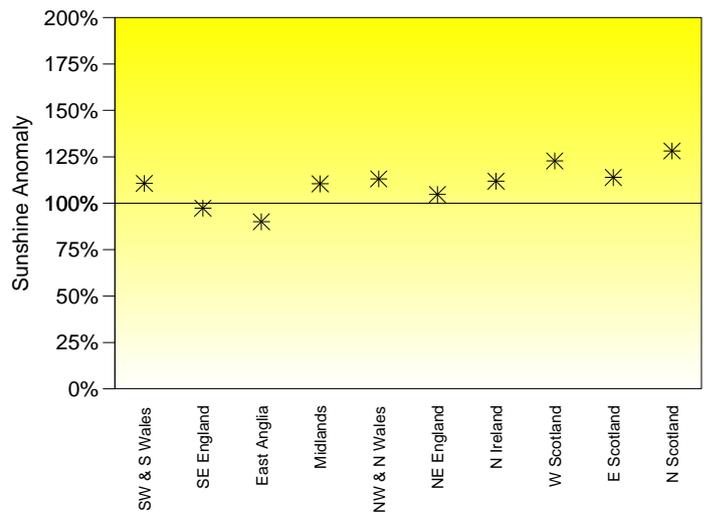
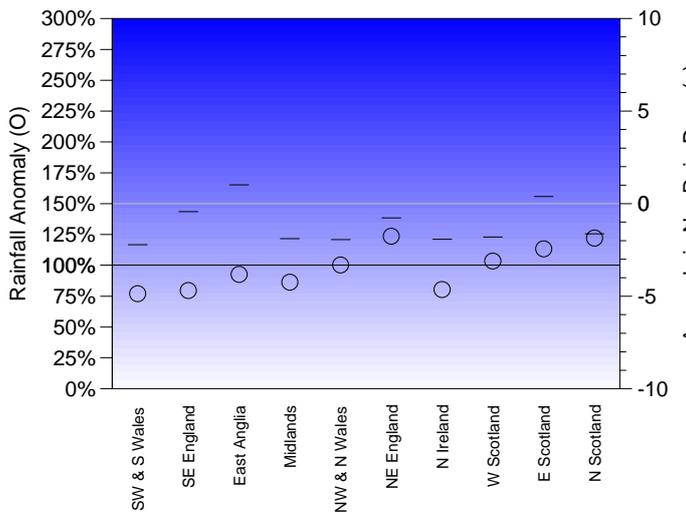
For the UK as a whole, April 2012 was the wettest since records began in 1910 yet, there remains a drought situation in some parts of the country. Sunshine was close to the average, but it was a cold month everywhere - and there have only been 19 colder Aprils in the last 100 years.

In Europe during April, a severe spring storm on 17th-18th unleashed damaging winds across Turkey and Greece. Trees were toppled, roofs torn off, boats capsized (at Bodrum) and a dust storm disrupted flights into the Turkish capital, Ankara. On 28th-29th central and eastern Europe experienced an early taste of summer with April temperature records smashed. Munich recorded 32°C (90°F) as did parts of Lower Austria; Vienna basked in 28°C (82°F) drawing large crowds to the banks of the Danube. The heat also extended into Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and western Russia, with Moscow sizzling in 29°C (84°F) Across the Atlantic, Anchorage, Alaska picked up 10cm of snow on the 7th, making it the snowiest season ever. Tornadoic thunderstorms ravaged parts of the USA Plains on 14th, killing six people and leaving behind a swathe of destruction. Over 100 tornadoes were reported from Oklahoma through Kansas, Nebraska and southern Iowa. The deadliest ravaged the town of Woodward, Oklahoma, where six people were killed and 30 injured. Another tornado tore through the southern portion of Wichita, Kansas, causing \$283 million damage. A tornado also ripped through the town of Thurman, Iowa, destroying most of the town. Golf ball sized hail fell near Petersburg, Nebraska and baseball-sized hail occurred just east of Dodge City, Kansas. Meanwhile eastern states twinned in an early heat wave. In Albany, New York, the record high of 33°C (91°F) on the 16th was the earliest in the year ever for reaching the 90°F mark. Baltimore equalled its record April high of 32°C (90°F) and more than 1,200 runners were treated for heat-related problems in the Boston marathon.

In India, violent thunderstorms saw sixteen people killed in multiple lightning incidents in the south-eastern state of Andhra Pradesh on the 29th. Victims were farmers or the homeless, caught outdoors. On the 30th more than 100 people were killed after a ferry sank in the Brahmaputra River of north-eastern India during another thunderstorm. The boat broke into two pieces after capsizing in torrential rain and fierce winds. Winds of typhoon strength swept over Japan on the 3rd leaving one person dead and tens of thousands stranded due to cancelled flights. In Australia, severe floods affected eastern New South Wales, including greater Sydney, on 16th-18th, swamping streets and inundating buildings. Two-day rainfalls of 75 to 150 mm were widespread with the highest rainfall of 180 mm observed between Sydney and Newcastle.



Extremes for May 2012		
Hottest:	29.0°C	Haselbury Plucknett, Somerset, 25th
Coldest:	-6.2°C	Saughall, Strathclyde, 5th
Most Rain:	101.6mm	Kinlochewe, Highland, 13th
Most Sun:	16.6hrs	Auchincruive, Strathclyde, 23rd
Windiest:	115mph	Lerwick, Shetland, 28th
Warmest:	14.3°C	Portchester, Hampshire
Coollest:	7.1°C	Lerwick, Shetland
Wettest:	158.4mm	Kinlochewe, Highland
Driest:	15.2mm	Swaffham, Norfolk
Sunniest:	302.9hrs	Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	114.2hrs	Swaffham, Norfolk



"He who shears his sheep before St Saviour's Day (May 13th) loves his wool more than his sheep..." This saying suggests that although summer may appear to be just around the corner, May weather often springs some chilly surprises. May 11th marks the feast day of St Mamertus and the 12th that of St Pancras, and the period 11th-13th comprises the festival of the Ice Saints, so named because mid-May was commonly associated with cold weather and frosts damaging young plants and fruit blossom. Interestingly, just such a cold spell occurred this year.

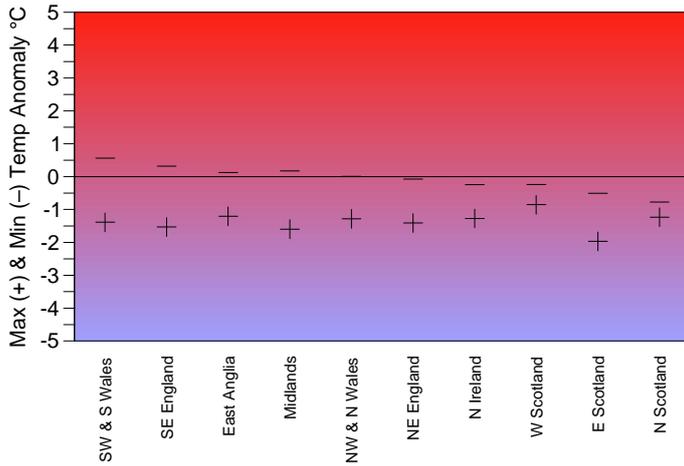
The month opened with the remnants of heavy and thundery rain over England and Wales, and the next two days were cool and overcast with occasional light rain or drizzle. By the 4th, Arctic air had reached northern Britain. Wintry showers fell in northern and eastern Scotland and in many places the early May Bank Holiday was a good deal colder than was Christmas! On the early morning of the 5th, Saughall, Ayrshire, recorded a sharp air frost -6.2°C (22°F), whilst Fair Isle struggled to a maximum of just 4.5°C (40°F) during the afternoon. More rain reached southern and western areas on the 7th, and the following days were very unsettled. It became warmer in the south, but further snow fell over the Scottish Highlands. The 11th was a windy day, but rather brighter, albeit with showers. The 12th saw a ridge establish from an Atlantic anticyclone bringing a brief sunny interlude to most parts before more fronts drove rain across Scotland and Northern Ireland on the 13th and 14th. Hail and thunder were observed widely on the 15th and snow and sleet fell over the Highlands. There was a widespread ground frost on the 16th and raw northeasterly winds set in over the next few days keeping the weather dull and unseasonably cool. However, from the 22nd pressure rose, as an anticyclone developed over Scandinavia, the cloud broke and temperatures soared. It was hottest in western Scotland, and on the 25th, Kinlochewe, Western Ross recorded 28.7°C (84°F). Thundery showers encroached into the south-west on the 27th and these subsequently broke out more widely. On the 28th, a huge cumulonimbus cloud was observed to the north-east of St Albans, Hertfordshire, and two lanes on the Dartford Bridge crossing were closed owing to very heavy rain.

Mean temperatures for May were below average for most places although the warm weather later redeemed what was otherwise a very cool month. Rainfall was generally near or slightly above normal. Sunshine was plentiful for Wales, northern England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, but for many central, southern and eastern areas of England it was a dull month.

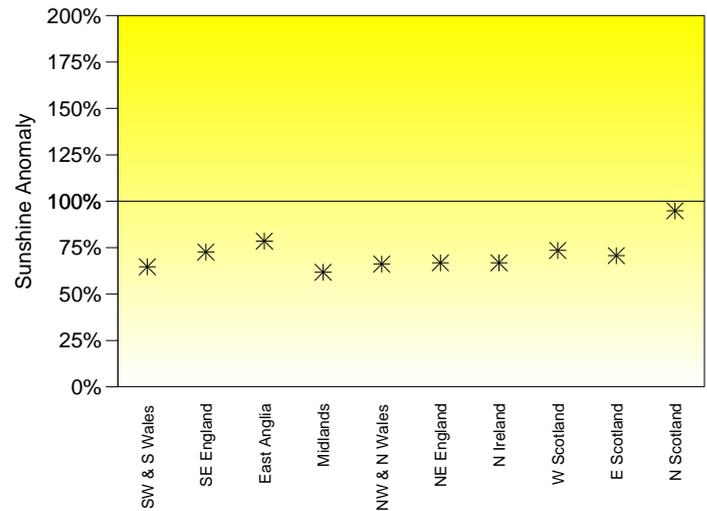
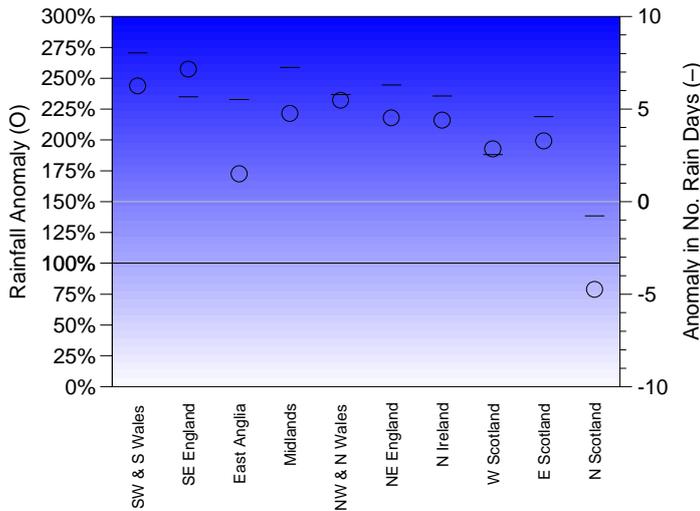
In Ireland, as in the UK, summer heat arrived in the last week with 27.8°C (82°F) at Shannon airport on the 25th the highest May reading since records began there in 1938. Two British tourists died while hiking on Gran Canaria as the island was gripped by a heat wave on the 13th. At least six others suffered heat exhaustion as temperatures soared to 40°C (104°F). On the 15th, the new French President, Francois Hollande was on board a plane which was struck by lightning en route to Berlin. There were no injuries, but the aircraft returned to Paris for checks.

In Japan, a deadly tornado struck the city of Tsukuba, 40 miles away from Tokyo on the 6th, leaving devastation in its wake. 200 homes were damaged by the twister and lightning and severe squalls knocked out power to 24,000 homes. 30 people were injured, and there was at least one death. A flash flood swept through the Seti River at Pokhara, a Himalayan tourist spot in Nepal on the 6th. 17 people were killed with 47 others left missing. Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, also suffered flooding on the 13th following heavy rain and snowmelt. At least five people were killed and dozens injured. Floodwaters from the main Mtkvari River inundated roads, cut power and left behind quagmires of mud. Stifling heat affected India during May. Allahabad, Nagpur, Gaya, Raipur and Ramagundam were among the cities exceeding the scorching 45°C (113°F) mark and on the 22nd, Brahmपुरi reached 46.3°C (115°F). Pakistan was also sweltering with several cities in the Sindh region topping 45°C on the 23rd.

In South America, on the 20th the Rio Negro (the largest tributary of the Amazon) burst its banks flooding the centre of Manaus. In contrast, to the west of the Andes, Chile has been in drought. Santiago has received just 9mm of rain so far during 2012 (23% of the normal amount) On 27th-28th a state of emergency was declared in the Thunder Bay area, Canada after severe flooding struck Ontario's Lake Superior region. Roads were washed out, and many schools shut. 70mm rain (nearly the normal monthly amount for May) fell within six hours late on 27th and the 30 hour total exceeded 100mm. On the 30th, the remnants of Tropical Storm Beryl spawned a tornado that destroyed three homes and damaged dozens of others on the North Carolina coast.



Extremes for June 2012	
Hottest:	28.9°C Leigh-on-Sea 2, Essex, 28th
Coldest:	-3.5°C Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 5th
Most Rain:	99.4mm Blencathra, Cumbria, 22nd
Most Sun:	16.4hrs Kirkwall, Orkney, 20th
Windiest:	67mph Mumbles Head, West Glamorgan, 7th
Warmest:	15.7°C Carrefour-au-Clercq, Channel Islands
Coolest:	9.4°C Lerwick, Shetland
Wettest:	350.9mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd
Driest:	41.7mm Fair Isle, Shetland
Sunniest:	294.1hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	57.1hrs Eskdalemuir, Dumfries and Galloway



Long light evenings, barbecues, uninterrupted play at Wimbledon and the thwack of bat on ball in summer sunshine - these are a few of the images that June may conjure up. The reality is often markedly different however, and this year was one of the coolest, dullest and wettest Junes ever...

The month was unsettled almost from the start and bad weather marred some of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The Thames pageant on the 3rd took place in cold, damp and dismal conditions with temperatures not far above 10°C (50°F). The 4th was drier but still very cool and more fronts followed over the next few days bringing further rain. An unusually deep depression for the time of year moved north-east across the UK on the 7th and 8th brought widespread rain and wind. Gales over southern England and south Wales led to dozens of uprooted trees and some 300 homes in south-west England losing power. The occlusion wrapped around the low gave persistent and heavy rainfall across mid-Wales on the 8th and 9th culminating in serious flooding in the Aberystwyth area. More than 1000 people were evacuated and 150 had to be rescued - mainly from half submerged caravan parks. Trawsgoed, Ceredigion, notched up a colossal 102mm rain in the 48 hours to 0900 on the 9th. After a brief respite on the 10th, the 11th and 12th were both very wet over England and Wales - though Scotland and Northern Ireland escaped largely unscathed. Chichester and Bognor Regis were just two areas affected by flooding. Another unseasonably deep depression brought more storms on the 14th and 15th and there was disruption to some ferry routes. The 17th - 20th was quieter - and though there were still some heavy and thundery showers - it became warmer with 23.3°C (73°F) achieved at Northolt, Greater London on the 20th. The respite was short lived however and low pressure soon took control again. Widespread rain on the 21st and 22nd was particularly heavy across northern England and Keswick, Cumbria recorded 88.6mm on the 22nd. Train services on the West Coast mainline were suspended and across Cumbria, Lancashire and West Yorkshire around 500 properties were affected by flooding - either from surface water or rivers bursting their banks. On the afternoon of the 25th warm, humid air invaded, and after a couple of rather cloudy, damp and muggy days, the stage was set for a grand finale. On the 28th lines of intense thunderstorms tracked north-east across the Midlands and northern England. There was lightning, torrential rain and large hail - which left numerous greenhouses and vehicles damaged especially across Leicestershire. In north-east England some 23,000 properties were left without power as substations flooded and a landslip near Berwick closed the East Coast mainline. The south-east missed all the activity and it was very warm with 28.6°C (84°F) at Gravesend, Kent. The final two days were somewhat fresher but still showery.

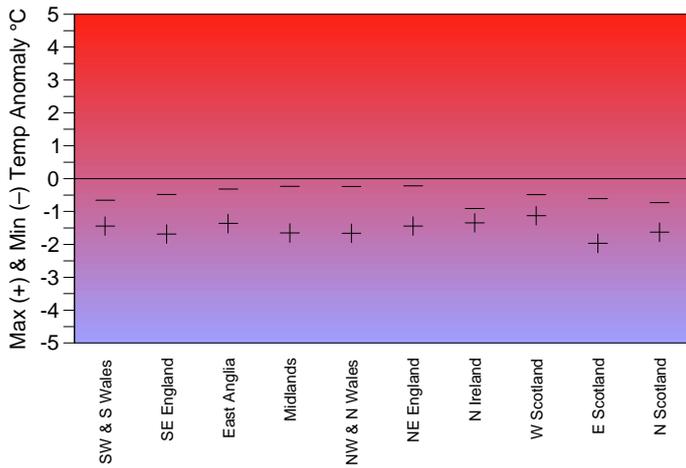
It was the wettest June across the UK in over 100 years (even beating 2007) and provisionally the second dullest in a series from 1929. Only the far north-west of Scotland was drier than normal - being away from the main depression track.

Other European countries were also affected by inclement June weather. In Ireland, Cork airport recorded 228mm for the month - making it the wettest June since records began there in 1962. On the 3rd, Stockholm registered its coldest June weekend in 84 years, with temperatures hitting a maximum of just 6°C (43°F) on the 2nd as blustery winds and heavy rain swept the Swedish capital. On the 30th, violent electrical storms injured 51 people at the Roitzschjora music festival in Lower Saxony (Germany). Three casualties had to be resuscitated on the spot after being hurled into the air. Golf ball sized hail fell in Hilpertsweiler, Bayern, (Germany).

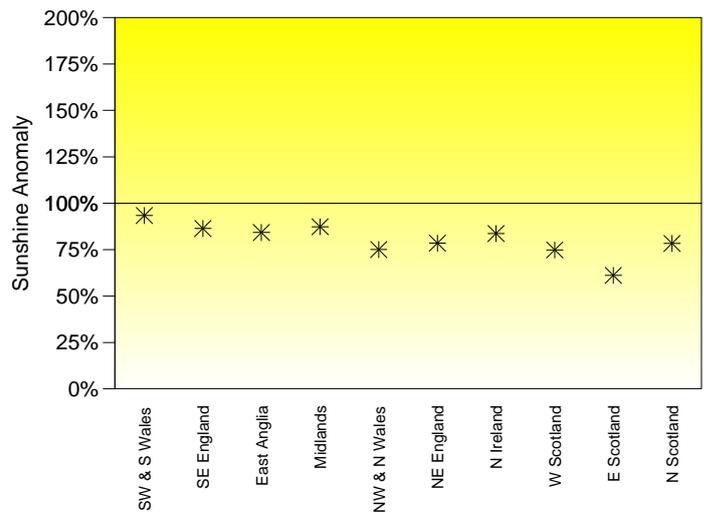
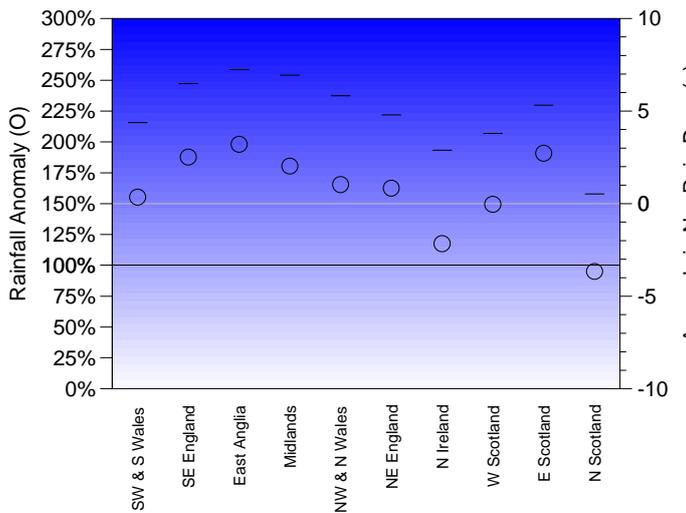
Across the Atlantic, severe thunderstorms also slammed Denver and Colorado Springs late on the 7th. A total of seven tornadoes were reported along the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies and one touched down north of Denver International Airport. Golf ball sized hail damaged vehicles, ripped gutters from homes and piled up several inches deep. Several massive thunderstorms cut a swathe through North Texas late on the 13th. Baseball-sized hailstones smashed everything from car windshields to the marquee of a landmark East Dallas movie theatre. The storms caused hundreds of millions of dollars of damage, about 6,000 homes and businesses lost power in Dallas alone and more than 40 flights were diverted away from the international airport.

A rare snowstorm crippled travel in and around the city of Christchurch, New Zealand on the 5th, leaving 3,000 people without power. On the 6th, the temperature did not rise above 0°C all day making it the coldest day in the city since records began 149 years ago! Also in the Antipodes, a round of severe thunderstorms on the 7th spawned tornadoes that led to widespread damage in and around Perth, Western Australia. A second wave of storms struck on the 12th, and wind gusts in excess of 90mph left more than 100,000 people without power.

Extreme rainfall across Taiwan 11th - 13th led to many school and business closures. Transportation was hit hard by flooding with dozens of flights cancelled and over 30,000 rail users were affected as tracks between Taoyuan and Yingge collapsed. At Kaohsiung City the 24 hour rainfall was an almost unbelievable 582 mm!!



Extremes for July 2012		
Hottest:	33.1°C	London Olympic Park North, Greater London,
Coldest:	0.0°C	Resallach, Highland, 2nd
Most Rain:	65.7mm	Dorchester, Dorset, 7th
Most Sun:	16.0hrs	Haselbury Plucknett, Somerset, 22nd
Windiest:	61mph	Berry Head, Devon, 7th
Warmest:	17.6°C	St James Park, Greater London
Coollest:	11.3°C	Fair Isle, Shetland
Wettest:	219.5mm	Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd
Driest:	24.2mm	Wych Cross, East Sussex
Sunniest:	327.6hrs	Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	59.3hrs	Eskdalemuir, Dumfries and Galloway



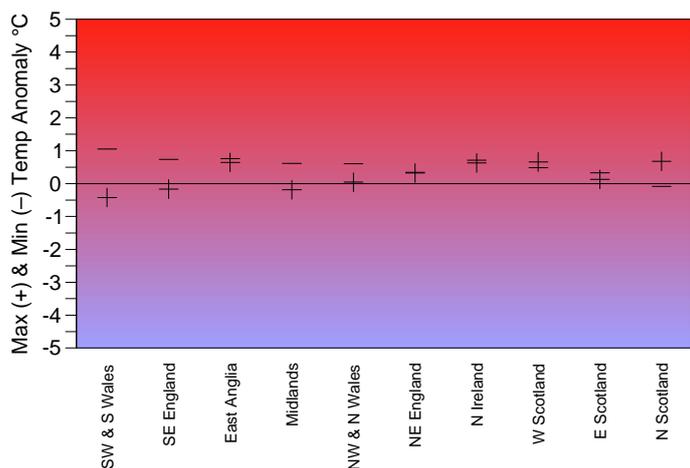
July marks the period of high summer. It is usually our warmest month, and in nearly half of all years it boasts our hottest day. July also ranks (alongside August) as the least windy month, but despite this, unsettled weather often features - and this was certainly the case this year. The first three weeks saw a continuation of the very unsettled conditions prevalent in June. Showers or longer spells of rain dominated during the first five days, and low pressure moving north from the Continent brought widespread heavy rain and flooding to much of England and Wales on the 6th. Conditions became more showery on the 7th and 8th, but heavy rain triggered more flooding to parts of Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders. Several rivers also burst their banks in east Devon and Dorset, with Wilmington (Devon) notching up a colossal 119mm in 24 hours to 1800 on the 7th. Very cool northerlies then affected northern Britain 9th - 11th with maxima struggling to exceed 13°C (55°F) - making it feel more like October! On the 9th, Calder Valley, West Yorkshire, was hit by serious flooding for the third time in a fortnight. A new depression swept in late on the 12th and brought more rain to England and Wales - but Scotland and Northern Ireland largely escaped - a frequent pattern so far this summer owing to the southerly track of low pressure. The 14th and 15th were brighter though still with some showers, but the following week saw more unsettled weather with the 16th and 18th notably wet. On the latter day, landslips delayed rail services in Fife and on the Glasgow-Oban route, but again the far north of Scotland remained largely dry. A marked change began on the 20th as the last in the long series of lows moved away into Scandinavia and pressure at finally began to rise. Showers died away by the 21st, and the main depression track transferred further north to the Iceland area, so that although northern Britain was wet on the 22nd and 23rd, the south basked in sun and warmth. Temperatures climbed steadily, peaking at 30.7°C (87°F) at St James Park, London on the 25th. As the opening ceremony of the Olympics approached, the heat began to ebb, but the worst of the thundery showers stayed away over the near Continent. Cooler, showery weather followed from the 28th and some showers did turn thundery on the 29th affecting some of the sporting events. A warm front approached late on the 30th, and this gave much of the south a damp and humid end to the month.

July was a cool and wet month for most parts. England, north Wales and eastern Scotland received over twice their average rainfall, but interestingly, the far north-west of Scotland and the west of Northern Ireland were a good deal drier than normal. Very wet ground conditions in many places added to the soggy, gloomy feel, and affected crop harvests in low-lying areas. At least, though, the persistent rain enabled the final four water companies in south-east England to lift remaining hosepipe bans. Sunshine was in deficit almost everywhere and Scotland had one of its dullest Julys ever.

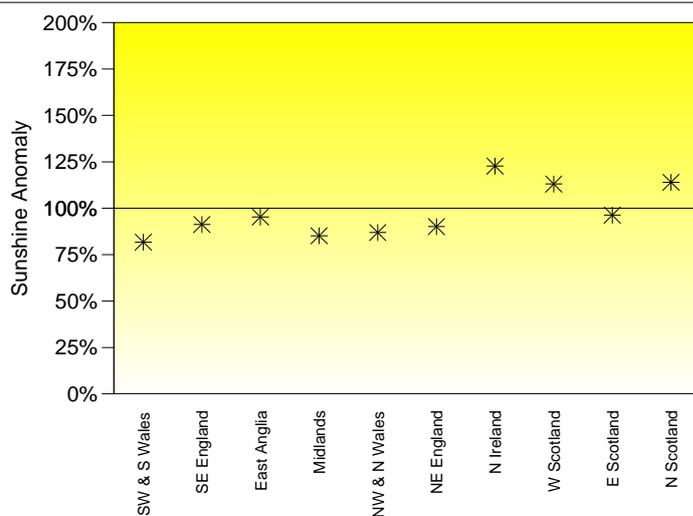
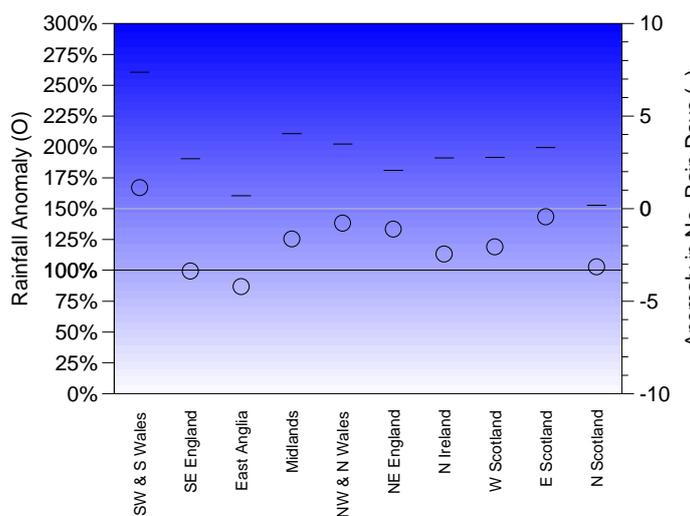
In Europe, powerful tornadoes struck Poland on the 15th leaving at least one person dead and another 10 injured. The twisters hit the northern and western regions of Kujawy-Pomorze and Wielkopolska, where they wrecked 100 homes and flattened swathes of forest. Witnesses saw a camper van flying through the air with a family of three inside; luckily, the occupants were not seriously injured. Also on the 15th, the temperature soared to a scorching 42.4°C (108°F) at Giurgiu, 60 km south of the Romanian capital Bucharest.

Blistering heat affected the USA well into July. On the 1st, Chattanooga, Tennessee tied the all-time record of 42°C, (107°F) set just the previous day, while Charlotte, North Carolina reached 40°C (104°F) and tied the all-time record for the third successive day. On the 5th Chicago hit 37.7°C (100°F) for the third day in a row. A powerful thunderstorm felled hundreds of trees and killed two people on the 5th as it whipped through Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Elsewhere, eight people were killed by lightning in the USA in storms 3rd - 16th. The severe drought in the Midwest forced barges on the Mississippi river to lighten their loads for fear of getting stuck and raised concerns about higher prices for food and fuel. Almost 30% of the nine-state Midwest was suffering extreme drought by the 24th. Firefighters in three Nebraska counties battled expanding wildfires, and the town of Ola, Arkansas, was evacuated as a firestorm bore down on it. In contrast, coastal Alaska experienced the coldest first half of July on record; the average temperature in Anchorage being just 11.5°C, (53.1°F)

Up to 280mm rain overnight 7th - 8th brought massive flooding to the Krasnodar region of southern Russia. There were 171 deaths, most around the city of Krymsk, where floodwaters quickly rose to 7 metres. Meanwhile, river flooding triggered by monsoonal rains ravaged the northeast Indian state of Assam. The Brahmaputra River and its tributaries overflowed in the worst flood in the state since 1998. Kaziranga National wildlife Park was devastated and there were at least 121 deaths. At least fifteen people were killed by flooding and landslides as rainstorms swept southwestern Japan on the 13th. Rainfall totals were reportedly as high as 500 mm. About 48,000 people were evacuated from the city of Kumamoto and blackouts hit thousands of homes. A cloudburst also hit Beijing on 21st, believed to be the heaviest rain in the Chinese capital since records began in 1951. Rivers burst their banks and flooded major highways, submerging then sweeping away large numbers of vehicles. More than 152mm of rain fell in Beijing city, while outlying areas recorded as much as 350mm.



Extremes for August 2012	
Hottest:	33.4°C Leigh-on-Sea 2, Essex, 18th
Coldest:	-2.4°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 31st
Most Rain:	58.5mm Lerwick, Shetland, 22nd
Most Sun:	14.2hrs Dunstaffnage, Strathclyde, 8th
Windiest:	65mph South Uist Range, Western Isles, 27th
Warmest:	19.6°C London Olympic Park South, Greater London
Coolest:	12.5°C Fair Isle, Shetland
Wettest:	223.2mm Eskdalemuir, Dumfries and Galloway
Driest:	17.4mm Cambridge, Niab, Cambridgeshire
Sunniest:	285.7hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	89.9hrs Bala, Clwyd



Whilst still a summer month, August is usually a little cooler than July. The sun's power begins to wane towards month end, and the occasional chilly, misty morning is seen as a harbinger of autumn. August is notoriously wet and thundery, and the late Bank Holiday frequently brings a deluge, followed by a settled spell just as the school holidays draw to a close in early September.

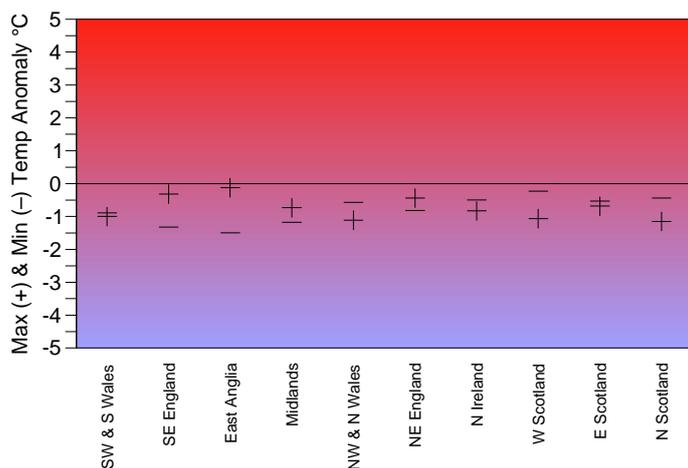
Low pressure dominated during the first six days, gradually migrating from west of Ireland to Denmark. All areas saw a mixture of sunshine and heavy showers which were sometimes thundery. The afternoon of the 5th was particularly lively and flooding was reported from various parts of England, Wales and Scotland, although the Olympic events proceeded largely unscathed. Pressure then began to rise, and although weak fronts brought dull and damp weather to the south at first, it became increasingly sunny from the 9th as high pressure became established over Scandinavia. The dry and warm spell did not last long however; thundery showers encroached the south-west from the 12th, and a more general breakdown followed on the 13th. An unseasonably deep depression anchored mid Atlantic affected all of England and Wales on the 15th and swept bands of heavy rain northward. The low subsequently weakened allowing warm southerly air to waft in by the 17th. The next two days saw hot, humid weather in central, southern and eastern parts and 32.4°C (90°F) at Cavendish, Suffolk on the 18th. It became rather cooler from the 20th and increasingly unsettled. An Atlantic low moving across the UK on the 25th gave widespread thunderstorms and after a brief lull on the 26th, very wet and windy weather in the west. South Uist, Western Isles recorded a gust of 64mph. There was further heavy, thundery rain on the 29th and St Bees Head, Cumbria, notched up 42.6mm in 24 hours - causing a landslip which closed a nearby railway line. A ridge of high pressure formed on the 30th and brought settled but very cool conditions in a north-westerly flow. The early morning of the 31st saw record low minima for August at some stations. Cromdale, Highland recorded a sharp air frost and a minimum of -2.5°C (27°F)

Across the UK as a whole temperatures were slightly above average by virtue of the warm spells, but away from East Anglia and the south-east it was another wet month and many areas were again rather duller than usual. Thus the curtain fell on another wet and cloudy summer overall - and the weather has adversely affected many fruit, vegetable and cereal crops.

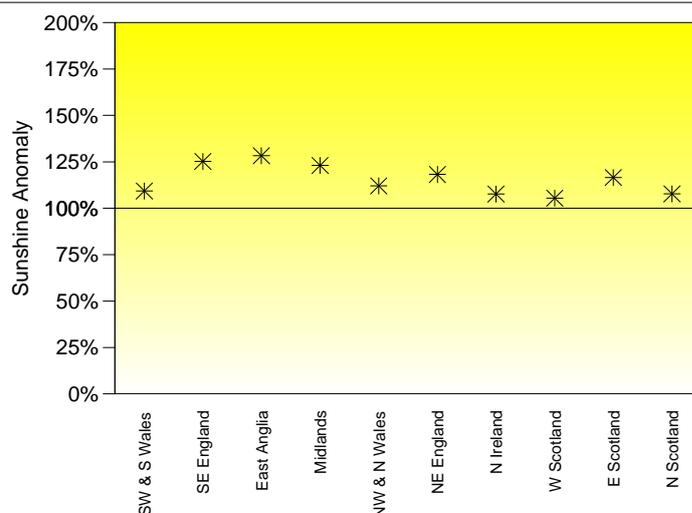
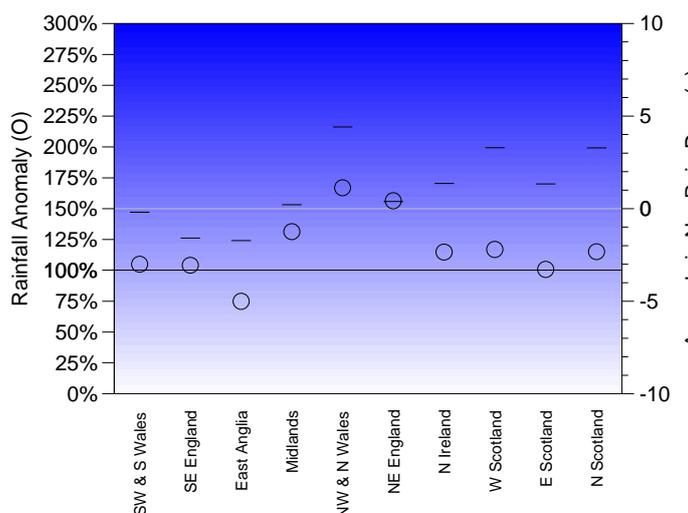
Continental Europe experienced its two hottest spells since the historic heat wave of 2003 during August. In the Balkans, all-time national temperature records were set on 7-8th in Moldova with 42.4°C (108°F) at Falesti and Montenegro on the 7th and 44.8°C (113°F) at Danilovgrad on the 8th. Wild fires raged in both Spain and Greece with several fatalities reported from the Spanish resort area of Marbella. France sweltered just after mid month and on the 18th, temperatures in Paris reached 38°C (100°F) for the first time in a decade. Montgivray (Indre) hit 42.2°C (108°F) on the 18th and Châtillon-sur-Seine (Côte-d'Or) reached 41.5°C (107°F) on the 19th. The Czech Republic hit a new all time record with 40.4°C (104.7°F) at Dobrichovice on the 20th. Blistering heat returned to the Balkan region on the 25th, and temperatures exceeded 41.1°C (106°F) at Loznica in Serbia and 40°C (104°F) in Belgrade. An intense heat wave also continued across the southern USA plains during August exacerbating an on-going drought. The temperature at Oklahoma City reached 45°C (113°F) on the 2nd - an all time record. Unusual rainstorms affected the desert southwest on the 22nd. Las Vegas, Nevada recorded its 2nd wettest day ever with 42mm causing flash flooding, whilst 103mm fell at Mid Hills RAWs in San Bernardino County, California. In stark contrast, Seattle, in the Pacific North West, received no measureable precipitation during the entire month of August. Hurricane Isaac made landfall in Louisiana on the 27th and seven storm-related deaths were reported - mostly associated with the 400-500mm rainfalls that fell along its track.

August was a very active month typhoon-wise in the Western Pacific. On the 23rd Hong Kong was struck by Kai-tak, packing winds of 87mph and going on to cause at least 27 deaths in China's neighbouring Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces. On the 29th, Typhoon Bolaven caused damage to western parts of North Korea. Hundreds of trees were felled and power supply's cut. South Korea too was affected with 15 people killed and almost two million left without power. A flood engulfed Manila in the Philippines during the first week in August. Up to 1000 mm (1m!) of rain was reported in Quezon City and more than a quarter of a million residents were evacuated from their homes as Manila's streets were turned into lakes.

In Africa during August, at least 33 people were killed by heavy flooding in central Nigeria's Plateau state in the days leading up to the 15th. More than 12,000 people were affected in six districts and floods swamped homes and washed away roads. By the 26th flooding in Niger had killed 65 people, destroyed 10,000 property's and left 125,000 homeless. A rare fall of snow came to parts of South Africa including the capital Pretoria and Johannesburg on the 10th. Meanwhile the coldest temperature in the world during August was a numbing -80.0°C (-112.0°F) recorded at Vostok, Antarctica on the 7th.



Extremes for September 2012	
Hottest:	30.1°C Leigh-on-Sea 2, Essex, 9th
Coldest:	-4.1°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 23rd
Most Rain:	78.0mm KillyLane, County Antrim, 24th
Most Sun:	12.7hrs Portchester, Hampshire, 5th
Windiest:	73mph Foula No 2, Shetland, 4th
Warmest:	15.5°C St James Park, Greater London
Coolest:	9.5°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	354.0mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	24.6mm Wych Cross, East Sussex
Sunniest:	194.7hrs Manston, Kent
Dullest:	63.4hrs Kinlochewe, Highland



September is on the cusp of summer and autumn - and frequently features contrasting weather. Fine, warm, hazy days can provide a late blast of summer but equally there can be spells of wind and rain as North Atlantic systems gather strength. The nights draw in rapidly after the Equinox on the 22nd and ground frosts become common.

High pressure prevailed at the start of the month, although weak fronts brought cloud and a little rain during the first four days. Northern Scotland was very windy on the 4th. Nights were sometimes chilly and Sennybridge, Powys recorded just 2.8°C (37°F) early on the 5th. Days became steadily warmer with widespread maxima above 25°C (77°F) culminating in 29.3°C (84°F) at Cambridge on the 9th. The following week was markedly cooler in a mainly north-westerly flow. Many areas saw showers or longer spells of rain but amounts were small in the south where pressure remained relatively high, and the Paralympics took place in mainly fine conditions. The next week saw a continuation of this trend with plenty of dry but rather cool weather. Many places saw their first ground frost of the autumn on the 19th and Topcliffe, North Yorks recorded a minimum of -2°C (28°F). The 22nd was a sparkling, crisp day beneath a small anticyclone but this turned out to be the calm before the storm: The 23rd was very cold with a raw easterly wind and widespread maxima below 13°C (55°F) and a deepening depression spread wind and rain into southern and central areas. The fronts continued slowly northwards and the low stagnated, resulting in prolonged heavy rainfall over northern England 24th-26th. Some places experienced 2 months' worth of rainfall in little more than 48 hours and there were numerous reports of flooding. The A1 was closed near Catterick, North Yorkshire, owing to the volume of standing water and around 600 homes and businesses were reported to be flooded across England and Wales. Meanwhile, strong winds in eastern Scotland led to fallen trees, power cuts and restrictions on road bridges. The low began to relax its grip on the 26th, and although further fronts moved south-east during the final 4 days, rainfall was much less intense.

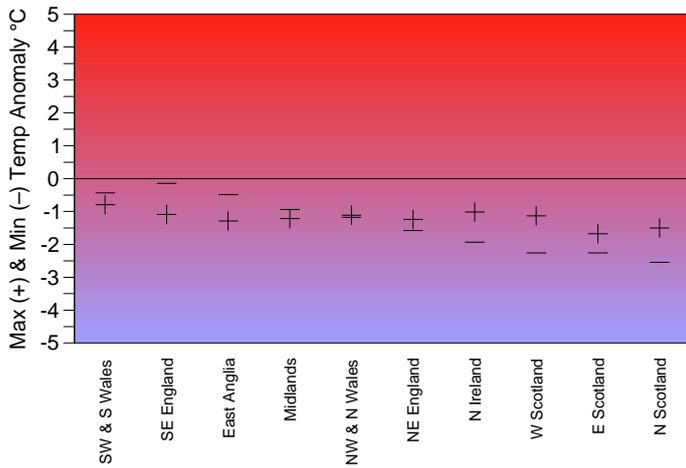
Northern England, southern Scotland, North Wales and the east of Northern Ireland had a wet or very wet September. Elsewhere rainfall was close to average despite the soggy finish. Temperatures were generally rather lower than usual and for the UK as a whole; it was the coolest September since 1994. The fine start meant that most places enjoyed a little more sunshine than normal.

The end of September also saw some very unsettled weather in parts of Europe. On the 28-29th at least 10 people died after heavy rains triggered flash floods in southern Spain. Cars were overturned, roads and railway lines closed and hundreds forced to leave their homes. Amongst the hardest hit were the Murcia region and the provinces of Malaga and Almeria. In Andalucia an almost biblical 245 mm of rain fell on the morning of the 28th forcing the evacuation of at least 600 residents. Further north, in Gandia, a tornado struck a temporary fairground, injuring 35 people, many seriously.

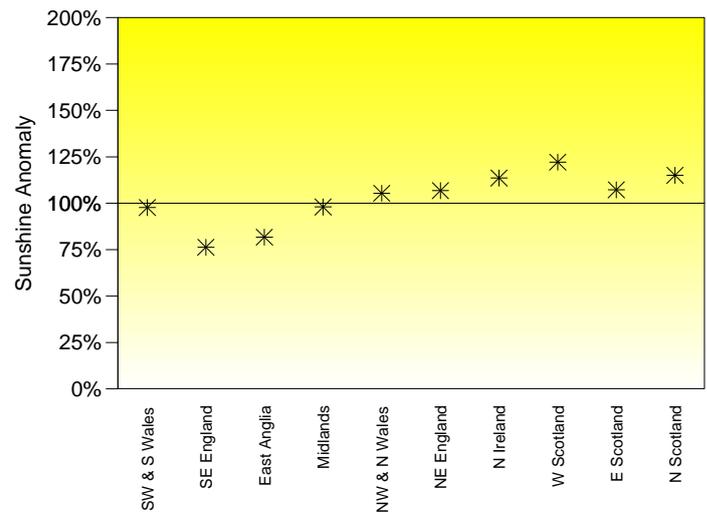
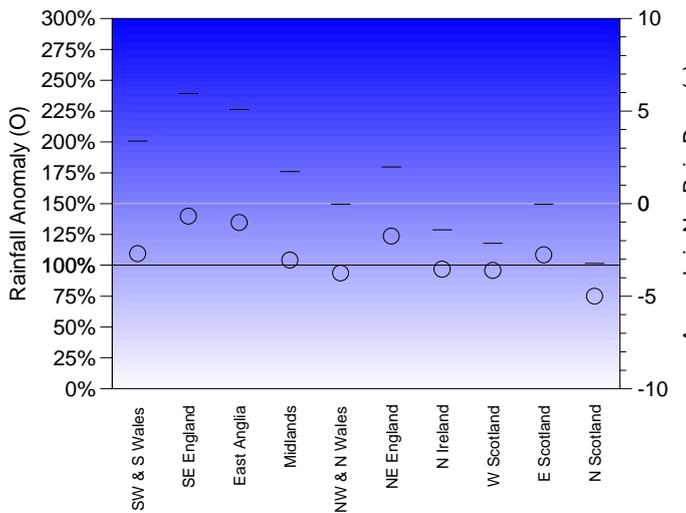
The "Entertainment Capital of the World", Las Vegas, recorded 13 thunderstorm days during August, breaking the previous monthly record of 12 days. On the 8th, two rare tornadoes hit the New York City borough of Queens and Brooklyn, damaging homes, causing blackouts and forcing the suspension of the US Open tennis tournament. On the 11th, former hurricane Leslie buffeted Newfoundland with storm surge, driving rain, raging surf and winds of up to 82mph. In Nova Scotia, Tracadie recorded 116 mm rain with 112 mm falling on Caribou Point. In South America on the 17th, temperatures reached 42°C (107°F) in the southern Brazilian province of Parana. The unusual heat for September triggered violent storms which pounded neighbouring Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay. Winds exceeded 90mph and rainfall 250mm in the southern Brazilian states 15th - 19th.

On the 25th, nearly 1.5 million people were evacuated from their homes as the north-eastern state of Assam, India, was hit by a second round of massive flooding. 18 out of 27 districts were inundated and 11 people were drowned. On the 30th, monsoon floods swept across Pakistan and an estimated 4.5 million people were affected. On the 29th, Typhoon Jelawat wreaked havoc in the Western Pacific. The Okinawa Islands, were struck by winds exceeding 136 mph and >300mm of rain was dumped over some parts of Taiwan.

While summer ice melt was causing concern in the Arctic, at the other end of the globe, Vostok in Antarctica registered some remarkably low late-winter temperatures - even for the coldest spot on Earth. Three nights saw the temperature break through the -80°C barrier, culminating with -84.2°C (121°F) on the 15th.



Extremes for October 2012	
Hottest:	19.2°C Langdon Bay, Kent, 22nd
Coldest:	-7.8°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 17th
Most Rain:	61.4mm Ballypatrick Forest SAWS, County Antrim, 18th
Most Sun:	10.4hrs St. Athan, South Glamorgan, 6th
Windiest:	69mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 31st
Warmest:	13.2°C Carrefour-au-Clercq, Channel Islands
Coolest:	4.8°C Dalwhinnie No 2, Tayside
Wettest:	231.1mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd
Driest:	44.4mm Wainfleet, Lincolnshire
Sunniest:	144.5hrs Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	35.6hrs Swaffham, Norfolk



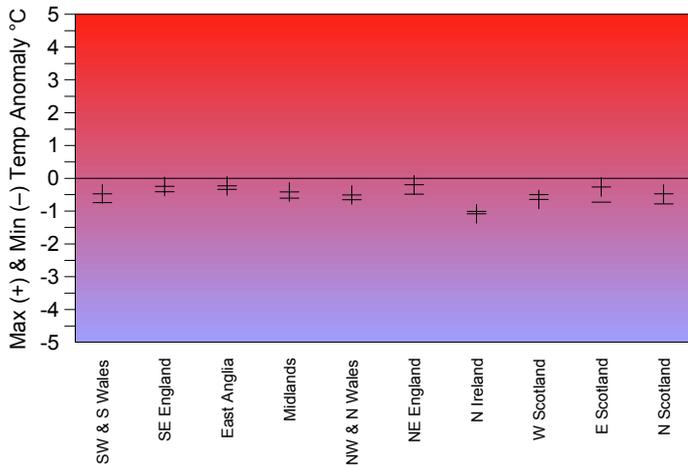
As autumn hastens on and the leaves turn, October can throw just about everything meteorological at us; sun, rain, gales, fog, frost, hail and snow can all feature, and such was the case this year. Last October saw record breaking warmth, but 2012 witnessed an early wintry outbreak towards month end. The first week was a typically mixed bag with bands of rain or showers, some sunshine in between and the odd chilly morning with grass frost, notably on the 4th. The 5th saw widespread rain which was heavy over southern areas, but the fronts moved away by the 6th - which was a sunny, crisp day nationwide. After further rain in the south on the 8th, a couple of settled days followed beneath high pressure but wet weather returned from the west on the 11th. Flash flooding occurred across parts of west Wales and also at Clovelly in Devon. On the 12th as the low pressure moved north, north-east Scotland was inundated. 50-70mm rain was recorded widely; there was disruption to road and rail services, and some damage to property in Fife. The next 4 days were increasingly cold and on the early morning of the 17th, the mercury fell to -7.8°C (18°F) at Braemar, Aberdeenshire. It then became milder everywhere, but very windy and wet as a deep depression off south-west Ireland drove active fronts north-east. On the 18th a combination of strong winds and very high tides caused coastal flooding in Devon and Cornwall. By the 20th, fronts were stagnating over the near Continent under the influence of high pressure to the east, and a warm front progressed slowly north-west over the next few days. This gave extensive low cloud and gloom over central and eastern UK and fog was troublesome 22nd-23rd and caused some disruption at airports. A cold front moving south on the 25th and 26th cleared the murk, but introduced much colder arctic air. Showers were wintry in the north and east, and parts of eastern England and Scotland awoke to snow cover on the 27th. Accumulations were mainly small and quickly melted but a snow depth of 12cm was observed at Copley, County Durham. It became less cold on the 28th as winds backed westerly and Atlantic fronts swept south-east. The month closed on a very unsettled note as a vigorous cold front brought heavy rain and squally winds to all areas.

For the UK as a whole, rainfall and sunshine totals were close to the long-term average. Some eastern and southern counties were rather wet, and it was a dull month across south-east England. By contrast, western Scotland fared very well in the sunshine stakes. It was a rather cold month, particularly across Northern Scotland and for the UK as a whole it was the coldest October in a decade.

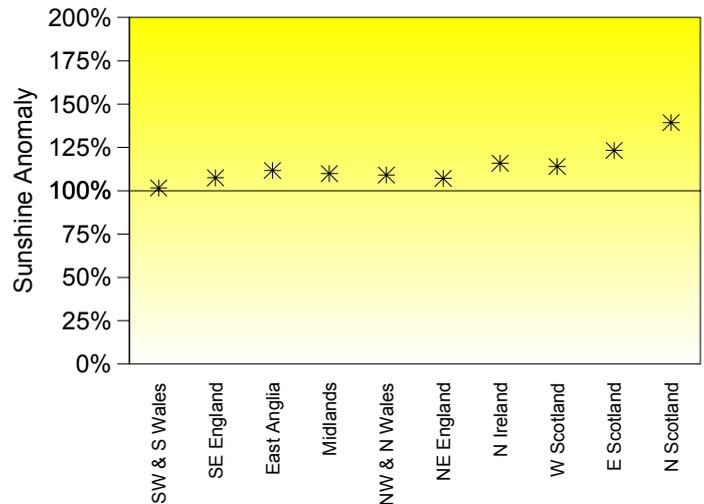
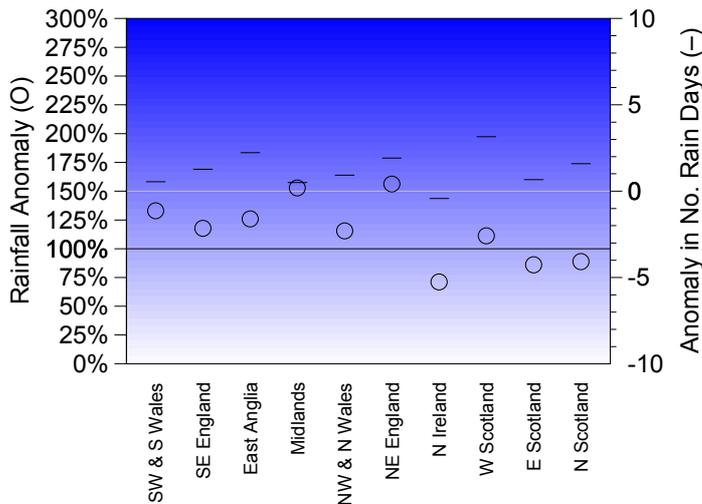
An icy arctic blast swept southwards across Europe during the last week of October. In Switzerland 19cm of level snow was measured at Zurich on the morning of the 29th, just short of the previous October record. In Poland snowstorms raged throughout the 27th and in the Mazovia province, 70,000 homes were left blacked out.

In the southern hemisphere, Australia's island state of Tasmania was battered by winds of up to 85mph on the 4th. Trees and power lines were downed, 9000 people left without electricity and several forest fires sparked. Diverted and cancelled flights caused a backlog of passengers through Hobart airport. An unusual cold wave in southern Australia on the 10th-11th brought the first October snow in a century. Snow whitened the ground along the Mount Lofty and southern Flinders ranges, east and north of Adelaide, South Australia. The snow and freezing rain stemmed from a storm that swept in from the Southern Ocean. Even further south, winter sea ice around Antarctica reached a record high (in contrast to Arctic sea ice which recently recorded a record summer low). Massive hailstones struck Gauteng province, South Africa on the 20th shattering windows, denting cars and smashing windscreens. The town of Ekurhuleni felt the brunt of the hailstorm, where stones were commonly the size of golf balls and occasionally the size of tennis balls! The Eastern Cape was hit by severe flooding on the 21st. Sections of the N2 highway were closed to traffic after part of the road collapsed, leaving a hole 25m wide and 50m deep between Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown.

However the biggest story of October was Hurricane Sandy. This hurricane hit Cuba on the 25th, and torrential rain and wind gusts in excess of 150mph left a trail of destruction, especially in the historic city of Santiago de Cuba. The country's second largest city was littered with fallen trees, damaged buildings and debris-choked streets. Sandy hit the northeast USA on the 30th and produced the lowest pressure of any storm making landfall north of Cape Hatteras. It featured every variety of extreme weather. Easton, Maryland, was swamped with 319mm rain while the nation's capital Washington, D.C recorded 138mm. The highest wind gusts were recorded at Eaton's Neck, New York (93mph) and Montclair, New Jersey (87mph). Colossal snowfalls included Mt. Leconte, Tennessee (86cm) and Clayton, West Virginia (83cm). Meanwhile, waves reached 12m off Atlantic City, New Jersey and 9.9m near New York Harbour entrance. The storm surge reached 2.7m at The Battery, New York. About 8.5 million homes lost power and in New Hampshire a "microburst" spawned by the storm toppled pines onto lakeside cottages.



Extremes for November 2012	
Hottest:	16.8°C Totterdown, Bristol, 3rd
Coldest:	-11.1°C Guernsey Airport, Channel Islands, 13th
Most Rain:	71.6mm Blencathra, Cumbria, 26th
Most Sun:	8.7hrs East Malling, Kent, 7th
Windiest:	77mph Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd, 22nd
Warmest:	10.0°C Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	3.5°C Braemar No 2, Avon
Wettest:	317.6mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	34.1mm Kinloss, Grampian
Sunniest:	98.0hrs Hastings 1, East Sussex
Dullest:	38.9hrs Magilligan No 2, County Londonderry



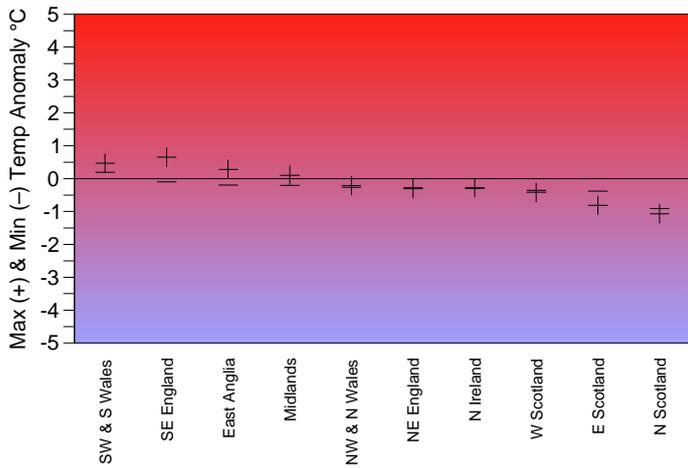
'If there's ice in November that will bear a duck, there'll be nothing after but slush and muck.' This saying suggests that a cold, frosty November may precede a mild winter, but it has little basis in fact. November 1988 was a bright, cold and frosty month and the winter that followed was outstandingly mild, but the frigid late November of 2010 was followed by one of the coldest Decembers on record.

The month opened with three bright days, but there were showers and on the 1st and in the west these were heavy and accompanied by hail and thunder. Rain was more persistent on the 4th in central and southern areas, and wet snow was reported from parts of Dorset, Wiltshire and Sussex. A frosty and crisp bonfire night was followed by milder air on the 6th and an early morning temperature of -2°C (28°F) at Kew contrasted with 9°C (48°F) at Glasgow. A mild, changeable spell followed with steady rain in the west and north - although it remained mostly dry in the south and east until a cold front moved through on the 10th. Remembrance Sunday was dry and bright but more fronts followed on the 12th. Winds became lighter on the 13th and fog and gloom were widespread over the next four days - before a cold front cleared the murk on the 17th. The north was notably cold and there were snow showers over the Scottish hills, followed by a sharp air frost at night. The 18th was sunny but this soon gave way to very unsettled weather which persisted for most of the remainder of the month. Heavy and prolonged rainfall caused flooding in parts of the south-west on the 22nd and in Bishop Sutton, Somerset, a woman in labour had to be rescued from her flooded home. The weekend of the 24th/25th was extremely wild as a deepening depression over Biscay ran quickly north-east to be centred over the North Sea by midday on the 25th. South-west England and the Midlands were particularly badly hit by flooding and while most new flood defences worked well, their failure at Kempsey, Wiltshire, led to the inundation of many homes. Another low followed hard on the heels of its predecessor on the 26th and this time northern England bore the brunt of prolonged rainfall. Drier, colder, conditions gradually took over during the closing days of the month with frost becoming increasingly widespread and a few wintry showers in the north and east. The mix of weather resulted in mean temperatures close to the November average. It was a wet month for most places, but paradoxically also a sunny one - a situation not uncommon amidst unsettled weather in late autumn and winter.

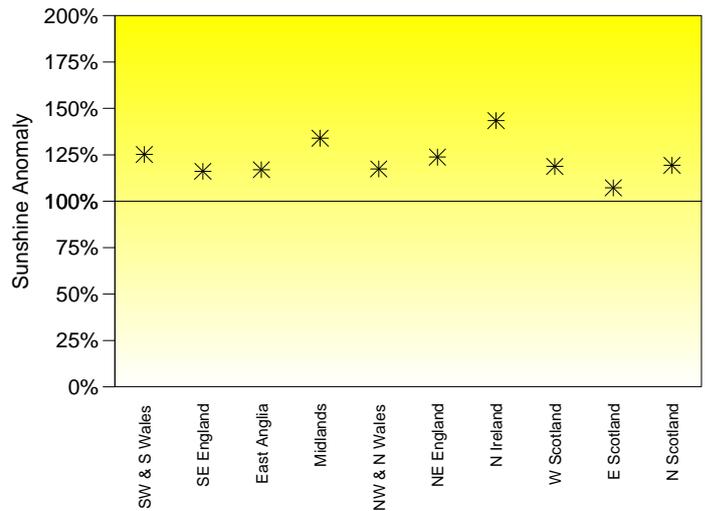
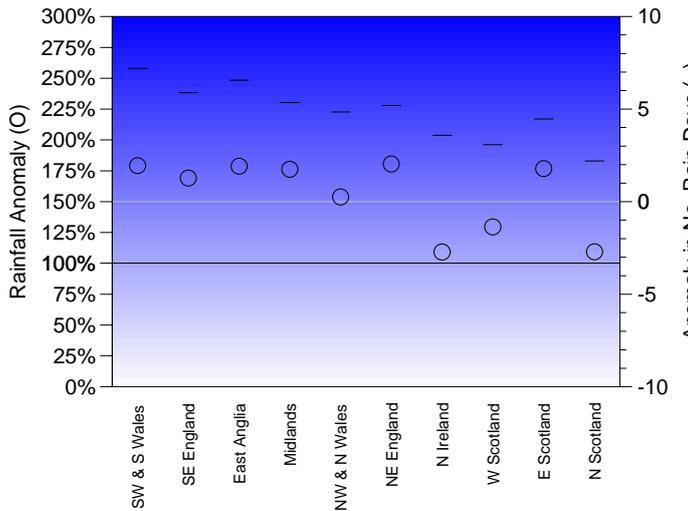
In Europe during November, Italy was hit by severe floods mid month. Storms on the 10th-11th caused huge damage in southern Tuscany, washing out roads and isolating towns. Three electric company workers were killed when their car fell off a collapsed bridge and near Orvieto in Umbria dozens of people only found refuge from floodwaters on the roofs of their homes. On the 11th, the water level in Venice reached the sixth highest level since records began in 1872. St Marks's Square was so submerged that some tourists were able to swim there! On the 12th, Orbetello San Donato, in the Grosseto province north of Rome, recorded 343 mm of rain - smashing the previous November daily record of 185 mm set during the 1966 flood episode. One of Rome's most historic bridges was closed on the 14th as the swollen Tiber River roared through the capital and flooded outlying districts. On the 16th a tornado struck the Algarve in southern Portugal and at Carvoeiro vehicles were blown into the air causing injuries to at least 8 people. On the 28th a tornado also tore through the southern Italian city of Taranto, hitting Europe's largest steel plant, with reports of 20 injuries. Meanwhile, at the opposite end of the continent, Moscow was hit by more than 20cm of snow on the 29th causing hundreds of flights to be delayed at the Russian capital's three major airports.

An unusually heavy early snowfall hit the populated north eastern USA from Maryland to Maine during the first week. By the 7th New York City's Central Park had recorded 12cm from the 'Nor'easter' storm. Since 1869, Central Park had never previously measured more than 8cm of snow this early in the season. Other snowfall totals, by the 8th, included Freehold (New Jersey) with 33cm and Clintonville (Connecticut) with 34cm. In contrast, on the 11th Canada experienced unseasonal warmth and people in Ontario and Quebec donned shorts and T-shirts. Temperatures in some areas peaked at around 20°C (68°F)

A violent snowstorm cut electricity to 41,000 homes in northern Japan on the 24th. Gusts of up to 90mph were recorded in Muroran on Hokkaido's Pacific coast. Tens of thousands of homes in and around the city were left without power after winds and snow downed transmission cables and dozens of trains and domestic flights were cancelled due to the blizzard. On the 28th, roof damage, broken trees and blackouts were the aftermath of a blast of severe winds in Australia's western metropolis of Perth. There was extensive roof damage to property and power was blacked out to more than 50,000 homes. In contrast, on the 29th parts of eastern Australia were sweltering in an extreme heat wave. A reading of 45.4°C (114°F) at Ouyen set a new high November temperature record for the state of Victoria beating the previous state record of 45.0°C (113°F) which had stood since the early 1900s.



Extremes for December 2012	
Hottest:	19.9°C Oxford, Oxfordshire, 24th
Coldest:	-12.9°C Braemar No 2, Avon, 6th
Most Rain:	88.8mm Tyndrum No 3, Perthshire, 20th
Most Sun:	7.9hrs Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd, 10th
Windiest:	81mph Sule Skerry MAWS, Orkney, 22nd
Warmest:	9.1°C Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	0.7°C Loch Glascarnoch, Highland
Wettest:	493.0mm Capel Curig SAWS, Gwynedd
Driest:	54.0mm Swaffham, Norfolk
Sunniest:	86.9hrs Portchester, Hampshire
Dullest:	18.1hrs Aviemore, Highland



A dusting of fresh snow, sparkling frost and the sound of carols coming through the crisp winter air... Such is the traditional image of December but the reality is often very different. It is more common to have a 'green' Christmas than a 'white' one, and in very few winters is December colder than January or February. Notable recent exceptions were 1981-82 and 2010-11. This year the Yuletide season was marred for many by the ravages of flood and virus.

December 2012 saw sharp contrasts in weather - with a dry and cold first fortnight being replaced by mild, very unsettled conditions for the remainder of the month. The 1st was dry and bright, but a band of rain overnight 2nd / 3rd was preceded by snow in the north - and this settled in places including Glasgow. Another icy blast occurred on the 5th and rain turned to snow - which settled in parts of the Midlands and the south early in the morning. The 7th also saw some wintry flurries but the deepest chill was reserved for the 10th - 14th as an anticyclone, near Iceland on the 9th, became established over the UK by the 11th. The morning of the 12th was greeted by widespread freezing fog which coated trees spectacularly in rime but also caused numerous road traffic accidents and disruption at airports including Gatwick. Even central London saw the mercury slump to -4°C (25°F) and minima below -8°C (18°F) were widespread. By the 13th milder air had reached the south-west, and a more widespread thaw set in the next day as rain swept northwards preceded by snow over northern hills with blizzards in the Highlands. A couple of milder, showery days followed and by the 19th, hopes of a white Christmas were fading as a very disturbed spell of weather began. From then until month end, the UK was bombarded by a relentless series of fronts and depressions with strong winds and heavy rain featuring almost daily. Extensive flooding affected the south-west in the run up to Christmas, and travellers faced disruption on rail services. Six villages in Cornwall were flooded and 80 homes were evacuated in Wellington, Somerset. In Braunton, North Devon, the river Caen burst its banks, inundating shops and homes. By the 23rd, more than 100mm had fallen in parts of south-west England, south Wales and eastern Scotland. On the 27th, lightning is thought to have set fire to several properties in Dorset and the Thames Barrier was raised due to the swollen river and in anticipation of a high tide. There were frequent gales during this period but it was often very mild with temperatures above 10°C (50°F) both by day and night. On the 22nd, for example, 15.0°C (59°F) was recorded at Westonzoyland, Somerset.

Mean temperatures for December were close to the long-term average with the mild second half offsetting the earlier cold spells. While sunshine was a little above normal it was very wet everywhere and provisionally the wettest December since 1999. The soggy end to the year has made 2012 the second wettest year ever for the UK - remarkable when the concern last Spring was of imminent drought and hose pipe bans.

A large area of southeast Europe was gripped by severe winter weather during December. Blizzards blocked roads, stranded villages, disrupted power supplies and shut down airports in the Balkans. Snowdrifts and avalanches blocked roads in northern Montenegro, where 1m of snow fell overnight 11th-12th. Across the border in south-western Serbia, heavy snowfall isolated more than a dozen villages. At least nine deaths across the region were attributed to the freeze, as temperatures dropped to as low as -15°C (5°F). Further south, in Kosovo heavy snow cut off villages in the west and closed schools. Snow even blanketed Podgorica on the Adriatic coast and closed its airport on 12th. Blizzards swept Romania over the following week and by the evening of December 19th several key roads were closed leaving 10,000 residents in Botosani County marooned. In the Ukraine temperatures plunged to -23°C (-9°F) and the snow lay >50cm deep.

In Japan widespread "sea-effect" snowfalls gave Sapporo a 27cm snow cover by 11th with 50cm at Asahikawa. On the 26th a major winter storm in eastern Canada delivered a record-breaking snowfall to Montreal and parts of Quebec. 45-50cm had fallen in and around Montreal by the 27th surpassing the previous one-day record of 43cm set in March 1971. In contrast, in South America, on the 10th, western and northern Argentina and much of Paraguay baked under temperatures >40°C (104°F); in the Argentina Cuyo, 43.1°C (109°F) was recorded at La Rioja with 43.5°C (110°F) at Catamarca.

In the Pacific, on the 6th typhoon Bopha tore through the southern Philippines with winds as high as 130mph. The storm caused 418 fatalities with many other people reported missing. On entering the open South China Sea, Bopha was upgraded to a "super typhoon", with Category 5 equivalent sustained winds of 160mph. Also on the 6th, three people were killed and several injured after a tornado hit New Zealand's largest city of Auckland. The tornado ripped concrete slabs from a building site and dropped them onto a truck. Slow-moving Tropical Cyclone Evan brought destructive winds and torrential rain to the Pacific state of Samoa 12th - 13th. At least two people were killed and there was widespread damage as the capital Apia was struck by the worst storm in 20 years. In Pago Pago, in American Samoa, winds toppled trees and power lines, as crops and buildings were destroyed by mean winds of >90mph.