



# Monthly Weather Summary

## The Weather of December 2011

### **Wet in places; dull and windy everywhere**

Rainfall for the month was above average along the Atlantic coast and in the northwest, with most stations in the west reporting their wettest December in 5 years and an above normal number of wetdays (*days with 1mm or more*) recorded. Malin Head had the highest rainfall relative to normal in December, with 179 % of its long-term average and its wettest December since 1999 (12 years). The rest of Ireland reported a dry month with below average rainfall. Casement Aerodrome received only 72% of its monthly rainfall total and recorded its driest December since 2004 (7 years). The majority of the month's highest daily falls were on the 12th and 19th, but were relatively small, with some stations reporting it as their lowest December daily rainfall for a number of years. At Dublin Airport and Mullingar, it was the lowest daily rainfall at the sites in December since 1963 (48 years) and 1970 (41 years), respectively. Mean temperatures for December were above average or average for the time of year. Mean maximum temperatures for the month were above normal everywhere, but almost all stations reported their maximum temperatures, mostly recorded on the 25th and 26th, were not as high as December 2007. Minimum air temperatures were warmer than normal almost everywhere, leading to a below average number of air frosts recorded, of between zero and eight. Malin Head and Belmullet both reported that their minimum air temperature's for December of 2.0°C and 1.6°C, respectively, were the warmest minimum temperatures recorded since 1988 (23 years). Sunshine during December was below average nearly everywhere, with Casement Aerodrome recording 26.2 hours of sunshine and the dullest December on record since the station opened in 1964 (47 years). Other stations across the country reported it was their dullest December for between six and 20 years.

**1st to 10th:** The start of the month was cool with light rain, drizzle and some fog at western inland locations. Deep depressions with associated frontal systems followed, bringing a few bright, sunny spells, but mainly scattered showers of snow and rain, some of which were heavy, with thunder and hail. Winds were gusty, mainly fresh to strong, with gales recorded along western coasts.

**11th to 18th:** Frontal activity brought bands of rain and drizzle before wintry showers and gale force winds affected most areas on the 13th. Gales generated a large swell off the Donegal coast and the M4 weather buoy measured a maximum wave height of 20.4 m, the highest wave ever recorded in Irish waters. Temperatures became cooler due to a northerly airflow, and weather was dry and bright, with few scattered showers, some heavy with hail and thunder. Some air frost was recorded along southern coasts and at inland stations.

**19th to 31st:** At the start of the period, rain and snow showers were observed in the west, with some bright spells and patches of light rain elsewhere. Temperatures rose and became milder due to warm front activity and a southerly airflow, with rain and drizzle becoming more widespread. Showers of rain, some heavy with hail and periods of rain and drizzle, followed. Mainly dull overall, with few sunny periods. Winds were mainly light to moderate at the start, becoming moderate to strong, with gales reported along Atlantic coasts.

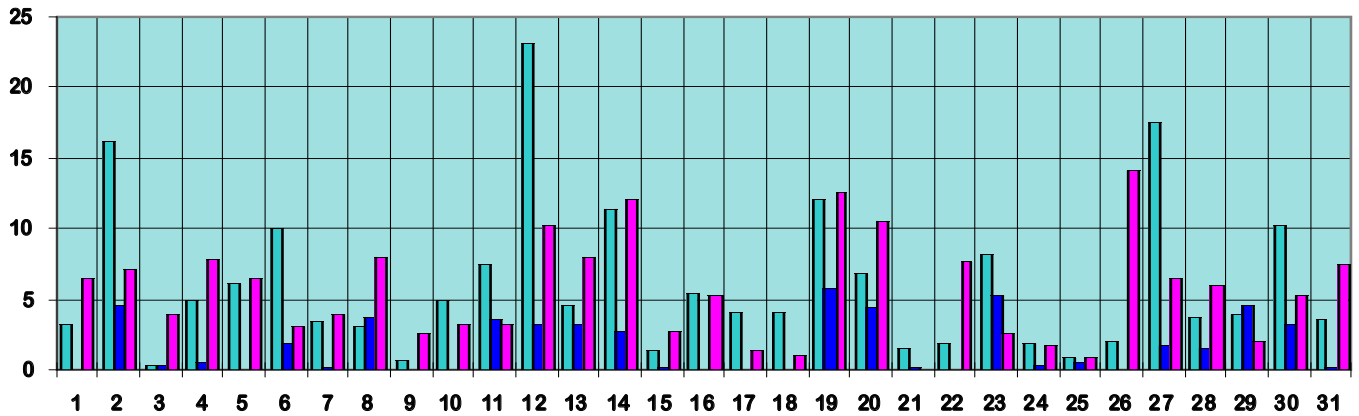
**Wind and elements:** Mean windspeeds for the month were above normal, between 10 and 22 knots (*19 and 40km/h*) and the highest for 12 and 37 years in most places. Gale gusts were recorded on all days with gales reported on the 7th, 8th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 22nd, 26th, 27th and 28th. The month's highest gust of 74 knots (*137km/h*) was observed at Malin Head on the 13th. Thunderstorms were reported on the 1st, 8th, 10th, 14th and 20th with numerous days with hail reports, especially during the first two weeks of the month. Fog was reported in the west on the 2nd, 10th, 19th, 20th, 21st and 27th and in the south on the 30th.

### EXTREME VALUES AT SYNOPTIC STATIONS

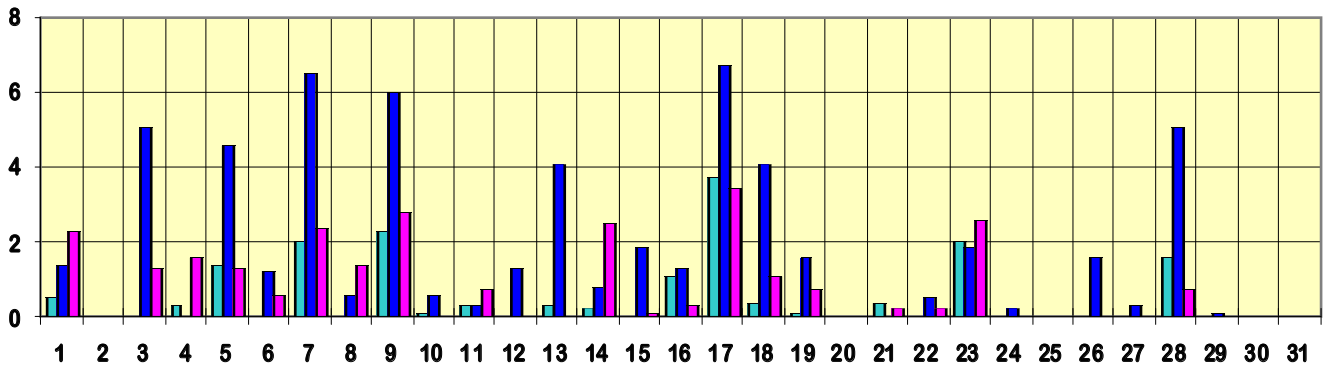
<b>Rainfall</b>	Highest total: 188.0mm at Valentia Observatory Lowest total: 49.1mm at Phoenix Park Highest daily rainfall: 23.0mm at Valentia Observatory on the 12th ( <i>its lowest daily fall for December since 2004</i> )
<b>Temperature</b>	Highest mean monthly temperature: 8.7°C at Sherkin Island Lowest mean monthly temperature: 4.9°C at Knock Airport Highest temperature: 13.7°C at Carlow (Oak Park) on 25th Lowest air temperature: -4.9°C at Mullingar on 16th Lowest grass minimum temperature: -10.1°C at Mullingar on 16th
<b>Sunshine</b>	Highest monthly total: 57.8 hours at Dublin Airport ( <i>its dullest December since 2005</i> ) Lowest monthly total: 16.7 hours at Valentia Observatory ( <i>its dullest December since 1993</i> ) Highest daily sunshine: 6.7 hours at Dublin Airport on 17th

# December 2011 Daily values at selected synoptic stations

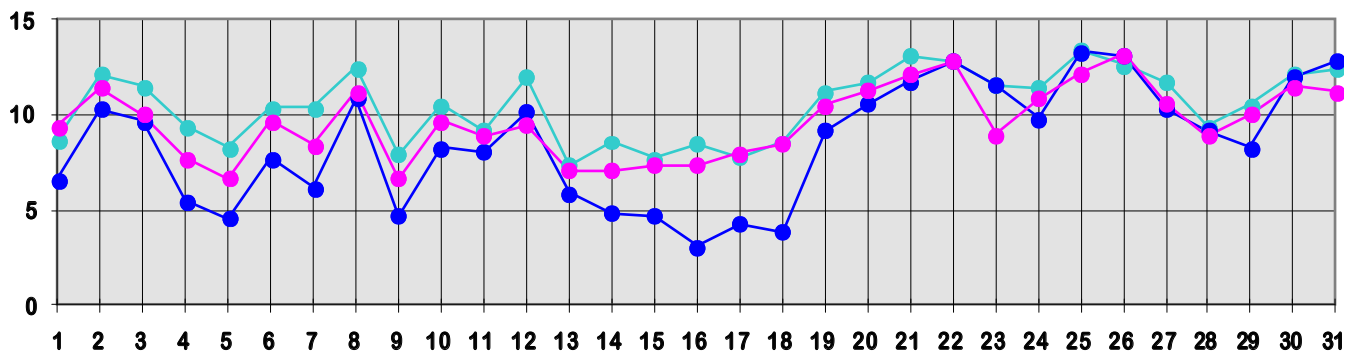
## Rainfall (mm)



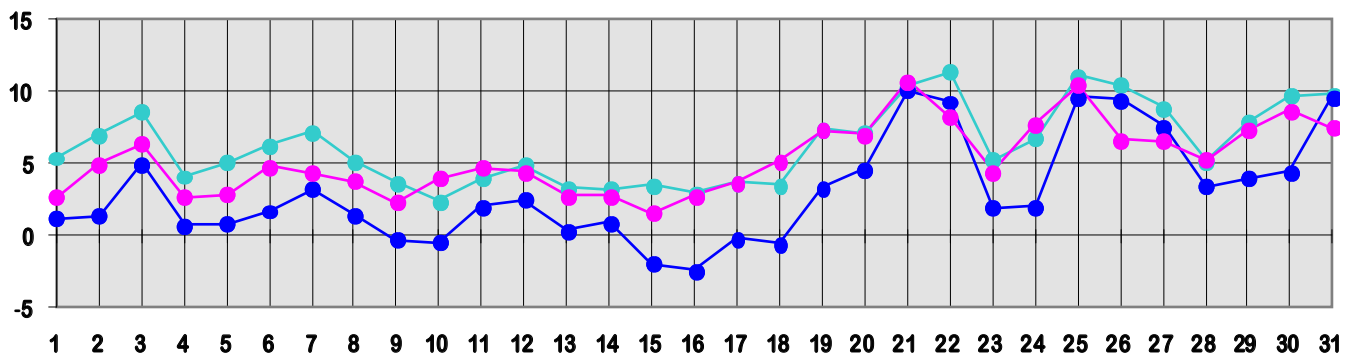
## Sunshine (hours)



## Maximum temperature (°C)



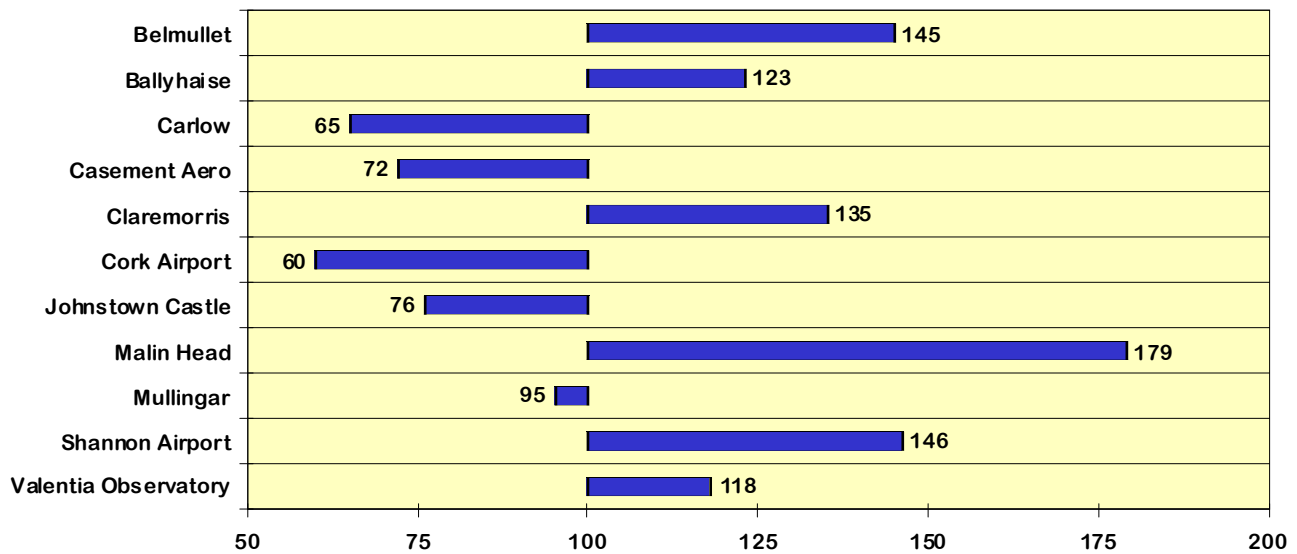
## Minimum temperature (°C)



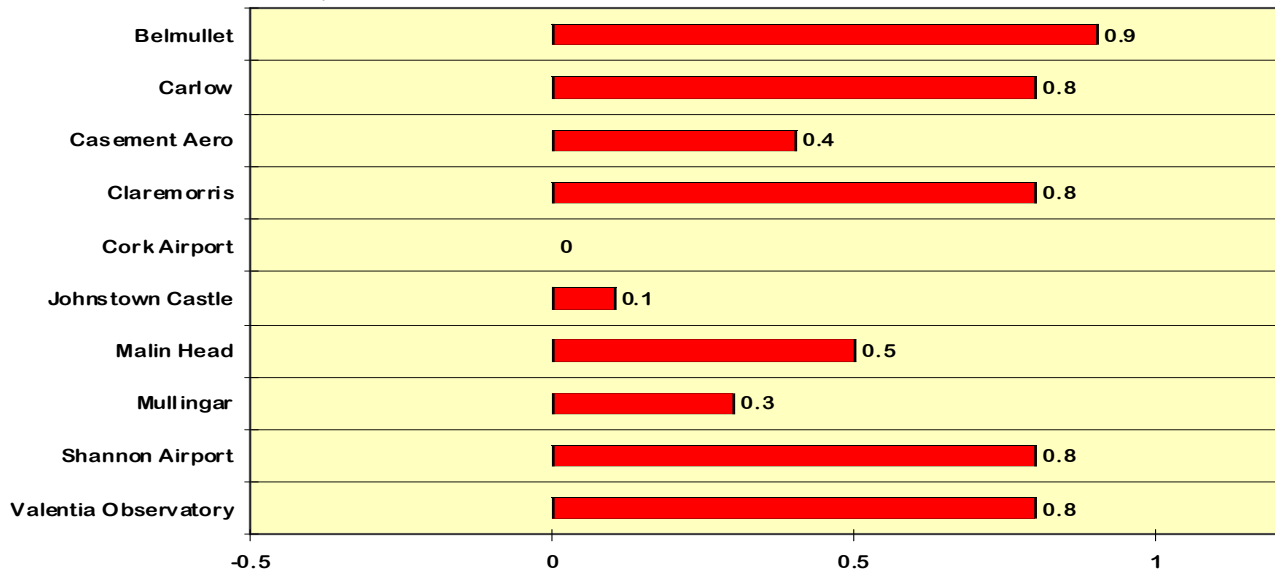
● Valentia Observatory    ● Dublin Airport    ● Belmullet

# December 2011 Percentage / Difference from 1961-90 monthly normals

## Rainfall (% of normal for period 1961-1990)



## Temperature (°C difference from normal for period 1961-1990)



## Sunshine (% of normal for period 1961-1990)

