

Surprising Statistics – Wet season climate in northern Australia

Yes, it is hot. It is humid. But the wet season weather is nowhere near as uncomfortable as most people think. In some respects, it's not all that different to southern Australia.

The climate figures below were taken from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology website <http://www.bom.gov.au/> All sites were chosen to exclude those no longer in operation. Site details have been included so that anyone who wants to check the figures can do so.

To get to the tables from which the data was taken, click on the state, then on climate averages near the bottom of the state page. That will give you a list of places. Click on the relevant place and you go to the main statistics for that location. To see some of the actual figures I used, you'll have to click on "all available" in the line just above the table

I got the length of the day from <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/sunrise.html>

It lists only the capital cities for Australia so I've used the figures for Darwin for Jabiru (Kakadu) as that is the closest. There were no figures for hours of sunshine for Kununurra (Kimberley). The figures on the next page are all for January, the wettest month.

Stop and think. Millions of people live in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. They don't think their climate is too extreme. Why do they think that ours is all that different?

- Sydney and Jabiru (the only town in Kakadu) have almost exactly the same percent of sunshine during the day.
- Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth have all recorded higher temperatures than Darwin.
- Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth have all recorded higher temperatures than Jabiru and Kununurra
- There's not a lot in it, but Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth average more 40° days than Darwin or Jabiru.
- Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth average more 35° days than Darwin.
- The average daily maximum temperature in Darwin is only 0.2°C warmer than the average in Perth.
- Kununurra averages only three more rain days than Brisbane or Sydney.
- The 9 am relative humidity in Sydney & Brisbane is comparable to that in Kununurra.
- The 3 pm relative humidity in Sydney is comparable to Jabiru and higher than in Kununurra.
- The biggest difference is in the average minimum temperature, but if you are going for a bushwalk, that's a plus. You don't need a sleeping bag. We don't get as much daily variation as southern cities so you can count on it not being too cold at night.

	Jabiru	Kununurra	Darwin	Brisbane	Sydney	Melbourne	Adelaide	Perth
Hours daylight	12.75	—	12.75	13.60	14.05	14.35	14.15	13.95
Hours sunshine	6.4	N/A	5.7	8.7	7.1	9.0	10.5	11.6
% sunshine	50.2	—	44.7	64.0	50.5	62.7	74.2	83.2
Avg no. rain days	18.5	15.3	21.4	12.5	12.2	8.3	4.6	1.4
Avg no days of 25 mm or more rain	4.8	2.5	5.9	1.3	1.1	0.5	0.1	0.1
Mean 9 am relative humidity	82%	68%	81%	66%	71%	63%	52%	51%
Mean 3 pm relative humidity	65%	51%	70%	63%	62%	47%	42.5	37%
Mean maximum temperature °C	33.5	35.8	31.8	29.0	25.9	25.9	28.0	31.6
Mean minimum temperature °C	24.6	25.6	24.8	21.2	18.7	14.3	15.9	16.9
Mean no days $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$	9.8	18.8	0.2	0.3	0.8	3.6	4.7	8.7
Mean no days $\geq 40^{\circ}\text{C}$	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.7	0.8	1.7
Record Max °C	38.0	43.0	35.6	37.4	45.3	45.6	44.0	46.0
Weather station	airport	airport	airport	airport	Observatory Hill	Regional office	airport	airport
Site number	014198	002056	014015	040842	066062	086071	023034	009021