

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

GALAPAGOS SEASONS

The Galapagos Islands feature a distinct microclimate, totally different from the mainland. This climate is caused by the coactions of equatorial winds from the coast and a number of ocean currents. The climate is distinguished between a hot season and a cold season.

THE HOT SEASON (DECEMBER - MAY)

The hot season can be characterized by mild summer like temperatures, deep blue skies, the islands plant life blooming and mating season. From December to May, the climate is impacted by the warm north trade winds and the changing ocean currents. The Panama Current features warm nutrient-poor waters coming from the northeast. This change displaces the cold, nutrient-rich Humboldt Current. As this occurs the air becomes warmer, the evaporating water rises and condensates causing rainfall. During years when the Panama current is strong (commonly known as El Niño) immense rainfall and strong storms can occur. This time of year turtles and land iguanas profit from an abundance of vegetation and food while other animal species are almost starving. Penguins, sea lions, sea birds and marine iguanas, all animals which are dependent on fish or seaweed as food, endure a hardship. Due to the rising water-temperature schools of fish head for cooler waters and the seaweed begins to die. Typically after an El Niño the flora and fauna recover quickly.

THE COLD SEASON (JUNE - NOVEMBER)

The months of July to November, the “garúa” season, are stamped by cool, dry air and cool water-temperatures. The islands and especially the mountaintops are often covered in clouds and mist. The clouds and mist are caused by the warming air from the islands mixing with the cold air off the waters of the Humboldt Current from the Antarctica. Water condensates and forms a layer of clouds over the archipelago. Sometimes the clouds are accompanied by drizzling rains. This effect is accentuated by trade winds coming from the south east. During August and October the winds can be particularly strong and the sea tends to be rather rough. However, underwater marine creatures are actively reproducing. This makes diving during these months especially good. Another factor is the Chromwell Current coming from the equator and reaching the Galapagos plateau from the west. This current which is several hundred metres deep notably affects the islands of Fernandina, Isabela and Floreana. The current is rich in nutrients and represents an important source of food for the marine species such as whales, dolphins and penguins.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Temperature (F)	77	79	79	79	77	75	73	72	72	72	73	75	75
Rainfall (inches)	1,5	6,1	4,9	4,2	1,1	0,2	0,5	0,3	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,6	20