

National Climate Summary: **August 2014** Issued: 4 September 2014

# Highly variable rainfall but plenty of sunshine

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rainfall** | August rainfall was wide ranging. Above normal rainfall (120-149%) occurred throughout eastern Northland, Manawatu-Wanganui, Gisborne, Southland and parts of Central Otago. Conversely rainfall was below normal (50-79%) in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty, and well below normal (< 50%) in Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough and Canterbury. |
| **Sunshine** | A very sunny month for Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Central Otago as well as parts of the West Coast and Canterbury where above normal sunshine (110-125%) was experienced and several August records were set. |
| **Temperature** | Near average temperatures recorded in July persisted into August and characterised much of the country. Pockets of below average temperature (-1.20 to -0.51°C) were recorded in the districts of Waitomo, Opotoki, Central Hawke’s Bay, Tararua and South Wairarapa. |
| **Soil Moisture** | As of 1 September 2014, soil moisture levels were typical for the time of year for large parts of the country. Soils were slightly drier than normal in Taranaki, the West Coast and Tasman as well as the districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Timaru. |

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## 

## Overview

August 2014 was characterised by anomalously high pressure south of Australia extending over and around New Zealand. This pressure pattern brought about strong south-westerly flow anomalies to the country.

Rainfall during August was highly variable across the country. Above normal rainfall (120-149%) occurred throughout eastern Northland, Manawatu-Wanganui, Gisborne and Southland regions as well as the Central Otago and Mackenzie districts. The largest rainfall anomalies were in Whangarei and Gisborne where rainfall in excess of 200% of normal occurred. In contrast, dry conditions prevailed in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty, and the north of the West Coast where below normal rainfall (50-79%) was experienced. Conditions were even drier in Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough and coastal Canterbury where well below normal rainfall (< 50%) was observed. As a result, several sites in these regions experienced near-record low rainfall totals for the month.

A lack of rain in large parts of the country coincided with a very sunny end to winter with well above normal (>125%) or above normal (110-125%) sunshine recorded for many locations. It was particularly sunny in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Westland, southern Canterbury and Central Otago where well above normal sunshine was observed and several August records were set. Only two locations (Takaka and Martinborough) recorded below normal sunshine levels during August.

Soil moisture levels around the country were at field capacity at the start of August 2014 but began to deplete during the second half of the month. Despite this, as at 1 September soil moisture levels in most parts of the country remained within the near normal range for the time of year but were slightly drier than normal in Taranaki, the West Coast and Tasman as well as the districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Timaru.

The near average temperatures observed in July continued into August, with the majority of the country characterised again by near average temperatures (within 0.5°C of average). In fact nationwide, only a handful of stations reported above average mean temperatures for August. Small pockets of below average temperature (-1.20 to -0.51°C) were recorded in the districts of Waitomo, Opotoki, Central Hawke’s Bay, Tararua and South Wairarapa. Despite the fairly neutral August mean temperatures, some weather highlights did occur. In particular the 1st-3rd of August were exceptionally warm all around the country due to a north-westerly flow combined with the foehn effect in eastern areas. As a result, several locations experienced record or near record high daily maximum and minimum temperatures. The nation-wide average temperature in August 2014 was 8.7°C (0.1°C above the 1971-2000 August average from NIWA’s seven station temperature series which begins in 1909)[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Further Highlights:**

* The highest temperature was 23.6°C, observed at Christchurch (Riccarton) on 2 August.
* The lowest temperature was -7.0°C, observed at Middlemarch on 4 August.
* The highest 1-day rainfall was 157.2 mm, recorded at Tolaga Bay on 4 August.
* The highest wind gust was 189 km/hr, observed at Cape Turnagain on 8 August.
* Of the six main centres in August 2014, Christchurch was the coolest and driest, Auckland was the warmest, wettest and cloudiest and Tauranga was the sunniest.
* Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four centres[[2]](#footnote-2) so far in 2014 (January to August) are: Whakatane (1793 hours), Tauranga (1622 hours), Nelson (1557 hours) and Lake Tekapo (1554 hours).

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## Rainfall: Both wet and dry around the country

Considerable variances in rainfall totals for August were observed across New Zealand. It was another wet month for eastern Northland where intense but short lived rainfall events on 19 and 31 August led to above normal rainfall (120-149%) being recorded for the month as a whole. Above normal rainfall also occurred throughout the regions of Manawatu-Wanganui, Gisborne and Southland as well as the Central Otago and Mackenzie districts. Whangarei and Gisborne experienced the largest monthly rainfall anomalies recording 206% and 209% of normal respectively. Lauder, Gore and Invercargill were likewise wet, experiencing rainfall totals greater than 140% of normal.

In contrast, many other parts of the country received very little rain throughout the month. Well below normal rainfall (< 50%) occurred throughout Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough and coastal Canterbury. Most notably, several locations along the northern coast of the South Island (Takaka, Motueka, Appleby and Nelson) received near record low rainfall of less than 30% of normal for August. Dry conditions also prevailed in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions as well as Buller and Grey districts where below normal rainfall (50-79%) was experienced.

The dryness experienced in many parts of New Zealand throughout the month contributed to decreasing soil moisture levels compared to July. Despite this, as at 1 September soil moisture levels around most parts of the country remained in the near normal range for the time of year and were only slightly drier than normal in Taranaki, the West Coast and Tasman as well as the districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Timaru.

**Record[[3]](#footnote-3) or near-record August rainfall totals were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Rainfall total (mm)** | **Percentage of normal** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Lumsden | 113 | 183 | 1982 | 2nd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Motueka | 40 | 28 | 1943 | 3rd-lowest |
| Nelson | 20 | 24 | 1941 | 3rd-lowest |
| Appleby | 20 | 23 | 1932 | 3rd-lowest |
| Waipara West | 15 | 23 | 1973 | 4th-lowest |

## Sunshine: A record breaking sunny August

Higher pressure than normal extending over New Zealand during August contributed to sunny skies in many parts of the country. It was particularly sunny in Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Westland, southern Canterbury and Central Otago where well above normal sunshine (> 125%) was observed. Record or near record sunshine August totals were observed at several locations around the country. Most notably, Queenstown experienced 186 hours (155% of normal) of sunshine during the month which is the highest August total for this location since records began in 1930. Takaka and Martinborough were the only locations where below normal sunshine was observed, receiving 89% and 67% of normal sunshine respectively.

Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four centres so far in 2014 (January to August) are: Whakatane (1793 hours), Tauranga (1622 hours), Nelson (1557 hours) and Lake Tekapo (1554 hours).

**Record or near-record August sunshine hours were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Sunshine hours** | **Percentage of normal** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Te Kuiti | 171 | 146 | 1962 | Highest |
| Taumarunui | 171 | 150 | 1947 | Highest |
| Lake Tekapo | 227 | 130 | 1928 | Highest |
| Queenstown | 186 | 155 | 1930 | Highest |
| Cromwell | 196 | 131 | 1979 | Highest |
| Hokitika | 187 | 136 | 1912 | 2nd-highest |
| Greymouth | 182 | 142 | 1947 | 2nd-highest |
| Turangi | 178 | 128 | 1976 | 3rd-highest |
| New Plymouth | 198 | 122 | 1972 | 3rd-highest |
| Ashburton | 188 | 131 | 1930 | 3rd-highest |
| Paraparaumu | 184 | 120 | 1953 | 4th-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Martinborough | 99 | 67 | 1986 | 2nd-lowest |

## Temperature: Near-normal temperatures for most

As a whole, mean temperatures around the country in August were subdued and largely near average (within 0.5°C of average). In fact, nationwide, only a handful of locations reported above average mean temperatures for August with Te Puke being the only location experiencing a near record high mean temperature. Small pockets of below average temperature (-1.20 to -0.51°C) were recorded in the districts of Waitomo, Opotoki, Central Hawke’s Bay, Tararua and South Wairarapa. The nation-wide average temperature in August 2014 was 8.7°C (0.1°C above the 1971-2000 August average from NIWA’s seven station temperature series which begins in 1909).

**Record or near-record mean air temperatures for August were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Te Puke | 11.2 | 1.1 | 1973 | 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Martinborough | 8.0 | -0.9 | 1986 | 4th-lowest |
| Castlepoint | 9.2 | -1.0 | 1972 | Equal 4th-lowest |

**Record or near-record mean maximum air temperatures for August were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean maximum**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Martinborough | 12.2 | -1.5 | 1986 | 2nd-lowest |
| Kaitaia | 14.9 | -0.8 | 1967 | 3rd-lowest |
| Ngawi | 12.0 | -1.4 | 1972 | 3rd-lowest |
| Castlepoint | 11.6 | -1.2 | 1972 | 4th-lowest |

**Record or near-record mean minimum air temperatures for August were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean minimum**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Masterton | 5.4 | 2.6 | 1992 | 4th-highest |

## August climate in the six main centres

Temperatures were near average for all of the six main centres with the exception of Auckland which experienced above average mean August temperatures. Monthly rainfall totals ranged from near normal in Auckland to just 30% of normal in Christchurch. Near normal sunshine was recorded in all of the six main centres. Of the six main centres in August 2014, Christchurch was the coolest and driest, Auckland was the warmest, wettest and cloudiest and Tauranga was the sunniest.

**August 2014 main centre climate statistics:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Temperature** | |
| **Location** | **Mean temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 12.2 | +0.6 | Above average |
| Taurangab | 11.0 | +0.2 | Near average |
| Hamiltonc | 9.3 | -0.3 | Near average |
| Wellingtond | 9.2 | -0.2 | Near average |
| Christchurche | 6.7 | -0.5 | Near average |
| Dunedinf | 7.6 | -0.2 | Near average |
| **Rainfall** | |
| **Location** | **Rainfall (mm)** | **% of normal** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 125 | 111% | Near normal |
| Taurangab | 81[[4]](#footnote-4) | 73% | Below normal |
| Hamiltonc | 84[[5]](#footnote-5) | 78% | Below normal |
| Wellingtond | 75[[6]](#footnote-6) | 55% | Below normal |
| Christchurche | 18 | 30% | Well below normal |
| Dunedinf | 43 | 76% | Below normal |
| **Sunshine** | |
| **Location** | **Sunshine (hours)** | **% of normal** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 150 | 102% | Near normal |
| Taurangab | 188 | 109% | Near normal |
| Hamiltong | 163 | 119% | Near normal |
| Wellingtond | 157 | 100% | Near normal |
| Christchurche | 169 | 110% | Near normal |
| Dunedinf | -[[7]](#footnote-7) | - | - |  |

*a Mangere b Tauranga Airport c Hamilton Airport d Kelburn e Christchurch Airport f Musselburgh g Ruakura*

## Highlights and extreme events

### Temperatures

The combination of a north-westerly flow and the foehn effect which began on the last day of July continued into the early days of August. This brought about record breaking daily maximum temperatures on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of August at a number of locations around the country. During this period 13 locations around the country recorded their warmest August daily maximum temperature. Similarly, the warmest minimum August temperature on record was observed at 37 locations around the country.

**Record or near-record daily maximum air temperatures for August were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme maximum (°C)** | **Date of extreme temperature** | | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | | |
| Masterton | 20.6 | 1st | 1992 | | Highest |
| Dunedin (Musselburgh) | 21.7 | 1st | 1947 | | Highest |
| Lumsden | 18.8 | 1st | 1982 | | Highest |
| Gore | 19.4 | 1st | 1971 | | Highest |
| Tiwai Point | 19.1 | 1st | 1970 | | Highest |
| Balclutha | 20.9 | 1st | 1964 | | Highest |
| Nugget Point | 19.9 | 1st | 1970 | | Highest |
| Reefton | 19.4 | 23rd | 1960 | | Highest |
| Auckland (Whenuapai) | 21.2 | 2nd | 1945 | | Highest |
| Dannevirke | 20.7 | 2nd | 1951 | | Highest |
| Waione | 22.1 | 2nd | 1991 | | Highest |
| Waipawa | 21.7 | 2nd | 1945 | | Highest |
| Christchurch (Riccarton) | 23.6 | 2nd | 1863 | | Highest |
| Wanganui (Spriggens Park) | 20.6 | 2nd | 1937 | | Equal highest |
| Queenstown | 18.9 | 1st | 1871 | | 2nd-highest |
| Masterton | 20.6 | 2nd | 1906 | | 2nd-highest |
| Gisborne | 21.7 | 2nd | 1905 | | 2nd-highest |
| Paraparaumu | 19.0 | 4th | 1953 | | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Ranfurly | 18.4 | 1st | 1975 | | 3rd-highest |
| Paeroa | 19.9 | 2nd | 1947 | | 3rd-highest |
| Kaikoura | 23.1 | 2nd | 1963 | | 3rd-highest |
| Kaikohe | 19.0 | 1st | 1973 | | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Palmerston North | 19.7 | 2nd | 1918 | | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Alexandra | 20.3 | 1st | 1983 | | 4th-highest |
| South West Cape | 15.2 | 1st | 1991 | | 4th-highest |
| Warkworth | 19.9 | 2nd | 1966 | | 4th-highest |
| Mahia | 19.5 | 2nd | 1990 | | 4th-highest |
| Waiau | 21.9 | 2nd | 1974 | | 4th-highest |
| Cheviot | 21.8 | 2nd | 1982 | | 4th-highest |
| Hamilton (Ruakura) | 19.9 | 2nd | 1906 | | Equal 4th-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | | |
| Hokitika | 6.0 | 13th | 1866 | | Equal 4th-lowest |

**Record or near-record daily minimum air temperatures for August were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme minimum (°C)** | **Date of extreme temperature** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Cape Reinga | 15.0 | 2nd | 1971 | Highest |
| Kaitaia (Airport) | 16.0 | 2nd | 1948 | Highest |
| Whangarei | 15.6 | 3rd | 1967 | Highest |
| Whitianga | 15.5 | 3rd | 1971 | Highest |
| Tauranga | 15.4 | 3rd | 1941 | Highest |
| Te Puke | 15.5 | 3rd | 1973 | Highest |
| Whakatane | 15.5 | 3rd | 1975 | Highest |
| Rotorua | 12.6 | 3rd | 1972 | Highest |
| Motu | 11.0 | 3rd | 1990 | Highest |
| New Plymouth | 13.8 | 2nd | 1944 | Highest |
| Masterton | 13.9 | 2nd | 1992 | Highest |
| Dannevirke | 13.6 | 1st | 1951 | Highest |
| Waione | 14.9 | 1st | 1993 | Highest |
| Ngawi | 15.1 | 2nd | 1972 | Highest |
| Hicks Bay | 15.3 | 3rd | 1972 | Highest |
| Gisborne | 16.4 | 3rd | 1940 | Highest |
| Wairoa | 16.1 | 3rd | 1972 | Highest |
| Mahia | 14.2 | 3rd | 1990 | Highest |
| Paraparaumu | 13.5 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Wellington | 14.2 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Wallaceville | 13.4 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Stratford | 12.5 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Hawera | 13.0 | 2nd | 1977 | Highest |
| Farewell Spit | 13.9 | 2nd | 1972 | Highest |
| Westport | 12.3 | 1st | 1966 | Highest |
| Greymouth | 12.9 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Haast | 13.0 | 2nd | 1949 | Highest |
| Milford Sound | 11.5 | 1st | 1935 | Highest |
| Secretary Island | 12.6 | 1st | 1988 | Highest |
| Hanmer | 14.5 | 2nd | 1972 | Highest |
| Kaikoura | 12.3 | 1st | 1972 | Highest |
| Culverden | 15.9 | 2nd | 1930 | Highest |
| Winchmore | 13.3 | 2nd | 1928 | Highest |
| Waipara West | 16.0 | 1st | 1973 | Highest |
| Orari Estate | 11.9 | 29th | 1972 | Highest |
| Ranfurly | 11.9 | 2nd | 1975 | Highest |
| Lumsden | 11.5 | 1st | 1982 | Highest |
| South West Cape | 11.0 | 1st | 1991 | Highest |
| Kaikohe | 14.9 | 3rd | 1973 | Equal highest |
| Paeroa | 14.6 | 3rd | 1971 | 2nd-highest |
| Takapau Plains | 11.1 | 1st | 1972 | 2nd-highest |
| Castlepoint | 14.3 | 1st | 1972 | 2nd-highest |
| Martinborough | 14.2 | 1st | 1986 | 2nd-highest |
| Palmerston North | 12.7 | 1st | 1940 | 2nd-highest |
| Wanganui (Spriggens Park) | 13.4 | 2nd | 1972 | 2nd-highest |
| Hokitika | 12.6 | 1st | 1866 | 2nd-highest |
| Reefton | 10.3 | 2nd | 1972 | 2nd-highest |
| Waiau School | 14.7 | 1st | 1974 | 2nd-highest |
| Tara Hills | 8.5 | 2nd | 1949 | 2nd-highest |
| Dunedin (Musselburgh) | 13.3 | 1st | 1947 | 2nd-highest |
| Lauder | 12.2 | 2nd | 1924 | 2nd-highest |
| Lincoln | 12.9 | 2nd | 1881 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Wanaka | 9.4 | 2nd | 1972 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Manapouri | 9.0 | 1st | 1973 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Alexandra | 11.6 | 2nd | 1983 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Nugget Point | 10.5 | 1st | 1972 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Taupo | 11.4 | 3rd | 1950 | 3rd-highest |
| Turangi | 10.6 | 2nd | 1968 | 3rd-highest |
| Waipawa | 12.2 | 2nd | 1945 | 3rd-highest |
| Levin | 13.3 | 1st | 1950 | 3rd-highest |
| Ohakune | 9.9 | 2nd | 1972 | 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Turangi | -5.9 | 10th | 1968 | 2nd-lowest |
| Le Bons Bay | -0.2 | 8th | 1984 | Equal 3rd-lowest |
| Waione | -4.1 | 10th | 1991 | Equal 4th-lowest |
| Martinborough | -2.8 | 10th | 1986 | Equal 4th-lowest |

### Rain and slips

On 19 August heavy rain swept through Auckland and Northland with the heaviest rain falling in the evening. 54.8mm of rain fell in Kerikeri between 6-8pm with the daily rainfall total of 105mm equating to the 2nd highest on record for August at the time (subsequently moved to 3rd place after even heavier rainfall on 30 August).

This heavy downpour also affected Rotorua on 20 August where the torrential rain brought flash flooding to the region. The Fire Service had up to 30 callouts to flooded properties and to rescue people trapped in vehicles and floodwaters. Some roads were blocked, several homes were evacuated and some schools closed. The front that brought the heavy rain did not hang around and moved offshore east later in the day.

On 30 August heavy rain hit Auckland Northland once again. State Highway 10 was closed at Kaeo as the rain continued through the night and led to extensive flooding. Farmers near Kaeo moved stock to higher ground as the river flats became cut off. Power to about 250 homes in parts of Kaipara and Whangarei was also cut off after outages caused by a slip and falling trees, but was restored by the morning. The 1-day rainfall total in Kerikeri of 115mm set a new station record for the month of August (records began in 1981 for this station).

**Record or near-record August extreme 1-day rainfall totals were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme 1-day rainfall**  **(mm)** | **Date of extreme rainfall** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| Kerikeri | 115 | 30th | 1981 | Highest |
| South West Cape | 40 | 1st | 1991 | 2nd-highest |
| Stratford | 111 | 2nd | 1960 | 3rd-highest |
| Ohakune | 52 | 2nd | 1961 | 3rd-highest |
| Gisborne | 80 | 4th | 1937 | 4th-highest |
| Hawera | 34 | 2nd | 1977 | 4th-highest |

### Wind

On 1 August ski fields in the Queenstown area were shut down due to severe gales.

On 2 August a tornado struck Blaketown (Greymouth) tearing off a roof, damaging 10 properties and leaving three families homeless. No one was reported injured.

On 7 August strong winds snapped wooden power poles near Invercargill and blew out panes of glass in the city. Also on this day, a bus carrying 18 children was apparently blown off the road near Eketahuna in the Tararua District. There were no injuries.

On 14 August strong gusts overnight caused vegetation to fall on power lines and brought down power to more than 1000 homes in West Auckland.

On 15 August strong winds in Wellington closed the harbour ferry crossing.

**Record or near-record August extreme wind gusts were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme wind gust (km/hr)** | **Date of extreme gust** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| Tara Hills | 98 | 1st | 1985 | Highest |
| Wanaka | 93 | 1st | 1992 | Highest |
| Manapouri | 80 | 7th | 1991 | Highest |
| Gore | 107 | 7th | 1987 | Equal highest |
| Paeroa | 96 | 20th | 1991 | 2nd-highest |
| Levin | 93 | 12th | 1971 | 2nd-highest |
| Ashburton | 100 | 2nd | 1970 | 2nd-highest |
| Wanganui | 96 | 14th | 1977 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Mahia | 98 | 15th | 1991 | 3rd-highest |
| Hawera | 91 | 14th | 1986 | 3rd-highest |
| South West Cape | 165 | 7th | 1991 | 3rd-highest |
| Westport | 96 | 14th | 1973 | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Motu | 93 | 2nd | 1991 | 4th-highest |
| Baring Head | 135 | 14th | 1991 | 4th-highest |
| Winchmore | 87 | 2nd | 1970 | 4th-highest |
| Kaikohe | 80 | 15th | 1986 | Equal 4th-highest |
| Hamilton | 82 | 14th | 1978 | Equal 4th-highest |
| Queenstown | 85 | 8th | 1972 | Equal 4th-highest |

### Snow and ice

On August 7 snow fell overnight in many parts of the south. Snow on August 8 closed all kindergartens, primary, intermediate and some high schools for the day in Dunedin. No roads were closed in the city, however no bus service was running in the morning. A number of flights at Queenstown Airport were cancelled due to snowfall. State Highway 87 from Kyeburn to Outram and SH94 from Te Anau to Milford Sound (the Milford Road) was also closed due to snow.

On 12 August the Desert Road was closed overnight due to snowfall. Snow had also closed the Milford Road in the South Island.

On August 14 significant snowfall in the Central Plateau struck again overnightclosing the Desert Road. Black ice on the roads saw several crashes being reported in Taupo and Bay of Plenty with one car over-turning. At the height of this early evening storm, 13 cars and a truck and trailer unit were trapped north of Wellington the Rimutaka Hill road summit. Down south state highways 6, 8, 83, 85, 87 and 96 were all closed or partially closed.

On 28 August snowfall affected some of the South Island's alpine passes, with State Highway 73 closed to towing vehicles from Springfield to Otira. Caution was also advised for those travelling on State Highway 94, between Te Anau and Milford Sound.

### Lightning and Hail

On 4 August a hailstorm hit several Auckland suburbs. The hail blanketed the ground and caused an office block in Ellerslie to flood.

On 14 August a violent storm of thunder, lightning and hail struck Wellington. Lightning struck the Zephyrometer sculpture wind needle near Wellington Airport causing it to explode.

### Cloud and fog

On 1 August heavy fog caused domestic flight cancellations in Auckland and the delay of some harbour ferry crossings. The radiation fog was caused by a humid air mass moving over cooler ground temperatures.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Mr Chris Brandolino**

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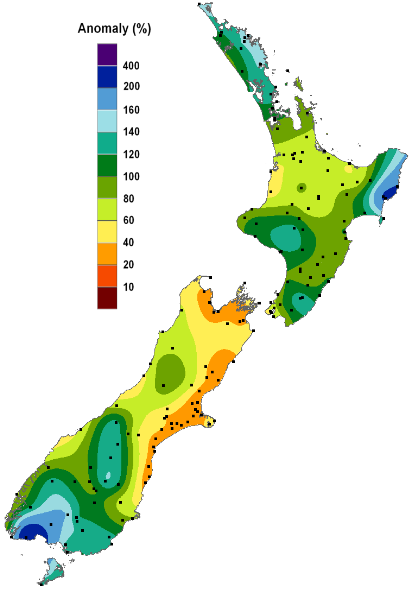
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*August 2014 total rainfall, expressed as a difference from average.*

*Considerable variations in rainfall anomalies were observed across the country in August. Above normal rainfall (120-149%) occurred throughout eastern Far North, Manawatu-Wanganui, Gisborne, Southland and parts of Central Otago. Conversely rainfall was below normal (50-79%) in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty, and well below normal (< 50%) in Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough and Canterbury.*

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1. Interim value [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. New Plymouth sunshine is still omitted from this ranking while recent instrumentation changes are assessed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The rankings (1st, 2nd, 3rd.etc) in all Tables in this summary are relative to climate data from a *group* of nearby stations, some of which may no longer be operating. The current climate value is compared against all values from any member of the group, without any regard for homogeneity between one station’s record, and another. This approach is used due to the practical limitations of performing homogeneity checks in real-time. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Missing one day of data from 14 August. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Missing one day of data 29 August. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Missing one day of data 20th August. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. No data due to sensor being replaced. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)