

New Zealand Climate Summary: **November 2014** Issued: 4 December 2014

# A cool month for most of the country.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Temperature** | November temperatures were below average (-1.20°C to -0.51°C) for many parts of the country, particularly for southern and western parts of the South Island, and central, western and northern-most parts of the North Island. It was a particularly cold month for Fiordland, parts of the Southern Lakes and Central Otago, the Canterbury High Country and central-western parts of Waikato where temperatures were well below average (> 1.20°C below average). In contrast, isolated locations including Kaikoura and Te Kuiti recorded above average temperatures (+0.51°C to +1.20°C). |
| **Rainfall** | Rainfall was below normal (50-79%) or well below normal (< 50%) for Central Otago, South Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, Wellington, Kapiti Coast, Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne, Bay of Plenty, Coromandel Peninsula and Auckland. Conversely, rainfall was above normal (120-149%) or well above normal (> 149%) for western and southern parts of the South Island and isolated locations in the North Island including Palmerston North, Whanganui and Dargaville. |
| **Soil Moisture** | As of 1 December 2014, soil moisture levels were below normal for the time of year for extensive areas of New Zealand, but especially for Nelson, Marlborough, Wellington, southern Wairarapa, the East Cape and Bay of Plenty. Soil moisture levels were above normal in the southern and northern-most parts of the country. |
| **Sunshine** | A sunny November for the eastern North Island as well as the eastern and northern South Island, with above normal sunshine (110-125%) recorded in many of these areas. Sunshine was below normal (75-90%) or well below normal (< 75%) for the south-western parts of the South Island. |

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## Overview

November 2014 was characterised by air pressures which were lower than normal over New Zealand and to the south of the Chatham Islands, with higher pressures than normal present in the north Tasman Sea. This pressure pattern resulted in westerly flow anomalies over New Zealand. Southerly outbreaks occurred frequently during the month, and these contributed to the changeable and generally unsettled weather that characterised the month for many parts of the country. Cold fronts associated with these southerly outbreaks triggered a number of thunderstorms, with many locations observing lightning and hail at least once during the month (see *Highlights and extreme events* section for further details). The high frequency of southerly outbreaks were reflected in temperatures for the month as a whole, which were below average (-1.20°C to -0.51°C) for southern and western parts of the South Island, and central, western and northern-most parts of the North Island. November temperatures were particularly low for Fiordland, parts of the Southern Lakes and Central Otago, the Canterbury High Country and central-western parts of Waikato where temperatures were well below average (> 1.20°C below average). Despite the generally cool conditions overall, warm periods occurred when westerly flows became established, enabling the foehn effect to increase temperatures in eastern parts of both islands. This was especially notable during the last ten days of the month, when daily maximum air temperatures frequently reached the mid-20’s and beyond in Christchurch, Blenheim, Napier and Gisborne. The nation-wide average temperature in November 2014 was 13.4°C (0.3°C below the 1971-2000 November average from NIWA’s seven station temperature series which begins in 1909)[[1]](#footnote-1).

The westerly flow anomaly for the month as a whole contributed to rainfall totals that were above normal (120-149%) or well above normal (> 149%) for western and southern parts of the South Island, and isolated locations in the North Island including Palmerston North, Whanganui and Dargaville. The orographic effect of air moving eastwards over elevated land meant that rainfall was below normal (50-79%) or well below normal (< 50%) in eastern parts of both islands such as Central Otago, South Canterbury, Marlborough, Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne, Bay of Plenty and the Coromandel Peninsula. It was a similarly dry month for Nelson, Wellington, the Kapiti Coast and Auckland. Remaining areas of the country typically received near normal rainfall (within 20% of normal) for the month.

As of 1 December 2014, soil moisture levels throughout New Zealand were closely reflective of the rainfall anomalies observed during November. Soils had dried considerably for many areas of the North Island in comparison to the soil moisture levels observed on 1 November. Specifically, soils had become notably drier than normal for Wellington, southern Wairarapa, Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne and Bay of Plenty. In the South Island, soils around the Nelson region had become considerably drier than normal for the time of year, whilst soils on the east coast of the South Island remained drier than normal. In contrast, soils were wetter than normal for the south of the South Island on the back of an especially wet November. Soil moisture levels were largely near normal for remaining parts of New Zealand.

Most of the country received near normal (90-109%) or above normal (110-125%) sunshine hours for November. It was particularly sunny for eastern areas of the North Island, and eastern and northern parts of the South Island, with well above normal sunshine (> 125%) observed in Gisborne, Blenheim and Cheviot. In contrast, it was a cloudy month for south-western parts of the South Island, where sunshine was below normal (75-90%) or well below normal (< 75%) for the south-western parts of the South Island.

**Further Highlights:**

* The highest temperature was 31.1°C, observed at Christchurch (Riccarton) on 22 November.
* The lowest temperature was -3.4°C, observed at Middlemarch on 11 November.
* The highest 1-day rainfall was 226 mm, recorded at Milford Sound on 21 November.
* The highest wind gust was 209 km/hr, observed at Cape Turnagain on 18 November.
* Of the six main centres in November 2014, Auckland was the warmest, Dunedin was the coolest, Tauranga was the driest, Hamilton was the wettest and cloudiest and Christchurch was the sunniest.
* Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four centres[[2]](#footnote-2) so far in 2014 (1 January to 30 November) are: Whakatane (2477 hours), Blenheim (2289 hours), Nelson (2283 hours) and Lake Tekapo (2255 hours).

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## Temperature: Below average for many parts of the country

November as a whole was a cool month across much of New Zealand, but not excessively cold. This is reflected in relatively few locations observing record high or low mean temperatures for the month. Perhaps most notable this month was Masterton (14.9°C) observing a higher mean temperature for the month than Kaitaia (14.1°C): a quite uncommon occurrence. It is likely that the relative warmth experienced in Masterton resulted from the foehn effect of the anomalous westerly flow during the month. A number of southern locations observed near-record low mean maximum air temperatures, which is likely to be a reflection of the cloudy and wet conditions that prevailed during November there. The nation-wide average temperature in November 2014 was 13.4°C (0.3°C below the 1971-2000 November average from NIWA’s seven station temperature series which begins in 1909).

**Record[[3]](#footnote-3) or near-record mean air temperatures for November were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Masterton | 14.9 | 1.0 | 1992 | 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Kaitaia | 14.1 | -1.8 | 1967 | Lowest |
| Te Kuiti | 11.9 | -2.9 | 1959 | Lowest |
| Secretary Island | 10.7 | -1.2 | 1985 | 3rd-lowest |
| South West Cape | 9.4 | -1.2 | 1991 | 3rd-lowest |
| Taumarunui | 12.6 | -1.7 | 1947 | 4th-lowest |
| Tiwai Point | 10.5 | -1.3 | 1970 | 4th-lowest |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean maximum**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Mahia | 18.9 | 0.7 | 1990 | 4th-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Te Kuiti | 17.2 | -2.8 | 1959 | Lowest |
| Kaitaia | 17.8 | -1.9 | 1967 | 2nd-lowest |
| Port Taharoa | 17.7 | -1.3 | 1973 | 2nd-lowest |
| Secretary Island | 13.4 | -1.6 | 1985 | 2nd-lowest |
| South West Cape | 11.8 | -1.8 | 1991 | 3rd-lowest |
| Manapouri | 14.7 | -2.0 | 1963 | 4th-lowest |
| Lumsden | 15.5 | -1.4 | 1982 | 4th-lowest |
| Balclutha | 15.3 | -1.9 | 1964 | 4th-lowest |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Mean minimum**  **air temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Masterton | 9.3 | 1.5 | 1992 | 3rd-highest |
| Campbell Island | 5.4 | 0.9 | 1991 | 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Te Kuiti | 6.6 | -2.9 | 1959 | Lowest |
| Whangaparaoa | 11.2 | -1.4 | 1982 | 2nd-lowest |
| Taumarunui | 7.0 | -1.9 | 1947 | 2nd-lowest |
| Tiwai Point | 6.8 | -1.6 | 1970 | 2nd-lowest |
| Motueka | 6.7 | -2.0 | 1956 | 3rd-lowest |
| Winchmore | 5.1 | -2.2 | 1928 | 3rd-lowest |
| Kaitaia | 10.4 | -1.6 | 1967 | 4th-lowest |
| Motu | 6.0 | -1.4 | 1990 | 4th-lowest |
| Wairoa | 9.1 | -1.4 | 1964 | 4th-lowest |
| Appleby | 6.4 | -2.6 | 1932 | 4th-lowest |
| Mt Cook Village | 2.9 | -2.5 | 1929 | 4th-lowest |

## Rainfall: Wet for the south of the South Island

November was a particularly wet month for southern parts of the South Island, where double the normal November rainfall was recorded. Invercargill observed its third-wettest November on record; remarkably, rainfall was recorded on all but four days of the month there. It was also a wet month in Milford Sound, which recorded approximately 1000 mm of rainfall (nearly 200% of normal). In contrast, it was especially dry in Nelson where just 13% of normal rainfall was received.

**Record or near-record November rainfall totals were recorded at:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Rainfall total (mm)** | **Percentage of normal** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Tiwai Point | 179 | 205 | 1970 | Highest |
| Balclutha | 100 | 196 | 1964 | 2nd-highest |
| Secretary Island | 531 | 150 | 1985 | 3rd-highest |
| Invercargill | 181 | 200 | 1900 | 3rd-highest |
| Nugget Point | 132 | 201 | 1930 | 3rd-highest |
| South West Cape | 139 | 128 | 1991 | 4th-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Mahia | 17 | 22 | 1990 | 2nd-lowest |
| Wairoa | 23 | 30 | 1964 | 3rd-lowest |
| Nelson | 10 | 13 | 1941 | 3rd-lowest |

## Sunshine: A sunny month for eastern parts

November was a sunny month for eastern parts of both islands. Cheviot observed its highest total sunshine hours for November on record, coming on the back of the town observing its third-highest total sunshine hours for October on record. It was an especially gloomy month in Queenstown, which recorded just 57% of its normal November sunshine: the lowest in records which began in 1930. A relatively cloudy month for Lake Tekapo compared to other sunny spots meant it slipped from second position to fourth in the rankings of New Zealand’s sunniest centres in 2014. Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four centres so far in 2014 (1 January to 30 November) are: Whakatane (2477 hours), Blenheim (2289 hours), Nelson (2283 hours) and Lake Tekapo (2255 hours).

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Sunshine hours** | **Percentage of normal** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Cheviot | 266 | 139 | 1983 | Highest |
| Blenheim | 292 | 125 | 1947 | 2nd-highest |
| Gisborne | 285 | 131 | 1905 | 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Queenstown | 124 | 57 | 1930 | Lowest |
| Invercargill | 130 | 72 | 1913 | 4th-lowest |

## November climate in the six main centres

November temperatures were well below average in Hamilton and below average in Dunedin, but near average in the remaining four main centres. It was a dry month in Tauranga and Wellington, which received just 47% and 52% of normal November rainfall respectively. Whilst it was both colder and wetter than normal in Dunedin, the city did at least enjoy above normal sunshine hours. Sunshine was similarly above normal in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Of the six main centres in November 2014, Auckland was the warmest, Dunedin was the coolest, Tauranga was the driest, Hamilton was the wettest and cloudiest and Christchurch was the sunniest.

**November 2014 main centre climate statistics:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Temperature** | |
| **Location** | **Mean temp. (oC)** | **Departure from normal (oC)** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 16.0 | -0.1 | Near average |
| Taurangab | 15.8 | -0.1 | Near average |
| Hamiltonc | 13.5 | -1.2 | Well below average |
| Wellingtond | 13.6 | +0.2 | Near average |
| Christchurche | 13.5 | 0.0 | Near average |
| Dunedinf | 11.5 | -0.9 | Below average |
| **Rainfall** | |
| **Location** | **Rainfall (mm)** | **% of normal** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 47 | 72% | Below normal |
| Taurangab | 35 | 47% | Well below normal |
| Hamiltonc | 82 | 92% | Near normal |
| Wellingtond | 51 | 52% | Below normal |
| Christchurche | 48 | 104% | Near normal |
| Dunedinf | 74 | 131% | Above normal |
| **Sunshine** | |
| **Location** | **Sunshine (hours)** | **% of normal** | **Comments** |
| Aucklanda | 216 | 112% | Above normal |
| Taurangab | 235 | 105% | Near normal |
| Hamiltong | 176 | 93% | Near normal |
| Wellingtond | 242 | 116% | Above normal |
| Christchurche | 254 | 113% | Above normal |
| Dunedinf | 195 | 117% | Above normal |  |

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

## Highlights and extreme events

### Temperatures

On 1 and 2 November a strong northwest airflow brought high temperatures to many parts of the country. Temperatures were especially high for the time of year on 2 November, when the maximum temperature reached 28.4°C in Timaru, 27.9°C in Napier, 27.8°C in Gisborne, 27.2°C in Clyde and 24.9°C in Dunedin. Also notable were some very high overnight temperatures recorded on the night of 1 November. Between 6 p.m. on 1 November and 8 a.m. on 2 November, the temperature never dropped below 18.2°C in Balclutha, 19.2°C in Clyde and 20.7°C in Dunedin. In addition, Lumsden (16.1°C) observed its highest daily minimum temperature on record for the month of November (see table below).

On 5 November, cold southerlies contributed to a winter-like day along the east coast of the South Island. Air temperatures dipped as low as 6.8°C in Christchurch and 4.3°C in Winchmore (near Ashburton) in mid-afternoon with heavy showers passing through frequently.

On 13 November Milford Sound recorded a maximum temperature of 19.9°C, the highest maximum temperature of the day across all of New Zealand. The southerly airflow resulted in a cool day throughout the country, with the exception of Milford Sound which benefitted from the foehn effect of the southerly winds passing over the western ranges.

At 10.45 a.m. on 15 November it was 26.2°C in Napier but just 6.2°C in Invercargill. This illustrated the considerable difference in temperature of the airmass in the pre-cold front north-westerly winds over Napier and the post-front south-westerlies in Invercargill.

On 22 November warm north-westerly winds saw temperatures climb into the late-20’s and early-30’s for eastern parts of the South Island. Temperatures were highest in Christchurch, where the temperature peaked at 31.1°C. This was the first time the temperature had exceeded 30°C in a New Zealand location since 16 March 2014.

The highest daily maximum temperature was 31.1°C, observed at Christchurch (Riccarton) on 22 November.

The lowest daily minimum temperature was -3.4°C, observed at Middlemarch on 11 November.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme maximum (°C)** | **Date of extreme temperature** | | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | | |
| Kerikeri | 27.3 | 25th | 1981 | | 2nd-highest |
| Mahia | 26.1 | 26th | 1990 | | 2nd-highest |
| Kaikoura | 29.5 | 22nd | 1963 | | 2nd-highest |
| Whangarei | 26.8 | 25th | 1967 | | 3rd-highest |
| Te Puke | 27.2 | 25th | 1973 | | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Christchurch (Riccarton) | 31.1 | 22nd | 1863 | | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | | |
| Taumarunui | 12.1 | 12th | 1947 | | 2nd-lowest |
| Kaitaia | 14.9 | 6th | 1971 | | 3rd-lowest |
| Turangi | 11.2 | 12th | 1968 | | 3rd-lowest |
| Ohakune | 9.4 | 6th | 1972 | | 3rd-lowest |
| Westport | 11.4 | 12th | 1966 | | 3rd-lowest |
| Te Kuiti | 13.7 | 12th | 1959 | | Equal 3rd-lowest |
| Martinborough | 12.0 | 6th | 1986 | | Equal 3rd-lowest |
| Wairoa | 11.6 | 5th | 1972 | | Equal 3rd-lowest |
| Dargaville | 14.7 | 6th | 1951 | | 4th-lowest |
| Castlepoint | 9.9 | 6th | 1972 | | 4th-lowest |
| Mahia | 11.1 | 6th | 1990 | | 4th-lowest |
| Farewell Spit | 13.6 | 12th | 1972 | | Equal 4th-lowest |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme minimum (°C)** | **Date of extreme temperature** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| High records or near-records | | | | |
| Te Puke | 17.8 | 26th | 1973 | Highest |
| Lumsden | 16.1 | 2nd | 1982 | Highest |
| Whitianga | 18.1 | 26th | 1971 | Equal highest |
| Kerikeri | 18.3 | 25th | 1981 | 2nd-highest |
| Masterton | 17.2 | 26th | 1992 | 2nd-highest |
| Blenheim | 18.0 | 26th | 1972 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Cheviot | 16.5 | 22nd | 1982 | Equal 2nd-highest |
| Tauranga | 18.2 | 26th | 1941 | 3rd-highest |
| Rotorua | 16.1 | 26th | 1972 | 3rd-highest |
| Ranfurly | 15.0 | 22nd | 1975 | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Taupo | 15.5 | 26th | 1950 | 4th-highest |
| Gisborne | 18.9 | 26th | 1940 | 4th-highest |
| Waipawa | 17.7 | 26th | 1945 | 4th-highest |
| Waiau | 16.2 | 22nd | 1974 | 4th-highest |
| Waipara West | 19.0 | 22nd | 1973 | 4th-highest |
| Whangarei | 18.5 | 25th | 1967 | Equal 4th-highest |
| Low records or near-records | | | | |
| Appleby | -0.5 | 13th | 1932 | 2nd-lowest |
| Whangaparaoa | 7.3 | 6th | 1982 | 3rd-lowest |
| Motueka | 1.1 | 7th | 1956 | 4th-lowest |

### Wind

Strong winds on 2 November fanned a large and out-of-control scrub fire near Outram in Otago, forcing the evacuation of at least four homes. A scrub fire in Millers Flat (Central Otago) also forced the evacuation of one property, and took local fire crews 8 hours to bring under control. Strong winds forced the diversion of an early-morning flight due to land in Queenstown. Wanaka and Manapouri observed their highest and third-highest maximum wind gusts for November respectively (see table below). Farther north, a family of four were trapped in their campervan after it was blown over near Mount Cook Village.

On 15 November, approximately 3600 Canterbury properties were without power after damaging winds brought down trees and power lines. Areas around Darfield, Homebush, Springfield and Hororata were worst affected. The downed power lines also triggered scrub fires in the Selwyn and Waimakariri districts. Caution was advised to motorists travelling on SH 1 from Blenheim to Waipara, SH 7 from Waipara to Springs Junction (Lewis Pass) and SH 2 over the Rimutaka Hill due to strong winds. In Greymouth, a strong burst of wind struck at 5.25 a.m. that lifted roofs and caused damage to the local fire station. Approximately 18,000 homes in Auckland lost power as a result of the strong winds bringing down power lines, and the *Taste of Auckland* festival was forced to close due to severe wind gusts.

On 18 November, motorists travelling on SH 8 from Omarama to Burkes Pass, SH 2 over the Rimutaka Hill, SH 1 and 3 from Marton to Bulls and SH 1 on the Desert Road were warned to drive cautiously due to strong winds.

On 22 November, the Fire Service attended six weather-related callouts in Wellington, as strong winds hit the city. Motorists travelling on SH 2 over the Rimutaka Hill were warned to drive cautiously due to the windy conditions.

On 26 November motorists travelling on SH 1 from Milton to Balclutha, SH 90 from Raes Junction to McNab and SH 2 over the Rimutaka Hill were warned to drive cautiously due to strong winds.

The highest wind gust was 209 km/hr, observed at Cape Turnagain on 18 November.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme wind gust (km/hr)** | **Date of extreme gust** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| Dannevirke | 111 | 15th | 1961 | Highest |
| Winchmore | 100 | 15th | 1970 | Highest |
| Wanaka | 83 | 2nd | 1992 | Highest |
| Ashburton | 93 | 15th | 1970 | Equal highest |
| Lyttelton Harbour | 106 | 15th | 1980 | 2nd-highest |
| Mt Kaukau (Wellington) | 141 | 26th | 1969 | 3rd-highest |
| Oamaru | 87 | 15th | 1984 | 3rd-highest |
| Manapouri | 83 | 2nd | 1991 | 3rd-highest |
| Tauranga | 83 | 16th | 1973 | Equal 3rd-highest |
| Auckland (Whenuapai) | 89 | 15th | 1972 | 4th-highest |
| Oamaru | 78 | 15th | 1984 | 4th-highest |
| Lauder | 122 | 15th | 1981 | 4th-highest |

### Rain and slips

On 2 November heavy rain and strong winds forced the closure of the Milford Road (SH 94).

On 22 November heavy rain caused surface flooding and a slip near Gore, which resulted in the closure of four rural roads.

The highest 1-day rainfall was 226 mm, recorded at Milford Sound on 21 November.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Extreme 1-day rainfall**  **(mm)** | **Date of extreme rainfall** | **Year records began** | **Comments** |
| Kaitaia | 43 | 15th | 1985 | 3rd-highest |
| Secretary Island | 126 | 20th | 1985 | 3rd-highest |
| Campbell Island | 25 | 14th | 1991 | 4th-highest |

### Lightning and Hail

A severe and damaging hailstorm struck parts of the Tasman District on 4 November, with the worst-affected areas around Lower Moutere, Motueka and Riwaka. The worst of the hailstorm lasted approximately 20 minutes and resulted in significant damage to apple and kiwifruit crops: an estimated 15 to 20 orchards were seriously affected with many crops deemed a complete write-off. In some cases hail nets that were used to protect the orchards collapsed under the weight of hail, with trees subsequently breaking under the weight of the collapsed nets. Thunder, lightning and hail was also reported in central Christchurch in the early evening, with hail the size of small marbles blanketing the ground.

On 5 November New Plymouth was stuck by a hailstorm, with considerable surface flooding resulting from blocked drains. A number of businesses had to temporarily close due to flooding caused by blocked drains overflowing, and widespread damage to multiple buildings (e.g. roof collapses) were reported.

On 11 November a thunderstorm passed over Dunedin at around 2 p.m. A large Macrocarpa tree near Portobello (Otago Peninsula) was shattered after being struck by lightning.

On 12 November thunderstorms occurred in many parts of New Zealand as the northward passage of cold fronts and daytime heating resulted in atmospheric instability. A particularly severe but localised hailstorm struck just outside of Methven, with the hail reportedly accumulating up to 30 cm deep in parts.

On 19 November approximately 150 lightning strikes were recorded in the Canterbury region during the evening, with the thunderstorms also bringing localised heavy rain.

On 28 November thunderstorms again struck Canterbury, with hail falling in Christchurch. Farther north, two helicopters with monsoon buckets were required to contain a forestry fire which was triggered by a lightning strike near Port Underwood (Marlborough). Orchards near Nelson reported damage to crops after being struck by a hailstorm.

### Snow and ice

On 3 November, the Milford Road (SH 94) was closed from Hollyford to The Chasm due to snow.

On 5 November, residents of Hanmer Springs awoke to an unseasonable settling of snow in the township. The snow in the town had melted by 10 a.m. but remained to relatively low elevations on the surrounding hills and mountains. *Mount Hutt* ski area, which by this stage had closed for the season, received approximately 25 cm of fresh snow. Ski area staff described this as the largest snowfall of the year (highlighting what a lean season it had been for the ski area snow-wise).

On 6 November, motorists were warned to drive cautiously on the Desert Road (SH 1) due to snow.

On 15 November caution was advised to motorists travelling on SH 94 from Hollyford to Milford Sound due to snow.

On 18 November, the Milford Road (SH 94) was closed at 5 p.m. in anticipation of heavy snowfalls.

### Cloud and fog

On 25 November, fog at New Plymouth airport forced the cancellation of numerous flights. The fog persisted for some time, and at midday the temperature in New Plymouth was 16.5°C with humidity at 100%. Fog also forced the cancellation of flights at Wellington, Paraparaumu and Nelson airports.

**For further information, please contact:**

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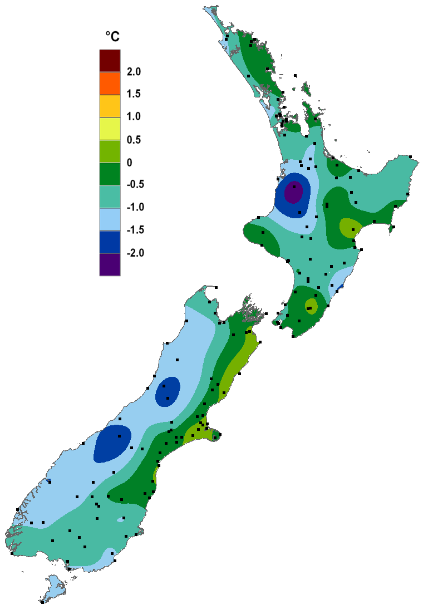
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*November 2014 mean temperatures, expressed as a difference from the 1981-2010 average (°C).*

*Temperatures were below average (between 0.51°C and 1.20°C below average) for many areas of the country, as indicated by the light blue and teal shades. Isolated areas observed well below average temperatures (more than 1.2°C below average) as indicated by dark blue and purple shades. Green shades illustrate areas where temperatures were near average (within 0.50°C of average).*

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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)