

THE WEATHER IN NEW ZEALAND IN DECEMBER 1985

General—December was cloudy and wetter in most places, with above average temperatures over the whole country.

North-westerly winds prevailed over the whole country and strong winds were less frequent than usual. North-easterlies and south-easterlies were about 10 percent more frequent than usual. South-westerlies had their lowest frequency over the southern part of the South Island for almost 30 years.

Mean sea level pressures were above average throughout the whole country, the greatest departures were in the east of the North Island where the pressure was 2 hpa above average.

Surface flooding was reported in Auckland City and the Paraparaumu area on the 2nd and 23rd respectively. With heavy rainfall affecting other areas on those dates.

Most farmers reported very good grass growth, but rain made haymaking difficult. Fly strike was reported on some farms, but otherwise stock were in very good condition.

Rainfall—Rainfall was above average over most of the country and several records were set this month for maximum monthly rainfall. However Southland, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay and the Gisborne area received below average rainfall. Nelson, Paraparaumu, Whenuapai and Auckland recorded well over 200 percent of normal rainfall (see table below). On the 2nd Auckland City Weather Office recorded 52 mm from midday to midnight, and 133 mm was recorded at Paraparaumu Airport within 24 hours over the 22nd and 23rd. Auckland and Whenuapai rainfalls were the highest on record, Paraparaumu the second highest.

Some of the greatest departures this month were:

Station	Start of Record	Total Rainfall (mm)	Percent of Average	Rank
Whenuapai	1943	236	248	Highest on record
Auckland City	1961	172	214	Highest on record
Auckland Airport	1962	139	159	Second highest on record
Taupo Airport	1976	161	—	Highest on record
Ohakea	1940	198	224	Highest on record
Paraparaumu Airport	1945	215	282	Second highest on record
Nelson Airport	1941	161	219	Second highest on record

Station	Start of Record	Total Rainfall (mm)	Percent of Average
Gisborne	1937	22	25
New Plymouth	1944	108	70
Invercargill	1939	52	63
Roxburgh	1948	35	63

Temperatures—Mean daily temperatures were at least 0.5°C above average, and mostly 1.5°C above average for the whole country. The West Coast of the South Island had mean daily temperatures 2.0°C above average, with average minimum temperatures being up to 2.5°C above normal.

Sunshine—The South Island was fairly cloudy throughout the month, while sunny days in the North Island were evenly spread, although the first few days were relatively cloudy. Sunshine hours for the North Island were either just below or just above normal for December. Southland's sunshine was just above normal. Canterbury, Otago and Westland sunshine hours were about 70 percent of normal. Kaikoura's December sunshine was the lowest on record.

Some of the greatest departures were:

Station	Start of Record	Departure from Normal (hours)	Rank
Kaikoura	1960	−64	Lowest on record
Christchurch Airport	1956	−56	Second lowest on record
Hokitika Airport	1964	−43	Second lowest on record
Dunedin Airport	1962	−55	
Queenstown	1930	−58	

J. S. HICKMAN, Director.