

THE WEATHER IN NEW ZEALAND IN SEPTEMBER 1987

General—This September it was rather dry in many eastern regions. It was also warmer than normal in most places.

Strong winds were more frequent than usual, for the sixth consecutive month over the south of the South Island. They were also more frequent over the north of the North Island. South-westerlies predominated over the whole of New Zealand.

Mean sea level pressures were below normal over the whole of the country, especially in the far south, where they were 8 to 9 hPa below.

Rather cold conditions prevailed in Canterbury on the 7th when maximum temperatures in many places were about 7 degrees below normal, whereas extremely high temperatures, for September, were recorded in Canterbury during the afternoon of the 28th, in gusty north-westerly conditions. Record high temperatures for September were recorded at Orari Estate (26.8°C), Rangiora (26.4°C), Christchurch Airport (26.2°C), Temuka (25.6°C), and at Bromley (25.3°C). Records began at Christchurch Airport in 1953; the previous maximum recorded there for September was 24.8°C.

A small tornado affected the Awatapu—Riverside areas of Whakatane at approximately 4.30 p.m. on the 11th. It was reported to have had a path 4 km in length, and caused extensive damage to two houses and minor damage to eighteen others.

North-westerly winds up to gale force affected Wellington, the Kaikoura Coast, and Canterbury on the 30th. A car was blown off the road on the Rimutaka Hill (north of Wellington) in the high winds. A wind gust of 63 knots (117 kph) was recorded at Kaikoura.

Rainfall—Rainfall totals were as low as 30 percent of normal in Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, and along the east coast of the South Island from Cape Campbell to Christchurch. It was also drier than usual in Bay of Plenty, Wairarapa, Wellington, Horowhenua, and in South Canterbury, with rainfall between 40 and 70 percent of normal.

Only 27 mm (32 percent of normal) was recorded at Wellington Airport, making this the driest September there since records began in 1960.

In Auckland, Nelson, Southland and coastal Otago rainfall was 120 to 140 percent of normal, but in central Otago totals of up to 200 percent of normal were recorded.

Temperature—Mean daily temperatures ranged from 0.5 to 1°C above normal in most places, except for Fiordland where mean daily temperatures were 0.5°C below normal.

Sunshine—Only 75 to 80 percent of normal sunshine was recorded in Northland, Westland, and coastal Otago. It was sunnier than usual in Bay of Plenty, Taupo, and along the east coast of the North Island; especially in Gisborne, where hours of bright sunshine were 120 percent of normal.

J. S. HICKMAN, Director.