

Dry and warm for many parts of the country

Rainfall	Below normal (50-79% of normal) or well below normal (<50% of normal) rainfall was common for Southland, coastal Otago, Canterbury, inland Manawatū-Whanganui, Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, and parts of Auckland. Rainfall was above normal (120-149% of normal) or well above normal (>149% of normal) for Central Otago, parts of the West Coast, Nelson, northern Tasman, Wellington, Kāpiti Coast, Wairarapa, inland Taranaki, and parts of Northland.
Temperature	Temperatures were above average (0.51-1.20°C above average) or well above average (>1.20°C above average) across most of the country, except for small areas of near average ($\pm 0.50^\circ\text{C}$ of average) temperatures in parts of Central Otago.
Soil Moisture	At the end of April, soil moisture levels were above normal for parts of Northland, western Bay of Plenty, coastal Gisborne, much of the lower North Island, northern Canterbury, Banks Peninsula, and southern parts of the Mackenzie Basin. Meanwhile, below normal soil moisture levels were present in coastal parts of North Otago and South Canterbury. Elsewhere, soil moisture levels were generally near normal.

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Overview

April 2023 was a dry and warm month for many parts of Aotearoa New Zealand with plenty of sunshine for the lower and western South Island. Mean sea level pressure (MSLP) was lower than normal over and northwest of the country, and higher than normal east and southeast of the country. This MSLP pattern resulted in more northeasterly winds than normal over New Zealand. ENSO-neutral conditions persisted in April, however seas continued to warm across the equatorial Pacific, consistent with a developing El Niño. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) remained above average during April near the western North Island and around the South Island, with near average SSTs near the northern and eastern North Island.

It was a relatively dry month for many parts of the country, and below normal (50-79% of normal) or well below normal rainfall (<50% of normal) was widespread for both the North and South Islands. Napier received just 28% of its normal April rainfall – a welcome reprieve after a very wet start to the year. Occasional periods of unsettled weather delivered heavy rainfalls to some parts of the country, with April rainfall totals above normal (120-149% of normal) or well above normal (>149% of normal) for Central Otago, parts of the West Coast, Nelson, northern Tasman, Wellington, Kāpiti Coast, Wairarapa, inland Taranaki, and parts of Northland. Atmospheric instability resulted in several areas of

strong convective activity and the development of thunderstorms, with five tornadoes reported across New Zealand during the month (see *Highlights and extreme events* section for further details).

The prevalence of elevated SSTs near New Zealand and more northeasterly winds than normal resulted in a warm month overall. Temperatures were above average (0.51-1.20°C above average) or well above average (>1.20°C above average) across most of the country. The exception was parts of Central Otago where temperatures were near average ($\pm 0.50^\circ\text{C}$ of average). The nationwide average temperature in April 2023 was 14.4°C. This was 1.1°C above the 1991-2020 April average from NIWA's seven station temperature series which begins in 1909, and New Zealand's 11th-warmest April on record.

Further Highlights:

- The highest temperature was 27.5°C, observed at Wairoa on 20 April.
- The lowest temperature was -4.1°C, observed at Pukaki Aerodrome on 25 April.
- The highest 1-day rainfall was 134 mm, recorded at Pukeiti (Taranaki) on 21 April.
- The highest wind gust was 193 km/h, observed at Cape Turnagain on 26 April.
- Of the six main centres in April 2023, Auckland was the warmest and least sunny, Dunedin was the driest and coolest, Wellington was the wettest, and Tauranga was the sunniest.
- Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four locations so far in 2023 are Central Otago (981 hours), West Coast (972 hours), Taranaki (964 hours), and Mackenzie Basin (957 hours).

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Rainfall: Dry for many areas, but very wet for the Kāpiti Coast and Northland

April was quite a dry month for large parts of the country, and three locations observed record or near-record low rainfall totals. In contrast, the Kāpiti Coast bore the brunt of unsettled weather during April, with Paraparaumu measuring its wettest April since records began in 1945.

Record^{1,2} or near-record April rainfall totals were recorded at:

Location	Rainfall total (mm)	Percentage of normal	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Paraparaumu	202	285	1945	Highest
Kaikohe	371	272	1956	2nd-highest
Low records or near-records				
Mt Ruapehu Chateau	67	33	2000	Lowest

¹ 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.

² All normal values in this climate summary are compared to the 1991-2020 normals.

Waipounamu	11	17	1917	Lowest
Secretary Island	194	61	1985	3rd-lowest

Temperature: A warm month for most

As has been the theme for quite some time, no locations observed near record or record low temperatures. Meanwhile, 23 locations observed record or near-record high mean temperatures. Auckland, Northland, the Coromandel, and parts of the Bay of Plenty had some very warm nights for the time of year, owing to warmer than average SSTs and frequent northerly airflows, which drew in subtropical moisture and warmth. Unusually warm SSTs also led to Chatham Island experiencing its warmest April on record, with records there extending back to 1878.

The near average temperatures for April observed in parts of Central Otago were largely a result of below average daily minimum air temperatures. This may be partly due to clearer skies and enhanced radiative cooling at night; for example, Alexandra (208 hours) observed its sunniest April on record.

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

Location	Mean air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Whitianga	17.2	1.4	1962	Highest
Oban (Stewart Island)	12.6	1.9	1975	Highest
Campbell Island	8.9	1.2	1991	Highest
Chatham Island	14.8	1.7	1878	Highest
Secretary Island	14.2	1.4	1985	2nd-highest
Tiwai Point	12.9	1.6	1970	2nd-highest
South West Cape	12.5	1.6	1991	2nd-highest
Kaitaia	18.7	1.8	1948	3rd-highest
Purerua	18.1	1.2	1983	3rd-highest
Auckland (Western Springs)	18.1	1.8	1948	3rd-highest
Whakatāne	16.9	1.5	1974	3rd-highest
Taupō	14.5	2.2	1949	3rd-highest
Auckland (Airport)	17.9	1.3	1959	3rd-highest
Tautuku	12.3	1.3	1976	3rd-highest
Auckland (Whenuapai)	17.2	1.4	1945	4th-highest
Te Puke	16.7	1.6	1973	4th-highest
Rotorua	14.8	1.4	1964	4th-highest
Motu	13.7	2.1	1990	4th-highest
Waiouru	11.6	2.0	1962	4th-highest
Brothers Island	15.3	0.9	1997	4th-highest
Waipounamu	11.0	0.9	1980	4th-highest
Invercargill	12.5	2.0	1905	4th-highest
Hicks Bay	17.6	1.3	1969	Equal 4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
None observed				

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

Location	Mean maximum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Campbell Island	10.8	1.2	1991	Highest
Arapito	19.7	1.6	1978	2nd-highest
Secretary Island	17.4	1.8	1985	2nd-highest
Waipounamu	17.1	1.6	1980	2nd-highest
Tiwai Point	16.6	1.8	1970	2nd-highest
Oban (Stewart Island)	16.1	1.7	1975	2nd-highest
South West Cape	14.8	1.7	1991	2nd-highest
Kawerau	22.2	1.2	1954	3rd-highest
Taupō	19.8	2.4	1949	3rd-highest
Te Kuiti	21.6	1.5	1959	3rd-highest
Manapouri (Airport)	16.9	1.9	1963	3rd-highest
Tūrangi	19.0	1.1	1968	4th-highest
Waiouru	16.2	1.8	1962	4th-highest
Ōkārito	17.8	0.8	1982	4th-highest
Appleby	19.9	1.1	1932	4th-highest
Invercargill	17.3	2.0	1905	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
None observed				

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

Location	Mean minimum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Purerua	15.3	1.8	1983	Highest
Whitianga	13.4	2.6	1962	Highest
Oban (Stewart Island)	9.1	2.1	1975	Highest
Chatham Island	12.4	2.3	1878	Highest
Kaitaia	15.8	2.9	1948	2nd-highest
Kaikohe	14.2	1.6	1973	2nd-highest
Hicks Bay	14.9	1.9	1969	2nd-highest
South West Cape	10.2	1.4	1991	2nd-highest
Cape Reinga	16.2	1.4	1951	3rd-highest
Kerikeri	13.9	2.1	1945	3rd-highest
Dargaville	14.2	1.5	1943	3rd-highest
Auckland (Whenuapai)	13.5	2.3	1945	3rd-highest
Auckland (Western Springs)	14.5	2.3	1948	3rd-highest
Te Puke	12.5	2.5	1973	3rd-highest
Whakatāne	12.3	2.1	1974	3rd-highest
Auckland (Airport)	14.5	1.7	1959	3rd-highest
Port Taharoa	14.4	1.6	1973	3rd-highest
Martinborough	9.9	2.1	1986	3rd-highest
Akaroa	10.3	1.0	1978	3rd-highest
Campbell Island	6.9	1.2	1991	3rd-highest

Motu	9.1	2.5	1990	4th-highest
Mt Ruapehu Chateau	5.3	1.3	2000	4th-highest
Brothers Island	13.3	0.7	1997	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
None observed				

April climate in the six main centres

April temperatures were well above average in Tauranga, and above average for the remaining five main centres. April rainfall was well below normal at Dunedin, below normal in Hamilton, above normal in Christchurch, and near normal for Auckland, Tauranga, and Wellington. Of the six main centres in April 2023, Auckland was the warmest and least sunny, Dunedin was the driest and coolest, Wellington was the wettest, and Tauranga was the sunniest.

April 2023 main centre climate statistics:

Temperature			
Location	Mean temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Comments
Auckland ^a	17.7	+1.2	Above average
Tauranga ^b	17.3	+1.4	Well above average
Hamilton ^c	15.6	+1.1	Above average
Wellington ^d	14.5	+0.7	Above average
Christchurch ^e	13.1	+1.2	Above average
Dunedin ^f	12.9	+1.1	Above average
Rainfall			
Location	Rainfall (mm)	% of normal	Comments
Auckland ^a	95	103	Near normal
Tauranga ^b	112	85	Near normal
Hamilton ^c	55	62	Below normal
Wellington ^d	131	103	Near normal
Christchurch ^e	70	122	Above normal
Dunedin ^f	29	48	Well below normal
Sunshine			
Location	Sunshine (hours)		
Auckland ^a	149		
Tauranga ^b	176		
Hamilton ^g	154		
Wellington ^d	163		
Christchurch ^e	153		
Dunedin ^f	165		

^a Māngere ^b Tauranga Airport ^c Hamilton Airport ^d Kelburn ^e Christchurch Airport ^f Musselburgh ^g Ruakura

Highlights and extreme events

Rain, flooding and slips

The highest 1-day rainfall was 134 mm, recorded at Pukeiti (Taranaki) on 21 April.

On 14 April, downpours about the Coromandel Peninsula caused areas of surface flooding, particularly near Whitianga. SH25 was closed between Whitianga and Kaimarama.

On 19 April, a period of heavy rain caused surface flooding for parts of Wellington. The city recorded a total of 63.2 mm rainfall in the 13 hours to 2 p.m., with 10.8 mm recorded in the hour to 1 p.m.

On 30 April, heavy rain fell over many parts of the upper North Island. SH1 was closed between Wellsford and Warkworth due to a slip.

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

Location	Extreme 1-day rainfall (mm)	Date of extreme rainfall	Year records began	Comments
Kaikohe	169	30th	1956	Highest
Levin	59	19th	1949	2nd-highest
Stratford	91	21st	1960	3rd-highest

Temperatures

The highest temperature was 27.5°C, observed at Wairoa on 20 April.

The lowest temperature was -4.1°C, observed at Pukaki Aerodrome on 25 April.

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

Location	Extreme maximum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Secretary Island	23.1	13th	1985	3rd-highest
Ōkārīto	22.4	17th	1982	4th-highest
Chatham Island	21.1	6th	1878	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
None observed				

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

Location	Extreme minimum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Secretary Island	17.4	17th	1988	Highest
Kaitaia	20.3	22nd	1948	3rd-highest
Hicks Bay	19.0	11th	1972	Equal 3rd-highest
Purerua	19.2	21st	1983	4th-highest
Auckland (Western Springs)	19.9	20th	1971	4th-highest
Tautuku	13.1	11th	1976	4th-highest

Tiwai Point	13.8	11th	1972	Equal 4th-highest
Chatham Island	16.4	21st	1878	Equal 4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
Whakatu	-0.6	25th	1965	4th-lowest

Wind

The highest wind gust was 193 km/h, observed at Cape Turnagain on 26 April.

On 30 April, around 4,500 people were without power as strong winds brought down power lines. A large tree was toppled in the Te Arai region of Auckland, causing extensive damage to a local coffee boutique.

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

Location	Extreme wind gust (km/h)	Date of extreme gust	Year records began	Comments
Bromley	91	24th	1972	Highest
Reefton	54	24th	1999	Equal highest
Cape Reinga	139	30th	1974	2nd-highest
Wānaka	80	23rd	1992	Equal 2nd-highest
Oamaru	87	25th	1984	Equal 2nd-highest
Te Puke	56	10th	1987	3rd-highest
Motu	80	7th	1991	4th-highest
Māhia	91	24th	1991	4th-highest
Windsor	83	23rd	2001	4th-highest
Lincoln	76	26th	1999	Equal 4th-highest

Lightning, hail, and tornadoes

On 9 April, ten homes were yellow-stickered after a tornado passed through the Auckland suburbs of Pakuranga, Golflands, East Tāmaki, Dannemora, Flat Bush, Botany and Howick. Reported damage included downed trees and fences, lifted tiles of roofs, broken windows and damaged cars.

On 10 April, a tornado impacted approximately 50 homes in parts of Upper Moutere, lifting roofs off houses, and downing trees and power lines. Approximately 34,000 lightning strikes were reported in the New Zealand region, with 8,827 of those strikes over land. In Taumarunui, very large hailstones were reported during a thunderstorm that occurred around 3 p.m.

On 11 April, at least 20 homes in Paraparaumu were damaged by a tornado, with one home lifted off its piles. One person was confirmed injured. A waterspout was spotted off the coast north of Titahi Bay. Further north, a tornado caused damage to several properties in Waitara (Taranaki) in the early hours of the morning. In addition, a tornado caused damage to a kiwifruit orchard in Katikati (Bay of Plenty).

On 24 April, 40 lightning strikes were recorded over Canterbury in the early hours of the morning, associated with the northward passage of a cold front.

Cloud and fog

On 1 April, fog blanketed many parts of Auckland during the morning, and several flights at Auckland Airport were cancelled.

Snow and ice

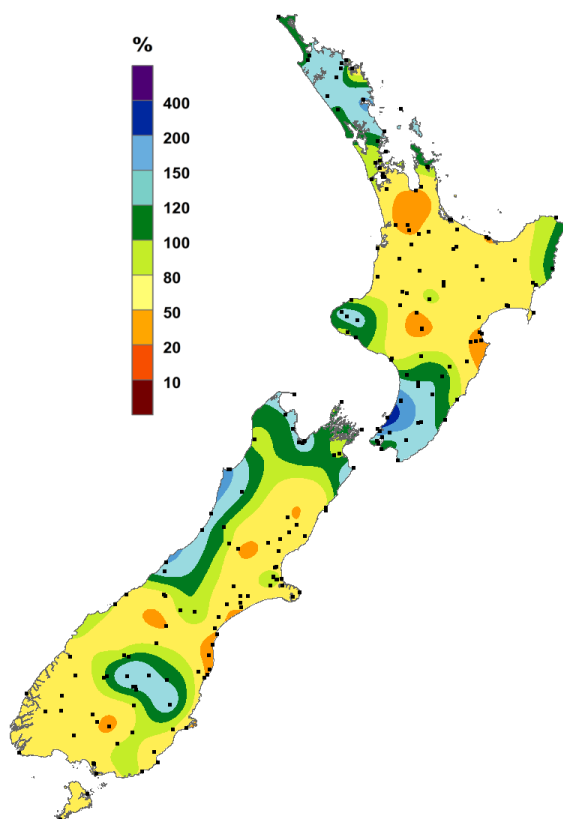
On 24 April, a dusting of snow settled on the summit of the Crown Range Road, although the road remained open to all vehicles.

For further information, please contact:

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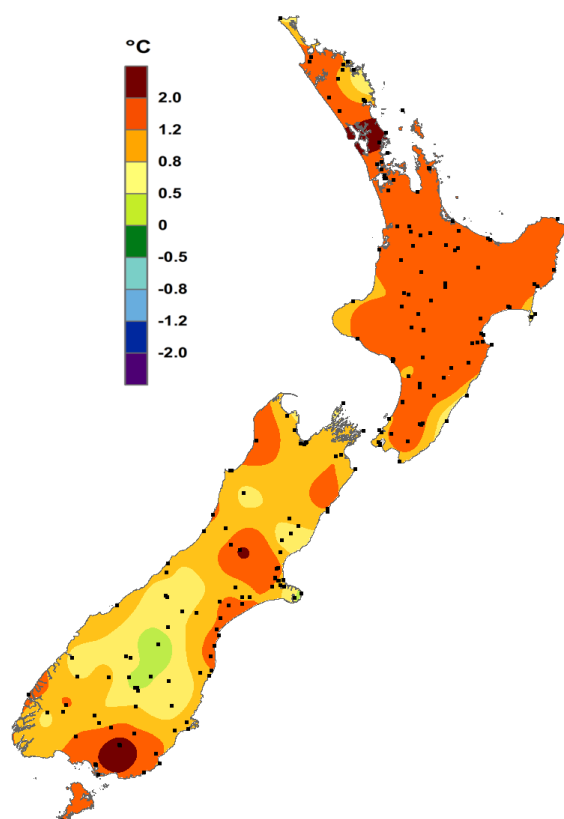
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April rainfall

Expressed as a percentage of the 1991-2020 normal.



April temperature

Expressed as a departure from the 1991-2020 average in degrees Celsius.

<https://www.niwa.co.nz/our-science/climate>

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