

## Cold and dry for many parts of the country

Temperature	Temperatures were below average (0.51-1.20°C below average) or well below average (>1.20°C below average) for much of the North Island to the south of central Waikato and the western Bay of Plenty, as well as northern, eastern, and southern parts of the South Island. Temperatures were above average (0.51-1.20°C above average) or well above average (>1.20°C above average) for western parts of the South Island. Temperatures were near average ( $\pm 0.50^\circ\text{C}$ of average) in northern parts of the North Island, Tasman, western and central Otago, and southern Southland.
Rainfall	Below normal (50-79% of normal) or well below normal (<50% of normal) rainfall was observed across western, inland, and southern parts of the South Island, Marlborough, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Auckland, and southern Northland. Above normal (120-149% of normal) or well above normal (>149% of normal) rainfall was observed across eastern parts of Canterbury, Nelson, and northern Northland.
Soil Moisture	At the end of January, soil moisture levels were lower than normal for much of Auckland, Waikato, Taranaki, the West Coast, and Stewart Island. Areas of meteorological drought were present in northern parts of the Ruapehu District according to the New Zealand Drought Index. Soil moisture levels were higher than normal for northern parts of Northland, coastal Gisborne, Banks Peninsula, and central Southland.

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### Overview

January 2025 was characterised by lower than normal mean sea level pressure (MSLP) to the east of Aotearoa New Zealand, with more southeasterly airflows than normal. This contributed to temperatures that were below average (0.51-1.20°C below average) or well below average (>1.20°C below average) across much of the country, including southern Waikato, eastern Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, southern Taranaki, Manawatū-Whanganui, Wairarapa, Kāpiti Coast, Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, Canterbury, eastern Otago, and inland Southland. In contrast, temperatures were above average (0.51-1.20°C above average) or well above average (>1.20°C above average) throughout the West Coast and Fiordland. Temperatures were near average ( $\pm 0.50^\circ\text{C}$  of average) for Northland, Auckland, northern parts of Waikato and Taranaki, Tasman, western and central Otago, and southern Southland. The nationwide average temperature in January 2025 was 16.4°C. This was 0.8°C below the 1991-2020 January average from NIWA's seven station temperature series which begins in 1909, and New Zealand's coldest January since 2017.

It was a dry month for many parts of the country, with below normal (50-79% of normal) or well below normal (<50% of normal) rainfall for the West Coast, much of Southland, southern and inland Otago, Marlborough, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Auckland, and southern Northland. Rainfall totals for the month were above normal (120-149% of normal) or well above normal (>149% of normal) for eastern parts of Canterbury including Christchurch and Banks Peninsula, Nelson, and much of northern Northland. Rainfall totals were generally near normal (80-119% of normal) elsewhere.

Sunshine was abundant for western parts of the South Island. Hokitika recorded 328 hours of sunshine, making it the town's sunniest January since records began in 1912. Farther north, Greymouth recorded 302 hours of sunshine, which was the town's highest January sunshine total since records began in 1947. It was also a relatively sunny month in Dunedin (256 sunshine hours) and Invercargill (260 sunshine hours), with these cities observing their third-highest and fourth-highest January sunshine totals, respectively.

**Further Highlights:**

- The highest temperature was 32.4°C, observed at Kawerau on 24 January.
- The lowest temperature was -0.4°C, observed at Waipara River North Branch on 25 January.
- The highest 1-day rainfall was 85 mm, recorded at Kaikohe on 20 January.
- The highest wind gust was 135 km/h, observed at Puysegur Point on 28 January, and South West Cape on 29 January.
- Of the six main centres in January 2025, Auckland was the warmest, Hamilton was the driest, Tauranga was the sunniest, Dunedin was the coolest, and Christchurch was the wettest and least sunny.
- Of the available, regularly reporting sunshine observation sites, the sunniest four locations so far in 2025 are West Coast (328 hours), Taranaki (318 hours), Bay of Plenty (310 hours) and Mackenzie Country (302 hours).

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## Temperature: Cold for many parts of New Zealand

It was the coldest January on record for six locations, with a further 17 locations observing near-record low mean temperatures for January. Regular spells of southerly winds meant daily maximum temperatures below 20°C were a common occurrence for eastern parts of the South Island and southern parts of the North Island. Waiau was New Zealand's coldest location compared to normal: its mean temperature of 15.0°C was 3.1°C lower than normal.

The unusually high frequency of southeasterly winds resulted in a warm month for western parts of the South Island, due to the foehn effect caused by the Southern Alps. Typically, New Zealand's prevailing westerly airflow means the foehn effect brings relatively high temperatures to eastern parts of the South Island, but these were notably lacking during January 2025. New Zealand's warmest location compared to normal was Greymouth, where the mean temperature of 17.6°C was 1.8°C higher than normal.

**Record<sup>1</sup> or near-record mean air temperatures for January were recorded at:**

Location	Mean air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Campbell Island	10.9	1.3	1991	2nd-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Martinborough	15.8	-2.1	1986	Lowest
Māhia	16.1	-2.3	1990	Lowest
Winchmore	13.4	-3.0	1949	Lowest
Waipara West	15.1	-2.3	1973	Lowest
Diamond Harbour	15.2	-1.6	2004	Lowest
Le Bons Bay	13.3	-2.1	1984	Lowest
Castlepoint	15.5	-2.1	1972	2nd-lowest
Waipawa	15.8	-2.2	1945	2nd-lowest
Wairoa	17.1	-2.3	1964	2nd-lowest
Waiau	15.0	-3.1	1974	2nd-lowest
Cheviot	14.8	-2.2	1982	2nd-lowest
Ashburton	14.2	-2.0	1927	2nd-lowest
Takapau Plains	15.0	-1.7	1962	3rd-lowest
Ngawi	16.8	-1.9	1972	3rd-lowest
Gisborne	16.7	-2.7	1905	3rd-lowest
Wellington (Airport)	16.3	-1.5	1962	3rd-lowest
Waipounamu	14.1	-0.8	1980	3rd-lowest
Masterton	15.4	-2.5	1906	4th-lowest
Medbury	14.5	-2.6	1927	4th-lowest
Rangiora	14.8	-1.9	1965	4th-lowest
Orari Estate	14.6	-1.3	1972	4th-lowest
Middlemarch	14.4	-1.2	2000	4th-lowest
Oamaru	13.8	-0.4	1967	4th-lowest

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

Location	Mean maximum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Secretary Island	21.1	3.1	1985	4th-highest
Campbell Island	13.4	1.4	1991	2nd-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Martinborough	21.2	-2.4	1986	Lowest
Māhia	18.7	-3.1	1990	Lowest

<sup>1</sup> The rankings (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

Wellington (Airport)	19.3	-1.7	1962	Lowest
Culverden	19.7	-2.9	1928	Lowest
Cheviot	20.4	-2.9	1982	Lowest
Ashburton	18.9	-3.2	1928	Lowest
Waipara West	20.4	-2.8	1973	Lowest
Diamond Harbour	19.0	-2.5	2004	Lowest
Oamaru	17.2	-1.2	1967	Lowest
Masterton	20.6	-3.9	1906	2nd-lowest
Takapau Plains	19.9	-2.4	1962	2nd-lowest
Castlepoint	18.1	-2.9	1972	2nd-lowest
Gisborne	21.1	-3.6	1905	2nd-lowest
Waipawa	21.3	-3.2	1945	2nd-lowest
Wairoa	21.9	-3.2	1964	2nd-lowest
Waiau	20.7	-3.9	1974	2nd-lowest
Winchmore	18.7	-3.5	1949	2nd-lowest
Akaroa	20.2	-2.6	1978	2nd-lowest
Le Bons Bay	16.1	-3.0	1984	2nd-lowest
Kaikōura	18.4	-1.9	1963	3rd-lowest
Rangiora	19.4	-2.7	1965	3rd-lowest
Lincoln	19.2	-2.8	1881	3rd-lowest
Orari Estate	19.3	-2.0	1972	3rd-lowest
Ngawi	20.3	-2.3	1972	4th-lowest
Brothers Island	18.2	-0.5	1997	4th-lowest

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

Location	Mean minimum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Campbell Island	8.4	1.2	1991	2nd-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Tūrangi	8.4	-2.0	1968	Lowest
Martinborough	10.4	-1.8	1986	2nd-lowest
Diamond Harbour	11.4	-0.7	2004	2nd-lowest
Waipounamu	8.1	-1.0	1980	2nd-lowest
Mt Ruapehu Chateau	5.5	-1.2	2000	3rd-lowest
Takapau Plains	10.0	-1.1	1962	3rd-lowest
Ngawi	13.2	-1.6	1972	3rd-lowest
Māhia	13.4	-1.5	1990	3rd-lowest
Winchmore	8.0	-2.5	1949	3rd-lowest
Pukaki Aerodrome	7.0	-1.6	1972	3rd-lowest
Lumsden	7.4	-1.5	1982	3rd-lowest
Waiau	9.3	-2.3	1974	4th-lowest
Cheviot	9.3	-1.4	1982	4th-lowest
Le Bons Bay	10.5	-1.2	1984	4th-lowest

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## Rainfall: Dry for many, but wet for some northern and eastern parts

Oban (Stewart Island) recorded 27 mm of rain, making it the town's driest January since records began there in 1975. It was also a very dry month for the villages of Mt Cook and Franz Josef, where monthly rainfall was just 14% and 19% of normal, respectively. In contrast, monthly rainfall totals were high for some northern and eastern parts of the country. It was an especially wet month in Purerua, where the monthly rainfall total of 151 mm was 262% of normal. Three locations received near-record high January rainfall totals (see table below for details).

### Record or near-record January rainfall totals were recorded at:

Location	Rainfall total (mm)	Percentage of normal	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Māhia	121	226	1990	3rd-highest
Le Bons Bay	82	225	1984	3rd-highest
Akaroa	115	207	1977	4th-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Oban (Stewart Island)	27	19	1975	Lowest
Ōkārito	62	21	1981	2nd-lowest
Franz Josef	80	19	1926	2nd-lowest
Secretary Island	163	45	1985	2nd-lowest
Lake Moeraki	116	29	1985	3rd-lowest
Mt Cook (Airport)	59	14	1928	3rd-lowest
Greymouth	62	29	1947	4th-lowest

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## January climate in the six main centres

It was a relatively cool month for all main centres. Temperatures were well below average for Christchurch and Wellington, below average in Dunedin, and near average for the remaining main centres. It was a particularly dry month in Hamilton, with just 38% of normal January rainfall. In contrast, rainfall was well above normal in Christchurch. Sunshine hours were higher than normal for all main centres except Christchurch, which received 14 fewer hours of sunshine than normal for January. Of the six main centres in January 2025, Auckland was the warmest, Hamilton was the driest, Tauranga was the sunniest, Dunedin was the coolest, and Christchurch was the wettest and least sunny.

### January 2025 main centre climate statistics:

Temperature			
Location	Mean temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	19.7	-0.1	Near average
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	19.3	-0.5	Near average
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	18.2	-0.3	Near average
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	15.7	-1.3	Well below average
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	15.3	-1.8	Well below average
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	14.6	-0.6	Below average
Rainfall			
Location	Rainfall (mm)	% of normal	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	39	70	Below normal
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	69	91	Near normal
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	29	38	Well below normal
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	70	89	Near normal
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	80	189	Well above normal
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	55	78	Below normal
Sunshine			
Location	Sunshine (hours)		
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	297		
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	306		
Hamilton <sup>g</sup>	279		
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	231		
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	214		
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	256		

<sup>a</sup> Māngere <sup>b</sup> Tauranga Airport <sup>c</sup> Hamilton Airport <sup>d</sup> Kelburn <sup>e</sup> Christchurch Airport <sup>f</sup> Musselburgh <sup>g</sup> Ruakura

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## Highlights and extreme events

### Rain and slips

The highest 1-day rainfall was 85 mm, recorded at Kaikohe on 20 January.

On 21 January, heavy rain caused slips that closed several Whangārei district roads including Finlayson Brook Rd, Marua Rd and Memorial Drive.

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

Location	Extreme 1-day rainfall (mm)	Date of extreme rainfall	Year records began	Comments
Cheviot	31	26th	1982	3rd-highest
Akaroa	63	3rd	1977	3rd-highest
Le Bons Bay	29	3rd	1984	3rd-highest

### Drought and dryness

By 31 January, NIWA's New Zealand Drought Index indicated meteorological drought conditions were present in northern parts of the Ruapehu District, with extremely dry conditions indicated for Taranaki and the southwestern half of Waikato.

### Temperatures

The highest temperature was 32.4°C, observed at Kawerau on 24 January. The lowest temperature was -0.4°C, observed at Waipara River North Branch on 25 January.

On 5 January, a cold southerly airflow covered New Zealand, and six locations observed record or near-record low daily maximum air temperatures for January.

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

Location	Extreme maximum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Hāwera	28.3	25th	1977	3rd-highest
Brothers Island	25.3	26th	1997	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
Whakatāne	17.5	5th	1975	Lowest
Diamond Harbour	13.0	5th	2004	Lowest
Te Puke	17.7	5th	1973	2nd-lowest
Martinborough	14.1	5th	1986	Equal 2nd-lowest
Le Bons Bay	11.2	5th	1984	Equal 3rd-lowest
Tauranga	17.6	5th	1941	4th-lowest

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

Location	Extreme minimum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Kaitaia	21.2	26th	1948	Equal 3rd-highest

### Low records or near-records

Diamond Harbour	6.9	14th	2004	3rd-lowest
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### Wind

The highest wind gust was 135 km/h, observed at Puysegur Point on 28 January, and South West Cape on 29 January.

On 3 January, a three hectare scrub fire occurred on Hutchinson Rd in Pataua South, near Whangārei. There were no reports of any property damage.

On 9 January, a 20 hectare scrub fire burned in the Onerahi area of Whangārei. Two nearby properties were evacuated.

On 11 January, a fire involving pine slash and regrowth occurred at Black Jack Rd in Kūaotunu, north of Whitianga. The fire reached about 300 metres by 600 metres in size.

On 21 January, strong winds brought down vegetation onto power lines in northern parts of the North Island, with associated power outages. Approximately 901 customers lost power in Ōmāpere and Awarua, 215 customers lost power in Waipu and Maungatapere, and 673 customers lost power in Whangamatā.

From 29-31 January, a large fire was fanned by strong winds at Tiwai Point (near Bluff). The fire burnt through at least 1,200 hectares, and its perimeter measured approximately 18 kilometres. Ten helicopters, nine fire appliances and 40 firefighters were deployed to the scene.

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

Location	Extreme wind gust (km/h)	Date of extreme gust	Year records began	Comments
Secretary Island	130	29th	1994	Equal 4th-highest

### Lightning, hail, and tornadoes

On 26 January, a tornado struck Mangawhai at around 3:00 a.m., causing significant damage to homes, with power poles torn down and trees uprooted. Approximately 5,000 people were initially without power in Mangawhai, Mangawhai Heads and Langs Beach. Two people suffered serious injuries and were hospitalised, including one woman who was reportedly sucked out of her bedroom window. Initial estimates were that 50 homes were damaged, with at least nine homes yellow stickered.

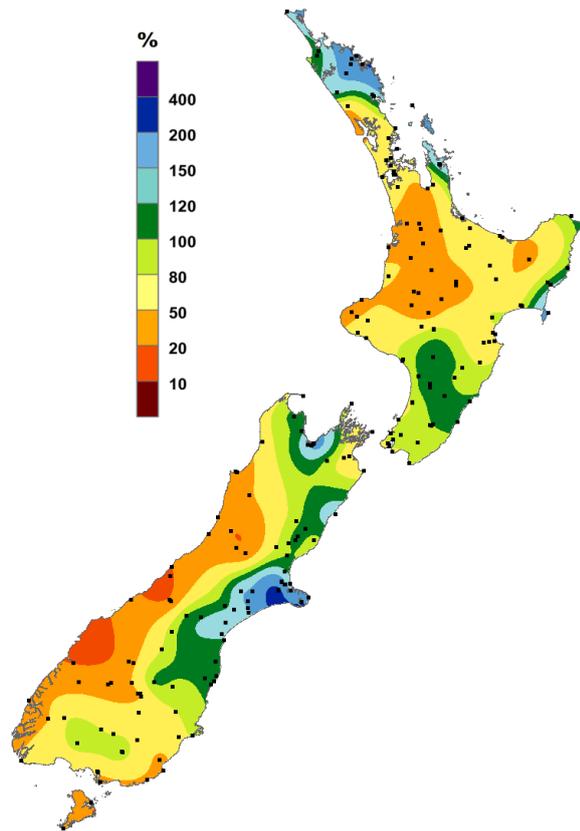
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### For further information, please contact:

#### Gregor Macara

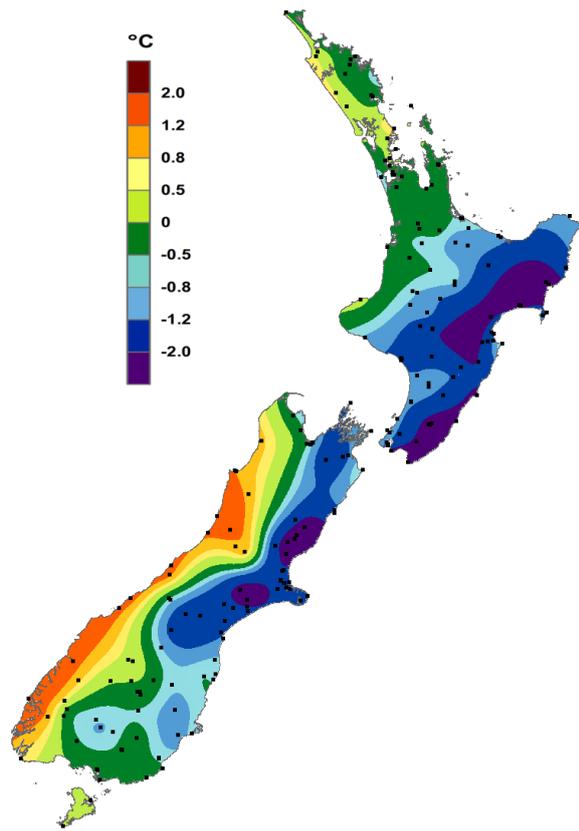
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**January rainfall**

Expressed as a percentage of the 1991-2020 normal.



**January temperature**

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

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