## CLIMAATIC HIGHLIGHTS

## DRAMATIC TEMPERATURE FLUCTUATIONS

Despite rather unspectacular monthly temperature anomalies during October ' 89 , the week-to-week variability across the country was striking, particularly during the first and last weeks of the month.

During the first week of the month, the western and most of the northern parts of Canada enjoyed warm, dry, Indian summer weather. Departures of 6 to $8^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ were recorded across the Yukon, the District of Mackenzie, Northwest Territories and most of the Arctic. On the other hand, the weather was cool, particularly across the southern parts of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

During the last week of the month there was a reversal of weather types as the western parts of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon experienced well-belownormal temperatures while the rest of the country, particularly Ontario and Québec basked in a period of Indian summer. Parts of Ontario and Québec recorded temperatures in the mid-twenties. Temperatures across southern Ontario topped $20^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ or more on six consecutive days. On the down side, high pollution levels were recorded at both Montréal and Toronto, a

common occurrence accompanying Indian summer.

The country, on the whole, experienced a dearth of precipitation. Below-normal precipitation was also reflected by the low number of days of measurable precipitation as compared to the 30 -year normal. Fall soil moisture is depleted across
southern Alberta, southwestern Saskatchewan and southem Manitoba.

Assuming normal amounts of winter snow cover and spring rains, the Winnipeg Climate Centre predicts that by mid-May 1990, crops in southeastern Alberta, southwestern and south-central Saskatchewan may suffer from inadequate soil moisture.

# Across the country 



## Yukon

Generally, mean temperatures in the Yukon were close to normal, except in the extreme north, where anomalies were 3 degrees above normal. Whitehorse finally succumbed to a month which averaged out to be below normal after experiencing 5 consecutive months of above-normal temperatures.

The first extensive outbreak of cold Arctic air occurred during the second week of the month. Rain changed to snow, and road conditions deteriorated. By the third week, temperatures had dropped into the minus thirties in the north. The last week of the month saw the Arctic front oscillate back and forth across the southern half of the Territory, allowing large fluctuations in both daily temperatures and forms of precipitation. By month's end, snow covered almost the entire Yukon.

## Northwest Territories

With the passage of the autumnal equinox, temperatures in the Arctic and the Northwest Territories continued their slide into a winter regime. By the middle of the month, snowfalls and sub-freezing daytime temperatures were common in the Arctic archipelago.

In the Northwest Territories, the first substantial snowfalls occurred in the District of Keewatin. Weather wamings for blizzards, blowing and drifting snow and gales were issued regularly.

Ferries crossing the Peel and Mackenzie Rivers were taken out of service just before freeze-up during the latter half of the month. As a result, motorists and transports travelling on the Dempster Highway had to wait a couple of weeks for ice bridges to be built at the river crossings. At the end of the month, many of the smaller lakes were covered with ice, but Great Bear Lake was only partially icecovercd owing to its size. Further to the south, the ferry at Fort Simpson was operating on a day-to-day basis into

November. The river crossing at Fort Providence, linking the Mackenzie Highway to Yellowknife, was still operational at the end of the month.

## British Columbia

An atmospheric ridge of high pressure dominated the weather pattern during the first part of the month, producing for the most part, dry and sunny weather conditions. Temperatures this month averaged very close to normal although on a daily and weekly basis there were some significant temperature fluctuations. Especially notable were the mild temperatures that covered the province at the beginning of the month, and later in the period, the incursion of cold Arctic air from the north.

The lack of a significant snow cover in the north allowed the ground to freeze quickly, which enabled logging companies to move heavy equipment into the bush earlier than usual this season. At first, heaviest snowfalls occurred on the windward side of the western Cordillera, but by month's end all northern communities reported between 5 and 25 centimetres of snow on the ground.

Overall, precipitation for the month varied widely, with above-normal amounts reported in the northern and southern portions of the province. Late-season thunderstorms, associated with heavy downpours and strong winds, moved across the southern interior during the middle of the month.

Towards month's end, a series of Pacific frontal systems produced unsettled weather conditions, hindering and eventually ending slash-buming operations for the season. As these Pacific storm systems approached the mainland, gale-force winds occurred recurrently, particularly along the north and central coast. Sunshine was unusually plentiful inland near the north coast; in contrast, northeastern B.C. residents received approximately half their normal hours of bright sunshine for the month.


## CLIMATIC EXTRENES IN CANADA - OCTOBER 1989

MEAN TEMPERATURE:

WARMEST

COLDEST
HIGHEST TEMPERATURE:
LOWEST TEMPERATURE:
HEAVIEST PRECIPITATION:
HEAVIEST SNOWFALL:

DEEPEST SNOW ON THE GROUND ON OCTOBER 31, 1989:

GREATEST NUMBER OF BRIGHT
SUNSHINE HOURS:

WINDSOR A, ONT

EUREKA, NWT
WINDSOR A, ONT

EUREKA, NWT
CAPE SCOTT, BC
CAPE DYER A, NWT

CAPE DYER A, NWT

LETHBRIDGE A, ALTA
209 hours

## Prairie Provinces

The month was ushered in by recordcold temperatures at many locations. Coronation, Alberta recorded a minimum of $-12^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on the 2 nd . In Manitoba, on the same day, every location dropped below freezing, and those in the north did not rise above $0^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$.

On the 10th, a sharp cold front swept across southern Alberta. Fierce northwest winds in the vicinity of Calgary produced zero visibility due to blowing dust. Calgary recorded gusts to $117 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$, surpassing the previous October record of $115 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$, set in 1978. Two people were killed, and there was extensive property damage.

From October 18 to 26, warm air infiltrated most southern areas and temperatures rose to record and near-record maximums in the mid-twenties. Brandon recorded $25.4^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on the 24 th . Overall, temperatures for the month were within 1.5 degrees of normal across all three provinces.

In Alberta, precipitation was above nor-
mal across the High Level and Fort Chipewyan regions and through central regions. Medicine Hat with only 4.7 mm was the driest area for the month. The greatest monthly total snowfall was 30.9 cm at High Level.

Western Saskatchewan and southern Manitoba were both drier than normal. Portage la Prairie received 13.8 mm of precipitation, which is less than half the normal. On the other hand, there was abundant precipitation through eastern Saskatchewan and central Manitoba; Broadview ( 55.8 mm ) and Island Lake ( 81.8 mm ) were approximately double their normal amounts.

## Ontario

October was a month of contrasts. Whereas the first three weeks were generally cold and wet with some heavy snow in northern Ontario, the final week featured sun, warm temperatures and balmy breezes.

On the 12th, downtown Toronto
received its earliest measurable snowfall in 37 years. Wawa's 44 cm of snow and 15 cm at Windsor set new records for Oc tober. The last week of the month featured a beautiful Indian summer. Temperatures rose to the mid-to-high teens and low twenties across most of Ontario. In southern Ontario, temperatures topped $20^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on 6 consecutive days. However, with the warm weather, fog was thick during the morning hours, causing several serious motor vehicle accidents. Accompanying the fog, there were high air pollution conditions, especially in the Toronto and Hamilton regions.

On Saturday, October 14, a severe thunderstorm complex developed rapidly along a warm front, striking south-central Ontario during the afternoon and evening hours. Waterspouts and funnel clouds were reported, along with torrential rain, hail and damaging winds. Along the Toronto waterfront, winds gusted to $124 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$. The thunderstorms produced startling waterlevel fluctuations on Lakes Ontario, Simcoe, Huron and Georgian Bay. In some cases water levels dropped by almost two metres and then recovered, all in a matter of hours. This seiche phenomenon was caused by the strong winds and pressure differences generated by these storms. Severe thunderstorms redeveloped again on Sunday in the southern Georgian Bay region, prompting more weather warnings.

Despite this month's contrasting weather, temperatures were within 1.6 Cel sius degrees of normal. Precipitation was very prevalent at the beginning of the month and practically non-existent at the end, allowing for some perfect harvesting weather. The driest area was the northwest, 25 to $75 \%$ of normal precipitation. Sioux Lookout recorded only 17 mm of precipitation, making it the driest in the province. Wawa was the wettest with 125 mm, followed by Kingston and Muskoka's 117 mm .

## Québec

Despite below-normal temperatures during the first three weeks of the month,

Indian summer weather over southwestern Québec during the last week of October resulted in above-normal mean-monthly temperatures. Mean temperatures during the final week of the month were as much as 10 degrees above normal. It has been two years since southern Québec experienced an Indian summer, with the last one in 1987 lasting only 3 days.

The sunny and warm weather regime started on Sunday, October 22, and by Wednesday through to the end of the month approximately thirty new daily high temperature records were established in the southwestern portion of the province. Associated with this very stable air mass was dense early morning fog and a pollution index which climbed to unacceptable levels for several days.

Although the month ended on a sunny note in the southwest, near the southern Hudson Bay coastline and along the north coast, overall total hours of bright sunshine in the province were below normal. The extreme north showed the greatest deficiency of sunshine, in some cases almost half of what is normally expected.

In northern Québec, mean temperatures were frequently below normal and snowfalls exceeded 25 cm . Shefferville recorded 89.4 cm of new snow this month, which is twice their normal. Snowfalls
across the central portions of the province ranged upwards to 10 cm .

Most of the province received abovenormal precipitation, with parts of central Québec and communities along the $\mathbf{S t}$. Lawrence and Ottawa Valley receiving more than 100 mm . At Sainte-Agathe-desMonts and Dorval, new daily record rainfalls for October were set on the 20th (69.2 and 63.8 millimetres, respectively). Matagami established a new October precipitation record of 129.3 mm , more than twice the normal. In contrast, La Grande Rivière set a new October record for the least amount of precipitation with only 38.2 mm .

## Maritimes

October was sunny and generally dry, with temperatures slightly-below normal. Precipitation totals in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were well-below normal, ranging from $33 \%$ of normal at CFB Chatham to $70 \%$ of normal at Charlottetown. In Nova Scotia, eastern locations were above normal, such as $151 \%$ of normal at Sable Island, whereas in the western sections at locations such as CFB Greenwood, only $61 \%$ of normal precipitation was received. Sunshine hours were above normal throughout the region.

On October 11 and 12, a storm tracked south of Nova Scotia, causing heavy rains and wind gusts to $83 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$ at Fourchu Head, Nova Scotia. At the end of the month, Indian summer arrived, bringing with it daily record-maximum temperatures in the high teens and low twenties.

## Newfoundland and Labrador

Near-normal temperatures prevailed across much of Newfoundland. Precipitation was below normal in the east but above normal at most western locations. St. John's recorded 91.3 mm of rain, about 50 mm below normal; Stephenville recorded 161.8 mm , compared to the normal of 11.6 mm . Snowfall totals were generally less than 2 cm , whereas normal snowfall for the month is 5 to 10 cm . Exceptions were La Scie and St. Anthony which reported totals of near 25 cm . A storm on October 9 produced very strong winds of up to $133 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$ in southern Newfoundland. Fishermen in Bonavista Bay reported some damage to equipment.

In Labrador, near-normal temperature and precipitation values prevailed. Snowfall was well-below normal at most locations; Goose Bay reported 3.1 cm , well below the normal of 24.7 cm .


SEASOMAL TOTAL OF HEATING DEGREE-DAYS TO END OF OCTOBER


|  | 1989 | 1988 | NOPMAL |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| BRITISH COLUEBIA |  |  |  |
| Kamloops | 384 | 403 | 393 |
| Penticton | 408 | 388 | 393 |
| Prince George | 773 | 856 | 874 |
| Vancouver | 374 | 398 | 416 |
| Victoria | 503 | 514 | 492 |


| YUKON TERRITORY |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | ---: |
| Whitehorse | 1031 | 1232 | 1149 |
| MORTHEST TERRITORIES |  |  |  |
| Iqaluit | 1927 | 1567 | $\star$ |
| Inuvik | 1430 | 1631 | 1623 |
| Yellowknife | 1060 | 1123 | 1121 |


| ALBERTA |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Calgary | 710 | 753 | 748 |
| Edmonton Mun | 703 | 681 | 667 |
| Grande Prairie | 814 | 811 | 844 |
| SASKATCHEWAN |  |  |  |
| Estevan | 580 | 593 | 535 |
| Regina | 628 | 686 | 609 |
| Saskatoon | 659 | 714 | 645 |
| MNITOBA |  |  |  |
| Brandon | 657 | 710 | 619 |
| Churchill | 1255 | 1314 | 1386 |
| The Pas | 787 | 771 | 770 |
| Winnipeg | 563 | 627 | 547 |



| OWTARIO <br> Kapuskes | 771 | 828 | 786 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| London | 397 | 662 | 597 |
| Ottawa | 411 | 520 | 420 |
| Sudbury | 579 | 634 | 565 |
| Thunder Bay | 683 | 710 | 658 |
| Toronto | 382 | 449 | 351 |
| Windsor | 292 | 352 | 249 |
| québec |  |  |  |
| Baie Comeau | 858 | 905 | 848 |
| Montréal | 390 | 511 | 389 |
| Quebec | 517 | 652 | 540 |
| Sept-1les | 913 | 925 | 919 |
| Sherbrooke | 582 | 670 | 612 |
| Val-d'Or | 714 | 807 | 752 |
| WEM BRUNSWICK |  |  |  |
| Charlo | 650 | 733 | 664 |
| Fredericton | 545 | 609 | 483 |
| Moncton | 555 | 593 | 501 |
| mova scotia |  |  |  |
| Halifax | * | 439 | 439 |
| Sydney | 560 | 579 | 471 |
| Yarmouth | 517 | 521 | 502 |
| PRINCE EDMARD ISLAND |  |  |  |
| Charlottetown | 539 | 560 | 468 |
| MEWFOUNDLAND |  |  |  |
| Gander | 682 | 723 | 694 |
| St. John's | 665 | 665 | 702 |

SEASOMAL SMOWFALL TOTALS (CE) TO END OF OCTOBER
19891988 NOROAL

VUKON TERRITORY

| Whitehorse | 30.4 | 19.0 | 21.4 |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| WORTMWEST TERRITORIES |  |  |  |
| Cape Dyer | 178.0 | 289.8 | 54.3 |
| Inuvik | 71.8 | 48.0 | 53.0 |
| Yellowknife | 17.6 | 10.6 | 26.7 |


|  |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| BRITISH COLURBIA |  |  |  |
| Kamloops | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| Port Hardy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 |
| Prince George | 1.2 | 0.0 | 10.4 |
| Vancouver | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Victoria | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
|  |  |  |  |
| ALBERTA |  |  |  |
| Calgary | 3.6 | 14.3 | 19.4 |
| Edmonton Namao | 3.4 | 2.4 | 9.7 |
| Grande Prairie | 13.4 | 1.4 | 16.3 |
| SASKATCHEWAN |  |  |  |
| Estevan | 5.4 | 0.6 | 8.2 |
| Regina | 6.4 | 2.2 | 10.0 |
| Saskatoon | 12.0 | 2.2 | 10.4 |
| MWITOBA |  |  |  |
| Brandon | 0.4 | 9.6 | 6.7 |
| Churchill | 40.0 | 65.6 | 35.7 |
| The Pas | 18.3 | 5.7 | 11.7 |
| Winnipeg | 1.4 | 12.6 | 5.4 |


| ONTARIO |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Kapuskasing | 42.0 | 22.1 | 23.5 |
| London | 10.0 | 11.8 | 1.9 |
| Ottawa | 3.2 | 24.6 | 2.7 |
| Sudbury | 1.6 | 2.6 | 6.5 |
| Thunder Bay | 5.0 | 4.2 | 3.3 |
| Toronto | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.9 |
| Windsor | 15.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Quebec |  |  |  |
| Baie Comeau | 11.2 | 1.8 | 6.1 |
| Montréal | 5.8 | 22.4 | 1.7 |
| Québec | 2.2 | 6.6 | 4.4 |
| Sept-Iles | 11.8 | 12.0 | 10.6 |
| Sherbrooke | 7.6 | 10.6 | 5.6 |
| Val-d'Or | 20.6 | 35.4 | 15.7 |

men brunswicx

| Charlo | 0.4 | 8.8 | 5.8 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Fredericton | 2.1 | 4.0 | 2.3 |
| Monction | 0.0 | 0.5 | 3.1 |
| MOVA Scotia |  |  |  |
| Shearwater | 0.2 | 0.4 | 5.8 |
| Sydney | 0.4 | 1.0 | 2.3 |
| Yarmouth | 0.2 | 0.2 | 3.1 |
| PRINCE EDMARD ISLAND |  |  |  |
| Charlottetown | 0.4 | 0.0 | 2.6 |
| MEWFOUNDLAS |  |  |  |
| Gander | 3.8 | 2.7 | 12.3 |
| St. John's | 0.4 | 0.0 | 4.4 |

St. John's
$\begin{array}{lll}3.8 & 2.7 & 12.3 \\ 0.4 & 0.0 & 4.4\end{array}$


## 50-kPa ATMOSPHERIC CIRCULATION

October 1989


Mean geopotential heights - 5 decametre interval -


Normal geopotential heights for the month

- 5 decametre interval -


Mean geopotential height anomaly


Mean heights difference $w / r$ to previous month - 5 decametre interval -

# Indian summer at Montréal 

The legendary expression "Indian summer" is used in the United States and Canada to designate a period of fine autumn weather with particularly warm days.

A systematic study of previous periods when these conditions prevailed indicated the need to numerically identify periods of fine weather with warm temperatures. Based on comparing the actual maximum temperature to the mean for the date, two actual maximum temperature thresholds were identified; the first specifying definite periods of Indian summer and the second, probable periods. Table 1 summarizes the values chosen. It should be noted that these criteria are not absolute and each situation which was close to meeting the criteria was examined closely. The dates in parentheses beside the threshold temperature values are the normal dates in the autumn when temperatures reach that maximum value. By comparing the dates on Table 1, it can be seen that the definite periods of Indian summer correspond to a climatological prolongation of summer weather from 2 to

5 weeks and for probable periods, a prolongation varying from 1 to 4 weeks.

Tables 2 and 3 give the number of definite Indian summers and the number of probable and/or definite Indian summers in 10 -year periods over the past 50 years.

Table 2 shows that there were 45 definite periods of Indian summer during the last 50 years, which indicate about one per year. The mean duration is 4 days and $27 \%$ of the periods lasted 5 days or more. Note the unequal distribution from one decade to another with a gradual reduction since the 1945-54 decade. Mean October temperatures during the last five decades were $8.6,9.9,9.4,8.6$ and $7.6^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$, respectively.

Table 3 statistics were compiled using the less severe criteria for probable Indian summers. There were 73 occurrences (compared to 45) over 50 years which corresponds to an average of 3 events every two years. The mean duration was 4 days. Using this criteria, the reduction in episodes during the last decade was not as great as with the more severe criteria.

Table 4 shows the annual frequencies of Indian summer in both the definite and probable categories.

Even though the average is about one period of Indian summer per year, it is surprising to note that in 2 years out of 5, there were none. On the other hand, in 1 out of every 4 years there were at least 2 definite episodes during the same autumn and in 1 out of 25 years there were 3 or more. Even when the criteria are relaxed, there have been 8 years without even a probable Indian summer.

Indian summers usually occur around October 10. The most frequent dates are October 7, 15 and 16 . The latest period was from November 18-20, 1953. Only 2 other definite events occurred in November, 3-8 in 1938 and 1-4 in 1944. There were, however, probable November episodes from 4-7 in 1956, 3-5 in 1961 and 2-4 in 1977.

It is worth mentioning that the month of October 1947 was particularly warm, with record-high temperatures for the month being established at Chibougamau, Montréal, Outawa, Québec and Bagotville.

Table 1
Numerical values chosen for identification of definite and probable Indian summers at Montréal.

|  | Mean Maximum |
| :--- | :--- |
| DATE | Temperature ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ |


| 1 Oct. | 16 |
| :---: | ---: |
| 10 Oct. | 14 |
| 20 Oct. | 12 |
| 1 Nov. | 10 |
| 10 Nov. | 7 |16

12
10
7

## Definite Criteria ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$

20 ( 14 Sept.)
19 ( 19 Sept.)
18 ( 24 Sept.)
17 ( 28 Sept.)
16 ( 03 Oct.)

## Probable Criteria ${ }^{\circ} \mathbf{C}$

18 (24 Sept.)
17 (28 Sept.)
16 (03 Oct.)
15 (08 Oct.)
14(13 Oct.)

- Absence of rain totalling 5 mm or more during a climatological precipitation-day, except on the last day of a period of Indian summer.
- Persistence of at least 3 consecutive days.
- Note: In the case of probable events, a minor break in the temperature regime is accepted in order to identify one single period instead of two.

Table 2
Characteristics of definite Indian summers at Montreal.

| Decade |  |  | Length of Periods in Days |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |  |  | Total Number | Total Number

Table 3
Characteristics of probable and/or definite Indian summers at Montréal.

| Decade | Length of Periods in Days |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Total Number of Periods | Total Number of Days |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |  |  |
| 1935-44 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  | 13 | 58 |
| 1945-54 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 18 | 96 |
| 1955-64 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 18 | 72 |
| 1965-74 | 7 | 3 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | g |  |  |  |  | 13 | 53 |
| 1975-84 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 11 | 42 |
| TOTAL | 33 | 15 | 11 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 73 | 321 |

Table 4
Annual frequency at Montréal of periods of Indian summer identified as definite or those identified as being definite and/or probable.

| Decade | Number of definite <br> Indian summer periods <br> occurring during the <br> same autumn | Number of definite and/or <br> probable Indian summer <br> periods occurring during <br> the same autumn |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

## REFERENCES

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Courtesy AES, Québec. Climatolocal bulletin \#003




