## CLIMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

by
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## Ware Weather Returns

Except for residual pockets of persistent warm temperatures in southwestern B.C. and in the Great Lakes basin of ontario, we last month pronounced the end of a prolonged period of above-normal temperatures across large parts of the country. The map on page $2 B$ shows that unusually warm weather returned to most of the country in September as an upper level ridge persisted over the central and western parts. The result has been an extension of the residual warm spells in parts of Ontario and B.C. For a small region along and just north of the northern shores of Lakes Superior and Huron, mean monthly temperatures have been above normal now for 10 consecutive months. In scattered locations in B.C., the spell of consecutive months above normal temperatures has extended even longer ( 10 months at Abbotsford, Kelowna, and Smithers; 12 months at McInnes Island, Prince Rupert and Victoria/Gonzales; and 14 months at Cape St. James, Comox, Sandspit and Vancouver International Airport.

The accompanying graph shows the extent and magnitude of the warm spell at Vancouver which is the longest since records began in 1937. There were 12 -month spells in $1939 / 40$ and $1957 / 58$. Note that the warm spell which began in November, 1939 would have extended 21 consecutive months to July, 1941 had it not been for below
normal $\left(-1.3^{\circ} \mathrm{C}\right)$ temperatures in Pacific Ocean. Persistent warm November, 1940. The magnitude of spells also coincided with the the departures was the greatest 1953 and 1982/83 El Nino events. during the $1957 / 58$ spell where This would seem to indicate a they exceeded $2.0^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ during 5 of relationship between El Nino the months.

It is significant to note that the three extended warm spells mentioned in the last paragraph coincided with years when the was a moderate to strong El Nino event in the eastern tropical

PROLONGED PERIOD OF ABOVE NORMAL TEMPERATURES
AT VANCOUVER 1986-1987



## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

## Yukon and Northwest Territories

The weather was variable, but under the influence of air from the South Pacific, it was milder than normal. The monthly mean temperatures were above normal throughout the two territories. A number of storm systems passed, bringing rain and snow, mainly over the southern parts of the Arctic coast. These systems were accompanied by high winds as they crossed the Arctic.

During the second week of the month, a number of daily maximum temperature records were set, from the Mackenzie Valley where the mercury climbed to nearly $25^{\circ}$ right over the Baffin Island.

## British Columbia

Most of the province enjoyed beautiful weather. Only western regions, along a line from Port Hardy to Watson Lake in the Yukon, suffered repeated assaults by storm systems coming from the Pacific.

The high temperatures set in at the very beginning of the month. On September 1, two monthly maximum records were set, at Penticton $\left(37^{\circ} \mathrm{C}\right)$ and Kelowna $\left(35^{\circ} \mathrm{C}\right)$. Numerous monthly mean temperature records were set as well. In the south, the unusually warm weather raised the forest weather index to extreme levels. There were great variations in precipitation. The northern coastal regions received the largest quantities. Terrace had a record high for September, with 265.00 mm ( $269 \%$ of normal). Moving east or south of this area, however, the recorded amounts drop off rapidly: Victoria airport 1.5 mm , and Quesnel 8.3 mm , record lows for the month.

The combined effect of warm temperatures and an absence of rain was particularly evident at Kamloops and Victoria, where the months from June to September were the driest on record. There are fears of possible shortfalls of water for livestock and human consumption.

## Prairies Provinces

September 1987 was very pleasant on the Prairies well above
normal, dry and sunny.
Daily maximum temperature records were set in many localities, especially in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan (above $30^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ ). But the clear, sunny skies also promoted night-time radiative cooling, and there were light frosts (seasonal at this time of year) in the northern Prairies and in the foothills of the Rockies. However at Thompson, Manitoba, this was the first frostfree September on record. Precipitation was light except for a storm early in the month which dumped 60 mm of rain on Edmonton in 12 hours, with hailstones the size of golf balls north of the city. Light snowfalls are normal on the Prairies in September, but this year only northeastern Manitoba had snow.

The fine weather allowed crops (behind schedule in late August) to mature in September. At month's end, harvesting was in full swing.

## Ontario

September was generally cloudy and rainy in southern Ontario, while drier weather prevailed in the central and northern parts of the province.

Alongside mostly positive temperatures anomalies, there were some disagreeably cold days. Record daily minimums were set throughout the province on the morning of the 3 rd , and on the 23rd the passage of a cold front brought frost to northern and eastern regions. In the south, the monthly means at several locations, including Toronto, did not even reach normal. Along with the smaller temperature anomalies, southern Ontario got the largest accumulations of rain, with abovenormal amounts falling. Sarnia had 144 mm , which is $22 \%$ of the normal. There were two occurrences of severe weather. On the $12 \mathrm{th}, 100 \mathrm{~mm}$ fell in 24 hours near Windsor, causing fields, roads and basements to be flooded. On the 13 th , one person was hit by lightning in Toronto and another in Orillia.

## Québec

The weather was generally mild for most of the month. Precipitation was variable, but generally abundant, especially in southwestern



## CLIMATIC EXTREMES IN CNUDA - SEPTEMBER 1987

MEAN TEMPERATURE:
WARMEST
COLDEST

HIGHEST TEMPERATURE:
LOWEST TEMPERATURE:
HEAVIEST PRECIPITATION:
heaviest snowfall:
deEpest snow on the ground ON SEPTEMBER 30, 1987 :

CORAL HARBOUR, NWT
8 cm
GREATEST NUMBER OF BRIGHT SUNSHINE HOURS:

KELOWNA, BC
282 hours

## THERGOMETRE SCALE USED IN THE 17th AND 18th CENTURY

| Name | Ratio with de Reaumur | Freezing Point |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| NOMS <br> desthermometres. | RAPPORT avec celui de M. de Reaumur. | TERME de la Congélation. |
|  | Digris. $R$ R. | Drsts. |
| De l'Ille. | 17 : 1. | 150. |
| Fahrenhcit | 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ : 1. | 32. |
| Hauk fbéc. | $5: 2$. | 77. |
| Celfus \& de I.jon. . . . . | $5: 4$. | o. |
| Barnfdorf ou Langc. . . | $0 \stackrel{1}{\square}$ | 7 |
| Mihely. | $20: 21$. | 9 ${ }^{\frac{1}{4} \text {. }}$ |
| Friche | $9: 4$. | 33. |
| De la llire ou Florence. | 13: 1 | 30. |
| Amontons. | 1.4 | $51 \frac{1}{2}$. |
| Poleni. | $1 \frac{3}{4}: 10$. | $47 \frac{1}{2}$. |
| Crucquius. | 11:2 | 1070. |
| Newton. | 2 : 5. | o. |
| Fowler. | 6 : 5 | 34. |
| Halcs. | $13: 8$. | 0 |
| Edimbourg. | $35: 8$. | $8 \frac{1}{3}$ |
| Jcan Patrice. | $7: 10$. | 32. |

The above table from cotte ".. most used thermoters with the one of M. de Reaumur", give the relative characteristics of the thermometers used in the 18 th century. Note: The Celcius scale in 4th position

Quebec and on the western shore of Hudson Bay.

The greatest temperature anomalies were in New Quebec (between 1.6 and $2.7^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ ). New mean temperature records were set at La Grande Rivière $\left(9.5^{\circ} / 8.7^{\circ}\right.$ in 1985) and at Matagami $\left(10.8^{\circ} \mathrm{C} / 10.7^{\circ} \mathrm{C}\right.$ in 1983). South of the Laurentians, and in eastern regions extending all the way to the Lower North Shore and the Gaspé Peninsula, the temperature anomalies were smaller. Eastern Quebec also saw the greatest contrasts in precipitation. Gaspé had only 34 mm ( 10 mm over the 1978 record minimum), but the Magdalen Islands received 156 mm , the most since September 1956. Measurable snowfall temporarily whitened mountainous regions in southern Quebec, enough to set records at Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts and at Sherbrooke airport.

Along with the mild temperatures came sunny weather, especially in New Quebec, where Kuujjuaq recorded $132 \%$ of normal bright sunshine.

## Atlantic Provinces

September was generally cloudy and very rainy. Mean monthly temperatures were variable: in general slightly above normal, excepted below normal in eastern Newfoundland.

There were some sharp contrasts in temperature. A cold snap from the 25 th to the 28 th brought the thermometer down well below seasonal values (several report of frost in N.B. and N.S.). But on the 29th the mercury climbed rapidly and daily maximum records were set in several localities. The rains quickly made up for the shortfalls of June and August in most regions. Almost all stations reported abovenormal quantities. At Yarmouth N.S., it was the second rainiest month since the station opened in 1789. In 24 hours, 102 mm fell 12.6 mm more than the normal amount for the entire month! Charlottetown P.E.I. got 174.3 mm , the greatest September accumulation in 45 years. The rainfall not only helped crops,
but also brought an end to a series of forest fires in New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

## ATMOSPHERIC CIRCULATION



Mean 50 kPa height anomaly (dam)
Mean 50 kPa heights (dam)

## MEAN 50 kPa CIRCULATION SEPTEMBER 1987

Alain Caillet, CCRM

Changes in the 50 kPa circulation in September strongly reflect changes in radiation following the summer solstice. The onset of cooling, which is always more marked and more rapid at Arctic latitudes, was reflected in sharp drops in recorded heights over Alaska and Greenland. In Canada, however, there was an increase in heights centred over New Quebec, which shows up (see anomaly map above) as a positive
anomaly covering most of the country a complete reversal of the negative anomaly situation that exists in August.

Noteworthy with respect to the general circulation are the greater amplitude of the planetary ridge on the west coast and the extent of the Canadian trough covering the western part of the country. At mid latitudes the flux was generally more intense than the climatological mean for the
month. The map clearly shows the very pronounced gradient in the maritime circulation, and the four or five planetary waves much more typical of summer than of fall, when the gradient is usually slacker.

Note that, as is of ten the case, the mean surface temperature anomalies for the month correspond to the height anomalies, except over the Yukon and southeastern regions.

GROWING DEGREE DAYS


DEGREE-DAYS TO END OF SEPTEBER

## 19871986 NORMAL

| BRITISH COLUNBIA |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Abbotsford | 1955 | 1919 | 1670 |
| Kamloops | 2390 | 2250 | 2051 |
| Penticton | 2250 | 2151 | 1959 |
| Prince George | 1207 | 1146 | 1122 |
| Vancouver | 2010 | 1900 | 1735 |
| Victoria | 1788 | 1717 | 1605 |


| ALBERTA |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Calgary | 1512 | 1295 | 1255 |
| Edmonton Mun. | 1620 | 1525 | 1284 |
| Grande Prairie | 1396 | 1242 | 1239 |
| Lethbridge | 1743 | 1573 | 1562 |
| Peace River | 1403 | 1272 | 1179 |
| SASKATCHEWAN |  |  |  |
| Estevan | 2023 | 1670 | 1670 |
| Prince Albert | 1582 | 1405 | 1353 |
| Regina | 1831 | 1617 | 1543 |
| Saskatoon | 1761 | 1496 | 1519 |
| Swift Current | 1706 | 1546 | 1514 |
| MANITOBA |  |  |  |
| Brandon | 1741 | 1468 | 1556 |
| Churchill | 505 | 534 | 509 |
| Dauphin | 1747 | 1478 | 1493 |
| Winnipeg | 2010 | 1752 | 1654 |


| ONTARIO |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| London | 2225 | 2078 | 1952 |
| Mount Forest | 1762 | 1786 | 1575 |
| North Bay | 1623 | 1595 | 1603 |
| Ottawa | 2040 | 2032 | 1886 |
| Thunder Bay | 1552 | 1496 | 1323 |
| Toronto | 2174 | 2079 | 1963 |
| Trenton | 2117 | 2027 | 1947 |
| Windsor | 2512 | 2530 | 2262 |
| QUEBEC |  |  |  |
| Baie Comeau | 1037 | 987 | 1096 |
| Maniwaki | 1545 | 1509 | 1507 |
| Montréal | 2042 | 1995 | 1954 |
| Quebec | 1594 | 1590 | 1606 |
| Sept-Iles | 975 | 949 | 970 |
| Sherbrooke | $\star$ | 1625 | 1720 |

NEW BRUNSWICR

| Charlo | 1401 | 1253 | 1393 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Fredericton | 1544 | 1500 | 1617 |
| Moncton | 1506 | 1478 | 1536 |
| NOVA SCOTIA |  |  |  |
| Sydney | 1334 | 1283 | 1374 |
| Truro | 1387 | 1403 | 1386 |
| Yarmouth | 1436 | 1460 | 1334 |
| PRINCE EDWARD | ISLAND |  |  |
| Charlottetown | 1480 | 1473 | 1455 |
| NEWFOUNDLAND |  |  |  |
| Gander | 1160 | 1161 | 1144 |
| St. John's | 1054 | 1059 | 1044 |
| Stephenville | 1236 | 1244 | 1174 |

ENERGY

## SEASOMAL TOTAL OF HEATING DEGREE-DAYS TO END OF SEPTEMBER



# SUMMER REVIEW 

by<br>Amir Shabbar, CCRM

The season was anything but placid and ane to be lang remembered across Canada.

$T$he summer of 1987 (June-July-August) set some long term records. The heat wave that covered southern Ontario and Quebec brought back memories of the heat waves in the 1940 s and 50s. Canada's worst natural disaster surprised Edmontonians as a violent tornado laid a vicious trail of death and destruction through their city on July 31. Scanty rainfall resulted in record-low river levels and dry wells in the Maritimes, where water rationing was imposed in some communities. July rains averted an onset of drought on the Prairies. However, it was excessively dry on the West Coast.

## Temperature

A vast stretch of the country from the British Columbia Coast to the St. Lawrence Valley and the High Arctic enjoyed temperatures about a degree above normal. Southern Alberta and southern Saskatchewan experienced a slightly, below normal summer. Most of the Maritimes and the Territories had readings near normal to $1^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ below normal. Southern Ontario sweltered through 2 heat waves during June and July, when maximum temperatures Climbed above $30^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ and the humidex registered an uncomfortable $40^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on 14 days.

The highest and lowest tem-
$39.1^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Lytton, B.C., $-14.2^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.

## Precipitation

Areas from eastern Ontario to the East Coast experienced a drier than normal summer. Summer precipitation was less than 75\% of normal in the Atlantic Provinces, in some southern Newfoundland communities amounting to less than half of normal. Charlo, Moncton and Fredericton received record-low July precipitation, from 20 to 40 mm . At Sydney, it was the driest July since 1937. The West Coast, the

northern interior valleys of British Columbia and the Mackenzie Valley were also dry. Communities in these areas had from one half to two thirds of their normal summer rainfalls.

Most of the Prairies, Ontario and the Territories had ample rainfall. Precipitation was from 100 to $150 \%$ of normal. Deluges ( 200 to 300 mm ) inundated the Grand Prairie and Edson Forest Districts during the last 2 days of July. Durign mid-August, southwestern Manitoba received a "once-in-a-lifetime" rainfall when 120 to 140 mm fell in a 24-hour period.

## Significant Climatic Impacts

The unusually dry summer created problems in the Atlantic Provinces as wells dried up and lake and river waters dropped to record, low levels. Travel in the woods was banned in western Nova Scotia, and owing to the heightened fears of forest fires a permit was required to camp and picnic. Sheep farmers found their herds vulnerable to coyote attacks as sheep roamed further afield in search of watering holes and grass. In Newfoundland, 1,500 workers were laid off in the forestry industry as the forest fire hazard index rose to extreme levels.

Throughout most of July, central Canada baked during a record-breaking heat wave, when daytime temperatures soared above $30^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$. Ontario had its hottest July in 33 years while a tropical brand of air mass covered the Province. Maximum temperatures exceeded $30^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on 14 occasions in Toronto - its greatest number of "hot days" in 67 years. Moreover, the extensive use of air conditioners set a record for daily electrical consumption in the city. Toronto experienced its sixth warmest summer since the start of records in 1840. The heat was beneficial for most Ontario crops, particularly corn and soybeans. After a dismal summer in 1986, farmers were reaping in a bumper crop by the end of summer. On a number of occasions, a clash between the hot and humid air from the south and the cooler and drier air from the


## FEATURE

north resulted in outbreaks of violent summer thunderstorms and tornadoes in southern Ontario and southern Quebec. On July 14, a series of intense thunderstorm cells dropped over 100 mm of rain In a 2-hour perlod on Montréal. Main expressways and basements were flooded throughout the city. Some roads were submerged under 4 metres of water and motorists had to be rescued from their vehicles. Damaged estimates from the flooding exceeded $\$ 200$ million. On July 24, a wave of destructive thunderstorms lashed southern Ontario, where lightning hit a YMCA camp near Bala (north of Orillia) and 15 campers were sent to hospital. Tornadoes at Sebright and in Mississauga caused extensive structural damage the same day.

The warm and dry weather helped to lower record-high water levels in the Great Lakes. The declining lake levels significantly reduced the risk of fall flooding along the shorelines.

After a very dry spring on
the Prairies, July rains provided much needed moisture for crop growth. The rains averted what had been shaping up as yet another catastrophic growing season for the Prairie farmers. Hailstorms, damaging winds and sudden downpours are common in summer on the Prairies. This year was no exception. On July 6, two tornadoes touched down in the southern part of Winnipeg. The winds caused considerable damage and over 40 mm of rain in $2 \frac{1}{2}$ hours caused flash floods. The most destructive summer weather was a killer tornado that struck Edmonton on July 31, the second worst tornado disaster in Canada (The Region cyclone in 1912 had claimed 28 lives). It laid a vicious trail of death and destruction in the agricultural, industrial and residential areas of Strathcona County and in Edmonton's eastern subdivisions. The Evergreen Mobile Home Park in northeastern Edmonton received the brunt of the storm as the tornado ripped through the
park turning it into a field of chipwood and mangled metal. In all, 27 people lost their lives, over 200 were injured and property damage exceeded $\$ 250$ million. Heavy rains in the 200 to 300 mm range inundated the Grande Prairie and Edson Forest Districts during the last 2 days of July. Rain-swollen rivers washed out roads and bridges, and huge tracts of farmland were waterlogged.

Sunshine abounded on the West Coast, where Victoria received a record 348 hours of bright sunshine during August. Although many West Coast residents enjoyed the long stretches of sunny and dry weather, people on Galiano and Grabriola Islands, located between Vancouver Island and the mainland, saw their wells dry up and had to cope with rationed bath waters.

The warm weather and favourable winds sped up the ice breakup and helped crews drilling for oil in the Beaufort Sea.

PERCENT OF MEDIAN RUNOFF
6 Previous and current water years (Current year is water year-to-date data)



Many cars were stalled by floods, but this one was smacked by a tree on Décarie. Montréal - Gazette - JNMES SEELEY





2TMOQ

