

Rainy forecast douses plans to view Easter Island eclipse

July 8 2010

Easter Island will be overcast and drizzly Sunday, weather experts said -- a disappointing forecast for thousands hoping to view what would be, if the weather cooperates, a spectacular solar eclipse.

About 4,000 tourists have traveled to tiny [Pacific ocean](#) outpost to view Sunday's rare total eclipse of the sun, but Chile's meteorological office on Easter Island said dreary [weather](#) may ruin the plans of sky-watchers.

The weather is likely to be "cloudy or partly cloudy with rain showers."

Still, the governor of Easter Island, Pedro Edmunds Paoa, told AFP that it is not unusual for the skies there to start out overcast and clear up by midday.

"The eclipse is going to happen around noon, so we still hold out hope that we'll be able to see it," he said.

Astronomers say Easter Island is the very best place to witness Sunday's alignment of the Sun, Earth, and Moon, which will occur for a fleeting four minutes, 41 seconds.

The 4,000 visitors expected to flock to the island for the eclipse are roughly twice the population of the tiny Pacific Ocean island, located some 3,500 kilometers (2,200 miles) from mainland Chile.

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