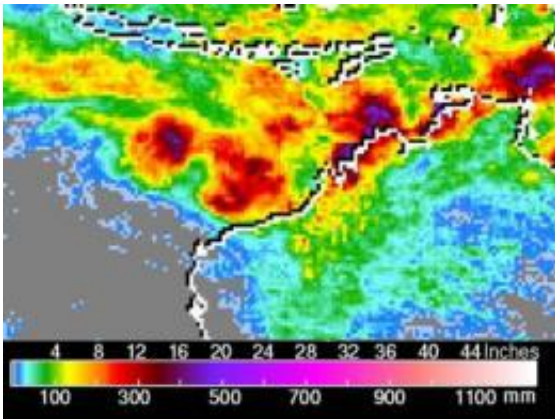


TRMM satellites see rainfall left behind from Cyclone Lua's landfall

March 19 2012



NASA's TRMM satellite can add up rainfall totals from space, and from March 17-19 Cyclone Lua, and it appeared the heaviest rainfall appeared just off the northwestern Australia coast, with rainfall amounts reaching as high as 20 inches/~500 mm (purple). Rainfall amounts seemed to fall off drastically as Lua made landfall with amounts ranging between 4 and 8 inches (~100 to 200 mm) appearing in yellow/green. Credit: NASA/SSAI, Hal Pierce

NASA's TRMM satellite added up the rainfall generated from Cyclone Lua as it made landfall in northern Australia on March 17, and tracked southward through March 19. The largest rainfall amounts appeared just off the coast before Lua made landfall, and continued generating heavy rainfall as it moved inland.

On Saturday, March 17, 2012, Lua's center crossed the Australia

coastline at Pardoo about 3 p.m. (local time/Australia) bringing winds gusting up to 155 mph (250 kph) and heavy rainfall. The Sydney Morning Herald reported that Port Hedland residents experienced [maximum sustained winds](#) up to 93 mph (150 kph).

On March 18, 2012, Cyclone Lua continued to move further inland and track south toward Wiluna and Kalgoorlie. At 8 a.m. local time on March 18, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology estimated that Tropical Cyclone Lua was about 137 miles (~220 kilometers) north of Wiluna and was moving south at ~19 mph (30 kph).

NASA's [Tropical Rainfall](#) Measuring Mission (TRMM) satellite can add up rainfall totals from space. As it flew over Cyclone Lua between March 17 and 19, TRMM calculated rainfall from the storm. The heaviest rainfall appeared to fall just off the northwestern Australia coast, with rainfall amounts there reaching as high as 20 inches (~500 mm). Rainfall amounts seemed to fall off drastically as Lua made landfall, with amounts ranging between 4 and 8 inches (~100 to 200 mm).

Reuters news reported that the sparsely populated area seemed unscathed, there were no injuries and iron ore operations resumed. Port Hedland is the area's largest iron ore terminal and its anchorage was closed for more than two days as Lua made landfall.

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology reported that Cyclone Lua was the strongest cyclone to hit Australia in 2012, and the most powerful since Cyclone Yasi in 2011.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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