

Supercooled clouds form stunning ice kingdoms atop mountains

November 17 2015



Rime ice extends several feet horizontally from a sign marking the summit of 5,774-foot Mount Adams, the second highest mountain in New England, on Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2015, in northern New Hampshire. Monday's freezing fog and strong winds formed the rime ice, creating a winter wonderland above treeline in New Hampshire's aptly named White Mountains. (AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

Winter is over a month away, but otherworldly ice kingdoms already have formed atop some New Hampshire mountains.

Mount Washington, the tallest peak in the Northeast at 6,288 feet, and Mount Adams are among those that have rime ice—supercooled [water droplets](#) that freeze when they come into contact with an object.

Rime ice creates stunning formations that look wind-blown, but it actually grows into the direction of the wind.

Kaitlyn O'Brien, a [meteorologist](#) and co-director of summit operations at the Mount Washington Observatory, said Tuesday rime ice forms when the mountain is in the clouds and temperatures are below [freezing](#).

That can happen much of the year. She says rime ice can occur any time but it typically starts in September or October.

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