

Australia's spring brings fires, snow, wild winds and dust storms

November 23 2018



Varied weather is not uncommon during spring in Australia as summer beckons but the current rare and dramatic conditions have left some scratching their heads

Dust storms, raging bushfires, gale-force winds, heatwaves, thunder and snow, flash flooding and driving rain—Australia is enduring a bout of

wild weather that's hit all parts of the vast continent in recent days.

Varied [weather](#) is not uncommon during spring in the southern hemisphere nation as summer beckons.

But rare and dramatic scenes of red [dust storms](#) shrouding towns and thundersnow—[lightning strikes](#) in thunderstorms that produce snow—in the alpine regions have left some scratching their heads.

The [culprit](#) is a slow-moving low pressure system that is deeper and stronger than usual, Bureau of Meteorology expert Dean Narramore told AFP.

"Ahead of the low, it's warm, it's hot, it's windy, and then behind the low, it's cold, it's wet, it's windy," the meteorologist said.

"And then the longer the air spends over the land, it dries out and goes back into the low—there's a lot happening."

The wild weather has seen flights delayed by [strong winds](#) in the country's busiest airport in Sydney on the southeastern coast, and a major storm leaving tens of thousands of homes in South Australia state without power.

Meanwhile, in the northeast, Queenslanders are sweltering through a days-long heatwave, with the popular tourist town of Cairns set to reach temperatures of up to 37 degrees Celsius (98.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

In the high country of New South Wales and Victoria states, a cold snap is bringing freezing temperatures and snowfall just a week before the summer season officially starts in December.

"It's a particularly strong system. We do get a couple of these a year, but

normally in winter or early autumn. It's a little bit more unusual, but it does happen from time to time in Australia," Narramore said.

Narramore said he did not see long-term weather trends such as climate change behind the current phenomena.

© 2018 AFP

Citation: Australia's spring brings fires, snow, wild winds and dust storms (2018, November 23) retrieved 28 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-11-australia-wild-storms.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.