

Spain surprised and delighted by rare snowfall

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Heavy snow was falling across parts of Spain on Thursday which could cover up to half of the country in the coming days, forecasters said on

Thursday

"If the forecasts are confirmed, we could be facing one of the most extensive snowfalls in recent years," said Ruben del Campo, spokesman for Spain's AEMET weather agency.

By Thursday afternoon, the capital was blanketed in white, as was the vast central region of Castilla La Mancha with the rare snowfall brought by Storm Filomena.

More than half of the country is on alert for snowfall which is expected to last until Sunday and mainly affect the central, northern and eastern regions.

By Thursday afternoon, traffic had been disrupted by the snow on nearly 200 roads and some trains were also delayed, officials said.

So low were temperatures in Madrid that the ducks in the city's Retiro Park could be seen waddling across the frozen boating lake.

Elsewhere an unofficial record of -34.1 degrees Celcius was even recorded at the Clot de la Llanca ski station in the central Pyrenees on Wednesday.

Storm Filomena also brought intense rain and high winds to the southwestern coast of the peninsula and the Canary Islands, AEMET said.

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