



Sizzling Summer

Sizzling Hot Summer Record-Breaking Temperatures, Typhoon-free August

LI Kin-wai



With a mean temperature of 29.3 degrees, the summer of 2014 (June to August) was the hottest in Hong Kong since records began in 1884. The hot weather was particularly remarkable in the first two months of the season, with monthly mean temperatures soaring to record-breaking highs of 29.0 degrees in June and 29.8 degrees in July. This has been attributed to a stronger-than-usual subtropical ridge over southern China combined with water temperatures that were higher than normal in the northern part of the South China Sea and the subsiding air brought by passages of tropical cyclones over the East China Sea, all of which contributed to producing the high temperatures. Although the Observatory issues 1.33 tropical cyclone warnings on average every August, it did not have to issue any tropical cyclone signal in August 2014, a repeat of the situation in 1988, 1989 and 2011.

Summer (June to August) Daily Mean Temperature (1884-2014)

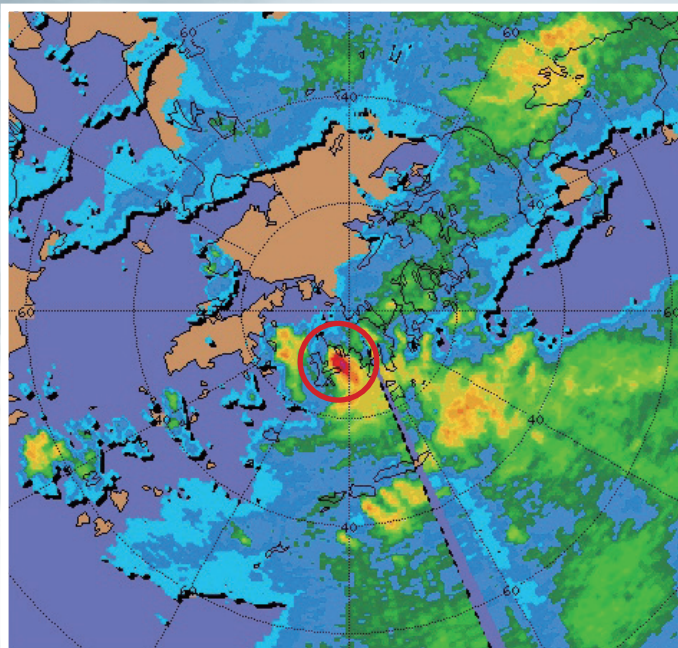
Rank	Year	Daily mean temperature (°C)
1	2014	29.3
2	2011	29.0
2	1983	29.0
4	2009	28.9
4	1998	28.9



Waterspout Incident

Daniel YEUNG

Hong Kong enjoyed sizzling hot and typhoon-free weather in August, but there were two incidents of torrential rain in the middle of the month, and a waterspout was even observed during the thunderstorm episode that broke over the territory at dusk on 12 August.



Radar image at 18:00 on 12 August: the small but intense rain area (red circle) in the sea near Ap Lei Chau shows the location of the waterspout.



Photograph by courtesy of Yuri Wong

Waterspouts are intense columnar vortices in the shape of funnel clouds over sea with very strong winds. This phenomenon is uncommon in the territory and occurs once every one or two years with just 32 waterspouts reported since 1959. The formation of waterspouts and tornadoes is closely related to severe convection associated with thunderstorms. They can affect areas extending from just a dozen metres up to a few kilometres wide and they can last from a few minutes to one or two hours. If you see a waterspout or tornado, you should immediately seek shelter and stay away from trees, cars and other objects that can be swept up by the strong wind.