



White clouds and blue skies over the Yangtze River

Heat wave rages on

According to the provincial meteorological department, the hot weather has continued all across the province since Hubei entered the dog days of summer season on July 12. As of July 24, most of Hubei experienced temperatures anywhere from 37°C to as high as over 40°C in some areas of the province.

Experts estimate that Hubei will witness unprecedented high temperatures if the subtropical high persists. From July 30, the subtropical ridge is expected to weaken and temperatures will fall to around 35°C.

Sunny and scorching days plus south winds help to bring crystal clear air and beautiful blue skies to the city. (Fu Sha, Wei Na & Wang Yaxin)



Locals cooling off by jumping into the water



People working with ice, crowds at a local swimming pool, a panda cooling off on ice cubes, and a tiger taking a bath (from top to bottom) Photos by Li Yonggang, Li Ziyun, Hu Dongdong & Ren Yong



Traffic police working under the sun



Takeout delivery man

Humidity and south winds make apparent temperature high

Li Lan, senior engineer of the Wuhan Climate Center, said that Hubei experienced similar high temperatures in 2013 and 2016 when the hot periods of both years started around July 22. This year the hot period came 10 days sooner. The temperature of most of Hubei now ranks around tenth in China and Wuhan has not yet entered the top three.

Why then do people feel so uncomfortable when the temperature has in fact not reached or exceeded the extremes in history? This occurs because humidity and south winds can increase the temperature felt by the skin. For example, with the same 70% humidity, when it is 30°C, people feel it is around 33°C, but if it rises to 33°C, the temperature feels like 7 to 8 degrees upwards to 41°C.

Experts say people should not stay for long in high temperatures. If you have to, take sunstroke prevention measures and drink more water. It's better for the weak and elderly to bring some medicine with them.

Traffic police walk to prevent shoes from melting in scorching heat

In the scorching heat of summer, traffic police, sanitation workers, gardeners, construction workers, electricity workers, delivery men, and others have to work outside. They are the guardians of our city.

On July 19, our reporter accompanied the traffic police on duty and experienced working in the scorching heat. At noon, when two broken down cars were towed away from the Yangtze River Bridge, Liu Sheng started to direct traffic in the middle of the bridge. After 30 minutes, his clothes were soaking wet. "I need to walk constantly to prevent my shoes from slightly melting on the bridge," he said.

The surface temperature of the bridge can rise to 60°C in the middle of the day. Vehicles may break down due to flat tires resulting from the heat. In only one week, the bridge brigade has already dealt with over 20 disabled cars.

Cooling recipes for animals in the zoo

Wuhan Zoo officials cool down animals in the heat by bringing them ice cubes and watermelons.

Black bears and brown bears are especially hot due to their heavy coats. They tasted their first bite of watermelons on July 20.

When the temperature exceeds 35°C, measures are taken against animal heatstroke. From July 14, the zoo started to buy 12 large ice blocks every day, each weighing 100 kg, to provide an air-conditioner-like relief.

Panda Weiwei already knows how to stay cool after having spent nine summers in the Wuhan Zoo. At 9:00 A.M. every day, when the ice blocks arrive, Weiwei climbs onto them as soon as he can. He will also put the apples that feeders give him onto the cubes. While waiting for the apple to cool down, Weiwei dines on bamboo.

Animals from subtropical and frigid zones are also important creatures in the zoo. Sunshade is set up for parrots, tigers, and lions, and cool water baths are arranged regularly for hippos, elephants, tigers, lions and black bears.