

## Publications

News

### **crazy world**

50 words

7 March 2010

Sunday Mercury

3

English

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crazy world LAJAMANU, Australia: Residents of a remote desert town were left stunned when fish began to rain from the sky.

Hundreds of small fish, many still alive, fell over two days. Weather boffins believe the fish were sucked up from a nearby river in a thunderstorm.

Document SUNMER0020100307e6370003c

News

### **Fishy rain hooks experts**

By BEN LANGFORD

362 words

6 March 2010

Northern Territory News/Sunday Territorian

1 -

6

English

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Puzzle defies attempts at rational explanation

THE Territory's tales of raining fish have drawn the attention of an expert from the US, who casts doubt on whether they were dropped from the clouds.

But more tales of the phenomenon continued to defy the "rational" explanations of experts.

Peter Unmack, an ichthyologist from Brigham Young University in Utah, wrote after reading the story of falling fish at Lajamanu, as revealed by the Sunday Territorian last weekend.

But he said it "almost certainly" was not a rain of fish.

"The best evidence for fish falling from the sky is not finding them on the ground, but finding them in gutters and water tanks," he said.

Dr Unmack, who studied desert fish at Alice Springs during a trip to Australia, said if fish were lifted by a waterspout into the clouds and sent up as far as 20km, they would have been frozen to death.

“The fact that they were alive (on the ground) also helps to suggest that they swam there,” he said.

Dr Unmack said if they were swept around in the clouds, they would not have survived.

“Strong winds ... would likely batter any fish to pieces with the other debris being flung around,” he said.

But, instead of battered fish pieces, Territorians from Lajamanu to Hermannsburg to Maningrida have reported live fish flapping about on the ground.

Palmerston woman Barbara Jackson called to say she remembered seeing perch and mullet falling from the sky when she was a teenager living at Burketown, just over the Queensland border, in the early 1980s.

“We actually seen them falling, falling down from the sky,” she said. “They were still actually alive when they hit the ground, they were flapping.”

Dr Unmack said there were other reasons to suspect the fish did not rain down.

They were all the same species (spangled perch), whereas if they had been swept up, different fish would have been included.

“Spangled perch have remarkable dispersal abilities,” he said.

“They have even been observed swimming 10 miles (18km) over a six-hour period along a wheel rut.”

NTN-20100306-1-006-367626

Document NORTH0020100305e6360000g

## **RAINING CATS AND DOGS? NO, JUST FISH DOWN UNDER**

By Stephen Davenport, MeteoGroup UK

535 words

4 March 2010

5:08 PM GMT

Press Association National Newswire

English

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In Australia torrential rain is threatening parts of Queensland with its worst flooding since the late nineteenth century. A flood surge along the Balonne River threatens the town of St George with an inundation on the scale of the epic floods of 1890.

Elsewhere more peculiar precipitation has fallen. The town of Lajamanu in Northern Territory was struck not once but twice by a shower of small fish on Thursday and Friday last week. Hundreds of spangled perch, many still alive and flapping, cascaded onto this remote town which lies on the edge of the Tanami Desert, hundreds of kilometres from the nearest substantial bodies of water.

Lajamanu seems to be something of magnet for these phenomena, the same thing having happened in 2004 and 1974, and there are occasional, although rare, reports of aquatic wildlife dropping from the heavens throughout history,

fish and frogs topping the list. Bhanwad in India had a fall of fish in October last year, while frogs and toads dropped several times in Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, last June. In the UK, the city of Bath suffered what must have been an unnerving shower of jellyfish in 1894.

Sometimes these creatures seem unharmed, although nonplussed, but on other occasions have hit the ground frozen.

The most likely source for these zoological downpours is a tornado. In the movie "Twister" a tornado hurls an alarmed cow across the landscape; although there is a degree of artistic license in that depiction, it is entirely possible that a tornado passing across a lake or river, at which point it is often called a waterspout, drags water skywards in its powerful updrafts along with the unfortunate inhabitants. As the storm weakens the rushing air becomes insufficiently forceful to support the weight of a frog or a shoal of fish and they fall to earth. In the most energetic storms these creatures could be carried high into the frigid layers of the atmosphere, accounting for the intermittent frozen varieties.

The phrase "raining cats and dogs" conjures up similar imagery but the etymology lies elsewhere and the origin is uncertain. Odin, the Norse god of storms, was associated with dogs but that does not account for the feline half of the saying. The French word "catadoupe" means cascade or waterfall, and it is somewhat plausible that a corruption gets us to "cats and dogs" but it is a bit of a stretch.

More likely, perhaps, is the inevitable upshot of the noisome state of British streets in the 18th and 19th centuries during heavy rain. With inadequate drainage the detritus of the gutters would be washed down the byways, and dead dogs and cats are likely to have figured largely. Jonathan Swift lit upon this unpleasantness in his poem "A Description of a City Shower":

"Now from all parts the swelling kennels flow...

...Drown'd puppies, stinking sprats, all drench'd in mud,

Dead cats and turnip-tops come tumbling down the flood".

A shower of fresh fish sounds positively refreshing in comparison.

:: [www.meteogroup.com](http://www.meteogroup.com)

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Document PRESSA0020100304e634006ki

## **Fish fall out of sky over remote Australian desert town**

308 words

3 March 2010

Day.Az

English

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Last Thursday and Friday the 650 residents of remote Australian desert town Lajamanu were bombarded by hundreds of white fish which fell out of the sky.

Spangled perch, to be precise. Ms Christine Balmer's family thought she was going mad when she told them what was happening. 'I haven't lost my marbles,' she said. 'Hundreds and hundreds of fish landed in the town. Locals were picking them up off the ground everywhere. 'These fish were alive when they hit the ground,' she added. 'Thank God it didn't rain crocodiles.' The perch are common throughout northern Australia. That's all very well, but the nearest river is 326 miles away from Lajamanu. It seems there is a natural explanation, albeit utterly unlikely.

Meteorologists say conditions were perfect for a tornado in the region which could have sucked the fish up to 50,000-ft into the air from lakes hundreds of miles away. 'Once they get up into the weather system they are pretty much frozen and after some time they are released,' said Mark Kersemakers of the Australian Bureau of Meteorology. It's not the first time local people have reported strange things. Les Dillon, 48, said: 'In the early 1980s I was at the Alice Springs Tavern Hotel and when I walked out the door I saw all those little fish, fallen out of the sky. 'Yes, I had a couple of beers, six, so none of my mates believed me. I've rung heaps of people to let them know I wasn't drunk back then. It had really happened.' 'I was really excited to see it had happened again, I rang heaps of people to let them know I had not been drunk back then, it had really happened.' /Metro.co.uk/

Document DLSDAZ0020100303e6330003r

World News

## **Australian desert town hit by raining fish**

The Daily Telegraph

103 words

3 March 2010

TODAY (Singapore)

AM & PM

22

English

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Residents in a remote desert town in Australia, 525km from the nearest river, have witnessed two days of fish raining from the sky.

Lajamanu in the Northern Territory, with a population of 669, has seen hundreds of small white fish — many still alive — fall from rain clouds. Weather experts in Australia believe that the fish, spangled perch, were sucked up in a thunderstorm before being dumped over the tiny town. This is the third time in less than 30 years that Lajamanu has been bombarded by falling fish. The Daily Telegraph

Document TDAYSG0020100302e63300013

INSIDE

## **Fish fall out of the rain-filled sky in Australia**

Asbury Park Press

17 words

2 March 2010  
Asbury Park Press  
English  
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asb-116143438.xml  
Document ASPK000020100303e6320002i

News

## **Fish rain on village**

60 words  
2 March 2010  
Scottish Daily Record  
29  
English  
(c) 2010 Scottish Daily Record & Sunday Mail Ltd

HUNDREDS of small fish rained on a remote settlement in Australia's Outback.  
Aboriginal villagers told how they watched them land alive on the ground in Lajamanu - which is hundreds of miles from the nearest lake.  
The fish, believed to be spangled perch, may have been lifted by a small tornado, locals were told.  
Document DRECRD0020100302e6320004i

## **Desert town baffled as fish fall from sky**

202 words  
2 March 2010  
New Zealand Herald  
English  
(c) 2010 The New Zealand Herald

A town in the northern Australian desert has been pelted in a downpour - of fish.  
Marine life tumbled out of the sky on two occasions last week, raining down on the Northern Territory town of Lajamanu, about 550km southwest of Katherine. The town is hundreds of kilometres from lakes and the coast.  
The Northern Territory News reported yesterday that resident Christine Balmer did a double-take as the fish - believed to be small spangled perch - fell from the sky.  
"Locals were picking them up off the footy oval and on the ground everywhere. These fish were alive when they hit the ground," Ms Balmer said.  
"I haven't lost my marbles. Thank God it didn't rain crocodiles."  
Weather bureau senior forecaster Ashley Patterson told the Northern Territory News that a tornado in the nearby Douglas Daly region might have been responsible, although no twisters had been reported.  
"It's a very unusual event," he said. "With an updraft, [fish and water picked

up] could get up high - up to 60,000 or 70,000 feet. Or possibly from a tornado over a large water body - but we haven't had any reports."

Dp3fish02

Document NZHLD00020100301e6320000f

News

## **Raining fish theories up the creek as reports flood in**

By BEN LANGFORD

356 words

2 March 2010

Northern Territory News/Sunday Territorian

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4

English

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STORMS which rain fish may be being confused with fish swimming from creeks along flooded ground, a Territory expert said yesterday.

But he had no sooner finished giving his rational explanation than another Northern Territory News reader phoned in a story of raining fish -- with no rivers or creeks in the area.

Several readers have called to report small fish appearing out of nowhere and flapping around on the ground, and said they rained from the sky.

Reports have come to the NT News from Lajamanu, Maningrida and Hermannsburg.

The phenomenon has been documented around the world and is believed to be caused by small twisters or waterspouts.

As they pass over water small fish can be sucked up into the clouds and kept there as the cloud moves over land.

Eventually they fall from the cloud to the ground, inevitably surprising any people who see them.

Incidents of raining frogs have also been reported.

NT head of medical entomology Peter Whelan said the examples in the Territory had probably involved fish swimming from creeks and drains across sheet-flooded areas. When the water leaves the fish are left behind.

"They swim upstream and they get stranded, especially these desert fish," he said.

"If there's sheet water flowing across areas just for a brief period of time they can swim up that flow, in just 1cm or 2cm of water. I haven't seen them going across an oval but I've seen them going across bitumen roads."

But then Dominic Fraccaro, 66, called to say he saw fish that he thought fell from the sky in 1974, when he was working installing airconditioning at Hooker Creek (now called Lajamanu).

"It was raining fish and it was known to all the locals," he said. Mr Fraccaro said he did not see them fall but there was no other explanation.

"Where I was they would have had to have come out of the sky because there's not rivers -- not on the black soil plains," he said.

NTN-20100302-1-004-703448  
Document NORTH0020100301e6320008o

## **It's raining fish**

108 words  
28 February 2010  
Sunday Times (Perth)  
4 - Metro  
39  
English  
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IT sounds like a fishy tale, but a remote community in the Northern Territory had to endure a downpour of fish falling from the sky.

Christine Balmer, who lives in Lajamanu, 558km southwest of Katherine, said "hundreds and hundreds" of small white fish had fallen from the sky on Thursday and Friday about 6pm.

"Locals were picking them up off the footy oval," she said. "They were alive when they hit the ground."

A Weather Bureau spokesman said the conditions were perfect for a tornado in the region and the updraft could have lifted fish up to 21,350m.

SDT-20100228-4-039-514489  
Document SUNTIP0020100302e62s0003x

News

## **It's raining fish ... no, really**

By DANIEL BOURCHIER  
406 words  
28 February 2010  
Northern Territory News/Sunday Territorian  
1 -  
1  
English  
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WHILE the Top End and Central Australia have been battered by torrential rains, a Territory town has had fish falling from the sky.

The freak phenomena happened not once, but twice, on Thursday and Friday afternoon about 6pm at Lajamanu, about 550km southwest of Katherine.

NEWSBREAKER Christine Balmer, who took these photos of the fish on the ground and in a bucket, had to pinch herself when she was told "hundreds

Continued P7

Big wet to continue: P7

Man drowns in Alice: P6

Believe it or not, it's raining small fish at Lajamanu

From Page 1

and hundreds" of small white fish had fallen from the sky.

``It rained fish in Lajamanu on Thursday and Friday night," she said, ``They fell from the sky everywhere.

``Locals were picking them up off the footy oval and on the ground everywhere.

``These fish were alive when they hit the ground."

Mrs Balmer, the aged care co-ordinator at the Lajamanu Aged Care Centre, said her family interstate thought she had lost the plot when she told them about the event.

``I haven't lost my marbles," she said, reassuring herself. ``Thank god it didn't rain crocodiles."

Lajamanu sits on the edge of the Tanami Desert, hundreds of kilometres from Lake Argyle and Lake Elliott and even further from the coast. But it's not the first time the remote community has been bombarded by fins from above. In 2004, locals reported fish falling from the sky, and in 1974, a similar incident captured international headlines.

The small white fish are believed to be spangled perch, which are very common through much of northern Australia.

Weather bureau senior forecaster Ashley Patterson said the geological conditions were perfect on Friday for a tornado in the Douglas Daly region. He said it would have been an ideal weather situation to allow the phenomena to occur -- but no tornados have been reported to the authority.

``It's a very unusual event," he said. ``With an updraft, (fish and water picked up) could get up high -- up to 60,000 or 70,000 feet.

``Or possibly from a tornado over a large water body -- but we haven't had any reports," he said.

Have you seen fish falling from the sky, or know what sort of fish they are? Call 8944 9724 and let us know.

NTN-20100228-1-001-508716

Document NORTHHT0020100301e62s0002t

## **Fish rain from sky over NT township**

DANIEL BOURCHIER

264 words

28 February 2010

Sunday Tasmanian

1 -

3

English

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WHILE the Top End and Central Australia have been battered by torrential rains, a remote Northern Territory community has had fish falling from the sky. The freak phenomenon occurred in Lajamanu, 550km southwest of Katherine, on Thursday and Friday evening about 6pm.

Christine Balmer, the aged care co-ordinator at the Lajamanu Aged Care Centre, said she was told ``hundreds and hundreds" of small white fish had fallen from the sky.

``Locals were picking them up off the footy oval and on the ground

everywhere. These fish were alive when they hit the ground," Mrs Balmer said.

"Thank God it didn't rain crocodiles."

Lajamanu sits on the edge of the Tanami Desert, hundreds of kilometres from Lake Argyle and Lake Elliott and even further from the coast.

But it's not the first time the community of around 1000 has been bombarded by fins from above.

In 2004, locals also reported fish falling from the sky, and in 1974, a similar incident captured international headlines.

The small white fish are yet to be identified.

Weather Bureau senior forecaster Ashley Patterson said the conditions were perfect for a tornado in the Douglas Daly region on Friday, although no tornado had been reported to the bureau.

"It's a very unusual event," he said.

"With an updraft, [fish and water picked up] could get up high -- up to 60,000 or 70,000 feet.

"Or possibly from a tornado over a large water body -- but we haven't had any reports."

STS-20100228-1-003-706458

Document SUNTAS0020100227e62s00008

## **Down it pours, raining cats, dogs ... and fish**

Russel Guse [Russel.Guse@centraltelegraph.com.au](mailto:Russel.Guse@centraltelegraph.com.au)

440 words

26 February 2010

Central Telegraph

Main

3

English

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Reserved

IT'S been pouring so hard out at Taroom that it's not raining cats and dogs – but fish.

Lorraine Becker found three small fish on the ground in front of a shed on their property on the Roma-Taroom road late last week.

"We have had plenty of rain but never fish before," Lorraine, who has had 317mm this year, said.

"We don't know exactly how it happened but presume they fell in the rain last night (midweek last week).

"The expression is raining cats and dogs – but fish!

"Apparently, it is not unheard of, as fish can be sucked up by waterspouts and deposited elsewhere in rain." Cindy Bruce's property is so thick with sand flies and mosquitoes, she feels like she is living on a mangrove flat.

But the farmer doesn't mind, given their property, "Moorat", west of Taroom, has received 13.5 inches (337.5mm) so far this year.

"We have had as much rain this year as we had all of last year – unbelievable," Cindy said.

She said "Moorat" smelt like a mangrove flat, complete with sand flies and mosquitoes.

"The sand flies and mossies are really starting to breed up and we need a few days of sunshine to dry out their habitat.

"But all that said, this rain is the most wonderful thing that has happened here for a very long time.

"So it is a bit annoying and inconvenient but I don't care – green is better than brown any time," Cindy said.

Jack and Mitchell Hay were among several students who had to board in town from the middle of last week after roads out to their family farm, "Boxgrove", on the Leichhardt Highway, were cut by floodwater caused by weeks of heavy rain.

The Leichhardt Highway to the north of Taroom towards Theodore was cut for several days and the Fitzroy Development and Injune roads were also cut.

Rob Lethbridge, of "Yo Yo", said he had had 401mm during 2009 and, so far in 2010, a total of 359mm had fallen on his property.

Rob said if you added the figures since Christmas to the 2010 rainfall, the amount so far rose to 465mm.

Official Bureau of Meteorology figures show Taroom registered 413.3mm in 2009, with 427mm so far this year already exceeding last year's miserable falls.

Tumbling down

Rainfall so far in 2010: 427mm

Rainfall in 2009: 413.3mm

Jan-Feb 2009 rainfall: 155.9mm

Document APNCET0020100225e62q000bb

## **Honduras' rain of fishes**

139 words

27 December 2009

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

English

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Sri Lanka, Dec. 27 -- The Rain of Fish is common in Honduran Folklore. It occurs in the Departamento de Yoro, between the months of May and July. Witnesses of this phenomenon state that it begins with a dark cloud in the sky followed by lightning, thunder, strong winds and heavy rain for 2 to 3 hours. Once the rain has stopped, hundreds of living fish are found on the ground. People take the fish home to cook and eat them. Since 1998 a festival known as "Festival de la Lluvia de Peces" (Rain of Fish Festival) is celebrated every year in the city of Yoro, Departamento de Yoro, Honduras. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at [htsyndication@hindustantimes.com](mailto:htsyndication@hindustantimes.com)

Document sunosl0020091228e5cr00002

## Dogfish rain causes storm around world

356 words

30 September 2009

South Wales Evening Post

default

16

English

(c) 2009 South Wales Evening Post

Emma Denholmpostnews@swwmedia.co.uk

A FISHY tale about a dogfish falling from the sky onto a Neath hotel has gone global since appearing in the Post.

As we reported last month, staff at the Castle Hotel were left baffled after the bizarre act of cod.

Assistant manager, Andrea Lewis, said customers who were enjoying a drink outside the hotel, had the shock of their lives when a live dogfish smacked down on the canopy above them.

At the time, it was thought the fish had fallen from the mouth of a bird.

Since the story ran, the now-deceased fish has become something of a celebrity in its own right after being pictured with Ms Lewis.

"A friend of the hotel owner, who lives in London, was on the tube when he picked up a Metro paper and saw the picture in it," she said. "Then someone came across from the Ambassador Hotel and said it was in the Sunday Times," said Ms Lewis.

"Fern Britton and Madonna were on the same page," Ms Lewis exclaimed about her new-found fame.

As well as appearing in other papers, the curious tale of the falling fish got a mention on the Jonathan Ross show, and Ms Lewis has also been interviewed by a Spanish radio show about the incident. "I had a phone call from Talk Radio Europe, which has 6,500 ex-pat listeners," she said.

Ms Lewis said the huge response to the story came as something of a shock.

"I cannot believe it, we just thought it was a giggle, but everybody has said something about it.

"People come into the hotel and even stop me on the street asking how the fish is," said Ms Lewis.

She said she even got sent a book, signed by the author, which highlighted a chapter about incidents of fish mysteriously falling from the sky.

Ms Lewis said the popularity of the tale has made them wish they had kept the fish that inspired such interest.

"We could have put him up on the wall or something," she laughed.

Document SWEPOS0020091001e59u0000z