Earthweek: Diary of a Changing World

time ice coverage surround-

ing the Antarctic continent

reached an alarmingly low

level for the third consecu-

tive year, according to an

analysis by the Colorado-

based National Snow and

occurring

Antarctica can adapt, and re-

cord-low sea ice levels have

contributed to the second-

worst year for chick mortal-

moved to more stable ice.

but researchers say it is only

Some colonies

a temporary solution.

Climate change is

than some emperor

penguin colonies in

faster

Ice Data Center.

ity on record.

2024 Year in Review

Unbridled Warming

A U.N. report warns that global warming is now on track to exceed 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 F) by the end of the century and that only a "quantum leap in ambition" to curb greenhouse gas emissions can avert a planetary climate catastrophe.

Drought Crisis

Brazil faced its most severe and widespread drought on record, leading to devastating wildfires and recordlow levels of the Amazon River. Dried-up streams stranded many communities that rely on water access, while the main Paraguay and Paraná rivers became so low that transport of key regional commodities was halted.

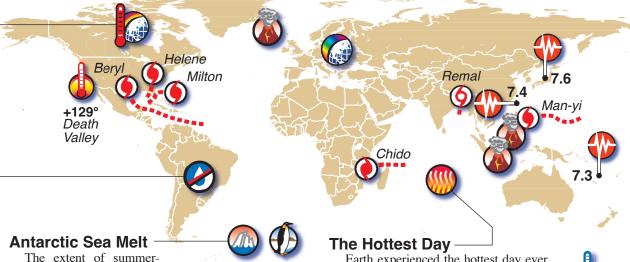
Earthquakes



A Jan. 1 temblor **Penguin Peril** killed 475 people on Japan's Noto Peninsula, lifting

the ground by more than 13 feet and shifting it sideways by more than 1 foot.

- A magnitude 7.4 quake in eastern Taiwan killed at least 18 people and wrecked buildings on April 3.
- At least 14 people perished in a massive Vanuatu quake that collapsed buildings in the capital on Dec. 17.



Eruptions



Iceland's restive Reykjanes Peninsula was blanketed by massive amounts of

lava from a series of seven eruptions during the year.

- A powerful eruption of Indonesia's Mount Merapi forced thousands to evacuate in central Java during late January.
- Around 87,000 people were ordered to evacuate their homes in the central Philippines during early December after Mount Kanlaon's strongest eruption in years blanketed nearby areas in thick ash.

Dist. by: Andrews McMeel Syndication ©MMXXIV Earth Environment Service

Earth experienced the hottest day ever measured, breaking the previous record by a tiny fraction of a degree, set a day earlier.

Europe's Copernicus climate service calculated through satellite observations that the average global temperature on July 22 was 62.76 degrees Fahrenheit.

The planet's average temperature was also 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 F) warmer than in preindustrial times across an entire year for the first time on record. Copernicus calculated the period from February 2023 to January 2024 reached 1.52 degrees Celsius of warming.

Solar Storms



The most intense geomagnetic storms to strike Earth's atmosphere in more than 20 years produced vivid aurora displays around the world, disrupted some high-frequency radio commu-

-112°

Vostok.

Antarctica

nications and brought farm equipment to a standstill at the height of the planting season.

Farmers in the Canadian Prairies and American Midwest suffered hours of shutdowns during early May when the high-precision GPS units on their tractors were knocked out by one of the year's strongest solar storms.

By Steve Newman

Tropical Cyclones



- Category-5 Hurricane Beryl ravaged Grenada on July 1. It later struck the Yucatan Peninsula and Texas coast as a much weaker storm. At least 18 people were left dead in its wake.
- Hurricane Helene killed 234 people and unleashed catastrophic flooding in Florida, Georgia and North Carolina during September.
- It was quickly followed in early October by Category-5 Hurricane Milton, which raked Florida as the second strongest ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico and the strongest worldwide for 2024. Milton left 35 dead.
- The Philippines was ravaged by six consecutive typhoons in less than a month, punctuated by Typhoon Man-yi in mid-November.
- Category-4 Cyclone Chido left hundreds dead as it devastated the French territory of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean on Dec. 14. It then killed at least 42 others in Mozambique and Malawi.