



2015: The Climate Record that Wasn't

To hear the climate change hysteria at the end of 2015, the apocalypse is nigh upon us. We were told by climatologists and their cheerleaders in the mainstream news media that last year was “the warmest on record,” a claim that those of us who endured the mammoth snowfalls and bitter cold of last winter in northeast North America were inclined to doubt.



The truth, as always proves to be the case with the climate clique, is rather more nuanced. The “record” in “on record” refers to satellite climate data garnered since 1979, and it turns out that, in fact, 1998 was the warmest year in the satellite era, with 2015 coming in third after 2010.

In point of fact, the absurd and unwarranted claims coming out last fall alleged that 2015 was the warmest year on record since global climate data was available in the late 1800s. This claim is farcical. By the 1880s, there were doubtless weather stations with mercury thermometers in many parts of the world that furnished such data — but in the high Canadian Arctic and northern Greenland? In Siberia? In interior Antarctica?

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Fort Conger, a research station in northern Ellesmere Island in the Canadian Arctic, was established in 1881, and occupied sporadically until it was abandoned in the 1930s. Thus we probably have some temperature data from some years from that locale in the high Arctic, but nothing like the constant data available in the satellite era. Another of Canada's northernmost islands, Victoria Island, was not fully charted until the second decade of the 20th Century. The North Pole itself was not reached until Peary's expedition in 1909, and seasonal research stations did not begin to be built there until 1937. Severnaya Zemlya, the northernmost archipelago in the Siberian Arctic, was not even discovered until 1913, and was charted for the first time only in the 1930s. As for the rest of Siberia, vast tracts remain completely inaccessible except by air, and have not been explored. It is therefore utterly fatuous to claim that we have anything like the climate data produced over the last thirty-six years from the high Arctic of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, much of which was still uncharted territory a century ago.

Much the same could be said of Antarctica, which, as far as can be ascertained, no human being ever laid eyes on prior to the 1820s. The South Pole was not reached until 1911, only a few years after the exploration of interior Antarctica had begun in earnest. The first permanent base established anywhere in Antarctica (and thus the first place capable of producing regular temperature data from the continent) is Base Orcadas on Laurie Island, well north of the Antarctic mainland, and operated continuously by Argentina since 1904. This base is much closer to Tierra del Fuego on the South American mainland than it is to the South Pole or even most of mainland Antarctica. Permanent



Written by [Charles Scaliger](#) on January 20, 2016

Antarctic bases with consistent temperature data from all over the Antarctic mainland did not come about until decades later.

Much the same, we suspect, could be said of various remote archipelagos across the Pacific and Indian oceans, of the fastnesses of interior Central Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Sahara Desert, and sub-Saharan Africa — enormous swathes of territory that today can be easily evaluated by satellite, but were terra incognita until well into the 20th Century. The claim that we have access to adequate global climate data since the late 1800s is patently fraudulent, and typical of the absurd claims routinely advanced in support of the global warming lobby.

In 2015, we were treated to the onset of what may turn out to be the strongest El Niño on record — which should have produced spectacular warming, but did not. Indeed, as James Taylor, contributor on energy and environment issues for *Forbes* magazine [observed](#):

A record El Niño resulting in less-than-record temperatures is another sign that global warming is not all that activists crack it up to be. Indeed, if a record strong El Niño cannot bring global temperatures back to the warmth of 1998, what can — and when will that be? 18 years after 1998, global warming still has not created the runaway warming we were told to expect.

More than halfway through the second decade of the 21st Century, the catastrophic, runaway greenhouse warming, melting of polar icecaps, and significant rises in sea levels foretold by climate change gurus have yet to materialize.

Of course, the real climate record spans thousands of years and tells quite a different story from the less-than-40-year snapshot afforded by global climate satellite data. By all available evidence, much of the world's history has been much warmer than now, with the exception of occasional ice ages and lesser cooling events (the Little Ice Age, which lasted from roughly 1300 to 1850 being the most recent example). [Over the last 10,000 years or so](#) — since the end of the last great ice age — there have been periods both significantly warmer and significantly cooler than right now; the Little Ice Age was preceded by the Medieval Warming Period, during which the climate of much of the British Isles was almost Mediterranean, allowing for the widespread cultivation of grapes. It was also during this time that the intrepid Vikings settled Greenland — settlements that had to be abandoned as the climate turned colder, and crops could no longer be grown on the arctic island.

Climate change is an established historical and climatological fact; anthropogenic climate change, on the other hand, is not. Most climate change extremists with a political agenda willfully ignore, for example, that the probable most significant contributor to climate change — the source of all energy and, therefore, all climate — is the sun, which produces vastly more heat energy in a single second than the entire human race in all of its history. Other questionable practices — like ignoring the effects of “urban heat sinks” — have long since cast most climate science into disrepute, except for those whose political agendas it satisfies.

El Niño is continuing into 2016, and should, if climate forecasts have any lingering validity, produce a significant warming event globally. If the latest El Niño continues to underperform, however, the pseudoscience of anthropogenic global warming will have been dealt yet another blow. Unfortunately, so potent has the climate change interest group become, that it is unlikely any event short of another full-blown ice age will undercut the fascination it exerts over scientific ignoramuses in the media and the halls of government.



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