

2013 Western Pacific Typhoon Season

This map shows the tracks and intensity of the tropical storms in the Western Pacific basin in 2013. The color and width of each line reflects the intensity of the storm on each day of its activity.

In 2013, there were between 28 and 31 tropical storms, and 13 to 16 typhoons—six of which reached super typhoon strength. (Note: other institutions, including the Joint Typhoon Warning Center and the Japanese Meteorological Agency, have arrived at slightly different counts for the region.) According to the Tropical Storm Risk Consortium, the average is 26 tropical storms and 16 typhoons.

Nearly one third of the world's tropical storms form in the Western Pacific in any given year. "The Western Pacific is the world's largest breeding ground of tropical cyclones, and storms tend to be larger and more intense there," said research meteorologist Jeff Halverson of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. This is because the sea surface temperatures are among the warmest in the world; the mixed layer of the ocean is deeper; there are fewer land barriers; and the tropopause—the boundary between the lower atmosphere and the stratosphere—is very high and cold. Essentially, storms have more fuel and more room (horizontally and vertically) to grow in the Western Pacific.

For more information:

earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=82528