

Forecasters Name Snow Storms After Dogs

National Weather Service forecasters in Buffalo track the season's storms with a little help from man's best friend.

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The National Weather Service office in Buffalo is naming the region's lake-effect snow storms after dog breeds.

The Great Lakes region gets about a dozen lake-effect snow storms every year. The first storm of the season struck in early November and was named Akita. (Fans of the famously strong and proud breed may be disappointed to know the storm rated only a weak two flakes on a scale of one to five.)

The region's second storm hit Dec. 3 and was named Borzoi. That storm rated a stronger three flakes.

Lake-effect snow storms occur in the Great Lakes region when cold, arctic winds sail above long expanses of warmer lake water. The phenomenon occurs around the world, but more often in the Northern Hemisphere.

The National Weather Service would not say what other dog breeds will be used to name this season's storms.

Last year's storm season, which ended in April, was named after insects. The strongest storm, Locust, pounded the region from Feb. 2 to 12, and earned five flakes out of five.