

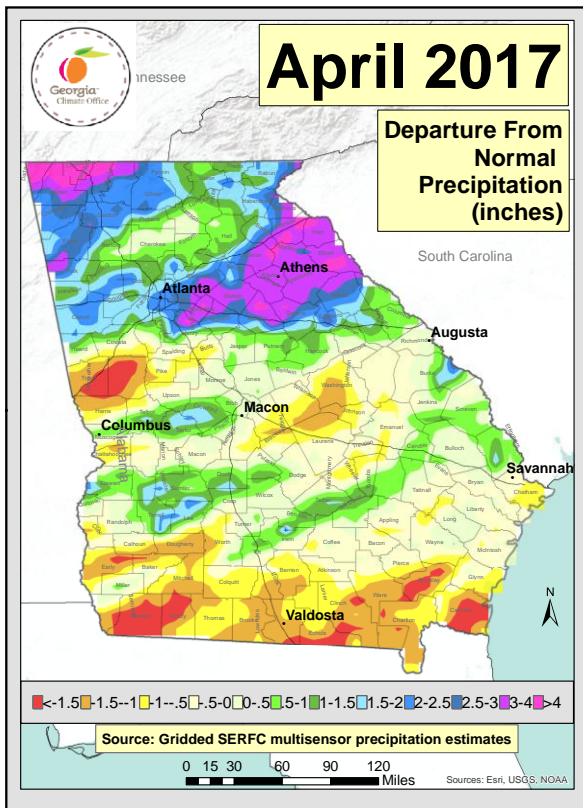
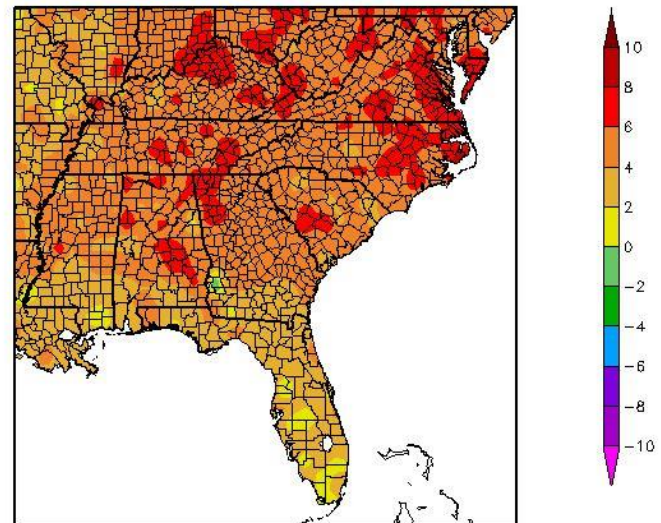
April 2017 Climate Summary – Georgia

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The trend of warmer than normal temperatures, above normal precipitation in north Georgia, and below normal precipitation in south Georgia continued and even intensified in April. Georgia had its 4th warmest April on record with 67.5°F (+4.5°), while areas in the northwest and northeast saw monthly precipitation totals greater than 4” above normal. Several weather systems helped ease drought conditions in north Georgia, but south Georgia generally missed out on the beneficial rainfall in April. A lightning-induced wildfire developed and continued to expand along and northward of the Florida border. Severe weather was also noted this month associated with the active weather pattern.

All the major climate sites in Georgia were ranked in their top five warmest April on record. Atlanta, Augusta, and Savannah all had their warmest April on record with 67.8° (+5.8°), 69.3° (+6.6°), and 71.0° (+5.4°), respectively. Athens had its second warmest April on record with an average monthly temperature of 66.7° (+5.0°), and Columbus also ranked second warmest April with 70.1° (+5.5°). Macon’s average temperature was 68.2° (+4.8°) and ranked as the 5th warmest April on record. Many daily temperature records were broken in April, particularly on the last three days of the month when minimum temperatures only reached around 70° in some locations (see table 1).

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/1/2017 – 4/30/2017

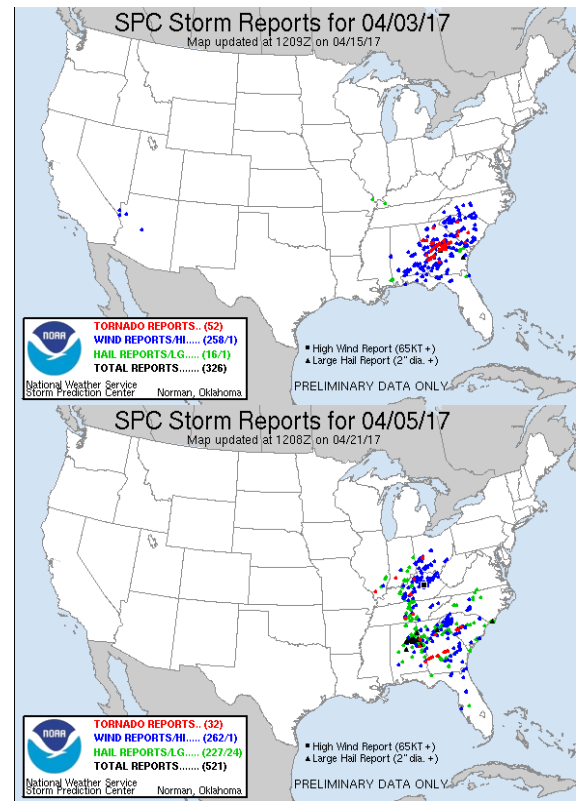


Atlanta’s monthly precipitation totaled 5.75” (+2.39”) and Athens recorded 6.86” (+3.71”) in April. Both sites broke daily rainfall records on April 5th when 4.27” fell in Atlanta (the previous record of 1.57” was set in 1937) and 3.54” fell in Athens (the previous record of 2.50” was set in 1898). Athens set another daily rainfall record on April 23rd with 2.52”, breaking the previous record of 2.48” that was set in 1971. Many of the other climate sites in Georgia were closer to their normal April precipitation amounts. Macon’s monthly precipitation was 3.01” (+0.05”), Columbus recorded 4.41” (+0.86”), Augusta received 2.60” (-0.24”), and Savannah’s April precipitation totaled 2.88” (-0.19”).

The active weather pattern allowed for a few rounds of severe weather to impact Georgia, with the most widespread and destructive storms occurring on April 3rd and April 5th. A total of 27 tornadoes (13 EF-0s, 13 EF-1s, and 1 EF-2) were confirmed on April 3rd, which were associated with a line of severe thunderstorms that developed ahead of an approaching potent low pressure system. In Wilkinson County, an EF-2 tornado caused significant damages to businesses in Gordon. The same storm

would later produce an EF-0 tornado several miles east. Two days later on April 5th, thunderstorms developing ahead of a strong springtime system would cause 6 tornadoes, hail, and flash flooding, particularly around metro Atlanta where over 4.0” of rain fell. The strongest tornadoes were rated EF-2, and they were spawned by the same long-lived supercell that traversed across central Georgia. Although there was not any other severe weather reported on April 27th, a long-tracked EF-2 tornado touched down in Talbot County. The tornado caused damage to homes and businesses and uprooted numerous trees on its 21 miles track across the county.

Another significant weather-related event occurred on April 6th when lightning caused a wildfire in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge just 7 miles east of Fargo in Clinch County. Near-record high temperatures, low humidity, and strong winds caused the wildfire to expand rapidly, covering over 80,000 acres by the end of the month. Several communities in Georgia and Florida have been evacuated, and air quality in the area has been deteriorating.

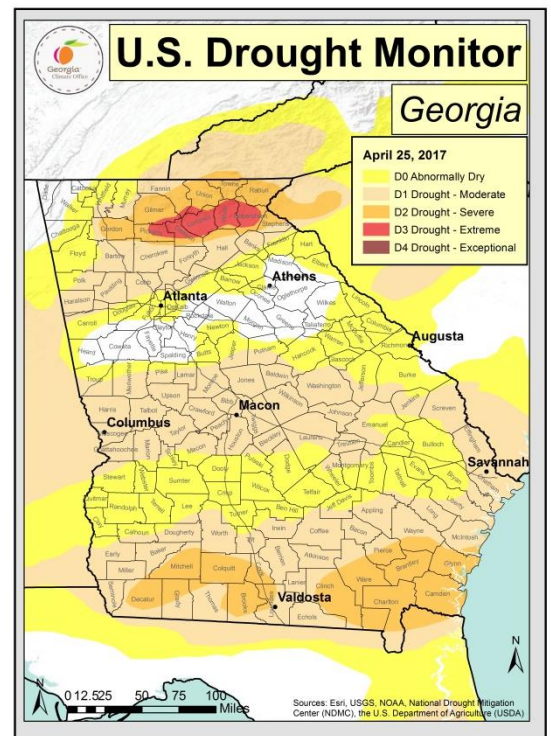


View from a firefighting aircraft of the West Mims wildfire in the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge.

Ozone forecasting season for the state officially started on April 1st, and one exceedance occurred on April 10th at the Dawsonville air quality monitoring site where the highest eight-hour average was 71 parts per billion. The day was characterized by a surface high moving eastward off the mid-Atlantic coast and strong mid to upper level ridging. Analysis of meteorological conditions showed good subsidence, dry and stable conditions, and abnormally warm temperatures conducive for ozone production and accumulation.

The United States Drought Monitor showed that drought conditions improved in northwest Georgia, as well as in areas south, southwest, and southeast of metro Atlanta area, where no drought conditions are present. D3 (extreme drought) and D2 (severe drought) were dramatically reduced in northeast Georgia, but conditions worsened in south Georgia. D1 (moderate drought) expanded to cover much of central and south Georgia along the Florida border, and D2 conditions were introduced.

According to the Climate Prediction Center, ENSO-neutral conditions are present. Equatorial sea surface temperatures (SSTs)



are near-average across the central Pacific. They are above-average in the eastern Pacific Ocean. ENSO-neutral conditions are favored to continue through at least the Northern Hemisphere spring 2017, with increasing chances for El Niño development by late summer and fall. There is a chance for above normal temperatures in Georgia, particularly in the southern half of the state, and an equal chance for above, near, or below normal precipitation in May, June, and July.

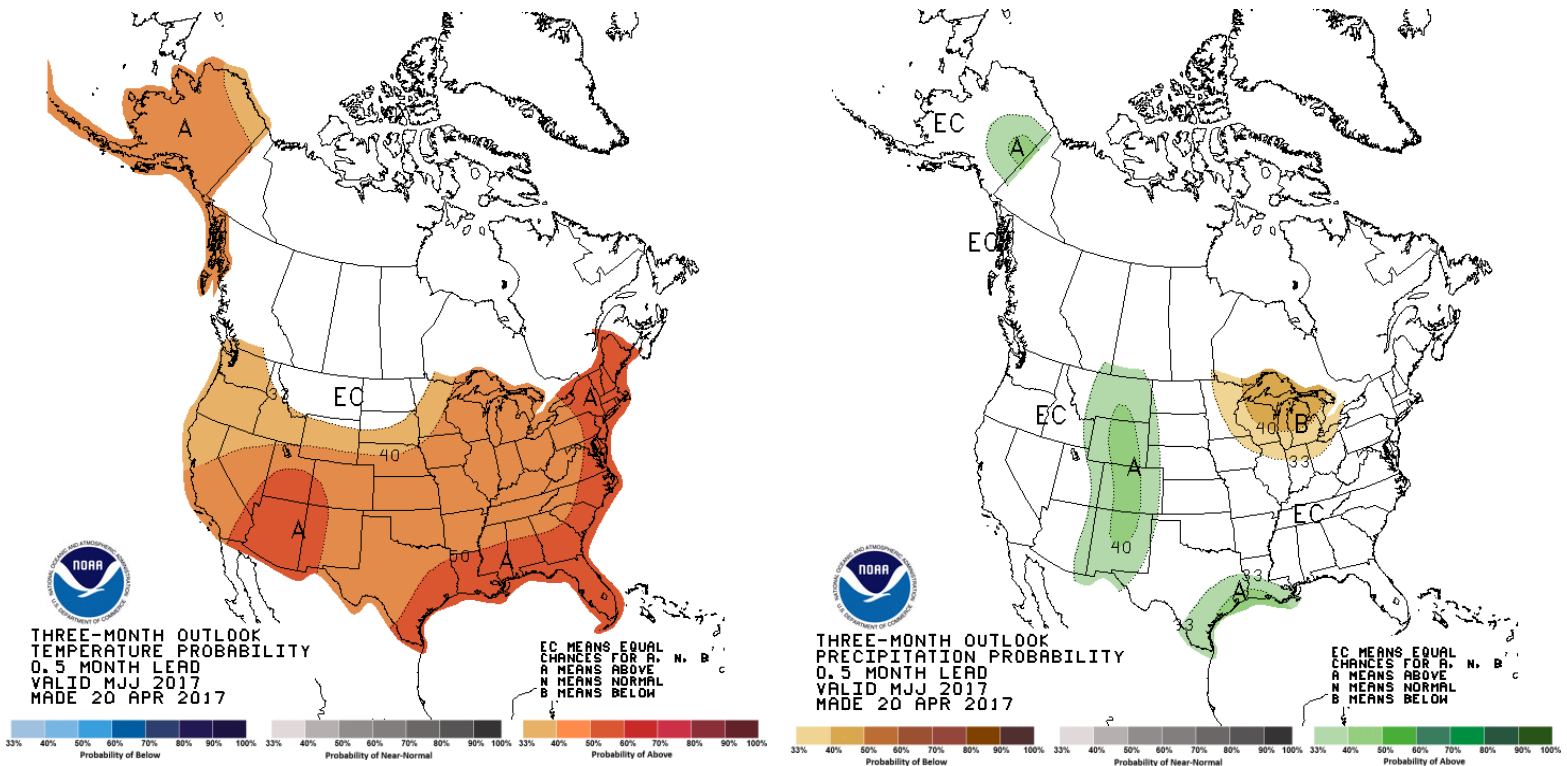


Table 1: Daily Temperature Records Broken in April 2017

| Date | City | Temp. | Type of Record | Previous Record |
|------|----------|-------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 4/2 | Columbus | 89° | High Temp | Tied, previously set in 1927 |
| 4/21 | Athens | 88° | High Temp | Tied, previously set in 2002 |
| 4/22 | Augusta | 90° | High Temp | Tied, previously set in 1985 |
| 4/28 | Augusta | 92° | High Temp | 91° in 2012 |
| 4/28 | Columbus | 70° | High Minimum Temp | 69° in 1970 |
| 4/29 | Atlanta | 69° | High Minimum Temp | 67° in 2014 |
| 4/29 | Augusta | 70° | High Minimum Temp | 68° in 1917 |
| 4/29 | Augusta | 91° | High Temp | Tied, previously set in 2016 |
| 4/29 | Savannah | 74° | High Minimum Temp | Tied, previously set in 2014 |
| 4/30 | Atlanta | 69° | High Minimum Temp | 68° in 2016 |
| 4/30 | Athens | 68° | High Minimum Temp | Tied, previously set in 1970 |
| 4/30 | Macon | 70° | High Minimum Temp | 68° in 1984 |
| 4/30 | Columbus | 70° | High Minimum Temp | 69° in 1970 |
| 4/30 | Augusta | 70° | High Minimum Temp | 68° in 1881 |
| 4/30 | Savannah | 73° | High Minimum Temp | 72° in 1953 |