

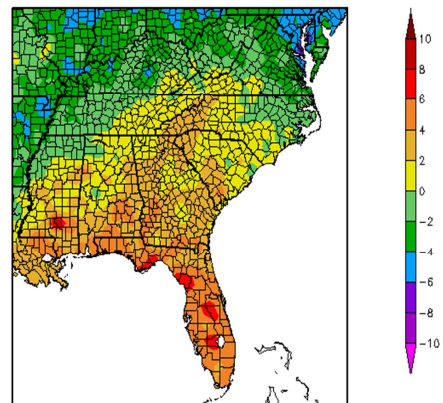
# March 2015 Climate Summary – Georgia

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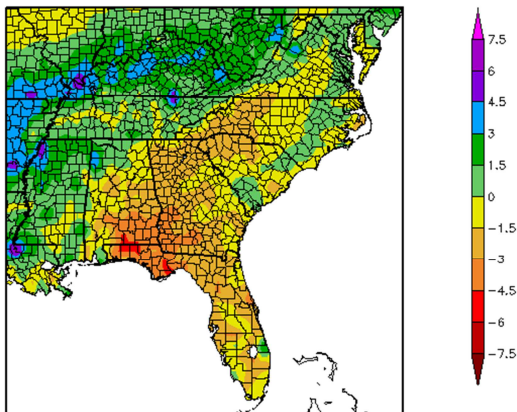
Georgia experienced above average temperatures and below average precipitation for March. The month was characterized by large temperature swings and an active long-wave pattern as the state transitioned into the spring season on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

The average temperature for Georgia during the month of March is typically 55.4°, though the majority of the state exceeded that average this month. Atlanta's average temperature of 57.6°F was 3.3° above normal. At 56.8°, the average temperature in Athens was 2.5° above normal. Athens also recorded a record high temperature of 87° on March 16<sup>th</sup>, breaking the previous record of 85° set in 2012. Columbus reached an average temperature of 60°, which was 2.2° above normal. Other parts of the state, such as Augusta and Savannah, also were warmer than normal with averages of 58.3° and 62°, respectively. Savannah tied record high temperatures on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, with 84° and 87°. St. Simons Island also broke two record high temperatures during the month. March 5<sup>th</sup> reached a record high of 84°, breaking the previous record of 83° set in 1985. In addition on March 17<sup>th</sup>, a record high of 86° was recorded, breaking the previous record of 85° set in 2002. Macon had an average temperature of 58.4°, or 1.6° above normal. An unusually cold airmass moved into the region during late March as a branch of the polar jet dove southward. This allowed Macon to set a record low temperature of 27° on the 29<sup>th</sup>. This broke the previous record low of 30° set in 1966.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)  
3/1/2015 – 3/31/2015

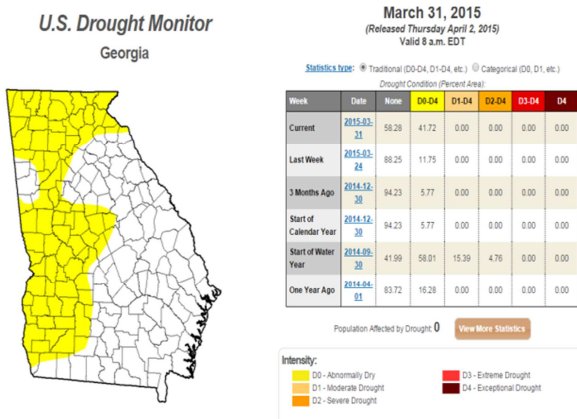
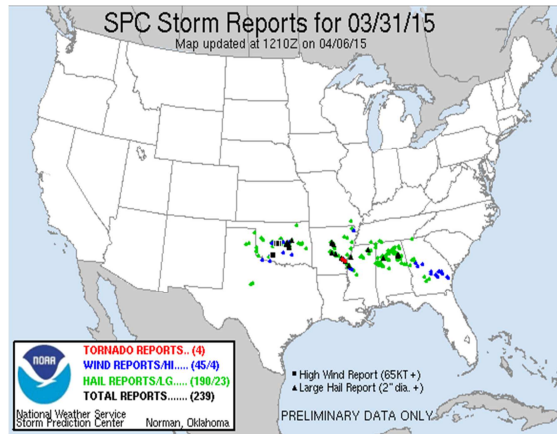


Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)  
3/1/2015 – 3/30/2015



Most locations in Georgia recorded below average precipitation; however, no precipitation records were broken for the month. Atlanta's total precipitation was 2.98", or 1.83" below normal. Athens recorded 2.79" (-1.64" below normal), while Macon also fell below normal with only 2.28" of precipitation for the month. Columbus fell well below normal precipitation as well, with only 2.46" of rainfall this month. A small amount of snow was observed in extreme north Georgia on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

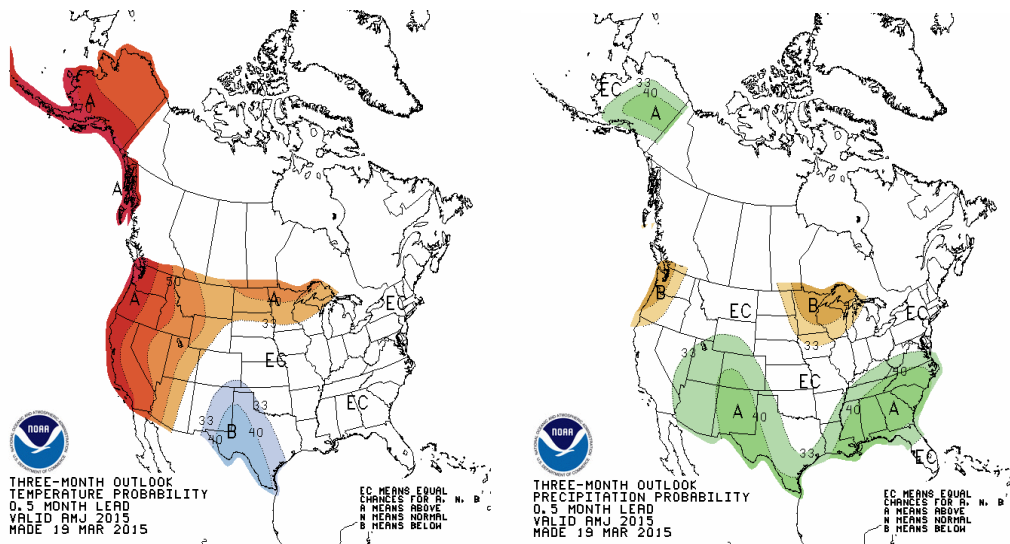
On March 31<sup>st</sup>, a weak shortwave pushed through the state. The instability and cold pocket aloft led to several wind and hail reports. Golf ball sized hail was the largest reported, and there were reports of hail covering the ground in some locations. The month of March was abnormally quiet in terms of severe weather, with a few cold air damming events. In fact, it was the first time on record that no tornadoes were reported for the month of March.



The drought monitor for Georgia indicated that counties in north Georgia, central Georgia, and many along the Georgia-Alabama border were in abnormally dry conditions by the end of the month. The below average precipitation in March intensified the drought in those areas. However, seasonal outlooks hint at some improvement in rainfall totals in the long-term. This will also depend on the main storm track position and the

orientation of the Pacific Jet.

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, the Climate Prediction Center officially issued an El Niño Advisory. Currently, El Niño conditions are present due to atmospheric and oceanic coupling, and there is an approximately 50-60% chance for El Niño conditions to continue in the Northern Hemisphere in summer 2015. The implications of an El Niño typically suggest a moist Pacific jet stream across South Georgia and minimal chances of significant drought development during the summer. A strong El Niño can help dampen Atlantic tropical activity during the tropical season due to increase in the westerlies, although there are many other factors at play here. The current three-month outlooks forecast above average precipitation for Georgia and equal chances for above or below average temperatures for April, May, and June.



## Climate Statistics for March 2015

<b>Location</b>	<b>Avg. Maximum Temperature (departure) Ranking*</b>	<b>Avg. Minimum Temperature (departure) Ranking*</b>	<b>Mean Temperature (departure) Ranking*</b>	<b>Total Rainfall (departure) Ranking*</b>
<b>Athens</b>	68.8 (+2.6) <i>26th warmest</i>	44.8 (+2.3) <i>30th warmest</i>	56.8 (+2.4) <i>T-28th warmest</i>	2.79 (-1.64) <i>27th driest</i>
<b>Atlanta</b>	67.6 (+3.0) <i>23rd warmest</i>	47.6 (+3.5) <i>19th warmest</i>	57.6 (+3.2) <i>T-17th warmest</i>	2.98 (-1.83) <i>26th driest</i>
<b>Augusta</b>	71.3 (+1.4) <i>T-33rd warmest</i>	45.3 (+3.3) <i>52nd warmest</i>	58.3 (+2.3) <i>T-41st warmest</i>	3.04 (-1.14) <i>47th driest</i>
<b>Columbus</b>	71.5 (+2.0) <i>T-17th warmest</i>	48.6 (+2.5) <i>12th warmest</i>	60 (+2.2) <i>15th warmest</i>	2.46 (-3.00) <i>10th driest</i>
<b>Macon</b>	70.7 (+1.2) <i>35th warmest</i>	46.2 (+2.1) <i>T-41st warmest</i>	58.4 (+1.6) <i>39th warmest</i>	2.28 (-2.27) <i>23rd driest</i>
<b>Savannah</b>	72.8 (+1.9) <i>T-32nd warmest</i>	51.1 (+3.5) <i>T-45th warmest</i>	62 (+2.7) <i>T-34th warmest</i>	2.02 (-1.71) <i>T-39th driest</i>