

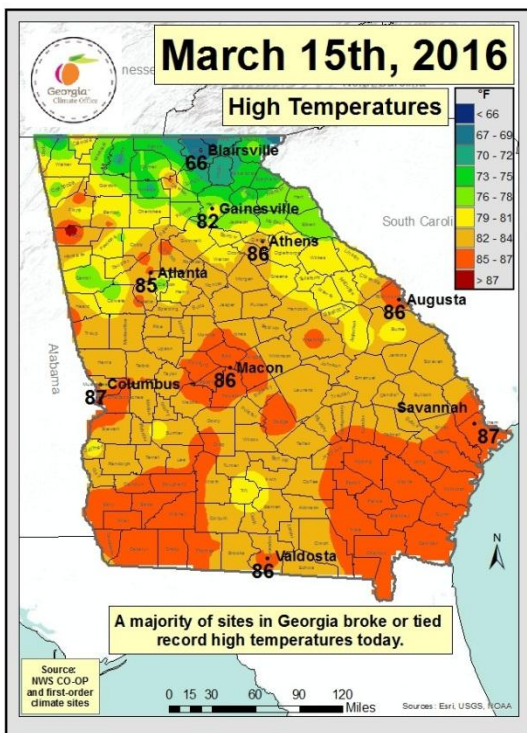
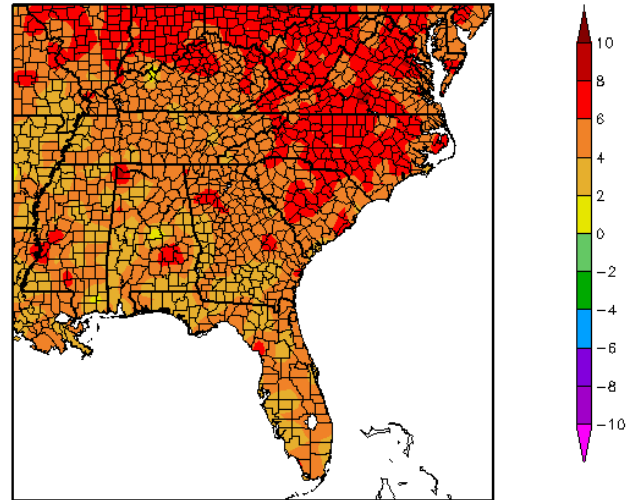
# March 2016 Climate Summary – Georgia

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March in Georgia was characteristic of spring with warmer than normal temperatures statewide. Most major climate sites recorded above normal average temperatures by more than 3° F, due in part to bouts of persistent high pressure ridges and the exceptionally warm minimum temperatures throughout the month. Rainfall was generally below normal statewide except for areas in southwest and west central Georgia where several weather systems tracked during the month.

The average temperature for the state this month was 60.9° (+5.5°), ranking it as the 7<sup>th</sup> warmest March on record. Atlanta, Athens, and Savannah all ranked in the top 10 warmest average March temperatures with 60.5° (+6.2°), 59.9° (+5.6°), and 65.0° (+5.8°), respectively. Macon's average monthly temperature was 61.1° (+4.3°), Columbus recorded 61.9° (+4.1°), Augusta's average temperature was 60.8° (+4.9), and St. Simons Island recorded 64.9° (+4.6°). Anomalous warm air advection accompanied a strong high pressure ridge on March 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> and brought record breaking warmth to the state. St. Simons Island broke a daily high temperature record on the 14<sup>th</sup> when the temperature reached 84°; the previous record of 83° was set in 1985. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, both Atlanta and Athens set daily high temperature records with Atlanta's 85° (previous record of 82° was set in 2012) and Athens' 86° (previous record of 85° was set in 2012). Columbus and Savannah reached 87° while Augusta recorded 86° on that day, allowing both sites to tie their high temperature records. Several more daily high minimum and high maximum records were tied at other locations in Georgia from the 14<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)  
3/1/2016 – 3/31/2016



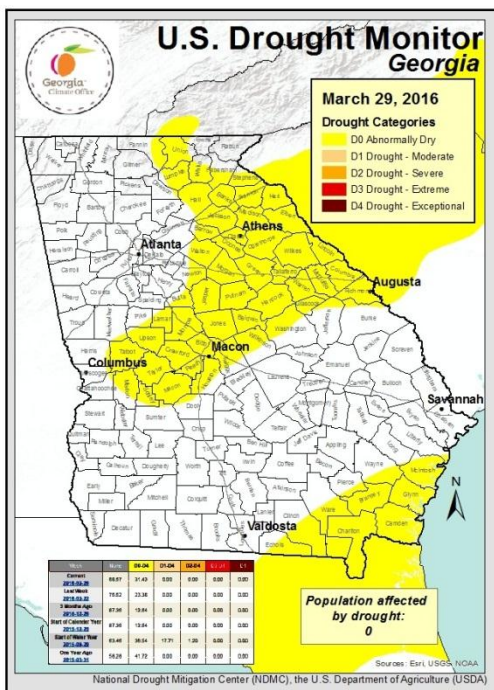
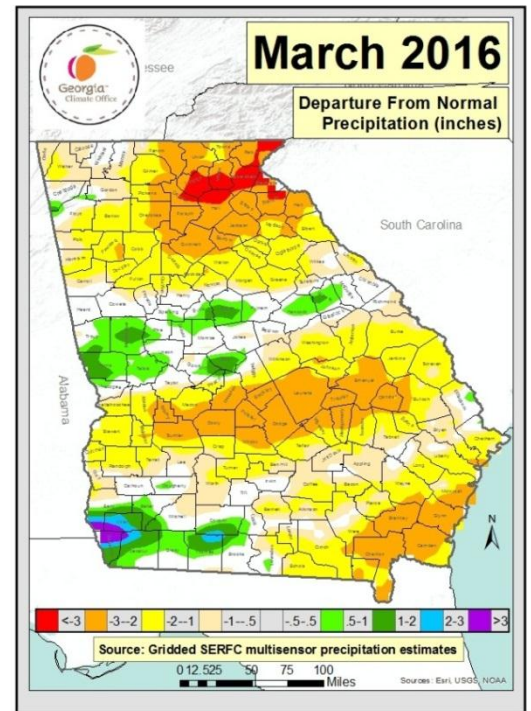
With the exception of Savannah, most major climate sites were well below normal in terms of precipitation in March. The statewide precipitation averaged below normal at 2.83” (-2.23”). No sites ranked significantly except Athens – with a total monthly precipitation of 1.95” (-2.48”), it ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> driest March on record. Atlanta recorded 2.21” (-2.60”), Macon's total monthly precipitation was 2.64” (-1.91”), Columbus recorded 2.56” (-2.9”), Augusta's total precipitation was 3.18” (-1.0”), and St. Simons Island recorded 1.56” (-2.32”). Savannah recorded above normal March precipitation with 5.01” (+1.28”), and on the 27<sup>th</sup> 3.98” of rain fell, breaking the previous daily record of 2.57” in 2005. This also was the wettest March day on record for the city, which was previously set on March 5<sup>th</sup> in 1959 with 3.57”.

There was little severe weather reported in Georgia during March until the last day of the month. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, an EF-0 briefly touched down in Taylor County, and a tornado was reported to have touched down in

Grady County as well.

The U.S. Drought Monitor currently shows that D0 (abnormally dry) conditions expanded in southeast, central, and northeast Georgia during March. The area of abnormally dry conditions in central Georgia should be eliminated with an upcoming event that is forecast to bring 3-5" of rain in the area.

According to the Climate Prediction Center, there is an El Niño advisory in place, but the strong El Niño event that is currently underway is weakening. A transition to ENSO-neutral is likely during late Northern Hemisphere spring or early summer 2016, with close to a 50% chance for La Niña conditions to develop by the fall. The CPC's 3-month seasonal outlook for Georgia shows chances for above normal rainfall for the entire state, with the greatest chances in the southern half of the state. It also shows chances for warmer than normal temperatures statewide, with the greatest chances in the eastern half of the state for April, May, and June.



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