

Southeast Region: (Information provided by the Southeast Regional Climate Center)

- Overall, temperatures in the Southeast region were above normal this February (excluding Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), especially portions of Florida, southern Georgia, Alabama and the eastern Carolinas, where mean temperatures ranged from 5 to 15 degrees F (2.8 to 8.3 degrees C) above normal. Cape Hatteras NC (1874-2019) recorded its warmest February on record, with an average mean temperature of 57.2 degrees F (14 degrees C). This was 1.6 degrees F (0.9 degrees C) warmer than the previous warmest Februarys on record: 2017 and 2018. Wilmington, NC (1871-2019) had 12 days with high temperatures in the 70s degrees F (21 degrees C), five of those days being consecutive. In Florida, it was the warmest February on record at Gainesville (1890-2019) and Key West (1871-2019), second warmest at Orlando (1952-2019), and tied for the second warmest at both Miami (1895-2019) and Tampa (1890-2019). The warmest temperatures of the month occurred February 5-8, as the Bermuda High and a large upper level ridge brought record-breaking temperatures to portions of the region. Daily maximum temperatures reached 85 degrees F (29.4 degrees C) in Jacksonville, FL (1871-2019) and 83 degrees F (28.3 degrees C), in both Wilmington NC (1871-2019) and Columbia, SC (1887-2019). Atlanta, GA (1878-2019) tied for the warmest winter (DJF) max temperature, reaching 80 degrees F (26.6 degrees C). Other stations experienced their warmest winter (DJF) day on record as well, including Montgomery, AL (1872-2019) at 86 degrees F (30 degrees C), and Gainesville, FL (1890-2019) at 91 degrees F (32.7 degrees C) on February 23rd. Daily temperature minimums were exceptionally high over parts of the region, as a persistent influx of subtropical moisture suppressed nighttime cooling during the month. The coldest reported temperature in Atlanta GA during the month was 34 degrees F (1.1 degrees C), setting a monthly record for the warmest daily minimum temperature. It is the first time since 1957 Atlanta, GA (1878-2019) experienced its lowest February minimum temperature above 32 degrees F (0 degrees C). The large-scale pattern did not usher in much cold air this month. The coldest weather occurred at the beginning of the month in association with the intense Arctic outbreak that affected the Plains and Midwest. Even as some of this cold air reached the extreme northern sections of the region, high temperatures were only 3 to 5 degrees F (1.6 to 2.7 degrees C) below average. Monthly mean temperatures were near average in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

- For the month of February, above average precipitation was seen in the northern and western parts of the Southeast region, while below average precipitation was observed across the southern and eastern parts. Muscle Shoals (1893-2019) and Huntsville (1894-2019), AL both had their wettest February on record at 14.13 inches (358.9 mm) and 13.72 inches (348.5 mm), respectively. Reidsville, NC (1962-2019) recorded 6.56 inches (166.6 mm) of rain, which was its wettest February on record. Brevard (1902-2019; 13.8 inches, 350.5 mm), Cullowhee (1909-2019; 10.4 inches, 264.1 mm), and Waynesville (1894-2019; 9.1 inches, 231.1 mm) in western NC each recorded their second wettest February on record. Cape Hatteras, NC (1874-2019) reported 3.50 inches (88.9 mm) of rain on the 4th, which was their third highest 1-day February total. The system that caused severe weather in parts of Alabama and Georgia also brought heavy rains to parts of western North Carolina that caused minor flooding and mudslides near the North Carolina, Tennessee border. In contrast, Montgomery, AL (1872-2019) reported its 4th driest February on record at 1.65 inches (41.9 mm) of precipitation. Although western North Carolina was wet this month, it wasn't very snowy. Mount Mitchell, NC (1980-2019) recorded

3.0 inches (76.2 mm) of snow on February 20th, and this turned out to be the total snowfall for the entire month, making it the second-lowest February snowfall since 1980. Washington Dulles, VA (1962-2019) reported the region's highest snow total for the month at 6.4 inches (162.6 mm), with 4.7 inches (119.4 mm) occurring on February 20th. Blacksburg, VA (1952-2019) and Roanoke, VA (1912-2019) reported 3.8 inches (96.5 mm) and 2.5 inches (63.5 mm) of snow, respectively, which was below normal for both locations.

- There were 83 severe weather reports during February. This is less than 90 percent of the median monthly frequency of 95 severe weather reports during 2000 – 2016. Of those, 85 percent (71 of 83) were wind reports. A total of 10 tornadoes (4 EF-1s and 6 EF 0s) were confirmed across the region, which is higher than the median frequency of 7 tornadoes observed during February. They were spawned by severe thunderstorms associated with two strong cyclones that crossed region during the month. A line of severe thunderstorms moved east through the region on February 12th with high winds and wind damage across parts of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. There was an EF-1 tornado with estimated wind speed of 95 mph (42.5 m/s) confirmed in Orangeburg County South Carolina. It damaged several trees and three structures. There were 3 confirmed EF-0 tornadoes in Fayette County, Henry County, and Clayton County Georgia. Several trees were uprooted and branches snapped, as well as damage to shingles from these tornadoes with winds around 75 mph (33.5 m/s). On February 23rd -24th 4 confirmed tornadoes were observed across western and central Alabama. In Lamar and Coosa counties two EF-1 tornadoes with winds 95 – 105 mph (42.5 – 46.9 m/s) were reported; and in Pickens and Fayette counties, two EF-0 tornadoes with winds 75-80 mph (33.5 – 35.8 m/s) were reported. These tornadoes snapped power poles, uprooted trees, and caused minor structural damage and even lifted a manufactured home off its foundation. On the morning of the 24th, an EF-1 tornado was confirmed in Coweta county Georgia. It had winds around 90 mph (40.2 m/s) and damaged several large trees. Two houses received damage from a falling trees, and the metal roofing was removed from a barn. Power lines and power poles were also knocked down. Damaging straight-line winds were observed across western Alabama and western Georgia as well. Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina reported the highest wind gust for the month at 121.95 mph (54.5 m/s) on February 24th, as the center of an intense low pressure system responsible for the severe weather moved across the Great Lakes.

- Small areas of moderate drought (D1) and slightly larger areas of abnormally dry (D0) conditions were present in parts of the Southeast throughout February. Although drought improvement occurred in eastern Florida, it was not enough to keep it out of abnormally dry (D0) conditions. The heavier precipitation in the northern and western parts of the region, missed the coastal areas of South Carolina, southern North Carolina and eastern Georgia, leading to an expansion of abnormally dry conditions (D0) there. Puerto Rico's drought conditions only worsened by the end of the month with abnormally dry (D0) conditions expanding, and moderate drought conditions covering more than 32 percent of the commonwealth by the end of the month. The warmer than normal February means that plants are blooming ahead of schedule. In Georgia, livestock producers, field crops, fruit and vegetable growers all noted negative impacts from too much moisture. Florida reported that most seasonal agricultural activities proceeded normally.