

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

- Temperatures were above normal across the Southeast this April and near normal in Puerto Rico. Monthly mean temperatures were at least 3 degrees F (1.7 degrees C) above average for approximately 42 percent of the 203 long-term (i.e., period of record equaling or exceeding 50 years) stations across the region. A total of 63 long-term stations observed or tied monthly mean temperatures that were ranked within their ten warmest on record. Ten stations had monthly mean temperatures above 6 degrees F (3 degrees C), including Pelion, SC (1947-2019; 2nd warmest) at 6.6 degrees F (3.3 degrees C) Cape Hatteras, NC (1874-2019; 3rd warmest) at 6.5 degrees F (3.2 degrees C), and Wallops Island, VA (1966-2019; 2nd warmest) at 6.2 degrees F (3.1 degrees C). Maximum daytime temperatures ranged from 0 to 6 degrees F (0 to 3 degrees C) above normal for the region and average nighttime minimum temperatures ranged from 0 to 9 degrees F (0 to 4.5 degrees C) above normal. The warm weather was due to the Bermuda high pressure system being positioned farther to the west immediately off of the southeastern coast. This set-up ushered in warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico, which suppressed nighttime cooling during the month. Marion, NC (1893-2019) had an average minimum temperature of 8.8 degrees F (4.4 degrees C) above normal and Danbury, NC (1946-2019) had an average minimum temperature of 8.5 degrees F (4.3 degrees C). On April 24th and 25th, maximum daytime temperatures reached 90 degrees F (32.2 degrees C) in parts of North Carolina including Concord, NC (1891-2019) and New Bern, NC (1948-2019). Typically this isn't seen until the first week of May.
- Precipitation varied across the region for April, with the wettest locations receiving up to 200 percent of their normal precipitation in parts of western North Carolina, northwestern Georgia, Alabama and southeastern Puerto Rico. The driest locations ranged from 10 to 70 percent of normal in parts of southeastern Georgia, central and eastern Florida, and northern Puerto Rico. Some parts of western North Carolina were 6 inches (152 mm) above normal, and the eastern part of Florida was 2.4 inches (61 mm) below normal. Precipitation in Puerto Rico also showed much variability, with Juncos, PR (1931-2019) being 4 inches (102 mm) above normal and San Juan, PR (1898-2019) being 1.63 inches (41 mm) below normal. St. Croix, PR (1951-2019) ranked as the 8th driest April on record, as measurable precipitation was only observed once during the month, April 22nd. The last time this occurred was in 1997. Brevard, NC (1902-2019; 1st wettest) had the highest precipitation total in the region for the month, with 14.43 inches (367 mm). This is followed by Gainesville, AL (1948-2019; 3rd wettest) at 12.71 inches (323 mm) and Pisgah Forest, NC (1939-2019; 1st wettest) at 12.61 inches (320 mm) of precipitation. Most of the maximum one-day precipitation totals across the region occurred during a severe weather outbreak on April 19th, when a low pressure system with an associated frontal boundary pushed through the area. The heavy rainfall resulted in numerous road closures due to flooding in Asheville. Indeed, Asheville, NC (1869-2019) observed its wettest April day on record with 8.97 inches (228 mm) of precipitation. The previous record was 8.70 inches (221 mm) back in 1998. Cape Hatteras, NC (1874-2019) observed its third wettest April day on record with 3.70 inches (94 mm), and Atlanta, GA (1878-2019) observed its sixth wettest April day on record with 3.37 inches (86 mm) of precipitation. A rare snowfall took place on April 2nd, as snow fell along the western edge of a low pressure system that tracked up the East Coast. Charlotte (1878-2019) measured 0.1 inches (2.54 mm) of snow, making it the 7th measurable snowfall on record for the month of April.

- There were 903 severe weather reports across the Southeast during April, which is over 350 percent of the monthly frequency of 253 reports during 2000-2017. More than 75 percent (707 of 903) of these reports occurred during the severe weather outbreak on April 19th, as a low pressure system intensified and a line of thunderstorms with embedded supercells tracked northeast through the region. A total of 655 out of the 792 April wind reports were observed with this outbreak and 52 of the 78 April tornado reports were observed. Virginia reported 19 tornados, making it the most active tornado day in Virginia in over 14 years. The strongest tornado, rated EF-3, damaged three structures and ten outbuildings in Franklin County VA. North Carolina reported 17 tornados with this outbreak, the strongest rated EF-2, which moved near Hillsborough, NC, damaging structures and downing trees. This tornado had a maximum wind speed of 115 mph and traveled over 12 miles. The line of thunderstorms stalled out temporarily over Georgia, upstate South Carolina, and western North Carolina, producing flash flooding that washed out roads across the area. There were numerous power outages associated with this event, and North Carolina topped the list with over 70,000. Hundreds of flights were cancelled due to the severe weather, and thousands were delayed. Although no fatalities were reported with the tornadic activity, two fatalities were due to windblown trees falling on houses and one reported fatality in Florida due to hydroplaning. Another severe weather event occurred on April 14th when a very potent storm system moved out of the Southern Plains states and into the southeastern region. A line of storms produced damaging straight line winds, golf ball sized hail in Polk County, GA, and several tornadoes across Alabama and Georgia. The strongest of these tornadoes was an EF-1 in Tuscaloosa County, AL. Peak wind was estimated at 105 miles per hour. This tornado uprooted some hardwood trees, removed the roof off a small barn, and killed a cow. There were ten other tornadoes in Alabama associated with this system, seven were EF-0, and three were EF-1. The severe weather system also produced five tornadoes in Georgia; three were EF-0 and two were EF-1.
- Drought conditions changed little across the region for the month of April. Moderate drought (D1) covered about 8 percent of the Southeast (down from 9 percent at the beginning of the month), in an area stretching from the South Carolina coast towards east/central Georgia and from southern Alabama to the western part of the Florida Panhandle. Abnormally dry (D0) conditions covered about 30 percent of the region from the southern coastal area of North Carolina, southward through most of South Carolina, southern Georgia, southeastern Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. A small part of the eastern coast of Florida also saw abnormally dry (D0) conditions. Drought conditions expanded in Puerto Rico, with around 16 percent in moderate drought (D1), and 44 percent in abnormally dry (D0) conditions. In Georgia, agricultural producers made a lot of progress this month in crop planting and chemical treatments. Some farmers were able to get in their first cutting of hay. The above average rainfall that occurred in parts of North Carolina this month is causing problems for wheat farmers, who are having issues with pests, especially mites. According to the North Carolina Division of Air Quality (DAQ), pollen concentrations from tree grains reached a peak of 3268 grains per cubic meter across central North Carolina on April 10th. The total pollen count for April 10th was 3278 grains per cubic meter, only second to the record of 3524 grains per cubic meter in 2010. The severe weather outbreak on April 19th caused some damage to several fruit and vegetable crops across north-central Florida.