

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

- Temperatures were near average across much of the Southeast region and Puerto Rico for the month of August. Monthly mean temperatures were within 2 degrees F (1.1 degrees C) of average for 80 percent of the 178 long-term (i.e., period of record equaling or exceeding 50 years) stations across the region. There were six stations that observed their warmest August on record, including Cape Hatteras, NC (1874-2020), and Sarasota, FL (1911-2020). Maximum temperatures ranged from 3.7 degrees F (2.1 degrees C) above normal in Elizabeth City, NC (1934-2020) to 5.2 degrees F (2.8 degrees C) below normal in Oneonta, AL (1894-2020). Daily temperature minimums ranged from 5.9 degrees F (3.3 degrees C) above normal in Clayton, NC (1955-2020) to 2.4 degrees F (1.3 degrees C) below normal in Haleyville, AL (1902-2020). High rates of evaporation and the persistent influx of tropical moisture suppressed nighttime cooling during the month. Indeed, there were several stations that saw minimum temperatures above 70 degrees F (21 degrees C) for the entire month including, Wilmington, NC (1870-2020) and Norfolk, VA (1874-2020). The warmest weather of the month occurred from the 9th through the 12th, as the circulation around the Bermuda High, situated off the Atlantic coast, transported warm, humid air over much of the Southeast region. Daily maximum temperatures exceeded 90 degrees F (32 degrees C) across portions of every state, with a few stations reaching 100 degrees F (38 degrees C), including Muscle Shoals, AL (1893-2020). In contrast, the coolest weather of the month across the Southeast occurred from the 17th – 20th, as the circulation around a departing mid-latitude cyclone ushered in relatively cooler and drier air from Canada. Daily minimum temperatures fell below 70 degrees F (21 degrees C) across portions of every state, with a few locations in the higher elevations of North Carolina and Virginia falling below 60 degrees F (16 degrees C).
- Precipitation was slightly above average across the Southeast region during August, with a few wet and dry extremes recorded. The driest locations were found across southern Florida, eastern Georgia, eastern North Carolina, and western Puerto Rico. Monthly precipitation totals ranged from 70 to less than 25 percent of normal across these locations. Only one long-term station (i.e., period of record equaling or exceeding 50 years) observed August precipitation that ranked in the top five driest on record, Coloso, PR (1899-2020; 5th driest), which received 6.18 inches (157 mm) of precipitation, over 3 inches (76 mm) below normal. In contrast, the wettest locations were located across Virginia, western North Carolina, northern Georgia, and northern Alabama. Precipitation totals ranged from 150 to 300 percent of normal. Indeed, Statesville, NC (1901-2020) received 15.78 inches (401 mm) of precipitation, which was more than 11 inches (279 mm) above average, making this the wettest August on record. From the 3rd through the 5th, Hurricane Isaias impacted parts of South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, with numerous reports of localized flooding. Williamsburg, VA (1948-2020) received over 5 inches (127 mm) of rain from the storm. From August 20th – 22nd, Hurricane Laura passed by Puerto Rico, dropping over 6 inches (152 mm) of precipitation across the southern and eastern portions. There were several reports of flooding and landslides, including two people that had to be rescued due to river flooding from the rapidly rising Toro Negro River. On August 31st, a line of slow-moving thunderstorms brought over 5 inches (127 mm) of rain to Johnston County, NC. Tragically, a 5-year old girl and her 4-year old brother were swept away in the flood waters.
- There were 520 reports of severe weather across the Southeast during August, which is 176 percent of the median monthly frequency of 295 reports during 2000-2018. There were 31 confirmed tornadoes reported for the month (11 EF-0, 15 EF-1, 4 EF-2, 1 EF-3), almost 4 times the monthly

average of 8. A total of 22 of these tornadoes were associated with Hurricane Isaias. The strongest of these tornadoes spawned as a rare EF-3 tornado from Hurricane Isaias in Bertie County, NC on August 4th. It completely destroyed several mobile homes, flattening some and leaving unrecognizable bits of debris for others. Maximum wind speed was estimated to be 140 - 145 mph (63 - 65 m/s). Unfortunately, there were 14 injuries and 2 fatalities reported. Hurricane Isaias made landfall near Ocean Isle Beach, NC on August 3rd, with peak winds of 85 mph (38 m/s). Federal Point, NC reported a wind gust of 99 mph (44 m/s) and Oak Island, NC reported a wind gust of 87 mph (39 m/s). Unfortunately, the 8.5-9.5 feet of storm surge destroyed many dunes and sea turtle nests in Oak Island, NC. At the height of the storm, over 53,000 customers in Brunswick County, NC were without power. There were 27 reports of hail for the month, with the largest being tennis-ball sized (2.5 inches) in Gordon County, GA on August 3rd. There were 457 wind reports for the month, which is 174 percent of the average (262 reports). On August 23rd a mesonet station in St. George Island, FL reported a wind gust of 75 mph (34 m/s) due to a passing squall line. Damaging straight line winds associated with severe thunderstorms impacted Bedford County, VA on August 24th. There were reports of several trees and large tree branches downed from these winds leaving over 3,000 households without power, however no injuries or fatalities were reported. Unfortunately, there were two lightning deaths in the region for the month. A 77-year old man and a 42-year old man were struck while cleaning Hurricane Isaias debris from their yard on August 5th.

- Drought conditions decreased across the Southeast for August, while Puerto Rico remained drought-free the entire month. At the beginning of the month, small pockets of moderate drought (D1) surrounded by abnormally dry conditions (D0) were in Georgia, Alabama, and western Florida. By the end of the month, however, only small pockets of abnormally dry conditions (D0) were found in Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and southern Puerto Rico. The citrus growing region in Florida continued to experience warm conditions, and grove activities continued as normal with irrigation in areas that received lesser amounts of rainfall. Peanut digging continued throughout the Florida Panhandle, but sporadic rain events delayed some harvesting as the peanuts will need to dry out. Due to wet conditions, a few peanut producers continue to battle leaf spot and white mold. Frequent rain events prevented some producers from cutting and harvesting hay in Georgia. The increase in rain, paired with high humidity, slowed the drying down of corn, and many farmers were battling with whiteflies and boll rot in cotton, and white mold in peanuts. A few counties in Alabama are in need of sunshine and dry weather for the corn harvest to start. Meanwhile, producers were reporting fall army worms in several pastures and hayfields recovering from dry conditions. In some South Carolina counties, growers were continuing to see a fair amount of disease from the recent wet conditions. Farmers also noticed caterpillar populations climbing on fall brassicas. However, cattle and pasture conditions were fairing well.