



ATLANTIC COAST OBSERVER NETWORK, MD / DE / DC CHAPTER WITH DATA FROM NEARBY AREAS

2001 ENDS OF A WARM, DRY NOTE

The unseasonable warm dry weather of November continued into **December 2001**. The warmth was the highlight of the month. This December was one of the warmest Decembers on record. Wilmington NWS DE reported its warmest December and its driest July—December period on record. It was also snow-less over most of the area.

TEMPERATURE

The first three weeks of the month were above normal. Temperatures rose into the 70's across the two state region on the 1st, 4th, 5th and 6th at many stations. The only observer's station which did not record a 70 degree reading was **Jim Canavan of Wilmington 4 NNE**.

The warmest day of the month was the 5th. Temperatures rose into the mid 70's in Central and Southeast Maryland west of the Chesapeake Bay. The warmest ACON station was **Jug Bay Wetlands** located at **Lothian**. They reached 79 degrees. Close by with 78 was **Al Kreninik of Parkton 5 SW**, **Joe Terry of Forest Glen**, and **Stan Rossen of Glenmont 1NNE**.

Beginning on the 7th temperatures began a slow decrease towards normal. This trend was briefly put on hold around the 14th to 18th and 23rd—24th. Christmas day saw seasonal temperatures which according to this December's standard was cold. The coldest day was the 30th. Many stations saw temperatures remain at or below freezing for the first time this winter season.

This month minimum temperatures remained in the double digits at all stations except at **Eagle Rock** which is located in the Western Maryland Mountains where it dropped to 2 degrees on the 30th and 31st. **Jug Bay Wetlands**, east of Washington D.C. in Anne Arundel County, observed 10 degrees on the 31st, the second coldest this month.

The first freezing temperature recorded at Washington (National) Reagan

Airport occurred on the 22nd. This broke the old record for first freezing temperature which occurred on December 14, 1980.

PRECIPITATION

December ended a dry year with below normal precipitation across the entire region. Precipitation was fairly evenly distributed. Most stations were in the 1.75" to 2.00" range.

Almost all of this month's rains fell from the 8th to the 24th. The heaviest rains fell on the 8th. Amounts generally ranged from 0.50" to 0.65". The heaviest amount of 0.72" was recorded by **Jim Canavan of Wilmington 4 NNE**. The least amount was reported by **John Zyla of Ridge**. 0.11" of rain fell.

The other period of a decent rains was on the 11th. Amounts generally ranged from 0.25" to 0.50". This time **John Zyla of Ridge** recorded 0.93", the heaviest rainfall of the month.

Washington (National) Reagan Airport reported its heaviest daily rainfall since August 23rd on December 8th. 0.57" fell.

SNOWFALL

What snow!! Not a flake fell at most stations across the region. The only observer to measure any snow this season so far has been Rebecca Harvey of Eagle Rock located in Western Maryland's Garrett County. This month 15.2" fell with the heaviest daily snowfall of 4.0" on the 30th.

2001

2001 will be remembered in many areas as a very dry year. The driest region was the northern portions of the region with Washington County being the driest where less than 27" of rain fell. The wettest areas was St Marys County, Howard County, and portions of Montgomery County were over 40" fell. Flooding rains hit the portions of Washington DC on August 8.

EXTREMES REPORTED BY

ACON OBSERVERS

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE

Jug Bay Wetlands	79
Glenmont 1 NNE	78
Parkton 5 SW	78
Forest Glen	78

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE

Eagle Rock	2
Jug Bay Wetlands	10
Fallston 2 NW	11
U of D Georgetown DE	12

WARMEST AVG. TEMP.

Ridge	47.0
Baltimore 2 SE	45.5
Hollywood	44.9

COLDEST AVG. TEMP.

Eagle Rock	36.0
Hanover 2 S PA	37.7
Westminster 4 SSE	39.6

MAXIMUM PRECIPITATION

Eagle Rock	2.97
Wilmington 4 NNE	2.63
Hollywood	2.38

MINIMUM PRECIPITATION

Smithsburg 2 NE	1.51
Owings Mills	1.65
U of D Georgetown, DE	1.71

MAXIMUM SNOWFALL

Eagle Rock	15.2
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An extreme heat wave occurred early in August. Temperatures rose to above 100 degrees at many areas. Temperatures remained above zero east of the mountains.

There were no tropical storms. A deadly tornado struck the University of Maryland campus on September 24. Another damaging tornado struck Hanover PA the same day.

OBSERVER COMMENTS FOR DECEMBER 2001

Gary Gallaher of Bear 2 SW, DE

Warmest December since 1990. The first 20 days were quite warm. The last 11 days were more seasonable. The week after Christmas was the coldest. Precipitation below normal for the 10th month this year. Snow has yet to fall this season.

Jug Bay Wetlands

13th—Morning fog, breezy, geese honking.

Al Kreinik of Parkton 5 SW

December started out with record warmth, turning quite cold during the 4th week. Still no relief from the drought conditions. Spring completely dry.

9th—Heavy frost.

18th—Gusty winds all day.

Marty Sharrow of Owings Mills

5th—Mostly sunny with unseasonably warm temperatures.

8th—Overcast with light rain and much cooler.

18th—Pre-dawn rain; clearing, windy, and cooler.

Joe Manfre of Baltimore 2SE

5th—Sunny, warm with record warmth.

30th—Sunny, windy, cold.

Ralph Hartsock of Westminster 4 SSE

Another month with below normal precipitation.

5th—Partly cloudy with record warmth.

8th—Yes!, Yes!, Yes! A good rainy day.

13th—Rain, thunderstorm in PM. Fog also.

31st—Sunny and very cold.

Bobby Miller of Millers 4 NE

December continued the trend of below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures. The final three months of 2001 were the driest 3 months period on record. This was the second warmest December. December 1984, with an average temperature of 42.1, is the warmest.

5th—75 degrees tied the record high for December set on 12/7/98.

14th—Thunder 2:55 PM. Brief moderate to heavy shower. Dry slot of storm causes gusty WSW winds to 39.

18th—Early showers, minimum barometer 29.26".

28th—Snow showers 3:45—3:55 PM.

Rob Cohen of Potomac 4 N

1st, 5th, 14th, & 15th—Record warmth.

29th—Very light snow flurry observed 1 mile from station.

Kevin Shaw of Gaithersburg 2 WNW

Second warmest December with an average temperature of 39.9. Warmest was 40.1 set in 1998. The high temperature of 74 on the 5th was 2 degrees shy of the December record of 76 set on 12/8/80 and tied on 12/6/98.

5th & 14th—Record maximum temperature

8th—0.61" tied daily rainfall record set in 1998.

29th—Snow flurries, the first of the season.

Joe Terry of Forest Glen

5th—78 degrees! Close to the extreme early December warmth of 3 years ago.

14th—Unusually high dewpoint for December. It reached 61 by mid afternoon.

20th—Strong wind accompanying AM FROPA. Power out from 0630 to 0750. Transformer explosions of very bright orange light lit up entire western portion of the neighborhood just before dawn.

Floyd Abell of Hollywood

Second warmest December.

1st—Fair. Station record high temperature for date.

8th to 13th—Light early morning fog.

23rd—Increasing clouds with late evening rain. Breezy evening.

29th—Variable clouds with late day sprinkles.

John Zyla of Ridge

6th—63 degrees at midnight.

18th—Greatest 24 hour barometric pressure change in station history of 1.04" (30.30' to 29.26").

22nd—Latest first freeze of the season.

Greg Keefer of Hagerstown 1 E

Even though the last 8 days were way below normal December 2001 was the 7th warmest on record with an average of 39.7. Last December was the 5th coldest. The warmest ever was in 1956 with a 42.2 average.

3rd—Very heavy frost this morning made everything a beautiful white then dense fog formed at sunrise.

5th—Record warmth of 77. Old record was 76 set in 1998.

28th—Cloudy cold and windy today with snow flurries throughout the morning. West winds gusting to 30 MPH.

Jim Vaughn of Smithsburg 2 NE

No measurable snow has fallen this season. This set a record. The old record for the first measurable snowfall was set on 12/28/99. This was the fourth driest December and also the third warmest December.

1st, 13th, 14th—Daily record maximum temperature set.

2nd, 6th, 12th to 14th, 17th, 18th—Daily record high minimum temperature set.

Rob Rickell of Hanover 1 S, PA

8th—Ice Pellets

Let us all wish **Bill Hudelson of South Bowie** a quick recovery. Bill suffered a severe heart attack and was discharged from the hospital on the 18th.