



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

DRYNESS INTENSIFIES ANOTHER MONTH OF ABOVE NORMAL TEMPS

February 2002 was an extremely dry and almost snow-less month. Record to near record dryness along with mild temperatures were the norm. Drought conditions worsened this month. Water flows in the regions streams and rivers were at quite low levels for this time of the year. On March 2 **Herb Close** of **Manchester 1 SW** visited the Pretty Boy Reservoir. It is one of the reservoirs that supplies water to the City of Baltimore. He said that the water level appeared to be 40 feet below the spillway. February was also a windy month.

SNOWFALL

The last month of winter normally is the snowiest but not this year. Portions of the region east of the mountains received measurable snowfall on only two days, the 4th and 7th.

The most widespread snow event occurred on the 4th. A cold front moving through the region brought snow showers. Many ACON observers reported strong winds along with a brief period of heavy wet snow with the passage of the front. **Joe Terry** of **Forest Glen** reported that an intense snow shower moved through his station around noon. It lasted 18 minutes and reduced visibility to 250 feet. **John Zyla** of **Ridge** reported that enough fell to cover the trees and made everything white, but it all melted in a hour. **Gary Gallaher** of **Bear 2 SW DE** reported a wind driven snow squall which reduced visibility to 1/16th of a mile. The greatest amount (1.0") was reported by **Stan Rossen** of **Glenmont 1 NNE**.

Snow and sleet turned to rain the morning of the 7th from Montgomery County north into Baltimore and Carroll Counties and York County Pennsylvania.

PRECIPITATION

Precipitation was at record to near record lows this month. Wilmington NWS broke its old record by over 4 tenths of an inch. Baltimore NWS saw its driest February in 132 years of record keeping at the Custom House and BWI. Another station to break its long time record was ACON observer **Greg Keefer** of **Hagerstown 1 E**

where 0.20" fell which broke its old record of 0.21" set in 1968. Records at Hagerstown data back to 1897. Many other ACON observers reported record dryness this month. See Observer Comments for details.

Most of this months precipitation fell during the first 10 days of the month. Generally the heaviest fell on the 7th. The greatest amount observed by an ACON observer was 0.66" by **John Zyla** of **Ridge**. The greatest amount reported by a non-ACON observer was 0.81" at Salisbury NWS ASOS at Wicomico County Airport. The only other rain after the 10th fell on the 20th and 26th. Amounts were generally a tenth of an inch or less.

TEMPERATURE

The last month of winter continued the trend which began last fall, that is the temperatures averaged above normal. This was the second warmest winter at **Hagerstown 1E** according to ACON observer **Greg Keefer**. Only the winter of 1931-32 was warmer.

The month began on a very warm note. Temperatures rose into the 60's to the upper 70's before a strong cold front moved through the afternoon of the 1st making this the warmest day of the month at almost all reporting stations. As a result of the strong cold front temperatures on the 2nd were some 30 degrees colder. Up and down temperatures continued throughout the month, but not to that extreme.

Rebecca Harvey of **Eagle Rock** was the only ACON observer to observe a zero degree reading this month.

The month ended on a cold note. The final two days were cold and windy.

EXTREMES REPORTED BY

ACON OBSERVERS

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE

Hollywood	79
Ridge	77

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE

Eagle Rock	0
Hanover 2 S PA	10

WARMEST AVG. TEMP.

Ridge	43.4
Baltimore 2 SE	43.0

COLDEST AVG. TEMP.

Eagle Rock	31.3
Hanover 2 S	35.4

MAXIMUM PRECIPITATION

Eagle Rock	1.73
Ridge	0.73
Hollywood	0.65

MINIMUM PRECIPITATION

Hagerstown 1 E	0.20
Smithsburg 2 NE	0.24
Manchester 1 SW	0.31

MAXIMUM SNOWFALL

Eagle Rock	16.7
Gaithersburg 2 WNW	1.3
Millers 4 NE	1.2

MINIMUM SNOWFALL

Six Stations	T
--------------	---

NEW STATIONS

Three new stations have been added this month. **Jeff Stoudt** has decided to join ACON. Many of us know him. Jeff's precipitation only station is located in Anne Arundel County just east of Laurel. The other two are Georgetown Sussex County Airport, and Salisbury Wicomico County Airport. Both are NWS ASOS stations.

WEATHER CONFERENCE

Mark your calendars for August 16-17-18. Roger Brickner will be holding a conference at his Weather Museum. More information to follow.

Long time member **Clinton Bubb** of **Morganza** is leaving our membership. He is moving to New York. **Thanks Clinton** for your support and data over the years!

OBSERVER COMMENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2002

Gary Gallaher of Bear 2 SW, DE

Driest February on record. (35 years of record dating back to 1963.) The ground was quite dry at months end. If this was April it would be on the dry side for seeds to germinate. The ground permitted planting some early crops in the garden. This winter was the second warmest (39.0) behind 1997-98 (39.3), and also the second driest (5.07") behind 1980-81 (4.15").

4th—Mid afternoon snow squall which brought with it strong winds, and wet snow which lowered visibility to below 1/16 mile.

Al Kreinik of Parkton 5 SW

1st — Heavy fog visibility 1/16 mile at 6:30 AM. Rapid drop of temperature 1—2 PM.

7th — 6:45 AM light snow. 7:15—7:50 AM heavy snow with large flakes, melts rapidly. Total morning snowfall 1.0".

Marty Sharrow of Owings Mills

1st — Thunder 1350 hours, breezy, brief storm, clearing and colder.

4th — AM snow squall, partly sunny windy and colder.

19th — High cloudiness and sun, much milder.

24th — Chilly start, Azure blue skies and milder.

26th — Thunder 1930 hours.

Joe Manfre of Baltimore 2SE

4th —Brief light snow showers.

26th —Light rain showers. Thunder in late PM.

Herb Close of Manchester 1 S

Warmest winter in station history (13 years) 38.2 degrees. February was the third warmest. The average maximum temperature tied the 1990 for the warmest. It was a windy month with only two days with a peak wind gust under 20 MPH.

Ralph Hartsock of Westminster 4 SSE

4th — Snow shower and very windy Peak gust 48 MPH.

11th — Early showers, clearing, colder, very windy.

Bobby Miller of Millers 4 NE

Some Winter stats: Warmest (39.7, 6.7 degrees above average), driest (4.71", 5.37" below average), and least snowfall (8.1"). For February—second warmest, and driest. February was the driest month ever.

1st — Record high. Gusty SW winds in afternoon after zero visibility for in AM.

26th — Some evening showers. Distant thunder 7:30 PM.

Lynn Albright of Fallston 2 NW

8th — Heavy morning frost.

Rich Giannola of Laurel JHU/APL

4th — Heavy snow shower 1150—1230 hours.

13th — Right sundog at 7:50 AM.

25th — Many contrails in sky at 8 AM. Solar halo 1:55 PM.

Rich Giannola of Olney 1 S

1st — AM fog. Light rain with cold front passage mid afternoon.

10th — Morning fog and occasional drizzle. Light rain in the

PM which ended early in the morning of the 11th.

Rob Cohen of Potomac 4 N

4th— Heavy snow squall with thunder around noon.

7th — Rain, began briefly as snow and sleet.

26th — Thunder 7 PM.

Kevin Shaw of Gaithersburg 2 WNW

Another incredible warm and dry month, record breaking in so many ways. Driest February ever, warmest ever average maximum temperature. Cooler nights with the predominantly dry air kept the all-time mean record from being set.

Joe Terry of Forest Glen

Another relatively wary and very dry month. No maximum temperatures below 40 degrees. Unusually windy considering there was little storminess. Total precipitation for the past 5 months is 5.57".

4th — Brief but intense snow shower around noon. From sunny to heavy snow in 10 minutes points out its rapid speed. Snow duration was about 18 minutes, during which visibility was briefly reduced to 250 feet. Three loud rumbles of thunder were heard. The temperature dropped from 42 degrees to 32 degrees in 10 minutes, allowing the 0.7" of wet snow to accumulate.

24th — Minimum relative humidity only 16%.

Bill Hudelson of South Bowie

1st—Dense fog during night and early morning. Rain mid afternoon with frontal passage

8th — Heavy AM frost.

25th — Mostly overcast. Lunar halo at 2100 hours.

Floyd Abell of Hollywood

Driest February on record.

1st—79 degrees—Record high for the date.

4th—Afternoon snow shower

27th—Variable cloudy—few AM snow flurries.

John Zyla of Ridge

4th—Surprise heavy wet snowfall of 0.3" from noon to 1:30 PM, enough to cover the trees and make everything look white. It melted an hour later.

10th — Last rain of the month.

Greg Keefer of Hagerstown 1 E

8th —Cold start with heavy frost. Became bright sunny and warm with a high of 60.

14th—A rare cold morning. Low temp 13 this morning.

25th — Partly cloudy and very warm high of 62.

Jim Vaughn of Smithsburg 2 NE

Driest February and the lowest February snowfall in the quarter century that I have been keeping records. It was also the windiest month, average wise, and the sixth warmest February. It was the driest Winter (3.74"), second warmest (38.4), and second lowest snowfall (6.9").

Rob Rickell of Hanover 1 S, PA

4th—Snow showers.

7th—AM wet snow and sleet.