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

RECORD DRYNESS

For the second time in only seven months extreme dryness again hit the region. This latest extreme dry spell began on February 13th and continued through the end of March.

Only one ACON station in Maryland and Delaware observed more than an inch of precipitation, **Eagle Rock**. Observer **Rebecca Harvey** reported 2.56". As a result of the lack of precipitation observed snowfall east of Frostburg ran from zero to 0.5". **John Zyla** of **Ridge**, whose station in extreme southern St Marys County which is not known for snowfall extremes, reported 0.5".

Temperatures this month averaged from slightly above normal to 2 degrees above. Maximums saw the greatest above normal departures due to the dry conditions.

Dry conditions along with high winds and pre-green-up of vegetation substantially increased the fire danger especially the last half of the month. Numerous brush and field fires were reported across the region.

March began on a quiet, mild note. The 1st saw mid to upper 20's in the morning and upper 40's to lower 50's in the afternoon. Showers and some with thunder moved in the morning of the 2nd. Rainfall amounts were less than a quarter of an inch. For a majority of ACON stations this was the heaviest daily precipitation this month. A few flurries were observed the evening of the 2nd and the morning of the 3rd. East of Allegany County the only measurable snow fell in Carroll County. Both **Herb Close** of **Manchester 1 S** and **Bobby Miller** of **Millers 4 NE** observed 0.1".

Windy and much warmer weather moved in on the 9th. The unseasonable warmth lasted to the 14th. The 12th saw showers and cooler, but still above normal temperatures. The 13th began with fog. Afternoon temperatures rose into the low to mid 80's at almost every ACON station

east of Frostburg. **Karyn Molines** of **Jug Bay Wetlands** recorded 87 while **Greg Klein** of **Westminster 5 SSE** recorded 77° and **Dave Bryant** of **Annapolis 2 N**, whose station is close to the Severn River, recorded 78.

Light showers, seasonal temperatures and windy conditions returned on the 14th. 50+ MPH wind gusts were observed by the following ACON observers on either the 14th and or 15th: 57 MPH on the 14th and 52 MPH on the 15th by **Jim Vaughn** of **Smithsburg 2 NE**, 52 MPH on the 14th and 50 MPH on the 15th by **Greg Keefer** of **Hagerstown 1 E**, and 51 MPH on the 15th by **Rich Giannola** of **Laurel JHU/APL**.

The first day of Spring saw cold, windy conditions with some light snow showers especially in the southeastern portions of the region. Measurable snow was reported by the following ACON observers east of Garrett County on the 21st and or the 22nd: **John Zyla** of **Ridge** 0.5", **Brian Smith** of **Oxon Hill** 0.2", and **Floyd Abell** of **Hollywood** 0.1".

March went out on a warm note. From the 27th to the 30th maximum temperatures were generally in the 60's. Temperatures on the 31st were generally in the mid 70's to around 80°.

For comments concerning record precipitation totals reported by ACON observers see the observer notes page.. Also see page 3 for the history of Dan Hanson's Millersville 1 SE station which closed at the end of the month.

Below are record minimum March precipitation reported by NWS stations*

EXTREMES REPORTED BY ACON OBSERVERS

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE

Jug Bay Wetlands	87
Millersville 1 SE	86
Pasadena 3 SW	86
Glenmont 1 NNE	86
Forest Glen	86

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE

Eagle Rock	12
Davis 3 SE WV	12
Frostburg	16

WARMEST AVG. TEMP.

Ridge	48.4
Hollywood	48.1

COLDEST AVG. TEMP.

Davis 3 SE WV	31.8
Eagle Rock	35.1
Frostburg	36.1

MAXIMUM PRECIPITATION

Davis 3 SE WV	3.34
Eagle Rock	2.56
LaVale	0.84

MINIMUM PRECIPITATION

Potomac 4 N	0.02
Jug Bay Wetlands	0.04
Hollywood	0.05

MAXIMUM SNOWFALL

Davis 3 SE WV	21.3
Eagle Rock	14.1
Frostburg	1.7
Ridge	0.5

Station	Year began	Total	Old record / year	
Washington	1871	0.05"	Old 0.57 / 1910	*Source: NWS Sterling, Wakefield, and Mt. Holly web sites.
Washington Dulles	1963	0.07"	Old 0.99 / 1981	
Salisbury	1906	0.15	Old 0.55 / 1921	
Baltimore	1871	0.18"	Old 0.46 / 1910	
Wilmington	1894	0.29"	Old 0.81 / 1966	

OBSERVER COMMENTS FOR MARCH 2006

Gary Gallaher of Bear 2 SW, DE

Driest March since records began in 1962. March was the third driest month ever behind 0.08" in May 1964 & 0.14" in October 2000. From Feb 13 to Mar 31 0.25" of precip fell. Humidity low this month - only rose to 90% or higher on 8 days.

Nate Mullins of LaVale

Driest March in 15 years of record. Old record 1.03" in 1995.

2nd - Early morning thunderstorm.

13th - Second earliest 80 degree day Earliest is 3/8/2000.

Dan Hanson of Millersville 1 SE

Last month of records at Millersville. See page 3 for the history of weather observing at Millersville 1 SE.

Jeff Stoudt of Laurel 2 E

21st - 1st day of spring brought some flurries.

Al Kreinik of Parkton 5 SW

Record breaking dry month. Burn band issued by the state.

2nd - Early AM glaze.

12th - Rainbow @ 4:45 PM.

13th - Heavy AM fog.

28th - Some AM fog.

Marty Sharrow of Owings Mills

13th - Early fog, mostly sunny and warm!

21st - Increasing clouds with a few flurries.

Joe Manfre of Baltimore 2SE

17th - Cloudy, few rain drops and snow flurries, then partly cloudy, windy, cold.

Herb Close of Manchester 1 SW

March was the driest March on record (18 years) and the second all-time driest month.

2nd & 3rd - Dusting of snow the night of the 2nd and the morning of the 3rd.

Ralph Hartsock of Westminster 4 SSE

15th - Few flurries, sun and windy again

28th - Cloudy, milder, overnight light rain.

Greg Klein of Westminster 5 SSE

A dry, boring weather month.

Bobby Miller of Millers 4 NE

Driest March on record. Fields plowed but no planting. Some brush and woods fires due to dry, windy weather.

2nd - Trace sleet, freezing rain before sunrise.

13th - Heavy fog @ 6 AM, windy in PM.

16th - Rapid increasing clouds late afternoon.

Ray Muller of Westminster City

Driest March for the City

2nd - Barometer fell to 29.41" with cold front passage.

Manuel Farfan of Frederick 4 N

14th - Very windy day with temps falling into the low 50's all day long.

24th - Snow showers this morning, then mostly cloudy.

Rebecca Harvey of Eagle Rock

Maximum snow cover 4" on the 1st and the 4th.

1st - Thunder

Rich Giannola of JHU/APL

20th - Solar halo at 12:55 PM.

Rob Cohen of Potomac 4 N

Driest month is 27 years of record keeping.

21st - Flurry at noon and 11 PM.

Rich Giannola of Olney 1 S

Driest month in 20 years of records.

10th - First crocus bloomed.

Stan Rossen of Glenmont 1 NNE

Driest month here in over 29 1/2 years of records. Old record dry month was October 2000 when 0.08" fell. Prior to this year there were only 7 times in March when less than 3.00" of precipitation fell.

Kevin Shaw of Gaithersburg 2 WNW

Driest month on record. Old record was 0.25" set last September. Old March record was 1.33" set in 1986. This was the third March since 1980 that the minimum temperature failed to fall into the teens. Daily temperature records were broken on the 10th (78°), and 11th (73°) and tied on the 13th (84°). Temperatures hit the 80 degree mark on the 13th and 31st.

Joe Terry of Forest Glen

Driest March and the second driest month ever

13th - 86° Highest temperature so early in the season in the 11 years of station records.

21st - Periods of light PM snow. No accumulation until a light dusting late in the evening.

Brian Smith of Oxon Hill

21st - -SNPL 1300-1500, -SN 2100-2400. Snow depth T at 2400

22nd - -SN 0000-0100

Floyd Abell of Hollywood

Driest month recorded at Floyd Weather Station.

21st - Early afternoon snow & drizzle—late night flurries.

22nd - Snow till about 1:30 AM then fair, breezy.

John Zyla of Ridge

21st - Late season snow flurries 12:15 - 2 PM 0.1" accumulation.

22nd - Heavy snow 12:15 AM to 1:30 AM 0.3" accumulation.

Max Hutto of Smithsburg 1.5 SW

2nd - Warmer AM with showers, not as warm PM, breezy, cloudy.

30th - AM haze, Partly cloudy, warmer, breezy

Greg Keefer of Hagerstown 1 E

Second driest March. Driest 0.08" in 1910.

13th - Very warm 81°. Daily record 86 set in 1990.

Jim Vaughn of Smithsburg 2 NE

Driest March on record. Old record 1.09" set in 1987. Second lowest snowfall total for March. Record 0.0" set in 2000.

Lance Shaffer of Sterling 4 N VA

26th - Clouds again, some peaks of sun, breezy at times.

Dave Leshar of Davis 3 SE WV

Max snow depth 7" on the 1st and 26th.

Compiled by Gary Gallaher, MD/DE ACON Data Collector and Report Writer, from data received from dedicated observers. Without your observations each month this report will not be possible.

MILLERSVILLE 1 SE MD 1976 - 2006

Millersville 1SE, MD is now closed (as of 4/1/06) after more than 23 years of daily records. I was down at my parent's house last weekend to take down the equipment. Closing on the house is on 4/21, and my parents will then be living in Maine fulltime.

It was a sad moment for me as it was where I started my weather record keeping back in 1976 at the tender age of 10 with a manual thermometer and lawn rain gauge. In 1977, dad bought a Heathkit digital anemometer and thermometer and I was hooked. In 1983 I bought and assembled a Heathkit ID-4001 with the money I saved from mowing lawns and the "official" daily record began. In 1988 I upgraded to the Heathkit ID-5001 system and in 1989 I started automated record keeping with the first incarnation of my WxSolution software which I still use today. In June 1991, record was suspended as I moved the computer system to my townhouse in Baltimore but my parents still had their own ID-5001. In September 1993, automated records resumed a couple of days after a F-1 tornado passed over the house blowing down a couple of trees and breaking one window in the house. As you may know, no measurement of wind speed was recorded because the power had gone out shortly before the storm hit and I didn't have any backup power -- it is still a sore spot to this day! In 1998 I moved to Massachusetts and left periodic maintenance of the station to my dad and my brother. In 2003 I added a Davis Vantage Pro system as a backup system just two weeks before Isabel. The Davis system enabled the records to continue through the four-day power outage resulting from Isabel.

Some highlights of the station record:

Temperature:

Highest: 105° on 7/15/1995
Lowest: -10° on 1/22/1984 and 2/6/1996
Warmest month: 81.6° 7/1995
Coldest month: 24.6° 12/1989

Pressure:

Highest: 30.92" in 2/1990
Lowest: 28.49" on 3/13/1993 (Superstorm of '93)

Rainfall:

Wettest day: 7.24" on 9/15-16/1999 (Hurricane Floyd)
Wettest month: 11.94" 3/1994
Wettest year: 67.29" 2003

Snowfall:

Snowiest day: 23.5" 2/11/1983 (Blizzard of '83)
Snowiest month: 32.1 1/1996
Snowiest season: 64.9" 1995-96

Wind:

Highest measured gust: 58 mph on 3/6/1997
Highest estimated gust: 80 mph on 9/27/1993 (F-1 tornado)

But not to worry, I have not abandoned Anne Arundel County as I set up an automated station (Davis Vantage Pro) at my brother's house in Pasadena, MD (about 10 miles NNE) last Christmas. His station is now online at www.thunderheadtech.com/Pasadena.

Dan Hanson
4/4/2006