

The Alabama Climate Report

Brought to you by the Office of the Alabama Climatologist

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As we have previously noted (more than once), Alabama's tornado season extends from Jan. 1 to the end of December. However, while tornadoes can occur in Alabama during any month of the year, April is the peak month for tornado activity.

To remind ourselves of how bad it can be, let's look at a couple of April tornado systems that caused deaths and major damage.

Sunday, April 8, was the 20th anniversary of the April 8, 1998, tornado system that dropped three tornadoes along a path that stretched from Pickens County near Gordo to St. Clair County north of Pell City.

The three tornadoes in the system included an EF-3 tornado that dropped in Pickens County and moved into Tuscaloosa County.

The second tornado was a EF-5 that was the most significant tornado to hit Alabama since 1977. With winds in excess of 260 miles per hour, that tornado touched down in Tuscaloosa County just east of the Warrior River. The tornado track, which continued into Jefferson County, was about 30.6 miles long. At its widest point, the track was half a mile wide.

The death toll was set at 32 people killed. At the time it was the seventh deadliest tornado in Alabama history. Another 250 people were injured. About 1,000 homes were destroyed, while another 900 had significant damage.

The third tornado in that system was an EF-2 that touched down just north of Moody. Two deaths were reported in St. Clair County, both of them in one mobile home.

Tuesday, April 24, will be the 110th anniversary of a 1908 EF-4 tornado that stayed on the ground for 105 miles, from Walker County through Jefferson, Blount and Marshall counties before ending in DeKalb County. The storm caused at least 35 fatalities and 188 people were injured, although more damage and casualties were expected given the limited reporting systems available in 1908.

Some of the damage reports from that storm are mind boggling. A nine-ton oil tank was reported to have been moved half of a mile near Albertville. A train with nine freight cars was overturned and destroyed.

Of course, the systems we have in place today for forecasting severe weather are much better than they were in 1998, much less 1908. But how effective those forecasting systems will be in protecting us from storms and tornadoes still depends in large part on how we respond to those watches and warnings. Warnings have little value if we don't take shelter or if we take shelter in places that don't really offer safe harbor from approaching storms — such as mobile homes and other less-than-sturdy buildings.

If you don't have a severe weather plan, now is the best time to make one. Know where to go and what to do the next time severe weather threatens.

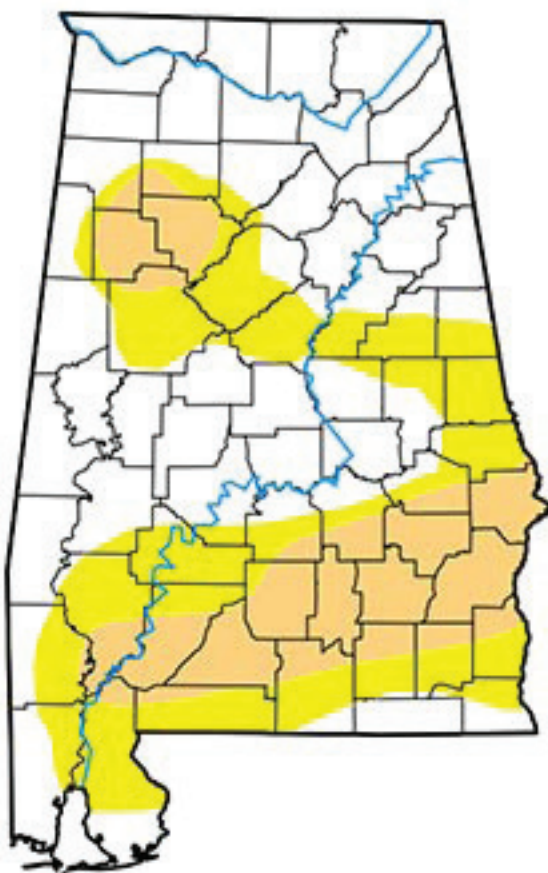
As noted, however, Alabama gets tornadoes and severe weather every month of the year. We had a strong system go through the state on March 19. It spun up at least 17 tornadoes, which caused a handful of injuries in central Alabama, but fortunately no fatalities. The storm also caused some significant large hail events, including what will probably be certified later as the largest hailstone yet recorded in Alabama. More on that later.

Rainfall was generally below normal in March, with large areas of mild drought returning to central and southern Alabama. Fairhope had its driest March on record. Temperatures state-wide tended to be very slightly cooler than normal, but not much to write home about.

- John Christy

U.S. Drought Monitor
Alabama

April 3, 2018
(Released Thursday, Apr. 5, 2018)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

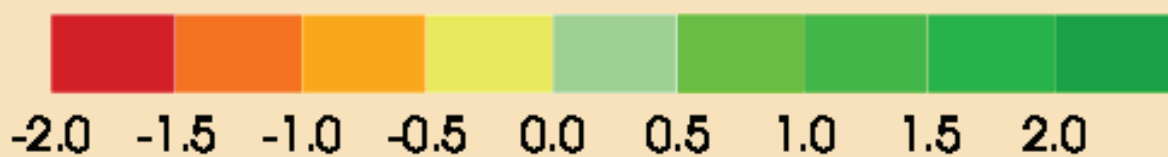
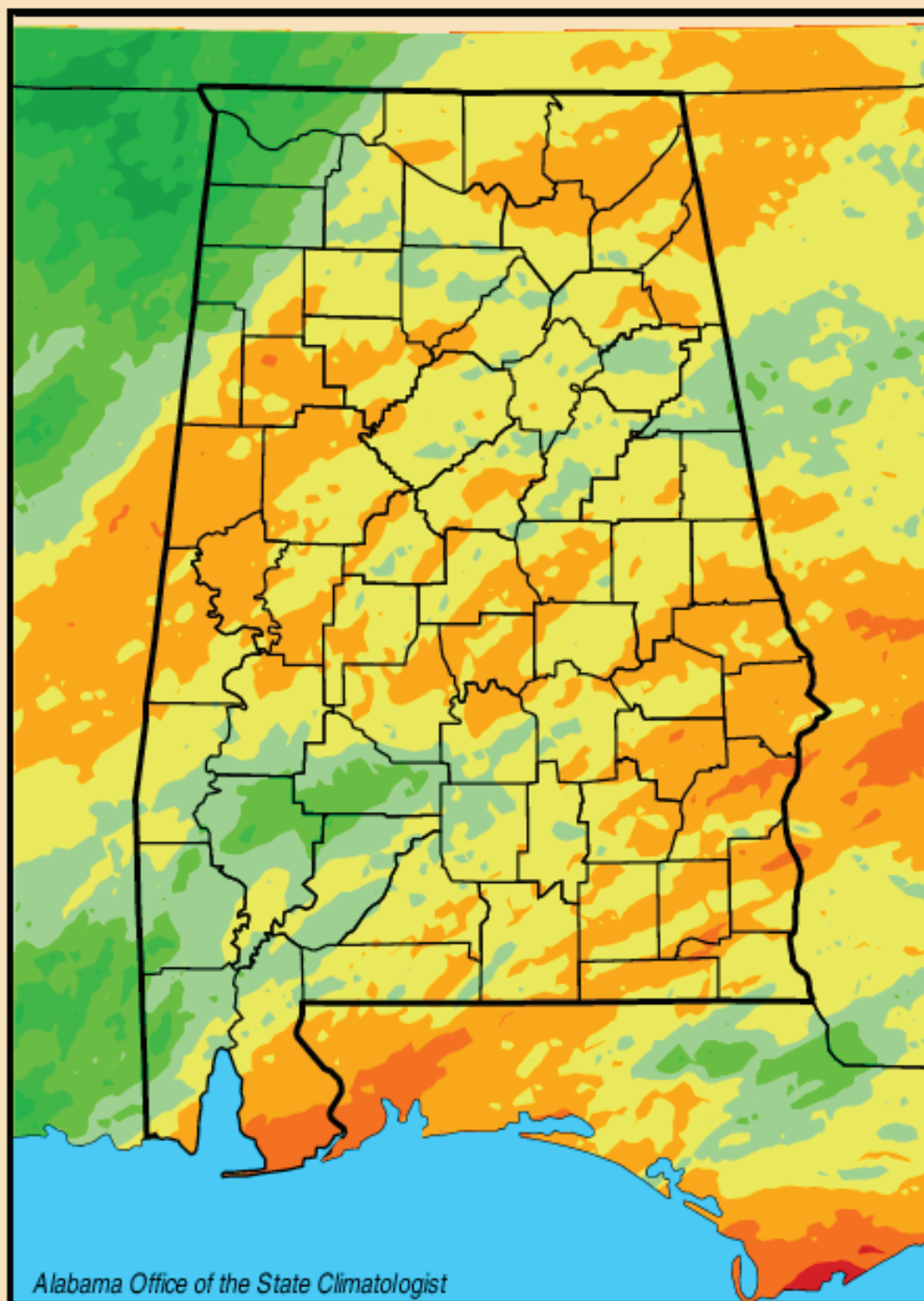
Author:

David Miskus
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Lawn-and-Garden Moisture Index for April 5, 2018



Alabama Monthly Climate Summaries

March 2018

	Station Began	March Mean March Norm	March Hi Temp Record Hi	March Low Temp Record Low	Total Precip. Normal Prec.	Wettest March Driest March	Heaviest Day Record Day
Anniston	2/1903	52.8°	80° 3/28/18	27 3/15/18	4.58"	18.09" 1977	1.26" 3/19/18
		54.9°	89°+ 3/9/74	12 3/14/93	6.28"	1.38" 1985	7.96" 3/29/77
Auburn	1/1893	55.5°	80° 3/1/18	27 3/9/18	3.16"	17.47" 1929	1.31" 3/11/18
		56.2°	89° 3/27/1910	13 3/4/43	6.44"	.69" 1918	5.06" 3/23/44
Birmingham	1/1930	55.3°	81° 3/28/18	30 3/15/18	4.13"	15.80" 1980	1.05" 3/29/18
		54.5°	89°+ 3/19/82	2 3/14/93	6.10"	1.71" 1985	6.91" 3/19/70
Brewton	4/1977	57.5°	81.3° 3/1/18	28.4 3/15/18	3.93"	15.82" 1990	1.67" 3/18/18
		57.6°	91° 3/31/78	10 3/3/80	7.01"	2.80" 1985	13.00" 3/15/29
Calera	9/1900	55.8°	80° 3/28/18	31 3/15/18	3.43"	18.86" 1980	1.01" 3/11/18
		54.2°	88° 3/10/74	9 3/3/80	6.50"	.40" 1918	6.45" 3/29/51
Clanton	2/1893	54.6°	79.5° 3/28/18	28.4 3/9/18	4.04"	15.88" 1976	1.45" 3/11/18
		54.5°	93° 3/25/29	10 3/14/93	6.96"	2.27" 1985	6.85" 3/4/79
Courtland		51.5°	79° 3/17/18	28.4 3/9/18	3.24"	M	1.07" 3/29/18
		M	M	M	M	M	M
Cullman	7/1907	50.7°	74.9° 3/17/18	22.9 3/9/18	6.17"	M	1.69" 3/19/18
		M	M	M	M	M	M
Decatur	2/1880	51.1°	79° 3/17/18	24 3/9/18	3.62"	11.45" 1929	1.51" 3/10/18
		52.4°	93° 3/22/1907	4 3/7/1899	6.15"	.65" 1910	4.95" 3/23/29
Dothan	2/1902	58.9°	83° 3/1/18	31 3/15/18	3.58"	16.40" 1929	1.22" 3/18/18
		59.3°	89° 3/24/1904	21 03/04/43	5.66"	.42" 1955	9.00" 3/14/29
Fairhope	8/1917	59.5°	79.2° 3/29/18	30.4 3/15/18	*2.44"	11.60" 1980	0.52" 3/29/18
		59.8°	85°+ 3/10/74	21+ 3/3/80	6.71"	2.59" 1981	6.20" 3/16/90
Gadsden	7/1893	49.7°	74.8° 3/28/18	23.7 3/9/18	6.02"	17.41" 1980	1.16" 3/11/18
		52.2°	88° 3/11/74	11+ 3/6/60	6.55"	1.46" 1986	4.98" 3/4/79
Gainesville Lock	6/1948	M	M	M	M	17.26" 1976	M
		54.8°	88°+ 3/13/67	15 3/3/80	5.97"	1.57" 1985	5.12" 3/29/51
Greensboro	2/1890	55.8°	80.8° 3/17/18	28.1 3/15/18	4.20"	14.57" 1976	1.79" 3/11/18
		56.8°	91° 3/23/95	10 3/14/93	6.51"	2.37" 1985	7.30" 3/28/51
Highland Home	3/1892	56.6°	79.8° 3/25/18	32.5 3/13/18	3.31"	13.84" 1973	0.93" 3/29/18
		57.8°	88° 3/12/55	14 3/3/80	6.95"	2.92" 1984	8.13" 3/30/60
Huntsville	1/1959	52.2°	79° 3/17/18	26 3/9/18	3.31"	17.00" 1980	1.18" 3/10/18
		52.1°	88° 3/31/63	6 3/3/80	6.11"	1.12" 2007	5.24" 3/16/1973

Alabama Monthly Climate Summaries

March 2018

	Station Began	March Mean March Norm	March Hi Temp Record Hi	March Low Temp Record Lo	Total Precip. Normal Prec.	Wettest March Driest March	Heaviest Day Record Day
Mobile	3/1900	61.4° 59.7°	82° 3/25/18 89° 3/15/67	33 3/15/18 21 3/14/93	3.71" 7.20"	13.46" 1980 3.00" 1981	1.32" 3/29/2018 7.15" 3/16/90
Montgomery	6/1948	57.9° 57.1°	84° 3/1/18 89°+ 3/22/95	30 3/15/18 17 3/14/93	3.18" 6.39"	12.40" 1990 1.75" 1997	1.28" 3/29/18 7.89" 3/16/90
Muscle Shoals	12/1940	52.6° 52.2°	81° 3/17/18 86°+ 3/13/67	27 3/9/18 10 3/3/43	4.57" 6.21"	14.25" 1980 2.22" 1985	1.04" 3/19/18 4.80" 3/27/94
Russellville	9/1953	51.1° 49.1°	78° 3/17/18 84°+ 3/24/95	23.4 3/9/18 5+ 3/4/80	5.66" 6.28"	15.75" 1973 2.14" 2000	1.40" 3/29/18 8.40" 3/16/73
Scottsboro	10/1891	50.3° 51.5°	76.3° 3/17/18 90° 3/25/29	23.8 3/9/18 8 3/14/93	2.83" 6.52"	16.48" 1980 2.28" 1982	0.76" 3/29/18 4.88" 3/16/73
Selma	1/1895	55.8° 58.5°	81.7° 3/17/18 90° 3/25/36	27.1 3/15/18 18 3/4/80	5.28" 6.67"	14.06" 1973 1.07" 1985	2.90" 3/11/18 9.75" 3/16/90
Talladega	2/1888	53.0° 54.8°	79° 3/28/18 88°+ 3/24/95	25.9 3/9/18 6 3/14/93	4.19" 6.82"	18.24" 1976 1.18" 1985	0.97" 3/29/18 7.81" 3/30/77
Thomasville	9/1891	56.1° 57.6°	81° 3/25/18 89°+ 3/20/80	26.9 3/15/18 14 3/3/80	5.12" 6.95"	15.35" 1976 1.62" 1978	1.58" 3/29/18 11.10" 3/12/35
Troy	6/1908	56.2° 58.0°	82° 3/25/18 89° 3/12/55	28 3/15/18 13 3/3/80	2.91" 6.56"	13.75" 1990 1.81" 1982	1.30" 3/29/18 8.56" 3/17/90
Tuscaloosa	6/1948	56.8° 55.4°	82° 3/17/18 90° 3/23/95	30 3/15/18 12 3/14/93	3.82" 6.37"	19.99" 1976 1.12" 1986	1.17" 3/11/18 6.08" 3/13/75
Valley Head	1/1893	48.3° 49.6°	75.6° 3/28/18 84°+ 3/20/82	21.6 3/9/18 2 3/3/80	3.37" 6.57"	15.87" 1980 1.91" 1985	0.91" 3/29/18 4.87" 3/4/79
Statewide March 2017		54.73° /	84° Montgomery	21.6° Valley Head	3.93"	19.99" Tuscaloosa	2.90" Selma
March Norm		55.24° /	93° 2 stations	2° 2 stations	6.52"	0.40" Calera	13.00" Brewton

M: Data is missing or not available

*New Record

#This data is missing this month due to an instrument malfunction

Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network (CoCoRAHS)

March 2018

	Total Precip.	# Stations
Autauga	2.69	2
Baldwin	2.24	24
Barbour	n.a.	0
Bibb	5.41	1
Blount	4.95	8
Bullock	n.a.	0
Butler	n.a.	0
Calhoun	7.00	2
Chambers	n.a.	0
Cherokee	n.a.	0
Chilton	4.58	1
Choctaw	4.51	1
Clarke	4.50	1
Clay	n.a.	0
Cleburne	n.a.	0
Coffee	2.68	1
Colbert	6.73	5
Conecuh	5.10	1
Coosa	5.15	2
Covington	n.a.	0
Crenshaw	n.a.	0
Cullman	6.83	3
Dale	3.13	1
Dallas	4.63	1
DeKalb	6.30	5
Elmore	5.53	5
Escambia	2.70	2
Etowah	n.a.	0
Fayette	4.17	1
Franklin	n.a.	0
Geneva	6.54	1
Greene	n.a.	0
Hale	n.a.	0
Henry	n.a.	0

	Total Precip.	# Stations
Houston	2.65	2
Jackson	7.47	5
Jefferson	4.39	15
Lamar	3.78	1
Lauderdale	6.91	8
Lawrence	5.17	3
Lee	4.06	1
Limestone	6.08	7
Lowndes	n.a.	0
Macon	5.37	1
Madison	6.06	19
Marengo	n.a.	0
Marion	4.02	1
Marshall	6.47	10
Mobile	3.55	14
Monroe	4.32	2
Montgomery	3.18	4
Morgan	6.43	5
Perry	n.a.	0
Pickens	n.a.	0
Pike	n.a.	0
Randolph	3.89	2
Russell	4.17	2
St. Clair	5.75	5
Shelby	4.18	16
Sumter	n.a.	0
Talladega	4.80	4
Tallapoosa	2.73	1
Tuscaloosa	3.70	6
Walker	n.a.	0
Washington	5.01	1
Wilcox	4.46	2
Winston	6.41	2

Normal March Precipitation*

Abbeville	6.21"
Alberta	6.76"
Alex City	7.09"
Aliceville	6.03"
Andalusia	6.63"
Ashland	7.16"
Athens	5.92"
Bay Minette	6.54"
Bessemer	6.38"
Billingsley	6.04"
Centreville WSMO	7.39"
Chatom	6.37"
Claiborne L&D	6.28"
Clayton	6.18"
Dauphin Isl.	6.47"
Elba	6.65"
Eufaula WR	6.19"
Evergreen	6.52"
Fayette	7.00"
Geneva 2	6.91"
Greenville	6.28"
Haleyville	6.50"
Hamilton 3S	6.33"
Heflin	6.88"
Hurtsboro	6.30"
Jasper	6.80"
Lafayette	6.71"
Livingston	6.20"
Melvin	7.22"
Milstead	6.08"
Moulton	6.42"
Oneonta	6.28"
Perryville	6.51"
Plantersville	6.73"
Rock Mills	6.43"
Rockford	6.93"
Sylacauga	6.22"
Union Springs	6.21"
Uniontown	6.21"
Vernon	6.78"
Warrior L&D	6.26"
Wetumpka	6.06"

*Southeast Regional Climate Center

www.serrc.com

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