

# April 2011 Climate Summary

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Georgia Climate Summary for April 2011

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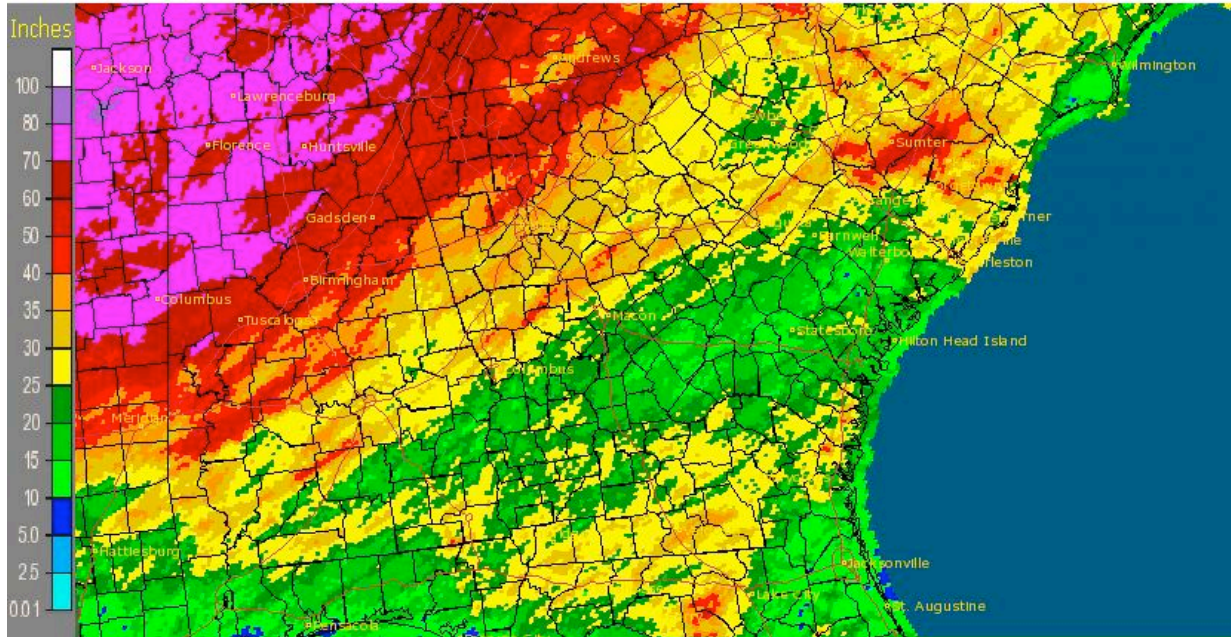
Three separate waves of severe storms passed through Georgia during April 2011. Warmer than normal temperatures may have contributed to the development of storms during the severe episodes. The fast-moving and spotty thunderstorms left most of the state drier than normal except in the far northern counties.

Temperatures across the state were above normal everywhere in Georgia for a third straight month. In Atlanta, the monthly average temperature was 65.3 degrees F (3.7 degrees above normal), in Athens 64.1 degrees (3.2 degrees above normal), Columbus 68.9 (4.7 degrees above normal), Macon 66.7 (4.0 above normal), Savannah 69.6 (4.3 above normal), Brunswick 70.3 (3.9 above normal), Alma 69.4 (2.7 above normal), Valdosta 70.9 (5.7 above normal) and Augusta 67.1 (4.7 above normal). This was the 9th warmest April on record for Atlanta, the 5th warmest for Columbus and Augusta, and the 3rd warmest for Savannah since records began at each airport location.

Several daily record highs were observed in April. Savannah broke their daily high temperature records on April 9 and 11, with reports of 91 breaking the old record of 90 set in 1947 on the 9th and 90 degrees F surpassing the old record of 89 set in 1999 on the 11th. Savannah also broke their daily record high minimum temperature on the 27th with a temperature of 73 F, passing the old record of 70 set in 1921. Augusta broke a daily high temperature record with 91 F on April 9 (old record 89 F set in 1965) and set a new daily high minimum temperature of 69 F on April 26 (old record 68 F set in 1925). Brunswick set record highs on April 9 and 10, with 89 F and 90 F, respectively, breaking old records of 88 F set in 1999 and 85 F set in 1963. Several cities also tied record highs during the month.

Precipitation in April was quite dry across most of Georgia, with the exception of the northern quarter of the state. The driest areas were the south central and southwest regions. Most of the rainfall this month came from thunderstorm activity, which is more highly variable in space and time than widespread winter frontal rains.

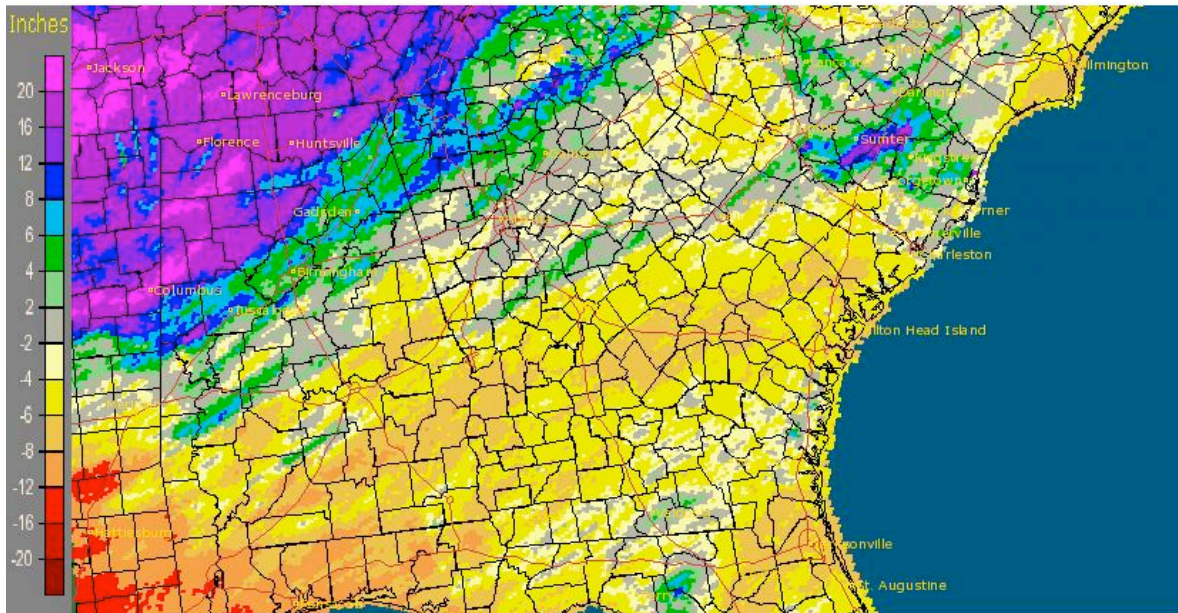
Georgia: April, 2011 Monthly Observed Precipitation  
Valid at 5/1/2011 1200 UTC- Created 5/3/11 13:37 UTC



source: [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

The highest monthly total precipitation from National Weather Service reporting stations was 5.40 inches in Valdosta (1.57 inches above normal) and the lowest was in Macon at 1.30 inches (1.84 below normal). Atlanta received 3.06 inches (0.56 below normal), Athens 2.28 inches (1.07 inches above normal), Alma 1.74 (1.42 below normal), Columbus 1.67 (2.17 below normal), Brunswick 1.98 (0.82 below normal), Savannah 1.35 (1.97 above normal) and Augusta 1.93 (1.01 inches above normal). This was the 10th driest April in both Macon and Savannah since records began.

Georgia: April, 2011 Monthly Departure from Normal Precipitation  
Valid at 5/1/2011 1200 UTC- Created 5/3/11 13:40 UTC



Source: [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

Augusta reported a new daily rainfall record of 1.08 inches on April 28, breaking the old record of 1.07 inches set in 1922.

The highest single-day rainfall from CoCoRaHS stations was 4.67 inches northeast of Dillard in Rabun County on April 16. An observer near Ringgold in Catoosa County reported 4.14 inches on the same day. The highest monthly total precipitation of 9.58 inches was measured near Emma in Dawson County, with 9.29 inches near Dillard in Rabun County and two monthly reports of over 8 inches near Ringgold.

Severe weather was reported on eleven days in April. The majority of the severe weather came on April 4, 15, and 17, as warm and moist flow from the south ahead of strong cold fronts caused multiple large thunderstorms to form. On April 4, several small to moderate tornadoes and widespread strong winds caused damage throughout Georgia. Seven people were killed and 9 injured during this series of storms. Over 270,000 people lost power during the storms and more than 400 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed. Moist soils combined with drought stress increased the number of trees blown down during this event.

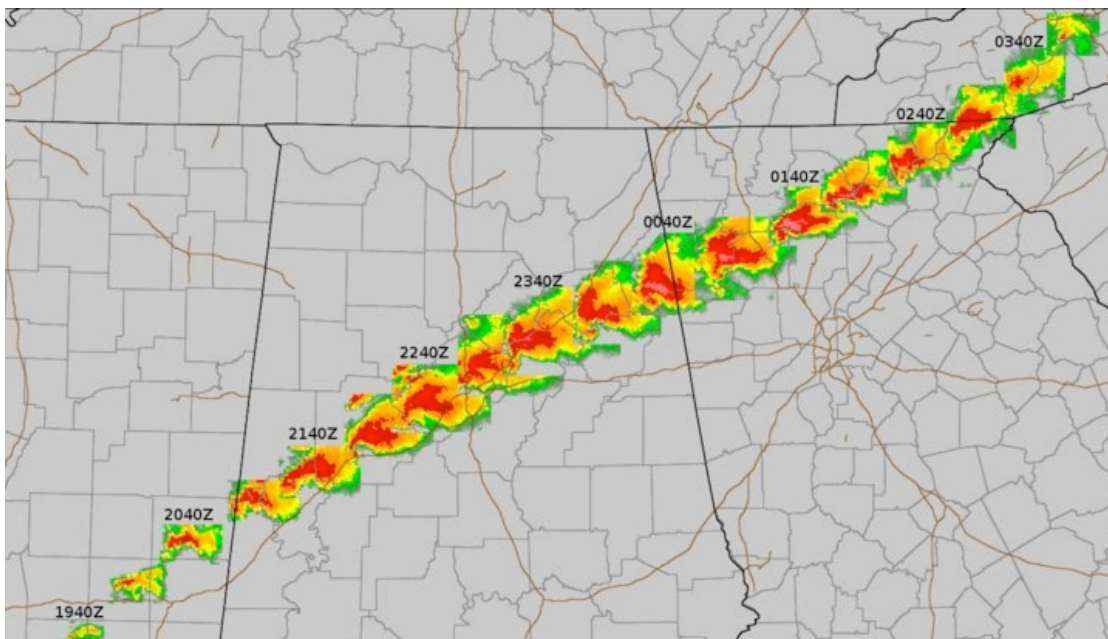
Three small tornadoes were observed on April 15 with the overnight passage of another cold front in central Georgia; however, damage from this front was much more widespread in Alabama and in North Carolina as the strong front passed through

while daytime heating was most intense, while Georgia received lesser damage over the nighttime hours.

The biggest outbreak of severe weather came on April 27-28 during one of the worst tornado outbreaks in the Southeast since the Super Outbreak of April 1974. The National Weather Service determined that Georgia experienced a total of 15 tornadoes during that time period, most strong and long-track tornadoes. A detailed description of the tornadoes in north and central Georgia written by the National Weather Service can be found at [http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc/?n=20110427\\_svrstorms](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc/?n=20110427_svrstorms). The state insurance commissioner estimated that insured losses from the storms in Georgia alone were at least \$75 million and were expected to rise.

The most devastating tornado in Georgia in this outbreak was a rare EF4 tornado that hit Ringgold in Catoosa County on the evening of April 27. Eight people died as this storm damaged or destroyed 75 to 100 buildings. A total of 15 people were killed and 115 were injured in the onslaught of storms that occurred across the state. Georgia Power reported that about 78,000 people were without power as of Thursday morning after the storms passed.

The supercell storm that spawned the tornado that hit Tuscaloosa and Birmingham AL also caused tornadoes in northern Georgia. A montage of the path of the storm is shown in the graphic below:



Source: Brian Tang

Farmers across the state reported generally good soil moisture conditions during April in spite of the lack of precipitation. Drought levels in the southeastern part of the state were reduced after good rains in the early part of the month and crops are making good progress in most locations without insect or disease issues. Some damage to vegetable crops and small grains were noted due to the high winds during the severe weather episodes this month.