

February 2010 Climate Summary

Georgia Climate Summary for February 2010

Prepared by Pam Knox, Assistant State Climatologist

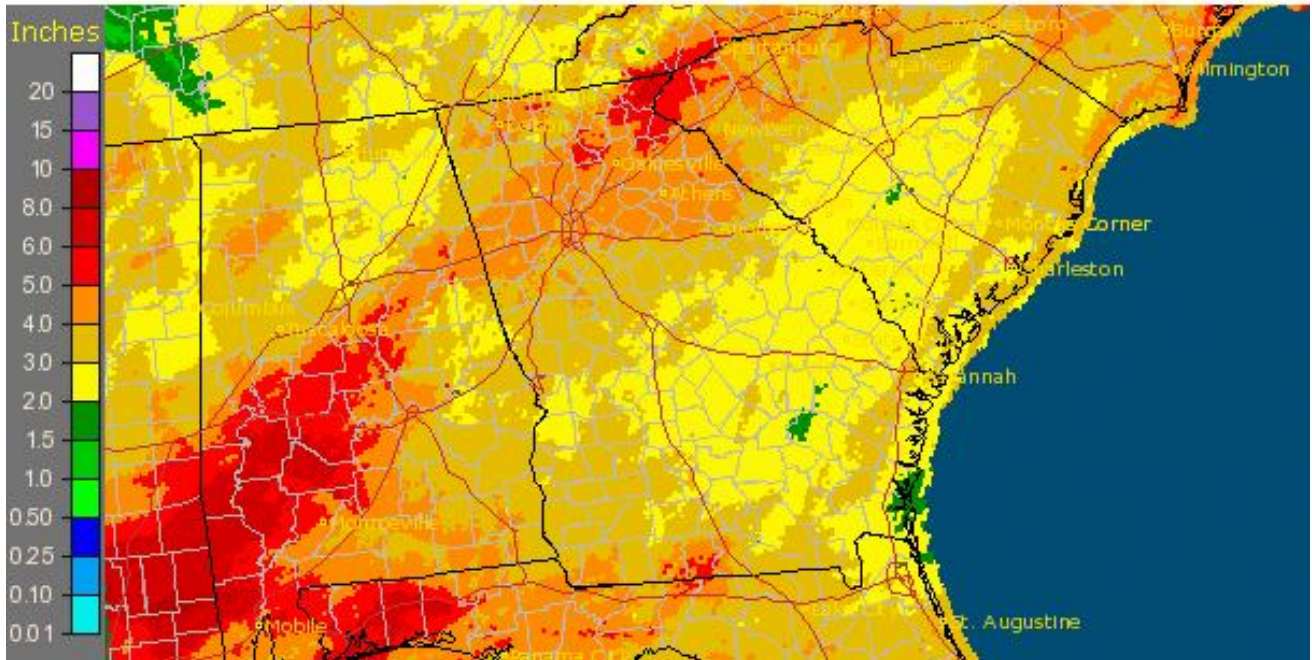
Georgia continued its cold winter during February 2010. These conditions were linked to the continuing influence of El Niño, which is now weakening in the eastern Pacific Ocean. In El Niño winters, the subtropical jet is frequently located over south Georgia, leading to cool and cloudy conditions, particularly in the southern half of the state. Rainfall across most of the state, however, was drier than average, leading to improved field conditions for farmers.

Temperatures across the state were much cooler than normal. In Atlanta, the monthly average temperature was 39.6 degrees F (7.1 degrees below normal), in Athens 39.5 degrees (6.5 degrees below normal), Columbus 42.5 (7.8 degrees below normal), Macon 42.5 (6.4 below normal), Savannah 46.2 (6.2 below normal), Brunswick 47.4 (6.8 below normal), Alma 45.5 (9.3 below normal), Valdosta 47.8 (6.0 below normal) and Augusta 42.1 (6.3 below normal). In spite of the persistent cold temperatures across the state, no daily temperature records were set this month.

The cold average monthly temperatures put stations across most of the state in the top five coldest Februarys on record. The state as a whole recorded an average temperature of 42.4 degrees, the 6th coldest since records began in 1895. The last time Georgia experienced a February this cold was in 1978, when the state average temperature was 40.8 degrees.

Most of the state received received over 3 inches of rain, and scattered areas received over 6 inches of precipitation. These amounts included the water equivalent of snow, which affected large areas of the state in the first half of February.

Georgia: February, 2010 Monthly Observed Precipitation
Valid at 3/1/2010 1200 UTC- Created 3/1/10 23:43 UTC

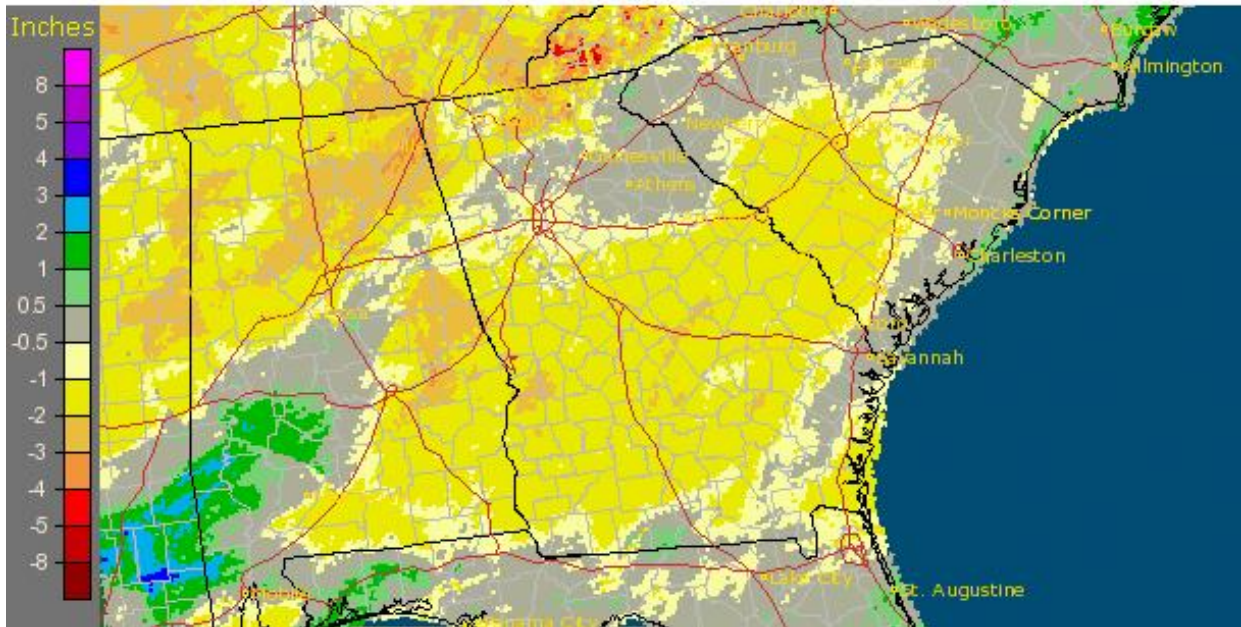


source: www.weather.gov

The highest monthly total from National Weather Service reporting stations was 4.74 inches in Valdosta (0.19 inches above normal) and the lowest was in Brunswick at 1.96 inches (1.54 below normal). Atlanta received 4.17 inches (0.51 below normal), Macon 3.07 inches (1.48 inches below normal), Athens 4.22 (0.17 below normal), Augusta 2.37 (1.74 below normal), Columbus 3.52 (0.92 below normal), Savannah 3.25 (0.33 above normal) and Alma 2.45 (1.48 inches below normal).

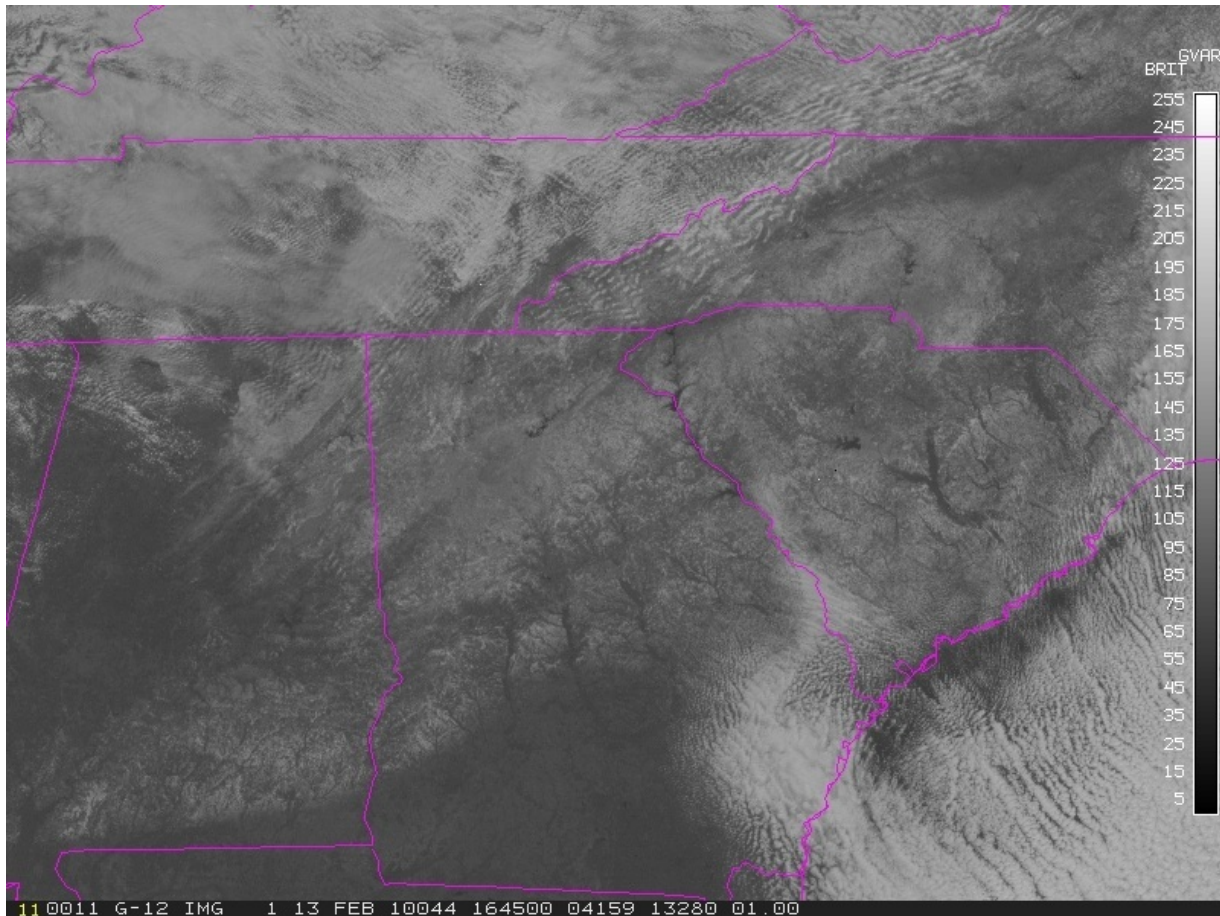
Daily rainfall records were set during February for Athens (2.55 inches on February 5) and Brunswick (0.93 inches on February 12). Record daily snowfalls were also reported in Atlanta (1.0 inch), Athens (1.0 inch), Columbus (1.5 inches), Macon (trace), and Savannah (0.9 inches) on the 12th. This was the first snowfall in Savannah since 0.2 inches fell in 1996.

Georgia: February, 2010 Monthly Departure from Normal
Precipitation
Valid at 3/1/2010 1200 UTC- Created 3/1/10 23:46 UTC



Source: www.weather.gov

The highest monthly totals from CoCoRaHS stations were 8.04 inches northeast of Smyrna and 7.62 inches southeast of Smyrna, both in Cobb County. The highest one-day amount occurred in Snellville on February 5, when 3.56 inches were observed, and widespread amounts in excess of 2 inches were reported on that date. Smyrna received 3.48 inches on February 7. The highest one-day amount from a CoCoRaHS observer was 5.8 inches measured in Washington on February 13, and amounts greater than 4 inches were reported throughout north Georgia during that storm. A high-resolution image of the snow cover on February 14 is shown below.



The Georgia Automated Environmental Monitoring site at Tiger in Rabun County reported 6.50 inches for February.

There were no tornadoes, hail or high winds reported in Georgia in February.

Minor flooding was reported in some streams on February 8.

Snow caused the early closing of schools and businesses on February 12 and numerous accidents were reported that evening. Delta cancelled 1100 flights across the country and AirTran cancelled 69 flights out of Atlanta as a result of the bad weather.

The continuing cold weather increased heating demands in February across the state. It also affected landscapers and home gardeners, who have not been able to start their spring planting due to the cold soil temperatures and wet conditions. A strawberry and blueberry farm in Oconee County said they had spent over \$10,000 on floating row covers to protect their crops from the inclement weather. However, some landscapers said they had picked up increased work on implementing drainage solutions for some homeowners due to the saturated soils.

During February, the drier conditions improved soil moisture levels somewhat by the end of the month. This allowed farmers to start their spring field work. However, cold temperatures continued to slow growth of forage, causing farmers to supplement feed at additional costs.

A summary of the 2009-2010 winter can be found by clicking [here](#).