

Climate Summary for Florida – April 2024

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Online at: <http://climatecenter.fsu.edu/products-services/summaries>

Summary

- Average monthly temperatures in April were near normal in Florida.
- Monthly precipitation totals in April were generally below normal except in the eastern Panhandle and north Florida where precipitation was above normal for the month.
- Drier conditions throughout the month of April led to drought development in the south-central region of the Peninsula from Brevard County south to northern Palm Beach County.
- A transition to ENSO-neutral conditions is expected April-June 2024 (85% chance); a transition to La Niña is likely during June-August (60% chance).

Average monthly temperatures in April were near normal around the state. Average monthly temperature departures from normal ranged from +0.9 °F in Tallahassee to -0.6 °F in Gainesville for the month (see Table 1 and Appendix 1 for select cities). Both Tallahassee and Jacksonville saw their first 90 °F day of the year on April 19th. This is about 10 days earlier in Tallahassee compared to the long-term average date of April 29 and 6 days earlier in Jacksonville where the long-term average date is April 25. There were a few daily maximum and minimum temperature records were set during the month.

Table 1. April average temperatures and departures from normal (°F) for selected cities.

Station	Mean Temperature	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	68.5	+0.2
Tallahassee	68.2	+0.9
Jacksonville	68.7	+0.6
Orlando	72.6	+0.4
Tampa	73.7	-0.2
Miami	76.3	-0.4
Key West	77.8	-0.1

Monthly rainfall totals in April were below normal except in the eastern Panhandle, northern Florida, and in other isolated areas. The monthly precipitation departures from normal ranged from -1.25 inches in Orlando to +3.88 inches in Tallahassee (see Table 2 and Appendix 1 for select locations). **Tallahassee** collected

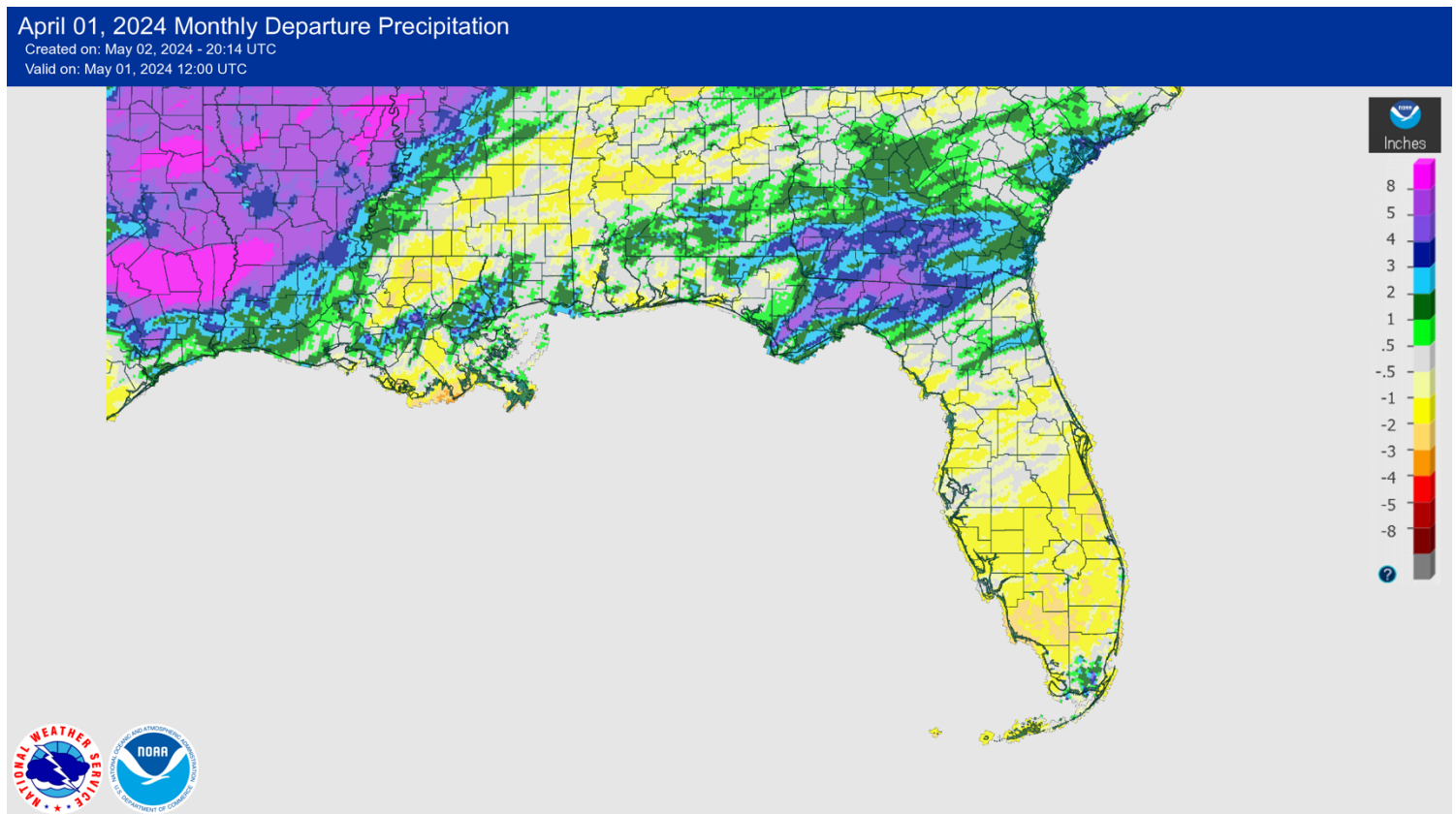


a total of 7.41 inches of rain for the month, which ranks as the 11th-wettest April on record. Most of the monthly rainfall in Tallahassee fell in just a few hours overnight on April 10-11 associated with a severe storm; the remainder of the month was mostly dry. Tallahassee recorded a new daily precipitation record on the 11th with 4.89 inches; the previous record on this day was 1.79 inches in 1975. **Quincy** and **Perry** also recorded new daily precipitation records on the 11th with 4.00 inches and 2.85 inches, respectively. **Ocala** collected 9.16 inches of rain in April, which was 6.94 inches above normal and ranks as the 3rd-wettest April on record based on a 118-year period of record. Ocala also had a new daily precipitation record on April 11 with 7.45 inches, smashing the previous record of 3.51 inches in 1975. Elsewhere in the state, conditions were generally drier than normal and drought emerged in the Okeechobee region in the south-central Peninsula (see below for more drought information).

Table 2. April precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for selected cities.

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	4.38	-1.14
Tallahassee	7.41	+3.88
Jacksonville	2.05	-0.88
Orlando	1.33	-1.25
Tampa	1.34	-1.21
Miami	2.78	-0.58
Key West	1.35	-0.72

Figure 1. A graphical depiction of the monthly rainfall departure from normal (in inches) for April (courtesy of NOAA)



El Niño Advisory / La Niña Watch.

El Niño conditions, the warm phase of the El Niño Southern Oscillation climate pattern in the tropical equatorial Pacific Ocean, have continued to weaken and a transition to ENSO-neutral conditions is likely on the horizon. The transition to ENSO-neutral conditions is expected by April-June 2024 (85% chance). There are increasing chances of a La Niña developing during June-August 2024 (60% chance), which increases to an 80% chance during August-October 2024.

Hazardous Weather Events in April.

According to the Local Storm Reports issued by the local National Weather Service offices serving Florida, there were 286 individual local reports of hazardous weather events recorded across the state during the month of April (see Table 4 for a breakdown by event type). A strong storm on April 10-11 impacted Leon and surrounding counties, generating widespread flash flooding. Reports of washed-out roadways and flooded buildings were reported in Leon, Jefferson, and Gadsden Counties. Rainfall amounts of 6 – 8 inches were reported by WeatherSTEM gauges and at the Tallahassee International Airport, which mostly fell within a 12-hour period. Several CoCoRaHS stations in eastern Leon County and Jefferson County reported over 9.0 inches of rain from the storm. A tornado on the 13th in St. Johns County caused a minor injury, and wildfires were reported in the Ocala National Forest in Lake County, in Collier County, and Miami-Dade County.

Table 3. Breakdown of storm reports submitted in Florida during the month of April (compiled from Iowa State University/Iowa Environmental Mesonet).

Report Type	Number of Reports
Heavy Rain	5
Flood	6
Coastal Flood	0
Flash Flood	67
Hail	1
Marine Thunderstorm Wind	25
Non-Thunderstorm Wind Gust	44
Non-Thunderstorm Wind Damage	2
Tornado/Waterspout/Funnel Cloud	5 / 4 / 2
Thunderstorm Wind Damage	62
Thunderstorm Wind Gust	52
Rip Currents	1
Lightning	5
Wildfire	5

Daily Record Events in April.

Table 4. Summary of daily records broken in Florida in April (source: NCEI Daily Weather Records).

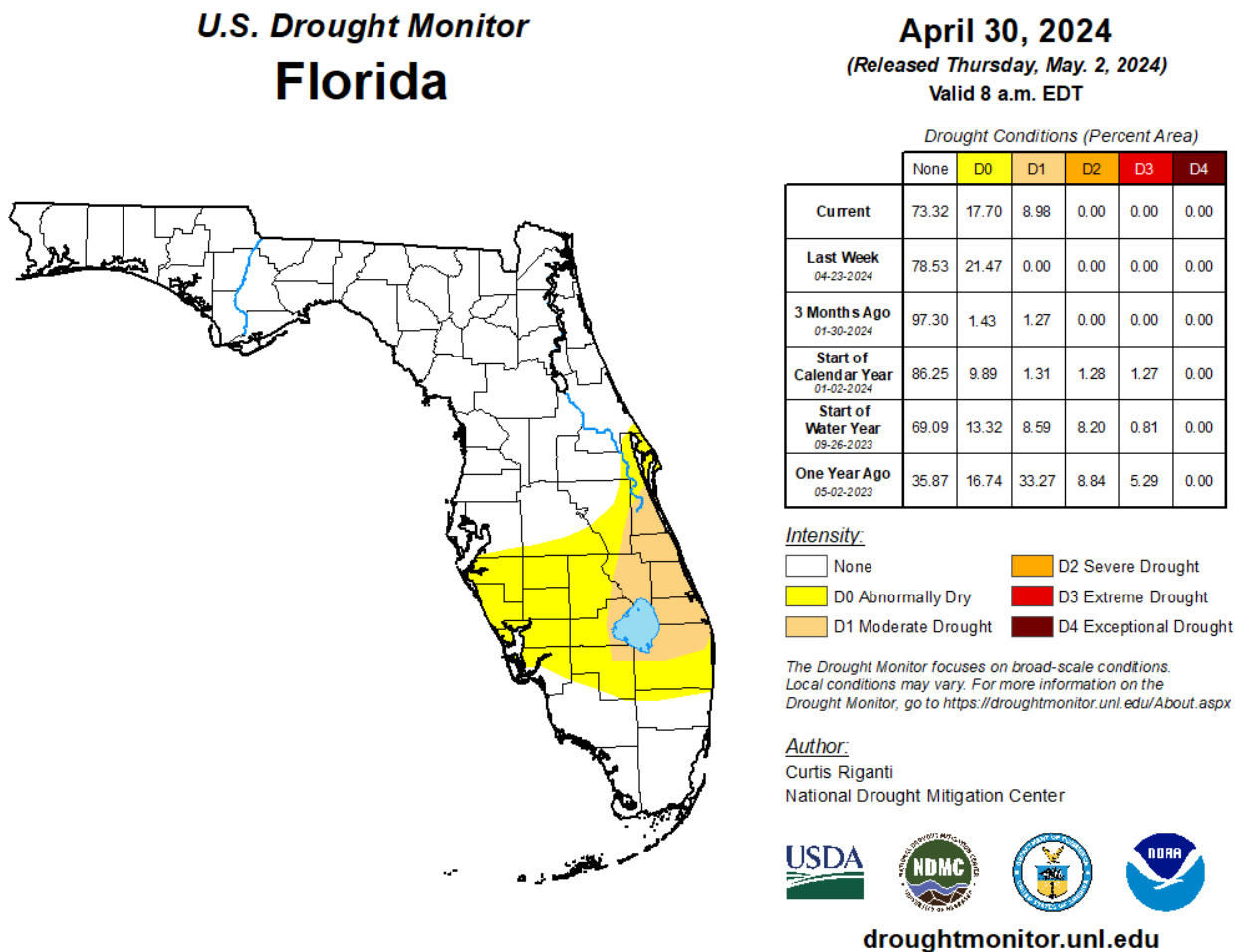
Category	Number of Records
Highest daily max. temp.	7
Highest daily min. temp.	10
Lowest daily max. temp.	4
Lowest daily min. temp.	5
Highest daily precipitation	16
Total	42

Drought-Related Impacts.

By mid-April, approximately 13% of the state was experiencing abnormally dry (D0) conditions, concentrated in the Okeechobee region of the Peninsula, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. By the end of the month, about 9% of the state was in moderate drought (D1) and 18% of the state was abnormally dry (see Figure 3 below).

As of April 30, the Lake Okeechobee water level was 14.19 ft. above sea level (Feet-NGVD29), which is above average for this time of year. At the first of the month, the water level was 15.20 ft. above sea level.

Figure 3. A graphical depiction of the latest drought conditions in Florida according to the U.S. Drought Monitor (courtesy of the National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln).



Agriculture-Related Impacts.

In mid-April, topsoil moisture conditions were adequate in 75% of the state, short in 16%, and very short in 2% of the state, while 7% of the state had surplus topsoil moisture conditions. Near the end of April, topsoil moisture conditions were adequate in 53% of the state, short in 38%, and very short in 9% of the state; no portion of the state was in surplus. While wetter soils earlier in the season were causing problems for planting, drier and warmer weather that has developed more recently has helped. For more information, consult the [Crop Progress and Conditions report](#), which is published by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Appendix 1. Additional April departures from normal data for select Florida locations (source: NWS).

Station	Average Temperature (°F)	Departure from Normal (°F)	Total Rainfall (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)
Gainesville	67.9	-0.6	3.13	+0.39
Ocala	70.3	-0.4	9.16	+6.94
Sarasota	72.2	-0.4	1.06	-1.40
Naples	75.3	+0.7	0.09	-2.43
Fort Myers	74.6	-0.2	0.87	-1.57
West Palm Beach	75.4	+0.5	5.57	+1.89