Climate Summary for Florida – October 2026

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

Summary

- Monthly average temperatures in October were generally near to above normal for the month.
- Monthly precipitation totals in October were above to well above normal, except in southern Florida which saw below normal precipitation.
- Drought improved during October and by the end of the month about 4% of the state was in severe drought (D2), 20% was in moderate drought (D1), and 33% was abnormally dry (D0), according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.
- El Niño continued to strengthen in the tropical equatorial Pacific Ocean and is expected to become a very strong event. There is an 83% chance of an historic event during October-December 2026 that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events.
- October featured impactful weather, including Hurricane Isaias, which made landfall at Category 2 strength on October 9 near Destin, FL, and record high tide flooding across the east coast of Florida.

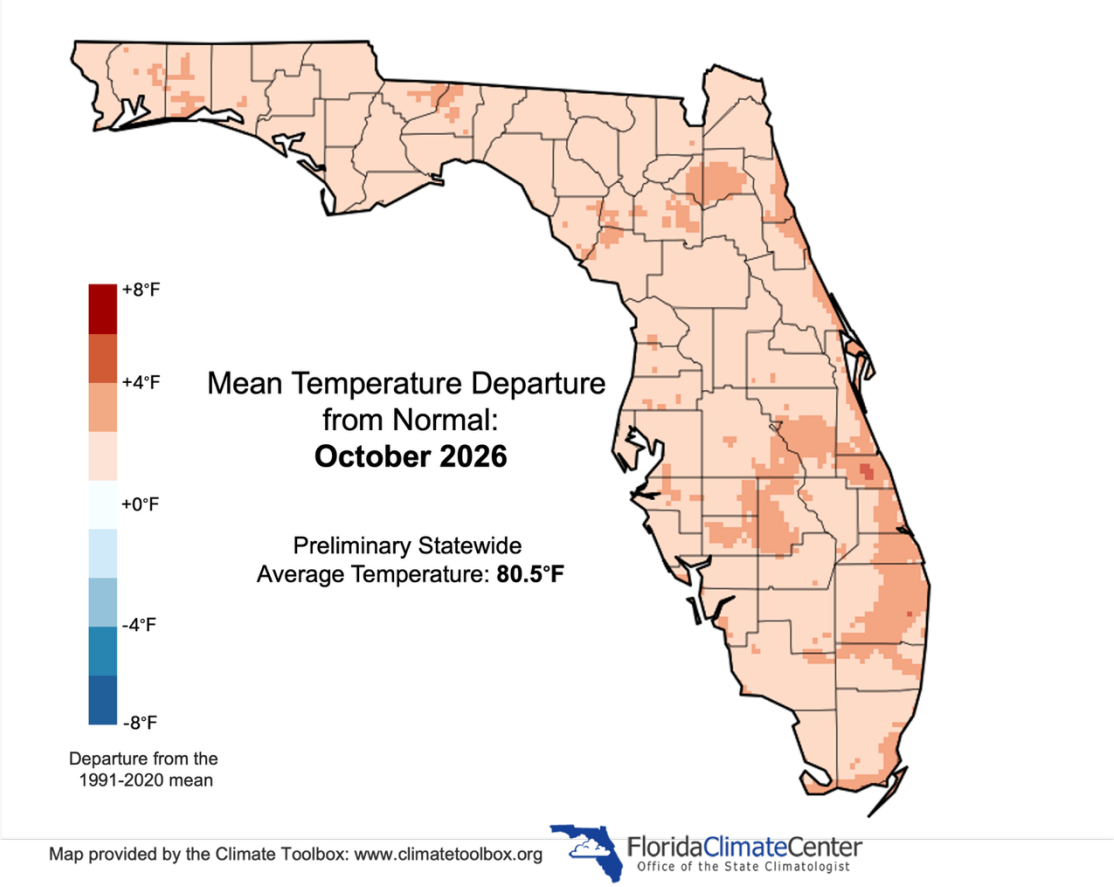
Monthly average temperatures in October were generally near to above normal for the month. Average monthly temperature departures from normal ranged from +0.5 ℉ in Tampa to +2.5 ℉ in Orlando (see Table 1 and Appendix 1 for select cities). Monthly average maximum temperatures were more mild throughout the month, while monthly average minimum temperatures were much above normal, especially across central and south Florida. Monthly minimum temperatures ranked in the top 5 warmest on record for October in Sanford (tied for 4th-warmest in 78 years), Melbourne (5th-warmest in 27 years), Sarasota/Bradenton (4th-warmest in 115 years), Stuart (4th-warmest in 77 years), Fort Lauderdale (tied for 5th-warmest in 111 years), Miami (5th-warmest in 90 years), and Marathon (3rd-warmest in 52 years). For the season to date, September-October, many locations are experiencing one of their top 10 warmest falls on record based on average temperatures. Select daily record high maximum temperatures tied or broken during October are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1. October average temperatures and departures from normal (℉) for select cities.

Station	Mean Temperature	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	72.1	+0.8
Tallahassee	71.6	+1.3
Jacksonville	72.0	+0.8
Orlando	78.0	+2.5
Tampa	77.9	+0.5
Miami	81.6	+1.5
Key West	82.2	+0.9

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Figure 1. Monthly average temperature departures from normal (˚F) for October 2026 for Florida.



Monthly precipitation totals in October were above to well above normal, except in southern Florida which saw below normal precipitation. The monthly precipitation departures from normal ranged from -5.91 inches in **Marathon** to +11.33 inches in **Stuart** (see Table 2 and Appendix 1 for select locations). In **Stuart**, the monthly rainfall total was 15.31" which ranked 5th-wettest October on record (77 years). **Apalachicola** totaled 15.36" for the month, which was +10.98" above average and ranked 2nd-wettest on record (86 years). **Melbourne** received 13.38" of rain, which was +8.52" above normal and ranked 2nd-wettest on record. **Pensacola, Jacksonville,** and **Sarasota** all saw rainfall surpluses over 7" for the month, ranking 7th-, 3rd (tied), and 5th-wettest on record, respectively, for October. Monthly rainfall in the Florida Panhandle fell mostly during the first 1.5 weeks, and, despite ending up above normal for the month, the rest of October was dry and places like **Tallahassee** and **Crestview** experienced 21 and 22 consecutive dry days, respectively, with no rainfall.

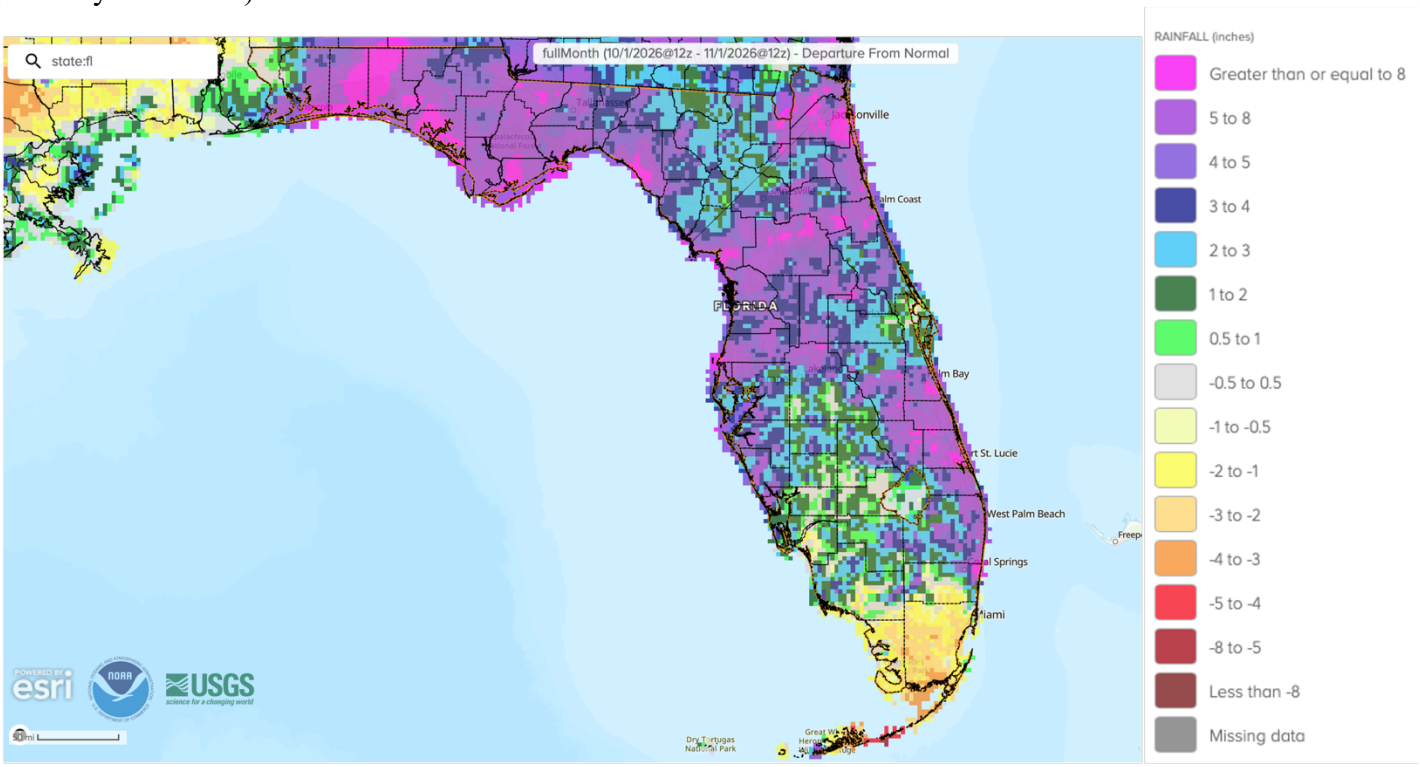
The month brought periods of heavy rainfall due to Hurricane Isaias and frontal systems that moved through the state. On October 5, **Apalachicola** recorded a 1-day rainfall total of 7.49", which tied as the wettest October day and tied as the 6th-wettest day on record overall (since 1975). The metro **Jacksonville** area received 4-9" of rain in the overnight hours of October 6-7. Hurricane Isaias, which was the first hurricane of the Atlantic hurricane season and a category 3 storm at its peak, brought heavy rainfall to the western Florida Panhandle. Among the largest storm totals included 12.43" in **DeFuniak Springs**, 11.65" in **Fort Walton Beach**, and 9.64" in **Valparaiso**. **Destin** recorded 7.50", while **Tallahassee** received as much as 7.81", according to CoCoRaHS reports and preliminary reports from the NWS.

For the season to date, September-October, many locations are experiencing well above normal precipitation, including **Fort Lauderdale** with 30.36" (+14.97"), **Sarasota** with 21.59" (+11.28" and 4th- wettest period on record), **West Palm Beach** with 22.90" (+9.04"), and **Melbourne** with 19.95" (+7.46"). Some southerly locations are experiencing season-to-date deficits, however, including **Marathan** with a total of 6.12" (-7.80" and10th-driest season-to-date on record), **Miami** with 12.21" (-5.66"), and **Fort Myers** with 6.84" (-5.24").

Table 2. October precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for select cities.

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	12.23	+7.53
Tallahassee	6.71	+3.47
Jacksonville	11.45	+7.42
Orlando	4.85	+1.39
Tampa	5.47	+3.13
Miami	4.90	-2.75
Key West	5.88	+0.21

Figure 2. A graphical depiction of the monthly rainfall departure from normal (in inches) for October 2026 (courtesy of NOAA).



El Niño Advisory in the Pacific Ocean.

El Niño continues to strengthen in the tropical equatorial Pacific Ocean. The latest ENSO forecast indicates an 83% chance or more for a strong to very strong event through January-March 2027. Sea surface temperature anomalies in the Niño monitoring regions of the Pacific Ocean increased over the past month and subsurface ocean temperatures remained +10°C at depth. The coupled ocean-atmosphere system continues to reflect a robust El Niño event. There remains a high chance (83% during October-December 2026) for a historic event that would exceed the strength of all previous El Niño events dating back to 1950, which substantially increases the odds for experiencing typical El Niño impacts in Florida.

Hazardous Weather Events in October.

According to the Local Storm Reports issued by the local National Weather Service offices serving Florida, there were 300 individual local reports of hazardous weather events recorded across the state during the month of October (see Table 3 for a breakdown by event type). Hurricane Isaias became the first hurricane of the season and reached category 3 strength with peak winds of 120 mph. The storm made landfall on the evening of October 9 near Destin, Florida as a category 2 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 105 mph. Isaias generated heavy rainfall, strong wind gusts in excess of 100 mph in areas near and just west of the eyewall, and 1 tornado in Florida, which moved onshore east of Eastpoint in Franklin County and caused minor damage to homes. One fatality was reported from the storm due to a downed tree in Escambia County, and injuries were reported from a car crash in Jackson County due to a tree in the road. From October 23-27, a Florida Nor'easter brought strong and persistent onshore winds across the entire eastern coast of Florida which coincided with king tides and resulted in moderate to major coastal flooding and erosion, along with isolated areas of moderate rainfall. Several tide gauges recorded record high tide levels, leading to closed roadways, closed businesses, and standing water in low-lying areas.

Table 3. Breakdown of storm reports submitted in Florida during the month of October 2026 (compiled from Iowa State University/Iowa Environmental Mesonet).

Report Type	Number of Reports
Heavy Rain	24
Flood	21
Coastal Flood	25
Flash Flood	39
Hail	5
Marine Thunderstorm Wind	26
Non-Thunderstorm Wind Gust	41
Thunderstorm Wind Damage	1
Thunderstorm Wind Gust	30
Non-Thunderstorm Wind Damage	1
Tornado/Waterspout/Funnel Cloud	1 / 4 / 2
Wildfire	2
Tropical Cyclone	78

Daily Record Events in October.

Table 4. Summary of daily records **broken** in Florida in October 2026 (source: NCEI Daily Weather Records).

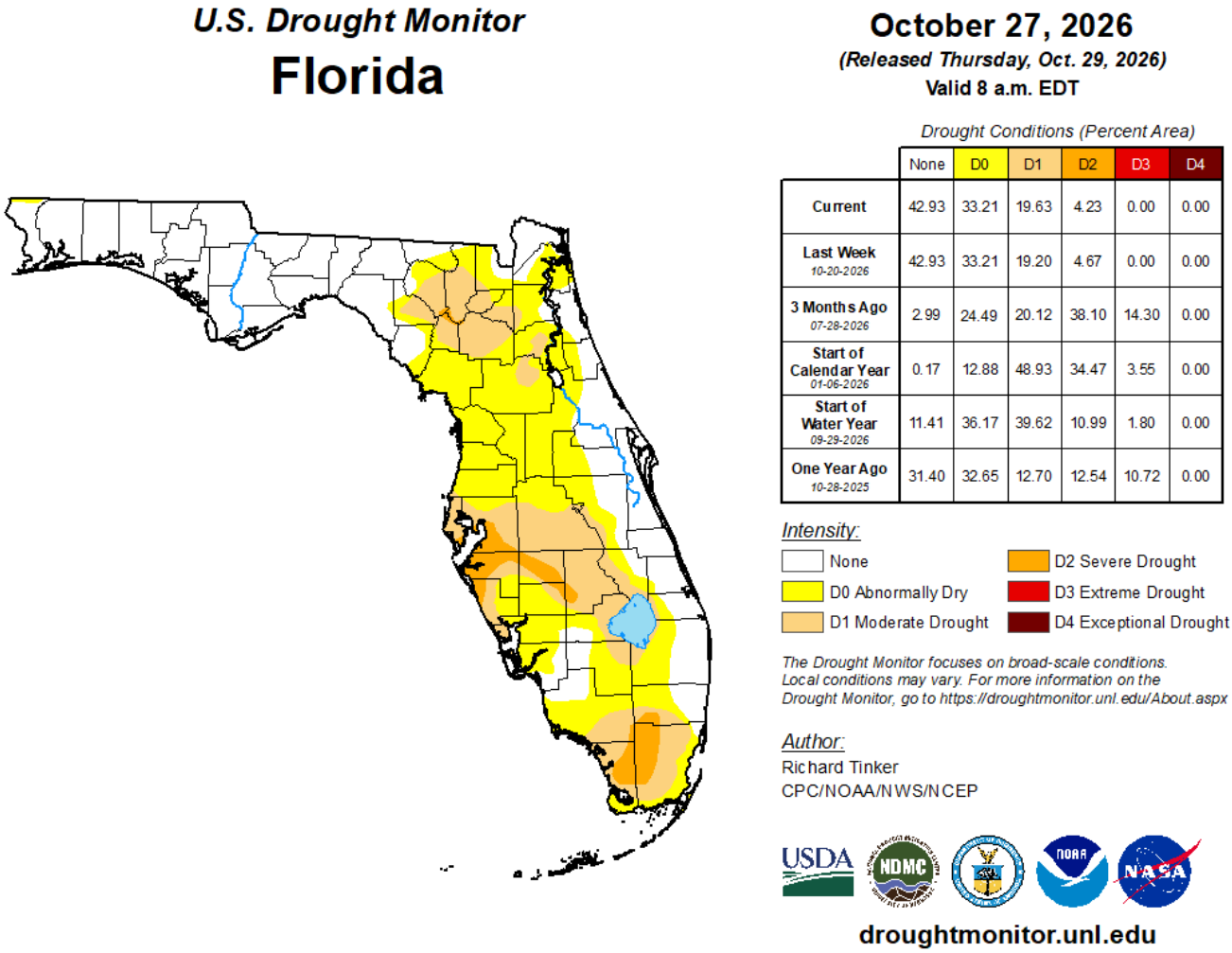
Category	Number of Records
Highest daily max. temp.	25
Highest daily min. temp.	57
Lowest daily max. temp.	4
Lowest daily min. temp.	1
Highest daily precipitation	41
Total	**128**

Drought-Related Impacts.

Drought improved over the past month across the state. Most areas that were experiencing drought at the beginning of the month saw between a 1- and 2-category improvement in drought over the past 4 weeks. As of October 13th, approximately 5% of the state was in severe drought (D2), 20% was in moderate drought (D1), and 32% was abnormally dry (D0), according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. By the end of October, 4% of the state remained in severe drought (D2), 20% was in moderate drought (D1), and 33% of the state was abnormally dry (D0) (Figure 3 below).

As of October 31, the Lake Okeechobee water level was 12.77 ft. above sea level (Feet-NGVD29), which is below average for the time of year and near the water shortage management level of about 13.00 feet. At the first of October, the water level was 11.93 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-October, topsoil moisture conditions were adequate in 60% of the state, short in 21%, and very short in 10% of the state, while 9% of the state had surplus topsoil moisture conditions. By the end of October, topsoil moisture conditions were adequate in 58% of the state, short in 19%, and very short in 8% of the state, while 15% of the state had surplus topsoil conditions. For more information, consult the Crop Progress and Conditions report, which are published by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

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

Station	Average Temperature (ºF)	Departure from Normal (ºF)	Total Rainfall (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)
Gainesville	73.1	+1.7	6.50	+3.82
Sarasota	79.5	+2.2	9.76	+7.00
Melbourne	78.6	+2.3	13.38	+8.52
Fort Myers	79.7	+1.7	1.21	-1.87
West Palm Beach	80.5	+1.8	10.89	+4.99

Appendix 2. Select daily record high maximum temperatures tied or broken during October (compiled from NOAA).

Location	Date	Record (°F)	Broken/Tied	Last
Fort Lauderdale Beach	1	97	Broken	93 in 2024
Gainesville	1	92	Tied	92 in 2019
Kissimmee	3	93	Tied	93 in 1971
Orlando	4	94	Tied	94 in 1986
Clermont	5	95	Tied	95 in 2024
Fort Lauderdale Beach	5	102	Broken	91 in 2015
Lakeland	9	93	Broken	92 in 2018
Homestead	10	96	Broken	93 in 2021
Fort Lauderdale	11	93	Tied	93 in 2018
Vero Beach	11	93	Broken	92 in 2020
Clermont	12	94	Broken	93 in 2020
Fort Lauderdale Beach	13	104	Broken	93 in 2023
Tallahassee	13	90	Tied	90 in 2020
Chipley	14	91	Broken	90 in 2017
Homestead	15	95	Broken	91 in 2022
Venice	15	93	Broken	92 in 2019
Clermont	17	95	Tied	95 in 2018
Homestead	17	95	Broken	92 in 2019
Fort Lauderdale Beach	30	99	Broken	89 in 2025