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Tallahassee *topics*

NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

The National Weather Service (NWS) office in Tallahassee, FL provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for Southeast Alabama, Southwest & South Central Georgia, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend, and the adjacent Gulf of Mexico coastal waters. Our primary mission is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the local economy.

Hurricane Season Recap + Possible Hottest Year on Record for FL

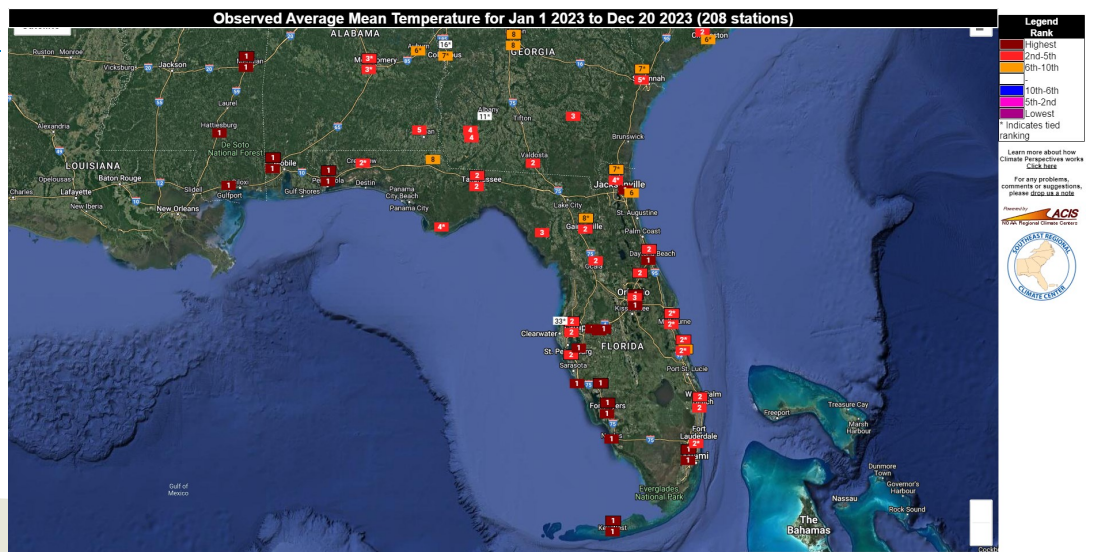
By Israel Gonzalez

Atlantic Hurricane Season Recap (2023): The season quietly concluded on with a ranking of [4th for most named storms on record](#) at 20, of which 7 became hurricanes (3 major hurricanes). The number of [named storms](#) is well above-average based on the 30-year climate normal period of 1991-2020, while the latter two exactly hit the average mark. The only US landfalling hurricane was [Idalia](#) when its center came ashore near Keaton Beach, FL, with max sustained winds of 125 mph (category 3) - the first major hurricane observed over Apalachee Bay in recorded history (dating back to the 1800s). Tropical Storm Harold and Ophelia were the only other landfalling tropical cyclones in the Atlantic basin. The strongest hurricane of the season by wind speed was Lee at 165 mph! Tammy was the last named storm and hurricane of the season, in late October. Record-warm Atlantic sea surface temperatures offset the effects of a simultaneously strong El Niño to produce the most named storms of any El Niño-influenced year in modern record.



2023 Hot Take: As we near the end of 2023, the [Florida climate temperature data](#) this year to date is close to record hot territory (*bottom-right figure*)! Many highly reliable, individual weather stations in the state (including TLH) are ranked top-3 in the almost 130-year history of record-keeping.

January through November 2023 is the [hottest 11-month stretch](#) for that specific period on record in FL by max temperature at 84.9° and 2nd hottest by average mean/min temperature at 74.4°/63.9°. The latter trails 2020. The current record-holder for hottest year is 2015 by average mean temperature at 73.4°. Looking at Tallahassee, the airport is also flirting with the hottest year on record. The site currently ranks 2nd in average mean temperature at 71.6°, just behind 2015. Multiple long-duration heat waves over the summer played a large role in these staggering stats, in addition to above-normal temperatures nearly every month.



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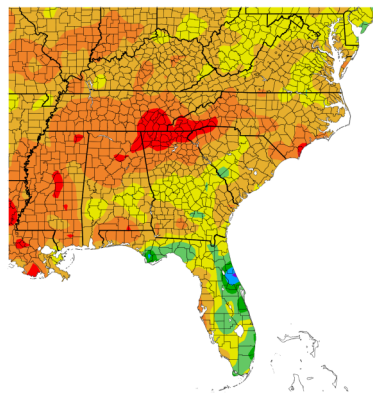
Autumn Highlights *By Israel Gonzalez*

September: September had a few bouts of heavy rainfall and severe weather mixed with an early taste of fall-like weather mid-month. The former got off to a quick start just ahead of Labor Day when a very moist airmass in Hurricane Idalia's wake contributed to widespread, efficient rainmaking thunderstorms that prompted several Flash Flood Warnings on the 1st and 2nd, particularly over parts of the FL Panhandle. By the 7th and 8th, strong to severe storms produced high gusts, damaging winds, and even some hail. The most notable storm was a severe-warned cell that plowed southward from the GA state line through Leon into Wakulla County and produced [straight-line wind damage](#) estimated to be in the 85-90 mph range based on photos shared by emergency management. Additionally, the public confirmed quarter-size hail just outside of Quincy, FL. On the 18th, a cold front pushed through the region and temporarily ushered seasonably cool temperatures. Weather was mainly uneventful thereafter outside of some locally heavy rain that fell across parts of coastal FL and the I-75 corridor where several locations reported in excess of 3" late in September.

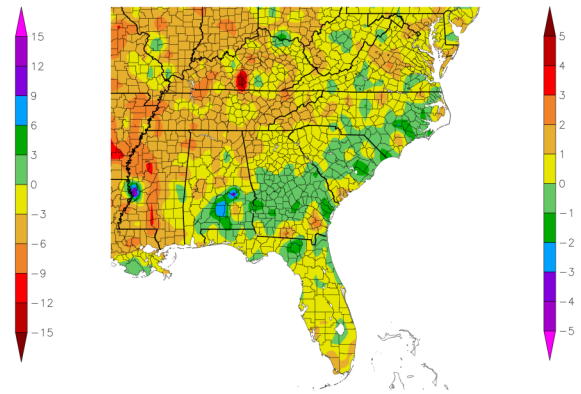
October: October began on a cool note with much of the Tri-State area experiencing sub-50° temperatures for the first time since early May in the wake of a cold front. Near the conclusion of the 1st week, a combination of gusty post-frontal winds and critically low relative humidity amidst ongoing drought conditions prompted Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings for much of the region from 10/5-10/8. By the 2nd week, a Gulf Low approached our coast and threatened portions of the FL Big Bend and South-Central GA with heavy rainfall and potential severe weather. The latter never materialized, but a large swath of 2-4" precipitation was observed roughly from Bay County east-northeastward to the I-10 & I-75 corridors. An extended period of cool/dry weather followed mid-month before transitioning to an unseasonably warm trend to close out October.

November: The beginning and end of November were met with the first freezes of the cool season, particularly at the conclusion of the month when widespread inland readings near or below 32° degrees were observed on the 29th and 30th. As a result, the NWS Tallahassee [discontinued issuing frost/freeze products](#) away from the coastal counties until the growing season begins on March 15, 2024. However, Hard Freeze Watches/Warnings for temperatures at or below 23° will still be issued as necessary. By mid-month, the longest dry spell of the year came to an end for many locations when light rainfall arrived. On the 21st, we dealt with a severe weather threat. One isolated supercell developed in Geneva County early that evening and produced a confirmed tornado whose [surveyed damage](#) was consistent with an EF-1 (max estimated winds of 105 mph). There were no injuries or fatalities reported. On the 26th, a [widespread wetting rain](#) of 1-3" was observed.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
9/1/2023 - 11/30/2023



Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
9/1/2023 - 11/30/2023



Generated 12/6/2023 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers 23 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Autumn Climate Summary: Tallahassee was much warmer than average from September through November, with a mean temperature just over 2 degrees above normal! The highest temperature was 96° on September 6th with the final 90°-day of the warm season on October 4th (late by 5 days on average). By contrast, the lowest reading was 27° on November 29th - the first sub-freeze in 104 days (10th longest streak on record) and first time hitting at least 32° this season (late by 4 days, on average). March 21st was the last freeze of the 2022-2023 cool season observed at TLH (late by 13 days on average).

For precipitation, 11.62" of rainfall was measured from September through November, which made for a slightly wetter-than-normal meteorological autumn. September was the wettest month of the period at 5.29", while October was the driest at 2.99". The greatest single-day accumulation was 2.37" on November 26th (2nd place off the daily record) with October 12th being a close second at 2.17" (daily record). The latter was then followed up with the driest stretch of the year when TLH went 32 consecutive days without any measurable rain (<0.01"). Year-to-date amounts just above 54" are slightly below normal and 4" shy of the average annual value.

Winter Climate Normals: Tallahassee mean temperature is 54.1° with a rainfall accumulation of 12.93".

Employee Spotlight - David Reese

By Israel Gonzalez



IS THERE A TOPIC YOU'D LIKE US
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Near the end of September, our newest meteorologist, David Reese made his debut in our office as a skilled forecaster coming from the NWS Brownsville, TX Weather Forecast Office. A Central FL native who attended college at FSU, then began his career as a broadcaster in Virginia and Georgia before joining NOAA, David brings a great mix of communication and technical skills to the table with versatile Southern US meteorology experience. We are pleased to have him join our team and he has been a great addition! Get to know David better in the Q&A section below:

1) How did you become interested in meteorology?

My interest in meteorology began at a young age due to the summertime thunderstorms we have here in Florida. They always fascinated me and I wanted to know more of the why and how they formed. As I got older, my interests changed some until Hurricane Charley in 2004. It was forecast to ride up the West Coast of Florida, right over the house I grew up in. However, it took that turn to the right sooner than expected, which spared our area, but devastated others to the south and east of us. Throughout that whole time, I was watching the local news channels and how their meteorologists were handling the storm. It was at that point I knew I wanted to become a meteorologist.

2) How was the transition from broadcasting to operations?

The transition to the National Weather Service from broadcast was an interesting one after having spent 10.5 years in TV. I had to learn a whole new way of doing the forecast with Grid Forecast Editor (GFE) and using Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) to disseminate warnings. Oh, and all the training! So much training has to be done by new employees that it was a bit overwhelming at first. As the Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC) told me when the training was assigned: It's a fire hose of information and training. And it certainly was! After dealing with those hurdles, I had to learn a whole new area to forecast as I started my NWS career in Brownsville, TX. It was a far cry from Charlottesville, VA, where I was before getting into the NWS. All-in-all, it was a little rougher than expected, but well worth it in the end.

3) Would you say your move to the Tallahassee office was somewhat of a homecoming?

Coming back to the National Weather Service in Tallahassee felt very much like a homecoming. I spent many hours here in the Love Building while I was in school, either going to class, studying for tests, or doing homework. It's a bit surreal to be back in the same building where I took many of my classes. It has been a joy to be able to show my wife around the college I went to and enjoy all that Tallahassee and the surrounding area has to offer.

4) Are there any focal point duties that you'd like to get into?

I was able to get a taste of a couple of focal point duties in Brownsville and hope to continue some of those here in Tallahassee, like StoryMaps, Culture, Diversity, Inclusion, and Wellness and Social Media. A few others I'd like to explore include Tropical and more of what the Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) has to do beyond Storm Data, which I also did in Brownsville.

5) What are your hobbies and interests outside of work?

My wife and I like to travel, so we attempt to do that as much as possible. We're also much closer to family, so visiting them and being around them is very important to us. I'm also into playing video games, trying new beers or wines, exploring the area, and running (when it gets warmer again).



Autumn Outreach Efforts

By Mark Wool

Management-Admin Team

Felecia Bowser, MIC
Mark Wool, WCM
Parks Camp, SOO
Doug Sherrick, ESA
Jennifer Nichols, ASA
Brian Coats, ITO
Kelly Godsey, Hydrologist
Ricardo Humphreys, OPL

Lead Forecasters

Don Van Dyke
Blair Scholl
Andy Haner
Karleisa Rogacheski
Molly Merrifield

Forecasters

Lance Franck
Wright Dobbs
Eric Bunker
Israel Gonzalez
Kristian Oliver
Jasmine Montgomery
Cameron Young
Joe Worster
David Reese

Pathways Interns

Sophie Bignault, Robert Szot,
Nico Porcelli

Electronic Technicians

Aaron Basti
Vacant

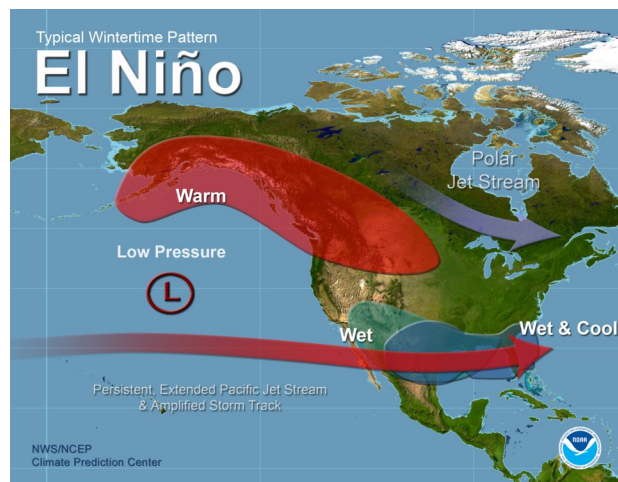
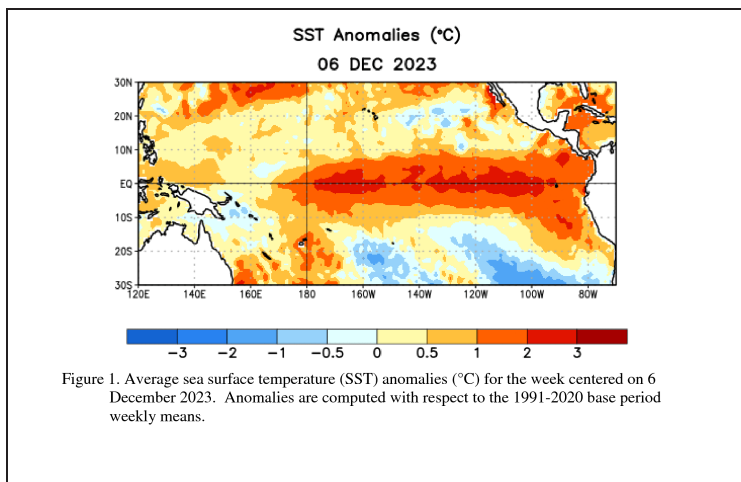
On September 13th, Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) Mark Wool conducted a tour for members of the Tallahassee Senior Center as part of their Lifelong Learning Extravaganza. On the 20th, the office began weekly weather briefings and lessons for FSU Meteorology students enrolled in Synoptic Meteorology. On the 30th, Mark was joined by forecaster Jasmine Montgomery, Pathways intern Robert Szot and student volunteer Mel Geiger at an NWS booth at the annual Tallahassee Science Festival (TSF; see photos below). The TSF attracts over 65 exhibitors and 2,000 visitors, mostly families with children.

On October 10th, Mark participated in a panel discussion on the 5-yr anniversary of [Hurricane Michael](#), sponsored by the American Meteorology Society. Other panelists included WTXL Chief Meteorologist, Casanova Nurse and UGA Agricultural Climatologist, Pam Knox. On the 12th, Mark participated in The School of Arts and Sciences' Science Night at The Centre. On the 17th, our fire weather team members Andy Haner, Wright Dobbs and Joe Worster attended the North Florida Prescribed Fire Council Meeting in Lake City, FL. On the 23rd, Mark was joined by forecasters Karleisa Rogacheski and Lance Franck (pictured below) as we presented the Tallahassee International Airport with the 2023 Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador Award for the efforts with last spring's Hurricane Awareness Tour.

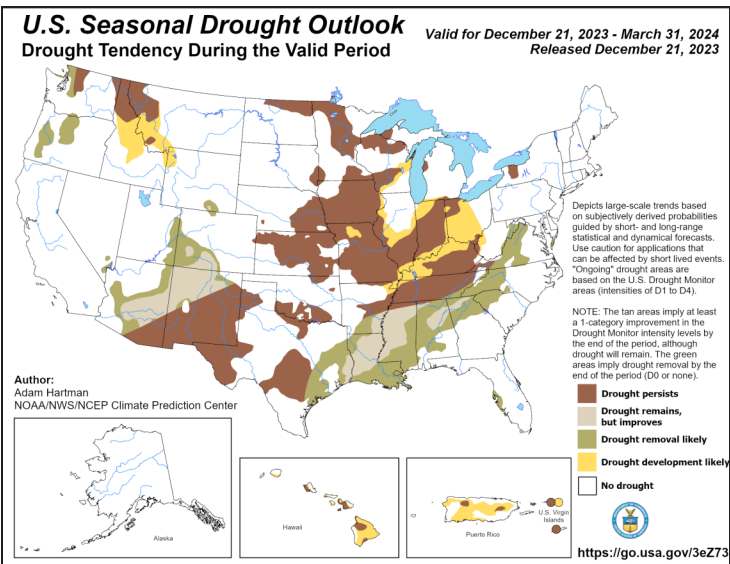
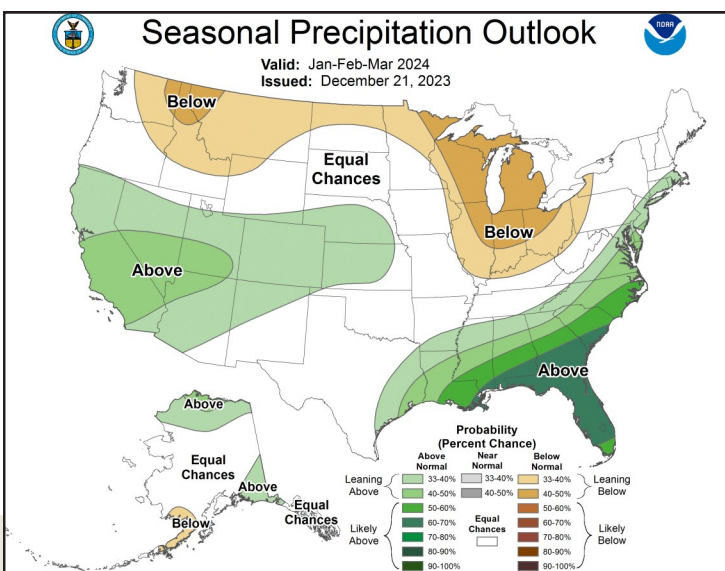
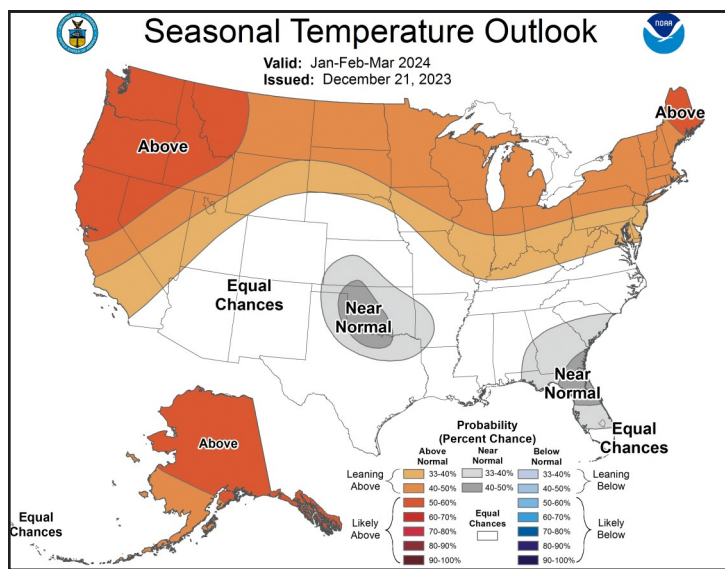
In November, on the 2nd, Mark recapped impacts from Hurricane Idalia as part of Florida State University's After Action Review on the event. Pictured from left to right are Karleisa, Lance, Mark, Tom Vergo, Alex Kraus, Heather Whitaker and Cory Peterson.



State of ENSO and Climate & Drought Outlook for Winter 2023-2024, by Israel Gonzalez



Wet End to 2023 Spills into 2024: An [El Niño Advisory](#) continues with current conditions poised to persist through the Northern Hemispheric Winter before favoring a transition to ENSO-neutral during April-June 2024 at 60%. As of early December, above-average sea-surface temperatures (*upper-left figure*) across the Equatorial Pacific were indicative of an ongoing El Niño despite abated growth anomalies. These trends are supportive of a [high likelihood of a wet winter](#) (*bottom-right figure*) across the Southeastern US thanks to a typically active subtropical jet (*upper-right figure*) that prompts storm development & tracks across the Northern Gulf. Although temperatures are trending towards near normal (*middle-right figure*), if persistent rainfall materializes, then temperatures may trend cooler than projected. Occasional Arctic outbreaks remain possible, but probably less frequent as the often-responsible polar jet stream aims to generally stay confined to higher latitudes. Regardless, it is important to note that every El Niño event is different, impact wise. The NOAA [US Winter Outlook article](#) from October 19th has more info.



Winter Drought Outlook: A very wet December thankfully brought an end to [local drought](#) conditions across the entire Tri-State area! With a likely above-average rainfall outlook the next 3 months, drought is not anticipated through March.

River Flood Risk: There are some longer-range concerns on riverine flooding from January through April from continued El Niño-driven weather during the climatological peak flood season for our region. Recent preliminary local research findings from Pathways student, Sophie Bignault and Hydrologist Kelly Godsey suggest a strong correlation between riverine flooding and El Niño years. Further details are forthcoming in the near-future.