

**MARCH 1992:** March marked a dramatic change in the weather pattern across the local area. After an initial ten days of very warm weather that was more typical of late April, a cold Arctic air mass, ushered in with gale-force northwest winds, brought sharply lower temperatures that persisted during most of the month. Daytime highs averaged in the forties, and numerous lows dropped below freezing, slowing growth, or in some cases, damaging early-season plants. This marked the first colder than normal March since 1984 locally, and the first month with below normal temperatures at Dulles since September 1990 (see cover). There were some large temperature contrasts during the month, particularly during the 17th when the strong March sun pushed afternoon temperatures 30–40 degrees higher than early morning lows in the teens and twenties.

The strong subtropical jet stream was very active across the southern U.S. throughout the month, resulting in frequent local storm systems. Precipitation amounts were slightly below normal in the western suburbs (IAD), near normal in Washington, and above normal east of the city (4.58 at BWI, over 5 inches in Calvert County, MD). Highlights included a compact but strong Atlantic Coast storm that passed just east of Washington on the 27th, providing a soaking rain with over 2 inches in many eastern suburbs. The storm was accompanied by steady, strong northeast winds. With low temperatures prevalent during much of the month, there were numerous days with snow or sleet recorded, although the greatest March snowfall was only 1.2 inches at IAD. However, to the north and west of the Baltimore/Washington area, heavy snow buried parts of western Maryland (Garrett County) and Pennsylvania, with Bradford, PA receiving nearly two feet of snow on the 22nd.

**MARCH 1992 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:**

Station	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day			Precipitation (In)		
Location	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	Snow
National (DCA)	53.6	36.4	45.0	45.8	-0.8	73/2	21/16	3.48	3.46	+0.02	T
Baltimore (BWI)	50.6	31.9	41.3	43.3	-2.0	67/9	19/16	4.58	3.72	+0.86	T
Dulles (IAD)	52.9	30.8	41.9	42.4	-0.5	74/2	18/17	3.23	3.43	-0.20	1.2
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	54.6	34.5	44.6	44	+0.6	74/2	21/14	3.66	3.7	0	T
Andrews AFB (ADW)	52.0	32.9	42.5	45	-2.5	69/2	20/14*	4.24	3.6	+0.6	T

Other occurrences: \* March 16.

**LOOKING AHEAD:** *A cool March.....cool Spring?*

Since 1970, there have been only 8 Marchs (including 1992) when monthly average temperatures have been below normal at DCA. Of the seven such occurrences prior to 1992, the following Spring season (March–May) has been equal or cooler than normal. Thus, the question arises: will 1992 continue this *coincidental* pattern? It should also be noted that during these same 7 spring seasons, only one April recorded above normal temperatures. (Normals: March [45.8°F], April [56.7°F], May [66.0°F] and Spring [56.2°F]) Note: all values below are degrees Fahrenheit.

Year	Mar AvgT	DepNml	Apr AvgT	DepNml	May AvgT	DepNml	Spring AvgT	Spring DepNml
1992	45.0	-0.8	?	?	?	?	?	?
1984	41.8	-4.0	54.9	-1.8	64.9	-1.1	53.9	-2.3
1982	45.7	-0.1	54.0	-2.7	69.0	+3.0	56.2	0
1978	44.4	-1.4	57.7	+1.0	65.8	-0.2	56.0	-0.2
1975	45.2	-0.6	53.6	-3.1	69.7	+3.7	56.2	0
1972	45.6	-0.2	54.1	-2.6	64.6	-1.4	54.8	-1.4
1971	43.2	-2.6	55.0	-1.7	63.7	-2.3	54.0	-2.2
1970	41.9	-3.9	55.3	-1.4	68.3	+2.3	55.2	-1.0