



▶ READ ABOUT THE APRIL TORNA-DOES.....1

○ ISSUE 29

○ Summer

○ 2020



▶ PREVIEW OF OUR 3 NEW FORE-CASTERS.....3



▶ OFFICE OUTREACH EFFORTS.....4

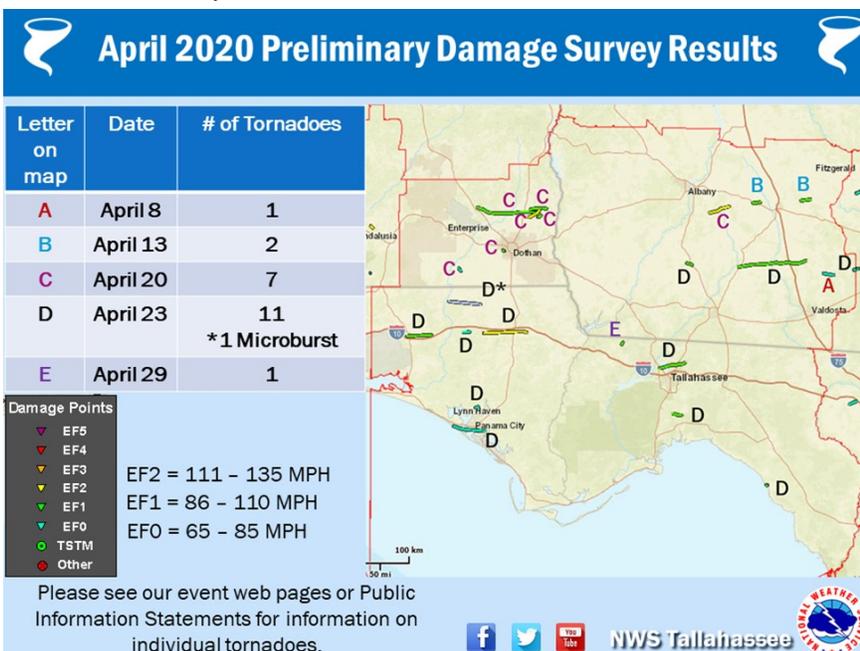
Tallahassee topics

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.

An April For the Ages (Tornadoes) By Israel Gonzalez & Lauren Nash

April 2020 will be remembered for the 22 confirmed tornadoes in our forecast area from multiple severe weather events throughout the month. This broke the previous record of 7 in 1973! The first event occurred on Easter Sunday night (13th) when a squall line passed through overnight. Two tornadoes were confirmed in our southwest GA counties. A little over a week later, the second event featured a squall line that spawned 7 tornadoes on the 20th – 6 in our southeast AL counties and 1 in Mitchell/Worth County, GA. Then on the 23rd, a multi-round, prolonged severe event took place and nearly lasted 24 hours! It consisted of widespread to numerous storms and 2 squall lines, that resulted in 143 storm reports and accounted for half (11) of the confirmed tornadoes for the month! Among those, one touched down in Leon County near Bradfordville. Two other tornadoes were confirmed on the 8th and 29th despite generally sub-severe conditions – EF-1s in Berrien/Lanier County, GA and in Gadsden County, FL, respectively. The figure below is a composite map highlighting all 22 confirmed tornadoes with the letters corresponding to their formation date, and colors representing their track and intensity.



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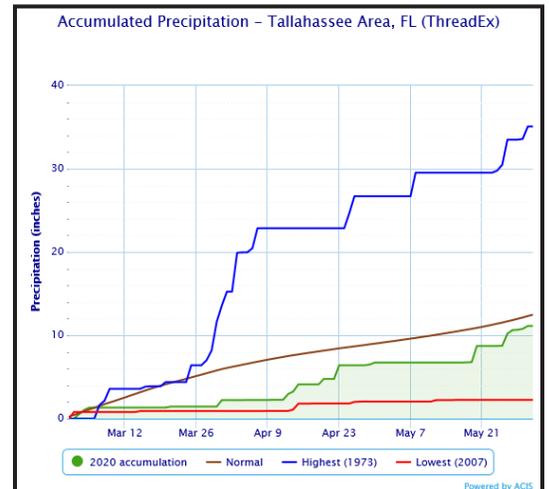
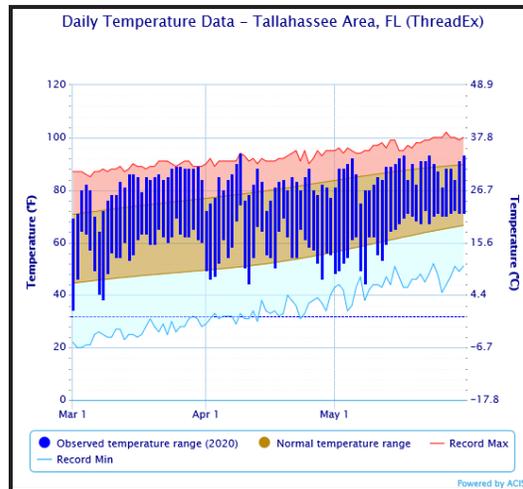
Spring 2020 Climate Summary

By Israel Gonzalez

Marching Towards Warmth: March saw abnormally warm temperatures and was much drier than normal. The average temperature in Tallahassee was 69.3° (+8.9° anomaly) with the highest max temperature recorded at 89° three times (one of which broke the daily record of 88° on March 30, 1946)! The lowest min temperature was 34° on the 1st. As for precipitation, only 2.22 inches of rain fell (-3.72 inch anomaly), with the greatest 24-hour accumulation of 0.78 inches during a severe weather event on the 31st that also spawned 5 tornadoes: https://www.weather.gov/tae/March31_2020_Tornadoes

April Rain Springs Into Action: April was slightly warmer than normal with average temperatures of 69.1° (+3° anomaly). The highest max temp was 94° on the 9th, which broke the daily record of 92° set in 2011! The lowest was 44° on the 11th. Unlike the previous month, precipitation was above average, with Tallahassee receiving some much-needed rainfall to help slightly mitigate the moderate drought conditions. This also contributed to the slightly cooler average temperatures compared to March. Total amounts were 4.51 inches (+1.45 inch anomaly). The greatest 24-hour accumulation was 1.64 inches on the 23rd during the aforementioned severe weather outbreak.

May the Forecast Be With You: The average temperature for May was 75.1° (near normal) and saw 12 days with max temperatures ≥ 90° (highest max temperature was 93° on the 17th and 23rd; lowest min temperature was 44° on the 8th). Total rainfall amounts were 4.39 inches (+0.92 inches anomaly) despite Tallahassee only recording a trace amount through mid month. In fact, conditions were so dry that the first Red Flag Warnings of the year were issued on the 5th. A series of wildfires broke out over the next several days — most notably a 575-acre fire in Walton County, FL where 500 residents evacuated and 33 structures were destroyed! The most significant rainfall of the month occurred on the 20th, when Tallahassee measured 1.94 inches. To close out May, Apalachicola set a daily record high temperature of 95° on the 31st breaking the record of 93° set just last year.

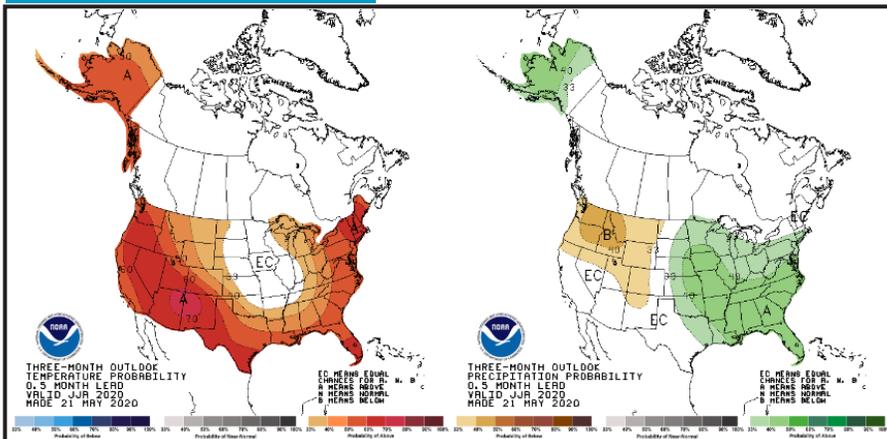


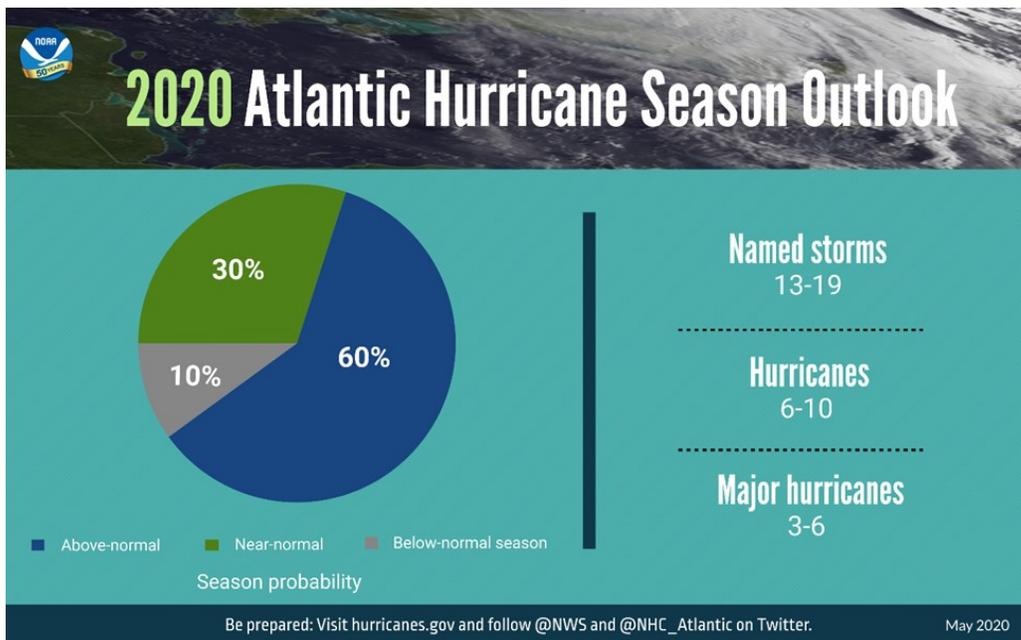
Summer Outlook

By Tim Barry

Looking ahead to summer (June through August) the Climate Prediction Center calls for an enhanced chance for experiencing above normal temperatures and rainfall. The average temperature for Tallahassee during summer is 81.3° and the average rainfall is 22.25 inches. The latter climatologically accounts for about 38% of Tallahassee's annual rainfall, during convective season.

In terms of the large-scale climate, the latest El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) discussion shows that sea surface temperature anomalies in the equatorial Pacific are near average. The tropical atmospheric circulation is currently in the ENSO-neutral phase and has a 65% chance of continuing in the Northern Hemisphere through the summer. The ENSO cycle has little impact on the local weather during the summer season, but may have a greater effect on Atlantic hurricane activity this season (discussed further in next section).





IS THERE A TOPIC YOU'D LIKE US TO COVER? SEND US AN E-MAIL:

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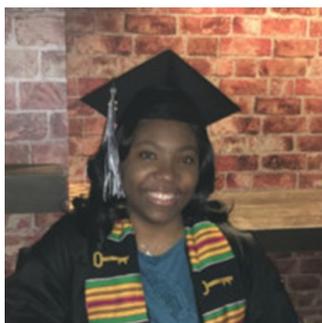
By Israel Gonzalez & Jessica Fieux

On May 21st, NOAA released their 2020 Hurricane Season forecast which calls for a 60% chance of above-average activity. An average season is 12 named storms, 6 hurricanes, and 3 major hurricanes. Last season we had a couple of close calls with Hurricane Barry, Hurricane Dorian, and Tropical Storm Nestor. Each of those storms presented distinct, unique challenges to forecast for and message on. This provided learning experiences that we will apply this season, which has already seen three tropical storms (Arthur, Bertha and Cristobal) form already, the first two making landfall in the Carolinas in mid/late May. This marks the sixth straight year that at least 1 storm was named before June 1st, the official start date of the Hurricane Season (ends on November 30th). Although this is somewhat unusual, it is not unprecedented. Early storm formations are also not necessarily indicative of an active hurricane season. Nevertheless, all it takes is 1 storm to define a season such as Hurricane Michael most recently for us in 2018. It is also important to note that this activity forecast does NOT take landfalls into account. Lastly, we had our Hurricane Preparedness Week May 3rd-9th where each day reviewed the following topics: **Determine Your Risk, Develop and Evacuation Plan, Assemble Disaster Supplies, Get an Insurance Checkup, Strengthen Your Home, Help Your Neighbor, Complete a Written Plan.** More information can be found here: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness>.

A Preview of Our 3 Newest Forecasters

By Israel Gonzalez

We are pleased to announce three new additions to our team this summer: **Jasmine Montgomery** (left), **Kristian Oliver** (right), and **Molly Merrifield** (middle). Jasmine is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma with a degree in Meteorology. She most recently worked as a GIS Specialist for AECOM in Dallas and has NWS volunteer/intern experience at the Storm Prediction Center and the NWS office in Ft. Worth, TX. Kristian has a Bachelor's Degree in Meteorology and Water Resources from SUNY Brockport and is nearing completion of his Masters Degree at the University of Arizona. He has experience at the NWS office in Tucson, AZ as a volunteer since January, 2019. Molly will be transitioning over from the Miami, FL Weather Forecast Office. She has several years of experience in the NWS with a prior position in Houston/Galveston, TX office. Molly is also a Florida State University graduate with previous volunteer work experience with our office, making for a nice homecoming. These individuals will be in the Employee Spotlight in forthcoming Newsletter Issues, so that you can get to know them better.





Spring Outreach Efforts

By Mark Wool

Management-Admin Team

Tom Johnstone, MIC
Mark Wool, WCM
Parks Camp, SOO
Doug Sherrick, ESA
Jennifer Nichols, ASA
Toan Tran, ITO
Kelly Godsey, Hydrologist
Ricardo Humphreys, OPL

Lead Forecasters

Don Van Dyke
Donal Harrigan
Jessica Fieux
Blair Scholl
Lauren Nash

Forecasters

Tim Barry
Lance Franck
Claudia (Jeanie) McDermott
Wright Dobbs
Eric Bunker
Israel Gonzalez

Electronic Technicians

Craig Carpenter
Ron Eimiller

In early March, the NWS in Tallahassee was still under a normal operating culture with respect to outreach and public interactions in general. On the 5th, forecaster Lance Frank met with Emergency Managers from the Florida Panhandle at their quarterly meeting. This one was held in Jackson County. We continued to plan for the Hurricane Awareness Tour scheduled for May 7th with some planning meetings with partners on the 6th and 9th of March. Also on the 9th, FSU students taking the Meteorological Instruments class observed our evening weather balloon preparation, launch, and data quality control process. On the 10th, Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) Mark Wool attended the quarterly Big Bend Healthcare Coalition meeting where the hot topical was the emerging COVID-19 Pandemic. From that date onward, social distancing became the new paradigm and all partner interaction and outreach transitioned to virtual formats. Many spring conferences were cancelled as was the Hurricane Awareness Tour.

Noting that school children were now suddenly all being taught virtually, NWS Tallahassee initiated a weekly school outreach social media post at 11 AM EDT on Wednesdays. This program started on April 8th and has included instructional videos and weather experiments.

This sudden shift in the way we interact with the community did not prevent us from reaching out to partners and the public to discuss the upcoming hurricane season and all of the products and services that are available to help you stay prepared. In addition to National Hurricane Preparedness Activities mentioned on page 3, NWS provided many training sessions and briefings to local partners. On April 21st, Mark provided training to City of Tallahassee employees. On May 8th, he discussed the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale with FSU leadership and emergency response personnel, focusing on the impacts winds at the various levels would have on the campus. On May 20th, Mark was joined in an evening Facebook Live panel discussion by National Hurricane Center WCM, Dan Brown; Leon County Emergency Manager, Kevin Peters; WCTV Chief Meteorologist, Mike McCall; and WTXL Chief Meteorologist, Casanova Nurse. The panel (pictured below) discussed lessons learned over these past several busy seasons and then took questions from the online audience. Around 5800 people watched the hour-plus-long recorded session with as many as 130 watching live at any given time. The recorded session can be accessed here. <https://www.facebook.com/NWSTallahassee/videos/175820277128753/>.

The last week of May was packed with virtual hurricane season outreach activities. Mark presented to the Big Bend Healthcare Coalition on the 26th, and the Apalachee Local Emergency Planning Committee on the 27th. Mark participated in the City of Tallahassee PREP event on the evening of the 28th and delivered a hurricane season briefing to FSU on the 29th. The office conducted a series of training sessions for our core partners. On the 26th, Mark and senior forecaster Lauren Nash did a Tropical Overview. On the 28th, Dan Brown was joined by tropical program leader, Jessica Fieux, as they discussed the various tropical products produced by the NHC and our local office. The series will continue into early June. Finally, on May 16th, the office facilitated a hurricane exercise with HAM radio operators as they tested their capabilities to communicate with one another and submit reports to us during a simulated hurricane landfall.



Hurricane Preparedness and Panel Discussion



Dan Brown
National Hurricane Center



Mark Wool
National Weather Service Tallahassee



Kevin Peters
Leon County Emergency Management



Mike McCall
WCTV



Casanova Nurse
WTXL ABC 27

Join these panel of experts on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 7PM on Facebook Live to learn about changes for the 2020 hurricane season, lessons learned from past seasons and have the opportunity to ask your hurricane and preparedness questions! You don't need a Facebook account to join in!

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 – 7PM EDT
NWS Tallahassee Facebook Live
<https://www.facebook.com/NWSTallahassee>