



FLORIDA KEYS

National Weather Service

Forecast Office

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COLDEST MARCH IN THREE DECADES AND 3RD COLDEST ON RECORD WINTER 2009-2010 TIES 1977-1978 AS THE COLDEST ON RECORD 2ND DRIEST MARCH IN THREE DECADES... TIES WITH MARCH 1994

AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES THIS PAST MARCH WERE QUITE COOL FOR THE FLORIDA KEYS. KEY WEST EXPERIENCED ITS COLDEST MARCH IN THIRTY YEARS AND THE THIRD COLDEST SINCE RECORDKEEPING BEGAN IN 1873. KEY WEST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AVERAGED 67.7 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT AND FLORIDA KEYS MARATHON AIRPORT AVERAGED 67.8 DEGREES...LEAVING THEM 6.1 AND 5.8 DEGREES BELOW NORMAL RESPECTIVELY. THE COLDEST MARCH ON RECORD WAS 1915 WHEN THE AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURE WAS 65.7 DEGREES.

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING BROUGHT AN END TO THE COLDEST WINTER ON RECORD...WHICH TIED WINTER 1977-1978. THE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE FELL 6.1 DEGREES SHORT OF NORMAL FOR A THIRD MONTH IN A ROW. THE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE FOR JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH WAS 65.6 DEGREES...MAKING IT THE COLDEST START TO A YEAR ON RECORD. THIS SURPASSES THE SAME PERIOD IN 1981 WHEN THE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE WAS 67.0 DEGREES.

MARCH RAINFALL TOTALS AT THE KEY WEST AND MARATHON AIRPORTS WERE BELOW NORMAL...CULMINATING WITH 0.34 INCHES AT KEY WEST AND 1.55 INCHES AT MARATHON. THESE VALUES ARE 1.52 AND 1.15 INCHES BELOW NORMAL FOR THE MONTH...RESPECTIVELY. LACK OF RAINFALL AT KEY WEST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TIED 1994 FOR SECOND DRIEST MARCH IN THE PAST THIRTY YEARS. ON THREE OCCASIONS THERE HAS BEEN NO MEASURABLE RAINFALL RECORDED IN MARCH...1893...1907...AND 1971.

IN CONTRAST TO THE ABUNDANCE OF RAINFALL THROUGHOUT THE KEYS IN FEBRUARY...MARCH ENDED WITH MIXED RESULTS ALONG THE ISLAND CHAIN. LOCATIONS IN THE MIDDLE AND UPPER KEYS TENDED TO BENEFIT MOST FROM PASSING COLD FRONTS...THOUGH NOT QUITE ENOUGH RAIN FELL TO KEEP MARATHON ABOVE NORMAL FOR THE MONTH. THE LOWER KEYS GENERALLY RECEIVED LESS THAN AN INCH OF RAIN...WITH EXCEPTIONS BEING THE EXTREME WESTERN AND EASTERN MOST REPORTING STATIONS.

BELOW ARE PRELIMINARY AVERAGE MONTHLY RAINFALL TOTALS FOR MARCH ALONG THE KEYS...COMPARING 2010 TO 2009 AND THE DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL VALUES WHERE AVAILABLE.

MARCH RAINFALL TOTALS/DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL/2009 IN INCHES

Station – Station Type	2010	Dep. fm Normal	2009	Dep. fm 2009
Dry Tortugas National Park – <i>COOP</i>	1.73		0.04	+1.69
Key West WFO – <i>NWS</i>	0.62	-1.24	0.83	-0.21
Key West International Airport – <i>ASOS</i>	0.34	-1.52	0.72	-0.38
Big Coppitt Key – <i>CoCoRaHS</i>	0.41		0.13	+0.28
Cudjoe Key – <i>CoCoRaHS</i>	0.84		1.35	-0.51
Bahia Honda State Park – <i>COOP</i>	2.15		1.34	+0.81
Florida Keys Marathon Airport – <i>ASOS</i>	1.55	-1.15	0.97	+0.57
Curry Hammock State Park – <i>COOP</i>	1.50	-1.20	2.55	-1.05
Duck Key – <i>COOP</i>	1.81	-0.89	1.06	-0.75
Islamorada – <i>CoCoRaHS</i>	1.01		1.13	-0.12
John Pennekamp State Park – <i>COOP</i>	3.03		1.10	+1.93
Key Largo – <i>CoCoRaHS</i>	2.38		0.71	+1.67

NORMAL VALUES FOR KEY WEST ARE THE AVERAGE OF 1979-2000 AND FOR MARATHON/DUCK KEY THEY ARE THE AVERAGE SPANNING 1982-2004. RECORDS ARE NOT YET TRACKED FOR MARATHON DUE TO THE SHORT PERIOD OF DATA.

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