

FEBRUARY 1993: February took a dramatic turn to much colder weather across the area due to a mid-month shift in the jet stream which allowed frigid Arctic air to plunge southward out of Canada and across much of the contiguous U.S. Locally, monthly temperatures were below normal at all 5 airports. At DCA, subnormal temperatures were observed on 10 of the last 11 days of the month (see cover). During this period, readings at DCA averaged more than 9°F below normal. There were four calendar days with at or below freezing temperatures at DCA. In addition, the low for the month at DCA was 11°F (the lowest reading since December 24, 1989) on the 19th while both BWI and IAD dropped to 9°F. IAD observed a record daily low on the 28th when the mercury dipped to 10°F.

Monthly precipitation was below normal at all 5 airports; however, two measurable snowfalls were recorded across most of the Washington/Baltimore area. The first event on the 21st produced 1 to 4 inches while the second provided up to 3 inches on the 26th. Portions of the area received additional snowfall on the 12th and 17th, resulting in slightly above normal February snow totals at both BWI and IAD.

FEBRUARY 1993 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	Snow
National (DCA)	42.5	26.1	34.3	37.5	-3.2	57/3*	11/19	2.27	2.71	-0.44	4.1
Baltimore (BWI)	40.3	22.4	31.4	34.8	-3.4	58/5	9/19	2.84	3.12	-0.28	8.8
Dulles (IAD)	41.4	21.9	31.7	33.6	-1.9	59/10	9/19	2.74	2.81	-0.07	8.8
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	42.5	23.6	33.0	36	-3	58/22	11/19	2.87	3.0	-0.1	4.0
Andrews AFB (ADW)	41.5	23.1	32.3	36	-4	58/5#	11/19	2.23	2.8	-0.6	5.0

Other dates of occurrence: * February 5th; # February 10th.

WINTER (DECEMBER 1992-FEBRUARY 1993): Despite a cold and snowy ending, this Winter provided relatively mild and dry weather, and little snowfall. January's temperature departure of +5.1°F at DCA more than offset the February chill, thereby providing the fifth consecutive winter with warmer than normal conditions. There was only one calendar day with at or below normal freezing temperatures at DCA prior to the mid-February cold spell; however, the last two weeks of the Winter yielded an additional four such days, producing a seasonal total of five (only one such day during Winter 1991-92). Four of the five airports observed readings at or above 70°F on the last day of December, with record daily highs of 72°F and 73°F reported at BWI and IAD, respectively. January provided unusually mild weather across the area. DCA recorded 25 days with at or above normal temperatures and IAD observed the third warmest January on record. Unseasonably cold conditions prevailed in February with four of the five airports observing monthly departures of -3°F and lower. Despite the February chill, 4 of the 5 airports reported above normal Winter temperatures.

Seasonal precipitation and snowfall were below normal at all 5 airports. DCA recorded a 6th consecutive Winter with subnormal snowfall as only 5.1" was measured, with the largest snowfall occurring on February 26th when 2.7" fell. The most significant storm of the season was a major Nor'easter that battered the area on December 10th-12th. The storm system generated over 3 inches of precipitation for some locations, over 3 feet of snow across portions of the Allegheny Plateau, strong wind gusts, coastal beach erosion, and flooding. This Winter also featured 59 cloudy days, including the cloudiest December ever recorded at DCA.

WINTER 1992-1993 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Mth-Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT*	DepNm*	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm*	DepNm*	Snow
National (DCA)	45.1	30.6	37.9	37.2	+0.7	67/12-31	11/2-19	8.03	8.55	-0.52	5.1
Baltimore (BWI)	44.2	27.9	36.1	34.5	+1.6	72/12-31	9/2-19	10.20	9.58	+0.62	11.7
Dulles (IAD)	43.9	26.2	35.1	33.2	+1.9	73/12-31	9/2-19	10.19	8.73	+1.46	14.8
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	44.6	27.3	35.9	35	+1	70/12-31	11/2-19	10.36	9.1	+1.3	5.0
Andrews AFB (ADW)	44.3	27.7	36.0	36	0	70/12-31	11/2-19	9.08	9.3	-0.2	8.0

* Note: Winter season departures calculated above are based on 1961-1990 normals.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SPRING: A month of contrasts.

March is the transitional month between winterlike and springlike conditions. It is also a month of extreme contrasts. Often, dramatic changes can occur over relatively short time periods. Below is a list of some notable March statistics for Washington. [Normal Avg. Temp.: 47.2°F, Normal Monthly Precipitation: 3.17", Average snowfall 2.3"; Normals Period 1961-1990]

Event	Year(s)	Event	Year(s)
Warmest on record (Avg. Temp. 55.5°F)	1921& 1945	Greatest number of days at or below 32°F (24)	1960
Coldest on record (Avg. Temp. 34.5°F)	1885	Greatest monthly snowfall total (19.3")	1914
Record monthly low (4°F-Mar. 4)	1873	Greatest daily snowfall total (11.3"-Mar. 29)	1942
Record monthly high (93°F-Mar. 23)	1907	Greatest single-storm snowfall (12"-Mar. 26-28)	1891
Greatest number of 90°F+ readings (3)*	1907	Greatest daily precipitation total (2.79"-Mar. 9)	1881

*March 22nd (Temp. rise of 50°F in 8 hours), 23rd, and 29th; also the only March with 90°F+ readings ever recorded.