

# March 2023 Northern Michigan Climate Summary

## Alpena

Avg Temp	Avg Temp Departure	Precip	Precip Departure	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure
29.7°F	+0.4	2.58"	+0.77"	15.4"	+4.8"

## Houghton Lake

Avg Temp	Avg Temp Departure	Precip	Precip Departure	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure
30.4°F	+0.7	3.31"	+1.53"	13.2"	+4.9"

## Sault Ste. Marie

Avg Temp	Avg Temp Departure	Precip	Precip Departure	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure
28.0°F	+1.3	1.08"	-0.73"	4.8"	-8.2"

## Gaylord

Avg Temp	Avg Temp Departure	Precip	Precip Departure	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure
29.3°F	+3.3	3.92"	+1.76"	30.6"	+15.7"

## Traverse City

Avg Temp	Avg Temp Departure	Precip	Precip Departure	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure
32.9°F	+0.7	2.79"	+0.66"	21.8"	+9.5"

March 2023 was another month that featured above normal temperatures across northern lower and eastern upper Michigan. The difference is that the abnormality was rather minimal when compared to the previous months. In general, climatologically chilly airmasses frequented the month, which allowed for winter weather to linger across the region when larger systems passed through, leading to another month that was generally wetter and snowier than normal.

At the start of the month, temperatures recovered from the chillier end to February, as temperatures swelled above normal over the first ten days of the month. Several spots saw highs reach well into the 40s. Following this stretch of warmer than normal temperatures, the trend was generally closer to or just below average to close out the month. That's not to say there was not the occasional warmer day sprinkled in before temperatures quickly cooled back down. March 16th was easily the warmest day of the month, with highs reaching into the 50s across portions of northern lower, while the eastern U.P. generally saw highs in the mid-to-upper 40s.

The aforementioned chillier airmasses contributed to snow being more dominant across northern lower, particularly owing to being in more favorable portions of the larger systems, which resulted in a snowier than normal month. On the other side of the bridge, there were systems that failed to produce appreciable precipitation, which resulted in Sault Ste. Marie seeing drier and less snowy conditions than normally seen in March. The result was a rare instance of eastern upper Michigan seeing a slowly dwindling snowpack, while much of northern lower Michigan observed a rising snowpack at the same time.

Despite temperatures above normal to start the month, light snowfall was observed periodically. Heavier snows became more frequent after the middle of the month. First, the warm winter led to near record low ice coverage on the lakes, which contributed to an abnormally heavy lake effect snow outburst around St. Patrick's Day, leading to some snowbelt locations across northwest lower Michigan observing 12-16" of snow. But the active end to the month was not over with, as a larger system brought a widespread swath of 6-12" of snow on March 25th. These outbursts of snow surged snowfall and liquid equivalent precipitation above normal across northern lower Michigan, particularly in the snowbelt regions.