

Annual 2002 Rainfall Capsule

Drought Finally Broken in 2002 Tampa Rainfall 11th Highest Since 1891

The rains returned in 2002, and water levels in area lakes and the Floridian Aquifer of Southwest Florida reached normal or above for the first time since 1998. Winter Rains were normal or slightly above for the first time since 1998, but dry and increasingly warm weather arrived for Spring (March through May). Ample sunshine in April and May pushed average combined temperatures into the top 5 all time in some areas. Temperatures leveled off by early June, and the Rainy Season began soon after. Summer featured near normal a really averaged rainfall, with above normal pockets from the Tampa Bay region north through Citrus and Sumter Counties, and below normal sectors in eastern Polk County and parts of the Southwest Florida coastline south of Sarasota. Temperatures were near normal from June through August, but rose in September, which was not only well above seasonal norms but the warmest month of the year. Dry weather returned by October, but the heat remained, courtesy of a persistent Bermuda High. Several tropical cyclones affected the Gulf, but had little impact on the Suncoast. The heat dissolved by November, and El Niño's prodigious rains followed in December. For the year, rainfall was 10 to 15 inches above normal across most of west central and southwest Florida. Figures 1 and 2 below show the total rainfall and the estimated departure from average, respectively, for 2002. Figures 3 and 4 are the graphic representation of the temperatures and rainfall from Tampa International for 2002

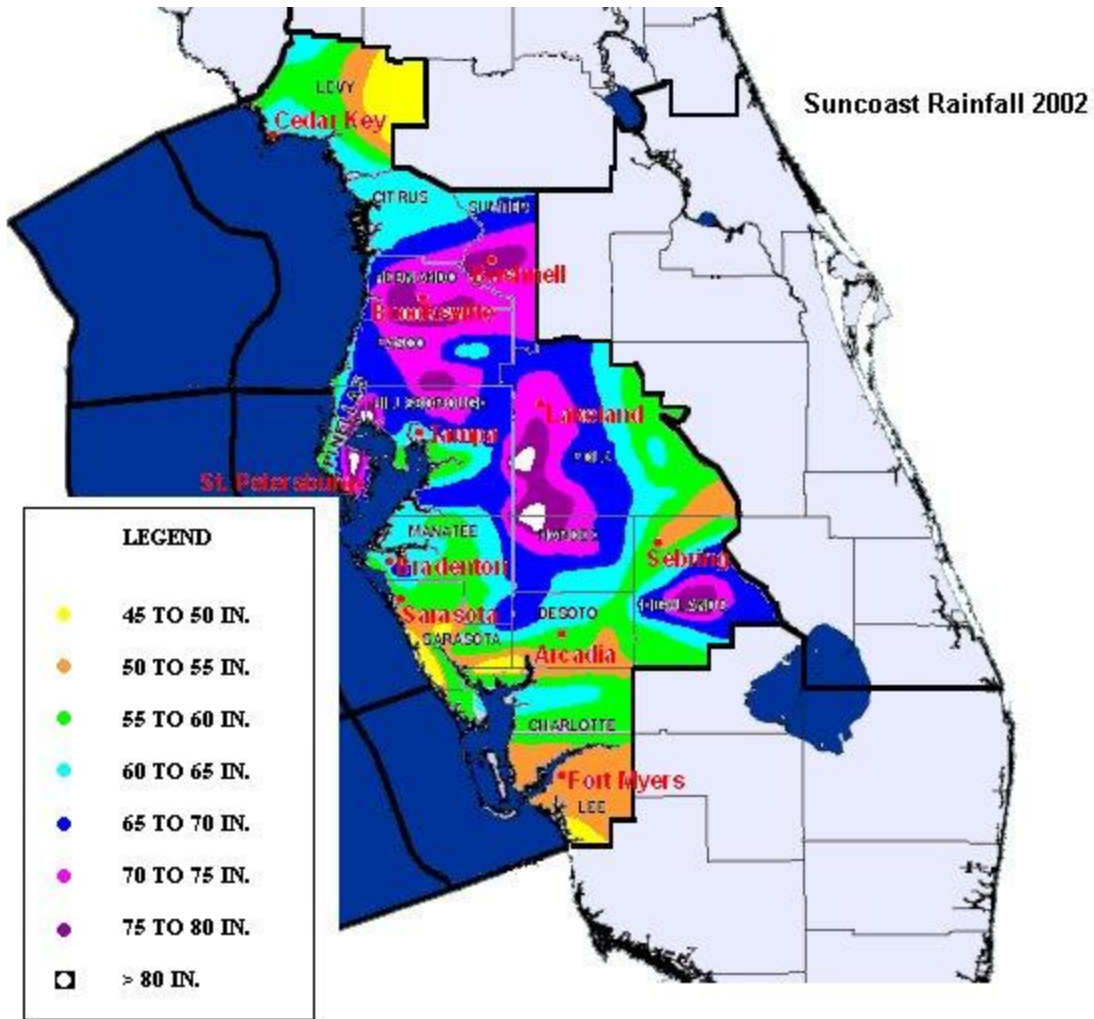


Figure 1. Total rainfall, 2002.

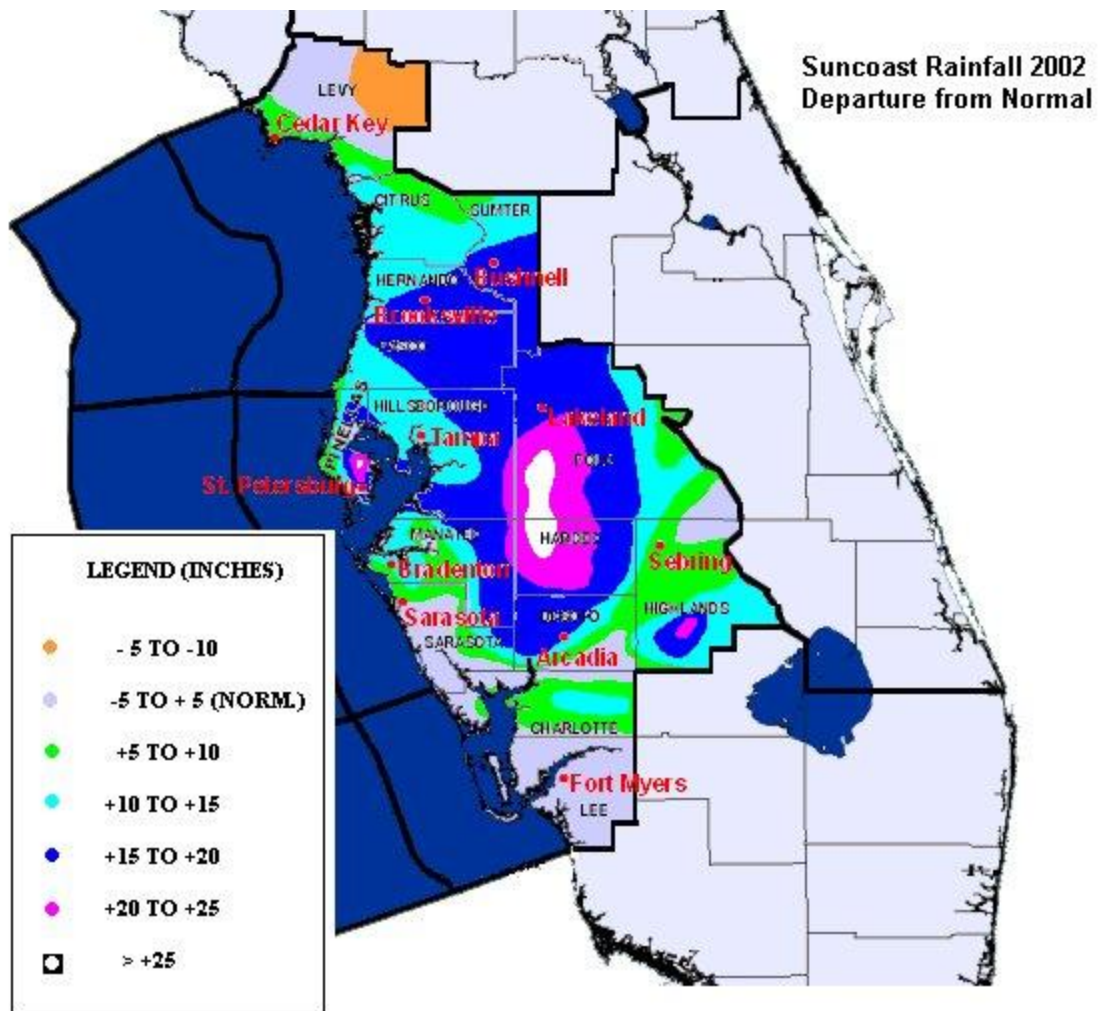
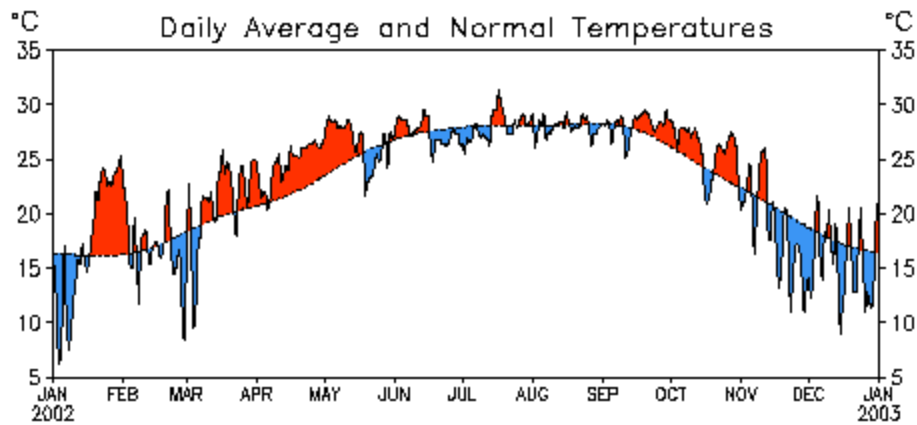
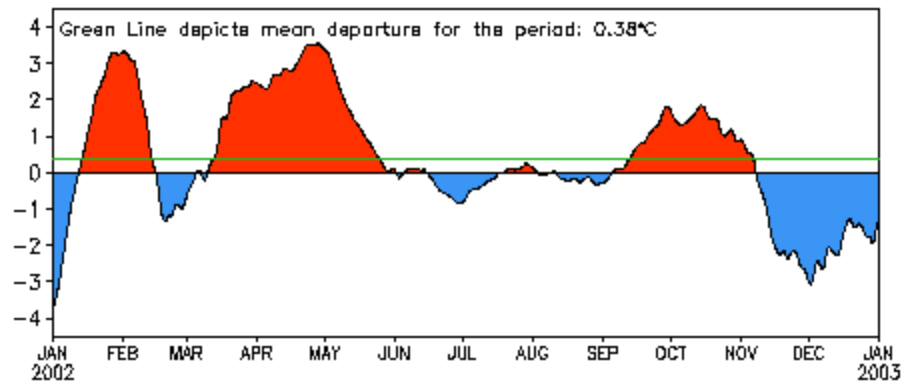


Figure 2. 2002 Departure from normal annual rainfall.

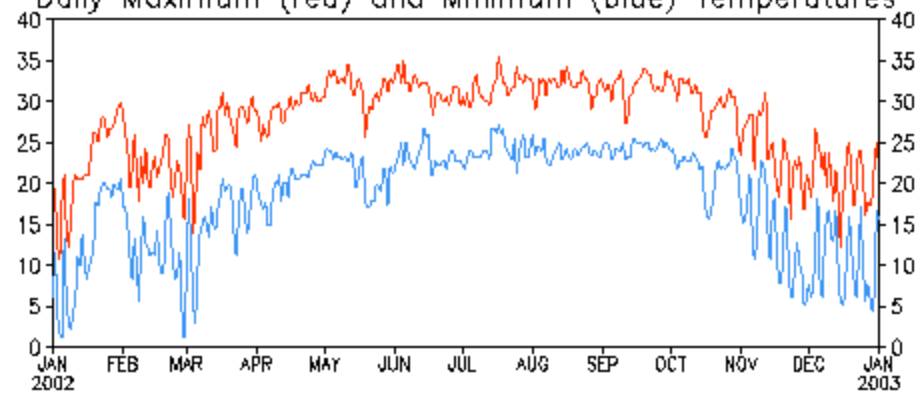
TAMPA INTL. AIRPORT, FLORIDA



31-Day Running Mean of Daily Temperature Departures



Daily Maximum (red) and Minimum (blue) Temperatures



Data updated through 31 DEC 2002

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Figure 3. 2002 Temperatures at Tampa International.

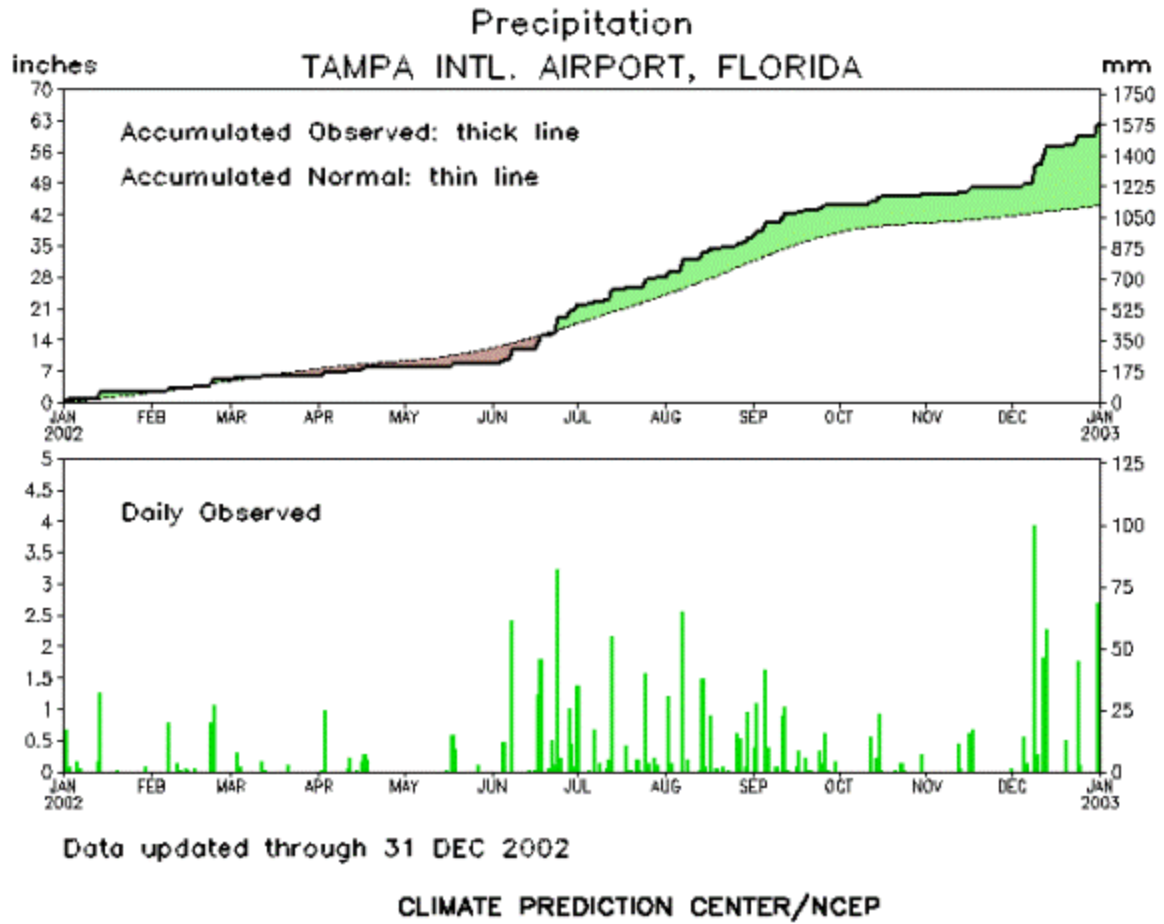


Figure 4. 2002 Rainfall at Tampa International.