



IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – MARCH 2014

General Summary. Temperatures averaged 29.3° or 6.6° below normal while precipitation totaled 0.83 inches or 1.32 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 22nd coldest and 11th driest March among 142 years of records. A colder March was recorded just last year while there has not been a drier March since 1994. Snowfall averaged 6.1 inches or 1.4 inches above normal to rank as the 52nd snowiest March among 127 years of records. As has been the case for most of the winter season eastern Iowa recorded the coldest/wettest weather while western Iowa was drier with more frequent reprieves from the cold.

Temperatures. The cold weather pattern that began in mid-October continued unabated through March as well. The first few days of the month were especially cold with temperatures averaging more than thirty degrees below normal on the 2nd and 3rd. Daytime high temperatures were below zero in many areas on the 1st and 2nd. Elkader and Decorah reported the month's lowest temperatures with -24° readings on the morning of the 3rd. Lower March temperature extremes have been recorded only three times (1948, 1960 and 1962) while the same -24° reading was last seen during the month on March 12, 1998. However there were no additional subzero temperatures after the 6th. Wind chill readings dipped as low as -37° at Mason City on the 2nd and -34° at Marshalltown on the 3rd. Only one day during the month (10th) averaged more than ten degrees warmer than normal. There have now been a total of only seven days since mid-October with temperatures averaging ten or more degrees above normal while 63 days in the period have been more than ten degrees below normal. Nevertheless, there were some sure signs of spring during the month. Temperatures reached into the 70's somewhere in Iowa on five days during the month with the first occurrence of the year coming on the 9th when Little Sioux reached 74°. The highest temperature was a 79° reading on the 31st at Clarinda and Shenandoah. Considerable frost remained in the ground at month's end across northern Iowa but soils finally thawed across most of southern Iowa over the last few days of March.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 2% less than last March but 22% more than normal. Degree day totals so far this heating season (since July 1, 2013) are running 14% greater than normal and last season's total. A colder heating season was last recorded 35 years ago.

Precipitation. It was a rather dry month across Iowa. Only Tripoli and Decorah managed to exceed the normal precipitation for the month while Sidney experienced their driest March of record (0.04 inches, old record 0.07 in 1956 among 72 years of data). Glenwood and Shenandoah tied with 1956 for their lowest March precipitation totals. Monthly totals varied from 0.03 at Glenwood up to 2.21 inches at New Hampton. Snowfall totals varied from 0.3 inches at Hastings to 15.5 inches at New Hampton. The bulk of the month's precipitation fell in two events at opposite ends of March. Snow fell statewide on the 1st-2nd with three to five inches common from Spencer southeast to Keokuk with a maximum amount of 8 inches reported at Zearing in Story County. The other event on the 27th brought rain statewide (with a dusting of snow in the far northwest) with greatest amounts across the northeast with Coggon (Linn County) reporting 1.24 inches.

Severe Weather. There were a handful of severe weather reports in south central Iowa on the afternoon of the 27th with a brief tornado reported near Chariton.

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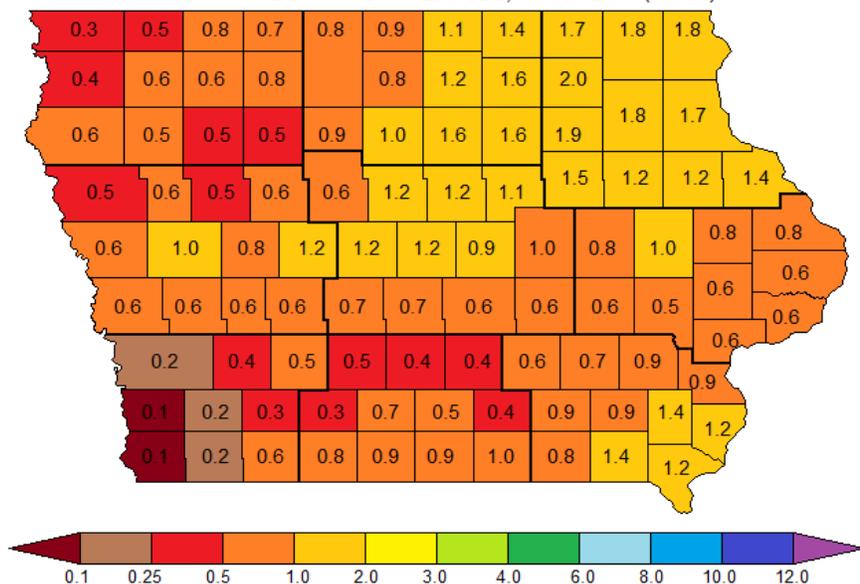
WEATHER BY DISTRICTS

DISTRICT	TEMPERATURE (F)		HEATING DEGREE DAYS				PRECIPITATION (inches)				SNOWFALL Mar 2014 Average
	March 2014 Average	Departure*	March 2014 Average	Departure*	Since Jul., 1, 2013 Average	Departure*	March 2014 Average	Departure*	Since Jan.1, 2014 Average	Departure*	
Northwest	28.0	-5.1	1140	+151	7475	+720	0.50	-1.38	1.60	-1.59	4.7
North Central	25.3	-7.5	1225	+226	7709	+880	1.14	-0.82	3.42	-0.23	8.0
Northeast	25.6	-8.5	1214	+258	7720	+1166	1.61	-0.36	4.18	+0.09	9.9
West Central	30.1	-5.6	1074	+165	6969	+681	0.60	-1.51	1.75	-1.96	5.1
Central	29.4	-6.5	1098	+197	7112	+864	0.92	-1.27	2.88	-1.25	5.9
East Central	29.8	-7.4	1087	+225	7093	+1127	0.72	-1.56	3.32	-1.45	5.9
Southwest	33.1	-5.3	983	+158	6510	+754	0.24	-1.99	1.53	-2.54	1.6
South Central	32.0	-6.2	1015	+185	6606	+838	0.63	-1.66	2.70	-1.72	5.4
Southeast	31.9	-7.6	1021	+231	6543	+1037	1.03	-1.54	4.53	-0.87	8.0
STATE	29.3	-6.6	1100	+199	7113	+890	0.83	-1.32	2.85	-1.27	6.1

* Departures are computed from 1981-2010 normals.

The weather data in this report are based upon information collected by the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA National Weather Service.

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
 COUNTY PRECIPITATION AVERAGES, MARCH 2014 (inches)



State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
 COUNTY SNOWFALL AVERAGES, MARCH 2014 (inches)

