JULY 2003: The consistently wet, cool conditions prevalent the first half of the year continued in July across the Washington/Baltimore area. Monthly temperatures averaged between 0.3ºF and 1.5ºF below normal in the area. There were 22 days with at or below normal readings at DCA. In sharp contrast to last July, there were no extended periods of heat. The longest stretch at or above 90ºF at DCA was a mere 4 days (4th-7th). The hottest day of the month occurred on the 5th when the high hit 94ºF at DCA, 93ºF at IAD, and 92ºF at BWI. Through July the area recorded no 95ºF+ readings at any of the three major airports. Temperatures averaged more than 1.5ºF below normal during the climatologically hottest period of the year (July 19-27) in Washington. Nighttime lows in the 70s were frequent due in part to high humidity. In fact, lows remained at or above 70ºF from the 5th-11th and 26th through months' end at DCA. The cooler than normal conditions in July combined with the unusually cool June yielded the coolest start to a summer since 1972 (see cover graphics). July also marked the ninth month out of the last ten with subnormal temperatures at DCA (8 of last nine at BWI).

Once again, precipitation was well above normal throughout the area with monthly surpluses of more than 2 inches common at many locations, including DCA and IAD. All three airports recorded monthly precipitation totals above 5 inches for the third consecutive month. Some locations recorded more than 10 inches, mainly the result of torrential downpours from tropical showers and thunderstorms. The 5.76"of rain observed at DCA resulted in the wettest July since1975, while the 6.07" recorded at IAD was the 4th largest July total on record. There were 3 days at IAD (9th, 10th, 22nd) with more than an inch of rain and 2 such days at both DCA (1st,10th) and BWI (2nd, 22nd). Precipitation highlights included heavy rainfall (1.84" at BWI) on the 2nd-3rd as the remnants of Tropical Storm Bill soaked the area. On the 9th, strong thunderstorms drenched the local area, dumping up to 1.04" at IAD. To the west, strong winds caused property damage in Round Hill, VA. The following evening, strong thunderstorms produced a spectacular lightning show across much of the local area with frequent cloud-to ground-lightning, booming thunder and heavy rain (1.41" at IAD; 1.06" at DCA). In addition, the storms spawned two tornadoes in Virginia (F0; winds between 40-72 mph in Stafford County and F1; winds between 73-112 mph in King George County), causing scattered property damage but no injuries or fatalities according to press reports. On the 12th, thunderstorms accompanied by strong winds dumped more than an inch of rain on portions of Montgomery County. On the 22nd, additional thunderstorms soaked much of the local area with over an inch of rain (1.67" at BWI; 1.49" at IAD), while nearly three inches drenched portions of Montgomery County. The accumulating rainfall resulted in the most precipitation for a June-July period since 1972 at both DCA and IAD and the greatest total in Washington (35.30") for a January- July period in over 100 years (see cover graphics).

JULY 2003 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station	Temperatures (ºF)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
Location	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr to date
National (DCA)	85.2	70.1	77.7	79.2	-1.5	94/5	66/25#	5.76	3.66	+2.10	36.83
Baltimore (BWI)	84.5	66.6	75.6	76.5	-0.9	92/5	59/20	5.56	3.85	+1.71	35.19
Dulles (IAD)	84.8	65.9	75.4	75.7	-0.3	93/5	59/25#	6.07	3.57	+2.50	38.53
Andrews AFB (ADW)	85.2	67.0	76.1	N/A	N/A	93/5*	61/14#	4.74	4.3	+0.40	36.20

Other Occurrences:* June 6; #June 20.

LOOKING AHEAD TO AUGUST: *A Wet June-July = Wet August?*

Does the wetter than normal June-July 2003 (total precipitation at DCA: 13.63") mean a wet August? Below is a look at the 10 wettest June-July periods in Washington along with the corresponding August precipitation total. Normal August precipitation at DCA is 3.44 inches.

Year	June-July Total Precipitation	August Precipitation Total (In.)
1886	17.38	2.43
1917	15.66	0.77
1972	14.96	2.82
1878	14.70	8.69
1905	14.47	9.75
1945	14.37	2.62
1884	14.34	1.01
1922	13.69	3.08
2003	13.63	?
1883	13.28	3.30