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It’s Official: 2012 Broke Record for Warmest Year in New Hampshire

DURHAM, N.H. – It may be snowy and cold outside, but Granite Staters should have no trouble remembering how hot it was last year. In fact, just-released climate statistics now show that 2012 was the warmest year for New Hampshire since official records began in 1895, according to Mary Stampone, assistant professor of geography at the University of New Hampshire and the N.H. state climatologist.

It was also the warmest year for the Northeast region, with state records broken in eight of the 12 Northeastern states: Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The average temperature of 47.2 degrees Fahrenheit in New Hampshire was about 4 degrees above the average for the period of 1895 to 2012 and broke the previous record of 46.6 degrees set in 1998, Stampone said.

“This new record makes 2012 the third consecutive year to rank as one of the 10 warmest since 1895 and the eighth since 1990. Four of the top 10 warmest years since 1895 occurred during the last decade, and eight of 10 occurred since 1990,” she said.

The top 10 average warmest years in New Hampshire are:

- No. 1: 2012, 47.2 degrees
- No. 2: 1998, 46.6 degrees
- No. 3: 1953, 46.3 degrees
- No. 4: 2010, 46.2 degrees
- No. 5: 2006, 46.0 degrees
- No. 6: 1990, 45.9 degrees
- No. 7: 1999, 45.8 degrees
- No. 8 (tie): 2011 and 1949, 45.6 degrees
- No. 10: 1991, 45.3 degrees

The coldest year for New Hampshire was 1926 (39.5 degrees), and no other year has ranked within the 10 coldest since.

“In addition, average monthly temperatures were above normal for 10 out of 12 months in 2012, with six months exceeding the range of normal variability and a new average monthly temperature record for March, which was unusually warm,” Stampone said.

The average temperature in March 2012 was 39.6 degrees, which was 9 degrees above the 1981-2010 normal for March and slightly above the previous record of 39.4 degrees set in 1946. Nearly
200 individual station records were also broken during the month, including 168 daily and 21 monthly station high temperatures records statewide.

June and November were the only months in 2012 with an average monthly temperature below normal, however both months fell within the range of normal variability, and the differences are not significant.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

**GRAPHICS**

State-Averaged Mean Annual Temperature for New Hampshire, 1895-2012

http://www.unh.edu/news/img/stampone_2012_1.jpg

New Hampshire average annual for 2012 are shown as a difference (departure) from the 1895-2012 average. The range of variability is shown as one standard deviation above and below the average for the period of record. The state-averaged mean annual temperature of 47.2 °F for 2012 ranks as the warmest year statewide since records began in 1895.

Credit: Mary Stampone/UNH and NHSCO

2012 State-Averaged Monthly Statistics for New Hampshire

http://www.unh.edu/news/img/stampone_2012_2.jpg

New Hampshire average monthly temperatures for 2012 are shown as a difference (departure) from the 1981-2010 average (normal) for each month. The “near-normal” range of variability is shown as one standard deviation above and below the 1981-2010 average for all months. March 2012 was the warmest March since 1895.

Credit: Mary Stampone/UNH and NHSCO

Top 10 Warmest and Coolest Years in New Hampshire


New Hampshire mean annual temperature rankings for the period of record 1895 to 2012. The largest ranking represents the warmest year; the smallest represents the coldest year.

Credit: Mary Stampone/UNH and NHSCO

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