

Dear CliSec Friends:

We'd like to present you with our March newsletter. In it, you'll find highlights of recent weather and climate news and events. Further, there're climate outlooks for the next six months. Links are provided for further information. We are now witnessing our **worst drought on record**, which is **likely to continue beyond mid-year**. Night-time temperature was at record high for February.

Thanks!

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What Happened? December 2015-January-February 2016 (DJF)

Very warm temperatures and below normal rainfall

+ Impacts

Unfavourable conditions for vector-borne diseases; raised public awareness on drought and the impact of El Nino on our climate

- Impacts

Drought remains at serious levels; some households without pipe-borne water for weeks

Notable climate events - DJF

- [Worst drought on record](#)
- [Seventh driest winter - DJF](#)
- [Record high night-time temp for February](#)

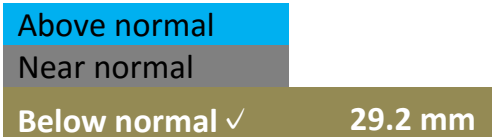
Summary

February 2016, at the V. C. Bird International Airport (VCBIA), now has the record highest mean night-time temperature, for the given month, as expressed by the mean daily minimum temperature. The mean minimum temperature of 23.4 °C is the record highest in a series dating back to 1969. A record number of warm nights was also observed at VCBIA; the 15 warm nights observed obliterated the previous record of 10, set in 2007. Overall, the VCBIA mean temperature for February of 25.6 °C was near record high. [Read more...](#)

Headline Impacts

- Still no potable surface water
- Weeks without water for some residents
- Favourable farming weather in few areas

February Rainfall



DJF Rainfall



Potworks Dam March 5, 2016
Courtesy: Karen Corbin, Humane Society

What Next? March-April-May (MAM) 2016

Consensus Outlook

Below to near normal rainfall and higher than normal temperature

+ Impacts

Reduced potential for vector-borne diseases and epidemics; favourable conditions for outdoor activities

- Impacts

Continuation of drought, empty surface catchments and expensive (92%) potable water from desalination

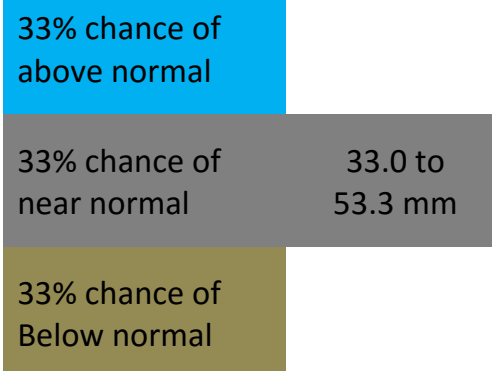
Our Typical March Weather

March is the first month of the meteorological spring. March has eclipsed February to become the driest month. The rainfall average is 51.8 mm (2.04 in). However, the month has had as much as 225.9 mm (8.89 in) and as little as 9.1 mm (0.36 in). Most rainfall during the month comes from surface to low level troughs, cold fronts and moisture advection. The mean temperature 25.6 °C (78.1 °F).

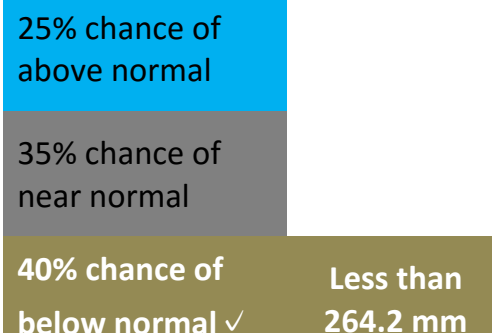
Our Typical MAM Weather

MAM is the meteorological spring period. The normal rainfall total for the season is 240.8 mm (9.48 in) but has ranged from 63.5-604.3 mm (2.5-23.79 in). In addition to the above mentioned weather features, deep layered troughs and daytime heating start to become more evident and are responsible for heavy downpours mainly in May. On average, there are 23 wet days (>=1 mm). The mean temperature is 26.3 °C (79.3 °C).

March 2016 Rainfall Outlook



MAM 2016 Rainfall Outlook



Climate Outlook

March to May

Rainfall: There is 75% confidence of lower than normal to normal rainfall

Temperature: There is 85% confidence of higher than normal temperature. [Read more...](#)

June to August

Rainfall: There is 75% confidence of lower than normal to normal rainfall

Temperature: There is 70% confidence of above normal temperature. [Read more...](#)

Drought

Drought Situation: Below normal rainfall for February has resulted in the drought remaining at serious levels. The island-average rainfall for the month was 29.2 mm (1.15 in), drier than the previous two Februarys and the third driest since 2001. [Read more...](#)

December 2015 to May 2016 Projection: Based on the rainfall experienced in December 2015 and January 2016 (94.7 mm or 3.73 in) and the outlook for February to May, a **moderate drought or worse is evolving** over the December 2015-May 2016 (DM) period; hence, a **drought warning** is in effect for DM. The probability of a **moderate drought or worse** is 60%. [Read more...](#)

October 2015 to June 2016 Projection: Based on the rainfall experienced October to January (291.1 mm or 11.46 in) and the outlook for February to June, a **moderate drought or worst is evolving** over the October 2015-June 2016 (OJ) period; hence, a **drought warning** is in effect for the OJ period. The probability of a **moderate drought or worse** is 58%. [Read more...](#)

September 2015 to August 2016 Projection: Based on the rainfall experienced September to January (386.1 mm or 15.2 in) and the outlook for February to August, a **severe drought is evolving** over the September 2015-August 2016 (SA) period; hence, a **drought warning** is in effect for the SA period. The probability of a **moderate drought or worse** is 74%. [Read more...](#)

What Influences the Next Season?

The weather across the area is generally controlled by the sea surface temperatures (SSTs) of the tropical North Atlantic (TNA), and the tropical Pacific Ocean (TPO) by way of El Nino/La Nina. March-May is normally warmer than usual the year following the start of El Nino. It also tends to get higher than normal rainfall, but this is in question this year. June-August is usually influenced by the TNA, where warmer than normal SSTs produce above normal rainfall and temperature with the converse being true. The TNA is likely to be warmer than normal; however, this may be one of those years when it does not bring wetter weather.

Agromet Bulletin Highlights

In preparation for the upcoming carnival season, farmers have now completed land preparation activities. As a result of near normal rainfall in some parts of the country during February, some farmers were encouraged to move forward with planting activities. Currently, farmers are in the process of seeding sweet potatoes, onions, tomatoes, carrots and cassava. [Read more...](#)

Record Breaking Dry Year for Antigua?

2015 will go down in meteorological history as the driest year on record for Antigua in nearly 150 years. The island-average rainfall was a paltry 574.5 mm (22.62 in), the lowest in a series from, at least, 1871. 2015 has shattered the previous record driest year – 1983 – by some distance, when we had 681.5 mm (26.83 in). [Read more...](#)

Record Low Cold Nights for Antigua

2015 saw the fewest number of cool nights on record across much of Antigua. At the V. C. Bird International Airport (VCBIA), the number of cool nights – nights with the temperature falling to at least 22 °C (71.6 °F) – was the fewest on record in a series dating back to 1971. [Read more...](#)

Rainfall and Temperature Outlook - Background

The outlooks are prepared by the CliSec, the Climate Section of the ABMS with support from the CIMH. The outlooks are produced by combining global, regional and national forecasts and expert interpretation. National and region-wide outlooks, produced using the [Climate Prediction Tool](#), are considered together with global dynamical climate models. Models considered include those from the IRI, the U.K. Met Office, ECMWF and EUROSIP.

Recent Events

Feb 15-19 | [ClimPACT Workshop](#), CIMH, St. James, Barbados.

Upcoming Events

May 25-31 | Wet season [Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum](#), Roseau, Dominica.

Other Products

[Dry Season Statement](#) | [Wet Season Statement](#) | [Yearly Weather Summary](#) | [Hurricane Season Summary](#) | [Droughts ABC Reef Watch](#) | [Drought Outlook](#) | [Normals and Averages](#) | [Climate Data](#) | [Antigua Hurricanes and Storms](#) | [Wet Days](#)

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