General: March 1990 was a quiet month for the most part. Temperatures averaged slightly below normal, rainfall was light and winds were near to below average values for March. However, fog occurrence was record setting for the month.

Temperature: March’s average temperature of 52.7°F is 0.5°F below the 39-year normal, almost exclusively due to cool days – 60.7°F vs a normal of 61.8°F, while the nights were near normal: 44.7°F vs a normal of 44.6°F. No individual temperature records were set, quite unlike the past few months. We probably saw the last of this winter season’s (light) frost on 12 March when the thermal shelter temperature dipped to 39°F. Low for the month, 38°F, was registered early morning 9 March, while the month’s high, 70°F, was recorded on the afternoon of 15 March.

Precipitation: What started as a lot of promise early month ended with a dismal 1.58”, which is 1.37” below normal and with only three months to go, the rain-year (1 Jul 89 – 30 Jun 90) total on 31 March is 12.21” vice 16.45” normal (or 74% of normal). Expectation for the year is 18.64” normal and 16.55” median. That leaves us (on 31 March) with a deficit of one third of our normal yearly rainfall, which is nearly impossible to make up as the dry season rapidly approaches and the outlook for April is not good. Earlier in March 1990 the year’s total exceeded that in early March 1989, but no longer. We are 0.90” behind 1989 as of 31 March. Small hail fell during shower activity on the evening of 11 March. Snow was observed at higher elevations of the local mountains (e.g., Chew’s Ridge) on 11 March … perhaps for the last time this season.

Wind: Maximum wind gust for the month, 32 miles per hour (mph), was measured on 27 March during a vigorous early afternoon sea-breeze event, not uncommon in Spring on the Monterey Peninsula. However, the average high daily gust was only 20 mph, some four miles per hours less than average (18 years of record). Airport winds (6 AM to 11 PM) averaged 7.9 mph – higher than last March but lower than the two previous Marches.

Fog: Only fog turned in a significant value for the month, namely 16 days with one or more hours of fog, which is a record high for March (27 years of record) and more than double the expected value of seven fog days. The nearest competitor in March was just last year with 14 fog days.

Earthquake: A moderate quake was felt in the area about 5:50 AM 23 March 1990. No damage was reported.
NWS Climate Station, Monterey, CA

March 1990

Temperature (degree F) vs. Precipitation (inches)

Total = 1.58
Average = 44.7
Average = 60.7