Understanding the origin and continuation of the active-break cycles during Indian summer monsoon has eluded scientists. A suite of high-resolution TRMM satellite measurements document the beginning, development, and propagation of the wet and dry spells of these cycles. Shown here is the life cycle of the rainfall and SST anomalies based on a composite of 24 events that occurred during the summers 1998–2003. The mean oscillation period is 32 days so that the interval between adjacent phases is about 4 days. The green contours (lavender) are positive (negative) precipitation anomalies starting from 2 mm/day (–2 mm/day) with a contour interval of 3 mm/day. The thick green contour outlines the major positive precipitation anomalies. The color shading represents SST anomalies in °C.