

# Florida CoCoRaHS

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network

*Volunteers working together  
to measure precipitation.*

## Thank You!

Yes, it's been a while since my last newsletter and I apologize for the delay in updating you with the recent CoCoRaHS news and information. I've been traveling over the past few months, which has taken me from Georgia to Puerto Rico and finally to California all in the name of work. And it's kept me from sitting down and taking time to thank you all for your hard work and diligence during January, when I asked for help in monitoring our cold snap. So many of you responded to the call with invaluable data, stories and pictures. Nolan has mentioned it time and time again, but you guys help make the network such a huge success and rise above and beyond the call of duty so many times during the year. Thank you!

## Flood Safety Week

Starting March 15<sup>th</sup>, NOAA and the National Weather Service are hosting a Flood Awareness Week. This week of activities will highlight some of the many ways floods can occur, the hazards associated with floods and what you can do to save life and property in the event of a flood.

For more information, you can click the following link:

<http://www.floodsafety.noaa.gov/>

## Quick Stats

973	# of registered FL observers
485	# of active FL observers
11,236	# of reports submitted by FL observers during 02/10
02/02/10 & 02/10/10	Dates with the greatest # of FL reports submitted during 02/10 (431 reports)
8.13"	Highest reported daily rainfall from FL CoCoRaHS observers during 02/10 (FL-BW-3 on 02/01/10)



*Because every drop counts!*



## January and February Rains

Rainfall totals for January were somewhat above normal at northern stations, while totals were below normal across most of central and southern Florida (Table 1). The heaviest rainfall occurred as surface low pressure systems moved across the Southeast to the north of the state. Monthly rainfall at Tallahassee (8.09 inches) produced the tenth wettest January on record. Also, Tallahassee set a daily record of 2.04 inches on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 4.66 inches on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Among other daily records were 1.71 inches at Jacksonville and 1.85 inches at Gainesville on the 21<sup>st</sup>, then 2.54 inches at Orlando on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

*Table 1: January precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for selected cities.*

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	6.07	0.73
Tallahassee	8.09	2.73
Jacksonville	3.96	0.27
Orlando	3.53	1.10
Tampa	3.42	1.15
Miami	0.89	-0.99
Key West	1.15	-1.07

February rainfall totals were well above normal at some southern stations, while totals were near normal across most of northern and central Florida (Table 2). The heaviest rainfall occurred in the extreme southern parts of the state as surface low pressure systems moved across the peninsula. Daily record amounts were recorded at Miami (2.90"), Key West (1.60") and Orlando (0.62") on the 1<sup>st</sup>. One inch of snow was reported at Jay and DeFuniak Springs on the 12<sup>th</sup>. A trace of snow was observed at numerous locations in northwest Florida, from Pensacola eastward to Tallahassee, overnight from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>.

*Table 2: February precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for selected cities.*

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	6.03	1.35
Tallahassee	4.97	0.34
Jacksonville	2.71	0.44
Orlando	4.35	2.00
Tampa	1.99	-0.68
Miami	4.69	2.62
Key West	4.63	3.12



## Current State of the Drought

I know that some of you looked out your windows and thought to yourself... “Drought? What drought?” The El Niño rains have come through during this winter and helped ease the remaining bit of drought that was lingering along portions of the east coast of Florida. It’s amazing that this time last year the entire state was suffering from drought. The current picture from the drought monitor shows a statewide absence of drought and conditions of extreme dryness. But that doesn’t mean we can forget about drought. Spring is typically dry across Florida, which means there might be a return of dry conditions before the onset of our summer rains.

The CoCoRaHS network is now helping report drought conditions across the United States as part of our continuing effort to count every drop *and* find out where the drops aren’t falling. For more information on how you can help, click on the “Impacted by Drought?” banner on the main page or the following link:

<http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=droughtimpactreports>

This website includes valuable information on how drought can impact a variety of sectors, such as agricultural, energy and public health, along with links to agencies that are on the constant watch for drought.

## Times Are Changing...

Hopefully, we were all prepared for the time change this month, and it didn’t catch anyone off guard (like it did me). While I’m still trying to adjust to losing that extra blissful hour of sleep, I wanted to let you know that your CoCoRaHS observations will continue to stay on local time. If your normal observation time was at 7 AM EST, it becomes 7 AM EDT after the time change. This should help avoid some confusion, but if you have questions, please feel free to drop me an email.

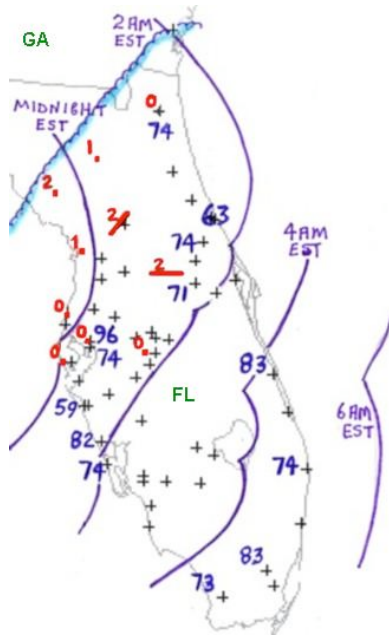
## March Madness

You’ve seen it mentioned when you’ve made your daily report, but in case you haven’t heard, we are running a little friendly competition at CoCoRaHS called ‘March Madness’ (not to be confused with the NCAA Basketball Tournament). We are trying to see which state can recruit the most observers in the month of March. As of March 12<sup>th</sup>, Florida has only been able to recruit 3 new observers. Mississippi is currently in the lead with 57 new observers since the start of the contest. So if you know someone (relative or friend) who might be interested in joining the program, now would be a perfect time to get them to sign up.



# Weather Term: Derecho

A derecho is a widespread and long-lived straight-line wind event associated with a cluster of severe thunderstorms in the form of a squall line. This phenomenon is similar to a gust front, except the high winds (in upwards of 100 mph) are sustained and generally increase behind the “gust” front.



In March 1993, the Superstorm of '93 produced a subtropical derecho that raced across the state during the early morning of the 13<sup>th</sup>. Gusts of near hurricane force were recorded at a number of locations. Tampa reported a maximum wind gust of 96 mph, Vero Beach saw a wind gust of 83 mph and the Dry Tortugas recorded a wind gust of 109 mph. Eleven confirmed tornadoes touched down in Florida, including 3 F2 tornadoes in Levy and Lake counties.

In addition to the wind and tornadoes, snow fell in north Florida, and several towns had unofficial estimates of up to as much of 5 inches. Numerous stations across the state reported record low temperatures for the day. The storm surge along certain portions of the Gulf reached 6 to 12 feet.

Image to the left: Severe weather reports in Florida from the March 13, 1993, derecho. Measured gusts (in mph) are plotted in blue. “+” symbols indicate wind damage or estimated gusts of 58 mph or greater. Red dots and paths indicate tornado events. The approximate location of the squall line is shown in two-hour increments. (Courtesy of NOAA’s Storm Prediction Center)



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## Have Questions?

If at any time you have questions about CoCoRaHS, reading your rain gauge, or finding a location to setup your rain gauge, please feel to contact a CoCoRaHS Coordinator. We are lucky enough to have regional support from National Weather Service offices across the state, as well as county/local help from several CoCoRaHS volunteers. You can find all of the contact information for the CoCoRaHS Coordinators at:

[http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=coord\\_FL](http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=coord_FL)

Take care,  
Melissa