

U.S. PRECIPITATION (PERCENT OF AVERAGE) - APRIL 2014

April brought a variety of weather to the lower 48 states with wet conditions in the southeast and Great Lakes and very dry weather across the southwest, central plains, south Florida and New England. In Colorado, most locations were at or below normal for precipitation with a few exceptions, such as the San Luis Valley and around Pueblo.





	April	Departure
	Precip	From
	(in.)	Average
Alamosa	1.06	0.47
Aspen	1.01	-0.83
Co. Springs	0.92	-0.50
Denver	1.24	-0.47
Durango	0.19	-0.91
Grand Junction	0.81	-0.10
Lamar	0.61	-0.71
Pueblo	2.06	0.66



U.S. TEMPERATURES (TEMPERATURE ANOMALY) - APRIL 2014

April was a fairly normal month compared to the 30-year average temperature. There were pockets of below and above normal weather across the country. In Colorado, some of the valleys on the western slope were slightly below normal while the north-central mountains and foothills were a little warmer than usual.



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	April Avg Temp (°F)	Departure From Average
Alamosa	42.6	0.8
Aspen	39.8	0.0
Co. Springs	47.5	1.0
Denver	49.0	1.6
Durango	44.3	-0.5
Grand Junction	49.6	-2.1
Lamar	53.4	1.2
Pueblo	52.1	1.5



COLORADO DROUGHT UPDATE

Not much has changed in recent weeks with regard to the drought conditions around our state.

The worst situation continues to grip our friends in the Arkansas River Valley of southeast Colorado, where extreme to exceptional drought can be found.

Moderate to severe drought remains on the far eastern plains and across southwest Colorado.

Most of the southwest mountains are abnormally dry as is the northwest corner.

The rest of the state (in white) is not reporting any level of dryness after a fairly wet winter.

There is still a significant snowpack to melt in much of this region, especially across the northcentral mountains.

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

May 13, 2014

(Released Thursday, May. 15, 2014) Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area) None D0-D4 D1-D4 D2-D4 D3-D4 18.86 12.49 55.29 32.79 1.91 44.71 Current Last Week 36.40 63.60 18.85 8.38 1.89 31.93 5/6/2014 3 Months Ago 25.06 74.94 22.62 13.82 4.06 1.47 2/11/2014 Start of Calendar Year 32.04 13.56 4.01 1.47 67.96 22.33 Start of Water Year 24.91 75.09 37.88 12.01 4.01 1.47 10/1/2013 One Year Ago 0.00 100.00 93.18 71.71 24.53 15.84 5/14/2013

Intensity:



D2 Severe Drought

D3 Extrem e Drought D4 Exception al Drought

D4 Exceptional Droug

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

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http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/



Because Every Drop Counts!

WHAT IS "AVERAGE" PRECIP FOR MY CoCoRaHS STATION

If you watch any daily weather report on the news, you might see or hear about the "normal" or "average" precipitation for a given location. (usually it's for a major city in your viewing area, such as Denver, Colorado Springs or Grand Junction)

Thanks to a unique partnership with the PRISM Climate Group at Oregon State, you can find out the average annual precipitation for your CoCoRaHS station. That information is available in the exclusive CoCoRaHS PRISM portal.

To access this information, just log into the CoCoRaHS website and then click on "My Account" in the top navigation bar. It will load a page that shows information about your station. Near the bottom of the page is a section called 'My Station' and that is where you will click on the 'PRISM Data' link.

Once you've done that, a line chart will appear, showing the 30-year normal precipitation for your location. The data is obtained from over 100 years of modeled climate data in the United States, including all of your daily CoCoRaHS reports.

SEVERE WEATHER SEASON

Severe weather can strike anytime between the months of March and October in Colorado, but in a typical year, storms really ramp up in both frequency and intensity between mid-May and late June. On May 22, 2008, a large and destructive tornado tore through Windsor, right around the noon hour. It didn't behave like most people think tornadoes should behave.

By Colorado standards, it was the wrong time of day for such a large storm. And besides being too close to the mountains, it traveled the wrong direction!

It's a myth that tornadoes can't form in and close to mountains. In fact, there has even been a tornado documented on Mount Evans, just southwest of Denver.

Most people associate tornadoes traveling from southwest to northeast, but this tornado did the opposite, traveling from southeast to northwest. Sadly, in addition to a lot of damage, the storm also claimed one life.

It was a sad, but important reminder, that while these types of tornadoes are not the normal in Colorado, we can, and do occasionally see, large and destructive twisters, even in parts of the state that don't expect to see them.

It also was a grim reminder to be on guard for dangerous thunderstorms during any hour of the day.





MAY FEATURED OBSERVER

All of our CoCoRaHS observers are extra special, but this month, we feature someone with a level of dedication that is hard to measure, largely, because of the task at hand! We've all had a day that was a little tough to make an observation because of the weather outside, especially when it's of the frozen variety. But how about having to deal with feet of snow for roughly half of the year!

Meet Billy Barr, from station CO-GN-18, high in the mountains at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory near Crested Butte. Billy has been a faithful CoCoRaHS observer for almost 10 years and has documented plant, animal, climate and hydrology at the same location for nearly 40 years!



To live in a place this remote, you have to ski in and out each time you need to go to the store or conduct business in town. And we're not talking a few inches of snow, we're talking several feet! It piles up so high, that when on the snow bank, Billy stands taller than his cabin!



Colorado CoCoRaHS

Because Every Drop Counts!

May 2014 Volume 2, Issue 5



Here are some details on Billy's snow for the 2013-2014 season.

- September 7 inches
- October 35 inches
- November 52 inches
- December 47.5 inches
- January 61.5 inches
- February 101 inches
- March 71 inches
- April 47.5 inches
- May (through the 15th) 35 inches

- a foot or more of snow on the ground every day since November 17, 2013
- as of May 15, 2014, there was still 29.5 inches on the ground
- there was at least 3 feet of snow on the ground between Jan. 30th and May 12, 2014
- there was at least 4 feet of snow on the ground between Jan. 31st and April 21, 2014
- there was at least 5 feet of snow on the ground between Feb. 7th and April 18, 2014 with a peak snow depth was 86 inches on March 28, 2014

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Why did you join CoCoRaHS?

I really liked the idea of being a part of a network of stations, and other people, doing the same thing- watching and recording weather data.

What have you learned from measuring precipitation?

I've learned about the variations from month to month and year to year. Also, I find having numerical weather data is much more accurate than the short term memory people (me included) tend to have regarding yearly comparisons.

Has being a CoCoRaHS observer made you more aware of climate?

As I have always kept weather data, it has made me more aware of climate state-wide and nationally versus locally. But, I like to follow storms across the nation using the weather reporting maps and have also become more aware of local weather effects in other parts of the country, especially where it does not snow much. I never used to pay as much attention to that in the past.

APRIL FUN FACTS FROM AROUND COLORADO

*As of 11 am, 5/17/2014

- 1,117 stations filed at least one daily report
- 803 stations reported at least half of the month
- 364 stations filed a report every day

- Wettest station: CO-SG-4 (Julesburg 0.1 WNW) with 4.04" of precipitation
- Driest station that reported all 30 days: CO-SA-58 (Moffat 1.8 N) with 0.13" of precipitation
- 53 stations filed a multi-day accumulation report
- 769 stations reported snow greater than a Trace) with the most being 47.5" at station CO-GN-18 (Crested Butte 6.2 N)

If you're on social media, don't forget to "Like" CoCoRaHS on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!

We also have a CoCoRaHS YouTube channel with all kinds of great videos.

The Colorado Climate Center is also on Facebook and Twitter if you would like to follow and like them!



Deep snow on Loveland Pass from the 2013-2014 snow season! (Picture courtesy of Chris Spears)