



# Prairie State Precip

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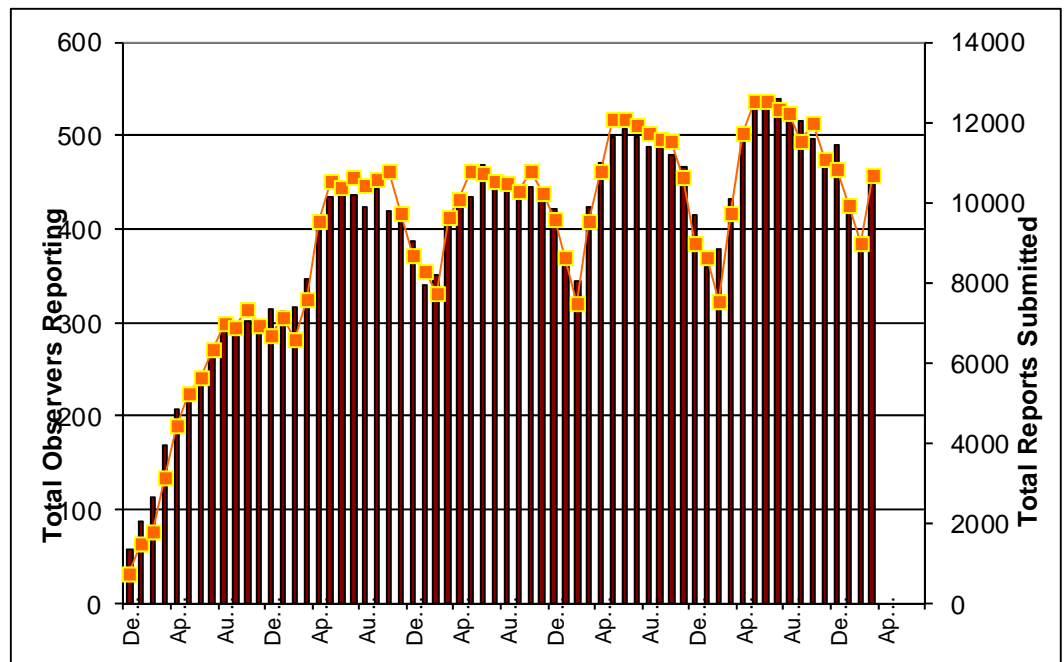
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*Currently there are 587 active observers (observers who have reported in the past six months) in 84 of Illinois' 102 counties.*

## Illinois CoCoRaHS Participation Continues to Grow

CoCoRaHS in Illinois marked its fifth anniversary last December 1st, and participation continues to increase each year. Over the last five years more than 1,500 people have registered to participate with the program. Currently there are 587 active observers (observers who have reported in the past six months) in 84 of Illinois' 102 counties.

On an annual basis participation is cyclical, with the highest participation in the warm months and lowest participation during the winter. However, each year monthly participation eclipses the same month the year before. In the graph below the total reports (daily plus multi-day) for each month and the number of observers who reported at least one in each month are plotted. You can see the annual cycle and the monthly variations in the number of reports submitted. The increasing trend in reports is also evident in the graph.



*This graph shows the total number of reports submitted each month since CoCoRaHS was launched in Illinois in December 2006. The orange squares show the total number of observers reporting in each month.*

## Illinois CoCoRaHS (continued)

*Our goal is to reach 500 daily reports on at least one day in spring or summer 2012.*

In 2011 we reached a couple of participation milestones. Plenty of rain last June generated a lot of interest in reporting precipitation, and this resulted in record participation numbers. The number of reports in 2011 only less than May,

ports June was 10 than pre-	Highest Number of Daily Reports	454	June 9, 2011
	Highest 7-Day Average	427	Week ending June 15, 2011
	Average Daily Reports per Day for a Month	407	June 2011
	Total Observers Reporting in a Month	542	June 2011
	Highest Total Reports in a Month (Daily + Multi-Day)	12,549	May 2011

venting a June sweep of the statistics.

## Some Menu Changes on CoCoRaHS "My Data" Page

*When you have an accumulation that occurred over a period of two or more days, it should be reported using the Multi-Day Accumulation Form.*

**Enter My New Reports**

- [Daily Precipitation](#)
- [Multi-Day Accumulation](#)
- [Hail](#)
- [Significant Weather](#)
- [Monthly Zeros](#)
- [Drought Impact Report](#)
- [Evapotranspiration](#)

**List/Edit My Reports**

- [Daily Precipitation](#)
- [Multi-Day Accumulation](#)
- [Hail](#)
- [Significant Weather](#)
- [Drought Impact Report](#)
- [Evapotranspiration](#)

There has been some reorganization of the left-hand menu of the **My Data** page to visually group the reports that you will typically use. The Daily Report, which is displayed automatically when you log in, is grouped with the Multi-Day report and separated by space from the rest of the menu. When you have an accumulation that occurred over a period of two or more days, it should be reported using the Multi-Day Accumulation Form.

**Multiple Day Accumulation Form**

Station Number : IL-CP-1

Station Name : Homer 2.0 N

5/1/2012 First day of accumulation period. This day should be one day after your last report.

5/2/2012 Date the rain gauge was emptied.

AM Time the rain gauge was emptied.

☒ Yes ☐ No Report was taken at registered location?

☐ Multi Day Precipitation (in inches)

☐ Total Depth of Snow on Ground (in inches)

☐ Core Precipitation (in inches)

Notes

## An Unusual Spring – and It's Not Over

This has been a very unusual spring so far in Illinois (meteorological spring is the months of March, April, and May). We had unprecedented warmth in March, and while cooler, April was still above normal. At the end of April much of Illinois was below normal on spring precipitation, with drought conditions developing across portions of central Illinois.

### Record Warm March

The statewide average temperature for March was 54.9 degrees, 13.8 degrees above normal, making March 2012 a record-setting month. The warmest temperature reported in the state was at Chicago O'Hare on March 21 with 87 degrees. The coldest temperature reported was in Monmouth on March 5 with 5 degrees.

The three-month winter period from January to March 2012 was another record-breaker; it was the warmest of that period on record since 1895. The statewide average temperature from January to March was 40.9 degrees, 9.1 degrees above normal.

The statewide average precipitation was 2.11 inches, 1.1 inches below normal or 66 percent of normal. Precipitation was below normal across much of the state. However, there were a few wet spots with Fairview Heights reporting the highest monthly total of 4.88 inches of precipitation.

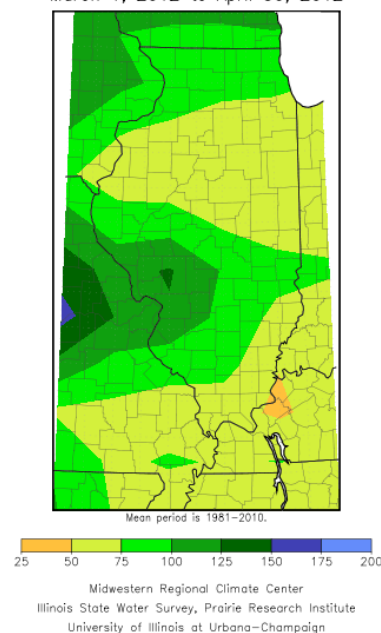
Despite the warm temperatures, there was some snow in March. The largest monthly total was reported at Roscoe (Winnebago County) with 5.6 inches of snow.

### April Cooler than March

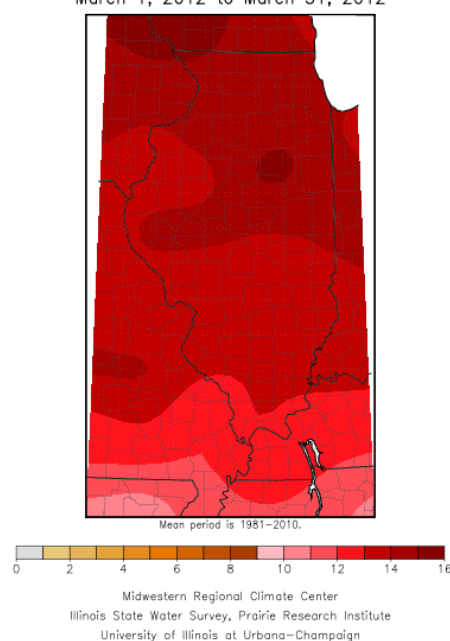
*Jim Angel, Illinois State Climatologist*

The statewide average temperature for April 2012 was 54.1 degrees, based on available data. The statewide average temperature for March was 55.0 degrees, based on the latest numbers from NOAA. That means that April was almost a degree cooler than March. What makes this even more impressive was that the April temperatures were still 2.4 degrees above normal!

Accumulated Precipitation: Percent of Mean  
March 1, 2012 to April 30, 2012



Average Temperature (°F): Departure from Mean  
March 1, 2012 to March 31, 2012



*...April was almost a degree cooler than March. What makes this even more impressive was that the April temperatures were still 2.4 degrees above normal!*

*There was only one other time—1907—when April was colder than March.*

## An Unusual Spring (continued)

By the way, the statewide normal monthly temperature is 40.7 degrees for March and 51.7 degrees for April, an eleven degree rise.

How rare is it for April to be colder than March? In the statewide records that extend back to 1895, it happened only in 1907 when the March temperature was 47.0 degrees and the April temperature was 43.2 degrees. In all the other cases between 1895 to 2011, April was always warmer.

The highest temperature reported in the state for April was 92 degrees at Kaskaskia on April 2 and at Jacksonville and Pana on April 3. The coldest temperature reported was 23 degrees at Jerseyville on April 17.

You can follow significant climate events of this year on Jim's blog at <http://climateillinois.wordpress.com/> and see maps and data on the Illinois State Climatologists web site at <http://www.isws.illinois.edu/atmos/statecli/index.htm>

## CoCoRaHS Courts Gardeners

Over the past three months we have held a number of training sessions around the state and often our audience has included a large number of gardeners, including Master Gardeners. In April and May we had the opportunity to promote CoCoRaHS at two venues targeted to green thumbs. On April 14<sup>th</sup> we exhibited and presented a training session at the McHenry County College Gardenfest. McHenry County Coordinator Mary Moltmann and Illinois Coordinator Steve Hilberg were there to talk to attendees about CoCoRaHS, and Steve conducted a training session in the afternoon. On May 6<sup>th</sup> Steve (along with wife Mari) and DuPage County Coordinator Nick Boss exhibited at the [Cantigny](#) greenhouse open house in Wheaton. We were able to "demonstrate" the gauge when thunderstorms rolled through late in the morning, and measured 0.20 inch in 15 minutes.

We have many observers who are Master Gardeners and a number who are Master Naturalists. These are two programs offered by University of Illinois Extension. If you are interested in the Master Gardener program, see their web site at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/>. Information on the Master Naturalist program can be found at [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/flagship/programs\\_IMNP.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/flagship/programs_IMNP.cfm)



(Top) DuPage County Coordinator Nick Boss (r) explains the signup process to a potential volunteer. (Bottom) Mari Hilberg explains CoCoRaHS to another potential volunteer.





*"As a child, I loved thunderstorms, and my mother was always after me to 'come in out of the rain'".*

## Rich Mathis, Lake County Coordinator



Rich Mathis has been Lake County Coordinator since

May 2007. He has always been interested in the weather. Rich spent a good portion of his life around aircraft, first as a teenager taking flying lessons and then in the Air Force working on aircraft.

### **How did you find out about CoCoRaHS and when did you get started?**

In July of 2006 I contacted Tracy Butler from Channel 7 in Chicago and became one of her "Weather Watchers." I am Rich in Gurnee and report to her every day.

A friend spotted an article in the Chicago Tribune Metro Weather Section dated January 28, 2007 that interviewed Tim Halbach, who at that time was the Illinois CoCoRaHS State Co-Coordinator. I contacted him on January 29, 2007, he responded on January 31, 2007. I signed up on January 31, 2007, ordered the necessary equipment, and my first report was done on February 14, 2007.

I absolutely love this program and truly enjoy being a part of it. I think that what I have come to enjoy the most is the impact that the information that we collect is having on so many different areas.

### **Why did you decide to volunteer as coordinator?**

After attending a couple of training sessions and a trip or 2 to the NWS Office in Romeoville, Tim and I were talking about coordinators one day, when I got home I sent him an e-mail and expressed my interest, as at that time there wasn't a coordinator in Lake County and he said that he would appreciate some help. I don't remember that exact date, but I then became the Lake County Coordinator.

### **Tell us a little more about yourself.**

My work history was split between industry and aircraft. My background is done on February 14, 2007. hydraulics, pneumatics,

electrical, and electronics.

The bulk of my aircraft experience is on what is referred to as heavy jet, with 4 years of active duty in the Air Force. I then spent 10 years in industry before returning to aircraft. I spent the next 10 years as a full-time Air Tech with the Air National Guard at O'hare Military, and finishing with a couple of years at American Airlines, and then returned to industry. I left industry in 2003 and went into retirement due to a genetic kidney disease.

I am married to Helen, my wife of 43 years. We were blessed with 2 sons and 2 grandsons. Our youngest son Ted, is married and has 2 sons. Our oldest son Hugh, who was unmarried, died on January 26, 2011 from a heart issue. I usually have my grandsons at least a couple of times a week and we are always exploring the weather, clouds, rain, snow, and the wind.



**Community Collaborative  
Rain, Hail, and Snow Network**

[www.cocorahs.org](http://www.cocorahs.org)

**Illinois web page**  
<http://www.cocorahs.org/state.aspx?state=il>

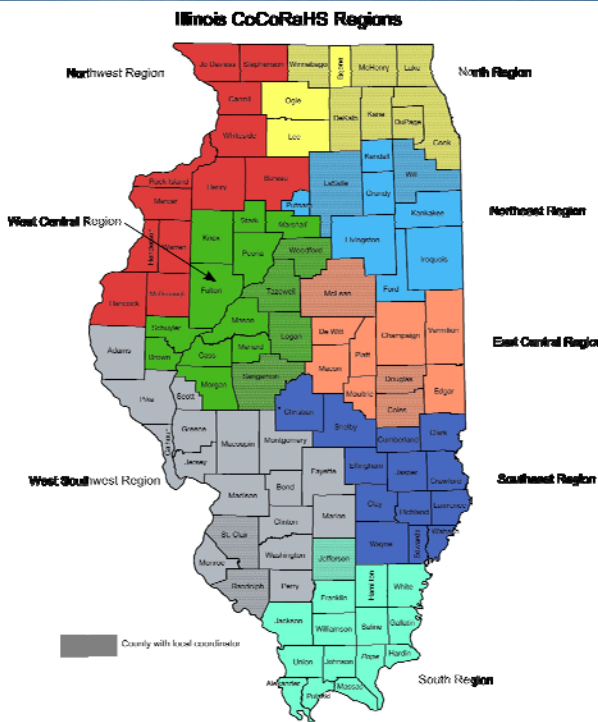
*"Because Every Drop Counts!"*

## Illinois State Coordinator

Steve Hilberg  
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**We're on  
Facebook!**

**Join the group  
Illinois CoCoRaHS**



## Region

## Coordinator

Northwest	Andy Ervin Andy.Ervin@noaa.gov
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East Central	Steve Hilberg hberg@illinois.edu
West Southwest	Jim Angel Jimangel@illinois.edu
Southeast	Darrin Hansing Darrin.Hansing@noaa.gov
South	Deanna Lindstrom Deanna.Lindstrom@noaa.gov

## Local County Coordinators

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