

Messages of the Day
April 2013

Monday, April 1, 2013

CoCoRaHS March Madness 2013 FINAL RESULTS . . . ALL-TIME MARCH MADNESS RECORD OF NEW VOLUNTEERS: 1,192 ! TEXAS (226) WINS THE TRADITIONAL CATEGORY . . . WYOMING WINS THE PER CAPITA! CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH STATES!

In the "traditional count" category (sheer number of new observers), **Texas (226)** wins with a fantastic showing. An amazing effort by our friends from the Lone Star State! North Carolina finished in second with a wonderful effort of their own (155), breaking last year's all-time record of 138. Valiant efforts by Arkansas (87), Wyoming (75) and Maine (49) round out the top five. Oklahoma (42), New Mexico (32), Colorado (32), South Carolina (31) and Georgia (30) all showed a strong month of recruiting to finish in the top ten. Well done!

In the "population weighted-per capita" category, **Wyoming (133.07)** wins the CoCoRaHS Cup by blowing everyone out of the water by almost 90 points. Incredible! Last year's champion, North Dakota (43.12) finished second, followed by Maine (36.89). Arkansas (29.84) and South Dakota (29.48), finishing fourth and fifth, were only separated by 0.36 of a point in the standings . . . Wow! New Mexico (19.43), North Carolina (16.26), Oklahoma (11.20), Nebraska (10.95) and Texas (8.99) rounded out the top ten. Great work everyone!

To view the final standings for all the states and learn more about our contest, visit our March Madness webpage by clicking here: "<http://cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=marchmadness>".

Thanks to all of you who have mentioned the network to a family member or friend! With your help we have recruited a new March Madness record 1,192 new volunteer observers during the month!



**CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar for April 2013:
"Forecasting the Ferocious: The How, What, Where and Why of
Tornadoes"**

Tornadoes will be the focus of our next "[WxTalk Webinar](#)" on April 18th. "*Forecasting the Ferocious: The How, What, Where and Why of Tornadoes*" will be presented by Greg Carbin, the Warning Coordination Meteorologist of NOAA's Storm Prediction Center located in Norman, Oklahoma.

Space is limited to the first 500 registrants, so register today! We will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line the following day.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #17 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: "Forecasting the Ferocious: The How, What, Where and Why of Tornadoes"

Date: Thursday, April 18, 2013

Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

Greg will give an overview of how the Storm Prediction Center forecasts severe weather in general and then concentrate on tornado forecasting specifically. We can learn a lot by looking at the historic record of tornado events in the United States. We also will take a look at why tornadoes form where they do in the U.S. and elsewhere and why twisters are much more common in North America compared to other parts of the world. We'll finish by looking at the current events during the spring of 2013 and take a look at what's ahead in terms of tornado forecasting and warning technology.

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [TORNADOES](#)

Our May CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar: "*At the Cutting Edge: Harry Wexler and the Emergence of Atmospheric Science*" by Jim Fleming of Colby College, Waterville, Maine will take place on May 9th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.

Wednesday, April 3, 2013

Prepare for Severe Weather Ahead . . . NWS Severe Weather Training Classes for 2013

It's that time of year when severe weather can show up in many sections of the country. Please be ready to report hail and intense rainfall using our appropriate reports:

To report hail: [Hail Report](#)

To report Significant Weather (Intense precipitation): [Significant Weather Report](#)

This month and throughout the spring many National Weather Service offices are holding local in-depth training classes on severe weather on spotting and If you are interested in attending one of these visit: www.weather.gov and click on your local area on the national map. Your local NWS forecast office home page will appear and most likely have a schedule of upcoming severe weather spotter training classes held in your area. These are free and well worth your time.

Saturday, April 6, 2013

"Is drought lurking about in your community? Let us know!"

A dry spring in your region? You're not alone. The Great Plains, South Texas, the Southwest, Hawaii and other parts of the country are very dry. Many of you are experiencing this dryness firsthand and we'd love to hear how drought is impacting your community. Drought can impact us in many ways. Effects may be associated with agriculture, energy, public health, wildfire and recreation, just to name a few.

Please take a look around your community this week and think about how drought might be impacting it. Then, as a big favor to CoCoRaHS and the National Drought Mitigation Center, file a "[CoCoRaHS Drought Impact Report](#)". It should only take a minute or two. Report what you can, don't let the "monetary impacts" part scare you away. That part is highly desirable, but if you don't know a dollar amount, feel free to skip that part.

Your reports go directly to the National Drought Mitigation Center ([NDMC](#)) and they provide critical information on how drought is impacting the nation. Just like your precipitation reports, drought impact reports help fill in the gaps by providing important "eyewitness information" for your geographic area.

When you have some spare time, please re-visit our "[Drought Impacts Reporting Resource Page](#)" to get re-acquainted with drought impacts. In addition there is a short slideshow that everyone can benefit from reviewing.

Monday, April 8, 2013

"CoCoRaHS Hail Week" -- April 8-13, 2013

Join us in creating 'Hail Awareness' during our annual "CoCoRaHS Hail Week". Most of us see hail in our backyards from time to time and many of us will even experience a hailstorm this month. Learn more about hail, including how to observe and report it, as we explore this icy phenomena all week long.

- **Tuesday:** "*Five things you always wanted to know about hail, but were afraid to ask*" We will feature some interesting facts about those falling balls of ice.
- **Wednesday:** "*CoCoRaHS Hail Reports . . . What are they, how can I access them?*" How you can help report hail.
- **Thursday:** "*CoCoRaHS Hail Pads*" How to make a hail pad . . . it's fun and easy to do.
- **Friday:** "*CoCoRaHS Hail Photo Day*" Have a great/unique photo of hail? E-mail it to us today!
- **Saturday:** "*CoCoRaHS National 'Put out your Hail Pad' Day*" Have a hail pad? . . . join thousands around the country who will put out their hail pads today. It's that time of year!

To find out more about hail, visit our CoCoRaHS Hail Page by clicking here: [Hail Information](#)

CoCoRaHS "Hail t-shirts" are currently available via [WeatherYourWay.com](#) as long as supplies last. They sell for \$12.75 (\$14.75 XXL) plus shipping and are pretty cool looking.



Thanks again for your reports and be on the lookout for hail in your neighborhood.

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

TUESDAY: "*Five Interesting Facts about Those Frozen Balls of Ice*"

Over the years CoCoRaHS has become one of few repositories of hail information in the nation. Thanks to your observations, we are able to catalogue hail reports from all fifty states. As we strive to become more 'hail aware' here are five things you may or may not know about hail.

- 1) Hail comes in many shapes and sizes, ranging from rice-sized pellets (1/8") to giant softballs (4 1/2"). Hail can be clear or white or a combination of the two. Hail can be hard or soft. Wind patterns usually form hailstones into balls, but they can also appear in other shapes, such as cones, discs, stars, pyramids, or just strange looking pointy blobs. We've even had reports of donut shaped stones!
- 2) On July 23, 2010, the largest hailstone ever recorded in the United States in terms of diameter and weight fell in Vivian, South Dakota. The stone had a diameter of 8.0 inches with a circumference of 18.625 inches and weighed 1.9 pounds. No one was injured. This hailstone broke the previous United States hail size record for diameter (7.0 inches - 22 June 2003 in Aurora, NE) and weight (1.67 pounds - 3 September 1970 in Coffeyville, KS). The Aurora, Nebraska hailstone will retain the record for circumference (18.75 inches). For more info on the Vivian, South Dakota hailstone click here: [Hailstone](#).
- 3) In North America, hail is most common on the High Plains just east of the Rocky Mountains. For example where Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming's borders meet just east of Cheyenne, WY there are an average of 9 to 10 hailstorms each year. Hail in this region occurs between the months of March and October mostly during the afternoon and evening hours, with the bulk of the occurrences from May through September.
- 4) Hail suppression has been tried by many over the years including silver iodide cloud seeding and types of rockets. "Hail cannons" whose "LOUD" acoustic burst is believed to break-up hail while it is just forming, are still being used in some areas where fruit and vegetables are grown extensively.

5) Hail is found in many countries around the world, such as China. In June 1932 a hailstorm killed an estimated 200 people, and injured thousands more there. Other countries with frequent hailstorms include southern and western Germany, northern Italy, northern India and Croatia.

Thanks again for your reports and be on the lookout for hail in your neighborhood.

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

WEDNESDAY: CoCoRaHS Hail Reports . . . What are they, how can I access them?

Thanks so much for your CoCoRaHS hail reports. You may not realize it, but there are very few sources for accurate data about hail. Most weather stations don't even measure or report hail. Scientists have great difficulty finding good data to help analyze hail storm patterns, frequencies, probabilities, etc. Therefore, our CoCoRaHS hail reports are especially important.

If you experience hail at your location (even the small stuff) please use the CoCoRaHS hail report form to submit a report. Even if you don't have much information about the hail or weren't home to know exactly when it happened, still send in a report: [Hail Report](#)

Hail pads help us document the size and number of stones. If hail pads are not provided in your area, you can make your own: [Making Hail Pads](#). More on this subject tomorrow!

Please report hail even if you don't have a CoCoRaHS hail pad: [Measure Hail](#)

"Days with Hail" reports are viewable to the public and include a list of all days during a calendar year with one or more hail reports entered into the CoCoRaHS database. This is a great way to see where hail fell across the country on any given day as well as the size of the hailstones. Those reports with a camera icon next to them indicate that a photo of a hail pad associated with that specific report is available for viewing on-line.

To access the "Days with Hail" report click "View Data" on the CoCoRaHS homepage's top menu bar. Under "Summary Reports" click "Days with Hail Reports". That's all there is to it.

You can also see a map of hail reports for any given day by clicking here: [Hail Maps](#)

Thanks again for your reports and be on the lookout for hail in your neighborhood.

Thursday, April 11, 2013

THURSDAY: "CoCoRaHS Hail Pads" -- How to make a hail pad . . . make your own at home!

Hail pads are essential to CoCoRaHS's mission to measure, map and study hail. They are fairly easy to construct with the right materials. If you can wrap a present, you can most likely make a hail pad.

A hail pad consists of a 12" by 12" square of Styrofoam covered in heavy duty aluminum foil. A little tape and you're set to go. To learn more on how to construct one visit: [Making Hail Pads](#).

For those of you who would like to order hail pads without going through the process of making your own, they are available from www.Weatheryourway.com for a modest fee.

Thanks again for your reports and be on the lookout for hail in your neighborhood.

Friday, April 12, 2013

FRIDAY: "CoCoRaHS Hail Photo Day."

Do you have a great/unique photo of hail that you observed within the last year? E-mail it to us today! We hope to use these in our presentations and educational information on hail.

The categories of photos we are looking for are: 1) close-up photos of hail stones -- unique shapes, size, colors, etc.; 2) hail damage (vegetation, dented cars, etc.) showing the power of this force of nature; and 3) interesting shots of ground covered by hail. For your safety, please wait until the storm is over to take your photos.

Send your hail photos over the next several weeks to: henry.reges@colostate.edu. Please include the name of the photographer for credit purposes, the date of the hail, as well as the location - city, state - of where the hail fell (ex- Mike Smith, March 14, 2013, Kansas City, KS). Without this information, we will not be able to use your photo. Finally please include in the text of your message that "you give CoCoRaHS permission to publish the photo and use it for other possible CoCoRaHS promotions".

Thanks again for your reports and be on the lookout for hail in your neighborhood.

Saturday, April 13, 2013

SATURDAY: CoCoRaHS National "Put out your Hail Pad Day"

Have a hail pad? . . . join thousands around the country who will put out their hail pads today. It is that time of year!

We have a saying in CoCoRaHS and that is "*A hail pad does no good unless it's outside to capture the footprint of a hail storm as it passes overhead*". This is so true! Many of us from time to time will learn of a hail event hitting our neighborhood while we are at work, out shopping, etc. and say to ourselves, "*Great! Guess where my hail pad is . . . it's in the garage!*" When our pads are out and deployed it is really fun to see the actual craters hail has left on the pad after the storm. Many pads often look like the surface of the moon. So don't miss out, put your hail pad out on this special "*Put out your Hail Pad Day*".

Some have asked, "*Gee, these pads are light, how do we keep them from blowing away?*" Great question! A simple way would be to cut two "L" shaped wires from a metal coat hanger and secure the pad to the ground in that fashion. Others have attached them to their snow measuring boards or made a special 18" x 18" plywood board to attach them to. Still others have mounted them to old tree stumps. As long as you have an open area with an exposure to the sky and not too close to a building you will be fine. Some have chosen to elevate their pads to prevent their pets from stepping on them. Many have sprayed a dull coat of spray paint on the pad to keep birds from peeling them and using the foil for nest material (somehow many

birds are attracted to the shine of the metal). It is also important to mark an "N" on the back of your pad to tell which direction is north. Finally, make sure to include your station ID number on the back of the pad and the date the hail event occurred. We get many amazing looking pads dented with craters, but unfortunately with no information on them.

We often are asked the question, "*Can the foam be reused or recycled?*" The answer is yes . . . when we make hail pads here in Colorado, we are careful to reuse the foam (after the pad is photographed and analyzed) if it is still intact by turning it over to make a new pad. You can do this too if you decide to photograph and not send the pad in to us. If the pad is too far gone, please check locally to see if you can recycle the foam.

Also, please remember that you do not need to have a hail pad to report hail that falls in your yard. You can report it by clicking here: [Hail Report!](#).

Thanks again for joining us for "CoCoRaHS Hail Week". We will rerun some of this week's messages from time to time. We'd love to have your feedback as to whether this series was helpful in making you more "hail aware". Send your thoughts to: henry.reges@colostate.edu .

Have a great weekend and thanks for putting out your pad!

CoCoRaHS "Hail t-shirts" are currently available via WeatherYourWay.com as long as supplies last. They sell for \$12.75 (\$14.75 XXL) plus shipping and are pretty cool looking. The shirts feature the hail symbol on back with the front sporting the CoCoRaHS logo on upper left

Friday, April 19, 2013

NOAA's Storm Prediction Center (SPC)

It's that time of year again when many of you may experience severe weather. NOAA's Storm Prediction Center (SPC) monitors potential severe weather situations across the country and helps to give both the citizens and forecasters in your area a heads-up of the potential of hazardous weather situations.

The Storm Prediction Center's mission is to provide timely and accurate forecasts and watches for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes over the contiguous United States. The SPC also monitors heavy rain, heavy snow, and fire weather events across the U.S. and issues specific products for those hazards.

To learn more about the Storm Prediction Center: ["SPC"](#)

Monday, April 22, 2013

How is CoCoRaHS correctly pronounced?

We get this question a lot, since this is not your ordinary run of the mill acronym. It stands for the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network, which started out as the Colorado Rain and Hail Study back in 1998.

The correct pronunciation is: "CoCo" . . . that's easy, like in coconut. The second part "RaHS" is just about like it looks. When the doctor checks your tonsils he says "say ah!" and that's the same sound only with an "R" and an "S" on it. Like he's saying "say rahs!" Put the two together and there you have it "CoCoRaHS".

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Weatherwise Magazine's 2013 Photo Contest and Discount Subscription Rate for CoCoRaHS Members

"Some people are weatherwise, but most are otherwise" -- Ben Franklin

Weatherwise Magazine is an exciting bi-monthly magazine that provides the weather enthusiast with fascinating articles regarding all aspects of weather and climate. With our full endorsement, CoCoRaHS regards this magazine as one "which everyone interested in weather would benefit from having on their coffee table". Thanks to a special arrangement CoCoRaHS volunteers can subscribe to the magazine at a 27% discount: [CoCoRaHS discount](#).

Now thru June 3rd, Weatherwise Magazine is accepting submissions for its "2013 Photo Contest". There are great prizes awaiting the winners. This annual event provides an opportunity for you to share your potential prize winning photos with a nationwide audience. Click here to find out more about the magazine and photo contest: [Photo Contest](#).

Check it out today, you'll be glad you did!

Saturday, April 27, 2013

CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar for May 2013: "At the Cutting Edge: Harry Wexler and the Emergence of Atmospheric Science"

The emergence of atmospheric science during the 20th century will be the focus of our next ["WxTalk Webinar"](#) on May 9th. "*At the Cutting Edge: Harry Wexler and the Emergence of Atmospheric Science*" will be presented by Jim Fleming, a historian of science and technology and Professor of Science, Technology and Society at Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

Space is limited to the first 500 registrants, so register today! We will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line the following day.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #18 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: "At the Cutting Edge: Harry Wexler and the Emergence of Atmospheric Science"

Date: Thursday, May 9, 2013

Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

Jim will tell the story of the emergence of the new interdisciplinary field of atmospheric science in the twentieth century as shaped by the influences of multiple technologies. He will do so from the perspective of MIT-trained meteorologist Harry Wexler (1911-1962), an American student of the Bergen School of air mass analysis, head of research in the US Weather Bureau, and one of the most influential meteorologists of the twentieth century, whose career spanned the middle decades of the twentieth century. In the first four decades of the twentieth century, aviation, radio communication and remote sensing, and the needs of two world wars dramatically re-shaped and expanded the meteorological enterprise. During the Cold War era, new technologies involving atomic energy, digital computing, rocketry and satellites provided meteorologists with powerful tools to study the atmosphere and precipitated fundamental changes in the older traditions of aeronomy, climatology, and weather analysis and forecasting. Much is to be learned by examining the nexus of new techniques and technologies in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century as they contributed to the transformation of meteorological science, service, and practice into a new synthetic field called "atmospheric science." Yet the story of the emergence of atmospheric science is so complex, dauntingly so, that it has never been told in its entirety. By telling the story through Wexler's eyes, a more personal story can be told."

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [HARRY WEXLER](#)

Our June CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar: "Monitoring the Earth's Climate" by Deke Arndt of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, NC will take place on June 13th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.

Monday, April 29, 2013

“BE AIR AWARE”

Air Quality Awareness Week

April 29th thru May 3rd, 2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service urge Americans to “Be Air Aware” during Air Quality Awareness Week, April 29th thru May 3rd, 2013.

Join the EPA and NOAA next week as they examine the following topics:

- Monday: It's Not Just Ozone. Particle Pollution It Matters, Too
- Tuesday: Know When You Can Breathe Easy
- Wednesday: Heads Up: Particle Pollution Can Harm Your Heart
- Thursday: Where there's smoke, there's particle pollution!

- Friday: You Can Help Keep the Air Cleaner and Your Family Healthier

To find out more visit: [Air Quality Awareness Week](#)