

**Messages of the Day**  
**April 2015**

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

**COCORAHS MARCH MADNESS 2015 FINAL RESULTS . . . NORTH CAROLINA (151) WINS THE TRADITIONAL CATEGORY . . . NORTH DAKOTA WINS THE PER CAPITA! CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH STATES! 782 NEW VOLUNTEERS NATIONWIDE !**

In the "traditional count" category (total number of new observers), **North Carolina (151)** continued the lead that it built up early in the contest and never looked back. South Carolina (57) finished in second, just one observer ahead of Texas (56). Great efforts by Michigan (35) and Ohio (31) round out the top five. New Mexico (27), New York (25) California (22) and Illinois, as well as Pennsylvania (tied at 21), all showed a strong month of recruiting to finish in the top ten. Well done!

In the "population weighted-per capita" category, **North Dakota (22.30)** wins the CoCoRaHS Cup with a lead that they developed early in the month. North Carolina (15.84) finished second, followed by New Mexico (13.11). South Carolina (12.32) and Wyoming (10.66), finished fourth and fifth respectively. Vermont (9.59), New Hampshire (9.12), Iowa (6.24), Maine (6.02) and Kansas (5.96) round out the top ten. Great work everyone!

To view the final standings and learn more about our contest, visit our March Madness webpage by clicking here: [COCO MARCH MADNESS FINAL STANDINGS](#)

Thanks to all of you who have mentioned the network to a family member or friend! With your help CoCoRaHS has recruited 782 new volunteer observers during March 2015!

Saturday, April 4, 2015

**"CoCoRaHS Hail Week" -- April 6-11, 2015**

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.

- **Monday:** "*Watch the debut of our newly produced CoCoRaHS animation on "How to Measure Hail"*" This YouTube animation will help you prepare to measure hail in your yard. [Hail Video](#)
- **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](#)

Monday, April 6, 2015

## **MONDAY: The Debut of our Newly Produced CoCoRaHS Animation on "How to Measure Hail"**

Many folks have asked how do I record and measure hail? Our new animation short will help you to be ready and know what to do when hail makes it's occasional visit to your location.

To view out new four minute animation click here: [Hail Video](#)

Tuesday, April 7, 2015

## **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 8, 2015

## **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](#)

Thursday, April 9, 2015

## **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](http://www.Weatheryourway.com) for a modest fee.

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

Friday, April 10, 2015

### **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](mailto: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- Haley Smith, April 2, 2015, Islip, NY). 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 11, 2015

### **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](mailto:henry.reges@colostate.edu) .

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

Sunday, April 12, 2015

## **LAX . . . DTW . . . MCO and don't forget GGG!**

Have you ever read a weather report and noticed one of those three letter location identifiers like ORD, DEN or RDU representing the place that the observation is coming from? What are they? Those are the Federal Aviation Administration's three letter airport codes for US cities (other countries use them as well). If you haven't seen them on a weather report, you've surely seen them on the tags on your checked airline luggage.

Why is MCI used for Kansas City? ORD for Chicago's O'Hare International Airport? BNA for Nashville? Click here find out why and also learn the history of these codes: [Explanation of Airport Identifier Codes](#).

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

## **Prepare for Severe Weather Ahead . . . NWS Severe Weather Training Classes**

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 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](http://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.

Friday, April 17, 2015

## **Join the USA National Phenology Network! Weather observers make great nature observers!**

You already track what's happening with the weather at your house every day... why not also keep track of what's happening with a plant or animal or two in your yard as well?

What happens with the weather directly affects how plants and animals respond. Trees are cued by warming spring temperatures to begin leafing out. A combination of temperature and soil moisture conditions influence when they flower and produce fruits and seeds. Similarly, birds and insects migrate and complete their life cycles based on temperature and sun angle cues. The timing of these seasonal life cycle events is termed phenology.

The USA National Phenology Network welcomes you to document how plants and animals are responding to local weather conditions. You can use this tool to answer your own question too – like, are the leaves appearing on your tree earlier or later spring? Your observations of plant or animal phenology collected via Nature's Notebook, the phenology observation program offered by the USA National Phenology Network, are made available publicly and are regularly used by researchers and decision makers. Phenology observations made at the same locations that weather observations are collected are especially valuable!

Learn more! USA-NPN invites you to learn more about species of interest in your area: [Region](#).

You are also welcome to collect and submit observations on any of the >1,000 species of plants and animals for which protocols are available: [Campaign Species](#).

Questions? Contact Theresa Crimmins, USA National Phenology Network's Partnerships & Outreach Coordinator at: [theresa@usanpn.org](mailto:theresa@usanpn.org)

Monday, April 20, 2015

## **Please scroll down to the bottom of this page . . . after reading this message**

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Did you know you can check your precipitation report right on this page? Simply scroll down and presto . . . there is the report you just entered. This is a great way to check your report for accuracy making sure it says exactly what you meant it to. By taking this simple step we can all help to make sure that we are presenting the most accurate data to the public. Thanks!

OK, don't forget to keep scrolling . . .

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

## **Spring is here! And plants are getting busy . . . Project BudBurst**

While you are checking your rain gauge, consider checking out the plants nearby. Project BudBurst is a great way for our volunteers to get involved with a very popular sister citizen science project and report on when plants leaf out, flower, and fruit. Project BudBurst invites people from all over the United States to join our community and share the stories plants can tell about changes in the environment, including climate change.

Check out the [Project BudBurst website](#) or email them at: budburstinfo@neoninc.org

Saturday, April 25, 2015

## **The CoCoRaHS iPhone and Android Apps**

Would you like to submit your daily measurements from your smartphone? There is both a CoCoRaHS iPhone and Android app available. Both are free to download thanks to the hard work of one of our CoCoRaHS volunteers, Steve Woodruff at Appcay in South Carolina.

The CoCoRaHS iPhone App is available at the Apple Store. Click here to download: "[CoCoRaHS iPhone App](#)".

The Android App can be downloaded via the Google play store by clicking here: "[CoCoRaHS Android App](#)".

These apps allow registered CoCoRaHS observers to submit their daily precipitation reports via their mobile devices. In addition, users can view past reports to ensure accuracy.

Monday, April 27, 2015

## **Weather Preparedness 2015**



As part of [NOAA's Weather Ready Nation](#), NOAA encourages you to "Be a Force of Nature" when it comes to extreme weather by learning about potential hazards. Help advance the Weather-Ready Nation by being prepared for the worst. NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) and its partners encourage individuals, families, businesses and communities to know their risk, take action, and be an example when it comes to dangerous weather.

Look for seasonal campaigns for spring, summer and fall in your state — all designed to keep the public safe. Preparedness event topics include:

- Severe Weather Awareness Week
- Flood Safety Awareness Week
- Tsunami Preparedness Week
- Safe Boating Week
- Rip Current Awareness Week
- Lightning Safety Awareness Week
- Tornado Drill
- Monsoon Awareness Week
- Hurricane Preparedness Week
- Heat Awareness Day
- Avalanche Safety
- Winter Weather Awareness Week

To find out more visit: [Weather Preparedness Events Calendar](#).

Thursday, April 30, 2015

## **Weatherwise Magazine's 2015 Photo Contest**

*“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. CoCoRaHS regards this magazine as one in which everyone interested in weather would benefit from having on their coffee table.

Now thru June 1st, Weatherwise Magazine is accepting submissions for its “2015 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!