

Photographing Hail and Hail Pads



You can submit up to four photos with your CoCoRaHS Hail Report. Only one photo will be viewable with the report, selected by CoCoRaHS staff. The remaining photos will be retained and associated with your report, and may be shared with the National Weather Service. For your photos to be as useful as possible, please follow the guidelines below for taking photos of hail and hail pads.

- Be safe! Don't run out to retrieve hail stones while it is still hailing or if lightning is present!
- Collect from a grassy surface, not from concrete where hailstones may have shattered on impact. Handle the hailstones as little as possible to prevent melting.
- Place the hailstone(s) on something flat like a deck, a piece of cardboard, or the grass. Avoid placing them on concrete, metallic objects, or similar surfaces that may hold heat and cause melting of the hailstones.
- Place a reference object of a known dimension in the frame next to the hailstone. Photos of hailstones in people's hands should be avoided. This can give a false perception of the hailstone size. A ruler is the best reference object, but common objects with a fixed size like a coin, golf ball, baseball, etc. are very helpful when estimating hail size from a photo.
- Avoid including people in the field of view of your photos.
- For hail pads, lay the hail pad on a flat surface with a dark background if possible. Place a ruler along the bottom edge of the hail pad for reference.
- Use a permanent marker to indicate which end of the pad faced north by writing "N" on that end. Include your station number and date as well.
- Photograph the hail pad so that it fills as much of the frame as possible.

