

# Florida CoCoRaHS

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network

*Volunteers working together  
to measure precipitation.*

## The Freeze and Thaw of 2010

Well, 2010 has started off in record fashion and all thanks to a pesky Arctic high-pressure system that's been ushering bitterly cold air into the Deep South. Numerous places across the state have broken records for the daily minimum temperature (one of which was a 130-year old low temperature in Key West), while other places are looking at one of the longest durations of cold weather they've seen in 20 years.

With this cold weather comes a story from Mrs. Kleine's 5<sup>th</sup> Grade class at West Navarre Intermediate School. Upon returning from their holiday break, the students waited for over 2 hours for the frozen water in their rain gauge to thaw. They then filtered the collected rain water to make sure they got out all the 'icky floaty stuff.' Kudos to you all for a job well done!

## WeatherFest

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, I'll be up in Atlanta at the national American Meteorological Society's (AMS) annual WeatherFest event helping out Nolan and Henry with the CoCoRaHS booth. In addition, I'll also be at the local WeatherFest on the 30<sup>th</sup>, sponsored by the Tallahassee National Weather Service, the Department of Meteorology at Florida State University and the North Florida Chapter of the AMS.

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tae/?n=weatherfest2010>

## Quick Stats

952	# of registered FL observers
495	# of active FL observers
11,911	# of reports submitted by FL observers during 12/09
12/03/09	Date with the greatest # of FL reports submitted during 12/09 (434 reports)
12.01"	Highest reported daily rainfall from FL CoCoRaHS observers during 12/09 (FL-SL-23 on 12/18/09)



*Because every drop counts!*



## December Rains

Rainfall totals for December were more than three inches above normal in northern and central parts of the state, as well several east coast areas (Table 1). Pensacola and Tallahassee were more than nine and six inches above normal, respectively. Numerous daily precipitation records were tied or set during December (Table 2). Several of those records have existed for many years. Of particular note, 5.74” on the 2<sup>nd</sup> at Tallahassee broke a daily record established in 1896, and 0.42” at Key West on the 5<sup>th</sup> broke a daily record from 1886.

Table 1: December precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for selected cities.

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	13.75	9.78
Tallahassee	10.92	6.82
Jacksonville	5.88	3.24
Orlando	5.39	3.08
Tampa	2.32	0.02
Miami	3.01	0.83
Key West	4.49	2.35

Table 2: Daily precipitation (inches) records tied or set during December (compiled from NWS).

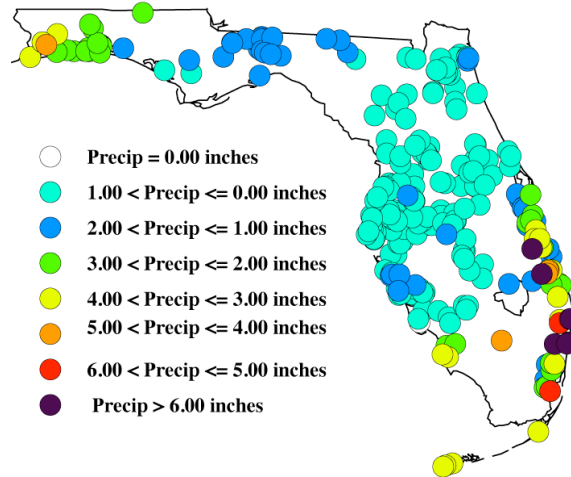
Date	Station	Amount	Previous Record
2	Apalachicola	3.72	0.35 in 1985
2	Tallahassee	5.34	1.93 in 1896
4	Daytona Beach	1.61	1.17 in 1953
4	Fort Myers	2.17	1.22 in 1994
5	Fort Myers	0.82	0.50 in 1937
5	Key West	0.42	0.41 in 1886
15	W. Palm Beach	3.10	1.33 in 1958
18	Ft. Lauderdale	2.45	1.98 in 1917
18	Key West	3.28	1.90 in 1928
18	Melbourne	1.68*	1.68 in 1999
18	Naples	1.70	0.62 in 1954
18	Vero Beach	1.87	0.70 in 1999
18	W. Palm Beach	1.90	1.07 in 1923

\*- Tied record



The graphic below shows the rainfall totals from December 15-22 from stations with no missing data. This time span includes many of the rainfall records that were broken across much of the southern part of the state. Station FL-SL-17 had the highest rainfall total for the period with 10.76", most of which (10.32") was reported on 12/18/09. 7.65" was recorded at FL-BW-7, 6.94" was reported at FL-BW-26, and FL-IR-2 measured 6.36".

**CoCoRaHS Rainfall Totals  
(December 15 - December 22, 2009)**



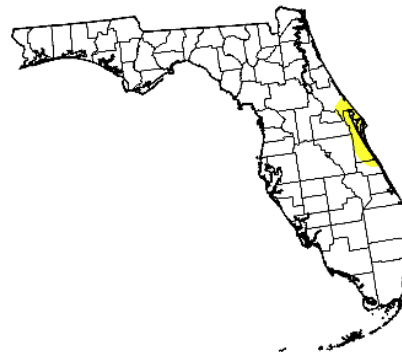
## Current State of the Drought

Not much has changed since the December newsletter. As mentioned in the previous section, rainfall totals for December were above normal across most of the state. The El Niño winter rains played a big part in ending most of the dry conditions in the state, though there remains a small area of the Space Coast that still remains in D0.

### U.S. Drought Monitor Florida

January 5, 2010  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Last Week (12/29/2009 map)	96.9	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (10/13/2009 map)	65.7	34.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (01/05/2010 map)	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Water Year (10/02/2009 map)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One Year Ago (01/06/2009 map)	44.0	56.0	13.4	0.0	0.0	0.0



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

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

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, January 7, 2010

Author: Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center



## Snow in Florida

Yes, I just put the words 'Florida' and 'snow' in the same statement. Contrary to popular belief, it does snow in Florida... not as much as it does for our CoCoRaHS leaders in Colorado, but we have had a few snow events in the state. And given the last few days of frigid temperatures, more residents would be willing to believe it's a possibility. Here are a few snow events from more recent history:

- January 1977 - Snow was reported across the Panhandle to the Big Bend, and accumulations of up to 3" were reported around the Tampa/Orlando area. Flurries were reported as far south as Homestead, FL.
- December 1989 – 1<sup>st</sup> White Christmas in Jacksonville's history.
- March 1993 – The '93 Superstorm produced up to 4" of snow in parts of northern Florida.
- January 2003 – Ocean effect snow (similar to lake effect snow) occurred over portions of the east coast, making it as far south as Fort Pierce.
- November 2006 – A light dusting of snow was reported in central Florida. It was the first snow in November in Florida since 1912.
- January 2010 – Light snow and sleet fell in parts of central Florida. Isolated flurries were reported in West Palm Beach and Kendall.

And just for a piece of Florida climate trivia: The lowest recorded temperature in the state is -2°F, observed in Tallahassee on Feb 13, 1899. Snow up to 3" deep blanketed numerous Panhandle communities. The event became known as the Great Arctic Outbreak.



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## Have Questions?

If at any time you have questions about CoCoRaHS, reading your rain gauge, or finding a location to setup your rain gauge, please feel to contact a CoCoRaHS Coordinator. We are lucky enough to have regional support from National Weather Service offices across the state, as well as county/local help from several CoCoRaHS volunteers. You can find all of the contact information for the CoCoRaHS Coordinators at:

[http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=coord\\_FL](http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=coord_FL)

Take care,  
Melissa