

# Florida CoCoRaHS

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network

*Volunteers working together  
to measure precipitation.*

## Things on the Horizon...

September 23<sup>rd</sup> marks the official end of Summer and the beginning of Fall. Fall is one of our drier seasons here in the Sunshine State. The change in season is usually accompanied by drier and (hopefully!) cooler air masses making their way into the state... which is good for those of us that like our college football and tailgating on the weekends. This fall could be drier than normal- but I'll address that a little further into the newsletter.

Some other interesting tidbits about the next upcoming weeks:

- The new water year starts October 1<sup>st</sup>. The hydrological water year begins October and ends in September and deals with surface water supply. If you are compiling your end of year water reports, please feel free to send them to me.
- In late October, the CoCoRaHS Calendar will be available for purchase from [www.weatheryourway.com](http://www.weatheryourway.com). I've seen two of the proofs and it looks amazing! The pictures contributed by our observers were all fantastic. Congratulations to Florida's own Harry Cunningham III for having his photo used in the calendar.
- In the next week or so, you'll start to see the 'Climates of the States' series highlighted in your Message of the Day. The series will start with the western states and move east, just like our weather. I'm not sure when Florida will be highlighted, but there have been some fantastic summaries written up for each state.

## Quick Stats

1014 # of registered FL observers

482 # of active FL observers

12,215 # of reports submitted by FL observers during 8/10

8/11/10 Dates with the greatest #  
& of FL reports submitted  
8/24/10 during 8/10 (407 reports)

9.16" Highest reported daily rainfall from FL CoCoRaHS observers during 8/10 (FL-OK-26 on 8/19)



*Because every drop counts!*



## August Rains

August rainfall totals varied around the state. Monthly rainfall in August was above normal in most areas. Pensacola (11.87 in) was more than five inches above normal (Table 1). In contrast, Vero Beach (2.89 in) was more than three inches below normal. Localized heavy rain produced isolated record daily amounts (Table 2). Departures from normal monthly totals ranged from much above normal in several areas near the Gulf Coast and inland sections of the southern part of the state, to well below normal along the central East coast. A monthly rainfall total exceeding 20 inches was observed in Levy County and parts of the Florida Coast saw totals over 10 inches.

Table 1. August precipitation totals and departure from normal (inches) for selected cities.

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	11.87	5.02
Tallahassee	9.97	2.94
Jacksonville	7.74	0.87
Orlando	5.62	-0.63
Tampa	9.29	1.69
Miami	8.75	0.12
Key West	5.01	-0.39

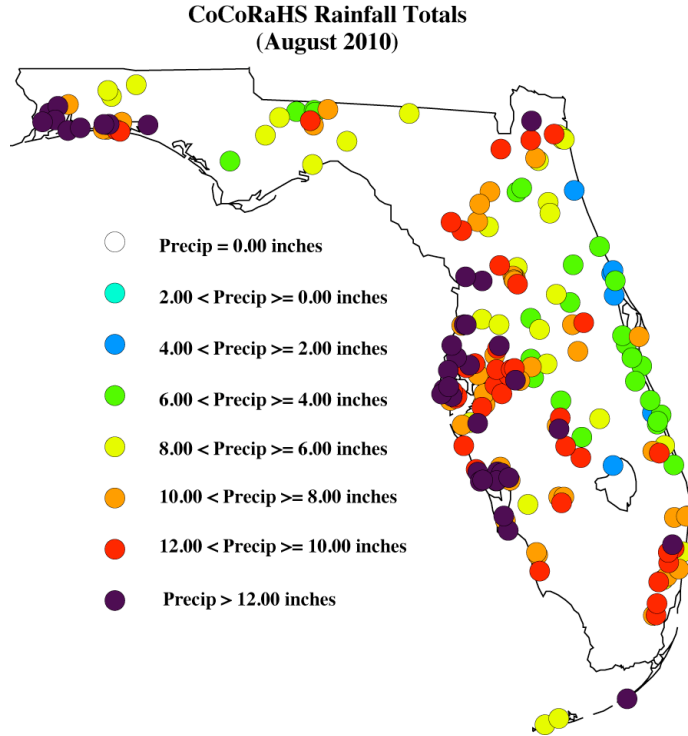
Table 2. Daily rainfall records (inches) set during August (compiled from NWS records).

Date	Station	Amount	Previous Record
8	Melbourne	2.32	1.69 in 2004
8	Lakeland	2.65	2.31 in 1967
8	West Palm Beach	2.51	1.99 in 1956
23	Sarasota	4.92	4.14 in 1977



# August CoCoRaHS Totals

Here are the rainfall totals for August from some select CoCoRaHS stations across the state.

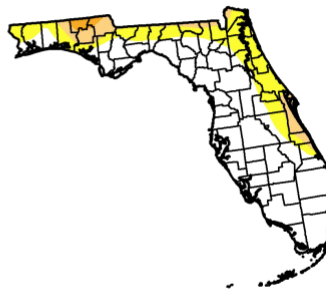


# Current State of the Drought

While parts of the state, mainly along the Gulf coast, had well above normal rainfall for August, other parts weren't so lucky. Abnormally dry conditions continued to linger along the East Coast, from Jacksonville south to Fort Pierce and west to the Florida/Alabama state line. Brevard County is listed in moderate drought, while areas of Holmes, Jackson and Washington counties are now in severe drought status. To add more fuel to the upcoming fire season, sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean continued to cool during August and now clearly denote a La Niña for this upcoming winter. La Niña winters are typically drier and warmer than normal, so you may end up reporting more 0.00" than actual rainfall this winter.

**U.S. Drought Monitor**      September 14, 2010  
Florida      Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	68.4	31.6	9.0	1.3	0.0	0.0
Last Week (09/07/2010 map)	73.7	26.3	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (06/22/2010 map)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (1/05/2010 map)	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Water Year (10/06/2009 map)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One Year Ago (09/15/2009 map)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0



**Intensity.**  
■ D0 Abnormally Dry      ■ D3 Drought - Extreme  
■ D1 Drought - Moderate      ■ D4 Drought - Exceptional  
■ D2 Drought - Severe

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, September 16, 2010  
 Author: M. Rosencrans, CPC/NOAA



## ‘Liquid’ Sunshine



This summer, a colleague of mine went on a trip to Alaska and came across this ‘rain gauge’ that he had to share with me – knowing how much I love fun facts about precipitation. While you may not be able to read all the words from the picture, the sign outside the visitor center in Ketchikan, Alaska, says that the liquid sunshine gauge was busted in 1949 with an annual rainfall total of 202.55”. On average, Ketchikan receives about 152” of rain each year. Closer to home, the annual maximum record rainfall amount in Florida is 112.43”, observed in Wewahitchka in 1966. To put that in perspective, the maximum annual record rainfall for the U.S. is 704.83” recorded in Kukui, Hawaii, in 1982.

But not everything that falls from the sky is a form of liquid sunshine. There have been numerous reports throughout the ages of frogs, fish... and even golf balls falling from the sky. This little anecdote comes from one of my favorite books, *Freaks of the Storm*:

**Florida, Golf Ball Rain?** (September 3, 1969): As recounted by a number of fortune authors, hundreds of golf balls apparently fell during a thunderstorm that produced five inches of rain in Punta Gorda Isles suburb on the west coast of Florida. A police investigation led by a lieutenant in the Punta Gorda Police Department failed to explain the hundreds of golf balls that had fallen into gutters, on the streets and sidewalks. Two patrolmen from the department picked up a huge number of golf balls while a security patrolman collected enough golf balls to fill a satchel case and complained that he was tired of

picking them up. A check of local golf courses and country clubs failed to find any missing golf balls.



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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