

Florida CoCoRaHS

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network

*Volunteers working together
to measure precipitation.*

Happy Holidays!

Thanksgiving has come and gone, Hanukkah has begun, and Christmas, Kwanzaa and the New Year are right around the corner. I'd like to wish you all a Happy Holiday and a Happy New Year.

I will be taking some time to visit my family this Christmas. Hopefully, I won't have to spend my Christmas morning standing outside in the cold, building a make-shift Stevenson screen and deploying my family's new weather station, like I did on Thanksgiving...

CoCoRaHS Takes Over The U.S

As of December 1st, CoCoRaHS is now in all 50 states! This is an exciting time as it's both an end and a beginning. When this program started out nearly a decade ago, having CoCoRaHS observers across the nation was more of a dream than something tangible. But thanks to you all, that dream is now a reality. Now comes the hard part of keeping those observers we already have and continuing to expand and grow. There is still plenty of white space on the map. One day we hope to have it filled in with dots of precipitation you all have measured.

Quick Stats

946	# of registered FL observers
488	# of active FL observers
11,682	# of reports submitted by FL observers during 11/09
11/10/09	Date with the greatest # of FL reports submitted during 11/09 (422 reports)
6.74"	Highest reported daily rainfall from FL CoCoRaHS observers during 11/09 (FL-ES-4 on 11/10/09)



Because every drop counts!



November Rains

Rainfall totals for November were slightly below normal across most of the state (Table 1). However, daily precipitation records were set at Vero Beach (2.63” on the 3rd), Gainesville (1.21” on the 25th) and Key West (5.05” on the 26th). The monthly rainfall departure at Key West (3.99”) resulted mainly from the one-day record total.

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

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	4.85	0.39
Tallahassee	2.27	-1.59
Jacksonville	0.85	-1.49
Orlando	0.60	-2.43
Tampa	2.82	1.20
Miami	2.97	-0.46
Key West	6.33	3.99

A graphical depiction of the monthly rainfall departure from normal for November is given in the figure below (courtesy of NOAA NWS). Departures range from over three inches above normal in the Keys and isolated locations in north central Florida to more than three inches below normal at some locations near the Atlantic Coast.

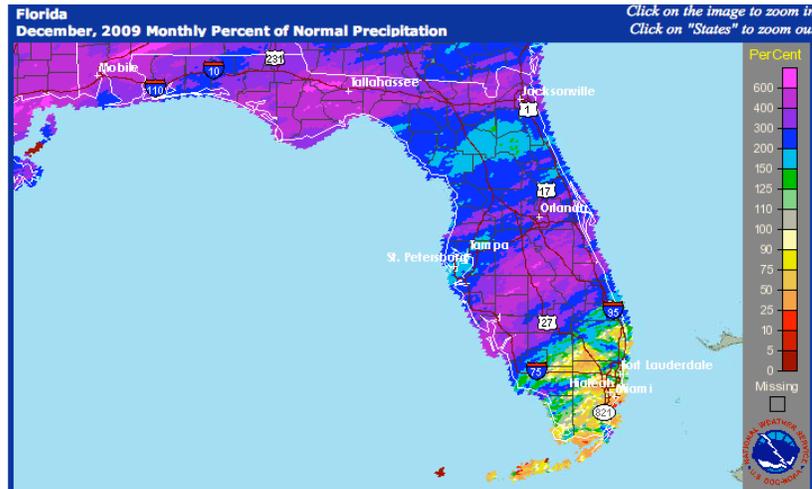
Florida: November, 2009 Monthly Departure from Normal Precipitation
Valid at 12/1/2009 1200 UTC- Created 12/1/09 23:46 UTC





Current State of the Drought

Much has changed since the newsletter back in November. El Niño's influence is being felt in Florida and we are already seeing impacts across the state. The Tallahassee airport reports at least a trace of rainfall on 11 of the first 14 days of December, including 5.34" on Dec 2nd and 1.98" on Dec 12th. For the first half of December, rainfall is already at 8.65", more than double the normal rainfall for the entire month. Portions of the state, north of a line from Naples to Vero Beach, have seen 125% or more of their monthly normal rainfall totals.

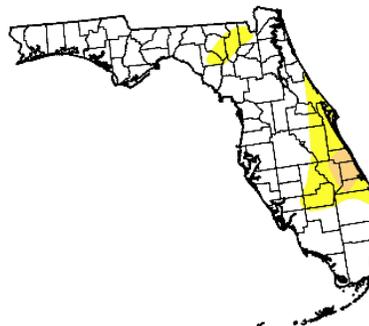


All of this extra rain has made for extremely soggy conditions, especially in the northwest Panhandle. The dry conditions we saw in November have eased in some areas, though they still persist along the Space Coast.

U.S. Drought Monitor Florida

December 8, 2009
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	81.7	18.3	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Last Week (12/01/2009 map)	70.2	29.8	8.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (09/15/2009 map)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (01/06/2009 map)	44.0	56.0	13.4	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 (12/08/2008 map)	76.4	23.6	6.6	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, December 10, 2009
 Author: M. Brewer/L. Love-Brotak, NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC



Severe Winter Weather

During an El Niño winter, we have an increased chance of stormy and severe weather, including tornadoes. The top two deadliest tornado outbreaks in Florida history occurred during El Niño events. The first outbreak occurred during the winter of 1997-1998, during the strongest El Niño in Florida's history. During this event, several EF-3 tornadoes, with wind speeds up to 165 mph, moved across central Florida on the night of February 22nd. The tornadoes killed 42 people in the Kissimmee area and caused millions of dollars in damage. The second event happened during the El Niño winter of 2006-2007, when two EF-3 tornadoes pushed through Sumter, Lake and Volusia Counties, killing 21 people.

The best course of action in the event of a tornado is to have a preparedness plan in place. Make sure you and your family know in advance where to take shelter if a tornado warning is issued for your area. Part of your plan should also involve having a NOAA weather radio, which broadcasts National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazards. The ability of the radio to trigger tone alerts can save lives, especially during overnight events when most people are asleep.

These radios are available for purchase from a variety of different vendors starting at \$30. They also make great stocking stuffers and last minute holiday gifts for the weather enthusiast in your life!



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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

Take care,
Melissa