

Messages of the Day
March 2014

Saturday, March 1, 2014

CoCoRaHS March Madness 2014 Begins! Please recruit someone in your state!

"CoCoRaHS March Madness", is our friendly annual recruiting competition between all of our CoCoRaHS states to see how many new volunteer observers we can recruit during the month of March.

We have a simple challenge to everyone out there during March: "Would you please take a moment to recommend the program to at least one friend or relative and encourage them to sign up to be a volunteer observer?" That's it just one (OK, two or three if you are really ambitious). If just half of our 19,500 current volunteers gave this a shot, we could really see the density of our coverage improve. Let the madness begin!

To help you with recruiting a downloadable CoCoRaHS Brochure is available by clicking here: [CoCoRaHS Brochure](#)

We will post an ongoing tally of results by state once a week (most likely on Fridays) on our "Message of the Day" with the final results posted on April 1st. The winning states will get to hold onto and display one of the two "CoCoRaHS Cup" trophies until next March.

Like last year, states will be competing for two national trophies. The first will be awarded in the "*Traditional Count*" category. This is pretty straight forward. The state with the most new volunteers recruited in March 2014 wins. The second category will be "*Population Weighted*" . . . the state that recruits the greatest number of new observers per one million of it's total population wins. This second category is a little trickier. For each new volunteer who signs-up, the state will be given a percentage of "one point" based on the state's total population (potential volunteer pool). This will give those states with sparser populations an equal chance. States with smaller populations will receive a larger point value for a new volunteer compared to those with larger populations (For each new volunteer Wyoming will receive 1.77 points based on their population of 563,626 residents, whereas California who will receive 0.03 points with their population of 37,253,956 residents). These point values are based on "new stations per million residents" which is derived from the 2010 estimated population information (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population). Please see: "[Population based scoring](#)" for a breakdown of each states point value per new volunteer.

Keep track of and learn about the tournament on our CoCoRaHS March Madness page: [COCO MARCH MADNESS HEADQUARTERS](#)

Good luck to your state! Don't forget to tell someone about CoCoRaHS, especially this month!



The "Total SWE Monday" Habit

The National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center <http://www.nohrsc.noaa.gov/> utilizes CoCoRaHS reports of precipitation, snowfall, snow depth and the water equivalent of the snow on the ground every day. CoCoRaHS data provide critical "Ground Truth" information that can improve the skill of their products and models. This will improve the accuracy of flood forecasts in the weeks and months ahead.

Their guidance to us has been:

"The analysts at NOHRSC prefer a Total Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) observation taken once a week on Monday. The simple reason is that digging cores every day ruins your sample snowfield area (unless you have a big yard or open fields nearby).

A flood of Monday morning SWE reports gives us a better picture of the overall snowpack instead of a few scattered results trickling in throughout the week. Daily total SWE would be great, but let's make "Total SWE Monday" a habit.

(Note: If you have the room, more frequent observations are appreciated, especially when conditions are changing. For areas that only infrequently get snow, there is no need to wait for Monday -- report SWE whenever you have the chance). For instructions on how to take core samples and report the snowpack SWE, please view our on-line training materials on snow: [Training Slide Shows](#) or watch the YouTube short animation on: [SWE](#).

Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step National Severe Weather Preparedness Week March 2-8, 2014



During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, March 2-8, 2014, NOAA and FEMA will highlight the importance of preparing for severe weather before it strikes.

Being prepared for severe weather doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. A few simple steps, such as having a disaster supplies kit, could help save your life.

During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, we ask that you Be a Force of Nature by knowing your risk, taking action and being an example where you live.

For more information click here: [Severe Weather](#).

Friday, March 14, 2014

CoCoRaHS March Madness 2014 results as of March 14th (week two)

"CoCoRaHS March Madness 2014" (our friendly annual recruiting competition between our CoCoRaHS states to see how many new volunteer observers we can recruit during the month of March) continues into it's second week.

Here at the end of week two, the "traditional count" category (sheer number of new observers) has **North Carolina (54)** in the lead followed closely by Georgia (45), Maine, Texas (32), Florida (27) and Wyoming (12).

In the "population weighted" category, **Wyoming (37.26)** remains in first, followed by Maine (24.09), South Dakota (7.37), North Carolina (5.66) and Georgia (4.65).

To view this week's standings as of March 14th and learn more about our contest, visit our March Madness webpage by clicking here: "[MADNESS HEADQUARTERS](#)". We will post an ongoing update of points by state each Friday via our "Message of the Day". Final results posted on April 1st.

A reminder that this year we are challenging everyone to sign-up a friend or relative as a CoCoRaHS observer during the thirty-one day competition.

Best of luck to your state!

Monday, March 17, 2014

NOAA Flood Safety Awareness Week (March 16-22, 2014)

Flooding is a coast to coast threat to the United States and its territories in all months of the year. National Flood Safety Awareness Week is intended to highlight some of the many ways floods can occur, the hazards associated with floods, and what you can do to save life and property.

Please take a few moments to visit this informative site: [Flood Information](#).

Wednesday, March 19, 2014



Join the USA National Phenology Network

Come join the [USA National Phenology Network](#). Document how plants and animals respond to local weather conditions using Nature's Notebook.

Once again, the USA National Phenology Network is very thankful to their friends at CoCoRaHS for the opportunity to invite you to track what the plants and animals in your yard are doing through Nature's Notebook, the plant and animal phenology observing program.

Plants and animals respond strongly to environmental conditions. 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.

As a CoCoRaHS participant, you already pay close attention to what's happening outside of your window. You're a keen observer, you recognize the importance of careful record keeping, and you are meticulous about reporting your observations. Think of what you could discover by adding observations of a tree or a bush in your yard to your detailed weather records. How long does it take following a precipitation event to see buds appear or for flowers to open? How many warm days do we need to experience before fruit starts to ripen?

The USA-NPN 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 my tree earlier or later spring? Your observations of plant or animal phenology collected via Nature's Notebook 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:
<https://www.usanpn.org/nn/connect/region>

You are also welcome to collect and submit observations on any of the 900 species of plants and animals for which protocols are available at: https://www.usanpn.org/nn/species_search

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

Friday, March 21, 2014

CoCoRaHS March Madness 2014 results as of March 21st (week three)

"CoCoRaHS March Madness 2014" (our friendly annual recruiting competition between our CoCoRaHS states to see how many new volunteer observers we can recruit during the month of March) continues into it's third week.

Here in week three, the "traditional count" category (sheer number of new observers) has **Florida (92)** taking the lead, followed by North Carolina (88), Georgia, Texas (53), Maine (33) and Maryland (31).

In the "population weighted" category, **Wyoming (46.13)** adds to its lead, followed by Maine (24.84), South Dakota (23.34), North Carolina (9.23) and Mississippi (7.08).

To view this week's standings as of March 21st and learn more about our contest, visit our March Madness webpage by clicking here: ["MADNESS HEADQUARTERS"](#). We will post an ongoing update of points by state each Friday via our "Message of the Day". Final results posted on April 1st.

A reminder that this year we are challenging everyone to sign-up a friend or relative as a CoCoRaHS observer during the thirty-one day competition.

Good luck to your state!