

# Carolina SkyWatcher



NWS Morehead City

Spring Edition, 2022

*Thunderstorm rolls towards Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, May 2015 | Credit: Cape Hatteras National Seashore*

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### Spring Means Severe Weather—Prepare for the 2022 Season!

With the warmer spring air comes the chance for severe weather. Review your household emergency preparedness plan and be Weather-Ready for severe weather season today!

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Snow, sleet, and freezing rain—we had it all this winter! We take a look back at the 2021-2022 winter season and relive our historic winter and ice storm.

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CoCoRaHS is looking for new volunteers to expand its North Carolina network of home-based and amateur weather spotters. Learn how to sign up today!

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# Start Preparing for the 2022 Severe Weather Season Today!

By: Erik Heden, Warning Coordination Meteorologist



*Shelf cloud approaches Ocracoke Beach | Credit: Cape Hatteras National Seashore*

With warmer weather quickly approaching, now is the time to prepare for the severe weather season! North Carolina's annual Severe Weather Preparedness Week took place March 6th through March 12th. Topics discussed during the week included tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, lightning safety, flash flooding, making a plan for severe weather, and ways to get warning information. While the week is behind us, you should continue to practice preparedness as we head into the spring severe weather season. It is important to have multiple ways to receive warnings and ensure one of the ways will wake you up at night. If each North Carolina resident would take a few moments this week to learn about severe weather safety and implement a safety plan, then we would all be better off when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes inevitably strike our state and the likelihood of injury and fatalities caused by severe weather could be minimized.

For more tips on preparedness and what kind of severe weather is possible in Eastern North Carolina visit our website: [www.weather.gov/moreheadcity/severeprep](http://www.weather.gov/moreheadcity/severeprep) for more information. Over the next few pages, we go over a helpful things to remember this upcoming severe weather season.

# Start Preparing for the 2022 Severe Weather Season Today!

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## Have A Plan/Know Where To Go

Having a safe place to shelter is something you need to plan well ahead of time, so that you know where to go when severe weather strikes.



## Having Multiple Ways to Receive Warnings

In order to be prepared for severe weather, you must be able to receive life-saving weather alerts! When reviewing how you receive alerts, ensure you have **at least two ways to receive warnings**. A NOAA Weather Radio is an excellent way to receive alerts, especially at night when you may be asleep. Remember you will not receive cell phone alerts if you leave your phone on do not disturb at night and **never** turn off Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on your cellular devices!





# Start Preparing for the 2022 Severe Weather Season Today!

(continued)

## Know the Difference

We issue both warnings and watches prior to and during severe weather. Do you know the difference between the two?

### TORNADO WATCH

A Tornado Watch is issued when **a tornado is possible.**

Know your safe place (storm shelter, basement, interior hall away from windows). Be ready to act quickly if a Warning is issued.

**Be Prepared.**



weather.gov

### TORNADO WARNING

A Tornado Warning is issued when **a tornado is happening or about to happen.**

Immediately seek shelter in your safe place!

**Take Action!**

### THUNDERSTORM WATCH

A Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued when **a severe thunderstorm is possible.**

Stay tuned to forecast updates, monitor sky conditions, and know where to take shelter.

**Be Prepared.**



weather.gov

### THUNDERSTORM WARNING

A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when **a severe thunderstorm is happening or about to happen.**

Take shelter immediately!

**Take Action!**

# Looking Back at an Icy, Memorable 2021-2022 Winter Season

By: Michael Lee, Meteorologist



*Ice encases the tall grass in front of the NWS Morehead City Doppler Radar KMHX*

Snow, sleet, and freezing rain. We saw every form of wintry precipitation here in eastern North Carolina—all in 24 hours. The winter storm of January 21st–22nd will go down in history as an incredibly memorable snow, sleet, and significant ice storm.

A wintry mix of sleet and snow impacted areas north and west of New Bern, with a general four to six inches being measured in places like Greenville, Washington, Kinston, and Snow Hill, even seeing up to two inches across the northern Outer Banks. Then, there was the ice. It was further south along the Crystal Coast where the National Weather Service office in Morehead City issued the first ever Ice Storm Warning in our county warning area. Communities across the Crystal Coast, including the cities of Cape Carteret, Morehead City, Newport, Havelock, Richlands, Jacksonville, Minnesott Beach, and North Topsail Beach, were literally frozen in place with 0.25"–0.50"



# Start Preparing for the 2022 Severe Weather Season Today!

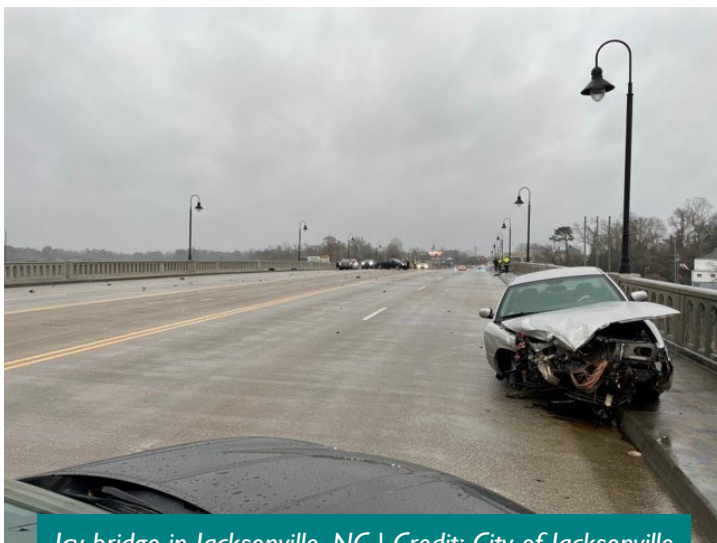
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*The NWS Morehead City office officially measured a storm total of 0.50 inches of ice accretion*

freezing rain for over 12 hours. Power companies reported over 12,000 customers lost power during this event. Major bridges iced over in New Bern, Jacksonville, and across the Morehead City area, leading to numerous vehicle collisions and overnight closures. Luckily, only a few injuries were reported with no deaths.

For a full summary of this historic ice/winter storm, visit our significant event review page at [weather.gov/mhx/pastWinterStormJanuary212022](https://www.weather.gov/mhx/pastWinterStormJanuary212022).



*Icy bridge in Jacksonville, NC | Credit: City of Jacksonville*



*Broad Creek Bridge on Hwy 24 Iced Over*



# Citizen Science Program Needs Your Help Observing the Weather!

By: North Carolina CoCoRaHS



Have you ever wondered how much rain fell during a recent thunderstorm? How about snowfall during a winter storm? If so, an important volunteer weather observing program needs your help!

The [Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow network](#), or CoCoRaHS, is looking for new volunteers across North Carolina. The grassroots effort is part of a growing national network of home-based and amateur weather spotters with a goal of providing a high density precipitation network across the country.

CoCoRaHS came about as a result of a devastating flash flood that hit Fort Collins, Colorado, in July 1997. A local severe thunderstorm dumped over a foot of rain in several hours while other portions of the city had only modest rainfall. The ensuing flood caught many by surprise and caused \$200 million in damages. CoCoRaHS was born in 1998 with the intent of doing a better job of mapping and reporting intense storms. As more volunteers participated, rain, hail, and snow maps were produced for every storm showing fascinating local patterns that were of great interest to scientists and the public. Recently, drought reporting has also become an important observation within the CoCoRaHS program across the nation. In fact, drought observations from CoCoRaHS are now being included in the [National Integrated Drought Information System](#).

# Citizen Science Program Needs Your Help Observing the Weather!

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***“We are in need of new observers across the entire state. We would like to emphasize rural locations, areas of higher terrain, and areas near the coast.”***

***-David Glenn, CoCoRaHS State Coordinator***

North Carolina became the twenty-first state to join the CoCoRaHS program in 2007, and by 2010, the CoCoRaHS network had reached all 50 states with nearly 10,000 daily observations. Through CoCoRaHS, thousands of volunteers, young and old, document the size, intensity, duration and patterns of rain, hail, and snow by taking simple measurements in their own backyards.

Volunteers may obtain an official rain gauge through the CoCoRaHS website ([cocorahs.org](http://cocorahs.org)) for about \$33 plus shipping. Besides the need for an official 4 inch plastic rain gauge, volunteers are asked to review simple training modules online and use the CoCoRaHS website to submit their reports. The process takes only five minutes a day, but the impact to the community is ten-fold: by providing high quality, accurate measurements, the observers are able to supplement existing networks and provide useful data to scientists, resource managers, decision makers and others.

“CoCoRaHS observers provided valuable data for both Hurricane Florence and Dorian,” said Sean Heuser, Co-CoRaHS State Co-Coordinator and Manager of the NC ECONet at the State Climate Office of NC. “For these high intensity events, whether they are tropical systems or afternoon thunderstorms, CoCoRaHS observers are able to fill in gaps and provide a clearer picture of where we see precipitation maximums. We also use Co-CoRaHS Condition Monitoring reports every week to determine drought conditions across the state and give recommendations to the U.S. Drought Monitor authors.”



CoCoRaHS rain gauge

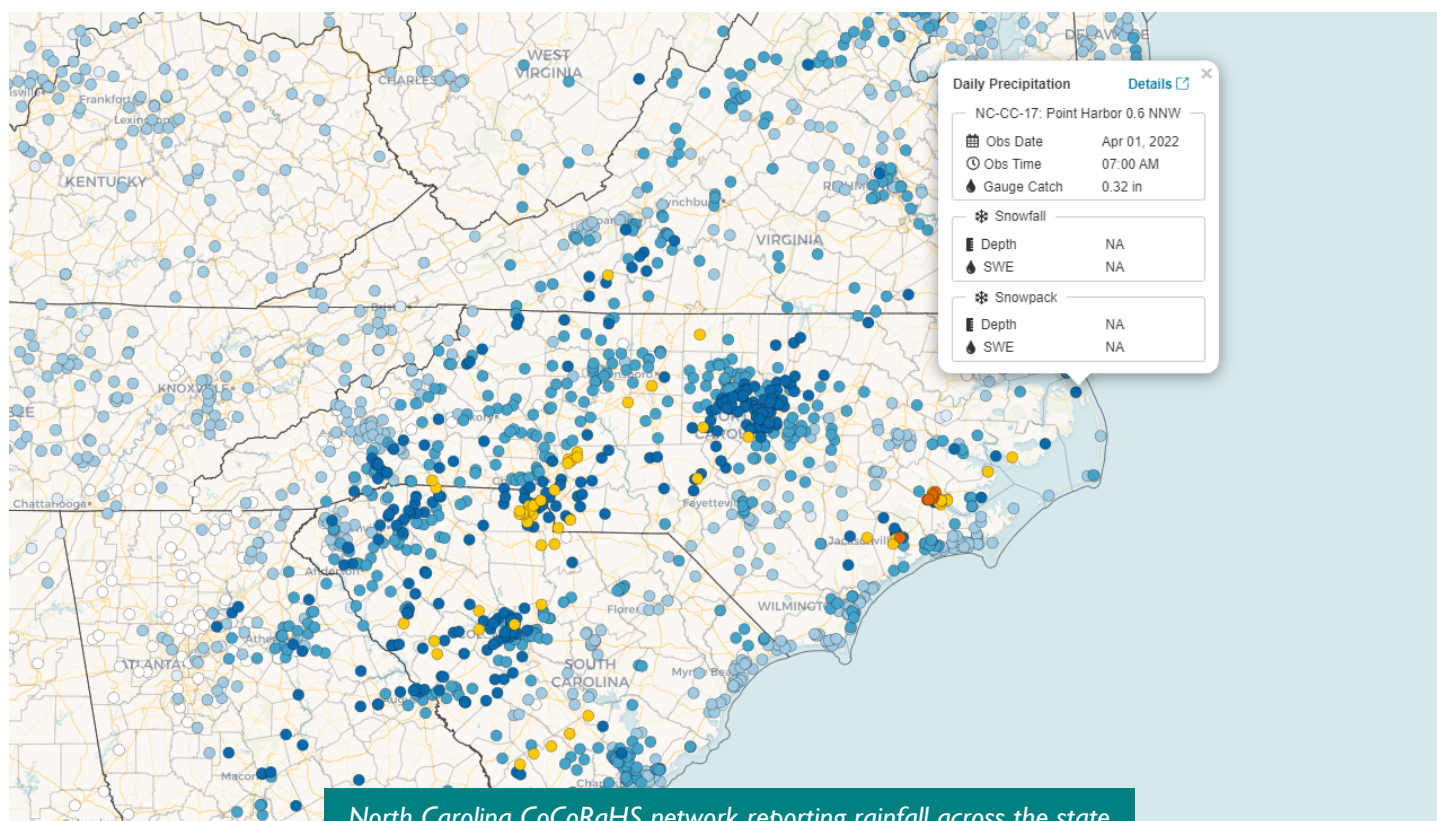


# Citizen Science Program Needs Your Help Observing the Weather!

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"Monitoring weather and climate conditions in North Carolina is no easy feat," said Heather Aldridge, CoCoRaHS State Co-Coordinator. "CoCoRaHS volunteers help by painting a better picture of precipitation patterns across North Carolina, filling in data gaps where there are no nearby stations. Reporting rain, hail, snow, and drought conditions is a fun activity for all ages!"

"An additional benefit of the program for the National Weather Service is the ability to receive timely reports of significant weather such as hail, intense rainfall, or localized flooding from CoCoRaHS observers that can assist meteorologists in issuing and verifying warnings for severe thunderstorms," says David Glenn, CoCoRaHS State Co-Coordinator and meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Newport/Morehead City.



North Carolina CoCoRaHS network reporting rainfall across the state

How does one become a CoCoRaHS observer? Go to the [CoCoRaHS website](#) and click on the "Join CoCoRaHS" emblem on the upper right side of the main website. After registering, take the simple online training, order your 4-inch rain gauge and start reporting!

"We are in need of new observers across the entire state. We would like to emphasize rural locations, areas of higher terrain, and areas near the coast," added Glenn.

North Carolina CoCoRaHS can also be reached on [Facebook](#) and through [Twitter](#).

# **Severe Weather** can escalate quickly.

While the possibility of tornadoes can be forecast ahead of time, they can form in minutes, day or night. Will you be prepared?



Set up a way to get weather warnings any time of day



When alerted to a tornado, quickly get to a storm shelter or basement



If underground shelter isn't available, get to an interior hall away from windows



weather.gov



Visit Our Severe Weather Preparedness Webpage to be Weather-Ready This Season!

Become a Trained SKYWARN® Spotter for North Carolina!

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