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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
Secretary, American Meteorological Society
discusses:

HEIGHT OF THE RAINBOW

Were one high enough above the earth the rainbow would appear not as a bow but as a complete circle. Not more than one-half of the arc is ever visible from the earth's surface, excepting from very high mountains. The reason is that the center of the rainbow circle is always as far below the horizon as the sun is above the horizon. Therefore as sunset approaches near, or soon after sunrise, the arch is nobly high and impressive, while as the morning wanes or in the middle of the afternoon only a small section of the arc is visible.

It is occasionally asked why the rainbow is not seen in the middle of the day. The answer is that when the sun is high in the heavens the entire circle of the rainbow is below the horizon, excepting from a great elevation, and therefore is cut off from sight.

Practically complete rainbows may be seen in the spray of waterfalls at any time of day, and even on lighted dew at night or early morning.

(Tomorrow: Summer Begins Tomorrow.)

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