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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,  
of Clark University,  
discusses:

SPRING SHOWERS FROM WINTER SNOW

Throughout a large part of the Great Plains region of the United States and Canada, the winter is so cold and dry that only a little snow accumulates before March. The higher temperatures of early spring, however, allow the air to become more moist; some of the winter snow evaporates, and a somewhat heavier and wetter snowfall takes its place. The spring snow cover, in turn, melts and evaporates, readily furnishing the moisture for spring showers. Much moisture is imported into the interior from the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere, it is true, but usually the storms pass by too quickly and the wind changes too soon to permit a large inflow of warm, moist air. It is largely the stored moisture, conserved in the snow, that furnishes the valuable spring showers. In the semi-arid regions it is fortunate that most of the rainfall usually occurs in April or May just when it is of most value for starting crops.

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(Tomorrow: Bird Migration and the Weather)

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