

April 26

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

APRIL SHOWERS

The reputation of April for changeable and showery weather is, at least in part, deserved. While it is true that some of the following months may produce just as many showers as April, showers then attract more attention because they differ noticeably from the immediately preceding general rains of winter. At this time of year cyclones or lows and their attendant rains are weakening and becoming less frequent; the shower type of rainfall is replacing the cyclonic type.

April showers, in fact, spring and summer showers usually, are produced by the local heating by the sun which starts small convectional circulations. In spring, the damp ground furnishes plenty of moisture to be evaporated and returned as rain; the cold, heavy air aloft and the rapidly warming and expanding air below at the surface favor overturning. With a northerly wind the temperature contrast is increased. The cold air descends and forces the warm, moist air to rise, usually causing condensation, and often numerous small showers. Heavier April showers accompany strong southerly winds, which produce the same sort of temperature contrast between the upper and lower air levels, though on a larger scale and with more moisture involved. These conditions are usually accompanied by a steady rain in winter, in April more commonly the smaller temperature contrasts and the strong sunlight do not favor the formation of a continuous low sheet cloud. Hence, in April a series of showers with sunlight between replaces the winter type of steady rain accentuated at intervals by showers.

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