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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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DURATION OF SNOW COVER

The number of days in the year when there is snow on the ground is much greater in the north than in the south, but there is surprisingly little difference in this respect between the snowy east and the less snowy Great Plains.

Thus, although it is so dry on the northern Great Plains that the snowfall is relatively light, the snow lasts a good while as there is little melting. Without this long lasting snow cover, it would be difficult for wintergrains to withstand the cold, dry winds of winter. East of the Rocky Mountains the duration of snow cover decreases with considerable regularity from more than 90 days in the northern and northeastern portions to less than one day south of Augusta, Ga., Birmingham, Ala., Vicksburg, Miss., and central Texas. In occasional winters more or less snow whitens the ground almost to the southern tip of Florida.

(Tomorrow: Cirrus Clouds of Lows)

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