

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SOUTHERN TORNADES IN MARCH

March is the chief tornado month for Alabama, according to a recent tabulation by W. R. Stevens of the Weather Bureau, and probably Alabama is typical of other Gulf states. As many as 283 tornadoes have been observed in Alabama from 1794 to March, 1925, of which 80 occurred in March and 69 in April. Spring is evidently the tornado season for that region. Though some occur in the winter months, tornadoes are rare from July to October; that period is reserved for local thunderstorms. It is apparent that tornadoes seldom develop in connection with the heat thunderstorms which are so prevalent in the south during the summer; rather, they are connected with the winter type of storm with its greater turbulence.

Tornadoes originate particularly in the southeastern quadrant of these storms or "lows", thus Alabama is most likely to be afflicted when the storm center is in Illinois, Indiana, western Kentucky or Tennessee. Because strong heating is also a factor in producing tornadoes, they are more frequent in spring than in winter and occur most often in the late afternoon and least commonly in the early morning.

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