

A Science Service Feature

Released on receipt
but intended for use
May 7, 1926

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed April 30, 1926

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks
of Clark University

LIFE RESPONDS TO SUDDEN HEAT

A sudden hot spell in spring, such as that of late April this year, finds an immediate, enthusiastic response from people awaiting the real advent of spring. Streets are crowded with pleasure-riding autoists, and porches on houses come into full use immediately. Some people open the swimming season, while others make haste to complete the winter's harvest of ice. A news item told of men harvesting ice on Lake Champlain and of autos driving across while the air temperature was up to 80!

But the vegetation does not turn green all at once. The hot weather may have as incongruous a setting of brown fields, snow patches and ice covered lakes, as last October's early snowstorms were when they bowed down the green leafy trees. The cold ground may be so incapable of supplying adequate moisture for evaporation that the brown dryness of the fields and woods may be turned suddenly into black by brush fires. But within two or three days of the beginning of the hot weather grass turns green, or makes notable growth, May apples rise and spread their leaves with astonishing rapidity. The advance guard of general green may march 300 miles northward in 2 or 3 days, or in excess of 5 times the usual rate. Over a broad belt certain types of vegetation all come out at about the same time.

Still slower are the denizens of our wet lowlands, the cheery piping or trilling frogs. They are buried at a depth, and it takes about 6 days for the wave of heat to get down to them. Then the piping may suddenly begin, even though cool weather has resumed its grip.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE,
21st and B Sts.,
Washington, D.C.