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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WHERE AUTUMN RAINS ARE HEAVIEST

In temperate North America the depth of rainfall on the coast ranges from Oregon northward in autumn alone exceeds the average for the whole continent in a year. In some places on these mountains exposed to the sweep of moist gales from the Pacific the autumn rainfall averages over 40 inches. The Cascades also are well watered, with more than 20 inches of rain in the months September, October, and November. A small part of the northern and Canadian Rockies stands out with more than ten inches of rain or water equivalent in snow.

In the east the rainiest corner is that of southeastern Florida, where along the coast the autumn rains total 20 inches on the average. Ten to fifteen inches of rain fall all along the Gulf coast and the Atlantic coast north to Hatteras. The highlands of Arkansas, the southern Appalachians and the river lowlands near the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi are also wet by over ten inches of rain at this season. The seaward slopes of the north Atlantic states and the Maritime Provinces also have much rainfall. The wetness of these eastern regions is evidently related chiefly to influx of very humid air from over the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf Stream, the particular occasions for rainfall being usually the passage of more or less well defined low pressure areas. The occasional torrential rains of tropical cyclones add considerably to the averages that would obtain without these paroxysms.

In terms of the annual rainfalls the autumn precipitation exceeds 25 per cent. of the total in the north Pacific and northern Rocky Mountain regions mentioned, the southern Rockies and most of Texas, southeastern Florida, and from Minnesota and the Great Lakes to the Atlantic seaboard, especially maritime Canada. The driest parts both in an absolute and relative sense are southern California, the central great Plains, and central Mississippi.

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