

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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NATURE'S PROGRAM IN NOVA SCOTIA

Under the direction of Dr. A. H. McKay, of Halifax, a comprehensive record of phenological events has been maintained for some years in the Province of Nova Scotia. As the events in question are mainly or entirely dependent upon atmospheric conditions, these records throw much light upon the weather and climate of the region.

The observers are schoolchildren, who make their reports to their teachers. For example, the children bring to school the first flowering specimen of a plant they discover and the teacher makes an authoritative determination of the species. Generally the name of the pupil bringing the earliest specimen is placed on the honor roll section of the blackboard for the day. The records for the different schools are assembled twice a year, and average dates of the various events are determined for each of ten regions into which the province has been divided for this purpose. An abstract of the results is published in the Proceedings and Transactions of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science. The original records are bound and preserved in the Provincial Museum and Science Library, at Halifax.

One hundred periodical events of the year are recorded under two headings; viz, "When first seen" and "When becoming common". They include the flowering, fruiting, etc., of various plants, the arrival and departure of migrating birds, agricultural operations, opening and closing of lakes and rivers, latest frosts in spring, earliest frosts in autumn, and several other things that mark the progress of the seasons.

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