

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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TROPICAL HURRICANES

The hurricane season is at hand - or has perhaps already arrived - on the North Atlantic, where severe tropical cyclones average three a year. Most Americans do not realize that storms of the same type are a good deal more common in some other parts of the tropics. According to Prof. S. S. Visher, full-fledged tropical hurricanes average ten a year in the western North Pacific, eight a year in the South Indian Ocean, five a year in the western South Pacific, and five a year in the Australian region between longitudes 110 and 160 east. The total number for the world in an average year is 39. According to the same authority, tropical cyclones and cyclonic disturbances of all degrees of severity average more than 173 a year.

As to distribution in time, destructive tropical cyclones have been recorded every month in the year in the western North Pacific, in the Bay of Bengal and about Australia, and in all but one or two months in the South Indian Ocean, the South Pacific and the eastern North Pacific. In the West Indies they are very rare, and in recent times have never occurred, during the first four months of the year.

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