

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER TASTES OF GRASSHOPPERS

J.R. Parker, of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, has published in a bulletin of that station a great fund of data concerning the effects of temperature and moisture upon the two most destructive grasshoppers of the northern United States and southern Canada; viz, *Melanoplus mexicanus mexicanus* (Saussure) and *Camnula Pallucida* (Scudder). One interesting fact brought out in this bulletin is that grasshoppers are great lovers of warmth and sunshine, their activities being very largely controlled by temperature. During cold weather they seek any shelter that offers a few degrees more of warmth than the open air, and so universal is this habit that a field that is swarming with grasshoppers at midday may not appear to contain a single grasshopper an hour after sundown if the weather is cool and shelter is available.

As the morning sun warms the air and ground the grasshoppers slowly crawl from their hiding places, seek a position in the sun, and seem fairly to revel in the warmth of its beams. At such times they cluster thickly on stumps, boards, dry sod and the like, which are already several degrees warmer than the air.

As the temperature increases, the grasshoppers start moving about and they are active during the greater part of the day in ordinary summer weather. If the days grow very hot, they crawl up weeds or blades of grass, where they find the air decidedly warmer than on the ground.

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