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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SUMMER IN ALASKA

Are you planning a summer jaunt to Alaska? At Seward, where you disembark from the steamer, you will find a damp climate, cool but not cold. The temperature here very seldom goes up to 70 or down to 40 in a summer month. Travel north on the Alaska Railroad and you will enter a region of warmer, drier and sunnier weather. Temperatures of 90 and above are occasionally recorded in the interior of Alaska in summer. Fairbanks has registered 99, and Fort Yukon, which is on the Yukon River just inside the Arctic Circle, 100.

The U. S. National Park Service gives us this description of the summer climate in central Alaska, in and about Mount McKinley National Park:

"The sunshine is gorgeous and lasts for more than 18 hours a day. On June 21, the longest day in the year, the sun is visible at midnight and photographs may be taken at that time. At Fairbanks this occasion is usually celebrated by a mid-sun night festival, of which a baseball game is one of the many athletic events. The mere fact of the unusual hour of play is a novelty that draws many visitors. The rays of the sun, as they shine over this part of Alaska, make a picture of riotous color that it would be difficult for any artist to reproduce."

And W.H. Dall, writing of a still more northerly region of the interior says: "In midsummer on the upper Yukon the only relief from the intense heat, under which the vegetation attains an almost tropical luxuriance, is the brief space during which the sun hovers over the northern horizon and the voyager in his canoe blesses the transient coolness of the midnight air."

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