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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE WORST HOT WEATHER

Hot weather is endurable if the relative humidity remains low; hot days are endurable if the air cools off at night. Neither of these mitigating features is found in the average climate of the Red Sea coast. An English meteorological journal has recently suggested that Kamaran Island, which lies in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen, can claim the distinction of having the worst climate on earth.

A four-year record shows that from April to October, inclusive, the average daily maximum temperatures range from 91 to 95; which would not be bad were it not for the fact that the average minimum temperatures are from 81 to 86. The highest single reading during the four years was 105, which we can easily beat in America, but the mercury never once fell below 66. The average relative humidity was 72 in January and 58 in July.

The climate of the island is extremely enervating. In spite of deserts near at hand and an average rainfall of only 2 inches a year the air generally feels damp, and the winds, though strong, bring no relief. Occasional sandstorms add to human discomfort. A lovely place to stay away from is Kamaran!

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