

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
June 5, 1931

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed May 29, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

A PLANT WEATHER BUREAU

In his "Philosophia Botanica," published in 1751, Linnaeus pointed out the fact that the dates of the periodical events in the lives of plants, such as blossoming, leafing, etc., are valuable indicators of the progress of the seasons and also provide a means of comparing the climates of different localities. This work was the foundation of scientific phenology, and since the time it appeared thousands of observers have kept records of the periodical phenomena of both plant and animal life.

The observations of this character made at the Royal Observatory of Belgium, near Brussels, are remarkable in two respects. They have been made since the year 1896 in the same place, and, in the case of perennial plants, on the same individual specimens. Secondly, meteorological instruments are installed in close proximity to the plants utilized. Thus an unusually homogeneous series of records has been obtained, and exact comparisons can be made with fluctuations of temperature, rainfall and other weather elements. At the present time 160 species are under observation. The plants occupy a small park and are arranged in a circle surrounding the weather instruments. Some extensive discussions of the data obtained have been published by the observatory.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

-----  
SCIENCE SERVICE  
21st and Constitution Ave.  
Washington, D. C.