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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

SOME AUSTRALIAN WINDS

The "black northeaster" is a stiff sea breeze on the coast of New South Wales. It sometimes blows for three or four days and is accompanied by dense clouds, heavy rain and low visibility.

In the "southerly bursters" of Australia's southeast and east coasts the wind shifts abruptly to a southerly/and the temperature falls rapidly. At Port Jackson there is sometimes a fall of more than 30 degrees within half an hour. The wind may attain a force of 80 miles an hour during gusts and continues from a few hours to several days.

The term "brickfielder," now applied to hot, dusty northerly winds on the goldfields of Victoria, was the first name given to the southerly bursters at Sydney. Brickfields in the early days were worked to the south of the latter place and with the arrival of southerly winds clouds of dust from these fields were brought to the northern edge of the town. Diggers from Sydney, migrating to the Victoria goldfields half a century ago, transferred the name to the hot northerly winds prevailing there.

The "Fremantle doctor" is the local sea breeze at the chief port of Western Australia. "Cock-eye Bob" is the name given to a summer thundersquall on the northwest coast of Western Australia, and "willy-willy" to a hurricane (tropical cyclone) of the same coast.

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