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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WIND-BORNE GRASSHOPPERS

That even relatively large and heavy insects are sometimes carried long distances by the wind is shown by the following episode, reported to the American Meteorological Society by K.M. Hutchins, of Neenah, Wis.:

"For some days previous to Aug. 4, 1931, there had been hordes of grasshoppers on the east shore of Lake Winnebago, but very few on the west shore. On Aug. 4 the farmers and cottagers on the west shore saw what appeared to be a low dark cloud approaching them from the east over the lake. To their astonishment, in a few minutes great quantities of 'hoppers began falling, some falling in the lake, but great quantities surviving the 10-mile journey across the water. They became so deep on the ground for a distance of about a mile along the shore that it was necessary to haul them away by truck. This kind of 'hopper is unable to stay in quiet air more than a few seconds, and having once fallen into the water, is unable to jump out. A 200-ft. hill rises abruptly from the water on the east shore, and they undoubtedly 'took off' from this, and were caught in a rising current of air. The day was mostly overcast, with light variable winds, mostly from the east."

Human aeronauts have only lately learned how to utilize the upward movements of the atmosphere as a means of long-distance gliding, but insect fliers probably learned to do this ages ago.

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