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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER AND SCENT

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For some years the former M.F.H. of a well-known English hunt, H.M. Budgett, has been studying the relations of weather conditions to scent. He sets forth the results in his book "Hunting by Scent," published last year in London.

"The nostrils of a hound," he says, "point forwards and downwards, and consequently lend themselves to intercept currents of air coming towards the hound and rising from the ground. It would therefore appear reasonable to expect that scenting conditions will be at their best when the air current is not only moving from the direction towards which the hound is traveling but also rising from the ground. It is a well-known and quite indisputable fact that scent is always better when the quarry runs up-wind than when he runs down-wind. When a hound is hunting up-wind the track of the quarry lies straight ahead, and air currents are bringing the scent from the whole length of this line back towards the hound's nostrils."

Because warm air rises, scenting conditions are best when the temperature of the ground is higher than that of the air. Mr. Budgett has devised an "electric scent indicator," which registers the difference in temperature between the air and the ground. He finds further that any sudden fall in the air temperature causes the scent to be good, while any sudden rise causes it to be bad; that scent is usually bad when the sun is shining brightly; and that a high wind causes eddies in the air, making scent conditions uncertain. Heavy rain obliterates scent, but moist land usually carries a better scent than dry. Scent is good on snow that has fallen before a freeze, but bad on snow that has fallen after frost has entered the ground.

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