

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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RAINBOW NOTIONS

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According to Bent, the English traveler, Greek peasants foretell the crops from the colors of the rainbow. If red prevail, the crop of grapes will be abundant; if green, that of olives; if yellow, that of corn. According to English folklore, as cited by Richard Inwards, if the green of a rainbow be large and bright, it is a sign of continued rain; if red be the strongest color, there will be rain and wind together. Of course, these ideas are without scientific foundation.

In the south of Ireland there is a saying, "A Saturday's rainbow, a week's rotten weather."

There are several rhymes about morning and evening rainbows. Here are some of them:

If there be a rainbow in the eve,
It will rain and leave;
But if there be a rainbow in the morrow,
It will neither lend nor borrow.

A rainbow in the morning
Is the shepherd's warning;
A rainbow at night
Is the shepherd's delight.

Rainbow at night, sailor's delight;
Rainbow in morning, sailors take warning.

If the rainbow comes at night,
The rain is gone quite.

A nautical proverb says:

Rainbow to windward, foul fall the day;
Rainbow to leeward, damp runs away.

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