

BOTANY

Principal Hay Fever Season Marches up Map on Schedule

Ragweeds Come Into Bloom Earlier in Northern States; Spores of Certain Species of Fungi Also Cause Sneezes

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ALL ALLERGY, like all Gaul, may be divided into three parts—three, because of the three principal avenues of entrance or points of attack. Allergic poisons may, in the form of cosmetics, chemical or plant juices, penetrate the skin of the hands, face or other parts of the body and thus assault us from without. They may be swallowed, as food, and subsequently snipe at us from within. But the most common and most insidious offenders are those invisible enemies that pounce upon us from the air. They find our most vulnerable spots—the tender membranes that cover the eyeballs, and those that line the eyelids, the nasal cavities and the lungs.

With reasonable care we may usually succeed in avoiding unfriendly food and chemicals. But the aerial allergy attack by pollen grains, mold spores and buoyant insect scales is so widespread, so intense and long drawn out that special personal defense measures must be taken. Nevertheless, a certain grim satisfaction may be had from the fact that there are few surprise attacks. All of the major allergenic broadsides are loosed on well-developed schedules.

Over the northern and eastern states the blossoming dates of ragweed are well synchronized, but in the south central and southern states the weeds usually come to maturity later than in the north. However, there are a few interesting local exceptions. The Arizona ragweed season occurs in the spring—March and April—instead of August and September. In southern Florida, on land where winter tomatoes and other vegetables are grown, common ragweed comes into full bloom in May. Wyoming has a small amount of ragweed pollen in the air in June and July. Along the Gulf Coast, from Tampa to Brownsville, ragweed pollination begins in September and drags along well into November.

If one were anxious to follow ragweed around the calendar and the map he could keep in close touch with it about nine months out of the year. He could dodge it almost completely by staying in Houston until about the last week of September and then changing his residence to some northern city. A non-stop flight from Houston to Minneapolis by plane at 10,000 feet altitude would do the trick.

Spores of certain kinds of fungi, principally molds, cause hay fever and asthma in just the same way as pollen, but not necessarily in the same persons. One man may be sensitive to certain pollens only, another to mold spores but not pollen, and still another to both pollens and spores.

It is possible to prevent the symptoms caused by mold spores. The skin testing and treatment are carried out in the same way and produce the same degree of benefit as pollen treatment. A grad-

uated series of hypodermic injections brings the patient's tolerance to a high level before the season begins and the treatment is continued at regular intervals to keep up the tolerance through the season.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Infra-Red Photoflash Bulb Takes Pictures in Darkness

AMATEUR photographers may now photograph the proverbial black cat in the dark cellar—and do it without the cat knowing he's been photographed.

Several years ago, as a special stunt, a group of executives visiting the research laboratory of a large photographic concern were so photographed, with infra-red rays, which consist of waves too long to affect the eye. But now a special photo-flash bulb will soon be placed on the market, to permit any photographer to take such pictures. The bulb is covered with a filter that looks black, because it stops all the visible light. However, the infra-red goes through freely.

Ordinary film will not work with this bulb, but infra-red sensitive film is now available from several manufacturers. As the rays are focussed at a different plane from those used in ordinary photography, the focussing must be changed



PICTURES IN THE DARK

Now you can take a photograph in your lightless darkroom without fogging the print that is just coming up in the "soup." It is made possible with the new "Blackout Superflash." This picture was taken at 1/50th of a second, f 5.6, 6 feet from the camera. The only other light was an ordinary ruby safelight.