

## ASTRONOMY

# Daytime Meteor Shower

Radar has discovered a display of meteors, hidden by sunlight. For three months the "shooting stars" have sped to earth.

► A DAYTIME meteor shower that peppered the earth for three months has been discovered by radar.

This new display of "shooting stars" is blinded out by sunlight. It would never have been found by the old-fashioned method of visual observing or even by photography. It could be detected only by the war-developed electronic method of bouncing radio echoes off objects, thus locating them. Meteors are pin-head sized particles that bombard the earth's atmosphere only to vaporize in a flashing instant.

Dr. A. C. B. Lovell, director of the University of Manchester's radar research on meteors, has announced the

discovery in a communication to the British Astronomical Association.

Early in May the meteor shower was picked up as "pips" in the radar signal. The shower continued until early this month when it diminished markedly. Each day there was a peak in the meteor shower at about 11 a. m. The meteors seem to come from about the direction of the sun, which is an astronomical effect due to the varying motions of the sun and earth. Daylight prevents them from being seen visually.

Often the hourly rate of meteors recorded by radar has exceeded 80, and at the daily height of the shower never fell below 20.

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**OFFENSIVE WEED**—The tall ragweed grows as high as 15 feet, with stiff, reedy stalks.

## BOTANY

# Hayfever Weeds Bloom

Ragweeds are beginning to spread their poisonous pollen in the North and will soon be blooming in the South. Here is how to curb them:

## See Front Cover

► RAGWEEDS have come into bloom, spreading hayfever in northern and central states, and will soon be doing their mischief in the South as well. Yet there is still time to check the shedding of their poisonous pollen with the new weed-killer, 2,4-D, if prompt action is taken.

If you don't suffer from hayfever, you will be doing a kindness to many of your neighbors if you will spray 2,4-D solution on the weeds in your neighborhood, and rouse the community to attack all along the line.

Ragweeds are the worst of our offensive weeds. Their pollen, floating invisibly in the air, makes eyes red and watery, noses puffy and sneezing. The number of persons susceptible to ragweed pollen is probably far less than that of ivy-susceptibles, but whereas you have to go to the poison ivy to be poisoned, the ragweed sends its pollen wherever summer breezes blow, so every hayfeverite is sure to be tormented if

he stays in ragweed territory during pollen-shedding time.

There are several kinds of ragweed, of which two are most abundant and most widely distributed. The common or low ragweed has finely divided leaves on tough, wiry, much-branched stems usually two or three feet high, although eight-foot thickets of it have been reported from Florida. It ranges from the Atlantic coast to almost the base of the Rockies, with its greatest abundance in the Corn Belt.

The tall or giant ragweed has leaves with three large lobes growing on tall, reedy stalks that get to be as much as 15 feet high. Usually they are thickly massed and hardly branched at all, but when a specimen gets enough room for itself it will branch freely and not grow so high.

Foliage of both weeds is coarse and disagreeable to the touch. That of the low ragweed has a taste so bitter and rank that nothing will eat it, not even a goat. Horses and mules will eat the leaves of the tall ragweed; presumably

one of its aliases, horseweed, is in recognition of this.

Flowers of the two plants are much alike, though the flowers of the tall ragweed are much larger. Unlike most familiar flowers, the sexes are borne separately though on the same plants. It is the male or pollen-bearing flower-clusters, borne at the tops of the stalks and branches, that are the trouble-makers, of course. If you are not subject to hayfever, you can get a demonstration of their producing capacity by gently shaking a ragweed. The resulting pollen shower will be astonishing.

Since these flowers have no petals, many people do not recognize them as flowers at all. And because they and the goldenrod are in bloom at the same time, the goldenrod often gets the blame for hayfever. This in an intolerable libel on a beautiful and innocent plant.

Ragweeds begin blooming in the latitude of Minnesota early in August, and the wave of their blossoming rolls southward for about three months. Peak of pollen production in the region of Chicago is about the end of August; it does not come until early October in the neighborhood of Houston, Texas. The season is much shorter in the North than in the South.

2,4-D attack on ragweed can be made at any time. Standard solution is one part 2,4-D to 1,000 parts water. Spraying should be done on still, warm days, to avoid injury to neighboring plants.