

Earth and Environment Notes

METEOROLOGY

Data Link Added

The U.S. and Canadian weather bureaus will be linked by a new, high-speed teleprinter circuit this summer.

The circuit will be capable of carrying 1,050 words a minute, 10 times today's 100 word a minute rate. It will have terminals at the National Meteorological Center, Suitland, Md., and the Central Analysis Office in Montreal.

WATER RESOURCES

Low-Down on Ground Water

An underwater cave off the Florida coast was once apparently occupied by man, according to one section of a comprehensive survey of the nation's largest underground water source just published by the U.S. Geological Survey. The report, which describes the Floridan Aquifer, was produced by the Water Resources Division, Washington, D.C.

SEISMOLOGY

Daily Earthquakes Shake San Andreas

Up to 10 small earthquakes a day are now being recorded for the first time in the San Andreas Fault

near Hollister, Calif., by University of California, Berkeley, seismologists.

The tiny quakes all registered below zero on the Richter scale, but showed up on ultrasensitive seismometers at the university's new San Andreas Geophysical Observatory five miles southwest of Hollister.

The ultra-micro quakes have been detected daily since the observatory went into operation last summer. Data from the unmanned station is transmitted directly to Berkeley over telephone lines.

MARINE TECHNOLOGY

Nuclear Undersea Power Source

A nuclear power generator for ocean-bottom use that will operate continuously up to 10 years has been introduced by the Aerojet-General Corporation.

According to Aerojet, the device, about the size of a beer keg, will provide from three to 28 volts reliably over that period. The thermoelectric generator will work at depths of up to 20,000 feet.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Old Tires Find a Use

A British firm claims it has developed a practical method of burning old tires to make steam without polluting the air.

Watts Tyre & Rubber Company of Lydney, Gloucestershire says its incinerator will handle up to 800 pounds of scrap tires an hour, producing 3,500 pounds of steam.

Ecology Notes

ENTOMOLOGY

Insect Sex Perfumes to Be Synthesized

The perfumes exuded by insects to lure a mate may be synthesized and used to eliminate the bugs instead, if research, under a grant from the Agriculture Department to Howard University, is successful.

Dr. James W. Wheeler and his associate, Sung Ki Oh, of Howard will work with waxlike, acetate compounds similar to the sex attractants used by several insects, including the gypsy moth, silkworm, cabbage looper, and pink bollworm.

At present, obtaining a minute drop of the chemical from existing insects requires processing thousands of bugs.

OCEAN RESOURCES

Decline in Fish, Scallops Foreseen

New England fishermen will find both fish and sea scallops less plentiful in 1967 than last year, the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries forecasts.

Haddock are in particular difficulty, BCF said, being reduced almost completely to a single year-class of fish—the one spawned in 1963.

Although the 1966 catch totaled 118 million pounds, up a million pounds over 1965, there were actually fewer

fish available, due both to natural causes and to heavy foreign fishing in 1965.

Sea scallops landed from Georges Bank last year weighed two million pounds, compared with three million in 1965. BCF expects no increase in 1967.

The abundance of red hake, taken by New England fishermen for industrial purposes and by Soviet trawlers for food, fell off sharply in 1966, possibly as a result of heavy Russian exploitation in 1965 and early 1966. If Soviet trawlers heavily fish the banks again this year, U.S. fishermen can expect continued low abundance of hake.

APICULTURE

Killer Bees Loose in Brazil

A strain of bees from Africa, excellent workers and good honey producers, has turned out to be too aggressive for its Latin American counterpart. Reports from Brazil say the African bees will often, instead of visiting flowers, fight pitched battles with established hives. Since they are stronger, they usually win, then steal all the honey the victims have, thus destroying the hive.

The imports have also been known to gang up on animals and sting them to death.

The United States has an absolute quarantine against the importation of any living foreign bee, originally set up to keep out a European bee disease.