OCEANOGRAPHY

Record Warm Weather Keeps Icebergs Off Atlantic Lanes

THE LABRADOR Current is weak this spring, and brings few icebergs. The warm Gulf Stream is taking advantage of this weakness to invade northern waters more deeply than usual.

These are among the first results of the exploratory trip of the U. S. Coast Guard vessel General Green, under the scientific direction of Dr. Olav Mosby, a young Norwegian oceanographer who is making a study of ice movements and their causes in the waters off Labrador and Newfoundland.

Only one berg has ben sighted so far, Dr. Mosby stated in a report to Science Service. This was picked up in latitude 47 degrees 2 minutes north, longitude 52 degrees 39 minutes west, and followed until it grounded, in latitude 46 degrees 36 minutes north, longitude 52 degrees 53 minutes west. Its drift was very slow and irregular, evidently mainly the work of winds and tide currents, indicating great weakness of the Labrador Current, the usual highway of icebergs.

Temperature reports from ships in the North Atlantic indicate unusually warm water for this time of year, and a notable extension of the Gulf Stream toward the north. Temperatures from 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit have been reported from the latitude of the Grand Banks. These are ten or twenty degrees higher than those of 1924, the "poorest" iceberg year so far on record, when the ocean temperature stood at about 40 degrees at the same latitude. In 1929, the "richest" iceberg year, the readings were from 40 down to 34 degrees. During 1929, 1,351 icebergs were sighted south of Newfoundland; 322 of them in April alone, as against a solitary one during the month just past.

The mildest winter on record is reported from Newfoundland. St. Johns harbor, usually frozen from late December until March, was ice-free this year, and no pack-ice drifted down from the North. Atlantic salmon were offered in the St. Johns market in January and February; these fish are not usually caught until May or June.

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The American Malacological Union was formally organized at a meeting of workers in mollusks held in the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Pa. The object of the Union is the promotion of the science of malacology by holding meetings for the reading and discussion of papers, and for furthering the interests of students and collectors of shells by facilitating acquaintance and cooperation between members. Membership is open to residents of North and South America, Cuba, and Hawaii.

BOTANY

Nature Ramblings

By FRANK THONE

Anemone

"WINDFLOWER," the anemone has been called, and it is a really appropriate name. For all the species of this genus don't mind being pulled at by the breezes, and some of them grow boldly on the open hillsides of the prairies, where the skies of April and May are more often open-windowed than not. Whoever has seen a mass of these flowers, blue or white, tossing in the wind will grant that they have been very well named.

It is frequently stated that the name Anemone is a corruption of the Greek *pneumos,* meaning breath or wind, but this is not the case. According to Gray's Manual, the standard botanical authority, it is an attempt at the latinization of Na'man, which is the Semitic name for Adonis. Adonis was a mortal youth who died tragically because of his love for the goddess Venus, and from his blood the crimson-splashed anemone of the Orient is said to have sprung.

Anemones are widely scattered, all around the world, but mostly in the lands where the wind blows free. Our most abundant species is a foot- or two-foot-high, rough-leaved, white-flowered plant that grows in great masses in rich, moist soil. It is frequently found forming long swathes along the foot of a railroad right-of-way. Then there is a smaller, more delicate, enamel-blue-flowered anemone, that grows in the woods and is in bloom at the present moment. A third kind, one of the oddest of all anemones, has gained the nickname of "old man's whiskers" because of the long, silky mass of hairs that surrounds the ripening fruits after the flower has faded.

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