

**AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY
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AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY - FEBRUARY SCIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Following are story ideas and tips about upcoming AMS meetings, papers in our nine peer-reviewed journals, and other happenings in the atmospheric and related sciences community.

10 Years Later: A Look at the Weather that Killed 8 Climbers on Mount Everest. In May 1996, eight climbers died on Mount Everest as a result bad weather that engulfed the mountain's upper slopes. Now 10 years later, two scientists from the University of Toronto have published a paper that takes a closer look at the meteorological conditions on Mount Everest that day. The paper reconstructs the meteorological conditions associated with the deadly outbreak of high impact weather on Mount Everest which was the subject of the best-selling book "Into Thin Air." The paper will be published in the February issue of the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. For a copy, please contact Stephanie Kenitzer.

Weather For the Birds. Did you know that weather patterns impact the flight altitudes of different bird species? And their flight altitude in turn impacts aviation? That's right, birds pose a serious risk to flight safety worldwide and scientists in the Netherlands are developing a Bird Avoidance Model (BAM) to reduce the risk of bird-aircraft collisions. But in order to develop a dynamic model of bird densities, the researchers need data on the flight-altitude distribution of birds and how this is influenced by weather. And now they have it. They completed a study that measured flight altitudes of several species in the southeastern Netherlands using tracking radar during spring and summer 2000 and found that maximum flight altitudes varied among species, during the day and among days. Weather significantly influenced the flight altitudes of all species studied. Factors such as temperature, relative humidity, atmospheric instability, cloud cover, and sea level pressure were related to flight altitudes. They also found that different combinations of factors explained 40%–70% of the variance in maximum flight altitudes and weather affected flight strategy groups differently. Their research is published in the January issue of the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. See <http://ams.allenpress.com/pdfserv/10.1175%2FBAMS-87-1-47>

AMS Hurricane and Tropical Meteorology Conference Set for April. The 27th Conference on Hurricanes and Tropical Meteorology sponsored by the American

Meteorological Society and organized by the AMS Committee on Tropical Meteorology and Tropical Cyclones will be held 24-28 April 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Resort and Conference Center, in Monterey, Calif. Although the AMS will not be operating a formal press room, media are invited to attend the session and interview the experts. All media are asked to register in advance by contacting Stephanie Kenitzer at Kenitzer@ametsoc.org. On site, you must register (at no cost expect for special events and meals) at the AMS Registration Desk. The complete program is online at <http://www.ametsoc.org/meet/fainst/200627hurricanes.html>

Thawing of Arctic Permafrost. The next AMS Environmental Science Seminar on Capital Hill is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2006 from 12-2 p.m. in Room 385 of the Russell Senate Office Building. The topic is the **Thawing of Arctic Permafrost: Extent, Causation and Implications**. The speakers will address the following questions - what is causing the thawing of Arctic permafrost? Are human activities responsible for at least some of the observed and projected thawing? What is the current extent or estimate of thawing? What do models suggest the extent of thawing will be later in the 21st Century? What level of confidence exists, among experts, with respect to these model projections? Are the appearance and disappearance of small Arctic lakes a manifestation of a global warming and the thawing of the Arctic permafrost? What are the implications and real and potential impacts that the thawing of permafrost will have? The speakers are Dr. Laurence C. Smith, Associate Professor at Departments of Geography and Earth & Space Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles, Calif., and Dr. David M. Lawrence, Research Scientist, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colo. A reception will follow. The public is invited. For more information see <http://www.ametsoc.org/atmospolicy/index.html>

AMS To Recognize Outstanding Science Journalism. The American Meteorological Society has created a new award, the *AMS Award for Distinguished Science Journalism in the Atmospheric and Related Sciences*, to recognize outstanding science reporting and writing of scientific discoveries, principles, advances, and impacts in all media outlets including radio, television, newspaper, magazine and Internet. The award, which consists of a certificate from the Society, will be given for the first time at the AMS 87th Annual Meeting in San Antonio in January 2007. The award will be given for a single article or radio/television report or a series that makes atmospheric and related sciences material accessible and interesting to the general public. Short pieces or in depth articles are eligible. The award recognizes outstanding reporting for a general audience, and honor individuals rather than institutions. Nominations must be received by the AMS by 1 May, 2006. The complete terms of reference and nomination details will be online by the end of February or contact Stephanie Kenitzer.

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