

Animals from the sky

Reports of all kinds of animals falling from the sky date back almost two thousand years: not only frogs, but fish and mussels, lizards and salamanders, spiders and worms—even baby alligators.

There have been all kinds of theories to explain these strange happenings. In the early 19th century, scientists thought that violent winds could lift animals, carry them aloft and then drop them in a new landscape. More recently, scientists have studied the enormous power that can be generated by weather phenomena such as waterspouts and tornadoes. They believe these vacuum cleaners of the weather world are capable of sucking up small animals, lifting them to relatively high altitudes, transporting them over large distances and then allowing the unfortunate creatures to fall to earth in a localised area.

This recent theory seems to be supported by the types of animals that are mostly found in these showers: small and light and often aquatic. It is further strengthened by the fact that a rain of animals is usually preceded by a storm.

However, this theory doesn't yet account for why a powerful storm selects animals from just one species and not an assortment of similarly sized animals from an area. And why, when tornadoes are known for destroying and scattering everything in their wake, they carefully avoid damaging surrounding plant life while plucking the unlucky creatures for their airborne adventure. Those are still mysteries!

