South Carolina Historical Society

South Carolinians have seen snow a few times, but some memorable storms occurred in 1886, 1899, 1973, 1993, and 2018. Do you remember it snowing in SC?

McLeod Family Papers, 1873-1990
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Snow in White Point Garden, year unknown.
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BFig}

Moisture from the clouds turns to ice crystals as it passes through cold air. If it hits warm air, it turns to rain, and sometimes back to ice. Blizzard Warning! What does it take to make a blizzard?
A mass of warm air rises over a mass of cold air causing strong, cold winds.

With freezing temperatures at ground level and an abundance of moisture in the air, the conditions will be just right for a blizzard and a snowball fight!

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Does it ever snow in South Carolina?
I want to build a snowman!

Polar Vortex
The Polar Vortex is an area of low pressure that always rests at the earth’s north and south poles. The Vortex is a counter-clockwise rotation that keeps the coldest air closest to the pole.

Jet Streams
The sun does not heat the earth evenly, and when cold air masses meet warm air, a jet stream forms. This stream can move as fast as 250 mph and changes routes depending on earth’s air and surface temperature. These streams make the northern U.S. typically cooler and the southern U.S. typically warmer.

Many cities use trucks to put salt on snowy and icy roads. Salt melts ice because it lowers the freezing point of water! However, the colder the weather, the more salt you need. Many cold regions put sand on roads to create friction for cars rather than trying to melt ice.

Salty Roads!

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