

Fitzroy Storm Glass

Admiral Robert Fitzroy was Captain of the HMS Beagle, the very same ship that ferried Charles Darwin around the Galapagos in the 1830's.

While Darwin contemplated the origin of the species, Admiral Fitzroy was testing an hypothesis of his own. He was testing a new weather predicting instrument.

In a sealed glass, he mixed potassium nitrate, ammonium chloride, ethanol, camphor and water, and created the storm glass. Admiral Fitzroy observations were thus:

-If the liquid in the glass is clear, the weather will be bright and clear.

-If the liquid is cloudy, the weather will be cloudy as well, perhaps with precipitation.

-If there are small dots in the liquid, humid or foggy weather can be expected.

-A cloudy glass with small stars indicates thunderstorms.

-If the liquid contains small stars on sunny winter days, then snow is coming.

-If there are large flakes throughout the liquid, it will be overcast in temperate seasons or snowy in the winter.

-If there are crystals at the bottom, this indicates frost.

-If there are threads near the top, it will be windy.

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