

Ragweed, which grows along College Station creeks, is the main cause of hay fever.

Ragweed major cause of allergy

Watery eye season begins

By ERICA KRENNERICH

Watery eyes and red noses may not be signs of the common head cold — they may be signs of an

About 10 to 15 percent of Texas A&M University students may suffer from allergy problems, said Dr. Claude B. Goswick Jr., stu-

dent health center director. Goswick said it's hard to estimate how many students have allergies since a statistical analysis of the center's records is not pos-

'We only see the sick ones," he said. "We don't see the well ones. Also, we tend to see those with allergy problems over and over again, whether it's for medication, complications of their allergies or for injections.

Allergies are generally abnormal bodily reactions to otherwise substances harmless reactions. Sometimes even emotions can trigger allergies, Goswick said.

"By far, though, the majority of people who have allergies have them to pollens," Goswick said. 'It's weeds and grasses that are pollinating now; whereas in the spring, it's mainly trees and

Edward McWilliams, Texas A&M floriculture professor, said despite the abundance of agricultural grasses in the College Station area, the main causes of hay fever are the short and giant ragweed

"Grasses are pretty minor offenders compared to ragweed," he

McWilliams said giant ragweed, which has yellowish flower heads and three-lobed leaves, grows about seven to eight feet rich soil.

Giant ragweed is particularly abundant along the creeks in College Station," he said. Hay fever sufferers may fare better this year, McWilliams added, since many ditches and creeks were cleaned out after floods earlier in the year.

"In College Station, giant rag-weed started flowering about two weeks ago and is peaking now," he

McWilliams, who has collected ragweed seeds from over 20 states and 50 Texas counties, said ragweed should continue to flower for several more weeks. He said he has seen it as late as December depending on the weather.

"Once we've had a severe freeze, though, that's the end of it," he added.

Goswick said a person can develop allergies to things like ragweed, but allergies have to do, to a allergens, which start allergic certain extent, with an individual's allergic constitution

the makeup of an individual.

"Generally speaking, with the inheritance-part of it, you probably don't inherit the actual allergy," he said. "In other words, if your mother is allergic to ragweed pollen, you may be allergic to eggs. You inherit the constitution to develop an allergy, and then it's an individual thing as to what that allergy might be.

It is often hard to distinguish between a cold and an allergy because the symptoms can overlap, Goswick said. "With hay fevertype allergies, which are most apt

but can reach 14 feet in nitrogen- to be confused with a cold, the A person could die from these eyes are usually itchy and watery
— as opposed to a cold, where the eyes are often bloodshot and irri-

A runny nose from allergies tends to have a thin, watery secretion rather than the thicker mucus typical of colds, he said. Both can lead to secondary infections.

Stinging insects — wasps, ants, bees — cause allergic reactions in ome students, Goswick said.

"Occasionally, we get very serious reactions to these sort of things," he said. "The serious ones are called anaphylactic reactions, ones where you get respiratory distress and swelling of the larynx and throat.

These reactions require immediate and vigorous treatment.

reactions if not attended to quickly, he said.

Other allergy promoters are poison ivy, poison oak and certain foods. Occasionally, he said, a stu-dent will claim to have food allergies to try to get out of a food services meal plan. Goswick said he has seen very few true food allergies in his more than eight

years at the student health center. Allergic reactions to medications are sometimes seen in students, he said. "A lot of students, though, think they're allergic to penicillin in particular, and other medicines in general, and they

Often students get side effects confused with allergic reactions, he said.



Professors use microcomputers in workshops

of mathematics.

By KIM CONNER

Battalion Reporter icrocomputers can do more play Space Invaders, several as A&M University professors d out Friday in two seminars ed by Radio Shack on the as A&M campus.

Microcomputers are small, able computers used for day-

m Cahill, a computer marg representative, said cus-rs want a machine they can heir hands on and play with —

Donald Clark, associate dean of cation, helped Cahill set up seminars.

The seminars allowed the prosors to see what a microcompucan do and how they can use it heir work, Cahill said. Profeswere able not only to hear out the microcomputers, but to to work with them.

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nother program showed proors how to make up their own son plans, complete with quizes, student progress checks and gratulatory messages.



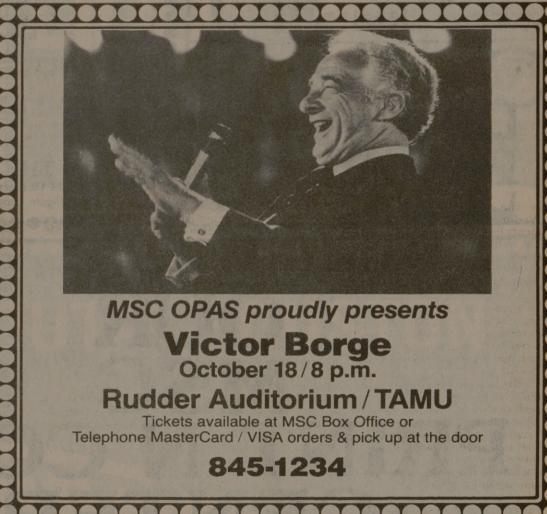
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