

Ozone crisis is blamed for the mystery rings

by
CHRIS LOGAN



SCIENTISTS believe they may have solved the riddle of the corn-field circles.

Causes ruled out include aliens from outer space, whirlwinds, helicopters and hoaxers.

Instead, experts are blaming the hole in the Earth's ozone layer for the mystery circles which appear overnight on farmland.

They believe unprecedented atmospheric conditions caused by the ozone crisis are behind the baffling phenomenon.

Flattened

Scientists have detected violent disturbances in the "electro-magnetic field" in areas where the circles—some up to 80ft across—have appeared.

Research co-ordinator Colin Andrews said: "We now believe the shifts in the Earth's electro-magnetic conditions caused by the ozone layer hole may be responsible.

"One of the circles which appeared recently in Hampshire amazed us even more than the others because the flattened crops grew back in a dartboard formation.

"There were seven concentric rings of crops which

grew back, with a series of perfect spokes going out from the centre."

Many of the circles have appeared on farmland near Winchester in Hampshire. But they have also appeared in other countries, including America, Australia and Japan.

Japanese scientists, who have visited Britain to examine our circles, are taking the ozone layer theory seriously.

They have invited Mr Andrews, an electrical expert with Test Valley Borough Council, Hampshire, to address a conference on the subject in Tokyo later this year.

Environment Secretary

Nicholas Ridley yesterday turned down the research group's request for a £50,000 grant to fund a hi-tech centre to monitor the circles.

The decision infuriated the experts working on the project.

Mr Andrews said: "It now looks as if we will have to hope that the Japanese come up with the money."



Circles in the corn six times the size of a car . . . the answer may be up in the air