

Let's face it, many of us don't have fond memories of physics and mathematics from our school days. "Why do we need to know this?" we wondered. "How does this stuff make any difference to our lives?"

Now, thanks to the work of two University of Victoria scientists, schoolchildren in Greater Victoria and many parts of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands are getting an answer. They're learning that every day we see these two sciences in action—shaping our weather.

"Physics and mathematics are often perceived as difficult and irrelevant," says UVic climatologist Dr. Andrew Weaver, who runs the School-Based Weather Station Network with Ed Wiebe, a research associate in the university's climate modelling lab. "What better way to demonstrate relevance to kids than weather, something we see and feel every day?"

Weaver and Wiebe created the network in 2005 to raise the profile of meteorology in the school curriculum and to engage children and young adults in science.

network, which Weaver believes is the only one of its kind in the world that provides local weather conditions in such fine detail.

different regions or even in different parts of a city, he notes. "It's the interplay of the ocean and mountains. You might have a 10-degree difference between James Bay and Saanich, or five times

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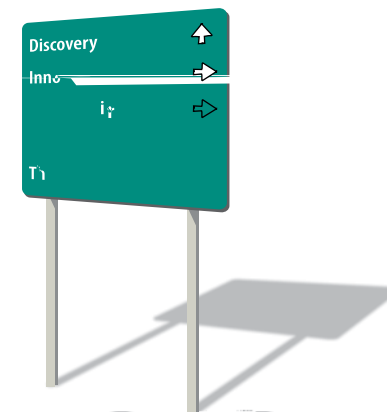
Weather. Climate. What's the difference? There's a popular saying that climate is what we expect, but weather is what we get. "Climate is the statistics of weather," says UVic climatologist Andrew Weaver. "You can't talk about climate unless you understand weather. The physics is the same for both."

The hottest temperature recorded on the south Island over the last six years was 34.9°C at Lake Cowichan in June 2008. The coldest was -15.6°C in Duncan in December 2008. Find out more in the "Extremes" section at climate.uvic.ca.

The School-Based Weather Station Network operates on a shoestring budget and relies on grants and donations. Major funders are the BC Year of Science, CTV Vancouver Island and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council's PromoScience program.

Weaver is the Canada Research Chair in Climate Modelling and Analysis and one of the world's leading authorities on climate change. He's the author of two popular books on climate: *Keeping the Cool: A Guide to a Warmer World* (2008) and *Geology: The Challenge of Global Warming* (2011).

UVic researchers were awarded more than \$100 million in outside research grants and contracts in 2010/11—more than triple the amount achieved 10 years ago.



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