

Do You Know?

The *drone bee* has no sting.

Fats are also called lipins from lipos, the Greek word for fat.

Rayon claimed to be stronger than nylon has recently been produced in England.

The characteristic flavor of *butter* is due largely to biacetyl; this compound, which can be derived from sugar by a fermentation process, is responsible for the improved flavor of margarine during the past decade.

Gasoline is to be made from natural gas in a plant to be erected near Texas gas fields, it is reported; the plant, it is said, will use 65,000,000 cubic feet of gas a day to produce 5,000 barrels of gasoline and 1,000 barrels of diesel oil.

Nail-pickers, magnetic bars mounted below trucks to gather up nails, screws, bolts, and other pieces of metal on roads that might puncture tires, are sometimes strong enough to pick up a nail embedded an inch deep in gravel.

Chemical analysis of *exhaust gases* from various gasoline engines show that they vary greatly, the controlling factor being the amount of fuel consumed and the air-gasoline ratio produced by the carburetor adjustment.

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Snow-King

➤ AN OLD RIDDLE takes the form of a problem: A hunter left camp, going seven miles straight south. Then he turned straight east and went another seven miles. At the end of this trek he saw a bear, which he killed and skinned. Packing the skin, he went seven miles straight north, which brought him back to camp. What color was the bear?

There is only one correct answer: White. For the only place in the world where a triangular course like the one described would bring you back to the point from which you started is the North Pole. And if hunters ever got as far north as that, the only bears they would find on the ice floes would be polar bears, which are always white.

The polar bear is exceedingly well adapted to its environment. That snowy coat enables it to approach its prey on land with minimum risk of detection, and when swimming in the sea it might easily be mistaken for a floating cake of snow-covered ice. Even in summer, when much of the snow melts off, even in the Arctic, the white coat is still no handicap, for there are always enough residual banks and patches of snow lying about to permit the animal to maintain its white camouflage the year round.

Since the principal food of the polar bear consists of seals and fish, it is usually found near the water, and very often in it. So completely is the animal given to a marine habitat that its very name smells of the sea. Its generic name, *Thalassarctus*, is Greek for "sea-bear," which is further underlined by its Latin specific name, *maritimus*. Zoologists who have observed this bear in its native waters state that it is a tireless swimmer, though not a very rapid one, and is sometimes encountered miles from the nearest land.

It is probably the most completely furred animal in the world. Almost all other mammals, including all other bears, have hairless soles to their feet, but the polar bear is furred on the soles as well as everywhere else. These furry soles apparently give it a considerable advantage in walking on ice and clambering over slippery seaside rocks.

In its native realm the polar bear is undisputed master; there is no animal bigger or stronger, save the bull walrus, which isn't built for aggressive warfare. The only creature the polar bear needs to fear is man—especially man-with-gun. That is why you sometimes see beautiful white bearskin rugs.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1946

HOME ECONOMICS

Thin Honey by Adding Water, Heating Slightly

➤ TO THIN HONEY, which is normally too thick to use in sweetening fruit, dry cereals and iced tea, add a little water and hold over a low flame until the honey and water combine. Avoid high heat which drives off the delicate flavors and is likely to scorch the honey, advise honey experts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. About a tablespoon of water should be used for each cup of honey.

Thinned honey should be kept in a covered jar in the refrigerator. Like other thin syrups, thinned honey may ferment or mold within a month unless it is kept cold.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1946

Bright noon *sunlight* is perhaps a million times brighter than moonlight.

An exhaustive survey of Japan's *forest* reserves and its forest industries is being made by three American government foresters to determine whether permanent employment can be found for former workers in war industries.

≡ GOLD ≡

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