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A Lamp is Heavy



by
**SHEILA MacKAY
RUSSELL**

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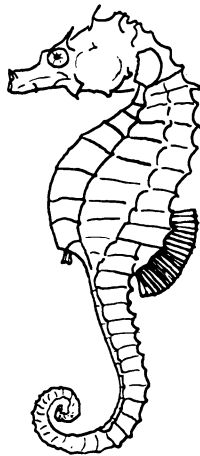
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ICHTHYOLOGY

NATURE RAMBLINGS



Sea Horse

➤ IN GREEK and Roman mythology, the sea horse was a fabulous creature, half horse and half fish, driven by sea gods and ridden by their daughters the sea nymphs. Medieval and even more modern writers put on a few trimmings: "The Sea Horse between Brittany and Norway is oft seen to have a head like a horse, and to neigh; but his feet and hoof are cloven like to a cow's; and he feeds both on land and in the sea. He is seldom taken, though he grows to be as big as an ox. He hath a forked tail."

Neptune's Pegasus is a queer enough little fish in its own right, without embellishments which make it a new form of sea monster. Only in Pacific waters where there is giant kelp in which to hide does the sea horse grow to as much as a foot in height; elsewhere it lives out its life only a few inches high. It has no hoofs, cloven or otherwise. Its tail is neither forked nor actually a tail, but part of its body. It has a tough hide stretched over a bony frame, which gives the impression that the sea horse wears a suit of armor.

Though the sea horse is really a fish, it acts like a monkey, coiling its posterior appendage around bits of eelgrass or seaweed and hanging there at anchor. The only difference is that the sea horse hangs head uppermost. The danger in the sea is not the chance of falling to the bottom but of falling upward to the surface.

Likewise the sea horse swims in a vertical position. Its gait is a series of short convulsive jerks—an elfin gallop hampered by blind staggers. Standing nearly upright in the water, it propels itself by a supple fin midway on its back which waves to and fro faster than the eye can see. There is a tiny fin beneath the sea horse's businessman

paunch, and two others spotted where humans have ears. By waving these and bending its head, the fish goes uphill or down.

Some say the sea horse has a jet in the top of its head for sudden crash dives. A naturalist who lives in a sea horse country says, "I have seen sea horses near the surface squirt a jet of water three inches into the air in their frightened efforts to submerge." But detailed studies of sea horse locomotion make no mention of such a blow-hole.

In the sea horse family, it is Pop who brings up the children. In breeding season the male develops a pouch like the pocket of a female kangaroo. The mother's eggs are laid in this pouch, and there the youngsters stay until they hatch and are old enough to swim. When they emerge, it looks exactly as if the father were giving birth.

Science News Letter, October 7, 1950

CHEMISTRY

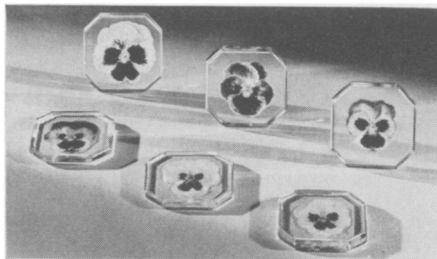
Filbert Nut Chemical Makes Cheese Better

➤ "IT'S the nuts" could be said of a new American cheese of superior flavor that was reported to the American Chemical Society in Chicago by four Oregon State College chemists.

Substances that help to digest protein—called proteolytic enzymes—can now be obtained from filbert nuts. They are used in cheddar cheese making. Tested for their effect on processing pasteurized milk into cheese, the filbert enzymes gave a product of better flavor which was described as mild and clean. The ripening time of the cheese was also substantially shortened, which reduces the expense of storage room.

Filberts are already a surplus crop in Oregon and many young filbert orchards will produce constantly increasing yields. The research on filbert extracts was done by Husain A. B. Parpia, Roy W. Stein, Thomas B. Niven and Ernest H. Wiegand.

Science News Letter, October 7, 1950



REAL PANSY COASTERS

These attractive coasters were made by embedding real pansies in Castolite, a new liquid casting plastic. With it students embed real flowers, butterflies, shells, photos, medals, etc. to make unusual jewelry, buttons, coasters, plaques, tiles, book ends, trays, other distinctive objects. Successfully used by hundreds of schools and colleges. New book gives instructions and ideas for making Christmas gifts. Send 25¢ for Castolite Manual. The Castolite Company, Dept. L-50, Woodstock, Ill.