

## MEDICINE

## Cat Scratches Cause Illness in Washington

➤ CAT SCRATCH disease has made its appearance on the Washington scene. No cure is known and the victims may have a fever and be sick for weeks or months, but the prospects for recovery are good.

The four-legged variety of cat is responsible, at least in the 12 cases reported by two physicians, Drs. Worth B. Daniels and Frank G. MacMurray of Washington.

In typical cases, the glands in the region of the cat scratch swell, sometimes have pus in them. In some cases there is no known contact with a cat and no sign of a scratch. Depending on where the swollen glands occur, the disease may seem like tuberculosis, Hodgkin's disease, rabbit fever or other ailments. The diagnosis can be proved by a specific skin test.

Science News Letter, October 13, 1951

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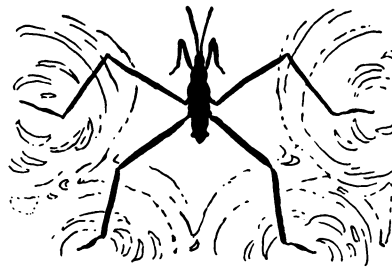
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Water Strider

➤ FROSTS CLEAR the land of insects first. As autumn creeps toward winter, the sound of insect cries dies out long before all the insects are dead or forced into hibernation, because the water dwellers, though still active, are for the most part voiceless.

Insects survive longer on the water because water is a heat reservoir, and as the year cools off its temperature fall lags behind that of the land, just as in the spring it warms up more slowly than the land does.

Conspicuous among the insects which you may still see skimming about on the surface of pools and quiet streams is the water strider. It is sometimes misnamed "water spider," presumably because of its long, slender legs and its swift, aggressive movements. But it is a real insect—a true bug, to be exact—and not a spider at all.

It does resemble the spider in one important respect, however. It is an insect of prey, a veritable little corsair of the lesser waters, its sharp, piercing beak forever thirsting for the gore of other insects. This predatory habit is accountable for its paradoxical appearance of having only four legs instead of the orthodox six of most insects. The two forward legs have been shortened and strengthened into little arms, which are usually held closely parallel to the creature's body, and are used in capturing prey and gripping it while the strider eats.

The water strider does not swim; it does exactly what its name implies, and runs along the surface of the water. If you will look at each one of its four legs, you will see that the tip rests in a little depression in the surface film of the water, exactly as a dry needle can be laid on top of water, as though the surface were a thin rubber sheet.

It is thus able to rush about swiftly and with very little effort, making almost no ripples that might betray its presence. So much at home on this unstable foundation is the water strider that it can jump from the surface as a grasshopper does from the ground, alighting again as though on a mattress.

There are marine water-striders as well as fresh-water forms. The most common of these salt-water pirates swarms in the drifting seaweed of the Sargasso sea, and is borne to our shores occasionally when storms break up parts of the floating mass.

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## MEDICINE

## Lipreading Is Still Important for Deafened

➤ LIPREADING is important for hard-of-hearing people, in spite of the real help many of them are getting from modern hearing aids, declares Miss Ena G. Macnutt, hearing counselor for the Public Schools of Newton, Mass.

In a special report to HEARING NEWS (Sept.), publication of the American Hearing Society, she says lipreading should be studied by "everyone who has sufficient hearing loss to be aware of it and even some who are not aware themselves, though their friends and associates may be."

The person with beginning hearing loss, who still hears too much to stand the amplification of a hearing aid, will not lose out in conversation if he can read lips. He will also seem to hear much better because lipreading will tone up his attention and concentration.

The person with more hearing loss but who hears almost normally with a hearing aid will find lipreading helpful when the batteries give out at a crucial moment, or when the aid must be removed as at the hairdresser's or barber's.

For those who have nerve deafness and hear plenty of sound with their hearing aids but often fail to understand what is said, lipreading is "indispensable," Miss Macnutt states. Auditory training will help them make the best use of the hearing they have but they will need lipreading also.

Some persons have no hearing in one ear but normal hearing in the other. Lipreading is advised for these because of the chance that the hearing of the other ear may also be lost.

Finally, Miss Macnutt points out, for the person who is truly deaf, not just hard of hearing, "lipreading is the one light on the horizon."

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