

TECHNOLOGY

Antarctic Tests for Lens-less Goggles

► THE NAVY, borrowing an Eskimo secret, will test lens-less goggles in the Antarctic this fall during Operation Deep Freeze (see SNL, Aug. 20, p. 122).

Conventional goggles, used to protect the eyes from severe cold and wind, fog up rapidly and interfere with good vision.

The new goggles are transparent, plastic, kidney-shaped cylinders fitted to a foam rubber frame. The cylinder circles the eyes and projects forward, shielding the eyes from glare. Although the cylinder is open at its front end, the still air within the cylinder deflects the wind. The goggles were developed from the Eskimo practice of cutting star-shaped slits in goggles carved in whalebone.

New cold weather clothing will also be tested in Operation Deep Freeze. The clothing is designed to keep a man afloat indefinitely.

The cold weather clothing has an outer waterproof shell, lined with perforated plastic foam that will not absorb water.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1955

HORTICULTURE

Lemon Greenness Not Key to Storage Quality

► HOW LONG a lemon will keep in storage cannot be judged by its greenness, research by Dr. Jacob Biale and Roy Young of the Subtropical Horticulture Department of the University of California at Los Angeles has indicated.

They found that, under certain storage conditions, lemons may retain their green color even while they are rapidly deteriorating.

Exposing lemons in storage to an atmosphere with excess carbon dioxide, they found that respiration, leading to deterioration, was markedly increased. At the same time, the carbon dioxide tended to preserve the lemons' green chlorophyll.

Benefits to stored citrus are more likely to come from decreased oxygen than increased carbon dioxide, the scientists concluded.

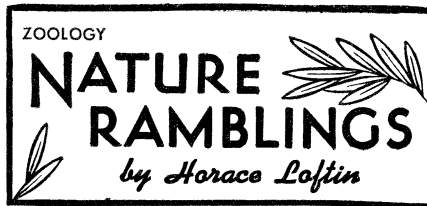
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**King of Spiders**

► LARGEST OF THE SPIDERS and most formidable in appearance are the huge, hairy tarantulas of the tropics.

The great size and bulkiness of these giants from the spider family *Theraphosidae* is often amazing. One male tarantula, *Theraphosa*, captured in French Guiana measured three inches across its body and had a leg span of 10 inches. It weighed nearly two ounces.

Another tarantula, *Lasiodora*, a female taken in Brazil, could stretch its hefty legs nine and a half inches across. Its body was three and a half inches long and it tipped the scales at almost three ounces, a gigantic weight among the spider clan.

North Americans seldom get to see such tropic brutes except when they are occasionally found as stowaways in bunches of bananas. However, the United States does have about 30 species of junior-sized tarantulas, most of them in the arid Southwest.

The usual diet of most tarantulas consists of bugs and beetles and other crawling creatures, including other spiders. But they do not disdain meals of frogs, toads, mice and lizards when they can capture them. Some of the large tropic forms are known to catch and devour small birds.

Tarantulas may live for many years. In fact, ten years is usually required for them to reach adulthood. In an experiment, one tarantula stayed alive two years and four months without food.

Are tarantulas dangerous to man? They certainly look as if they should be. But experts say they fail to live up to their evil reputation. Their poison is not exceptionally virulent and they are slow to attack.

In fact, says one spider specialist, tarantulas make fine pets and some quickly become tame enough to handle. That may be, but if you must have a tropical pet, better stick to parakeets!

Science News Letter, September 10, 1955

More than 200 species of *birds* find sanctuary in Yellowstone National Park.

PSYCHOLOGY

Second Year Said to Be Most Important to Child

► THE SECOND YEAR is the most important year of a child's life from the standpoint of mental health, Dr. Henry Work of the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center believes.

"The second year is the age of socialization," Dr. Work said. "During that time the child generally learns most of the basic social patterns. He learns to feed himself and is toilet trained. He learns to walk and thus is removed from his sit-down world of limited reach. He also begins to learn how to get along with other people.

"Preventive psychiatry should begin long before the second year," Dr. Work urged. "Our philosophy is that mental hygiene should be a part of normal child care. For this reason a major emphasis in our new child psychiatry program is being placed on the integration of pediatrics and psychiatry.

"One of our larger research projects will be concerned with how early mother-child relationships are established. Many psychiatric problems in childhood can be prevented with a better understanding of this relationship."

Science News Letter, September 10, 1955

ZOOLOGY

Keep Monkeys From Man Not Man From Monkeys

► TO PROTECT the monkeys from the people, iron bars are giving way to glass partitions in American zoos.

Routine tests for tuberculosis on zoo monkeys turn up new cases each year, a committee on Diseases of Wild and Furbearing Animals told the American Veterinary Medical Association meeting in Minneapolis. The infection probably comes from human visitors who throw gum, used tissues and other contaminated material into the cages.

Many zoos are now putting glass between the monkeys and the public for the protection of the animals. Monkeys that react positively to tuberculin tests are destroyed immediately to safeguard the health of the remaining animals.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1955

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