

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **CHEMICAL RESISTANT LAMINATE** for laboratory table tops has unusually high resistance to reagents and solutions commonly used in laboratories. The material eliminates areas of contamination, a vitally important factor in work with radioactive materials. The laminate can be formed to a contour permitting a completely seamless top in continuous lengths up to ten feet.

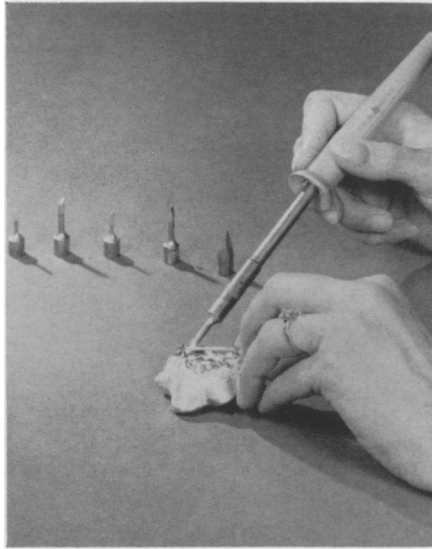
• Science News Letter, 82:128 August 25, 1962

⚙️ **PROTECTIVE CUSHION TAPE** prevents lamp bases and ash trays from scratching, rugs from slipping and car doors from rattling. The pressure sensitive tape, quick and easy to apply to any clean, dry surface, also deadens sound and seals against dust and dirt. It resists moisture, solvents, acids and grease and is available in rolls one-half inch wide and 108 inches long.

• Science News Letter, 82:128 August 25, 1962

⚙️ **SOLDERING IRON** for Hi-Fi kit and do-it-yourself enthusiasts is pen-shaped and easy to handle. Originally developed for electronic equipment manufacturers, it has a 40-watt heater assembly and 20 interchangeable tips. (See photograph.)

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⚙️ **MOVIE REEL**, a single piece unit of break-resistant, high temperature plastic, loads film automatically and contains no residual magnetism to affect the sound strip. The 8 mm reel and ring stand reduce

damage from cutting, scratching, dust or fading. Seven inches in diameter and holding 400 feet of film, the reel can be stored in an upright position.

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⚙️ **FIBER GLASS CONTAINER** for storage and handling of refrigerated or heated liquids, chemicals, moisture-sensitive solids or potable water is insulated with polyurethane foam. Lighter than its metal counterparts, the tank is resistant to corrosion and will not split, chip or absorb liquid or gases. The containers are available in sizes up to three feet in diameter and up to seven feet in length.

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⚙️ **PIPE REPAIR CLAMP** can be used to repair a leaking pipe of any type in less than a minute. Consisting of a neoprene-lined, U-shaped stainless steel sleeve, the clamp is slipped over the rupture and drawn tight by means of one or two bolts. It is resistant to flame, gas, oil, water and chemicals and is suitable for all types of industrial and residential piping systems. The clamps are available in four different lengths.

• Science News Letter, 82:128 August 25, 1962



## Nature Ramblings



### Garter Snake

By WILLIAM E. SMALL

➤ BILLIONS of garter snakes are being born this month in broods of two to thirty from southern Canada to Central America. If any reptile deserves to be called The Snake it is *Thamnophis*, for it is the most widely distributed genus in North America.

Eleven species of *Thamnophis* live in the United States alone, with several times that number dwelling in Mexico. They are the familiar, striped, harmless snakes seen most frequently in this country.

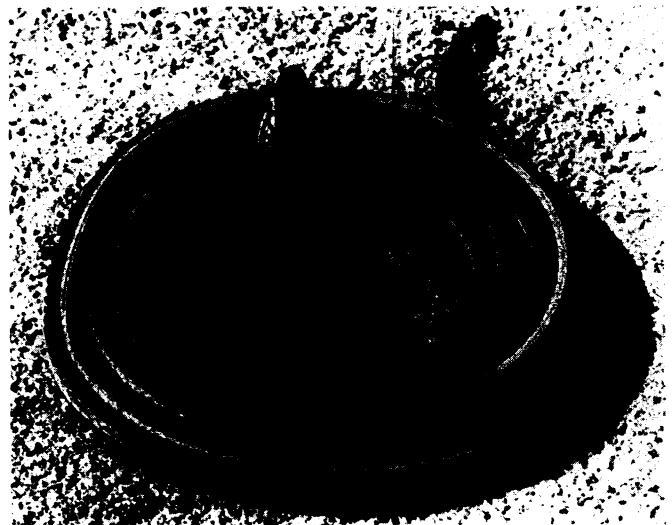
One of the most common species in this group is the ribbon snake, *Thamnophis sauritus*. These differ from other garter snakes by their very slender bodies and very long tails. The tail makes up more than one-fourth of the total length.

Ribbon snakes live in or near swamps, ponds, lakes and streams, especially where grass or trees grow by the water's edge. They are rarely seen far from a watery habitat.

Adults generally grow to two or two and one-half feet long, with exceptions reaching three and one-half feet. Their bellies are unmarked, whitish or greenish. Their sides and backs range from olive and brown to black, with two or three evenly spaced stripes of yellow, red, orange or brown. They look like pretty striped ribbons while moving through the grass.

The diet of ribbon snakes is largely cold-blooded animals, mainly frogs and salamanders. They have never been recorded as eating fish, but an occasional small mammal or bird becomes a meal. Earthworms are also eaten.

When chased or threatened, these snakes discharge a bad odor from their anal glands, retreating to the safety of water. Captured,



they strike repeatedly with their small fangs, but have no harmful venom.

These common snakes breed early in the summer and the young are born from the end of July to September. They are born alive, unlike many snakes which lay eggs. A few may produce more than one brood at a time, mothering as many as 60 young at one time.

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