

Christmas Shoppers' Science List

Scientific gifts available this year will interest the entire family and help to develop the familiarity with science that has become so necessary in every walk of life.

By FORREST SNAKENBERG

► WITH SCIENCE playing so large a role in our everyday lives, you can no longer limit scientific gifts to the Seaborgs and Schweitzers on your list. Now everyone is interested in science to some degree.

Many of the gift selections included here show promise of becoming family projects, while others have been designed specifically for the small child or the advanced science student.

With the many recent innovations in photography, local camera shops can be expected to have on display a variety of new merchandise that will be of use to the entire family, regardless of the scientific fields of interest. Component kits for citizens band radio, available at varying prices depending on the sets, will provide enjoyment during construction and training as well as being useful on family rock-hunting excursions, etc. (1)

A dual action tumbler that rotates on two axes giving both horizontal and angular action is a gem-polishing must for the rockhound at \$34.95. (2)

Other lapidary equipment and gem stones are available from the same scientific supplier. You might like to give a do-it-yourself



Mattel

PLASTIC TOYS MADE AT HOME
—Boats, planes, cars, jewelry, cabins and signs can be made of plastic with a "do-it-yourself" outfit complete with instructions, molds, material, paints, brush, etc.

gem kit in the form of marbles. Marble frying kits come in various sizes, and include everything needed to make beautiful jewelry at home for only \$1.00, \$2.00 or \$4.00. (3)

Some Items Are Decorative

Decorative items the entire family will enjoy include a bronze compass and sun dial for the garden. The eight-inch compass is \$9.00 and the seven and one-half-inch sun dial is \$13.50. (4) Another scientific touch in decorating is the cosmophile, the entire solar system in the form of a colorful mobile, for \$9.95. (5)

If the solar system is too limiting, you might try broadening horizons with a celestial jigsaw puzzle that will teach the names and positions of the constellations. The puzzle is 17 inches square, and is only \$1.95. (6)

Family rooms, teen-agers' bedrooms and dens will brighten with scientific eye-catchers. Relief maps, 27½ by 20 inches, are available for \$3.00 each. The four being offered are of the United States, Europe, Asia and the world. (5) The same firm has a 62-by-25-inch periodic table of the elements on spring rollers for \$12.50.

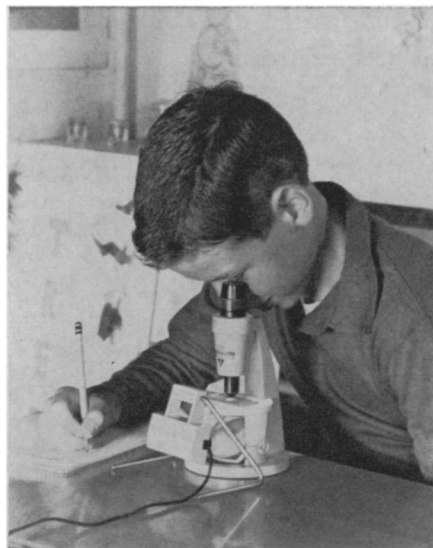
Another scientific supply house has nine attractive two-by-three-foot murals of famous sky phenomena for \$6.00 each, three giant space and star maps at \$1.25 a set, and a set of three maps of the United States, the world and the solar system, each three by four feet, for 98¢. (7)

It would not be Christmas without toys. A Thomas Jefferson nuclear submarine model more than two feet long fires a play Polaris missile. Complex interior arrangements are visible through a transparent hull. This model should be in department stores for around \$2.98. (8) Another department store item that should bring hours of fun is an aircraft building set with full instructions for making jet planes, helicopters, missiles and rockets, for around \$5.00. (9)

Another timely toy is a computer kit. Complete with instructions for assembling, it will add, subtract, multiply and process data, all for \$4.98. (10)

Heat Engine Models Available

Five basic heat engine models are available this year with illustrated manuals for construction, including suggested experiments, demonstrations, the scientific principles involved, and the history of each. They can be assembled on plastic plaques nine by ten inches. The set is \$19.95, or they can be purchased separately: Gasoline and diesel engines for \$6.95, jet engine



Bausch and Lomb

YOUNG SCIENTIST—The almost unbreakable student microscope, made by Bausch & Lomb Incorporated, is an ideal gift for the young potential scientist and will open for him the fascinating world of microscopy.

at \$3.95, steam turbine at \$4.95, or the steam engine for \$5.95. (6)

Now you need not have a big city nearby to visit a planetarium. An up-to-date Spitz Jr. planetarium that plugs into any AC outlet shows more than 60 constellations as seen from any geographical location in the Northern Hemisphere at any month of the year. It is popularly priced at \$20.00, with instruction book. (4)

A set of 14 different experimental THINGS of science kits, each complete with materials and instructions for performing experiments, is available for \$7.49, or a \$5.00 gift subscription will bring a new kit each month for a year. (11)

If you have a budding scientist on your list, and money is not of prime concern, you may want to give a portable laboratory. It includes such features as running water from a pressurized water tank and gas supplied from a refillable tank. The laboratory sells for \$298.00. (4)

Also for the serious science student, at various prices depending on quality, are sturdy student microscopes from \$12.00, including a stereomicroscope for about \$50.00. (12) You might like to give microscope accessories, binoculars, specimens and laboratory supplies. Find out, of course, which specimens and supplies would be most useful.

Some unusual pets available are baby alligators (under 12 inches) at \$4.50 each, guinea pigs for \$5.00 a pair, and a mother opossum with young in pouch for \$10.00. Mice are \$10.00 a dozen and white rats are \$10.00 per half dozen. For each order

of mice or rats, there is an additional charge of 75 cents for a container.

Hamsters are \$30.00 per dozen.

Any of these unusual pets should be the envy of the neighborhood children. (13)

Make Your Own Models

The well known mail-order houses seem to offer a wider array of scientific toys each Christmas. One such item in this year's selection is a Vac-U-Form for making plastic models. Usable in any 110-120 volt 60-cycle AC outlet, the set comes complete with instruction book, 65 sheets of colored plastic, 50 molds and other equipment, for \$8.55. Refill material packs are 88¢ each. (14)

Most persons do more reading in winter, and Christmas is a good time to supply friends with good books for the coming months.

The full range of science is covered in an excellent series of paperbacks by one publisher (15), probably available in your local bookstore, or in small towns a librarian can help you select the titles and find the sources for ordering. Especially good for youngsters is a set of books available at \$1.00 each consisting of such titles as Rocks and Minerals, Weather, Reptiles and Amphibians, Birds, Stars, Seashores, Mammals, Flowers, Insects, Fishes, Trees, and Photography. These are readily available, and have even been seen in supermarkets.

Among new offerings this year is a paperback by Judith Viorst called 150 Science Experiments Step-by-Step. This well rounded collection, many of them classics, is available for 60¢ plus five cents postage. (11)

Dr. Watson Davis, director of SCIENCE SERVICE, tells of the fantastic progress of science and technology this century, in a new volume called, appropriately enough, The Century of Science. With more than 200 vivid and historic illustrations, this hardback edition is available for \$5.95. (11)

For year-round reading, gift subscriptions to magazines are always well received. Again, your librarian can help you locate publishers of scientific and technical journals.

Even non-scientific men and women will enjoy scientific jewelry. There is a variety of diffraction-grating pins, pendants, necklaces, tie clasps, cuff links, bracelets, and money clips available; and the miniature slide rule tie clasps still are popular. (7)

The problem, again this year, is not that of finding a suitable gift. The difficulty is in choosing from many attractive alternatives.

This article is not advertising. Most of the items listed can be found locally. The suppliers are listed below as a service to our readers:

1. Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich.
2. Wards Natural Science Establishment, P.O. Box 1712, Rochester 3, N. Y. or P.O. Box 1749, Monterey, Calif.
3. Caro Crafts Corp., 195 Mineola Blvd., Mineola, N. Y.
4. Science Education Center, 3107 East Central, Wichita, Kansas.
5. Central Scientific Co., 1700 Irving Park Road, Chicago 13, Ill.
6. Science Materials Center, 59 4th Ave., New York 3, N. Y.

7. Edmund Scientific Co., Barrington, N. J.
8. Renwal, Mineola, N. Y.
9. Kohner Bros., Inc., 155 Wooster St., New York 12, N. Y.
10. ESR, Inc., 350 Main St., Orange, N. J.
11. Science Service, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.
12. Bausch & Lomb, Inc., 635 St. Paul St., Rochester 2, N. Y.
13. Carolina Biological Supply Co., Burlington, N. C.
14. Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago, Ill., and other cities.
15. New American Library, 501 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022.

• Science News Letter, 84:298 Nov. 9, 1963

ENTOMOLOGY

Three Harmless Moths Recorded in Delaware

➤ THREE new species of moths have been recorded in counties of Delaware for the first time.

The pretty black and white grass moth, *Crambus elegans*, offers no threat to Delaware crops, but in the South has been known to eat corn and sugar cane.

The chrysaugid moth, *Galasa nigrinodis*, is also not harmful. With soft red and sometimes green wings, this moth is basically small, less than an inch and a half.

The noctuid night creature, *Bomolocha abalienalis*, is part of a large group extending through the eastern and southwestern United States to California, according to insect officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Although this species is not considered harmful, other members of the family are known as major economic pests, such as the corn ear worm. The forewing of this moth is either dark or pale brown, with white lines extending out toward the edge.

• Science News Letter, 84:299 Nov. 9, 1963

Nature Note

➤ WANDERERS in the woods may get an early glimpse of one of nature's strangest sights—appropriately named for this time of year—the witch hazel bush.

This weird and ghostly shrub with its tousled clusters of twisted yellow flowers chooses to bloom in November and December, long after nature's other flowers have gone to bed, and again in late February and March.

The witch hazel grows anywhere from eight to 12 feet tall, and its strange beauty is best illuminated on the slopes of deep shaded ravines or in heavily wooded forest thickets.

Pollination occurs late in the year and the fruit and seeds take nearly a year to ripen. At maturity, the nut-like fruit capsule bursts like a popgun, hurling the little black seeds far and wide like so many cannonballs.

The shrub gets its name from the ancient use of forked wands of the European witch hazel as dousing rods or divining rods, used in seeking water and buried treasure.

• Science News Letter, 84:299 Nov. 9, 1963

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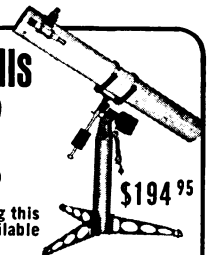


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