

PUBLIC HEALTH

Tranquilizer Librium Best for Alcoholics

► ACUTELY ill alcoholics are best treated with the tranquilizer Librium, or chlordiazepoxide, two Washington, D.C., physicians reported in the Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 26:10, 1965.

A comparison with Valium, or diazepam, and Sparine, or promazine, favored Librium, Drs. Joseph F. Chambers and John D. Schultz said.

At the District of Columbia General Hospital, they used the drugs on 103 men aged 29 to 63 years, divided into three groups. Each group took one of the three medications to control such symptoms as active delirium tremens, acute brain syndrome and acute alcoholic hallucinations.

Three patients developed convulsions while on Sparine, and two others on this drug became uncontrollable and had to be dropped from the study.

Valium was frequently effective but sometimes made the symptoms worse. It was inferior to both of the other drugs. Librium had a steady influence in relieving symptoms and produced complete remission in a day or so.

Dr. Chambers is on the staff of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington. Dr. Schultz is association director of health, District of Columbia. Librium is a product of Hoffman-La Roche, Inc., Nutley, N.J.

• Science News Letter, 87:303 May 8, 1965

Nature Note

Kittlitz's Sand Plover

► SLIGHTLY LARGER than a man's thumb when first hatched, Kittlitz's sand plover grows rapidly and flies when it is three to five weeks old. At maturity, this African bird measures approximately six and one-half inches.

Resembling a miniature American Killdeer, the sand plover has dark feathers along the upper parts of its body, and orange buff color underneath. On its forehead stretches a white band which is prolonged around the back of the neck to form a white collar.

Residing in eastern, southern and central Africa on sandy or mud flats along waterways and also in small flocks on grassy flats of lake margins, *Charadrius pecuarius* is usually very tame and without fear of man.

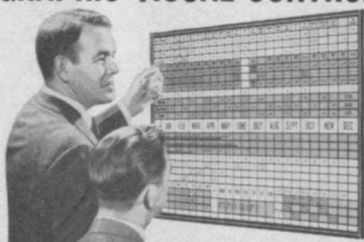
The eggs are incubated by both sexes, and when the adult leaves the nest, it covers the eggs by kicking and scratching sand over them.

The voice of a Kittlitz sand plover is a clear, plaintive "pleep." Its bill is pigeon-like, shorter than the head and slightly swollen at the tip.

The name plover is supposedly a corruption of the Latin *pluvius*, meaning rain, with which these birds were associated in ancient folklore. In German, its name, regenpfeifer, means rain sandpiper.

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