

have taken advantage of the unusual chance.

In other cities—St. Louis, Cleveland, Dallas, Buffalo, Honolulu and many more—people can watch vital human processes such as blood circulation, nervous system and reproduction cycles in transparent plastic models of a man and a woman. Children can feel the replica of an ear, walk through an immense model of a heart, watch the pulse of an idea in an electrified human brain.

They can push a button to demonstrate the principle of nuclear energy, can walk among simulated planets or touch two-man mobile seacraft that are used in exploring the depths of the ocean.

For the first time in history, at the New York World's Fair, people can watch a small-scale but actual demonstration of thermonuclear fusion, the violent process that lights the sun and stars.

Much force for this new impetus to brighten museums and zoos and to create spectacular exhibits comes from a healthy growing interest which people, especially the young in spirit, are taking in the world and universe around them. Not only are young persons able to obtain fuller reading material from libraries and better information at schools but they are being encouraged to do things for themselves, to use their hands and heads in individual projects such as identifying fossil bones, building a musical computer or analyzing what makes roses red and violets blue.

During the last 30 years, science fairs and youth exhibits have mushroomed in all soils and climates until today children in many schools, counties, states and nations take part in creating scientific projects and finishing them for exhibition. Last spring, the National Science Fair-International in St. Louis, sponsored by SCIENCE SERVICE, had 418 exhibitors from 5 nations besides the United States—Japan, Sweden, Israel, El Salvador and Canada.

### Wildlife Protected

Another new role museums and zoos all over the world have acquired is that of protecting animals from becoming as extinct as the dinosaurs. As man's civilization spreads and vast wildernesses are conquered with cities and tractors, many wild animals are heedlessly slaughtered or die from lack of food and uprooting of their natural homes.

Today international organizations recognize this wildlife crisis and are undertaking to assemble and manage herds and flocks of vanishing species for reproduction and preservation. They are establishing an "animal bank" system for keeping and transferring animals between zoos of different nations. They are encouraging local zoo keepers and naturalists to set up "modern arks" of game farms and land tracts, often far away from the general exhibition area, to preserve living creatures for future generations.

Already many shy wild animals that otherwise would be becoming extinct are thriving in these open-air museums—the Arabian oryx, Pere David's deer, the okapi and the Indian rhinoceros, among others.

• Science News Letter, 88:122 August 21, 1965

### CONSERVATION

## Plastic Seaweed Helps Build Up Beach Sand

► FLOATING PLASTIC "seaweed" is helping to build up beaches and check erosion along the south coast of England.

The synthetic seaweed, made from strong polypropylene fibers, produces the same effect as natural seaweed in absorbing wave energy.

Strands of it have been anchored to long lines in recent experiments and placed offshore to trap incoming sand from the ocean bottom so that it settles on the beaches.

Using artificial seaweed to stop beach erosion was the suggestion of a Danish fisherman.

During full-scale trials in sheltered Danish waters it was found that sand piled up about a yard in 18 months.

If the new seaweed proves successful, it may one day replace present wooden groynes, the rigid structures built out at an angle from shore to protect it from currents, tides and waves, or to trap sand for making a beach. The groynes, however, trap only sand carried along the coast by currents, thereby robbing beaches farther along.

Tests with artificial seaweed were reported in the *New Scientist* 27:269, 1965.

• Science News Letter, 88:123 August 21, 1965

### PALEONTOLOGY

## Sharks Once Roamed Rugged Israeli Desert

► ONE HUNDRED and thirty million years ago sharks may have infested what is now a sweltering desert.

Fossils of four species of sharks, including many teeth from a shark known as *Lamna*, have been found at Arad in the heart of Israel's rugged desert of the Negev. This genus of shark can be found today in tropical and temperate seas.

The discovery of these fossils indicates that this part of the Negev was once covered with a warm sea, reported Dr. M. Raab of the Geological Survey of Israel.

• Science News Letter, 88:123 August 21, 1965

## Do You Know?

A puppy taken from the litter after eight weeks of age may be overly attached to his own species and therefore difficult to domesticate and train.

The worst *dam disaster* in history took some 2,600 lives in Italy in 1963.

The giant *kelp* is the fastest-growing plant in the world.

The structure of certain *protein* molecules in egg whites, blood and milk are used to indicate evolutionary links among living creatures.

• Science News Letter, 88:123 August 21, 1965

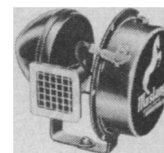
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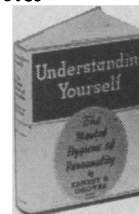
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