



American Museum of Natural History

MOTHER AND YOUNG—A hoary bat is shown here with two of its young. Its wings have a spread of about 15 inches, held by a Museum scientist.

BIOLOGY

Bats Blown to Iceland

► **MIGRATING** bats have been literally blown off course by strong North Atlantic storms that carried them to the coast of Iceland, a scientist has reported.

Hoary bats, a species that lives in North and South America, have been found in Iceland where no bats are native. Four bats found within the last 23 years were probably swept 1,500 miles from northeastern North America to Iceland while migrating in fall.

Dr. Karl F. Koopman of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, received the preserved bats from Finnur Gudmundsson of the Museum of Natural History in Reykjavik, Iceland. Hoary bats are a fairly large species, with a wingspread of about 15 inches.

More are likely to be found in Iceland, Dr. Koopman predicted, after storms during autumn and spring when migration is under way. They will not be able to take up residence, however, because they live in trees and the Icelandic tundra has none.

Hoary bats are unlike most members of the bat family in their migratory habits.

Most species congregate in caves and stay put for the winter.

They are also distinctive in their reproductive patterns.

A female bears three or four offspring rather than the usual one or two.

Although hoary bats are among the

most efficient of all flying mammals, they are poorly equipped for long flying trips compared to birds.

Dr. Koopman also reported an explanation for the discovery of a single specimen of a nonmigratory little brown bat taken to Reykjavik in 1944. He thinks that the little animal, which hibernates in winter and is unable to fly long distances, flew aboard a ship at St. John's Newfoundland, during World War II and got a ride north.

ENTOMOLOGY

'Love Bugs' Decline With Fall's Arrival

► **THE LITTLE** black bugs that fly into windshields and clog car radiators will probably decline in numbers now that fall is here, but they will be back again next spring.

Called "love bugs" or "honeymoon flies" because they are often seen in pairs, their enormous populations are due to unusually moist weather speeding the incubation and development of the offspring of prolific parents. They are scavengers of dead vegetation and fly only during daylight.

Because these harmless insects have a life-span of only three weeks, no control measures are planned against them, according to the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Gainesville.

CHEMISTRY

Pollutants Team Up To Damage Crops

► **TWO AIR** pollutants are better than one—at damaging crops, that is. Tobacco, spinach, cereal grains, grapes and citrus fruits are among plants that can be damaged by a combination of ozone and sulfur dioxide in quantities too small to cause harm alone, scientists have discovered.

Some of the air pollutant damage that is found in plants in the late spring and early fall, when individual levels of ozone and sulfur dioxide are not high enough to be a problem, can be explained by their joining forces. Research by H. A. Menser and H. E. Heggstad of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, Beltsville, Md., upsets the theory that the two pollutants act independently of each other on leaf tissue.

Ozone and sulfur dioxide are common air contaminants, the former being a photochemical smog formed when sunlight and car exhausts react together. Sulfur dioxide is a product of fuel combustion for power and heating.

Potential plant disease from air pollution can be decreased somewhat by growing resistant species, the researchers reported in *Agricultural Research*, 15:3, 1966, but even these may be damaged under severe conditions.

ENTOMOLOGY

Insect Pests Imported To Fight Plant Pest

► **THREE** insect parasites are being imported to attack lantana, the most serious weed pest in the New South Wales and Queensland coastal areas.

Two are leaf-mining parasites and the third is a stem and root borer.

The director of the Federal Government's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization's division of entomology, Dr. D. F. Waterhouse, said that some of the insects have arrived.

Results will not be known for two or three years, when stocks have been built up and it is discovered whether the insects are subject to attack by Australian parasites.

Other species which had previously been imported to destroy lantana were attacked by natural parasites and were unable to exert their full effect.

Tests in high rainfall areas in Hawaii have suggested that the types of insects now being imported will be most effective in Queensland, but they may also be tried in northern New South Wales.

Tests were done in Hawaii by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on a large number of economic plants to ensure that the parasites would not attack them.