

To the Editor

Sources Conflict

Dear Sir:

Contrary to your issue of SCIENCE NEWS 3/11, Indian Pipe is in the family Ericaceae, sub-family Monotropoideae and not wintergreen subfamily (Pyrolaceae).

Check PLANT CLASSIFICATION, Lyman Benson, p. 212-213.

Glenn E. Walthall
Biology Dept.
Sunset High School
Beaverton, Oreg.

According to two of our authoritative sources (GRAY'S MANUAL OF BOTANY, p. 1113 and Mathews and Taylor's FIELD BOOK OF AMERICAN WILD FLOWERS, p. 340, Indian Pipe is listed in the family Pyrolaceae—Wintergreen).

Colorado Dam

Dear Sir:

Your earlier balanced report (February 18) on Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall's new plan for the Central Arizona Project is unfortunately in marked contrast to your account (SN: 4/1) of hearings held during the week of March 13 by a House Interior Subcommittee on new Colorado River legislation.

The testimony by Mr. Floyd Goss of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power on March 17 in no way "shot down the economic arguments against the [Hualapai] dam." In fact, the new LADWP "proposal" can be viewed as an implicit admission that the Hualapai proposal is indeed economically unjustified. Mr. Goss did not present an economic analysis of the LADWP's new scheme, and his cost estimates appeared to rest more on his word than any detailed engineering study.

When asked where the necessary after-bay structure would be built below the dam, Mr. Goss admitted that he did not know, raising doubts as to how a definite cost figure could reasonably have been determined. Mr. Goss also admitted at the hearing that he had worked on the proposal for only ten days, and that he had never discussed it with either the Bureau of Reclamation or (except for one telephone call) with any of the utilities that would have to purchase much of the added power.

Mr. Goss's "bombshell" is as yet nothing more than an idea which

(See p. 396)

Exciting summer program on scenic Maine island

in
Marine Biology
and
Oceanography

Young men and women ages 16 to 18 years

8th Annual Session • June 30 to August 11

Tuition based on academic ability and need

NATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE CENTER

Box 131-S, South Orange, New Jersey 07079 • Phone: 201 • 763-0310

You are cordially invited to attend the

18th International Science Fair

A Science Service Youth Activity

Brooks Hall, San Francisco, California

More than 420 exhibits from 232 regional, state and nation-wide science fairs will be shown, including international participation from Canada, West Germany, Japan, Nicaragua, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Sweden, and Switzerland.

THURSDAY and FRIDAY, MAY 11 and 12

9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Finalists will be present

FRIDAY

9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

18th International Science Fair closes Friday, 10:00 p.m.

From Abbott Laboratories...

Pioneer in Radio-Pharmaceuticals,

Radioisotopes for School Laboratory Experiments

Abbott will produce on order a choice of two kits suitable for student use to permit a wide range of experiments.

The radioisotope quantities in these kits are generally licensed by the Atomic Energy Commission and no by-product license is required.

For an order form and bibliography of literature describing various experiments that may be made with these kits fill out and mail this coupon.



Name _____

School _____

Address _____

Please send order blank

Please send more information

Mail to: Abbott Laboratories,
North Chicago, Ill. 60064. Dept. 346

Nature Note

Roadrunner

In the southwestern United States and in northern Mexico lives a swift-footed bird that amuses and fascinates many travelers by his comic antics.

This is the roadrunner, *Geococcyx californianus*, one of the 130 species of the Cuculidae or Cuckoo family. It is also called ground cuckoo, lizard bird or snake killer. The name roadrunner refers to its strange habit of racing down a road at full speed in front of or beside cars, long legs reaching out in great strides, neck stretched out, its long white-tipped tail streaming out behind. Some birds have been paced running as fast as 15 miles an hour.

The legs are long and muscular and the feet are well adapted for running, with two toes in front and two in back. The wings are rounded and stubby and used only for short flights. A roadrunner prefers to run. A perky ragged crest on top of its head gives the bird a clownish look, enhanced by distinctive light blue and reddish streaks extending from each bright eye toward

the back of the neck. The roadrunner is nearly two feet long, generally brownish and coarsely streaked with brown and green. Its tail is longer than its body. These birds build their nests of sticks in low trees and bushes of arid or semiarid regions. Although once quite common in southern California, roadrunners are now becoming scarce as more communities are developed, and their natural habitat is disappearing.

This cocky bird has no fear of poisonous snakes, and attacks them with little hesitation, feinting to make the snake strike, then darting in to peck its sides before the snake regains balance. With incredible speed the bird also attacks lizards, poisonous spiders and scorpions, whacking them with its beak or flailing them against a rock until they become limp, then flinging them into the air and gulping them head first. Sometimes if the victim is still struggling, the bird coughs it up, batters it some more, then swallows it again.

"They laughed when I wound up my shaver..."



That's liable to happen to you when you first use the RIVIERA in front of anyone. A wind-up shaver may seem a plaything. Or at best an emergency type of shaver (because it needs no cords or batteries). After all, how can a hand-cranked shaver rotate fast enough to do a clean and close job? And how many times do you have to wind the darn thing to finish one shave?

One answer at a time: The three-blade shaving head revolves at such a fast clip that it actually gives you seventy-two thousand cutting strokes a minute! Compare that to your \$30 TurboDeluxe. Now, about the winding. The palm-shaped body of the RIVIERA (named for its birthplace, Monte Carlo) is filled with a huge mainspring made of the same Swedish super steel used in the most expensive watch movements. You crank the key just like a movie camera (about six turns) and the RIVIERA shaves and shaves. From ear to ear; from nose to neck, without slowing down. Maintains its full shaving speed right to the end—and long enough to do the complete job. Hard to believe, but really true.

A few more details: The surgical steel blades are so designed that they are continuously self-sharpening. You will find that the more you use the RIVIERA the sharper and the better it gets. The guard is so unbelievably thin (5/100 of a millimeter) that pressure is unnecessary. You just touch the shaver on your face and gently guide it in circular motions.

We could go on. But we don't expect to sell you with words. We just want to get you open-minded enough to tie up \$17 for two weeks. We'll give you that long to put the RIVIERA to the test. If it disappoints you (if you want to return it for any reason), send it back. Your money will be in the return mail. Obviously, we have reason to believe that this won't happen and that you will want to keep your RIVIERA for the office, club, cabin or in a permanent place in your bathroom cabinet. It's that kind of a thing. Once you've tried it you won't let it go.

P.S. You not only save the cost of an electric motor, but you save the cost of repairing it. The money that it leaves in your pocket; the dependability; the good, fast, clean shaves that you'll get—they'll give you the last laugh.

PLACE YOUR ORDER HERE

Dept. SN-0429
Mail to: HAVERHILL'S
526 Washington St., San Francisco, Calif. 94111

Please send me the RIVIERA Shaver. I must be amazed and delighted or I may return it within two weeks after receipt for immediate refund. I understand that there is a one year's unconditional guarantee on parts and workmanship.

I enclose \$16.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and insurance. (Calif. residents add 4% sales tax.)

Bill Amer. Exp. Acct. # _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____

© 1966 **Haverhill's**
Searching the World to bring you the Finest

Letters (continued)

seems more likely to further delay consideration of Colorado River legislation pending detailed studies than to increase the chances for dams in the Grand Canyon. Only if dam proponents can make people believe that their idea is something more than what it is can it have any other effect. Unfortunately, your article appears to serve their purposes.

Your article would have been somewhat better balanced if it had mentioned some of the new evidence presented at the hearings by dam opponents. For example, I presented a 73-page statement including a detailed economic analysis of the Bureau's dam proposals showing that both dams are economically unjustified, even at the Bureau's low 3½-percent interest rate.

Alan Carlin
Santa Monica, Calif.

Electric Cars

Dear Sir:

Electric vehicles are enjoying considerable attention, largely because they are being evaluated as partial solutions to many urban traffic needs and growing air pollution.

But the image presented in the public media of these recent evaluations has all too frequently resembled a combined football game, bull fight, and christians-to-the-lions feeding session at the coliseum—complete with the win-or-lose, all-or-nothing decision making process that goes with such games. Invariably, in such articles, the electric vehicle is matched against the latest 'Thundering-8'—and is of course found wanting in most departments in which the fossil-fueled vehicle excels (none of which being particularly germane to the problem that prompted our giving the electric vehicle our attention in the first place).

The chart published in your article, "Electric Autos—Not Yet," is a case in point. In several of the events listed the ground rules totally eclipsed the abilities of one of the electrics shown, and depreciated those of the other two. One event, as an example, seems completely pointless. It calls for passing capabilities, at fifty miles an hour. When considering the electric vehicle's potential virtues as an urban runabout, such a test requirement seems patently silly (and illegal to try, I sincerely hope).

But within the win-lose framework of this reportage game, it's 'thumbs down,' and 'not yet' for the electric runabout. (I'm quite puzzled about the nature of the listed lead/acid electric:

(See p. 398)