

Star Games

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etc.) to seize the correct one secures a point for their patrol.

ALTAIR and VEGA MEETING: Tell story of Chinese legend concerning Altair and Vega, the river of the Milky Way and line players up in two files facing one another and about twenty feet apart. Let players select one from each side to be Altair and Vega. Vega starts from one side and Altair starts from the other. Leader begins by asking Vega's side a question regarding the stars. Number One answers and if correct, Vega takes one step toward Altair. Altair's side is next and leader asks question there. If one side should miss, other side may answer question and let their star take two steps forward. Five questions should be allowed each side (that is, five steps or ten feet), and Vega and Altair should meet—if they do not—game can be closed and "Rain of Tears" continues.

Questions like: 1. Name planets visible at night in this season. 2. Name five first magnitude stars visible this month at night. 3. What three constellations are always visible? etc.

STAR STUNTS: Players can be divided into several groups and given "Sealed Orders" such as:

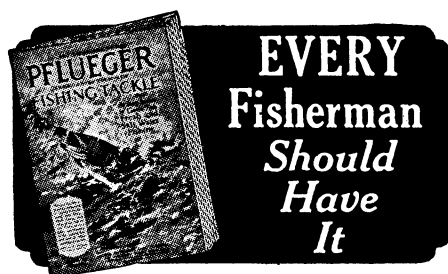
1. Act out story of Cassiopeia or make up some story that will be original and entertaining.

2. Make up original words to some familiar tune. This song should be woven around the story of the Big Dipper, or the Great Bear.

Each group will draw for turn on program and is given five or ten minutes to prepare stunt.

—MARIE AFTNITH,
Girl Scouts, Inc.

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Nature Coordination

Realizing the need for a national program that would coordinate the nature activities of national groups working with young people, the American Museum of Natural History invited these volunteer organizations to form a council to be known as the Coordinating Council on Nature Activities for the purpose of teaching the growing generation, through nature activities, the value of all wild life and natural resources and their conservation.

The various organizations represented are as follows:

American Museum of Natural History, American Natural Study Society, Boy Scouts of America, Camp Directors Association, Camp Fire Girls, Inc., Girl Scouts, Inc., Pioneer Youth of America, Playground and Recreation Association, Woodcraft League of America.

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BOTANY

NATURE RAMBLINGS

By FRANK THONE



Two Curious Plants

Everyone who spends his vacation in Yellowstone National Park or anywhere in that general region, will see great quantities of the rayless cone-flower. This very curious plant looks more or less like one of the numerous species of wild sunflower or related flowers that can be found anywhere. It has rather coarse, rough stems, from three to five feet high. Its leaves also are rough, broad at the base and tapering to a point. It rather likes moist places, which accounts for its frequent presence in mass in the roadside ditches.

The curious feature about it is the flower, or rather the flower-head, for the plant is a composite, crowding scores of tiny flowers into an apparent single bloom. Only this flower, instead of having a gay collar of petal-like "rays" about it, just sticks up like a little black pine-cone. The main stem and larger branches bear large cones, and the lesser branches bear little ones. One would think that this plant, having so little to attract insects to their task of carry-

ing pollen, might have a hard time of it; but quite the contrary is true, for it is one of the commonest species in the region. Perhaps it depends on underground runners or rootstocks for propagation, or forms its seeds, as many of its relatives do, without pollination, or it may even be successful in attracting insects without a colored flag. Nobody has given it much study, and the question is still an open one for some enterprising botanist to tackle.



Another curious flower that grows in the same region, as well as in many other parts of America, takes us back to memories of the quaint old drug shops our parents and grandparents knew. Modern drug stores, where you can buy anything from an imitation ivory toilet set to a popular novel, have their advantages; but a generation whose hair is beginning to grow thin on top (in spite of tonics recommended by glib salespeople) remember with regret the "lickrish root" of their childhood, handed out as *lagniappe* by the old-fashioned druggist with every dime purchase. Nothing on the modern candy counter tempts the appetite as did those pungently sweet bits of soft, barkly wood, that supplied just the right resistance for vigorous and satisfactory chewing.

How many of us knew then, or now, for that matter, that licorice is a plant related to beans and peas? Yet so it is. The licorice of commerce is one of a dozen species scattered around the northern hemisphere, and one of them running down into South America. In many places in this country, especially in the northern Rockies, you will see quantities of wild licorice growing by the roadside and along the bottoms of moderately moist gulches.

It is a densely bushy plant, with lush, dark green foliage, reaching a height of two or three feet. The leaves are somewhat like those of a locust tree, but bigger and coarser. The creamy flowers are shaped individually like narrow pea-flowers, and are densely crowded together in spires that stand up above the mass of leaves.

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