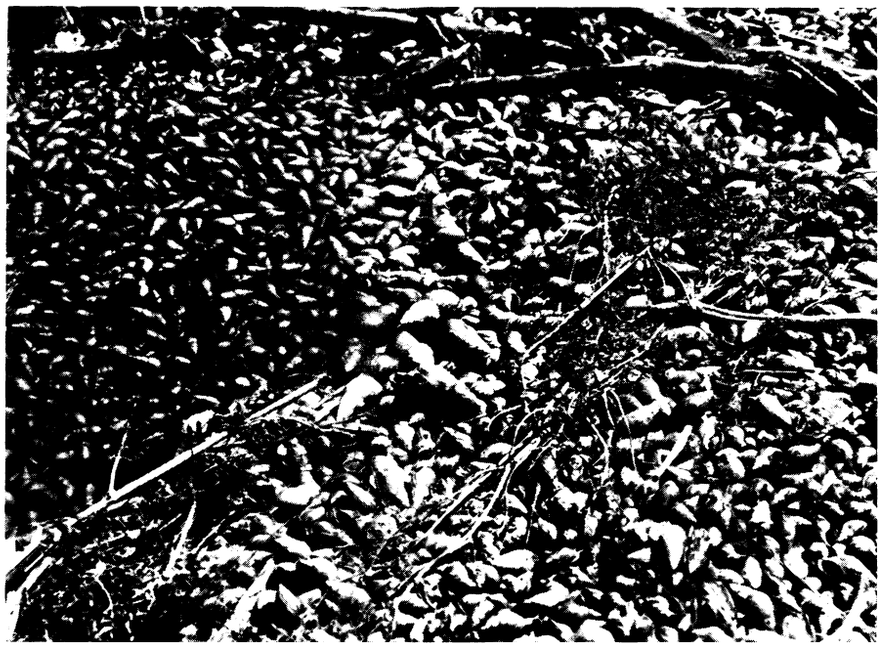

DEAD GIANT SNAILS — A pile of approximately 10,000 giant African snails, collected and killed by a farmer on Guam, are shown here. Some extra large specimens, over seven inches long, are in the collection.

ZOOLOGY

Kill Giant African Snails

► CANNIBALISM IS being promoted in the South Seas to solve certain population problems there. As a matter of fact, a scientist went to Africa to select about a hundred choice cannibals for the Pacific islands.

The cannibals are flesh-eating snails, *Gonaxis kibweziensis,* natural enemies of the giant African snail, *Achatina fulica,* which has become a major agricultural pest in the Pacific.

After the introduction of the cannibal snails, the African snail population on the highly infested island of Agiguan, near Guam, declined almost 20%, reports Dr. Yoshio Kondo, mollusk expert with the Bishop Museum in Honolulu.

The African snails, which average four inches long when full grown, were spread from Africa to the Pacific, probably through the agency of man. During World War II, the Japanese introduced the snail to several islands as a source of food for their troops. The giant snail, unhampered by its natural enemies, multiplied tremendously to become an agricultural menace.

After the war, the fight against the snail began. F. X. Williams of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association went to Kenya, British East Africa, to search for the snails' natural enemies. He sent 97 cannibal snails from Kenya to Dr. Kondo in Honolulu. Only seven survived, but in two years those seven had multiplied into 11,000.

Then in 1950, these cannibal snails, and others supplied by the U. S. National Museum, were shipped to Agiguan and released. A recent survey by Dr. Kondo showed a decrease of nearly 20% in the giant snail's numbers on the island.

Science News Letter, July 25, 1953

TECHNOLOGY

Electronic "Hand" Sends Elevators Up and Down

► AN ELECTRONIC "hand" rests lightly on the controls of a bank of new elevators in New York. It gives better up-and-down service in office buildings than human operators can deliver.

Displayed in model form, the Otis elevators capitalize upon the ability of electronics to make fewer errors in judgment than human operators. The bank of elevators "thinks for itself" in analyzing passenger requirements and in selecting the correct traffic program to speed passengers to and from their floors.

Adaptable for use in most office buildings, stores and hospitals, "autotronic elevatoring" relies upon six basic control programs: balanced up-down, heavier-down, heavier-up, up-peak, down-peak and intermittent. These control programs permit the elevators to handle rush traffic at lunch and quitting time with maximum efficiency, the company reports.

Science News Letter, July 25, 1953

MEDICINE

Leukemia Victim Takes Record, Lives 29 Years

► A RECORD survival of 29 years after diagnosis of chronic lymphocytic leukemia is reported to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (July 11) by Drs. Arthur A. Marlow and Grant R. Bartlett of La Jolla, Calif. The patient was a businessman who died last year at age 74.

A more optimistic view of chronic leukemia, a blood cell disease, is justified than the average rates of survival usually cited, the report indicates. One other case of 25 years' duration was reported some years ago, while average rates of survival run about eight years.

The unusual occurrence of acute leukemia in boy twins, causing their death at ages 18 and 24 months, was reported by Dr. Jean V. Cooke of St. Louis, Mo. Only four other such cases have been reported in medical literature.

Science News Letter, July 25, 1953

AGRICULTURE

Waste Shells and Pits Find Use in Industry

► NUT SHELLS and fruit pits now can be ground up and used as anti-skid agents in car tires, "fillers" in fine plastics, litters for poultry-house floors, and blasting grits for cleaning airplane engine parts.

T. F. Clark and E. C. Lathrop have reported to the U. S. Department of Agriculture that about a billion pounds of such materials are discarded yearly in this country by fruit canneries and nut-processing companies.

Pits of apricots, cherries, peaches and dates can be ground up for further utilization. Almonds, coconuts, filberts, peanuts, pecans and English and black walnuts are among nuts having shells suitable for grinding.

Relatively coarse particles of hard shells can be incorporated into auto and tractor tire treads. They give superior non-skid and traction properties. When finely ground, they make good fillers for plastic molding compounds.

Nut shells and fruit pits also can be used to clean furs and to control the degree of porosity of bricks and ceramic ware. Ground peanut shells can be worked into "noreseal," a cork substitute developed during World War II by the Department of Agriculture.

Grits made of walnut shells and apricot pits have been used satisfactorily to clean aircraft engine parts by grit blasting.

The new uses for pits and shells were developed at the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry's Northern Regional Research Laboratory at Peoria, Ill., by Messrs. Clark and Lathrop. Details are revealed in a free booklet (AIC-352) which may be obtained from that laboratory.

Science News Letter, July 25, 1953