

# Questions

**AERONAUTICS**—What kinds of degrees are needed for specializing in rocketry? p. 375.

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**AGRICULTURE**—What kind of grass resists drought best? p. 377.

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**GENERAL SCIENCE**—How many people are contacted during the successful completion of one round of a five-name chain letter? p. 372.

How do some Hopis teach their children about religion? p. 378.

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**STATISTICS**—How many people lived in other than their birth state in 1950? p. 373.

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ICHTHYOLOGY

## Aureomycin Checks Growth of Guppies

► THE GROWTH of guppies is checked by aureomycin, famous so-called mold remedy for many germ diseases. This growth-checking effect on the guppies is the reverse of its effect in other animals, such as chicks and pigs, when fed in addition to their regular diet.

This unexpected finding was made by Drs. Phillip Berke, Albert M. Silver and Herbert S. Kupperman of the Sutton Laboratories and Diagnostic and Endocrine Laboratories, Newark, N. J., and New York University-Bellevue Center, New York.

Whether this means aureomycin has a different effect on fish than on birds and mammals is not yet known. Dr. Berke and associates found that an overgrowth of the mold, *Monilia albicans*, occurred in the water of the aquarium to which aureomycin had been added. This might have been a factor in checking the growth of the guppies.

Science News Letter, December 12, 1953

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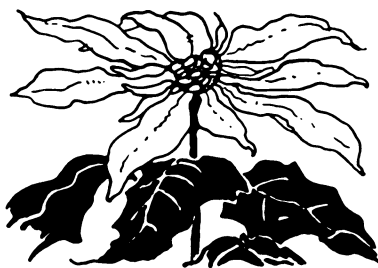
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# NATURE RAMBLINGS



### Poinsettia Pointers

► THIS IS a critical time for poinsettias. Whether this festive plant will lend its flaming red bracts to the brightness of the Christmas season depends largely on how well it survives pre-Christmas hazards.

Poinsettia goes by a variety of names: Christmas Flower, Easter Flower, Lobster Flower, Mexican Flame-Leaf. It grows wild in moist, shady areas of Mexico and Central America.

In the home, we are not likely, without special effort, to supply its natural rhythm of light and dark.

Of all possible measures to induce the brightest display by Christmas, the most important is the regulation of light. Scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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have found that as little as an hour's exposure to minute quantities of light nightly for three weeks is enough to prevent the poinsettia from flowering.

The red bracts of poinsettia are actually one of the two kinds of leaf that the plant produces. The other, of course, is the glossy dark green leaf that contrasts with the bracts in the traditional cheerful Yuletide colors. The flowers proper are tiny club-shaped objects at the center of the red bracts.

There is a large group of plants that share this distinctive manner of flowering which goes under the botanical name, euphorbia.

Science News Letter, December 12, 1953

Vacuum drying procedures have been developed that speed the production of low-moisture powders from *juices* of seven fruits.

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