

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **TRAVEL CASE** for men has a wide-mouthed spring closure for safekeeping of shaving gear and men's toiletries. Cut square and measuring 10 inches, the inside of the kit is lined with a plastic film that resists water, oils, grease and chemicals. It is available in blue, brown or wine.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **HOME INTERCOM-RADIO** system can service five stations within the house. It permits simultaneous radio and inter-room communication at any outlet. The master set can be used additionally as an electric or alarm clock. Sounds of baby's playing or breathing, or music, can be piped throughout the home.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **POLYETHYLENE PLASTIC TAPE** helps stop pipe corrosion. Permitting little or no moisture absorption or penetration, the tape is said to resist electrolytic attack and microbiological deterioration. Heat is not needed to apply the plastic tape; a non-corrosive adhesive compound is bonded to one side for ready use. It is available in widths from one to six inches.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **OUTDOOR BOWLING** is now possible with a portable game set shown in the photograph. Almost any long, level stretch



can be a site for the bowling alley. The pins are molded of a lightweight polyethylene plastic and stand 15 inches high. The plastic ball weighs two pounds. A portable backstop net and triangular pin-spotting sheet are included in the set. The total weight is 20 pounds.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **LABORATORY SOLVENT** offers added safety for scientific workers. The solvent,

a non-flammable trichloroethane with solvent properties similar to those of carbon tetrachloride, has a low toxicity. It has a pleasant odor and boils at a slightly lower temperature than carbon tetrachloride.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **PLASTIC POLISHER-CLEANER** for improving pilot vision removes fine scratches and haze from airplane plastic windshields. The powder is described as being anti-static, non-flammable and non-toxic. It is effective on acrylics, polystyrene, acetate, and both rigid and flexible vinyls.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **ANTI-STATIC SWEEPER**, using the ionizer polonium, cleans surfaces of dust, lint or any substance held to the surface by dry static attraction. Available in various sizes, the sweeper can be used by photographers, Hi-Fi fans and photo-engravers.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956

⚙️ **WALL STUD FINDER** locates the stud by finding hidden nails securing it to the baseboard. It makes picture hanging easier for the home-owner. The two-inch device locates metal objects by use of a magnet imbedded in a plastic case. It can also be used to pick up pins and needles and locate nails in tires.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ **BRIGHT SCARLETS**, greens and yellows are found commonly in the coloring of birds, fishes and reptiles. When compared to these brilliant colors, the dress of most mammals may seem somber indeed.

Mammal color is largely determined by pigments found in the hairy coats. The fur usually runs to blacks, whites, grays, reddish browns and mixtures of these. But although mammals may lack in brilliance, they make up for brightness by variety and pattern of subdued colors.

Take, for example; the familiar red fox, *Vulpes fulva*. This handsome animal has his upper parts a reddish yellow, with black-tipped hairs streaking the middle of his back. His rump is grizzled with reddish hairs mingled with white and black-tipped ones. His bushy reddish tail is mixed with black, and there is a black spot at the base and a white spot at the tip of the tail.

### Colorful Mammals



The under parts, cheek and inner side of Renard's ears are white, while the back of his ears and his feet are black.

The above description fits the "average" red fox, but foxes range far around that "average" color. The rare and expensive "silver fox" fur represents nothing more

than the pelt of a red fox in its "silver" color phase. In this dress, the fox has a sleek blackish coat frosted in white.

Another color phase of the red fox is seen in the "cross fox," so named for bands of lighter fur that cross the pelt. The chief variation here is yellow and gray mixed with the normal pelt color. Cross foxes stand somewhat intermediate between normal red and silver foxes in pigment.

All these color phases may appear in the same litter with normal fox pups, proving they are all in the same species.

Arctic foxes show striking color changes within the same individual. With the approach of snow, these foxes don an immaculate white coat, which they keep till spring. As the days lengthen, the white coat is abandoned for one of drab gray.

This variation is thought to represent presence of entirely new hair, not pigment changes in old hairs.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1956