

• New Machines and Gadgets •

If you want more information on the new things described here, send a three-cent stamp to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., Washington 6, D. C. and ask for Gadget Bulletin 431. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **SEALING MATERIAL**, to make water-tight joints between bath-tubs and tile walls or flooring, is a resin-based caulking that comes in a tube from which it is squeezed out like toothpaste from its container. It is smoothed into place with a tool accompanying the material and forms a white, durable, expanding and contracting joint.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

⚙️ **EYEGLASS CASE**, made of a plastic called polyethylene which is flexible but almost indestructible, can be cleansed inside and out with boiling water if desired and it does not absorb perspiration. Oils, greases, solvents and common chemicals do not harm it.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

⚙️ **ALUMINUM SCREEN** for the automobile radiator front, to keep insects out of the radiator itself, has high heat conductivity which permits rapid dehydration of all insects caught. The remains are swept from the screen by a two-way operating stiff bristle brush controlled from the glove compartment.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948



⚙️ **TREE-PULLER**, shown in the picture, is used in connection with a farm tractor and lifts reasonably large trees out of the ground, roots and all. Two powerful jacks, which rest on the ground at the rear, and a pair of gripping jaws are used, the jacks being powered by the tractor engine.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

⚙️ **CABLE REEL**, particularly for heavy electric cable, has tubular steel supports on which it stands and which may be used as sled runners in sliding the reel in or out of trucks. Handles above the reel make it easy to carry; an adjustable brake controls rotation.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

⚙️ **CLEANING BRUSH**, for the insides of bottles and laboratory flasks, has a nylon bristle head which after insertion in the hard-to-reach place can be turned at an angle to the handle by means of a trigger on the handle outside the flask. The trigger controls several springs which permit the hinged movement.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

⚙️ **ELECTRONIC COLOR ANALYZER**, for medical research, color photography and other fields, may play an important part in cancer research because blood changes color during the progress of the disease, it is claimed. It provides for accurate measurements of color densities at single wavelengths as well as black-and-white densities.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948

• Nature Ramblings by Frank Thone •

➤ **WARM**, wet weather, prevalent during August over most of this country, should insure an abundance of mushrooms, puffballs and other fleshy fungi in September and October. People who know their mushrooms will rejoice accordingly, and fare forth with their baskets to reap gourmets' harvests at no cost—an accomplishment well worth while in these days of super-stratospheric prices.

It is really a pity that so little use is made of our great wealth of wild mushrooms, especially since there are several species among them far superior in flavor to the common field agaric which is the only mushroom cultivated for the market.

There is, for example, the inky-cap tribe, so called because of the readiness with which their mature caps melt down into a fluid mass stained black with their billions of spores. They make just about the best mushroom gravy there is. Biggest and best of this group is the conspicuous, easily recognizable, appropriately named shaggy-mane mushroom.

Close competitor for flavor, and of solid

Autumn Offerings



flesh in the saucepan, is the morel, a stubby-stalked mushroom with an irregularly furrowed, mostly dark-brown cap that looks rather like a roughly conical bit of synthetic sponge. That it doesn't taste like a sponge is well attested by its common nickname of "beefsteak mushroom."

If you can find a big puffball that is still in a white-cheese-like state of immaturity inside, you have a treat in store—supposing

you can afford to fry anything in butter nowadays. Sliced like eggplant and fried thus, puffball is really good eating. There is a consolation, too, in knowing that there are no poisonous puffballs.

Many persons are afraid of all wild mushrooms because some of them are poisonous. There is good warrant for caution in approaching strangers in the fungus world, but that should not be carried to the point of avoiding all acquaintance. Most state agricultural experiment stations, as well as the larger public museums of natural history, have popular mushroom-recognition pamphlets available for free or low-cost distribution.

It is easy to recognize the one abundant genus of mushrooms that is most dangerous, the amanitas or death-cups. The trademark of the amanita is the ring and the cup. Around the stalk, about half-way up, is a loose ring of fragile mushroom tissue; and at the base of the stalk is a cup, that once covered the young mushroom like an eggshell. If both these characters are present, better let that mushroom alone.

Science News Letter, September 11, 1948