

• New Machines and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 969. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **TRAVELING CLOCK RADIO** weighs less than three pounds. Offering radio-alarm service, the battery-powered AM radio in a rugged case is light enough for packing in luggage. Radio will play 400 hours on four mercury batteries. The clock will run a year on its own 1½-volt D cell.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **TROUSERS HANGER** has retracting gripper arms which are inserted into the trouser legs and expanded by a spring. This enables the hanger to adjust automatically and grip securely any pair of pants, even cuffless. The non-rusting plastic device is also useful for drip-drying trousers.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **ACRYLIC HOUSE PAINT** for new wood or for surfaces from which old finish has been completely removed, requires a special primer but stops blistering with its moisture-passing qualities. The paint is said to roll or brush on easily, dry in 30 minutes, chalk little and have a long life.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **MELTING POINT DEVICE**, shown in the photograph, to identify chemical compounds, heats to the dialed temperature and cools rapidly. It has an adjustable magnifying lens for viewing the specimen, and an



anti-glare device for cutting eyestrain. It uses only 40 milliliters of silicone oil heating medium.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **ROUND PLASTIC BOXES** protect lenses, bearings, small instrument parts and other items vulnerable to dust and moisture. They come in sizes from ½ inch to 3 inches in diameter, and in depths of ½ to

¾ inch. Each box consists of two halves that form a moisture-proof drum capable of withstanding heavy blows and a crushing force of more than 100 pounds.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **TIRE INFLATOR** in an aerosol-like can eliminates hand pumping. When its nozzle is pressed over the tire valve, the device inflates a flat tire to 22 pounds pressure in six seconds. The device also is said to be an effective fire-fighter for use in the house or in a car.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **LONG-LIFE GARDEN HOSE** has a mirror finish created in a process said to triple its life. The new hose has greater flexibility and is resistant to sun and exposure damage. Available in 25- to 75-foot lengths, color and finish are maintained indefinitely.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959

⚙️ **SINISTER DECANTERS**, to protect your bar from free-loaders, are authentic eight-ounce reagent bottles used in chemical labs. Relief-etched in the glass are such warnings as Con Acid Nitric HNO₃, or Con Acid Sulphuric H₂SO₄. With pencil you can write on stopple tips what each really contains.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

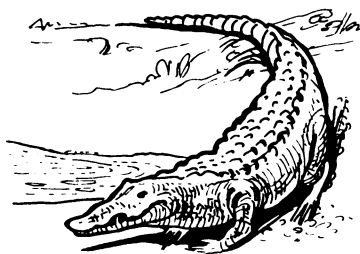
➤ A TRAVELER in the deserts of the American Southwest is apt to run across any of a number of snakes and lizards scurrying across the waterless waste. These, obviously, are animals that are completely at home away from oceans, rivers, creeks, even the tiniest mud puddles. They are prime examples of animals adapted to a terrestrial mode of life.

Yet the reptiles are but one stage removed from the water-bound amphibians and two stages from the wholly aquatic fishes in the evolutionary scale of life.

What new weapons in the struggle for survival do the reptiles have that equipped them to leave the water behind for a total life of land?

Possibly the most significant change to be seen in reptiles over amphibians toward a terrestrial existence is the advent of eggs suited for development on land, with shells and special membranes to protect the grow-

They Left the Water



ing embryos from drying out. This single step forward freed the reptiles from having to return to water to complete their life cycles.

More obvious adaptations of reptiles for life on land are certain structural features of the body not present in the amphibians.

The body is covered with dry, horny skin, usually in the form of scales or scutes, protecting the animal from desiccation. The limbs are much more highly developed for

rapid locomotion on land than those of amphibians. Respiration is always by lungs, and the blood system is much superior to anything found in lower vertebrates.

Amphibians, the group from which the reptiles descended, may live most of their adult life on land, but must return to the water for reproduction. In a complete reversal of this situation, aquatic reptiles such as the alligators and turtles must return to land to lay their eggs.

The class Reptilia today has four major subdivisions or orders: the tuatara, a "living fossil" found only in New Zealand; the crocodiles; the turtles; and the lizards and snakes. But during the heyday of this group, the "Age of Reptiles" of some 100,000,000 years or so ago, there were at least 14 orders of reptiles. These included such monstrous forms as the brontosaurus, Triceratops, and the winged Pterodactyls.

There are probably approximately 6,000 species of reptiles in the world today.

Science News Letter, January 10, 1959