

• New Ideas 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 1082. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **PAPER BAG HOLDER** of steel with lacquered brass finish will hold up to 50 empty paper bags of assorted sizes. It has four hooks for hanging keys, pot-holders or other kitchen items. Easily attached to any wood surface, the 14¼-inch high holder also has a tray for pencils or bottle opener.

• Science News Letter, 79:160 March 11, 1961

⚙️ **SELF-POWERED RADIO** for space-minded children needs no batteries or electricity. Made of plastic with nose cone tuner, the radio has a trouble-free diode rectifier and comes complete with a high fidelity crystal earphone and 36-inch aerial.

• Science News Letter, 79:160 March 11, 1961

⚙️ **PRINTMAKER** does not need a dark-room or laboratory to turn out a sharp, dry and permanently finished photo print in ten seconds. Using a special formula photo paper and premixed, ready-to-use chemicals, the cigar-box size unit permits both professional and amateur photographers to print pictures from finished negatives in either daylight or artificial room light.

• Science News Letter, 79:160 March 11, 1961

⚙️ **INFANT SAFETY GARMENT**, shown in the photograph, makes a seat for baby. It provides a new way to prop and feed baby whether on bed, sofa, chair, crib, high-chair, stroller or in auto. The garment



type infant seat avoids bunched up clothing and bedding under baby.

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⚙️ **NATIONAL PARK RELIEF MAP** of Craters of the Moon National Monument, scaled one inch to half a mile, brings out hills and valleys in striking fashion. Also available in contour edition, the map con-

tains interesting, non-technical information on the phenomena to be seen in the area.

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⚙️ **HANGING KITS** for home and workshop feature special clips to hold tools or equipment to a perforated board. Board and clips for the tool hanging kit and for a utility closet hanging kit are available in separate units.

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⚙️ **SHATTERPROOF PLASTIC WINDOW** with reinforced glazing permanently eliminates glass replacement in windows. The glazing can be cut to size and installed with regular tools. Treated to block out up to 94% of infrared rays, the glass fiber panes are available in crystal clear, crystal green and stay white.

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⚙️ **FRY PAN FOR FATLESS COOKING** is easy to clean and economical to use because its non-stick surface is coated with a special resin. The aluminum pan, ten inches in diameter, has a very slick finish to which virtually nothing sticks. Chops, pancakes, hamburgers can be browned easily and quickly without fat; and washing in warm, soapy water with a dish cloth leaves the pan clean.

• Science News Letter, 79:160 March 11, 1961



Nature Ramblings

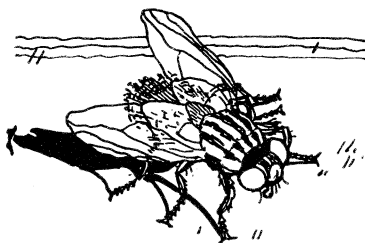


➤ **THAT FLIES ARE** at least pests in the temperate zones and disease carriers in the tropics is well known. But not everything about the fly is bad.

The ichneumon flies, for example, destroy pests such as caterpillars, spiders, grubs, beetles and some relatives of the housefly. This is accomplished when the ichneumon deposits its eggs, through a stinger-like apparatus called the ovipositor, on the larvae of the pest species. The eggs hatch and the ichneumon larvae live on and kill the host.

The fruit flies, particularly *Drosophila melanogaster*, that cluster around decaying bananas are the guinea pigs of the insect world. For years they have been favorites for genetic studies because they reproduce rapidly and are easy to work with. By comparison with the ugly black housefly, these small creatures are beauties, with red eyes and iridescent wings.

In Defense of the Fly



When mutants appear, some with white eyes and dull warped wings, geneticists try to find out whether the how, where and when of the change can be applied to some abnormality in man.

Some very odd insects have appeared in these studies. One scientist has produced four-winged flies that cannot fly.

A million years ago, flies probably had four wings, but the back pair shriveled up into club-shaped flight stabilizers called halteres. Thus, today's mutant four-winged flies are atavists.

Even the housefly, which has managed to survive in spite of DDT, is not so dirty-footed as once believed. About 90% of the tens of millions of bacteria dwelling in the maggot are shed by the time the insect develops to the larval stage and forms its hard outer shell.

When the new fly emerges, it carries only about 1,000 bacteria, 500 on the surface and 500 inside the body.

For those who still believe flies are good for nothing but swatting targets, remember what the frog ate the next time frog legs appear on the menu. And for tropical fish, ground flies can be the tastiest of morsels.

—GLORIA BALL

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