

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **TRAVELER AIDS** for U.S. visitors abroad are a currency guide and language translation guide. Currency guide computes from 1¢ to \$300 in exchange values of U. S. money and their equivalents in 15 foreign countries and from these countries to each other. The language guide gives tourists more than 145 commonly used expressions in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Swedish and Yiddish.

• Science News Letter, 79:192 March 25, 1961

⚙️ **MONOGRAM KIT** contains self-adhering, miniature raised golden initials for personalizing any item from a cigarette lighter to an automobile. Kit includes 200 assorted A-Z initials. The plastic letters adhere permanently to wood, glass, metal, paper and other materials. Heat or cold does not affect the metalized initials.

• Science News Letter, 79:192 March 25, 1961

⚙️ **ILLUMINATED HOUSE NUMBERS** may be attached on any house bell circuit, 6 to 24 volt AC or DC. Anodized aluminum-framed unit in bronze or silver has adjustment for brightness of lamp. Black, rubber-impregnated numerals may be read day or night from a distance of 200 feet.

• Science News Letter, 79:192 March 25, 1961

⚙️ **GOLF UMBRELLA** of crystal-clear, heavy gauge plastic provides a clear view down the fairway in drizzle or downpour.



It is more than four feet wide when open. During rainy football games, the umbrella, shown in the photograph, keeps three persons dry. It is also useful for gardeners, fishermen and other sports fans.

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⚙️ **PORTABLE PROJECTOR** with a screen and high-fidelity playback unit built into a single compact case opens in seconds

for desk or table-top presentation. Unit includes a convection-cooled, 100-watt film-strip projector, a four-speed turntable, a 1½ watt speaker and a 9- by 12-inch lenticular screen. Record player takes 12-inch records.

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⚙️ **THREADON TROLLER** is a new rig, used in trolling for all game fish, on which bait will stay alive and in a natural position for a long time. The nickel-plated troller is said to assure positive hooking when fish strike.

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⚙️ **TRANSMITTER** no larger than a pack of cigarettes for use with any home, car or portable radio provides close-range communication for practical applications. Certified by manufacturer to meet FCC requirements for low-powered transmitters, unit does not require an operator's license for use.

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⚙️ **BLOW TORCH** for "do-it-yourself" home soldering is powered by air blown into small plastic tube by user. Torch unit comes complete with a two-hour replaceable fuel supply of 12 fuel tablets. Miniature torch is operated by placing a tablet on a special metal holder, focusing small air nozzle, igniting tablet, and gently blowing air through tube connected to nozzle.

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## Nature Ramblings



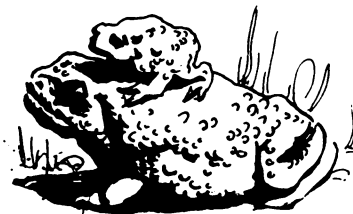
➤ **AFTER WINTER'S QUIET**, the first "ker-lunk" of the courting frog at the beginning of spring is as welcome as the flute of the brown thrush.

One of the evidences of the balance established in nature is that the frog does not sing like a brown thrush. If it did, there would be unending confusion among frogs and thrushes, for the frog song, like the thrush song, is an amatory performance.

"Indeed, it is even more of a serenade than the thrush song, for male birds sing at least partly for the same reason that a rooster crows, that is, to warn interlopers and rivals off the reservation. By contrast, the frog, so far as is known, is solely bent on wooing his coy mate.

There is something abysmally human about his method: he gets so puffed up over it. He swallows all the air he can hold, blows out the skin under his throat into a tight little balloon, sometimes half as big as himself, and puts his whole heart into a flat

### Courting Frog



note. Sometimes he gets so interested in his own singing that he forgets all about the lady, so that she has to come up and nudge him gently, to remind him that after all, the opera is supposed to have something to do with her presence.

The frog and toads form a natural group of amphibians. The terms "frog" and "toad" are often used loosely; however, frog generally refers to the forms that live in the

water most of the time while those living mostly on land are called toads.

The order of these amphibians is divided into eight families. One family of frogs, Ascaphidae, of which there is only one kind in this country, has short ribs, smooth skin and the males have short tails.

The tree frogs belong to the family Hylidae that are mostly small, slender frogs with toes that expand at the tips to aid the animal in climbing.

The Leptodactylidae are called "robber frogs." The family Ranidae is that of so-called true frogs and includes the well-known bullfrog, living in water.

It is mostly the male frogs that call, and their voice is especially loud in the spring during the mating season.

The female frogs have no mating song. They are only able to call in a low, subdued voice.

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