

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☞ **SPRINKLER SYSTEM** with five octopus-like hoses radiating from common base quickly waters large tracts of land or scattered shrubbery in one operation. The brass sprinkler-tipped plastic hoses in 10- and 15-foot lengths can be set at any angle and locked into position with pins.

• Science News Letter, 79:384 June 17, 1961

☞ **HEARING AID DECOUPLER** for persons using eyeglass hearing aids can remove or plug in ear connection in just two seconds. The device is supposedly ideal for individuals with mild or borderline hearing loss and who use the hearing aid only on special occasions.

• Science News Letter, 79:384 June 17, 1961

☞ **FOLDING TABLE** with or without benches can be folded or unfolded in one motion. The wheeled table folds into 10½-inch width without benches, 11½-inch width with benches, for easy storage. Height-adjustable feature maintains correct elbow-to-seat dimensions for all age groups. The table comes in 6-, 8-, 10-, or 12-foot lengths.

• Science News Letter, 79:384 June 17, 1961

☞ **PANEL FLUORESCENT LAMP** with square waffle pattern adds new dimension to fluorescent lighting, compressing 5-foot long arc path in a 1-foot square area. The



nearly 12-inch square panel, shown in the photograph, diffuses more light, can be used singly or in groups, and operates at 50 or 80 watts.

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☞ **FRACTIONAL DEMONSTRATION RULER** for school classrooms helps teach youngsters addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of fractions. The large 48-

inch by 10-inch ruler has 12 hinged tabs, each representing one inch, which can be lifted to reveal various fractions and decimal equivalents. The yellow ruler, seen clearly 30 feet away, can be hung on the wall or placed on a desk.

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☞ **DISPOSABLE PLASTIC PLATE** for outdoor and everyday use indoors serves hot and wet foods without leaking. The double-thick, sectioned plastic plate has outer layer of foamed plastic resembling kidskin. Available in pastel shades of yellow, pink or blue.

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☞ **NO-STICK SAUCEPAN** needs no scouring after sticky food has been cooked in it. Silicone lining baked on aluminum utensil prevents sticking. Just rinse clean with hot water after use.

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☞ **PERSONAL HELICOPTER KIT** permits sportsman, tourist, farmer or rancher to build a 10-foot long, 275-pound helicopter from factory-approved plans. With top speed of 85 miles per hour and cruising speed of 65, the aircraft can fly as high as 12,000 feet. Rotor blades fold for easy storage in garage.

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Nature Ramblings



Do You Know?

► THE GORGEOUS MAGNOLIAS of the South do not venture very far north, but the tulip tree, a fairly near relative, upholds the family tradition through a wide stretch of country both below and above the Mason-Dixon line. The yellow flowers, tinted with a little red and green, can be seen from Florida and Arkansas to Illinois, Michigan and Ontario.

Although the flowers are about the size and shape of tulips, the internal structure is quite different. Instead of the triple arrangements of stamens and pistil parts, they have indefinite numbers, arranged in spirals. This is the mark of relatively primitive rank in the evolutionary scale of plants.

The tulip tree, which grows to 50 or 100 feet and is the tallest of eastern forest trees, is known by various names. It is sometimes called "fiddle tree," because its peculiar leaves, with their arched bases and in-cut sides, suggest the violin shape. The gray, heavy, rough bark, similar to that of the cottonwood, has given it the name "tulip poplar" or "yellow poplar." In some areas it is called "whitewood," and its

Tulip Tree



scientific name, *Liriodendron*, is Greek for "lily tree."

Apart from the beauty of the flowers themselves and the spicy aroma of the crushed leaves and buds, the tree has other merits.

The seeds make tasty tidbits for squirrels and songbirds, and the wood has a value that was known to the Indians. It is straight-grained, soft, split-resistant, and easy to work with—just right for making dugout canoes. Even today, the wood is used for boats, as well as for furniture, toys, shingles, pulp and fuel.

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Today six nations have artificial *satellite* programs whereas two years ago the United States and Russia were the sole competitors.

The idea of using machines for purposes of *teaching* originated with psychologists.

U. S. taxpayers are paying \$1,400,000 each day to store *surplus* products raised on the farms.

About 200,000 *thunderstorms* occur throughout the world in a 24-hour period.

The average U. S. person ate nearly 1,500 pounds of *food* in 1960.

Transplanting the cornea of the *eye* to restore vision is more successful if the blood types of the donor and patient are matched.

Of much greater clinical significance than the measurement of *blood pressure* in the arm is the pressure at critical organs in the body, such as the heart, brain and kidneys.

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