

# • 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 1099. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

🌀 **TREE GUIDE** for sportsmen, naturalists and educators lists on punched cards the 260 major native and foreign trees found in continental United States, Canada and Alaska. A sorting needle inserted into the holes and notches coded to certain tree characteristics sorts out the desired tree. Each card is illustrated and has descriptive text.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **PORTABLE RECORD PLAYER** is a transistorized, battery-operated record player that plays all four conventional speed records. The lightweight player, the size of a hatbox, has a detachable lid for record storage and a seamless scuff-proof case. Available in blue, charcoal or red.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **SWIM LUNG** is for underwater swimming of adults or children. A face mask complete with intake and exhaust valves is connected to two air-filled rubber floats, strapped to the back, by a plastic hose.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **PIANO CHORD UNIT**, shown in the photograph, is an electro-magnetic device built into a piano and is intended to simplify piano playing. A set of 72 buttons is located on the left side of the keyboard. A person can play a tune with right hand while playing accompanying piano chords

by numbered buttons with only one finger of left hand.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **INDOOR SKI SLOPE** for beginners and professionals permits year-round skiing regardless of weather. Skiers whisk down a



nylon "snow carpet" revolving on an endless belt. The carpet speed and slope are adjustable and a safety bar for beginners is provided. Available in large or junior sizes for indoor ski centers or home recreation rooms.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **MANICURE SET** contains scissors, cuticle pusher, nail cleaner and file that fit into a holder shaped like a shell. Available in aqua or pink, the 4½-inch holder and handles are made of polystyrene plastic with a mother-of-pearl finish.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **ADJUSTABLE DESK RACK** of aluminum can be expanded to hold large books and catalogues or contracted to store file folders. The aluminum ribbed rack weighs only two pounds.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

🌀 **CORRUGATED PLASTIC PANELING** reinforced with glass fibers is well suited for awnings, signs, breezeways, and special roofing. Available in 50-foot lengths and 40-inch widths, the panels are rolled into place for speedy installation and may be cut, sawed, nailed or drilled with regular tools. Crinkle finished on both sides, the material comes in several colors as well as clear.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961



## Nature Ramblings



## Do You Know?

➤ **SCOTLAND** has the thistle, England the rose and France the fleur-de-lis. But the United States has no national flower.

Serious attempts to have one adopted began in 1889 when the goldenrod, now the floral emblem of five states, was indecisively chosen. Like all subsequent suggestions, it never received an unqualified vote of confidence from the people nor a legal stamp of approval from Congress.

In 1929, a minor battle raged through the newspapers when the American Nature Association sponsored a national poll in which more than 86,000 persons voted. The wild rose won over the columbine by 20,000 votes. Next in popularity were goldenrod, phlox, violet, daisy, dogwood and beauty rose.

In 1959 the Florist Telegraph Delivery Association sponsored another contest and the rose won again, this time in competition with marigold, corn tassel, Kentucky blue grass and black-eyed Susan, among others.

At present, eight separate resolutions naming specific flowers are pending in Congress. Both the Senate Judiciary Committee and the House Administration Committee

### National Flower



received resolutions in favor of the American marigold and the corn tassel during the current session. The Senate also has one for the carnation, and the House has one for the Shasta daisy and two for the rose.

The biggest stumbling block to adoption of a national flower is the fact that some objection can be cited for almost any nominee. In addition to being popular, symbolic, bound in tradition and suitable for emblems and designs, a national flower should be available the year round and thus able to thrive indoors as well as out.

—GLORIA BALL

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961

The cost of forest fire protection in 1960 averaged 57¢ for every United States citizen.

In 1960, transistors accounted for \$301,000,000 of the \$509,000,000 semi-conductor market in the United States.

"Thirsty" glass is used in transistors to absorb moisture that would affect the efficiency of the devices.

In 1960 nearly 90% of the pork in storage was frozen and the remainder cured, while in 1935, nearly 75% was cured and 25% frozen.

The frequency of occurrence of certain types of cancer in both men and women vary with the socio-economic status, according to long-term statistical studies.

When a new crop is introduced to an area, the local insects may find the new food more attractive and switch from their old standby crops.

• Science News Letter, 80:32 July 8, 1961