

• 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 1104. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **HUMAN HEAD MODEL**, life-size, shows head and neck and is molded in four colors. Useful as an anatomical teaching aid, it can be assembled and disassembled. The ear, eyes, brain, spinal cord and organs of the mouth and throat are presented in detail. A 16-page fully illustrated handbook is included.

• Science News Letter, 80:112 August 12, 1961

⚙️ **MULTI-COLOR BALL POINT PEN** writes in four colors by just turning to the desired color as shown on the cap rim and pressing down the cap. All metal, it is imported from West Germany. Refills are available.

• Science News Letter, 80:112 August 12, 1961

⚙️ **CASTER CUPS** for use on hard-surfaced floors come in two types, non-skid with a rubber cushion and free-sliding with a carpet cushion. Of tough plastic, they will not dent floors, nor rust, and are detergent resistant. They are available in sets of four in two sizes for blonde and dark furniture.

• Science News Letter, 80:112 August 12, 1961

⚙️ **MERMAID PONY TAIL**, shown in the photograph, is artificial hair that can be attached by means of a special water-proof adhesive to swim caps and beach hats or pinned to a person's short-cut hair. The pony tail comes in four natural hair



colors and can be combed, braided or curled.

• Science News Letter, 80:112 August 12, 1961

⚙️ **CORNER DISTILLATION RACK** utilizes usually wasted laboratory corner space. The two panels permit two independent complex setups to be carried on

simultaneously in the laboratory. Both vertical and horizontal rods are adjustable and services for water and drain, gas, air, vacuum, steam and electricity are conveniently located. In gray or green, the rack is 10 feet 6 inches along each wall, 8 feet high and 2 feet 6 inches deep.

• Science News Letter, 80:112 August 12, 1961

⚙️ **POCKET POST OFFICE** in a genuine pigskin case is handy for pocket or purse. Its built-in features include a stamp case, address-memo book, zippered money pocket, two extra utility pockets, a slim-style mechanical pencil, memo pad and a postal scale.

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⚙️ **HIGH-SPEED TIRES** for police and other emergency vehicles are made of 4-ply nylon with a scientifically determined cord angle designed to eliminate shock waves that cause blowouts. The tubeless tires come in four sizes to fit virtually all cars.

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⚙️ **U. S. FLAG EMBLEMS** for display on luggage, books, house doors or gift packages, are 2½ by 1¼-inch self-adhering labels of the 50-star flag. Sticking instantly to metal, leather, paper, wood or plastic, they do not harm the surface when removed.

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Nature Ramblings



Do You Know?

➤ **THE SONG** of the cicada is an unmistakable sign of approaching autumn. Some weather-wise prophets believe frost is only six weeks away, "because the locusts are singing."

It may be six weeks until frost, but the insect is singing to his mate, or perhaps merely singing for the fun of it, and cares nothing about the weather except that he likes it hot. The creature is not a locust, for a locust is a kind of grasshopper, and the cicada is a true insect, that is, with a long piercing beak instead of chewing jaws.

The dog-day cicada is a relatively long-lived insect. It exists as a grub or larva in the ground for two or three years, sucking the juices from the roots of plants. When it reaches maturity, the cicada tunnels to the surface of the ground, and some day, when there is no threat of rain, it comes out, crawls up the tree trunk and emerges from its shell as a fully formed winged insect.

The life history of the 17-year cicada is essentially the same, except that this species

Cicadas



is the longest-lived insect known to entomologists.

After their 17-year underground life, these insects spend only two or three months at most above ground. Their only function as adults is to mate, produce eggs for the next generation and then die.

The eggs are laid in the tender bark of young twigs, which are killed by the feeding of the newly hatched grubs. Later the larvae drop to the ground and dig themselves in for their long subterranean existence.

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A simple, inexpensive technique for evaluating blood circulation of the liver by injecting isotopes into the spleen allows the diagnosis to be made immediately at the patient's bedside.

The Japanese beetle feeds on 280 different kinds of plants.

As early as 940 B.C. the Chinese had discovered and harnessed natural gas.

More than 80% of personal injury accidents on the highways still involve driving violations and the fact that deaths have not risen sharply in recent years is due largely to better and more prompt medical care rather than care on the part of the drivers.

Super sensitive films have opened the door to almost universal use of photographic instrumentation for intricate research under difficult conditions.

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