

GENERAL SCIENCE

Furor Over a Red Maple: Symbol on Canada Flag

► THE RED MAPLE is making some people red with anger. Its prominent use on the new proposed Canadian flag is being discussed politically as well as botanically.

The political issue is whether the Canadians will have their own distinctive flag as proposed by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, who pledged last year that the Liberal government would produce a distinctive national flag within two years.

The botanical issue is the fact that the tree is found only in the eastern part of the country.

The proposed new design of the flag is three red maple leaves on one stem against a white field. Two blue stripes on either end of the flag represent Canada's motto, "From Sea to Sea."

The red maple, *Acer rubrum* L., is particularly beautiful in autumn when its leaves turn brilliant scarlet. Stretching sometimes as high as 100 or more feet, the red maple is a stately tree, growing mainly in bottomlands and along banks of streams and swamps.

The wood makes excellent furniture and its sap can be converted into delicious maple sugar.

The red maple leaf was first suggested as a suitable emblem for Canada by the French Canadians in 1805. After the First World War, the Canadian Expeditionary Force placed the red leaf on its badge, and it was officially embodied in the Canadian coat of arms.

Since 1945, this Canadian coat of arms has been displayed on the red Canadian flag which also has the design of the Union Jack, the British flag, in the upper left-hand corner.

• Science News Letter, 85:383 June 13, 1964

Nature Note

Diamonds in America

► DIAMOND HUNTING usually brings to mind visions of obscure mines somewhere in the steaming jungles of Africa.

However, diamonds have been found all over the United States, from North Carolina to California and from Wisconsin to Georgia. The largest diamond field in the United States, the Great Lakes region, has yielded about 50 stones, and undoubtedly contains 1,000 more for every one that has been found.

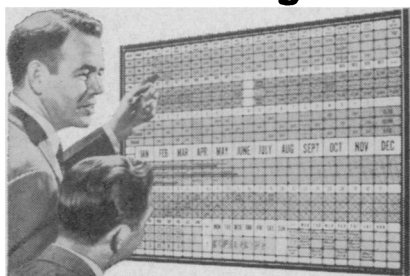
One of the largest diamonds ever found in this country was discovered on an Arkansas farm. It weighed 40.23 carats.

Diamonds, such as those found in the Great Lakes area, were deposited by glaciers moving across the land eons ago. Others were created and left by volcanoes boiling up from within the ground, such as a number found in the Appalachian region of the southeastern United States.

Diamonds in the rough are hard to identify. One stone, weighing 34.46 carats, was uncovered by a pitched horseshoe in a vacant lot in West Virginia in 1928. It was not identified as a diamond until 1943.

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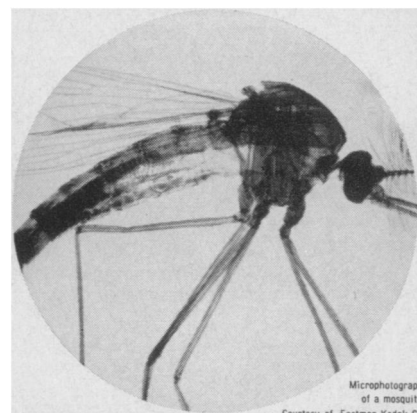
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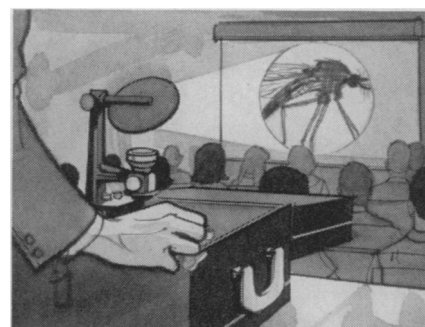
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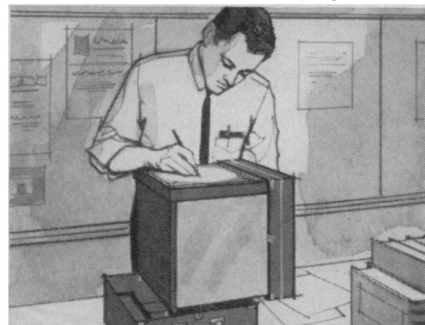
Microphotograph of a mosquito. Courtesy of Eastman Kodak Co.



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