

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **PLASTIC HEADSET** for use with office, laboratory and communications equipment can be worn for hours without discomfort. Weighing only 1.6 ounces, the headset is made of a butyrate plastic and nickel. It has a flexible headband and adjustable tone arms. The set's magnetic receivers rest on the temples.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

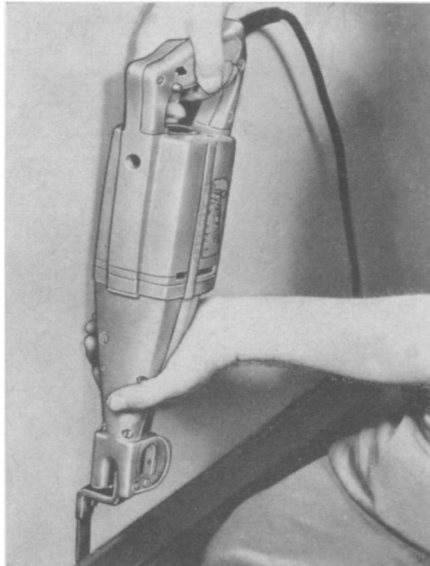
⚙️ **DEEP WELL FILTER** has a standard 1¼-inch pipe fitting for attachment to the end of the supply line in a well. A plug at its bottom can be removed to add more filters. The filter has an over-all 3½-inch diameter and is available in coarse, medium and fine pore sizes.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **LABORATORY MIXER** can whip up batches as small as five cubic inches. The mixer has a one-pint capacity and is completely demountable for cleaning. Corrosion- and abrasion-resistant materials are said to be used in all parts in contact with the materials to be mixed.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **RECIPROCATING SAW**, shown in the photograph, permits the user to cut flush with any surface and in any position. Equipped with a one-half horsepower motor, the saw delivers 2,500 strokes per minute. The saw has an arm for cutting flush that



can be reversed for right or left hand cuts and a rocker guide for direct cuts into wood or metal. The power saw weighs eight pounds.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **DUST COLLECTOR** and vacuum for cleaning up labs, shops and offices is powered by a ball-bearing motor that develops

⅞ horsepower. Equipped with a 2½-inch diameter hose, the collector comes with a 28-gallon fiber drum or can be used with a 24-gallon metal disposal can.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **PORTABLE POWER TOOL** is described as a complete home workshop packed into one unit. It can be set up on a card table and plugged into the wall socket. The 12-pound multi-purpose power tool can be converted from a jig saw to a disc sander, bench grinder, buffing tool and a flexible shaft machine.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **SHEET PROTECTORS** made of a polyester film are described as thinner, lighter and stronger than other such protectors. They are designed as transparent covers for sheets in notebooks, albums, displays and files and do not require reinforcers.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957

⚙️ **CALK CARTRIDGE** is said to eliminate the problem of dripping and oozing calk. Pressure on the trigger of the calking gun compresses a flexible plastic button in the cartridge that forces the calking compound out. A twist of the gun plunger rod stops the stream by relieving pressure on the plastic "stop-flow" button.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

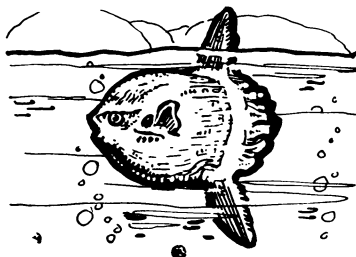
➤ SCIENTISTS tell us that if life exists on planets other than the earth, we should not expect it necessarily to bear a resemblance to any forms of life with which we are familiar. Thus, some day a valiant interplanetary pioneer from earth may be called on to describe the oddities of our world to some possible Martian intelligence.

How would he describe a fish to this Martian who had never seen, much less imagined, one?

Well, he might say that a fish spends all its time in and under the water. But what about the little mud skipper, which is equipped with "legs" with which it climbs agilely on branches above the water in search of insects?

He might say that fish breathe by gills, but that omits the lungfishes found in Africa, South America and Australia that can boast of a nice set of lungs. If kept too long under water, these fish will drown.

Fish From Mars?



Fish are scaly. No, this is not universally true, either. A good example of a fish without scales is the seahorse, which is covered with a bony armor, true scales having been lost in the process of its odd evolution.

Concerning the shape of fishes, our interplanetary explorer would be at an even greater disadvantage to describe this.

We all think immediately of the "typical" streamlined form—sharp head, slender, flattened body, tapering tail—but there are possibly as many exceptions to this as examples

of it. Again the queerly shaped seahorse is a prime specimen. Another is the ocean sunfish, *Mola mola*, shown in the picture. This huge fish, which is measured by the hundreds of pounds, seems all head and no tail.

Eels run to the other extreme in size and shape with their relatively small heads and very long bodies.

Then there are the flattened stingrays and skates and the super-skinny filefishes at the opposite poles in sideways or lateral length.

Possibly the batfish would strike a note of familiarity with the Martians, since this unlikely fish appears as if it might have come from another world. This fish has the head of a cow, reptile-like "legs," stumpy fins, a box-like skeleton, and a hard skin covered with "warts." Water taken in through the mouth is ejected from two circular openings behind its front "legs," giving it the appearance of being jet-propelled.

Science News Letter, September 14, 1957