

# • 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 1140. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **ATOMIC STRUCTURE KITS** for students and teachers contain clear, colorful plastic spheres of varying sizes for constructing crystal structures. Models can be built to demonstrate how atomic structure affects properties of materials, the differences between hexagonal close-packed, cubic close-packed and body centered cubic crystal structures.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **DIAMOND MARKER**, useful to hobbyists, laboratories and industrial plants, is an inexpensive diamond-tipped tool for engraving designs or permanent identification marks on glass, plastic or metal objects. The depth and width of lines are controlled by pressure and angle at which the tool is applied.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **TELEPHONE-CALL TIMER**, a pen-shaped instrument that times telephone calls, is especially useful for preventing extra costs arising from direct-dialing long distance calls. After dialing the number with the stub end, the instrument is pressed down to activate the timing mechanism. Colored bands register each minute of time charges.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **LIGHTWEIGHT FACSIMILE TRANSMITTER**, shown in the photograph, enables forward area troops to flash charts, maps and drawings to combat headquarters



in six minutes through radio or telephone line. Copy is slipped into the unit and a button pressed for transmission. Weighing only 27 pounds, it can be carried on a soldier's back and operated even on a moving vehicle.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **PHYSICS EXPERIMENTS PROJECTOR** enables the instructor to show many key physics experiments to large audiences.

Built for 500-watt lamps and suitable for showing lantern slides, it has a special attachment with an adjustable mirror that permits the vertical projection of demonstrations. A wide range of auxiliary equipment is available.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **COMPRESSOR/VACUUM-PUMP COMBINATION** is useful for classrooms and small labs as a continuous source of compressed air. With a steel case and a convenient work-space top, the apparatus can be used with distillation equipment, air torches, filter pumps, for aeration and many other laboratory and demonstration uses.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **LABORATORY TABLE-TOP MATERIAL** is a special polyester thermosetting plastic which can be shaped under heat to eliminate joints and seams in counter tops. Non-porous and fire- and chemical-resistant, it provides a smooth low-gloss working surface. Sheets can be produced in any length to provide a joint-free surface.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

⚙️ **AUTOMATIC BOOKMARK** is a nickel- or gold-plated steel device that clips to the back cover of any standard hard cover book. Lightweight, it keeps the place automatically until the book is finished and prevents wind-blown pages in out-of-doors reading. It will not mar or tear the thinnest page.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962



## Nature Ramblings



➤ ONE OF NATURE'S most fascinating underwater creatures is the starfish, a five-legged animal which is not a fish at all. It belongs to the class Asteroidea, animals with no backbone.

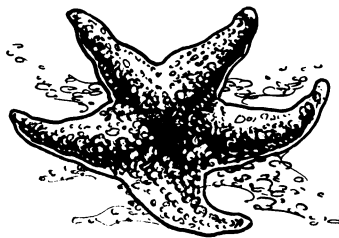
Starfish are relatives of the sea urchins, brittle stars, sea cucumbers and sea lilies, an odd phylum of animals with a five-sided pattern.

Although the five-armed type is best known, starfish can radiate as many as 40 arms, each containing transparent tubes with sucking disks. They have the unusual ability of regenerating or restoring new parts; they can even grow a new starfish from a single arm.

This strange ability caused big problems for oystermen some years ago. Since starfish prey on oysters and clams, oystermen would capture them, chop them up and throw the pieces back to sea, unknowingly increasing the number of the pests.

Starfish are slow-moving creatures, but can easily capture their still slower-moving prey.

### Starfish



They grasp an oyster or clam with hundreds of sucking disks and pull the shell apart. When it opens slightly, the starfish turns its stomach inside out through its mouth and envelops and digests the soft parts of the mollusk. In this manner, they can eat a bushel of clams or oysters in a year.

During high tide these animals travel up the beach on their leg stalks, and are left stranded to die in the sun as the tide swiftly retreats.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962

## Do You Know?

Belgian hothouse *strawberries* are packed in foam plastic for shipping.

About 28,000,000 Americans, or about one in six persons in the U.S., have some degree of *disability*.

The desire for *alcohol* does not stem from a vitamin deficiency, but from inadequate consumption of food as a whole.

The greatest percentage of disabled *children* in the United States are the result of congenital malformations.

The best temperature for warehouse *storage* of fruits and vegetables is 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

*Grants* totaling \$18,706,123 have been awarded to 141 schools of medicine, dentistry, and osteopathy to help strengthen their research and research training programs by the National Institutes of Health.

• Science News Letter, 81:256 April 21, 1962