

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **AIR SAMPLING UNIT** powered by a nonflammable liquefied gas analyzes lead contamination in storage tanks which have held antiknock gasoline. The portable unit, equipped with an automatic timer, can be set to take its own air samples. By changing reagents and comparator slides, the device can be used for substances other than lead.

• Science News Letter, 81:336 May 26, 1962

⚙️ **ENGRAVED MEDALLION** tells the condition of a patient unable to speak due to unconsciousness or shock. Inscriptions include one of several, such as "I am a cardiac," "Allergic to penicillin," etc., followed by "Please call a doctor." The medallion is available with a featherweight neck chain or in pin style and comes in polished aluminum or sterling silver.

• Science News Letter, 81:336 May 26, 1962

⚙️ **STREET-LIGHTING GLOBES** of tough butyrate plastic virtually eliminate replacement and servicing costs due to breakage by vandals. Costing less than their glass counterparts, the globes have a similar acorn shape and about the same light-transmission properties. They are exceptionally resistant to weathering.

• Science News Letter, 81:336 May 26, 1962

⚙️ **REUSABLE FILE HANDLE**, shown in the photograph, is made of impact- and torsion-resistant plastic and can be driven onto a file with a few quick hammer blows.



When the file is worn out, the handle can be removed and applied to another file. The reusable handles come in six different sizes to accommodate various hand file sizes.

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⚙️ **PLASTIC-COATED KITES** that can withstand wind buffeting which would shred uncoated paper are made of kraft paper treated with extruded polyethylene.

When the kites have heat sealed ends, they can be blown up to about 2,000 feet.

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⚙️ **CAN LID HOLDER** prevents spillage and scattering from a garbage can. The lid holder, made of tightly coiled metal springs, is slipped under the lid cover and linked to the garbage can handles. Non-rusting, it fits any size can.

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⚙️ **ICE REFERENCE JUNCTION** for ice weighs only two pounds and is electrically operated. It maintains a constant temperature of 32 degrees Fahrenheit with a temperature variance of less than 0.1 degree. Consuming only three watts of power, this reference junction is ideal for laboratories requiring continuous 24-hour operation.

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⚙️ **SPIKE DRIVER** is an explosive-actuated device that sinks spikes six inches into solid concrete or hard-frozen earth in seconds. Lightweight, completely self-contained and with built-in safety devices, emplacement of the tool requires only one man. Unaffected by temperature changes, it is invaluable in flood and hurricane emergencies.

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Nature Ramblings



Gray Squirrels

Photograph by GEORGE A. SMITH • Text by WILLIAM E. SMALL

➤ IN THE SPRING, nature's young begin emerging from the shady woodlands and open fields.

The young gray squirrels leave their nests early in May, merely six weeks after birth, their once naked pink skins covered by a light gray fur and their long climbing legs still shaky and unsure. This is the first litter of the year, with the second to follow in August.

Soon the spring babies will be scampering across the ground, stopping to sniff here and there, gathering nuts to bury for the winter.

A remarkable climber and runner, an adult can climb an 80-foot tree in 20 seconds, jump from swaying limbs and branches, and descend another tree trunk nose-first on a dead run. The beautiful bushy tail gracefully balances the rodent while peeking through the maze of leaves below.

During the spring and summer the infant squirrels will stay near the nest of sticks and grass, high in the branches or in a hollow tree. They will learn nest building and food gathering from the mother until the summer litter is born.

Although timid and alert in the wild, gray squirrels soon become tame enough to eat from a friendly hand. Quickly upset at infringements of their rights, however, they will "bark" at their perpetrator in guttural tones.

Western gray squirrels (*Sciurus griseus*) are quite similar in coloring and habit to their eastern cousins (*Sciurus carolinensis*), but the western squirrels are larger and display a handsomer tail and longer, finer fur. Both species make fine pets.

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