

## BIOLOGY LABORATORIES

### BY THE OLD FOSSIL

**SAINTPAULIA.** The BH successfully uses an improved method for rooting her leaf cuttings of the African Violet. She covers a tumbler full of water with a piece of wax paper and holds it in position with a rubber band. A sharp instrument punches a small hole in this paper. The petiole of the leaf is inserted in this hole and into the water below. It remains in this position for a period of three weeks or longer until it is rooted. The paper serves as a support for the leaf (or leaves if she is rooting more than one in the same tumbler). It also retards evaporation. Try the method on any plant you propagate vegetatively this way.

**GERANIUMS.** This fall I sent my greenhouse superintendent to Lincoln Park for some geranium cuttings. They had a particular variety I was interested in. I asked for a hundred but they only gave me fifty as these do not branch out much even when pinched back. I told Groves to ask Ed Hewitt, the Chief Horticulturist, how to make the cuttings. Ed explained "make the cut one half inch below the node and scrape this area with a sharp knife to break down the tough epidermis and rooting will be accelerated." He stated root hormone could or could not be used—they did not use it. We tried it here for several years and gave it up. I never could detect any difference for our semi-commercial practices here.

**MAKE YOUR GERANIUM CUTTINGS** in the fall after Labor Day. Keep them in damp sand for three weeks. Pot them up at the end of this time. Do not cover with newspaper the first few days nor over water. Space them with room in the beds. Feed them. When the growth is good pinch out the center growing tip. This forces the plant to branch and make a "bush". Shift to a larger pot in mid winter. We generally start them in about three inch pots.

**REPRINTS.** I have a few left of an article on *Greenhouse Techniques* I wrote for "School Science and Mathematics" several seasons

ago. Free for the asking. The Old Fossil, 5061 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago 25.

**SUCH IS PROOF POSITIVE** that we need laboratories for the study of biology and things biological. We just can not get all from the printed page. A microscope with a slide series could tell and show the student more than ten thousand words, and quicker.

**JOBS FOR WOMEN.** Smith College has an article in this same *Educational Focus*, Vol. XX No. 2. Out of two hundred and twenty two calls for scientifically trained women in the (1) teaching, (2) non-industrial and (3) industrial fields there were inquiries as follows: Bacteriology seventeen, botany three, biology twenty-eight, zoology ten, chemistry and biology eleven. The rest were in other sciences. Of this number twenty five were for teaching, thirty four for non-industrial and ten for industrial.

**THE JUNIOR** member of the firm was in a hurry to get out of the lab with me. I had more work to do. I propositioned her with some medicine droppers—said we would go as soon as she cleaned them. I figured it would take her a half hour before she gave up. She walks over to the desk, picks up a couple of pipe stem cleaners from an ash-tray and was ready in three minutes. You may use these for the smaller diameter glass rods. For your larger pipets and glass tubing you can get chenille-covered wire at your florist supply house. I now have some that is near half inch in diameter. You can clean a glass rod of any length with it by cutting it long enough.

**SUNFLOWER.** Had the head of a large one brought in. It measured just one meter in circumference. The boy said it was an Italian one. He of course had a grandparent that was a gardener in his spare time. One student asked—"is that where we get those pumpkin seeds from in these penny machines?" You can see that we must start biologically very low.

**BRILLE.** Do you know of any one that reads Braille? They may obtain *The Living Museum* printed for them for free. It now

is sent to over six hundred persons. You are also losing a good bet if you do not receive it. Over twenty thousand copies are sent out free. Virginia Eifert, editor. Write her for a copy and get your name on the mailing list: Fifth Floor, Centennial Building, Springfield, Illinois.

**AQUARIUMS.** These can be reset in fresh aquarium cement. Remove the last glass that was inserted first. You can find out which by examining the inside. Remove the rest in their order. Scrape the frame down to the metal and put on an even layer of cement. Replace the sides first then the ends. Insert the bottom last. Slight even pressure should be applied to each glass. You can find out if the surface has contact at all points by noting if there are any air bubbles in the cement where it contacts the glass. After the last insertion it is ready for the sand, water, and other biologicals. If you do not have the cement write me and I will see that you get it. It is not too expensive.

**BIOLOGY LABORATORIES.** Still at the same old stand. Write me with your tips and quips. News notes about biologists or things biological are acceptable. You will get full credit if printable. The Old Fossil, 5061 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago 25, Illinois.

**ANY ONE KNOW** where I can get some *Aedes* mosquito eggs? If you can get them drop them in some 'five percenter' formaldehyde or even some clear pickle juice from the pantry. Pack them in a carton and send them on. I will pay you for them. Need a few dozen.

**CAN ALSO USE** *Diphyllbothrium mansonii* by the dozen, preserved in five per cent formalin or 70 per cent alcohol. I would get down on my knees for a dozen or more *Paragonimus westermani* preserved in the same way. We will pay you for these. If you are a collector of any of these write me and let me know.

**COLLECTORS OR POTENTIAL COLLECTORS** are in

demand for part time work. Many biologists are in a position to collect materials for the trade. If you have collected in the past write and let us know what you have available or can collect. If you would like to collect materials let us know what is available and we could tell you about the market for that material.

**AARDVARK.** The *Educational Focus* had an article titled "Three Artists Couldn't Draw an Aardvark." This was a reprint from *Parade* magazine who asked three top artists to draw an Aardete. from an Encyclopedia Britannica description. The reproductions are there for your judgment. The results look like a Capps Little Abner animation of Slobvania.

## NATIONAL TEACHER EXAMINATIONS

The National Teacher Examinations, prepared and administered annually by Educational Testing Service, under sponsorship of the American Council on Education, will be given at testing centers throughout the United States on Saturday, February 18, 1950.

At the one-day testing session a candidate may take the Common Examinations, which include tests in General Culture, Mental Abilities and Basic Skills, and Professional Information; and one of eleven Optional Examinations, designed to demonstrate mastery of subject matter to be taught. The college which a candidate is attending or the school system in which he is seeking employment will advise him whether he must offer the National Teacher Examinations and which of the tests he should take.

Application forms, and a Bulletin of Information describing registration procedure and containing sample test questions, may be obtained from college officials, school superintendents, or directly from Educational Testing Service, P. O. Box 592, Princeton, New Jersey. A completed application, accompanied by the proper examination fee, should reach the ETS office not later than January 20, 1950.