

# Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS  
Ranger-Naturalist

In studying animals, one is always baffled: where does blind instinct leave off? And where, possibly, does reasoning begin? Take the deadly relationship of the tarantula spider and digger wasp of our Southland. Customarily tarantulas live in deep burrows from which they emerge at dusk and into which they retire at dawn. Although the male dies in a few weeks after mating, the female lives many years and lays from 200 to 400 eggs at a time, thus is capable of producing several



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thousand young. Upon birth, each of these young are immediately independent. Although tarantulas have notoriously poor eyesight and little or no sense of hearing, they have an extremely delicate sense of touch—and when touched, if hungry, attack immediately. So swiftly, in fact, that when it seizes a cricket the human eye is too slow to record the swift assault. But when not hungry, an insect can walk under its hairy body unharmed. Now, for its deadly enemy, our digger wasp Pepsis. These solitary wasps of beautiful blue have a wing span of

## On The Side

By E. V. DURLING  
(Distributed by King Features Syndicate, Inc.)

The average Danish bachelor would not think of accepting a young woman's proposal of marriage unless she could display a diploma indicating her graduation from a "housewife school." In these Danish schools young women are given a thorough six-month course in housekeeping, cooking, child rearing and interior decoration. Similar courses are given in this country in so-called "brides schools." But they are not greatly attended. The average American girl waits until she is married to learn how to cook and be an efficient housewife.

## Among The Married

What did your wife weigh on her wedding day? What were her measurements on that happy occasion? Has she still her "bride's figure?" A marked increase in weight on a wife's part frequently develops a dangerous situation. Her spouse's love may begin to fade. He may permit his eyes to wander longingly in the direction stream-lined beauties passing by. In Chicago a husband offered his wife's increase in weight as grounds for divorce. What's more the judge presiding expressed the view there was justice in this plea. When married, the wife in question was five feet, two inches, and weighed 137. Eighteen years later she was still five feet, two, but weighed 190! The judge asked the husband if he would agree to cancel the divorce plea if his wife would reduce her weight to what it was when she was a bride. The husband agreed to that. The wife was given six months to affect the reduction. She did it.

## Profitable Disc

From one recording of the song titled "Little Things Mean A Lot," Kitty Kallen has collected royalties amounting to \$80,000. Remember when they said the introduction of the radio would kill the phonograph recording business?

## Please Note

The whining excuse that carrying 132 pounds would be a menace to Nashua's future health and breeding ability is an insult to any well informed turf fan's intelligence. Discovery who carried 136 pounds to victory in the Brooklyn handicap is now 25 years old, in good health and the possessor of a remarkable breeding record.

## Asides

William Franklin Beedle, Cinema luminary professionally known as William Holden. He is a native of O'Fallon, Ill. His future is well taken care of. He has a 14-year contract calling for a salary of about \$6,000 a week. Not bad. Still Tom Mix, the great western star of the yesteryear, had a contract calling for \$20,000 a week. And that was when the dollar had three times its present buying power and the income tax was much less. . . . Charles B. Wrightsman, Texas oil tycoon. He is a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, the second best preparatory school in America. Now quite an art collector. Recently paid \$350,000 for Vermeer's "Portrait of Young Girl."

## Princess

Grace Kelly is now a princess but indications are that her feelings are still 100 per cent American. She sailed to her wedding on an American ship and plans to make her first trip home on another American ship, the S.S. United States. More power to her.

about four inches and live on nectar. When excited they give off a warning odor. Their sting is potent, much worse than that of a bee. In the adult stage, the wasp lives a few months and the female produces but a few eggs, one at a time every two or three days.

## One for Each Egg

And now for their deadly relationship. For each of its eggs, the mother wasp must provide one adult paralyzed tarantula. This tiny egg, the mother wasp attaches to the host. Upon hatching, the immature young feeds on the tarantula's body—it takes no other food or water—and by the time it has finished its enormous meal, it is ready to take up wasphood—and the female to lay her eggs in other tarantulas.

As soon as the egg within the female wasp is almost ready to be laid—and note the timing—the mother wasp at once goes tarantula hunting. Mind, it is a solitary wasp and has never seen a tarantula before. But flying low over the ground, towards dusk, the wasp knows exactly where to look for its victim, near the mouth of a tarantula burrow, a round hole edged with silk.

And the knowing wasp is a sharp entomologist. Each species of this wasp knows its spiders by heart—it requires a certain species of tarantula, and never attacks the wrong kind.

To identify the right species—and there are many—the digger wasp explores the tarantula spider with her antennae, crawling under it and walking over it without arousing any hostility although the investigation may cause the tarantula to rise up on all eight legs as if on stilts, standing this way sometimes for several minutes.

Satisfied that this is the right species, the knowing wasp now moves off a few inches and excavates a hole up to 10 inches deep, with a diameter just a fraction larger than the spider's width—the spiders grave.

## They Roll on Ground

Grave finished, the wasp returns to its ghastly job. Again, she feels over her victim. This time searching for exactly the right spot—and there is only one spot where she could penetrate the tarantula's horny skeleton. Finally, spot found, she grasps one of the spider's legs in her powerful jaws. Now a terrifying battle begins: the two roll over and over on the ground. But the outcome is at ways the same—the wasp thrusts her sting deep into the soft vital spot and holds it there for a few seconds, pumping in the poison.

Almost immediately, the tarantula falls paralyzed on its back, its legs stop twitching and its heart stops beating. Yet it is not dead, only paralyzed—kept in a moist place, it can be restored to some sensitivity months later.

Next, the wasp drags the helpless tarantula into the bottom of the grave, attaches her egg with a sticky secretion, emerges, fills the grave with soil carried bit by bit in her jaws, and finally tamps the ground all around evenly to hide any trace of the grave from prowlers. Her offspring is safely started in life.

Contrast the two: the tarantula's confusion and stupidity; the wasp's seemingly intelligent actions.

Recognizing this, nature has provided the answer: fertility. To keep the species going, the tarantula is capable of giving birth to several thousands; the wasp to less than 1/100th part of this number. And so, digger wasp and tarantula thrive.

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## Examiner Completes First of Hearings

Washington — (AP) — A Federal Power commission examiner Friday completed the first round of hearings on the Pacific Northwest Power company's proposal to build a \$217.4 million hydroelectric project on the Snake river below Hells Canyon. Hearings before Chief Examiner Edward B. Marsh will resume on Sept. 24.

Pacific Northwest is a generating company formed by four Northwestern utilities. It has proposed a two-dam project which would generate almost 1.2 million kilowatts. The company said it would be the only new development capable of relieving critical power shortages in the area in 1960.

## Use Tribune Want Ads

## Around Hollywood

By ALINE MOSSBY  
United Press Correspondent

Editor's note: Aline Mosby is on vacation. Sheree North takes pen in hand today to complain about the lack of comedies in the movies.

## By SHEREE NORTH

Written for United Press Hollywood — (AP) — Everyone is so busy contemplating their own novels since the New York Actor's Studio routine; everyone is so darn serious about the thespian art, that people are forgetting the wonderful art of making people laugh. My agent has given me about

60 scripts to read—but not one of them made me smile, much less grin or chuckle.

It seems to me the only people who still make the art of laughter an art are the French, especially Fernandel. Everyone else in all the drama classes is working on "Hedda Gabler."

## Laugh-getting Difficult

Take those wonderful scripts which two of us in class will get up and go—but not one of us can get up and make someone else laugh.

We don't seem to have many performers who can make us

laugh. I've seen some of the stuff that's supposed to be great comedy on TV—I don't mean a Sid Caesar or individual comedians. I mean a play that has comedy situations. You don't see them.

I liked "I Am A Camera." It was a little long, but it had wonderful comedy touches. I'd like to see more of that type of thing. Nowadays everyone is interested in taking off their makeup and doing the "Snake-pit" routine.

## More Comedy Needed

What the world needs is more comedy like "The Sheep Has Five Legs," "The Little World of Don Camillo," and the Alec

Monday, August 20, 1956

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—SEVEN

Guinness comedies, and more Cary Grant. Above all, Cary Grant. Remember "Bringing Up Baby" with Cary and Katherine Hepburn? What's Cary doing in a Spanish drama, if that's what it is, like "The Pride And The Passion." Come back, Cary, to what you're the undisputed master of—light comedy.

Maybe the lack of comedies is the fault of writers rather than actors. When you get some good comedy situations in a picture you're glad you're in it. I don't have the comedy in my latest, "The Best Things in Life Are Free," but I do in the next.

"Do-Re-Mi," from a story in the Atlantic Monthly. When I read the story I never dreamed I'd get to do it.

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