

tigue as a result of the blood-letting. In fact, the psychological effect is a new stimulus to greater effort and improvement in morale, like a 'shot in the arm.'

Dr. Taylor reported that in one large city where 10,000 consecutive donors were given follow-up cards, less than one in 100 of the more than three-fourths who replied had colds or sore throats in the week following the blood donation. This was less than the rate for colds among the general population of the community at the time.

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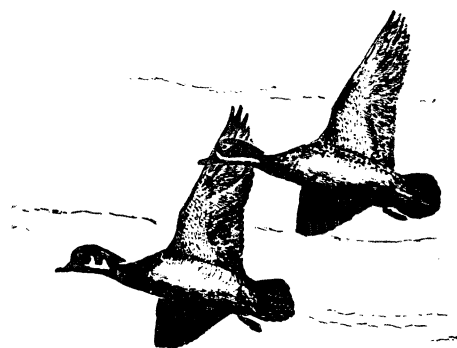
WILDLIFE

Lifesaver Made For Fish In Irrigation Ditches

➤ SERIOUS FISH losses are one of the great worries of irrigation system management; the fish wander from the stream into irrigation ditches, until they are at last stranded in the fields to die. Various kinds of screens are placed in flumes to stop them, but these get clogged with floating debris, interfering with the flow of the water.

Richard Roberts of Cokeville, Wyo., who has died since his application was filed, invented a cylindrical screen, kept rotating by a horizontal paddlewheel placed partly athwart the flume. Ribs at intervals on the cylinder bear projecting fingers, which pick up the debris and throw it out of the way. The water is thus free to flow, but the fish still cannot get through the screen barrier. Patent 2,328,297, issued on this invention, is in charge of Floyd L. Roberts of Cokeville, Wyo., administrator.

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DUCK STAMP—A "must" item for duck hunters and preferred by stamp collectors is this Federal migratory-bird hunting stamp, 1943-44 issue. The color is Indian red and it is reproduced from an etching by Walter E. Bohl, of Columbus, Wisc.

MEDICINE

New War Hazard

Added to all the other dangers and discomforts of war in the China-Burma-India theater is a new itching rash caused by laundry mark.

➤ ADDED to the hazards of war in the China-Burma-India theater is a distressing and in some cases temporarily incapacitating skin disease called dhobie mark dermatitis.

This new disease is an itching rash that breaks out on the neck, at the waistline and on the back or sides of the feet, ankles or lower part of the legs. It comes from contact with the marking fluid which native dhobies or washermen use for marking laundry, Maj. Clarence S. Livingood, Lieut. Arthur M. Rogers and Lieut. Col. Thomas Fitz-Hugh, Jr., of the 20th General Hospital, report. (*Journal, American Medical Association*, Sept. 4)

More than one-tenth of the men and one-fifth of the officers exposed to the marking fluid suffered with the skin trouble. Its importance "as a cause of disability in American officers and men in this theater," the medical officers comment, "is obvious."

Dhobie laundered clothes have previously been blamed for spread of a fungus infection of the skin popularly and medically termed "dhobie itch." This name is misleading, the medical officers state, and should be abandoned. The dhobie mark skin trouble is not a fungus infection, they found. Dhobie laundering, they indicate, may be hard on the clothes, buttons being broken "with disturbing regularity," but the process is not likely to spread fungus infection.

Dhobies mark laundry by pushing a straight pin through the hard capsule of the nut of the ral or bella gutti tree. The pin picks up enough dark brown or black fluid from the nut to make small crosses, dots or lines for identifying laundry. The marks are usually put on the inside of collar bands, inside the waistbands of shorts or trousers, and near the top or above the heel of socks. The regions affected by the skin trouble correspond to these locations.

The itching subsides and sores begin to heal as soon as dhobie-marked clothing is discarded. For persons sensitive to the dhobie mark, the officers advise: repeated washing of marked clothes; cutting out marked parts with scissors; furnishing dhobies with commercial in-

delible ink for marking; covering the marks with adhesive tape or similar material; or personal dhobies or self service without marking, this last being unsatisfactory but the safest for highly susceptible persons.

The natives, incidentally, have a common superstition that the ral or bella gutti tree has strong "likes" and "dislikes" for certain persons, "poisoning" its enemies when they approach the tree. The "poisoning" takes the form of severe itching skin trouble and the medical officers believe it may come from touching the leaves of the tree.

Lacking library facilities, the officers were unable to identify the tree except by the names of ral or bella gutti supplied by a line officer of the Indian army.

Their report recalls a U. S. Public Health Service finding, (*See SNL*, March 20) and now reported in detail to physicians in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. This finding concerned an outbreak of skin trouble among employees of a government department in Washington who opened a sealed mail pouch containing among other things a bottle of thick black oil which had become partially opened and some spilled. The trouble, the federal health service found, was due to the oil which was labeled Bhilawanol Oil. It comes from the juice of the marking nut tree (*Semecarpus anacardium*), which grows in the tropical outer Himalayas and the hotter parts of India.

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ENGINEERING

Sixty Great Dams Designed By John Lucian Savage

See Front Cover

➤ GRAND COULEE dam, shown on the front cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, is just one of 60 major dams in the United States for which credit must be given to one designer, John Lucian Savage, who has been a public servant for 26 years.

Of these 60 dams, Grand Coulee and Boulder are considered the two mightiest weapons of this or any other war.

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