

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **CAR RACKS** are small blocks of neoprene rubber. Mounted on top of the roof to hold fishing rods, the blocks are held in place by strong permanent magnets on their undersides. The carriers can be rolled off the roof or left on the car indefinitely without harm from sun and rain. Tie-down cords hold the rods in place.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **SCRAPING RODS** for removing paint, grime and rust from corners and grooved or rounded surfaces has 26 flexible prongs of spring steel. Permanently imbedded in a wooden handle, the prongs permit the scraper to be pulled over flat or irregular contours with only a small amount of pressure.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **CHEMICAL CARRIER** replaces the wooden crate of the past. Made of welded steel rod construction and epoxy-phenolic coating, the carrier is designed to carry a 13-gallon puncture-proof polyethylene bottle. Together, the carrier and bottle weigh 60% less than glass carboys and wooden crates the same size.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **TONE ARM KIT** is designed for the do-it-yourself high fidelity fan. The kit consists of three basic parts and springs are not used in any part of the arm structure.



The arm for self-assembly is available in 12-inch or 16-inch lengths.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **EXPANDABLE HAMPER**, shown in the photograph, holds more than four bushels of laundry. Made of heavy-duty,

industrial-type elastic, the hamper can be attached to the ceiling or joists of the basement, or to the end of a laundry chute. Washable, the empty webbing-hamper is 22 by 26 by 9 inches.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **HIGH-SPEED SCALE** is designed to reduce normal precision weighing time by 50%. A product of the Netherlands, the laboratory tool is equipped with liquid damping for rapid balance. The instrument has sliding counterweights on two horizontal tare bars with a capacity of 0 to 50 and 0 to 500 grams.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **TRAVEL DESK** can be used in the car for making notes, records or holding maps. The six-and-one-quarter-inch by ten-inch metal clip board is placed under the dash and can be swung out for use. Four leveling screws keep the desk flat. A pad and magnetic pencil are included with the car desk.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956

⚙️ **TANK BALL ATTACHMENT** has a rubber tube that releases air so the ball drops after releasing enough water. A water-saving device, the toilet tank ball can be installed in five minutes and is described as preventing flooding of septic tanks.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

Why Watch Birds?

► THERE IS, according to Walt Kelly, deep in the heart of the Okefenokee Swamp, an organization of bird lovers—the Audible Boy Bird Watchers. Its acting president is the versatile opossum, Pogo.

Cartoonists and comics find it hard to resist making a bit of fun at the expense of the bird watchers. Indeed, the antics of the bird watching fraternity excite the curiosity and tickle the ribs of the non-bird watching world. What compelling power, they wonder, makes this group rise before dawn on a frigid winter morning to look through frost-covered glasses at "dickey birds?"

Like fishermen, bird watchers are born, not made. It may take most of a lifetime for a person to learn he is a bird watcher, but thereafter he takes to the field, glasses in hand and a gleam in his eye.

Actually, in the majority of cases it is



not love of birds, but love of the out-of-doors, that makes a person take up the strange role of bird watcher. The birds furnish the excuse some of us need to break away from the city's brick and concrete for a day of "idleness" close to trees and earth and wild things.

And what better excuse is there than to

become familiar with the ever-changing bird life of an area? Skill in identification of the birds—coming only with arduous practice—furnishes challenge. Hunting new or rare species, early or late records, on your birding ground awakens the competitive spirit. Learning the habits of the different birds rewards the curious.

Then there are the beauty and mystery of the birds themselves. Probably no other wild creatures are so satisfying to man's sense of the beautiful as the birds. They sparkle in song, flight, color. The age-old riddle of migration which is made vivid by field work lends itself to the speculative mind.

After the spell of bird watching has taken hold of a person, he still laughs along with the others to the old jokes about "double breasted seersuckers" and the like, but on his day off you will find him where the birding is best.

Science News Letter, November 3, 1956