

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **METAL CABINETS** to house instrumentation, automation, and electronics equipment can be made from an industrial do-it-yourself "building block" set. The set can be put together to form different sized and shaped cabinets. It is made up of 75 mass-produced enclosures and 125 sub-parts.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **ELECTRIC WATCH** is billed as the world's first. No mainspring, winding or shaking is necessary. The watch movement is powered by a tiny energizer the size of a small shirt button. It is designed to run for a minimum of 12 months.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **NONFLAMMABLE SOLVENTS** remove oil, grease and dirt without harming delicate metal parts or electrical insulation. Designed for special industrial cleaning problems, the solvents are available in three types, depending on their boiling point, and in container sizes ranging from 10 to 55 gallons.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **POCKET SAW** with a flexible silicon-steel blade is designed for odd sawing jobs in the field. Double spiral teeth cut through heavy shrubbery, hardwoods and timber. Handles of the cutting tool are two steel



rings, attached to each end of the foot-and-a-half-long blade, as shown in the photograph. To saw, the tool is pulled back and forth. Folded, the saw fits into a pocket.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **OUTDOOR LANTERN SYSTEM** is a string of three lanterns on 30 feet of rubber-covered cord. Designed for all-weather use,

the lantern shades are made of a butyrate plastic. Hangers permit the system to be mounted on trees, roofs or wires. Two or more of the three-lantern strings can be plugged together in a continuous chain.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **ELECTRONIC HIGHWAY FLASHER** is described as the first to use transistors. Available in four models, the flashers will operate in temperatures ranging from 40 degrees below zero Fahrenheit to 140 degrees above. The flashing light can be regulated to the number of flashes per minute desired.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **UMBRELLA TENT** has zippered storm door, screen door and three insect-proof windows. It also has a sewed-in canvas floor and 10-foot awning. The tent is on an all-aluminum frame that weighs 12 pounds and has no center pole.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957

⚙️ **BOOT SHOES** are designed for the do-it-yourselfer. For indoor or outdoor wear, the Indian-modeled footwear can be made from oak leather soles, foam rubber insoles and moccasin cowhide tops. Boot kit contains soles, uppers and waxed lacing thread with a needle.

Science News Letter, January 26, 1957



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ THE WINTER SUN had just set, hiding the beach, marshes and pine woods of Bald Point in darkness. At the edge of a thicket, a cardinal sounded his last call note of the day. High overhead a flock of Canada geese flew by invisibly, their honking scarcely audible. Then all was quiet.

The naturalists began to put their field glasses in their leather cases, for surely the day's birdwatching was over. Reluctant to call it quits, one of the group made a last scan of the horizon. There on the edge of the far marsh he saw the silhouette of a giant, stark pine, and on the uppermost dead branch was the outline of a large bird.

"Well, there's the last blue heron," he called out to his companions. But then he took a closer look, for this bird seemed too squat, too close to the limb to be a heron. He took out his field glasses again and focused them on the dark figure. Magnified seven times, the bird took on a new

Specter of the Swamp



shape. There were no long neck and long legs, just a big, fluffed body and a large head stuck neckless on it, like a child's snowman. Then he saw the "horns": two tufted ears that projected from the head like the horns of some imp or devil.

He had found the great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), the inhabitant of dense forests and swamps, the most formidable in appearance and most powerful of the American owls. These great birds of prey are creatures of the dusk and night and are not

often seen by man. The naturalists of Bald Point were more than lucky to add this one to their list.

The horned owl is nearly two feet in length and is the only large owl with the distinctive ear tufts. His wingspread is from 35 to 52 inches, greater than that of the red-tailed hawk which it also outdistances in bulk. The horned owl's cry is a deep-toned hoot, usually five in succession: "hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo, hoooo." This may vary with a blood-curdling shriek, an awesome sound to break the quiet of the winter forest night.

The horned owl is a voracious eater and will attack almost anything from rats to wild turkeys or other owls. Even hawks become prey to the great horned owl. Among his foods is the house cat, which has led to his nickname of "cat owl." While he does not take a large share of game birds and animals, this "bad habit" is probably compensated for by his usefulness as a rodent killer.

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