

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **AUTOMATIC THREADING 8 MM MOVIE PROJECTOR** "whisks" the film through the threading mechanism in less than three seconds. This automatic threading mechanism forms the film loops, engages the sprocket teeth and directs the film through the proper channel. It can also restore a lost film loop without stopping the projector.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

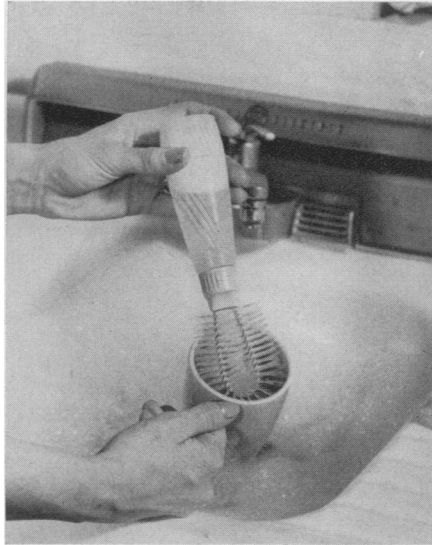
⚙️ **FOOD STRAINER AND DRAINER** made of aluminum is designed to prevent burns and save food. It locks onto the edge of a pot or bowl and can be adjusted to fit many sizes of pots and pans.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **SOLAR COOK STOVE** is said to be able to cook four large hamburgers in less than ten minutes on a clear day. The cooker has aluminized plastic dual reflectors and aluminum and steel structural supports and pan. The total weight is less than four pounds.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **FOUNTAIN BRUSH** designed to make dishwashing easier combines a rounded and tufted nylon brush with a polyethylene plastic bottle. The screw-on head is pierced so that water and detergent can be squeezed over the brush. The kitchen aid, shown in



the photograph, keeps hands out of water, dries quickly and is odor-free.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **"SKID-CHAINS"** for shoes provide traction on icy surfaces. The skid-chain is in the form of a triangle with one-half-inch rubber bands fastened through metal loops

at each end. One rubber band is slipped over the toe of a shoe and the other over the heel. The chain is brought along the sole of the shoe.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **UNDERWATER VIEWER** for children is a ten-inch inflated pillow made of a vinyl plastic sheeting. By pressing the pillow against the surface of the water a child can look through clear plastic windows at the undersea world below. The pillow can double as a beach ball and floating toy.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **ALUMINUM SIDING** that is described as self-insulating has a blanket of fiber glass laminated to the back of the aluminum clapboard. The fiber glass blanket is backed with a coated aluminum reflective insulation sheet. It is available in seven colors.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1958

⚙️ **DE-ICING AND DE-MISTING DEVICE** for automobile and ship windshields is a British development. It consists of the insertion into panels of glass of a transparent film of gold and metal oxide. Glass panels as large as 30 by 42 inches can be treated. The laminated anti-ice device is said to operate on voltages ranging from 24 to 240.

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Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

A Lesser Role

➤ ALL LIVING things are creatures of their surroundings. Form, habits and every particular of their lives are molded through eons of adapting to their environments.

When the familiar environment suddenly changes, due to natural or man-made causes, a plant or animal must move swiftly to conform to the new conditions. If the living organism does not it faces a losing fight in the struggle for survival.

One way of facing changing times and conditions is to diminish in numbers, alter in habits and "play a lesser role," while trying to hold on. The alligators of the southeastern United States present a good example of this, comparing their abundance and habits today with just two centuries ago.

In 1774, the Quaker naturalist William Bartram was voyaging alone on a seldom traveled part of the St. Johns River, Florida. He had pitched camp on the bank and set out in his boat to catch a string of fish for supper. He writes:



"I furnished myself with a club for my defense, went on board, and penetrating the first line of those (alligators) which surrounded my harbour, they gave way . . . but ere I had half-way reached the place, I was attacked on all sides, several endeavouring to upset the canoe.

"My situation now became precarious to the last degree: two very large ones attacked me closely, at the same instant, rushing up with their heads and part of their bodies above the water, roaring terribly and belching floods of water over me . . .

"I applied my weapons some effectually about me, though at random, that I was so successful as to beat them off a little; when, finding that they desired to renew the battle, I made for shore, as the only means left for my preservation . . ."

Such were the alligators of the 18th century. But since that time, Bartram's club and flintlock have been replaced with shotguns and automatic rifles. Cities have been built on what was once the alligators' domain. Drainage ditches have taken their feeding grounds.

The old belligerent ways of the alligators were not enough for the new environment that has come along with men. The aggressive bull 'gator who did not fear to attack a boat has yielded to the stealthy, secretive one, the only kind fitted for survival in a land filled with humans.

To see alligators today, you have to hunt for them. They have long given up hunting humans! This is a lesser role, but it has allowed the creatures to survive in a changing world.

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