

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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**LATEX PAINT** can be used inside or outside on concrete floors, walls, patios, steps and porches. It is easy to apply and dries in less than an hour. Warm, soapy water will clean paint from hands and equipment.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**NUT REMOVER KIT** enables rusted or frozen nuts to be split and removed quickly and without damage to bolt or threads. It consists of a cast steel instrument, with a hole for the nut at one end and a shaft for insertion of a steel cutter. The steel cutter is screwed through the shaft and against the nut until the nut splits. The device is said to cut over 100 nuts without re-sharpening.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**SPLICING TAPE** for motion picture film is available in a clear plastic dispenser. The tape is said to retain its size, moisture and flexibility, and to hold with all types of film bases.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**HAND-SIZE GREASER** of lightweight plastic, shown in the photograph, facilitates lubrication of grease fittings on lawn mowers, automobiles, workshop tools and out-



board motors. With a press of the thumb on a plunger, the greaser delivers up to 3,000 pounds pressure per square inch through a three-inch nozzle.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**WINDOW WASHER** has a rotating horsehair brush on the end of an aluminum pole adjustable from 4½ to 15 feet. The

washer has a built-in sudsers and can be used to wash second-story windows from the ground. It can also be used on automobiles.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**SMALL TIME ALARM** can be used as a money clip or tie clasp or can be clipped any place you would put a fountain pen. It can be set for any time up to three hours and 55 minutes. It buzzes when the hand reaches the zero hour.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**ALUMINUM DOCKS** are rustproof, and free from corrosion and rot. Designed for summer water-front homes, the docks come in 45-pound, eight-by-three-foot sections that are easy to install and remove. The decking is coated with skid-proof enamel abrasive tread in various colors.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959

**WALL DECORATING KIT** has a plastic stencil pattern, an application brush, a container of blending color in a choice of 12 colors, and instructions. The colors are fast drying, washable and can be applied to any surface that will take ordinary oil paint.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

### Birds in the Hand

THE FLOCK of shorebirds whirled over the marsh so fast that their wings made a noise audible to the naturalist who watched them so eagerly. At first they circled high, then spotting a clustered group of their companions resting on the shore, they came toward the earth, though hardly lessening their speed.

But as if some invisible hand had snatched them from the sky, three of the flock abruptly stopped in mid-air, struggled briefly, then hung limply five feet from the ground.

The naturalist ran forward, and in a brief moment had them disentangled from the fine, almost invisible webbing of the Japanese mist net which had stopped and held them without causing them the least injury. And he gave a fond look to the wooden decoys beneath the net that had attracted the birds to his net!

In just a few minutes he had taken cer-



tain measurements from his captive birds, fastened numbered aluminum bands to their legs, and set them free—three more banded birds who might help in solving the age-old mystery of migration.

Scientific banding dates back to 1899, when a Danish teacher began to put rings on storks, teals, starlings and a few other birds. By 1902, an American scientist was using numbered bands, and in 1909 the American Bird Banding Association was founded to centralize the growing program.

The task of keeping up with the growing number of banded bird records became so great that in 1920 the job was taken over by the U.S. Biological Survey (now the Fish and Wildlife Service).

Some seven million birds have already been banded in the program with another 300,000 to 400,000 new banded birds reported each year to headquarters in Laurel, Md. Almost a quarter of a million returns have been recorded from these banded birds, furnishing extremely valuable data on migration, life history, longevity and other phases of bird life not available by any other means.

To the bird watcher who "graduates" to bird bander, the old phrase about birds in hand versus birds in the bush takes on a new meaning. He feels as though the banded bird is "his." There is an incomparable excitement that comes when he hears that "his" bird was recovered in some far away region.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1959