

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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**CLOTHES HOOK CHAIN** for closets enables articles to be hung at all levels. Designed to save closet space, the chrome chain consists of clothes hooks linked together.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**CAMPING STOOL** weighs only one and a half pounds and folds to six by six and a half inches. The stool is constructed of sturdy steel and canvas. It is a great convenience for portability and space saving. The stool has a six- by 12-inch seat when unfolded.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**ELECTRICAL OUTLET** mounted on the wall can hold eight or more plugs simultaneously. Although all eight appliances should not be turned on at the same time, the tangled wires and the inconvenience of having to disconnect one plug to insert another are eliminated. The outlet is 11½ inches long.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**DANCING DOLLS** go into a lively dance when a spring is wound. The dolls, 8½ inches high, are imported and colorfully dressed. A Red Riding Hood doll, a goose girl doll, and Scotch dolls with clan



skirts and English dolls in sailor outfits, shown in the photograph, are available.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**LIGHT CONTROLLER** for the home automatically turns lights on in the evening

and turns them off the next morning. The device, placed next to a window, is responsive to natural light conditions. It can eliminate returning home to a dark house.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**METAL CUTTER** is a single shear made of aluminum and weighing only 12 ounces. It drills its own starter hole in light materials. The shear is said to cut cleanly and accurately on a variety of sheeting and most nonbrittle material.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**ELECTRICAL COMBINATION LOCK** has no tell-tale tumblers to guide burglars. When the correct combination is dialed, an electrical circuit is completed. The lock can be supplied with four different combinations, each performing a different job. Combinations can be changed without the aid of a locksmith.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959

**SOLITAIRE BOARD** for devotees who like their rows of cards straight is made of plastic-coated hardboard. Seven rows of diagonal slots hold the seven rows of cards and four special plastic clips at the top hold the aces.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

THERE IS A NIP in the air now over much of the country, warning the human population to look to the fuel supply, check the furnace, and get topcoats out of moth balls. Some persons are even making preparations for a "flight" south to avoid the rigors of the coming winter.

The same is true among the animals.

Those that must spend the winter in the north are laying in fuel, in the form of a thick layer of fat, for nourishment and warmth in the cold days ahead. Others are preparing their homes with extra linings of warm leaves and patching weak spots. As for topcoats, the furred animals are putting on fine new pelts.

There are the lucky ones which simply leave the cold and snow behind them, as they fly to the southlands. The autumn migration has already begun for many or most of the northern-nesting birds. Those like the barn swallow which spend the winter on the South American continent have virtually all abandoned their summer

### Autumn Flight



homes and can be seen in growing flocks along the river courses and coasts of the southern states. They stay for a while, as if gaining courage for the flight over the Gulf and Caribbean. Then one day they all go, leaving the area empty and waiting for another group of late-arriving migrants.

In terms of distance covered, shorebirds hold the record for autumn migration. The Arctic tern, for example, nests above the Arctic Circle in summer, then flies south to spend the winter below the Antarctic Circle.

The golden plover also equals this tern in its long-distance flight.

The minute ruby-throated hummingbird excites admiration by its autumn flight, too. This bird, barely three inches in length, regularly flies across the Gulf of Mexico, from the United States coast to Yucatan, on its way south. This is a flight of 500 miles across an open expanse of ocean.

The most assiduous autumn migrants among birds are the insect-eaters, such as the swallows and warblers. When cold weather strikes, their insect prey either dies or hides away. Thus they cannot feed and migration is imperative. Many of the seed eaters tend to remain in the north as long as they can scratch food from the litter of forest or field.

Many ducks and geese are reluctant to move southward, staying as far north as the presence of non-frozen water will allow them. On the other hand, there are sun-lovers like the teal which head for Florida and the tropics when Jack Frost puts in his appearance.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1959