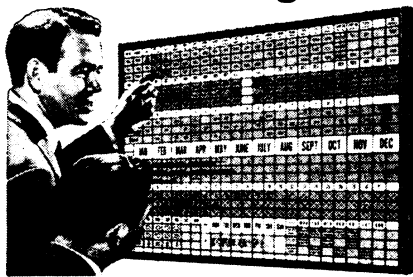


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FORESTRY

Squirrels Outwit Man In Battle of Pine Cones

► MAN MAY HAVE more brain power, but the wily squirrels can still outwit him when it comes to pine cones.

Even with special bands of metal placed around Californian pine trees to keep the squirrels from climbing the trunks, about 70% of the pine cones were destroyed last year by these rodents, reported S. L. Krugman and R. M. Echols of the Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station in Berkeley, Calif., part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The cones of these pine trees are valuable to the foresters because they are part of the seed crop to produce more pines.

The main reason the tree bands do not work is that they are improperly installed, foresters say. In order to prevent the squirrels from scaling the trees, the aluminum bands must be 18 inches wide and wrapped around the trees about six feet above the ground.

The nails which fasten the bands to the trees should not protrude beyond the bands to prevent the squirrels from using the nailheads as "ladder pegs" to climb the trees.

A simple device should be provided for the expansion and growth of the tree. This is done by cutting narrow slots in the band underlying the top flap, and by driving in the nails so their heads extend two inches out from the trunk. Thus, as the tree grows, the inner band slips along the slots through which the nails are driven, and the tree can expand without being bound tightly by the band.

Another necessary protection against squirrels is to have the trees planted far enough apart so that they cannot jump from one to another.

• Science News Letter, 86:164 Sept. 12, 1964

OCEANOGRAPHY

Drowned Treasure Found By Team off Florida

► THE RICHEST PRIZE of sunken wealth since the 17th century has been salvaged from remains of Spanish galleons wrecked by a hurricane in 1715.

More than a million dollars in doubloons, pieces of eight, silver bullion and gold jewelry has been found by Kip Wagner, a construction engineer of Sebastian, Fla., and nine associates. Ten of 11 royal Flota de la Plata ships carrying plunder to the Spanish Crown were destroyed by the storm.

The corporation of ten began its systematic search of the sea floor in the Fort Pierce vicinity off Cape Canaveral four years ago.

The two methods of recovery used were airlift dredging that shoots debris-filled water to the surface in a large hose, and jet blasting of the sea floor to clear away debris. Sunken metal was located by a sensitive underwater magnetometer and other metal detectors.

• Science News Letter, 86:164 Sept. 12, 1964

Questions

ASTRONOMY—How does the fluctuating light output of quasars indicate their size? p. 167.

BIOCHEMISTRY—Why is the behavior of the virus that causes fever blisters being studied by cancer researchers? p. 163.

MICROBIOLOGY—What cellular structure is now being studied with the aid of polarized light? p. 168.

PHYSICS—How long is the reported half-life of element 104? p. 169.

PUBLIC HEALTH—What drug is credited with the first known cure of human trichinosis? p. 162.

SURGERY—What is the test suggested to find the most compatible donor for a transplant operation? p. 171.

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