

## Nature's Program for July

(Continued from page 3)

weather maps, charts and weather display flags, all worked out by members of the groups.

—By HARRY ALLEN,  
*Playground and Recreation Association of America.*

Science News-Letter, July 2, 1927

## Weather Vane for Camp

This weather vane is not so difficult to make as a first glance at the sketch might lead you to believe. I have suggested the kinds of wood that are suitable, but any other woods which may be at hand will answer. First, lay out the "Arm"— $1\frac{1}{4}$  in. x  $1\frac{1}{8}$  in. x  $13\frac{1}{2}$  in. Plane the edges square. Mark the distances for the mortises, arrow, fan and holes, and also for the parts of the arm that are hollowed out. Make two saw cuts for the mortises and trim out with a chisel.

If you haven't a chisel, make one. Take a large cut spike or nail and grind or file it down. That will do very nicely. Care should be taken when boring the hole for the spindle to keep it plumb. Screws or nails may be substituted in place of the wooden pins which secure the arrow and fan to the arm. The arrow and fan

should be laid out in pencil also, and carefully cut. A dowel or any round piece of wood will answer for the spindle. Hard wood is preferred for this, on account of the strain, when the wind blows hard. The collars, between which the arm turns, may be made from a spool. Fasten them on with small wire nails as indicated. The distance between the upper collar and ornament and the ornament itself, are optional. After putting the arrow together take off the sharp edges and smooth with sandpaper. Do not use any sandpaper until you are through using edge tools.

A weather vane half this size would give equally good results. It should be painted or varnished to preserve the wood.

—PETER T. SHARP,  
*Boy Scouts of America.*

Science News-Letter, July 2, 1927

Realizing the need for a national program that would coordinate the nature activities of national groups working with young people, the American Museum of Natural History invited these volunteer organizations to form a council to be known as the Coordinating Council on Nature Activities for the purpose of teaching the growing generation, through nature activities, the value of all wild life and natural resources and their conservation.

The various organizations represented are as follows:

American Museum of Natural History, American Nature Study Society, Boy Scouts of America, Camp Directors Association, Camp Fire Girls, Inc., Girl Scouts, Inc., Pioneer Youth of America, Playground and Recreation Association, Woodcraft League of America.

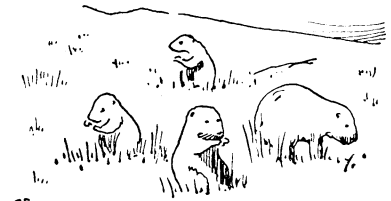
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## MEMORANDUM

This blank space serves a dual purpose. It allows you to clip out the article on the reverse of this page without destroying any other article. It can also be used for notes and the recording of your own observations.

## NATURE RAMBLINGS

By FRANK THONE



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## Prairie Dogs

As you speed across the plains on your way to a vacation in the Rockies, you will see many "towns" of prairie dogs. These gregarious little rodents are fairly close relatives of the woodchuck or groundhog, and have no more to do with dogs than guinea pigs have to do with hogs. They have the same elementary social organization that many other gregarious animals have, the most outstanding feature of which is the posting of sentinels that warn the rest of the approach of danger by shrill whistles.

Prairie dogs are sources of unending entertainment to travelers, and especially to their children, but they are equally unending annoyances to ranchers. They have the insatiable nibbling appetites with which all rodents are endowed, which means that they do a lot of damage to crops. And on the range, where there is much riding to do, their innumerable burrows are always catching horses' hooves, sometimes causing broken bones for either horse or rider.

The old tales of prairie dogs, owls and rattlesnakes sharing the same burrows must be relegated (with a sigh, perhaps) to the realm of fable. Rattlesnakes do live in prairie-dog villages, but there is no evidence that they do more than occupy abandoned burrows. Perhaps they oust the original tenants, or even eat their families. Owls also take over empty prairie-dog apartments, but the little owl of the plains country is a burrower himself, and able to make his own dug-out.

Science News-Letter, July 2, 1927

The United States uses up about four-fifths of the world's gasoline production.

Nearly 40 per cent. of automobile fatalities happen to children under 15 years.



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