

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **EVENTS RECORDER** can be used to show the operator, when and for how long a machine was in use. The recorder, which does not use any ink, is a drum that rotates at speeds from four to 24 hours per turn as desired. A stylus records the information on a paper graph.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **SHIRT BAGGER** uses a roll stock of polyethylene film. Transparent covers for shirts or sweaters can be tailored to size at the laundry or dry cleaner's. The machine is designed to package more than 3,000 shirts in eight hours. It can also make reusable film packages to widths up to 20 inches.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **BAIT MAKER** for the do-it-yourself fisherman is a kit that can be used to make dozens of soft, pliable and wiggly fishing lures. An aluminum mold is filled with liquid plastic. It is heated, a hook added, and then it is quenched in water. Six different kits are available with choice of lures and colors.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **RETRACTABLE HYDROFOIL**, shown



in the photograph and made of epoxy resins, lifts a 15½ foot outboard motorboat above the water at 15 miles per hour. The hydrofoils are reinforced with a glass-fiber cloth. The two main foils, now being made for one type craft, are attached to the hull on either side of the driver's seat. At 30 miles per hour, they can carry a total weight of 1,360 pounds.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **CAR TRAY-TABLE** designed for a roadside snack folds up for easy storage under the car seat or in the trunk. Built on aluminum legs, the tray can also be used at the beach or at home. It is sturdy enough to hold a typewriter or adding machine.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **OVEN THERMOMETER** is designed so that it can be hooked, hung or stood up on the oven rack. It features a horizontal scale against a black background, so that mercury indicator is easy to read.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **ALUMINUM COT** weighing five and three-quarter pounds is described as the lightest cot designed. Standing eight inches high, it is six feet long and 25 inches wide. The entire unit can be rolled into a carrying case.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957

⚙️ **SLIDE COPIER** permits amateur and professional photographers to copy, crop or correct their own 35 mm slides. Duplicates can be made in black and white and color or duplicates of negatives on spare negatives. A special reflex housing version permits the use of the device for most 35 mm cameras.

Science News Letter, March 9, 1957



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ **FIRST** there was a mighty whirring of wings and then what seemed to be a tumbling mass of feathers hanging in mid-air like an animated ball. Under the lenses of powerful field glasses, the whirling figure resolved itself into two birds in a bitter fight—a fight for life.

One of the birds was a brown thrasher, and he was fighting to avoid being devoured. The other was a loggerhead shrike, struggling for food in the eternal fight against starvation.

A well-aimed rock sent by the bird watcher put a temporary end to the struggle. The shrike released his prey to fly from this new danger, and the thrasher limped away into hiding in a nearby thicket. But the peace is only temporary, for the shrike must have prey and soon another bird or rodent or insect must feel his powerful beak

Fitted for Survival



if the shrike is to live and reproduce his kind.

In nature's great scheme of things, the shrike is no villain. It is but another creature struggling for survival, using the means provided by nature. The shrike is endowed with a powerful beak, swift flight, keen sight and a hunter's instinct. These are his tools and he must live by them.

Actually, this true case of a loggerhead

shrike attacking a bird as large as a thrasher is rather rare. When food is plentiful, this shrike and his larger cousin, the northern shrike, subsist on a diet mainly of insects, lizards, snakes and rodents, with a few small birds from time to time. In winter when lesser food is hard to find, then both shrikes must seek more of their food from weaker birds. Even so, the benefits of shrikes as pest killers far outweigh any "harm" they do as bird killers.

In one way, shrikes are ill-equipped for life as birds of prey, for they do not have strong talons to match their powerful beaks. They cannot hold their victims in their weak claws. But they have developed a unique habit which effectively overcomes this difficulty: they impale the carcasses of their prey on thorns, broken twigs, barbed wire or other sharp projections. Thus held down, the food can be devoured easily by the shrikes or left "for future reference."

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