

• New Machines and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 934. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **ALUMINUM DOCKS** for lakeside can be put together in eight-foot sections. Succeeding sections are fastened by means of a pin and slot arrangement and each is adjustable to water depth. Designed to withstand winds up to 50 miles per hour, the dock will not rust, rot, sag, or warp.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **SWIMMING AID** is a sled made of plastic designed to help develop and to teach youngsters the flutter kick. It will support adults up to 175 pounds in weight, too. The swimmer's sled is rust-, rot- and warp-proof.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **IRON HOLDER** designed to permit burn-free ironing for the housewife is made of aluminum. It consists of a clamp-on bracket and support arm. The device holds either closed- or open-handled hot irons off the ironing board.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **BAIT KEEPER** is an aerator housed in a portable butyrate plastic case. The aerator, shown in the photograph, uses a miniature piston pump to force a steady supply of air into any bait bucket or jar. The plastic-



housed aerator eliminates the need for lowering a bucket over the side of a boat. Used only 15 minutes every hour, the aerator is powered by a six-volt battery.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **FOOTBALL PLAYER IDENTIFIER** permits anyone to spot a player at a glance.

The spotter contains spools carrying the names of players for each of the 22 positions, as well as another spool for the downs. When a substitution is made, the spool is wound around to the new name.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **RECTANGULAR LAUNDRY BASKET** is made of a polyethylene plastic. With a capacity of more than a bushel, the basket is said to fit laundry carts and clothing folds. The plastic basket also does not need a liner.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **AUTOMATIC GOLF SCORER** fits around wrist like a wrist watch. Imported from Switzerland, the golf scorer is housed in a metal case and is faced with a magnifying glass to enlarge the numbers.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958

⚙️ **DO-IT-YOURSELF GREENHOUSE** for the hobby horticulturist eliminates the need for permanent foundations or masonry walls. Metal parts designed for self-assembly are made of aluminum. All-glass sides double the inside growing area, and heating, cooling and ventilating systems are built in.

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

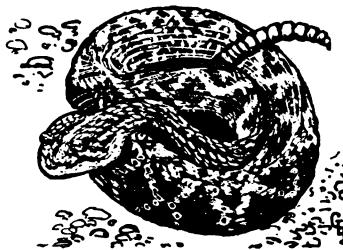
► IN AN automatic reaction to a long winter of being penned in steam-heated houses and offices, America is taking to the out-of-doors as spring marches northward over the country. Along with the humans, many poisonous snakes are rousing themselves from winter lethargy or sleep to seek the springtime sun.

The two will meet a comparatively small number of times. An infinitesimal proportion of these meetings will result in a man, woman or child being bitten by a venomous snake.

What are the chances of an individual being bitten in the United States? According to one estimate, there's a better statistical chance of his being struck by lightning.

Another reassuring statistic is that more Americans are killed or injured each year in their bathtubs than by snake bite. (An eminent herpetologist adds that "it must

Snakes and Snake Bites



be admitted that a good many more people encounter bathtubs than snakes and, it is hoped, more often!")

Some 1,500 persons are bitten each year by poisonous snakes in this country. Approximately 1,000 of these are rattlesnake bites, and these probably account for a disproportionately high percentage of snake bite fatalities among humans.

Of the approximately 1,500,000 deaths occurring annually in the United States, 30 are due to poisoning by rattlesnake bite. This amounts to only about three percent of the persons bitten. It is estimated that the number of fatalities due to rattlesnakes probably never exceeded 15% to 20% of the number of persons bitten, even when snake bite treatment was most primitive.

The moral of this story is, be reasonably careful but do not worry a great deal about venomous snakes while you are out-of-doors. Certainly never handle live or supposedly "dead" poisonous snakes. If you are in an area noted for snakes, certainly you should wear boots or similar leg protection. Always have a snake bite kit handy.

In summing up, a rule of snake safety is "watch where you put your hands and feet; do not put them in places without looking and do not put them in places where you cannot look."

Science News Letter, May 10, 1958