

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **NO-BEND NAILS** are formed of a special heat-treated steel. Made of a series of rings, 24 to the inch, the nails hold like screws. Each ring is complete and continuous in itself. The nails are available in blued, coated, galvanized or bright finish.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **CAR DOOR OPENING TOOL**, used when door is locked from the inside, slips under the butterfly window. It is made of two steel strips more than 20 inches long connected at one end by a pivotal rivet. The other end of one of the strips is U-shaped for engaging the car lock button. An attached strip of spring steel is then released, snapping up the button.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **MAGNETIC HANDLE**, weighing five pounds, is capable of lifting more than 300 pounds. Made of permanent Indox magnets embedded in plastic, the tool is six inches square and an inch thick. It gets its powerful attractive force from a magnetic field that extends only 1/16th of an inch.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **SELF-PROPELLED SCAFFOLDING** has a crank with which a workman can move the unit from an elevated position. The scaffolding, shown in the photograph, has a safety brake for locking it in position.



Its wooden platform can be adjusted in seven positions up to 12 feet. The whole unit can be assembled and disassembled in less than 60 seconds.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **TABLEMATS**, designed with water-color scenes of early America, can double as wall decorations. The mats are reversible, the opposite side being a textured,

fabric-like design in a soft beige. They are 17 by 11½ inches and made of nonabsorbent plastic.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **AUTOMATIC SLIDE PROJECTOR** permit slides to be advanced and moved in reverse through a remote control, hand-held unit. It has a slide holder that mechanically prevents the pictures from going out of focus. A zoom lens enables the operator to adjust the size of the picture without moving the entire projector. The unit is portable and flat in shape.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

➤ **GLASS PANELS** polarize light to provide glare-free illumination. A process of breaking the glass into flakes and combining it with liquid resin gives the panels their polarizing ability. The panels come in flat sheets up to 24 inches by 48 inches.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958

⚙️ **LOW TEMPERATURE ENVIRONMENTAL TEST CHAMBER** may be used in space and missile research where conditions of extreme cold must be simulated. It provides 13 cubic feet of testing volume and automatically maintains internal temperature at levels in the range of 32 degrees Fahrenheit to minus 260 degrees Fahrenheit.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ WHAT GREAT impulses can lead a citizen to abandon the comforts of home and office, in the face of sly smiles and broad jokes from friends and family, to spend a cold, wet day at bird watching?

These impulses are many and varied; but to many or most of the birdwatching tribe, it is the sporting instinct that gives them the biggest shove down the path of birding from which there apparently is no return.

You see, to a large extent, birding is an exciting game, a type of "numbers game" as many play it.

According to the "birdwatchers' bible," the official Checklist of the American Ornithological Union, there are 1,686 species and subspecies of birds known from North America above the Mexican border. Any one area contains only a fraction of these birds, of course, but the eager birder wants his share of that fraction! Victory is sweet when he adds a new bird to his "life lists"—those species which he has positively

Numbers Game



identified alive and in the field. It is sweeter when the new bird is one which his companions and friendly competitors have not managed to find.

Adding "life list birds" is routine at first. But after a while the easy birds will have been marked off and hunting starts in earnest.

As the bird watcher becomes more skillful through experience, however, the "tough" species will be added to his list. Thereafter, until he makes a birding trip to another

section of the country, his "life listing" will just about be halted. So the numbers game takes new directions.

Initially, the bird watcher begins to play hard to see how many kinds of birds he can positively identify in a given area in a single day. This is where skill in identification and knowledge of the habits of birds begins to pay dividends. The difference between the beginner's daily list and that of the "professional" at the game of birding is a measure of how much the expert bird watcher has learned about the ways of wild creatures.

Then there come the annual list, the spring, fall and Christmas bird counts, the breeding bird censuses, the nest hunts, the life history studies, and on and on.

The birder is as much a sportsman as the hunter or fisherman. The chief difference, perhaps, is that the birder comes to know much more about his "prey." Birding is a numbers game in which the player always wins.

Science News Letter, November 22, 1958