

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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UTILITY SHAKERS of sturdy, lightweight plastic have convenient handles. They may be used to dispense dry ingredients such as salt, pepper, flour, cinnamon or sugar. Three inches in diameter and three and one-quarter inches in depth, the shakers may also be used for baby talcs, powdered soaps and scouring powders. They come in a choice of colors.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

GARDEN TOOL SET contains a hand pruner with plastic-gripped handles and a grass shear with scissor-type blades for cleaner cutting and less jamming. The pruner is lightweight and weather-proofed by chrome. The shear has a contoured high-angle handle to reduce fatigue.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

TELEVISION TUNER for the new battery-powered TV sets uses transistors in place of tubes. The tuner is 1¾ inches high, 2½ inches wide and 3½ inches deep. It packs 287 separate parts into 15 cubic inches of space, and weighs 9½ ounces.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

TOY ZOO for children, shown in the photograph, consists of four snap-together, pull-apart animals. Their interchangeable



parts are of non-toxic, unbreakable, lightweight polyethylene plastic. Each of the animals has up to 29 individual pieces, which may be used interchangeably to create progressively more fascinating animals. Fourteen million combinations are possible.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

COLONIAL ANTIQUE KITS are easy-to-assemble, wooden, pre-cut units with Early American styling. Among the furnishings that can be made are a spoon rack and planter, a pipe rack, a large spoon and plate rack, a cobbler's bench planter, and a doll cradle and planter.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

CARPENTER'S JOINTER-PLANER is said to do the same type of planing and surfacing as is done with a hand plane, but faster and more accurately. It makes accurate glue joints and precise rabbeting cuts for doors, window frames, table drawers and cabinets.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

CHEESE BELL consists of a teak tray and an inverted oblong glass bowl with a knob handle. Cheese placed on the tray is kept covered and fresh by the bowl.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959

CEDARWOOD SQUARES may be put in dresser drawers, closets, storage bags and luggage to prevent mildew and eliminate musty odors. Each small cedarwood square is saturated with cedarwood oil so that it is equivalent to one square foot of natural cedarwood.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

Bird Listening

IT WAS the morning of a big day for birdwatching, and the lodge was filled with bird enthusiasts who rose before the sun to have a pre-breakfast start on their daily score of birds seen.

One of the group, a well-known ornithologist, elected to remain in bed for an extra snooze.

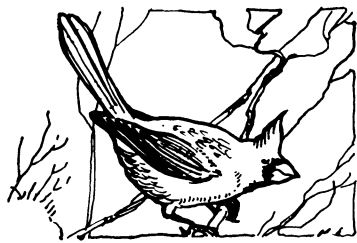
At the breakfast table, the returning bird-watchers recounted the species they had already seen, implying that they felt sorry for the one who chose to lay abed. But he had his moment of glory when he then told the early risers that he had added some 30 birds to his morning list. He had identified this many species in the trees outside his window by their different songs.

Most birdwatchers, however, do not share this ornithologist's gift for birding by ear. Many amateurs do come to know a great number of birds by their unique songs and call notes. But the majority are

satisfied when they learn a score or so of bird songs from the several hundred species on their life lists.

This is not the birds' fault, however, for each species definitely has its own particular repertoire of songs and call notes. There may be slight individual differences or even regional dialects, but each species maintains its true song patterns.

A certain amount of an individual bird's



song is undoubtedly learned by listening to its elders, but the basic pattern seems to be inherited. One scientist hand-reared some chaffinches, each being kept in a sound-proof cage. When these reached the singing age, they sang! Their melody lacked the finesse of chaffinch song in nature, but the basic pattern was there.

Another scientist found that the white-throat (a European warbler), raised in isolation from the egg, could reproduce the typical song of its species, when the singing season began, down to the finest detail.

Most of us are delighted when the cardinal announces its presence in a very direct manner: "Birdie, Birdie, Birdie!" This is usually the first song that the beginner learns. The Carolina wren invites us with "Teakettle, Teakettle, Teakettle, Tea." It is generally the second on the song list.

From there on, however, bird listening becomes a major challenge in birdwatching.

Science News Letter, October 17, 1959