

Is That So?

By Eugene Burns
Ranger-Naturalist



Now that autumn's here, it is the time to walk in the woods and see the touch-me-nots, wild geraniums, witch hazels and poppies working their marvelous seed-dispersal machines, really precision-built machines, hurling heavy seeds from a few feet up to 20 feet and thus creeping forward to claim the earth inch by inch, foot by foot, mile by mile.

The appearance of these seed machines give no hint of their remarkable potentials — like so much in plant life, they are disarmingly simple looking. Yet, these machines, can be seen, heard and even smartly felt.

For example, have you ever touched the ripe seed pod of a touch-me-not? It explodes at your touch, its seeds popping off so suddenly that your eye cannot possibly follow them.

What happens? The pod has five perfectly-fitting segments sealed along the edges with light waterproofing shellac. Each of these segments contains within itself a spring which gets wound up tightly as the pod grows — a mysterious act when you stop to think of it. By the day the pressure grows stronger and stronger. Then, when the precise moment arrives, when the seeds are fully ripe, the five-sided pod lets go, all over and at once — the coiling segments fire their rocket-like salvo and the five seeds bearing five microscopic perfect little plants are hurled out 10 feet or more . . . ready to carry on and on the history of the touch-me-not!

Somewhat differently — there is infinite variety among all seed hurlers — the wild geranium's seed case is constructed of five straps with a seed cup at each base. On a day when it is not raining, the touch of the warm dry sunlight shrinks some of the cells, setting up pressures — tremendous pressures comparatively speaking.

Released at Forceful Point
Again the trigger is pulled, the steel spring-like straps fly up, violently coiling, and the seeds are released just at the most forceful point — tossed out with exactly the same sort of force as a baseball player might use in throwing a high ball to the outfield. To work best, the

air should be comparatively still — delicately poised springs would be upset by too violent a wind — so where does the geranium grow? Where'd you expect? In protected places, and for the mechanism to work properly, where there is moist shade alternating with direct sunlight.

In the poppy, the small round and relatively heavy seeds when ripe, lie loosely in open-topped capsules, on long elastic stalks. When the spring stalks are shaken by gusts of wind or the impact of passing animals, the recoil hurls the seeds out along smooth grooved lines placed to give the seeds the most effective angle to gain distance.

The witch hazel lobs its seeds somewhat like a mortar, but double-barreled. Unlike most plants, it takes a full year for its slow-working seed propulsion mechanism to toughen up and to build in the adequate stresses. Finally when the second year's warm autumn sun touches the pod, the muzzle bearing two black seeds opens slowly.

Case Shrinks
Dry air circulates inside the open mouth and the case shrinks. The shrinking in turn squeezes the inner half of the seed which is both smooth and tapering. (Every plant's seeds of course must be properly shaped, weighted and precisely fitted to be propelled by the mechanism.) Suddenly when the stresses become too great, out shoots the seed, up to 20 feet and more, just as though you had squeezed it between thumb and forefinger with all your might and main.

Come spring, the witch hazel's seeds — as well as those of the poppy, wild geranium, and touch-me-not — will grow in new ground. And in growing they will obey the impulse locked within them on impulse 10,000,000 years old, to reproduce to perfection, once again, the wonderfully and faultlessly-engineered seed projectors.

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More than 50,000 prisoners of war in Korea attended classes of religious instruction during their captivity. The classes were conducted by former missionaries who could speak the prisoners' language.

Dead line Sunday Classified to at noon Saturday; 10 a.m. Monday for Monday; other days 5:30 previous day.

Democrats Hope To Pick Up Republican Seats in Four States

Washington — (U.P.) — Democratic campaign strategists based their Senate victory claims today on the belief they can hold what they have and pick up Republican seats in Kentucky, New Jersey, Wyoming and Nevada in Tuesday's balloting.

That outcome would give them 50 of the 96 Senate seats when the 84th Congress convenes Jan. 5.

Republican chances of maintaining and increasing their slender margin of control rest on keeping the seats they hold and unseating Democrats in such

states as Ohio, Delaware, Montana, Illinois, Iowa and Colorado.

The present Senate lineup is 49 Republicans, 46 Democrats and one Independent.

37 Senate Seats Open

Thirty-seven Senate seats are at stake in 34 states. Fifteen of these are now held by Republicans and 22 by Democrats. There are 58 Senators—33 Republicans, 24 Democrats and one independent—whose terms do not expire this year.

The GOP won the 38th seat at stake this year when Maine re-elected Sen. Margaret Chase Smith Sept. 3.

Many of the seats to be filled Tuesday are in fairly safe southern Democratic or northern Republican states. The real battle for control of the Senate has been wage in 17 states for seats now held by nine Republicans and eight Democrats.

The nine Republican Senators represent California, Idaho, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon and Wyoming. The Democratic seats in Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico and Ohio.

Democrats Eye Four Seats

In the 17 crucial races, the Democrats have eyed Kentucky, New Jersey, Wyoming and Nevada as the states where they have the best chance of winning seats now held by Republicans.

In Kentucky, former Vice-President and ex-Sen. Alben W. Barkley is trying to unseat GOP Sen. John Sherman Cooper. In Wyoming, former Democratic Sen. Joseph C. O'Mahoney is making a comeback try after his defeat in 1952.

Nixon Would Cast Vote

A net loss of one seat Tuesday would enable the GOP to keep the Senate under Republican leadership. If the Senate were divided 48 Republicans, 47 Democrats and one Independent, Vice-President Richard M. Nixon would cast the deciding vote to enable the GOP to organize the Senate.

The Democrats need to gain two seats to gain control of the Senate committees and other legislative machinery. If they hold 48 seats after the election, the additional vote needed for a Democratic majority has been promised by the Independent, Sen. Wayne L. Morse (Ore.).

Snow and Freezing Temperatures Hit Midwest and South

By UNITED PRESS

A wintry blast of Arctic air brought freezing temperatures as far south as Birmingham, Ala., today and snow fell in many areas around the Great Lakes. Forecasters predicted that the weather for election day tomorrow will be:

Great Lakes and Northern Plains: Cloudy and cool with some snow flurries around the lakes.

South and Southwest: Generally fair.

Fair Along Coast

Northeast and New England: Stormy and rainy.

Rockies and Pacific Coast: Generally fair and rather mild.

A new surge of cold air swept the plains today, reinforcing a cold mass that hit before the week end.

The new front was preceded by a band of light snow which was expected to reach a depth of an inch or more throughout Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.

18 Degrees at Minot

Before dawn today, the mercury sank to 18 degrees at Minot, N. D., 32 at Birmingham, 30 at Richmond, Va., 31 at Chicago, 30 at Milwaukee and 28 at Pittsburgh.

Snow piled up half a foot deep Sunday at Erie, Pa., and Duluth, Minn., had an accumulation of three inches. There was two inches on the ground at Sount Bend, Ind.

Bust of McLoughlin Slated To Be Moved

Portland — (U.P.) — The bust of Dr. John McLoughlin, Oregon pioneer, may be moved — but only a few yards.

The State Highway Commission agreed at its meeting here Friday to study feasibility of moving the bust from its present location south of Oregon City to a location a few yards further where a viewpoint parking area has been established overlooking the Willamette river falls.

Several delegations appeared before the commission with requests.

Sen. Cordon's Use Of Addressograph Plates Said Legal

Portland — (U.P.) — Howard Morgan, state Democratic chairman, today charged that Sen. Guy Cordon illegally used addressograph plates owned by the State of Oregon in his campaign for reelection, but a state official said the use was entirely within the law.

Morgan said he had been "flooded with complaints from all over the state" regarding the use of plates to address the campaign postcards. The postcards were delivered Saturday.

Suit To Be Filed

Morgan said a taxpayer's suit "to recover the cost of Cordon's illegal action would be filed Monday." He estimated that the addressograph files are worth \$100,000 and that more than \$3700 worth of state-employed labor was utilized to address the postcards.

William Healy, assistant secretary of state, confirmed that Cordon's campaign committee used the addressograph, but he said the state was paid for the use and that the transaction was entirely legal.

Democrat Bill Unpaid

Healy charged that in 1952 the Democratic party bought carbon copies of hand-type labels then used to address the Voter's Pamphlet, but have not yet paid the bill.

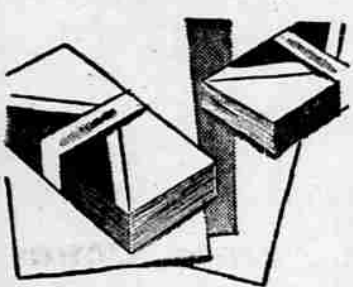
The plates, authorized by the 1953 legislature, were used to address this year's Voter's Pamphlet.

Parking Lot Plans Reported Progressing

Trees on the strip along the Southern Pacific tracks on South Front st., off Main st., were removed last week and the docks formerly along the tracks also have been removed. The work is in preparation for grading and graveling of the area for a parking lot, it is reported.

Further plans call for the removal of the building at the back of the Associated Oil company station, though the gas pumps will remain, according to the report. A driveway also is planned from Main st. onto the lot with another driveway to Front st.

The property is being purchased by Medford business men, the lot will be operated on a lease arrangement.



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