June 28, 1955 V. V. MILLER 2,711,610

MINNOW BUCKET

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Fig. 1.

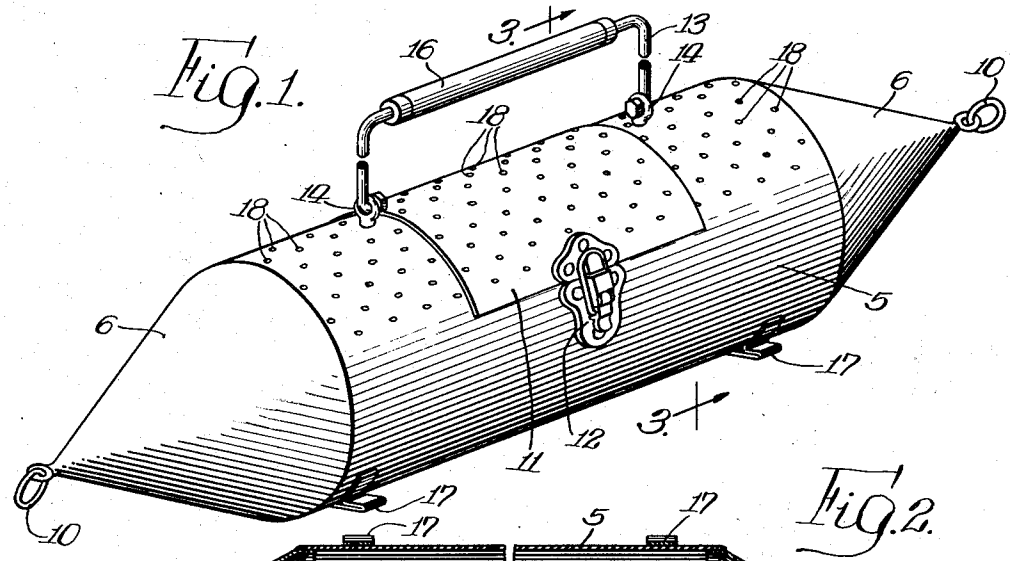



Fig. 2.

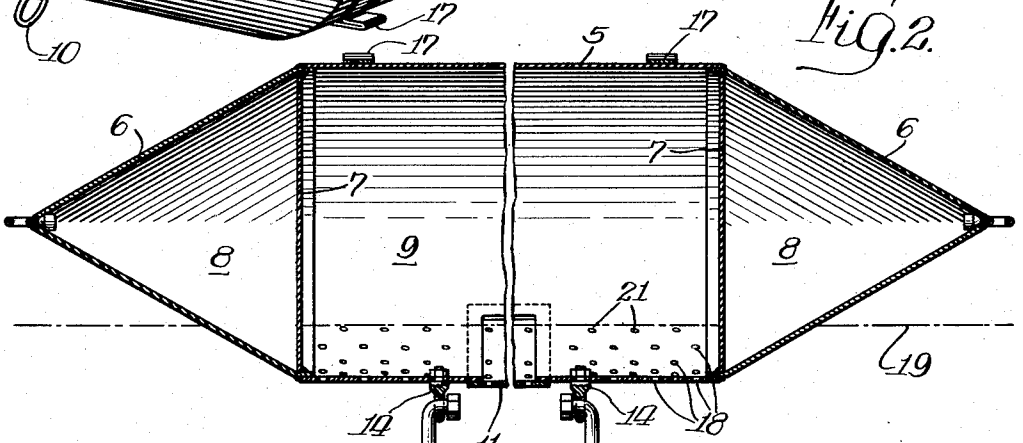
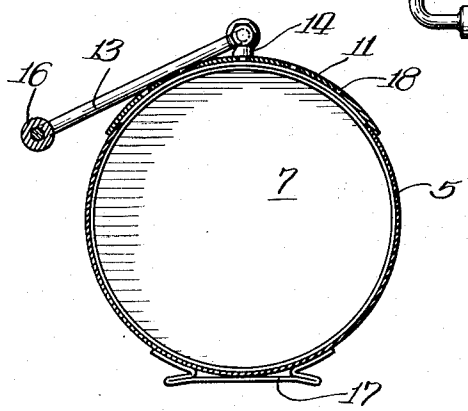
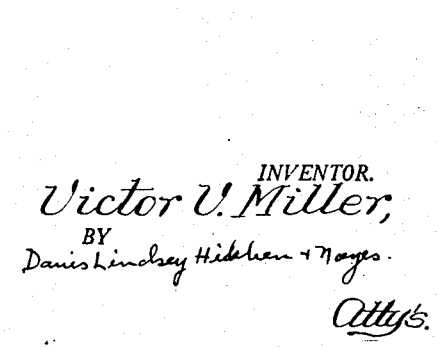



Fig. 3.




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# MINNOW BUCKET

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9 Claims. (Cl. 43—56)

This invention relates to improvements in a floating bait receptacle, particularly a minnow bucket.

One object of my invention is to provide a novel minnow bucket adapted for use in maintaining a supply of minnows, either when floating in water or when on dry land.

A further object of the invention is to provide a minnow bucket having means for supporting the same in one position on dry land and having novel means for automatically inverting the bucket to its opposite position when placed in the water.

Another object of the invention is to provide a floating minnow bucket having novel means for insuring continuous aeration and interchange of water within the bucket.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the subsequent detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a minnow bucket comprising one specific embodiment of my invention and showing the position of the bucket when it is out of the water;

Fig. 2 is a longitudinal sectional view illustrating the position assumed by the bucket when it floats in water; and

Fig. 3 is a transverse sectional view taken along the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Referring first to Figs. 1 and 3 of the drawing, the device comprises an elongated cylindrical central body portion 5 and a pair of cone-shaped end portions 6 secured thereto. A circular partition 7 is joined at its periphery to the base portion of each of the cone-shaped end portions 6 whereby to define a pair of conical air-filled sealed float chambers 8. The space within the cylindrical body portion 5 and between the partitions 7 comprises a compartment 9 for a supply of minnows. Ring fasteners are provided, as at 10, at one or both ends of the device for tying the same to a boat or the like. The conical shape of the end portions 6 permits the device to be pulled through the water without great resistance.

A curved cover 11 is secured by means of hinges (not shown) over an opening at the upper side of the body portion 5, and a catch or lock 12 is provided to retain the cover in closed position. Spanning the cover 11 is a U-shaped handle bail 13 swingably secured at its ends to the body portion 5 by means of a pair of eyes 14. A relatively heavy or weighted handle member or handle grip 16 is carried by the bail 13 for the purpose hereinafter described. A pair of transverse supports or leg members 17 are provided at the opposite side of the body portion 5 for supporting the device on a flat surface, the supports 17 being in the form of straps bent to the configuration best seen in Fig. 3 and secured to the under side of the body portion 5.

As seen in Fig. 1, the upper region of the body portion 5 and the cover 11 are provided with a plurality of



holes or perforations 18 which extend over only a portion, e. g., about one-quarter, of the circumference of the cylindrical central portion of the structure and on opposite sides of the handle. Thus, when the device is used on dry land it may rest on the ground or other supporting surface on the leg members 17, as in Fig. 1, and the compartment 9 may be provided with a supply of water and minnows. It will be apparent that the compartment 9 in this position of the device may be supplied with water up to the edges of the cover 11 or the outermost rows of perforations 18. The device containing water and minnows may be carried about from place to place in the usual manner by means of the handle.

Because of the float chambers 8, the device is also adapted to float horizontally in water while still containing the supply of minnows. Moreover, because of the generally cylindrical and tapered end contours of my device it will be seen that the structure can readily roll or rotate about its longitudinal axis when floating in water. Thus, the heavy handle member 16 causes the device to turn over or invert itself automatically when placed in the water. This is clearly shown in Fig. 2 where the supports 17 are uppermost above the water level, indicated at 19, and the handle member 16 and handle bail 13 hang downwardly below the water level 19.

To facilitate rapid automatic inversion of the device when placed in the water, the side arms of the handle bail 13 are sufficiently long so that the heavy weight or handle member 16 is disposed in eccentric off-center relation with respect to the longitudinal axis of the device, as best seen in Fig. 3. Consequently, it will be seen that the heavy handle member 16 is disposed radially beyond the body portion of the device by reason of the dimensions of the bail 13 and the center of gravity is therefore considerably beyond center resulting in a highly unstable condition. When the device is floated in water, rapid inversion to the Fig. 2 position results. However, when resting on a surface in the Fig. 3 position of the device, the lateral extent of the supports 17 is adequate to prevent tipping or overturning even when the handle is in either of its side positions.

The buoyant effect of the float chambers 8 is regulated with regard to the total weight of the minnow bucket so that the device floats at a relatively high level in the water, i. e. so that only a minor portion of the structure is immersed. Preferably, the water level 19 should be adjacent or substantially coincident with the outermost rows of perforations, as seen at 21 in Fig. 2. With this relation between the water level 19 and the perforations, it will be understood that only a slight amount of rolling or axial rocking movement of the device in the water will serve to expose or uncover the outermost rows of perforations or holes 18 from time to time and thereby permit fresh air to be introduced into the water within the compartment 9 of the device. In this way the minnows are insured of properly aerated water at all times. Because of the absence of external stabilizing fins or like projections on the body of the device, the rippling and other normal movement of the water in the lake or stream will cause adequate rocking or rolling of the device to obtain aeration in this manner. In addition, of course, when the minnow bucket is pulled alongside a boat, the added disturbance of the water will cause further rolling motion of the device.

When the device inverts itself to the Fig. 2 position it will also be seen that a quantity of air will be trapped within the compartment 9 above the water level 19. This trapped initial supply of air also functions to provide aeration for the water within the compartment 9 in addition to the air which enters from time to time through the perforations 18. It will also be understood that the

perforations 18 permit continuous interchange or replacement of water in the minnow-containing compartment 9 when the device is floating in its Fig. 2 position, particularly when being pulled through the water at the side of a boat. Thus, fresh aerated water is provided at all times.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that my invention provides a novel minnow bucket of the floating type which has the advantage of being equally adapted for use on dry land or in the water and is especially designed for automatic inversion when placed in the water. In addition, the shape of the device is such that there is little resistance to movement of the device through the water. By reason of its perforated shell construction and its ability to invert automatically for submerging the perforations, the device has the further advantage that it provides a continuous supply of fresh aerated water in the minnow compartment at all times.

I claim:

1. A floating minnow bucket comprising a hollow cylindrical body member having perforations over a limited portion of its circumferential area at one side thereof, said body member defining a compartment for containing a supply of water and minnows when said perforations are uppermost, a pair of end portions at the opposite ends of said body member defining float chambers for the device, and a weighted handle pivotally secured to said body member at said one side thereof for carrying the device with said perforations uppermost, said handle being pivotable about an axis parallel to the longitudinal axis of said body member and being freely swingable to off-center eccentric position relative to the longitudinal axis of said body member for causing the device to roll automatically about its longitudinal axis to inverted position when placed in the water whereby to effect substantial submersion of the perforated portion.

2. A floating minnow bucket comprising a hollow cylindrical body member defining a minnow compartment and having an opening at one side thereof for access to the compartment, a cover for said opening, means at the opposite ends of the body member providing a pair of air-filled float chambers for the device, said cover and the adjacent portions of said body member being perforated over a limited area at said one side of the latter, a relatively heavy member swingably secured to the body member adjacent said cover at said one side, and support means secured to the body member at the opposite side thereof for stably supporting the device on a surface with the perforated portions uppermost, said heavy member causing rapid and automatic rotation of the device about its longitudinal axis when placed in the water whereby the perforated portions are immersed in the water.

3. The device of claim 1 further characterized in that said handle comprises a generally U-shaped bail swingably secured to the body member and carrying a heavy handle grip, the pivotal axis of said bail being parallel to the longitudinal axis of said body member and the handle grip thereby being disposed outwardly from the body member by means of the side arms of the bail whereby to exert a strong eccentric torque tending to rotate the device about its longitudinal axis when placed in the water.

4. A floating minnow bucket comprising an elongated cylindrical body adapted to contain a supply of minnows, means secured at the ends of said body and defining a pair of float chambers for causing the device to float horizontally in the water, transversely extending support members secured to the under side of said body for supporting the device on a surface when not in the water, said body being perforated over a limited area at the upper side thereof opposite said support members, and a handle comprising a bail swingably secured to the body at said upper side thereof and a heavy handle grip carried by the bail in outwardly disposed eccentric relation with respect to said body whereby to exert a strong torque tending to rotate the body automatically about its axis when placed in the water for submerging the perforated portions of the body, said support members extending transversely of the body to a sufficient extent so that the device is stable against tipping movement when being supported by said members on a surface.

5. A floating minnow bucket comprising an elongated generally cylindrical body providing a minnow compartment and having tapered end portions providing a pair of closed float chambers for supporting the device horizontally in the water, said body being perforated over a limited area at the upper portion thereof, and means comprising a weighted handle swingably secured adjacent the perforated area of said body for carrying the device with the perforated area uppermost, said handle being freely swingable to off-center eccentric position relative to the longitudinal axis of said body for effecting automatic rotation of the body about its longitudinal axis when placed in the water whereby to submerge said perforated area and thereby insure a continuous supply of fresh water within the minnow compartment, and said body being substantially free of float stabilizing and rock-preventing projections on the normally submerged portions thereof whereby to permit back and forth rocking of the device about its longitudinal axis when in inverted floating position thereby exposing at least some of the perforations intermittently to the air above the water level for permitting aeration of the water in the minnow compartment.

6. A floating minnow bucket comprising an elongated generally cylindrical body providing a minnow compartment and having means providing a pair of closed float chambers for supporting the device horizontally in the water, said body being perforated over a limited area at one side thereof, and means comprising a heavy off-center weight pivotally secured to said body adjacent the perforated area, said weight being freely swingable to off-center eccentric position relative to the longitudinal axis of said body for effecting automatic rotation of the body about its longitudinal axis when placed in the water whereby the perforated area is disposed at the lower side of the device and is submerged for providing free access of fresh water to the minnow compartment, said float chambers being so proportioned relative to the weight of the device that the body floats with the water level substantially coincident with the upper edges of the perforated area when the body is so rotated whereby normal rocking of the device about its longitudinal axis in the water serves to expose at least part of the perforated area intermittently to the air and thereby provide free access of air to the water in the minnow compartment and also effect a change of water therein.

7. A floating minnow bucket comprising an elongated hollow body defining a minnow compartment therein, a pair of end portions at the opposite ends of said body defining air chambers for causing the device to float horizontally in the water, a relatively heavy member swingably secured to said body at one side thereof, said heavy member being pivotable about an axis parallel to the longitudinal axis of said elongated body and being freely swingable to off-center eccentric position relative to the longitudinal axis of said body, and support means secured to said body at the opposite side thereof for stably supporting the device on a surface, said heavy member causing rapid and automatic rotational inversion of the device about the longitudinal axis of said body when placed in the water.

8. The device of claim 1 further characterized in that said end portions comprise cone-shaped hollow members.

9. The device of claim 1 further characterized in that said float chambers are so proportioned relative to the weight of the device that the device floats with the water level substantially coincident with the upper limits of the perforated portion when the device is in inverted position in the water whereby normal rocking of the device about

its longitudinal axis serves to expose at least part of the perforated portion intermittently to the air and thereby provide free access of air to the water in the minnow compartment and also to effect a change of water therein.

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