United States Patent

[11] 3,622,201

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[21] Appl. No. **22,412**
[22] Filed **Mar. 25, 1970**
[45] Patented **Nov. 23, 1971**

[54] **PORTABLE BLIND**
9 Claims, 7 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **297/217,** 297/184, 135/1, 135/7.1
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A47c 7/62,** A47c 7/10, A45f 1/00
[50] **Field of Search** 297/217, 184; 43/1; 135/1, 4, 7.1

[56] **References Cited**

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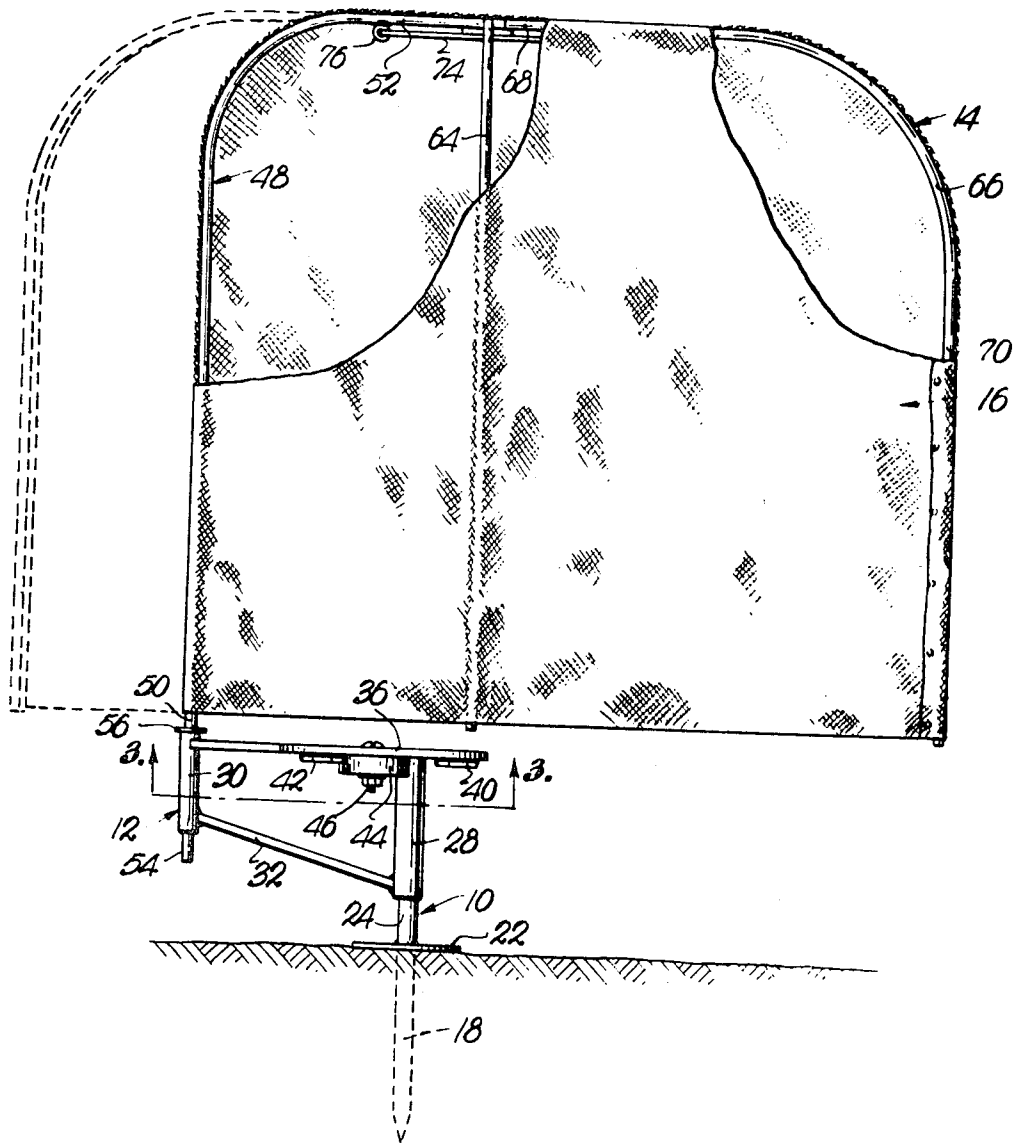
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ABSTRACT: A portable blind for providing concealment and shelter in the field for hunters or observers of wild life is constructed of separable and foldable parts, both to permit quick and convenient assembly under field conditions and to facilitate transportation and storage. The blind includes a user seat, and the seat and cover portions of the blind are adapted for rotation as a unit upon the support structure therefor, to permit quiet and unobtrusive scanning of the surrounding terrain in any direction without the user emerging from the blind, substantially altering his position within the blind, or otherwise creating any undue movement or disturbance that might tend to frighten wild game. The cover portion of the blind, which may be camouflaged, is adapted for immediately and automatically opening from its normal or almost closed condition to an opened condition providing a wide angle field for vision or shooting, whenever a suitable holding means associated with the elements that support the cover shroud is released by the user.



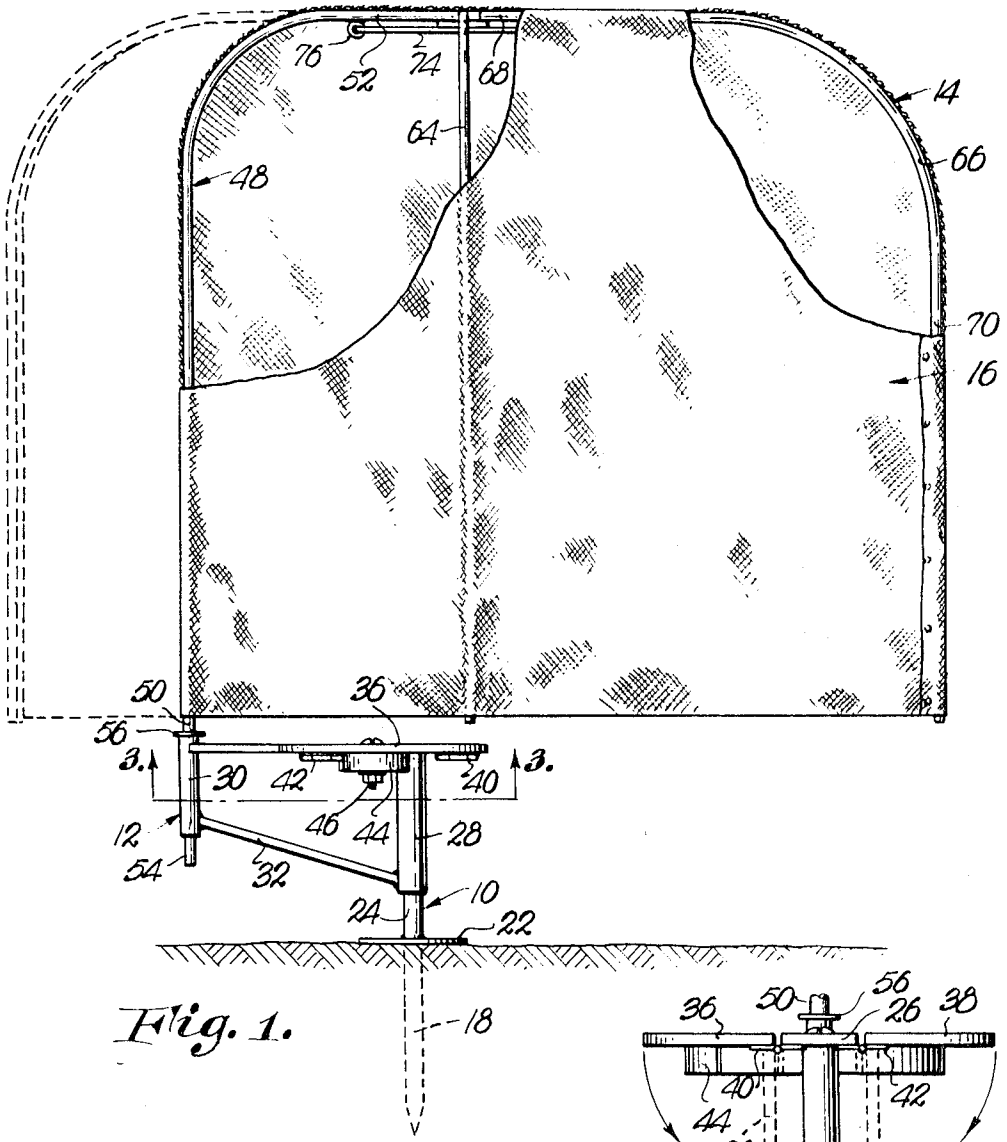


Fig. 1.

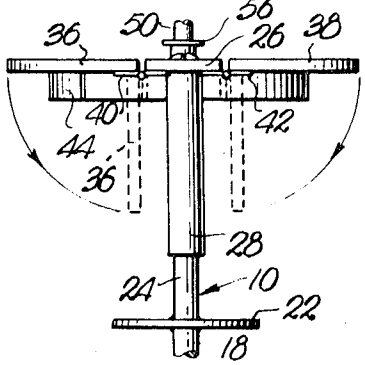


Fig. 4.

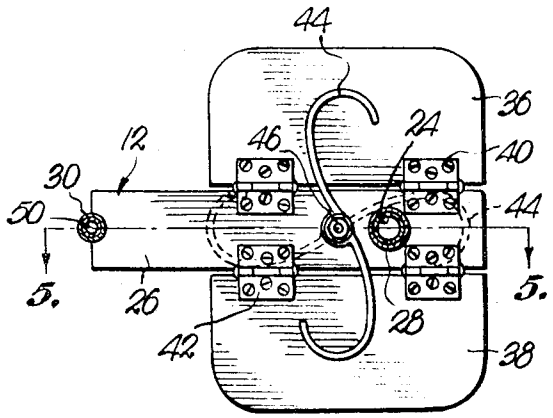


Fig. 3.

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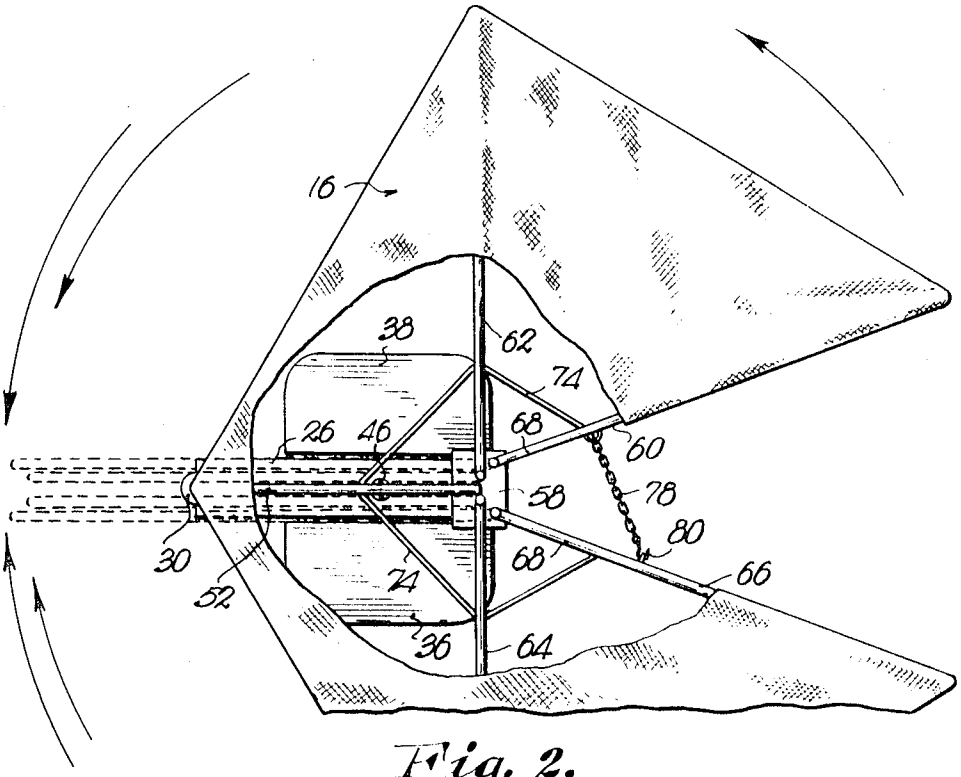


Fig. 2.

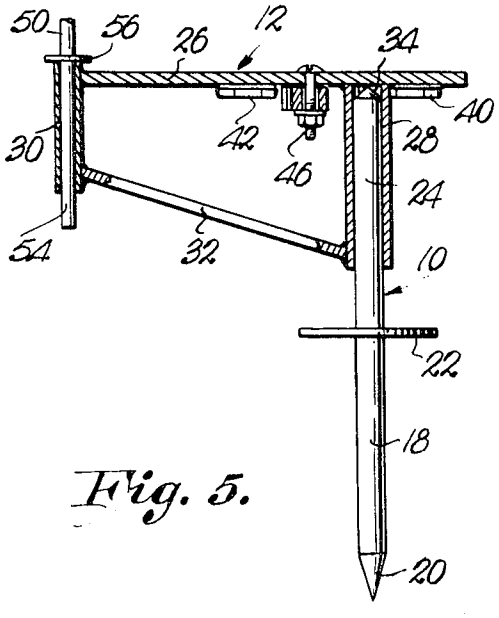


Fig. 5.

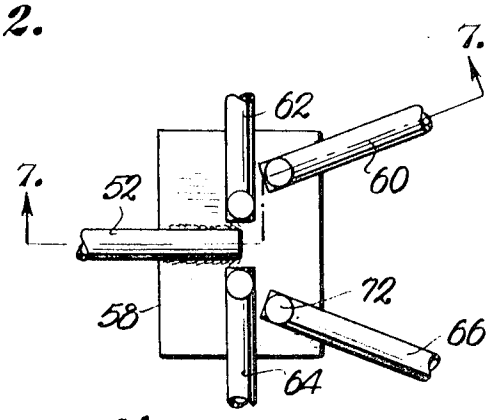


Fig. 6.

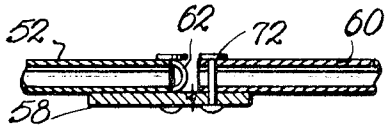


Fig. 7.

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PORTABLE BLIND

The present invention relates to a portable blind, which is especially well suited for use by hunters or persons desiring to observe or photograph wild life in its natural environment.

In hunting or attempting to observe many types of wild life in the field, it is usually necessary for the hunter or observer to station himself in a concealed location and then to wait for the game to come within shooting or observing range. For this purpose, it is customary to use a blind or other shelter, which is preferably camouflaged. Most blinds are essentially permanent in nature and are constructed in preselected fixed locations. Such permanent blinds suffer from serious and inherent disadvantages, including the fact that, if hunting or observing is desired in more than one location, it is necessary to construct and maintain different blinds at each such location, the fact that such permanent blinds normally require frequent repair because they are continually left in the open and subjected to the ravages of inclement weather, and the fact that the field of vision or fire is often quite restricted as well as fixed. Previous attempts to provide what might be called portable blinds have generally been unsuccessful or impractical for a variety of reasons, including difficulties in their emplacement, transportation or storage inherent from their constructions, the discomfort suffered in using them, and the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining quickly or at all an adequate field for vision or shooting while using them.

It is, therefore, one of the primary objects of this invention to provide a blind that overcomes the mentioned disadvantages, which is highly portable, and which may be rapidly and conveniently assembled for use at any chosen location in the field, then just as quickly dismantled for ease of transportation or for storage in minimum space between periods of desired use.

Another important object of this invention is to provide such a blind, which includes a collapsible seat as a part of a frame that supports a cover shroud and is rotatable upon a base structure, to permit a user within the blind and on the seat turning the entire upper portion of the blind for surveillance in any direction through a relatively narrow opening normally provided in the front of the shroud and without any other movement on the part of the user that might tend to frighten wild game.

Another important object of this invention is to provide such a blind, in which a cover shroud is supported upon shiftable elements normally held in a position to substantially close the shroud, except for a relatively narrow front viewing opening, but which, upon release by the user of a suitable holding means, will automatically move to positions opening the shroud throughout a wide angle to the front and sides of the user, presenting a wide and unobstructed field for shooting, viewing or photography.

Still other important objects of this invention will be made clear or become apparent as the following description of a preferred embodiment of the invention progresses.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of a blind made pursuant to the teachings of my invention and set in position for use, the phantom lines indicating the positions of the shroud supporting elements when the shroud is collapsed to its fully opened position, and the shroud being partially broken away for clarity;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary, top plan view of the blind of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary, horizontal cross-sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary, front elevational view of the seat assembly, the phantom lines indicating the positions of the seat panels when in folded condition;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary, vertical cross-sectional view taken along line 5—5 of FIG. 3;

FIG. 6 is an enlarged, fragmentary, top plan view of the top plate which pivotally carries the shroud-supporting elements; and

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary, vertical cross-sectional view taken along line 7—7 of FIG. 6.

Referring to the drawings, and initially to FIG. 1 in particular, a preferred embodiment of the portable blind of this invention is illustrated, which broadly includes a ground-supported base structure **10**, a lower frame assembly **12**, an upper frame assembly **14** and a shroud or cover **16**.

In such preferred embodiment, the ground-supported base structure **10**, as best shown in FIG. 5, comprises an elongated stake member having a lower length **18** provided with a point **20** and adapted to be inserted into the ground at any suitable location in the field, an intermediate outwardly extending flange **22** adapted to serve as a stop when the length **18** of stake structure **10** is emplaced in the ground and as a possible aid in accomplishing such emplacement, and an upper length **24** extending uprightly above the ground and the flange **22** for rotatably supporting the lower frame assembly **12** as hereinafter described.

The lower frame assembly **12** includes an elongated horizontal main member **26** having a downwardly extending front socket **28** secured to its bottom with the top of the socket being closed by the member **26**, an open ended upright rear socket **30** mounted at the rear of member **26**, and a brace **32** interconnecting the sockets **28** and **30**. As best shown in FIG. 5, the upper end of the stake structure **18** is preferably pointed as at **34** to reduce friction when the frame assembly **12** is pivotally emplaced upon the base structure **10** by fitting the socket **28** onto the upper portion **24** of stake **18**.

The lower frame assembly **12** also includes a pair of seat-forming side panels **36** and **38**, which are hingedly mounted on opposite side of the member **26** by hinges as at **40** and **42**. When the panels **36** and **38** are swung upwardly from the folded positions shown in dotted lines in FIG. 4 to their horizontal use positions shown in solid lines, they may be locked in place by turning a generally S-shaped holder **44** pivotally mounted on the bottom of member **26**, as by a nut and bolt **46**, from the dotted line position to the solid line position shown in FIG. 3. When so assembled, the panels **36** and **38**, together with the member **26**, present a stable and comfortable seat for the hunter or observer, which will turn easily upon the base structure **10** along with the rest of the lower frame assembly **12**. The S-shaped configuration of the holder **44** provides a desirable degree of support for the seat panels **36** and **38** under substantial areas to prevent rocking thereof, and also facilitates convenient disposition of the holder **44** along the bottom of member **26** without interference with the socket **28** when the assembly **12** is to be removed from the base stake **18** and the panels **36** and **38** are to be folded for transportation or storage.

The upper frame assembly **14** includes an inverted generally L-shaped standard indicated by the reference numeral **48**, which has an upright leg **50** and a forwardly extending leg **52**. A lower portion **54** of leg **50** is received within the socket **30** when the blind is assembled, and an outwardly extending flange **56** on the leg **50** serves as a stop to hold the standard **48** in the desired position relative to the lower frame assembly **12**. If desired, the lower portions **54** of leg **50** and the interior of socket **30** may be formed with other than round cross sections to positively secure the standard **48** against turning in socket **30**, but in practice this has been found unnecessary for normal conditions of use.

A pivot plate **58** is secured to the leg **52** of standard **48** adjacent the forward end of the latter, and a plurality of generally inverted L-shaped shroud-supporting elements **60**, **62**, **64**, **66**, each having an outwardly extending leg **68** and a downwardly extending leg **70**, are pivotally carried on the plate **58** by rivets or the like **72** disposed on axes arranged to permit free swinging of the elements **60**, **62**, **64** and **66** (see FIGS. 6 and 7). A strong elastic member **74**, which may be of rubber, is oppositely secured to the legs **68** of elements **60** and **66** in any suitable fashion and is intermediately coupled with the leg **68** of elements **62** and **64** and the leg **52** of standard **48** as by passage through rings **76** thereon (see FIG. 1). The elastic member **74** should be of sufficient strength to strongly bias and urge the elements **60**, **62**, **64** and **66** toward the positions shown in dotted lines in FIG. 2 when they are not being

held in the solid line positions shown. Any suitable holding means that is readily releasable, such as the chain and hook-and-eye assembly 78-80 illustrated in FIG. 2, is provided to releasably interconnect elements 60 and 66 and thereby normally hold all of the element 60, 62, 64 and 66 against the force of elastic member 74 and in positions spaced from each other and leg 52 of standard 48, as generally illustrated in solid lines in FIG. 2, although the spacing between elements 60 and 66 may be varied by altering the length of the holding means 78–80 to suit the user's preference or conditions of use as to the size of the frontal surveillance gap or opening to be left in shroud 16 between elements 60 and 66.

The shroud or cover 16 may be formed of any suitable flexible material, but a heavy cloth or canvas desirably decorated with a camouflaging design suitable for the terrain of intended use is preferred. If desired, several shrouds 16 of different designs or materials could be alternately employed for different terrain or purposes, which might also include one of white canvas or plastic for use snow-covered surroundings, one of netting suitable for on the sight embellishment of camouflaging by the attachment of local vegetation, etc. In any case, the shroud or cover 16 is generally configured as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 so as to suitably fit over and be supported by the elements 60, 62, 64 and 66 with assistance from the standard 48 at the rear. A fairly tight fit will minimize any tendency of the shroud 16 to flap in a wind, but the shroud 16 should allow for the user to adjust the frontal surveillance gap between the elements 60 and 66 within reasonable limits of individual preference approaching complete closure when desired, and it is noted that any undesired slack in the fit of the shroud 16 usually can be taken out through shortening adjustment by the user of the holding means 78–80 to decrease the size of the frontal gap. The margins of shroud 16 around the frontal gap are secured to elements 60 and 66 in any suitable fashion, such as the snap fasteners 82, illustrated in FIG. 1, which have been found most convenient for quick assembly and disassembly, although tie strings or the like could also be employed.

During disassembly for transportation or extended storage of the blind, the shroud 16 is preferably removed from the upper frame assembly 14 and folded, although it may be left on if desired and probably would be for short transits from one site to another; next, the holding means 78–80 is released, whereupon the elastic member 74 urges the elements toward the folded condition illustrated in dotted lines in FIG. 2, in which the elements 60, 62, 64 and 66 lie alongside the standard 48 and the shroud 16, if not previously removed, will be collapsed; the upper frame assembly 14, including standard 48 and elements 60, 62, 64 and 66 is then removed from the lower frame assembly 12 by lifting the lower portion 54 of leg 50 of standard 48 out of the socket 30; the seat holder 44 is then swung to the dotted line position shown in FIG. 3, whereupon the seat panels 36 and 38 fold under the member 26, and the lower frame assembly 12 in removed from the base structure 10 merely by lifting socket 28 off of the upper stake length 24; and finally the base structure or stake 10 is removed from the ground, the flange 22 being helpful if any prying is needed to get it loosened from the ground after being subjected to the weight of a user of the blind over some extended period. Thus, at most, four separable and individually foldable assemblies or elements 10, 12, 14 and 16 are involved during transportation or storage.

Assembly of the blind is merely the reverse of the steps for disassembly just described. With only four parts to be assembled and that being done primarily by merely fitting each onto another, it will be clear that emplacement is quick and convenient even under adverse field conditions.

In use, the hunter or observer normally remains quietly and comfortably on the seat with the cover closed except for a relatively small frontal viewing gap. He may then slowly turn the blind as an entirety, except for the base structure, upon the pivot provided by the latter to scan the surrounding terrain merely by moving his feet on the ground and, while so doing, he may remain in constant readiness for shooting, taking photographs or the like since his hands are free to manage the equipment to be used. It should be noted that the disposition of the seat and the mounting and proportioning of the upper frame assembly are such as to provide a weight distribution substantially balancing the forces acting relative to the pivotal mounting of the lower frame assembly on the base structure, which provides stability and permits easy turning of the blind. When game is detected within the desired range, the user need merely release the means holding the blind in concealment condition, whereupon the shroud and supporting elements therefor will be automatically and quickly swung to his rear to immediately clear a wide angle or field for shooting or photographing to the front or either side.

Thus, it should be clear that this invention fully achieves its objects and overcomes the disadvantages and inconveniences of the prior practices that have long been conventional and at least tacitly accepted as inevitable by hunters and other users of blinds, and that it does so by a device which is relatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture, easy to maintain and convenient to use. It is to be understood that various modifications in details of construction may be made from the precise from of the preferred embodiment shown and described for purposes of illustration without departing from the essence and spirit of the invention. Accordingly, my invention should be deemed as limited only by the fair scope of the claims that follow.

For the purpose of protecting the contribution made by my invention to the art to which it relates, I claim:

1. A portable blind comprising:

ground-engaging base structure adapted to be removably supported by the ground;

frame means mounted on the structure and including a generally inverted L-shaped, upwardly and forwardly extending standard, a plurality of generally inverted L-shaped, outwardly and downwardly extending, relatively shiftable support elements, and means pivotally mounting the innermost extremity of each element upon the forwardmost extremity of the standard for shifting of the elements relative to the standard and each other about vertical axes; and

a collapsible shroud carried by the elements for presenting a concealment cover having a relatively narrow surveillance gap therein when the elements are in one relative disposition thereof, but adapted to be opened to clear a wide and unobstructed field for the shooting, photographing, or observing of wild life when the elements are shifted to another relative disposition thereof.

2. A blind as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

said frame means is pivotally mounted on the structure to facilitate scanning of the surrounding terrain through the gap from within the blind without opening of the shroud and elimination thereby of the concealment cover.

3. A blind as set forth in claim 2, wherein:

said frame means includes a seat pivotable therewith and disposed to support a user for surveillance through the gap.

4. A blind as set forth in claim 1, wherein there is provided:

resilient means yieldably urging the elements from said one relative disposition thereof toward said other relative disposition thereof; and

releasable means for normally holding the elements in said one relative disposition thereof.

5. A blind as set forth in claim 1 wherein:

said frame means comprises a lower frame assembly releasably and pivotally mounted on the structure, and an upper frame assembly including said standard and said elements releasably mounted on the lower frame assembly, to facilitate assembly, disassembly, transportation and storage.

6. A blind as set forth in claim 5, wherein:

said structure comprises a ground penetrating stake presenting a generally vertical axis for pivoting of the

lower frame assembly thereon, the entire frame means being supported by the stake in spaced relationship to the ground.

7. A blind as set forth in claim 5, wherein:

said lower frame assembly includes foldable seat-presenting means pivotable therewith.

8. A portable blind for hunters or observers of wild life comprising:

ground-engaging base structure;

a lower frame assembly pivotally mounted on the structure for rotation about a generally vertical axis, said lower frame assembly extending in a rearward direction from its axis of pivot and being supported by the structure for free rotation in spaced relationship to the ground;

a seat carried by the lower frame assembly for rotation therewith and extending in a rearward direction from the axis of pivot of the lower frame assembly;

an upper frame assembly including a standard mounted on the lower frame assembly adjacent the rear of the latter and extending upwardly and forwardly therefrom, and a plurality of support elements pivotally mounted on the standard adjacent the forward extremity of the latter for swinging movement about generally vertical axes and extending outwardly and downwardly therefrom;

resilient means yieldably biasing the elements toward generally rearwardly extending positions;

means for releasably holding the elements in normal more forwardly disposed positions; and

a flexible shroud carried by the elements for providing concealment when the elements are in their more forwardly positions but arranged for opening to clear a wide field of fire or vision when the elements are in their generally rearwardly extending positions.

9. A blind as set forth in claim 8, wherein:

the respective mountings of the lower frame assembly upon the base structure, the standard upon the lower frame assembly, and the shroud upon the elements are each releasable for quick and convenient assembly and disassembly, and the upper frame assembly and seat are each foldable to further facilitate transportation and storage.

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