April 25, 1967 T. A. SMITH 3,315,403

LIVE BAIT CONTAINER DEVICE

Filed Oct. 20, 1964

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

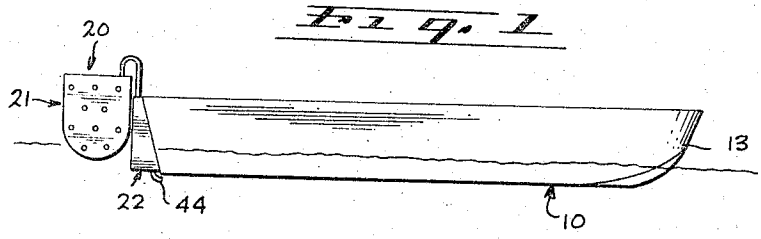


Fig. 2

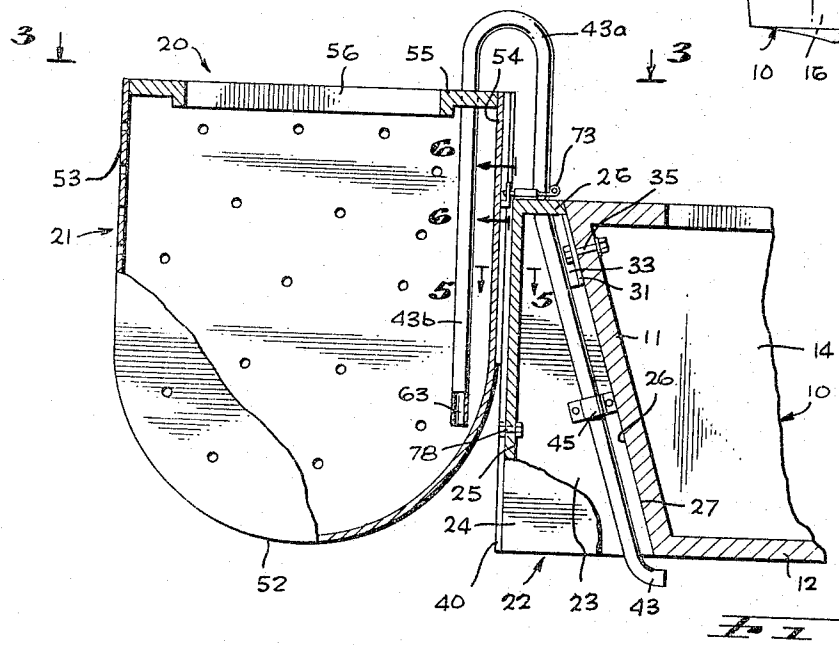


Fig. 1a

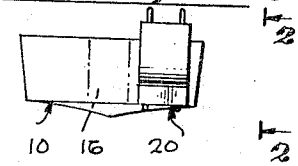


Fig. 3

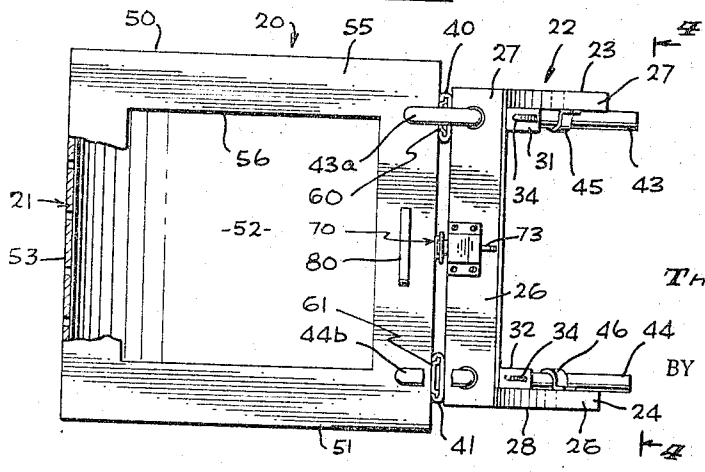
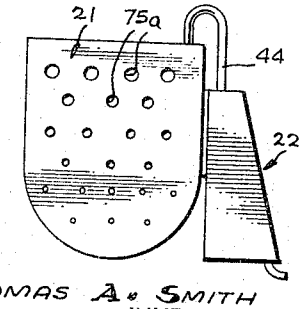


Fig. 8



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Fig. 4

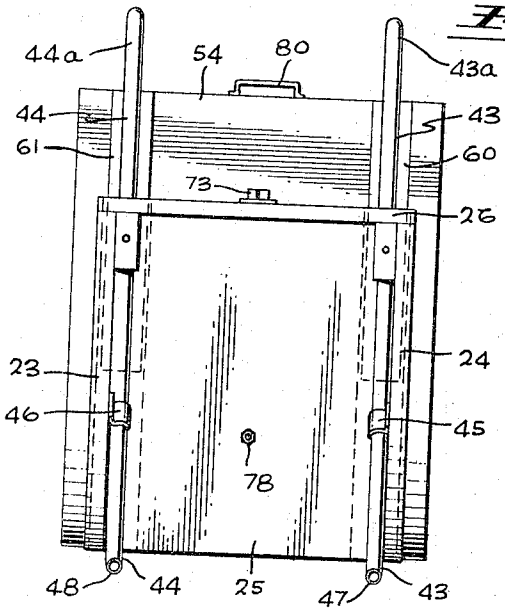


Fig. 5

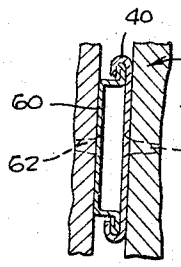


Fig. 6

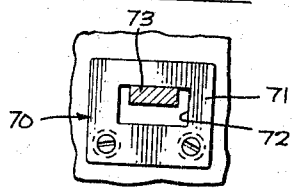


Fig. 9

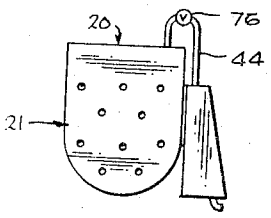


Fig. 7

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LIVE BAIT CONTAINER DEVICE

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Filed Oct. 20, 1964, Ser. No. 405,074
3 Claims. (Cl. 43—55)

This invention relates to a live bait container device and more particularly to a live bait container through which water can continually circulate whether the boat is stationary or moving.

Live bait containers have been placed inside a boat adjacent to the transom and the water is continually changed when the boat is underway by a probe projecting into the water below the bottom of the boat (see U.S. Patent No. 3,040,469). Also, the water in a live bait container located within a boat has been changed by an electric water pump driven by extra batteries carried in the boat. In the present invention, the bait container is always supported externally of the boat adjacent the transom whether or not the boat is moving, so that it doesn't take up room in the boat. Also, the bait container is vertically movable on the boat so that it can be placed directly in the water when the boat is stationary and can be raised above the water level when the boat is moving. In the raised position, there is no substantial drag on the boat and the water is circulated by probes projecting into the water just below the bottom of the boat. Therefore, the need for a pump and extra batteries is eliminated. The container is detachably mounted so that it can be removed from the boat for cleaning and storage and the container requires no maintenance other than occasional cleaning.

Briefly, the container itself has an open top and the sides and bottom contain a plurality of drainage openings small enough to retain the bait in the container. A container support means located between the container and the boat and has brackets on one side for attachment to the boat transom. The other side of the support means is substantially vertical and carries a pair of spaced female slides. A pair of male guides are attached to the container and ride in the female slides so that the container can be raised and lowered with respect to the water. The probes for circulating the water can be fixed to the support device which is offset to one side of the motor mount so as not to interfere with the operation of the motor. The holes in the container can be graduated in size from bottom to top to accommodate the different flow rate through the probes at different boat speeds.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a live bait container, through which water circulates whether the boat is stationary or underway.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a live bait container device which is continually mounted exteriorly of the boat in order not to interfere with the interior space of the boat.

Another object of the invention is to provide a live bait container device which is mounted by support means located exteriorly of the boat for up and down movement relative to the boat so that the container is in the up position when the boat is under way and can be lowered into the water when the boat is stationary or drifting.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a live bait container device having probes projecting into the water in order to continually circulate water through the container when the boat is underway and moving.

Another object of the invention is to provide a live bait container device having a container supported for

up and down movement by support means attached exteriorly on the transom of the boat, said container being in the up position substantially out of the water to reduce drag when the boat is underway and being in the down position in the water when the boat is not underway.

These and other objects of the invention not specifically set forth above will become readily apparent from the accompanying description and drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view of a boat with the live bait container device supported at the aft end thereof in the up position;

FIGURE 1*a* is an elevational view of the aft end of the boat showing the container device supported on the transom;

FIGURE 2 is a vertical section along line 2—2 of FIGURE 1*a* showing the support means for the container and the probes located below the bottom of the boat.

FIGURE 3 is a top plan view along line 3—3 of FIGURE 2 showing the support means for the live bait container;

FIGURE 4 is a side elevational view along line 4—4 of FIGURE 3 illustrating the probes carried by the support means;

FIGURE 5 is a partial section along line 5—5 of FIGURE 2 showing the female and male slide members for movably supporting the container;

FIGURE 6 is a sectional view along line 6—6 of FIGURE 2 showing the latch device for holding the container in the up position;

FIGURE 7 is a side elevational view similar to FIGURE 2 showing the container in the down position while the boat is stationary;

FIGURE 8 is a side elevational view similar to FIGURE 2 showing a modification in which the holes in the container are graduate in size; and

FIGURE 9 is a side elevational view similar to FIGURE 2 showing a modification in which a valve is placed in one of the probes.

Referring to the embodiment of the invention chosen for purposes of illustration, the boat **10** has a back transom **11**, bottom **12** and a front bow **13** defining an interior compartment **14**. The transom **11** can have an area **16** (see FIGURE 1*a*) for mounting an outboard motor or the boat could be powered by an inboard motor. The live bait container device **20** of the present invention can be located to one side of the motor mounting area **16** so as not to interfere with the operation of the boat if an outboard motor is utilized. The device **20** consists of a bait compartment **21** which is supported on the transom of the boat by support means **22**. The support means consists of a frame having tapered sides **23** and **24**, a back panel **25** extending between the sides, and top flange **26**. The tapered edges **27** and **28** on the sides **23** and **24**, respectively, are shaped to rest against the slanting transom **11** and position the back panel **25** substantially vertically. It is understood that the slope of the edges **27** and **28** can be varied to engage various shaped transom and still provide a substantially vertical back mounting panel **25**.

Mounting plates **31** and **32** are located at each corner of the support means **22** and are attached to sides **23** and **24**, respectively, by a side flange **33** (see FIGURE 2), secured in any desired manner. Each of the mounting plates **31**, **32** have an opening **34** for receiving a mounting bolt **35** which also passes through an opening in the transom in order to receive the support means **22** to the transom.

The back panel **25** supports a pair of female slide mem-

bers **40** and **41**, each of which are secured to the back panel by means of screws **42** (see FIGURE 5). Also, a pair of water probes **43** and **44** are secured along the side panels **23** and **24**, respectively, by means of brackets **45** and **46**, respectively. The end openings **47** and **48** of the probes extend below the bottom **12** of the boat (see FIGURE 2) so that when the boat is underway, water is forced through the end openings of the tube to produce circulation through the tube. Each of the probes **43** and **44** extend upwardly through an opening in the flange **26**. The compartment **21** consists of two U-shaped ends **50** and **51**, a curved bottom **52** and sides **53** and **54**. A flange **55** extends inwardly from the ends and sides to provide a splash shield around a top opening **56**. The side **54** of the container located adjacent the back panel **25** of the support means mounts a pair of vertical male slide members **60** and **61** by means of screws **62** (see FIGURE 5) and the male members **60** and **61** are received by the female members **40** and **41**, respectively, in order to slidably mount the compartment **21**. The probe **43** has a loop portion **43***a* above the support means **22** connecting with a straight leg portion **43***b* which extends into compartment **21** through an opening **65** in flange **55** and terminates in an outlet discharge opening **63**. In a similar manner, the probe **44** has a loop portion **44***a* above the support means which connects with a straight leg portion **44***b* extending into compartment **21** through an opening **65** in flange **55** and terminating in a discharge opening **64**. The loop portions **43***a* and **44***a* and the leg portions **43***b* and **44***b* are large enough so that the container can be moved vertically on male slide members **60** and **61** into the up position of FIGURE 2 while the discharge openings **63** and **64** remain with the containers in order to maintain water in the container while the boat is underway.

A bracket **70** is secured to the slide **54** of the compartment **21** at a position intermediate the male slide members and has an upright portion **71** containing an opening **72**. The flange **26** of support means **22** carries a spring biased latch **73** which is slidable in a housing **74**. The latch is tapered on its lower surface in order to move past the top of the bracket **70** and into opening **72** when the compartment is moved into the up position. Thus, the latch will hold the compartment in the up position and will release the compartment for downward movement when pulled out of opening **72**. While the boat is underway with the container held in the upward position by the latch **73**, water will be supplied by probes **43** and **44** into the interior of compartment **21**. The sides and bottom of the compartment contain a plurality of return flow openings **75** which are of size and number to maintain the water level within the compartment at a suitable height at the normal operating speed of the boat. For boats of slow speed, the openings can be all of the same size but for high speed boats, it is desirable to graduate the size of the openings as shown in FIGURE 8. The lower openings are smaller than the top openings so that the greater water flow at higher speeds will be discharged through the larger top openings and prevent the bait bucket from overflowing. Water will continually circulate from the probe inlet openings, through the probes to the probe outlet openings and then through the surface openings in the bait container. Also, since the container is raised substantially above the water level while the boat is moving, it will not present a drag to the boat. Another modification to control the water level in compartment **21** is shown in FIGURE 9 wherein probe **44** contains a valve **76** which can be closed down somewhat at high speeds and a similar valve could be placed in probe **43** if necessary to control the water level. It is understood that overflow of the container is prevented so that bait will not be lost.

The back panel **25** of the support means carries a stop in the form of a nut **78** located midway between the

female slide members **40** and **41** and in the path of movement of the bracket **70**. When the boat is stopped or drifting and no water is flowing through the probes **43** and **44**, the latch **73** is pulled out of the opening **72** and the container **21** is permitted to move downwardly on the slides into the water (see FIGURE 7). The downward movement of the container is stopped when the bracket **70** engages the stop **78** and the stop supports the container in this lower position. In the lower position, the water level in the compartment **21** is substantially the same as that of the surrounding water and circulation is obtained by inflow and outflow through the openings **75** resulting from the swells and waves on the surface of the water. The portion **43***b* and **44***b* of the probes remain within the interior of compartment **21** but there is no substantial flow of water through the probes while the boat is stationary or drifting so that there would be no tendency for the water to overflow the compartment. Before the boat is again propelled under power, the compartment **21** is pulled upwardly into the position of FIGURE 2 and secured by latch **73**. A handle **80** is attached to flange **55** adjacent the support means **22** for moving the compartment.

The compartment **21** of the live bait container device can be molded from fiberglass or constructed of any suitable plastic or other material and the support means is preferably formed of wood or some other material which is resistant to salt water corrosion and contamination. Also the probes **43** and **44** are preferably formed of a plastic for the same reasons. It is apparent that the position of the bracket **70** and of the stop nut **78** can be to change to vary the up position and the down position of the compartment. Thus, the container could ride completely out of the water and the depth of the container in the water when the boat is stopped or drifting can be adjusted to a suitable depth. It is, of course, understood that the holes **75** in the container **21** will be smaller than the size of any bait that may be carried therein. Various other modifications are contemplated by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as hereinafter defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A live bait container device for use with a boat comprising:

a bait container having a plurality of openings in the surface thereof;

support means connected to said boat and mounting said container on the transom of said boat for movement substantially vertically with respect to the water level;

means for holding said container in an up position substantially out of the water when the boat is under way;

probe means connected to said support means in fixed relationship with said boat and having an inlet opening continually located in said water and facing in the direction of movement of the boat for moving water into said container when the boat is in motion;

means for supporting said container in a lower position when the boat is stationary or drifting with a major portion of the container in the water;

said support means comprising a pair of sides each having an edge engaging said transom and a second substantially vertical edge;

a substantially vertical panel secured to said vertical edges and supporting first slide means;

second slide means on said container cooperating with said first slide means to provide for vertical movement of said container; and

means connecting said sides to said transom.

2. A live bait container device as defined in claim **1** wherein said container carries a bracket means, said lower position supporting means comprising a stop located on said vertical panel below said bracket means

for engaging said bracket means when said container is lowered.

3. In a live bait container as defined in claim 1 having means for attaching said probe means to said support means for locating said inlet opening slightly below the bottom of said boat, said probe means having a loop portion extending above said support member and having a leg portion extending from said loop portion down into said container, said loop portion extending high enough above said support means to permit said container to move between its upper and lower positions.

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