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MINNOW BOX

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Fig. 1

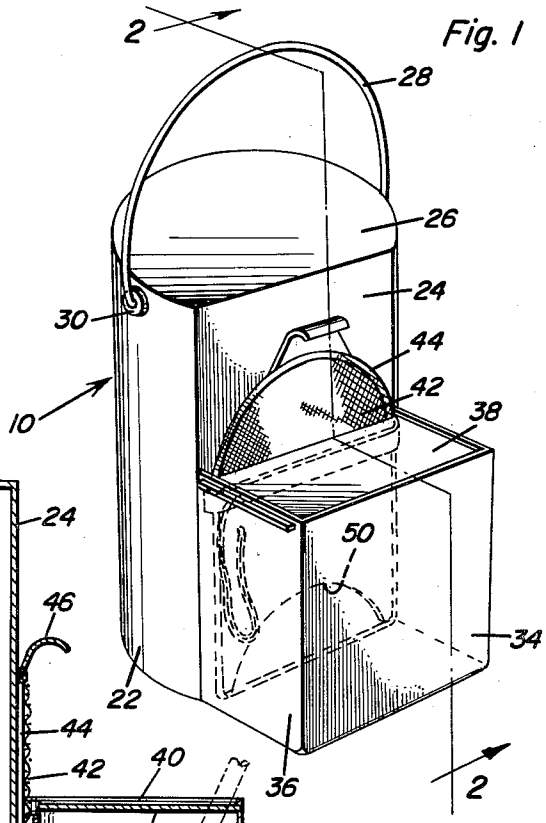
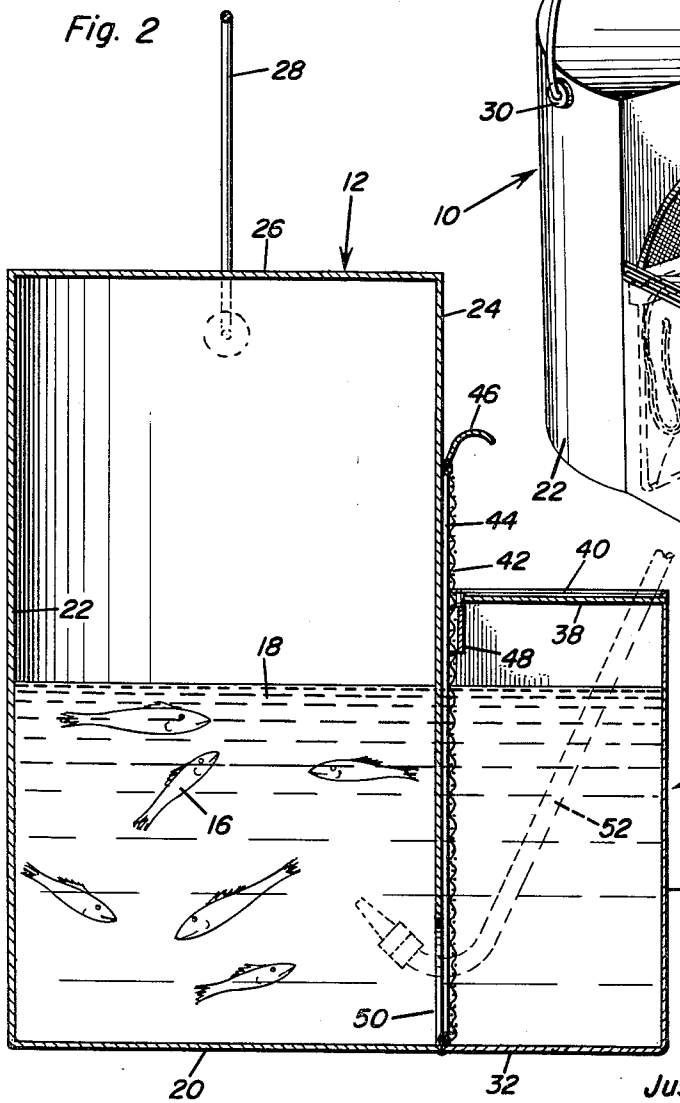


Fig. 2



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MINNOW BOX

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The present invention generally relates to a minnow box or bait receptacle having a supply of oxygen incorporated therein.

The primary object of the present invention is to provide a minnow box or receptacle that is extremely simple in construction, effective in maintaining minnows and the like in a live condition, easy to use, long lasting, dependable and generally inexpensive to manufacture.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a minnow box having a main compartment and a secondary compartment communicated therewith through an arch-type opening at the bottom which enables the minnows to proceed from the main compartment to the secondary compartment with the arch type opening permitting the box to be tilted to a greater degree without losing the supply of oxygen or discharging it into the secondary compartment.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a minnow box constructed in accordance with the preceding object so that the main compartment is taller than the secondary compartment with the upper end thereof is adapted to be filled with oxygen for supplying the minnows with oxygen for maintaining them alive.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the minnow box of the present invention; and

FIGURE 2 is a vertical sectional view taken substantially upon a plane passing along section line 2—2 of FIGURE 1.

Referring now specifically to the drawings, the numeral **10** generally designates the minnow box of the present invention which includes a main compartment generally designated by the numeral **12** and a secondary compartment generally designated by the numeral **14**. The main compartment **12** may be considered a storage chamber for a plurality of minnows **16**, a quantity of water **18** and a considerable volume of oxygen disposed above the water level. The secondary compartment **14** may be considered a catching chamber which also receives a quantity of water at the same level as the water **18** in the main compartment **12** for reasons to be described.

The main compartment **12** is provided with a bottom **20**, an upstanding peripheral wall **22**, cylindrical in nature and having a flat side wall portion **24**. The wall **22** and the wall **24** are integral with the bottom **20** and are provided with a top wall **26**. Attached to the wall **22** is a U-shaped handle or bail **28** connected thereto by suitable connectors **30** in the form of sockets receiving inturned ends of the bail **28** whereby the bail **28** may be pivoted in relation to the main compartment **12** in the usual manner. The side wall **24** may be considered a partition wall in that it separates the main compartment **12** from the secondary compartment **14** and forms an inner wall for the secondary compartment **14**. The secondary compartment **14** is also provided with a bottom **32** forming an extension of the bottom **20**, an outer wall **34** and end walls **36** with the outer wall **34** generally being parallel to the partition wall **24** and the end wall **36** extending outwardy from the end edges thereof. At

the upper end of the secondary compartment **14** there is provided a sliding closure panel **38** received in slots **40** in the end walls **36** and the outer wall **34**, as shown in FIG. 2. Disposed against the partition wall **24** is a screen member or foraminous closure **42** secured to a peripheral frame **44** having a handle **46** at the upper end thereof. The screen member **42** is vertically slidable against the outer surface of the partition wall **24** and is guided by a transverse strap **48** extending between the end walls **36** in spaced parallel relation to the partition wall **24**. The upper edge of the strap **48** underlies the left edge portion of the closure **38** as seen in FIG. 2, and the upper edge of the strap **48** is located at substantially the same height as the lowest portion of the slots **40** so as to be adapted to serve as a support for the left edge portion of the closure. The screen member **42** forms a gate for an arcuate or arch-type opening **50** formed in the bottom of the partition wall **24** which communicates the main compartment **12** with the secondary compartment **14** so that the minnows **16** may swim from the storage chamber within the main compartment **12** into the catching chamber in the secondary compartment **14** when the screen **42** is elevated. However, the screen **42** will permit circulation of water and thus, the water **18** within the main compartment and also within the secondary compartment will be provided with a supply of oxygen at all times to maintain the minnows **16** in live condition.

Actually, the sliding closure **38** is an optional feature and may be omitted and the device will work just as effectively. This is also true of the sliding screen **42** since the fish may just as well have access to the catching chamber within the compartment **14** at all times.

In using the device, the arch-type opening **50** will prevent oxygen from escaping through the opening **50** during normal sidewise tilting of the box as would occur when walking or perhaps when a boat was rocking or the like. The slidably mounted, removable closure **38** provides access to the secondary compartment **14**. The slots **40** are of a length to permit one end of the closure **38** to slide on the guide **48** in a manner to be supported thereby when said closure is being inserted or removed. In using the device, a discharge nozzle **52** for oxygen may be inserted through the open upper end of the secondary compartment **14** and into the interior of the main compartment **12** wherein oxygen may be discharged into the main compartment **12**. If any pressure differential exists between the interior of the main compartment **12** and the secondary compartment, then the level of the water in the secondary compartment will be higher than the level of the water in the main compartment for compensating for the pressure differential.

The present invention is preferably constructed of a transparent plastic material which enables the person using the device to observe the water level and also observe the minnows within the minnow box for constantly revealing the quantity of minnows within the minnow box, the water level therein and the condition of the minnows in the minnow box. For example, when the water level in both compartments is the same, this is an indication that it will soon be necessary to add additional oxygen to the main compartment in order to maintain the minnows in live condition. Also, the condition of the minnows will be indicated by observing their movement and activity. The arch-type opening in the partition wall is quite important to the normal operation since this will permit the minnows to proceed from one compartment to the other but will prevent loss of oxygen by any substantial tilting of the minnow box.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those

skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A minnow container comprising a first receptacle and a second receptacle disposed in side-by-side relation and including a common bottom, said second receptacle being of lesser height than the first receptacle, the wall of the first receptacle extending to the common bottom and forming a partition between the first receptacle and the second receptacle, said partition forming wall having an enlarged opening in the bottom portion thereof for communicating the interior of the first and second receptacles, a supply of water in said receptacles having a water level disposed above the opening for retaining live minnows therein whereby the minnows may travel between the first and second receptacles, the volume of the first receptacle above the water level adapted to contain a supply of oxygen for maintaining the minnows alive, said first and second receptacles being constructed of transparent material thereby enabling the condition and quantity of minnows to be observed and further enabling the minnows to be more easily caught by hand, said second receptacle having an open top for enabling a hand or net to be inserted into the second receptacle for catching a minnow for use as bait.

2. The structure as defined in claim 1 wherein said partition forming wall is provided with a strap mounted thereon and having the major portion thereof spaced slightly therefrom for forming a guide slot, a slidable closure member conforming to the configuration of the partition forming wall and slidable between the partition forming wall and the strap for forming a closure for the opening in the bottom of the partition forming wall, said closure having a handle on the upper end thereof for manipulation, said closure member being of screen mesh material for preventing passage of minnows but enabling passage of water between the receptacles.

3. The structure as defined in claim 2 wherein said second receptacle is provided with a sliding closure plate for forming a closure therefor, said opening being of semi-circular configuration to prevent loss of oxygen during normal tilting of the container, said semi-circular opening also adapted to receive an oxygen nozzle for discharging oxygen into the first receptacle for replenishing the supply of oxygen above the water level therein.

4. A minnow container comprising first and second receptacles and a partition therebetween, said first receptacle for receiving water and oxygen and including a closed top, said second receptacle for the reception of water and having an open top, said partition having an opening in its lower portion communicating the receptacles, a horizontal guide in the second receptacle adjacent the top thereof and adjacent to and in spaced parallelism with the partition, a foraminous closure for the opening slidable vertically on the partition in the guide, said second receptacle having means for guiding and receiving a slidable closure in the upper portion of wall portions thereof and said horizontal guide having an upper edge portion located at substantially the same height as said guiding and receiving means, and a removable closure for the second receptacle slidable in the guiding and receiving means and engageable on the upper edge of said horizontal guide.

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