

Slick Way To Catch A Thief

A “wildlife” camera unexpectedly turned up crucial evidence that was used to catch a couple of thieves in action. They were stealing Glen Ransbottom’s deer stand near Etna Green, Ind.

Ransbottom had strapped a weatherproof 35 mm camera, equipped with a motion sensor, to a tree that was close to his deer hunting stand, hoping it would provide him with photos of any deer grazing in the area. Then one day he noticed that someone had stolen his tree stand. Irritated by the theft, he checked his camera and, to his surprise, he found the film included photos of two guys carrying away his deer stand.

Ransbottom contacted a state conservation

officer and the photos were used in the local local crime stoppers “crime of the week” alert that produced tips from the public. The thieves were caught and each got 18 months in the slammer.

Ransbottom says the camera could have been seen easily, as it was mounted about waist high. He suggests that the wildlife cameras could be used around machinery sheds or to monitor machinery left parked in fields overnight. The cameras are available from Cabelas (ph 800 237-4444; www.cabelas.com) and a number of other retailers.

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A “wildlife” camera attached to a tree caught these thieves in action stealing a metal deer stand.

Amazing Collection Of Electric Fencers

One of the more unusual collections we’ve ever seen at an antique tractor show is Loren Etter’s collection of some 40 electric fencers.

“As far as I know I have the biggest electric fencer collection around,” says Etter. “Some of my fencers contain a battery; others hook up to a battery; and others plug into a 110-volt wall outlet. I get most of my fencers at flea markets and auctions and sometimes at antique shops, mostly in Minnesota and Wisconsin. At shows, people come up to me and say they remember their dad using many of the fencers I have.”

What got Etter started was a fencer called the “Busy Bee”, which he bought at an auction about 15 years ago for \$1. “I didn’t even know what it was when I bought it. But once I figured it out I thought it was cool, so I got it working. Then I went to another auction where there were about 20 electric fencers, although most of them were old junky things. I bought 8 to 10 fencers when the auctioneer put the balance together as one lot. They cost a total of about \$15. Most of them work.

“The farthest away that I’ve bought a fencer was in New York state. It was an all metal Shoc-Stock in working condition. The smaller of my two glass ‘Red Devil’s’ came from Lawrence, Kansas.”

The fencers come with colorful names, such as the Electro Line, Weed-O-matic Farmmaster, Surge, Red Devil, Hold-Em, Shoc-Stock, Le-Jay, and Busy Bee. “The

most I ever paid for a fencer was for the Red Devil, for which I paid \$20.”

Here’s a description of some of Etter’s fencers and how they work.

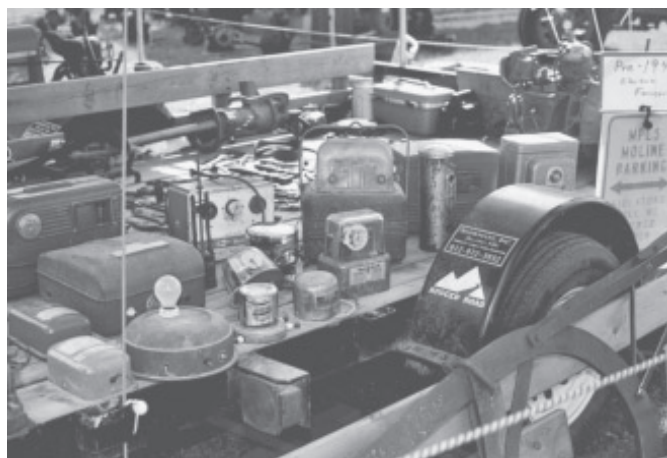
Weed-O-matic Farm Master - It was made by the old Gamble’s department store and was quite popular in the early 1950’s. It has a pulser built into the center of it. “Without the pulser, the fencer wouldn’t let the animal loose once it was shocked,” says Etter. “There’s a red light on one side that shows the fencer working, and a green light on the other side that shows if the wire is grounded out and not working. The pulser is located in the center and can be replaced when defective.”

Busy Bee - This fencer has a round glass dome and a photo of a yellow jacket hornet on front. The words ‘Busy Bee’ are etched on the front.

Surge - It’s a 110-volt operated, metal round canister equipped with an electric cord at the bottom and what looks like an electric meter dial. It was made by the same company that made Suge milkers.

Shoc-Stock - Battery-operated, it has a metal base with what looks like a 4-in. glass canning jar on top. “I have three glass Shoc-Stock fencers, and two other all-metal Shoc-Stock models that are also battery-operated,” says Etter

Red Devil - It has a metal base with a glass rectangle on top of it. There’s even a photo of a devil with a lightning bolt.



Loren Etter has a collection of some 40 electric fencers. “As far as I know it’s the biggest electric fencer collection around,” he says.

Hold Em - The 110-volt operated, reddish round canister has a light bulb on top of it. The current is regulated by the wattage of the bulb you put in the socket. “The higher wattage the bulb, the thicker the element so the more voltage goes through it. So to reduce shocking power and electricity costs most farmers would use only a 25-watt bulb. The downside is that it was dangerous to use,” says Etter. “There is no pulser on this model.”

Le Jay Hi Ball kit - This kit sold for \$1.95 and was designed to make use of the coil on a Ford Model T car. “The kit I have is still new in the box,” says Etter. It includes pieces

that you screw onto the coil, and then the coil is wired to the fence. It comes with a mounting bracket that supports a glass test tube set at an angle above the coil.

“A black marble would roll up or down inside the tube, and every time the marble hit the bottom of the tube it contacted a metal tab that contacts the Ford coil and causes the fencer to stop shocking. Whenever the marble goes up the test tube it creates the pulse,” says Etter. “There was a felt pad in the end of the tube to keep it from breaking.”

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37-Year-Old Cat Still Going Strong

Baby was just a tiny ball of black fur when he came to live with Al Palusky and his mother, Mabel, in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1970. Mabel held the kitten for an hour before it stopped shaking, Palusky recalls. It had been rescued after children tossed it in a trash can along with firecrackers.

“Even now if kids come into the house, he runs and hides,” Palusky says of his 37-year-old cat, which he thinks is currently the world’s oldest cat. Baby won the oldest cat entry in a recent contest held by Cat Fancy magazine. Palusky’s main evidence of Baby’s age is a photo of him when he was 3; the photo is dated 1973.

Baby meows loudly as Palusky talks on the phone, annoyed at not getting attention. When Baby is in the mood, he’ll fetch a toy Palusky tosses. Baby is still fast enough to swat flies out of the air.

Palusky doesn’t know why Baby has lived so long. He eats regular cat food and loves table scraps; cheese, steak, macaroni, peas and corn are some favorites. He also likes grass Palusky pulls from the yard.

Baby has never been outside, Palusky says,

which may have helped in preventing the cat from picking up diseases. About the only time he’s left the house was in a carrier to see the vet to be declawed at 28. That was when Palusky married Mary, and she wanted to replace the cat-clawed furniture with new furniture and have it stay nice. While Mary was initially scared of cats, she’s a big softie with Baby, Palusky says.

While Baby likes Mary, he won’t tolerate other pets. He once chased a Great Dane out of the house.

Because Baby’s dish and cat litter are 14 steps down in the basement, he gets plenty of exercise. He weighs about 9 lbs. and is skinny along the back.

Baby has received a lot of national media attention in recent years.

There’s just one thing Palusky could have changed. Had he known Baby would live so long, Palusky might have spent more time thinking of a better name.

You can contact Al by email at: apalusky@charter.net.



At 37 years old, “Baby” won the oldest cat entry in a recent contest held by Cat Fancy magazine.