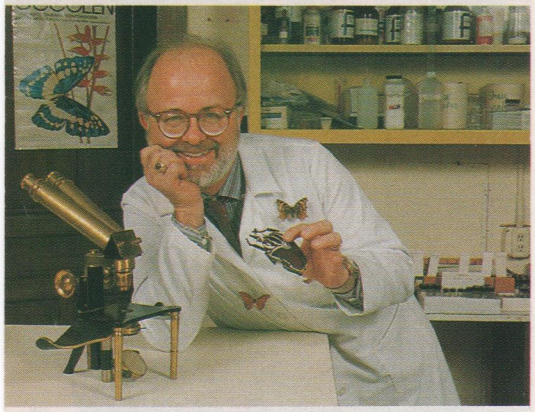
SOURCEBANK

A Useful Miscellany Including a Copper Cricket and a Bug Doctor

PEST PROGNOSIS

If something's been bugging you lately, share your problem with Dr. Mike. A professor of entomology at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mike Peters will do more than just listen to your woeful account of the mysterious insects infesting your home or garden. For $12.50, he will identify the pest and tell you about its life cycle, where and when its various stages occur, and what you can do to control it.



Dr. Mike Peters, the Bug Doctor, can help you solve your big bug problems.

No bug problem is too unusual for Peters. He has shown antique dealers how to protect fabrics and furs from insect damage, solved a major scorpion problem for a Georgia family and helped a California yogurt company get rid of the beetles invading its supplies. Whenever possible, he prescribes remedies that do not involve pesticides. "For instance, there are ways of destroying the hiding places where the insect spends the day," he says. "Or you can separate two kinds of plants that, together, may aggravate the situation. Or for pests like cutworms, you can shield the plant."

Peters recommends that you catch one of the bugs that's bothering you and package it in a crush-proof container or, if it's soft-bodied, in a small bottle filled with alcohol. "Be sure to tell me where you found it," he says. And if it's causing problems in the garden, send part of a plant, too, so Peters can see the damage. "But a plant alone isn't enough to make a diagnosis," he adds.

The doctor tries to deliver his prognosis within a week of your request.

Mike Peters
393 Bay Road
Belchertown, Massachusetts 01007

—Eileen Whitney

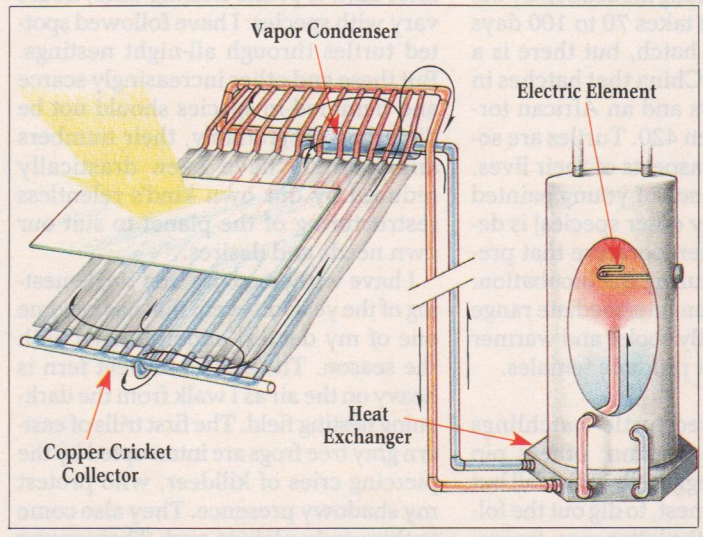
SOLAR AS IT SHOULD BE

Copper Cricket, a passive-solar water heater manufactured by Sage Advance Corporation of Eugene, Oregon, has been hailed as the best solar hot-water system now on the market. Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute has said, "It's what solar always should have been." The Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC), an independent testing agency, ranks it as one of the most efficient systems available.

It took the Copper Cricket's designers 10 years to devise this glitch-free, closed-loop water heater. They've guaranteed freeze protection, eliminated moving and electronic parts, and made the system affordable and easy to install and maintain. "We've installed hundreds of systems nationwide and have not had one system failure to date," says Sage Advance Vice-President Tom Scott. "There's no reason the system can't be maintained for the life of the house."

Unlike active solar systems, which require pumps and valves, the Copper Cricket employs a passive process called "geyser pumping." It works much like a coffee percolator. The heat of the sun "perks" a water-alcohol mixture inside a rooftop collector, forcing it through copper pipes to a heat exchanger underneath the hot-water tank in the house. The cooled fluid then returns to the collector. The pipes carrying the water-alcohol mixture are hermetically sealed, so it should never be necessary to change the fluid.

Data collected by the SRCC and the Oregon Department of Energy indicate that the Copper Cricket will deliver 100 percent of the hot water used by a four-person household anywhere in the U.S. during the summer months. On a year-round basis, it will contribute 47 percent of a four-person household's hot-water needs in Boston and 95 percent in Phoenix. The Copper Cricket should save enough energy to pay back its purchase price within its 10-year warranty period; in some cases, in only 2 to 3 years.



The Copper Cricket passive-solar water heater works like a coffee percolator.

The Copper Cricket can be purchased as a kit for $1,880 plus shipping. The kit includes an installation manual and all necessary hardware. For more information, write or call:

Sage Advance
1001 Bertelsen Rd., Eugene, Oregon 97402
(503) 485-1947

—Marnie McPhee

FOR THE BIRDERS

Looking for something special for a birder's birthday? You'll almost certainly find it in the catalogue of the Crow's Nest Birding Shop. Operated by the Cornell