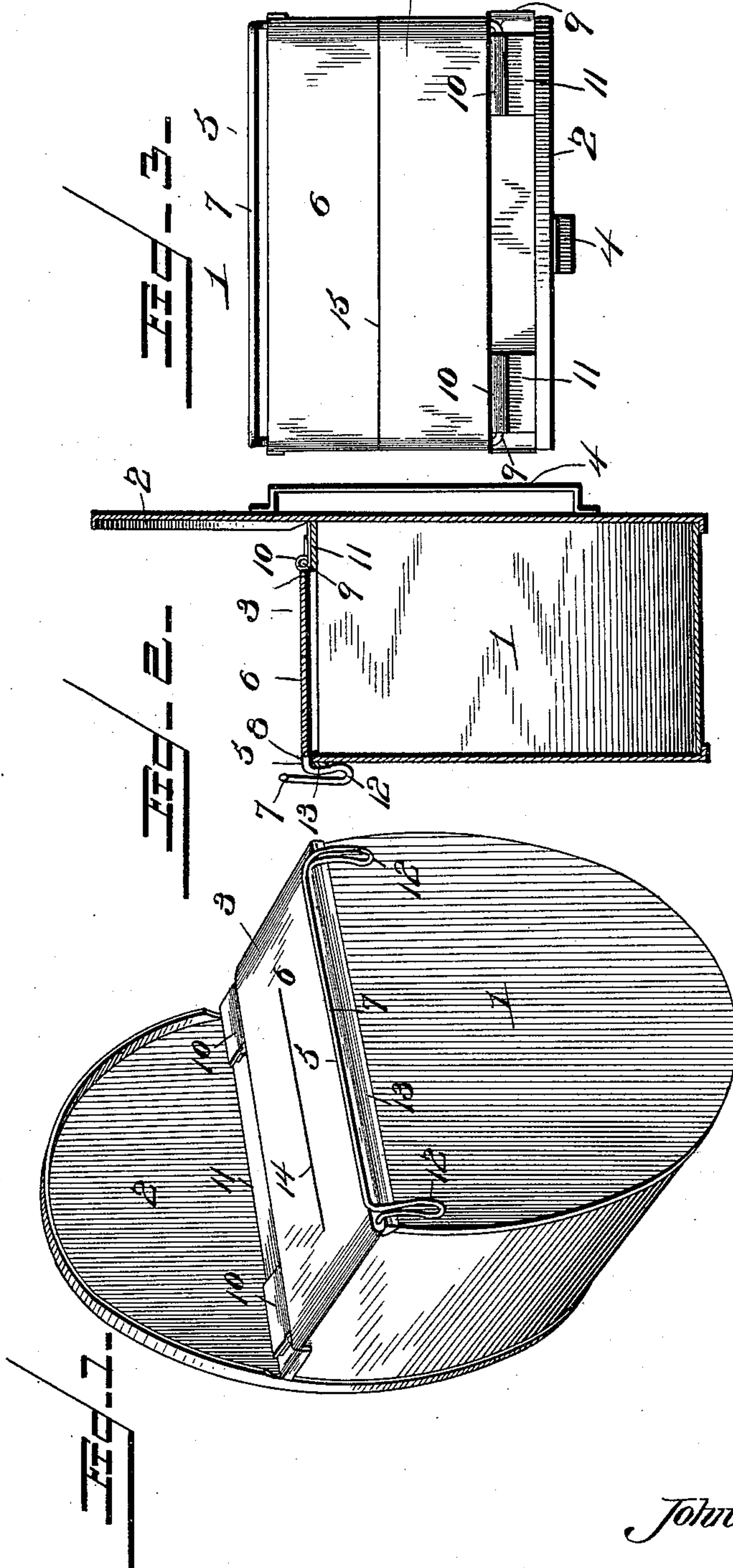


(No Model.)

J. F. WEBBER.  
BAIT HOLDER.

No. 594,448.

Patented Nov. 30, 1897.



Witnesses  
F. Kiser.  
Edwin Cruise.

By *his* Attorneys,

*C. A. Snow & Co.*

Inventor  
*John F. Webber,*



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN FRANCIS WEBBER, OF SHERIDAN, WYOMING.

## BAIT-HOLDER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 594,448, dated November 30, 1897.

Application filed August 12, 1897. Serial No. 648,001. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, JOHN FRANCIS WEBBER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Sheridan, in the county of Sheridan and State of Wyoming, have invented a new and useful Bait-Holder, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to bait-boxes more especially designed for live bait, such as grasshoppers and other insects which are commonly used as bait for fishes; and the object of the invention is to provide a box for this purpose to which access can be readily had at all times by the user and which automatically closes itself when an insect is taken from it.

With this object in view the invention consists of a box having a hinged cover comprising a suitable frame upon which an elastic diaphragm is stretched and secured thereto, said diaphragm having a dividing slit of sufficient length to permit the insertion of the thumb and forefinger of the user.

The invention will be fully described hereinafter and its novel features pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of a bait-box made in accordance with my invention. Fig. 2 is a vertical transverse section. Fig. 3 is a plan view showing a slight modification.

Similar reference-numerals indicate similar parts in the several figures.

1 indicates the box, which may be of sheet metal or any other suitable material, the back 2 of which is preferably extended above the hinged cover 3 and provided with a loop 4 on its rear face adapted to receive a strap or similar device by means of which the box can be conveniently supported and carried by the user. The hinged cover consists of a supporting-frame 5 and a flexible diaphragm 6, stretched across the frame and secured thereto in any suitable manner. The frame 5 will preferably be made of a single piece of spring-wire bent to form the front piece 7, which serves as a finger-hold to open the cover, the side pieces 8, to which the diaphragm 6 is secured, and the short end pieces 9, which are seated in loops 10, secured to an arrow strip 11, which extends across the box immediately in front of the back thereof, and these short

pieces 9 and the loops 10 serve as hinges to connect the cover to the box. At the junction of the side and front pieces downwardly-extending loops 12 are formed, which serve as spring-catches to engage a bead or flange 13, formed on the upper edge of the front wall of the box.

As shown in Fig. 1, the diaphragm is formed of a single piece of rubber secured to the sides 8 of the wire frame and of sufficient width to entirely close the open top of the box. The diaphragm is provided with a dividing slit (indicated by 14) of sufficient length to permit the passage of the thumb and forefinger of a person to the interior of the box.

In Fig. 3 the diaphragm is formed of two separate rubbers (indicated by 15) arranged side by side in close proximity to each other, and in this case the thumb and forefinger may be easily inserted between them in order to withdraw the insect from the interior of the box.

From the foregoing description it will be seen that I have provided a very simple and efficient bait-box which will securely hold the grasshoppers and similar insects and prevent their escape therefrom. At the same time the fisherman can easily insert his thumb and forefinger through the dividing slit in the flexible diaphragm to withdraw an insect from the box when he may desire to use it, and as soon as the thumb and forefinger are withdrawn the flexible diaphragm will immediately close and effectually cover the top of the box. With a bait-box made in accordance with my invention the fisherman will only require to use one hand to take the bait from the box, and it will not be necessary for him to release his hook while extracting the bait from the box, as is the case with bait-boxes now in general use and especially where insects, such as grasshoppers, are employed for bait.

It will be understood that changes in the form, proportion, and the minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention.

Having thus described the invention, what I claim is—

1. A bait-box, having a cover formed of an elastic diaphragm provided with a dividing

slit, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

2. A bait-box, having a cover comprising a wire frame hinged to the box, and an elastic diaphragm secured to the frame and provided with a dividing slit, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

3. A bait-box, having a cover comprising a wire frame hinged to the box and provided with locking-catches, and an elastic diaphragm secured to the frame and provided with a dividing slit, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

4. A bait-box, having a cover, comprising

a wire frame hinged to the box and provided with locking-catches, and an elastic diaphragm formed of two pieces of rubber secured to the frame and arranged side by side in close proximity to each other, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

JOHN FRANCIS WEBBER.

Witnesses:

OTTO KITELSON,

A. C. THOMAS.