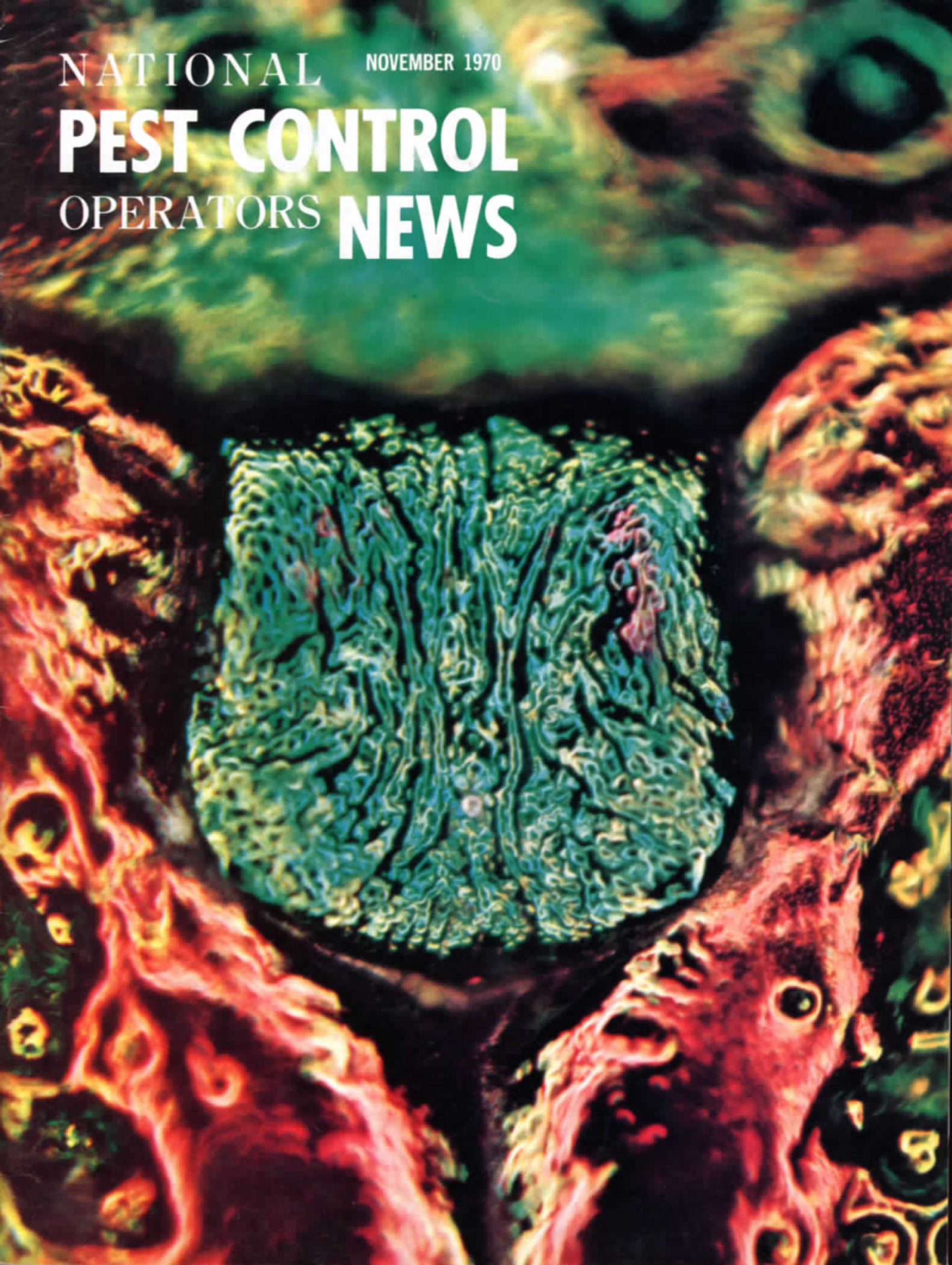


NATIONAL NOVEMBER 1970

# PEST CONTROL OPERATORS NEWS



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NEAR IMPOSSIBLE

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PEST CONTROL WORK

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ACCOMPLISHED

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ON SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

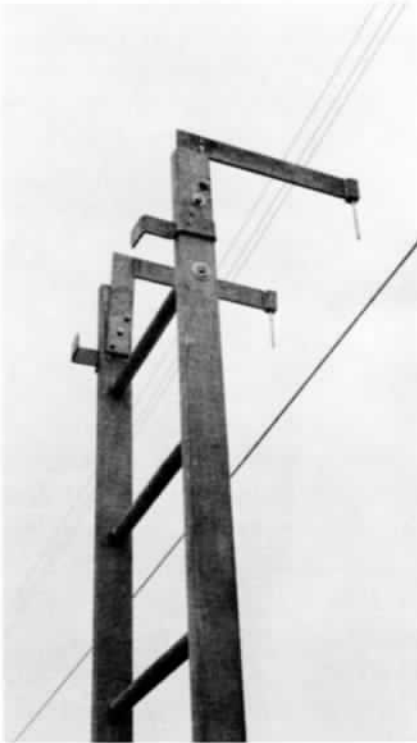
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**by RON HUNT, SR.**

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**CAPTIONS ARE UNNECESSARY SINCE THESE PICTURIZE THE STORY**

The work of Consulting Entomologist often leads one into very unusual and interesting situations. An example was my recent assignment for work on the pier on one of the Channel Islands near Santa Barbara.

The Channel Islands include San Clemente, Santa Catalina, San Nicholas, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, San Miguel, Santa Barbara and Anacapa. They were discovered by **Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542**—only 50 years after Columbus voyaged to the West Indies. At the time of their discovery the islands were populated by the **Canalino Indians** who were excellent fishermen and canoe builders. However, many of the early white men who settled on the island were either pirates or prisoners from other lands. Their rough character plus severe drouth conditions possibly explain why these Indians disappeared about 100 years after the islands' discovery.

**Santa Cruz** is the largest of all the islands being twenty-five miles long and varying in width from three to nine miles. Small streams and springs abound and the tree growth lends much beauty to this island. It lies thirty miles south of Santa Barbara. It was first colonized by a shipload of Mexican prisoners in 1830 who were given domestic animals by residents of Santa Barbara. However, they

soon tired of the isolation and some years later they left the island on a large raft. The late **Justinian Caire** developed the island as a cattle ranch in 1865 and in 1869 he purchased it and colonized it with one hundred persons from France and Italy. In the large central valley, about three miles in from Prisoner's Harbor, living quarters, winery, stables, shops and other structures were erected and for a time the island prospered.

During the depression, the colony suffered setbacks and finally, in 1936, **Caire** sold the island to the **U.S. Government**. Due to its ample water supply and many small rivers and springs, the government considered many requests to make it a National Park. These requests fell on deaf ears and all but 8000 of the 62,500 acres was purchased by **Edwin L. Stanton**, a Los Angeles business man. Domestic hogs and sheep had long been wild on the island and since Stanton needed the grassy slopes for his cattle, these wild sheep and hogs have been hunted and trapped to save the pasture. Few native wild animals exist there today except for small red fox and spotted skunks. Crows, hawks, bald eagles, bluejays, meadow larks and sea birds make up the rest of the fauna.



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At the present time, this picturesque island is owned by the Stanton Family and **Dr. Carey Stanton** resides there in a beautiful French-Mediterranean type villa surrounded by lush gardens in the central valley some three miles south of Prisoner's Harbor. It was interesting to note that Stanton's pool is surrounded entirely by banks of native shrubs and plants.

The greater portion of the island is divided into fenced forage areas where Stanton's Hereford cattle graze. Mr. Henry Duffield is ranch manager and there are a number of "vaqueros" of Spanish decent who ride the range. Prior to World War II, a pier was built by the Stanton's from which to load their

cattle aboard ships for transportation to market. This pier juts out from Prisoner's Harbor about 334 feet and except for the outboard and inboard ends is 24 feet wide. It widens out at the approach and at the outboard ends with bents consisting, for the most part, of three piles each, set twelve feet apart. No fresh water is piped to the pier nor available in the vicinity and no electricity is nearer than the pumphouse, which is about one mile inland.

This pier is under lease by the Naval Air and Missile Station at Point Mugu and is jointly used by Stanton and the Navy. On a small plot of ground on the heights about six and

a half miles east, up a curving and rough-surfaced road, lies the Military Facility. This Navy compound houses a radar station and other electronic equipment used in connection with similar station on San Nicholas Island, as part of the Point Mugu Missile Guidance program. The facility is staffed by Naval and Civilian personnel who operate and maintain the various installations.

In the summer of 1970, the Naval Air Station at Point Mugu awarded a contract to the **B. Q. Halloran Corporation** to make specific repairs to the pier, in keeping with the maintenance agreement included in their lease. Some piles were installed, other pilings were wrapped in poly-vinyl chloride sleeves and weakened stringers were removed and replaced with pressure-treated members. The last operation undertaken was the spraying of all timbering, from the pile-caps up, with water repellent pentachlorophenol according to Navy Specifications. A twenty-five percent concentrate was diluted on the job with mineral spirits one to five. The application was designed to prevent the attacks of wood destroying organisms, especially drywood termites (***Incisitermes minor***). An inspection of the pier had been made earlier by the senior pest control equipment operator from Port Hueneme (**Mr. Robert Marquez**), and a marine biologist from the nearby Navy Laboratory\* (**Dr. Harry Hockman**). This treatment is to be followed up by a jell-type pentachlorophenol paste applied to timbering where deeper colonies of termites were known to exist.

The author was employed by the Halloran Corporation to organize and supervise the spray operation. He realized that it was of primary importance to provide for the safety of the spray-crew. Pentachlorophenol is a highly toxic acid-reacting wood-preserved and must not be permitted to contact the skin. Furthermore, one must avoid breathing the vapors. To prevent injury to the spray operators, they were equipped with vinyl coats, pants, boots, gauntlet gloves and hats. After applying a preventive cream on the face, a respirator was fitted over nose and mouth and a hinged plastic face-shield was drawn down, completely covering the face.

One fifty-gallon piston type sprayer powered by a three-horse power gasoline engine

and equipped with two hoses and guns were used. (A second similar machine was held in reserve to guard against breakdown.) Spray-rods were used instead of guns on the deck and fencing and at the outer edges of the deck. The spraying of the readily accessible deck and its appendages was no problem but the under portion of the deck, stringers and blocking, was something else! Since only a few of the deck-planks were nailed, openings could be made at intervals and the author designed and built a unique type of portable apparatus to lower into each opening. A twenty-four foot wooden extension ladder was separated into its two components, iron hooks were bolted to the upper ends and ladder-jacks were fastened at the lowest two rungs, which in turn supported a plank on which the men stood while spraying. From the hanging "Scaffold" the men were able to spray in both directions, covering a distance of approximately 24 feet. This reduced the number of necessary openings to every other bent and, by using guns, a saturating coverage was possible. The spraying operation required four days and 580 gallons of dilute material.

Washing and drinking water was provided by the Navy Personnel. As part of the protective procedure the author had a strong alkaline soap, some detergent, Isopropyl alcohol and an eye-wash solution readily available in the first-aid kit. Due to the warm weather that week, the air-tight clothing and face coverage made the work quite disagreeable but the spray-crew were most cooperative and did a heroic job. We were all grateful for the excellent cooperation of the Naval and Civilian staff of the local Navy Facility.

On the fifth day, the Navy Inspector checked the work and pronounced it satisfactory. So we again loaded our equipment on a beach-landing L.S.T. (M type) and returned to the mainland.

It will be interesting to check this Penta application from time to time to appraise its efficiency. The author regrets the fact that more time was not available to explore the Indian mounds and other points of interest on this interesting Island!

A NPCON Feature Story

(\*Navy Laboratory "Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory" NECL)

Reference: "The California Islands" by Charles Hillinger, Academy Publishers, Los Angeles, 1958.