

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

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## Ivy Poisoning Always Painful, At Times Dangerous

By V. W. FLICKINGER

Chief, Lands and Waters Division

"Doctor will see you. Come right in."

Exhibiting a rash on face, hands, and points south, the victim stated frankly, "I itch."

"Hmmm, looks like poison ivy. Have you been in the woods recently?"

"Yes, some time ago, but I haven't been out of the office for over a week."

"That may be so. Symptoms often do not develop immediately, sometimes not for two weeks or more."

"But it's too early in the year for poison ivy."

"It's never too early. Ivy poisoning is more prevalent in the spring and summer, but the plant is dangerous at all seasons and

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## Chicago Owned Pigeons Race From Iowa

By REE BERRY

"Pigeons Race to Chicago," reports a press dispatch from Ames, Iowa. "More than 5,000 pigeons were released here Sunday for the 300 mile race to Chicago, where their owners and handlers were waiting to receive prize money." This was the start of one of many races held each season by the various pigeon racing clubs in the United States and Canada.

If you find a live banded homing pigeon, feed and water it well and release it to continue on its homeward way. Homing pigeons frequently become lost and temporarily halted by exhaustion from battling adverse weather conditions, but after being fed

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## The Wood Duck Has Come Back To Stay Along Iowa's Wooded Waters

### Rare Shot Catches Wood Duck Leaving Nest



(Photo By W. E. Albert.)

Wood duck on an island in the Mississippi, leaving one of the thousands of man-made nesting sites.

## Rivals Humming Bird As King Of Feathered Beauties

By W. J. MORF  
Conservation Officer

Up to about 1880, wood ducks were very numerous in the Mississippi Valley area, and they were considered a legitimate source of human food. Commercialization of game was an accepted practice, and on our prairies hosts of prairie chicken and quail were taken with wing-nets and pens. Wood ducks during those early days brought from \$1.50 to \$8.50 a dozen on the Eastern markets. Captain Bogardus, a former champion U. S. wing shot, records in his book that his average daily kill of wood ducks was from 125 to 150. He hunted them principally in the Great Kankakee Swamp of southern Illinois during both the spring and fall.

By 1934 many species of ducks had reached a point where they were actually in danger of following the passenger pigeon into the past tense. More stringent hunting laws were passed to control the take. Many refuges were established, and many breeding grounds were built or rebuilt. But in spite of this limiting of the take and stimulation of production, for several years it was a question whether certain species could survive. The wood duck was one of these and was given absolute protection throughout the United States for a number of years. Under this stimulation the duck population has increased, the increase in wood ducks being almost phenomenal.

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## Wood Duck

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Distinctly an inhabitant of the woodlands near water, the wood duck is almost unknown and unseen on the prairies. With a homing instinct comparable to that of the carrier pigeon, it returns year after year to rear its young in the same locality. It is exceedingly tenacious of its nesting sites, which are usually in the hollow cavity of a tree. Whether nesting near a summer cottage in the woods, or in the trees or building boxes on the lawns of the city dwellers along the Mississippi, no bird creates more interest or is given more encouragement and protection.

The male wood duck is considered the most brightly plumaged of all American ducks. (It rivals the humming-bird as the king of our feathered jewels.) In coloring it is one of nature's masterpieces of blended metallic greens, blues, white, and red. The female colorings are quieter, dusky brown, black, and white predominating. In midsummer the male takes on more neutral coloring, resembling the hen considerably.

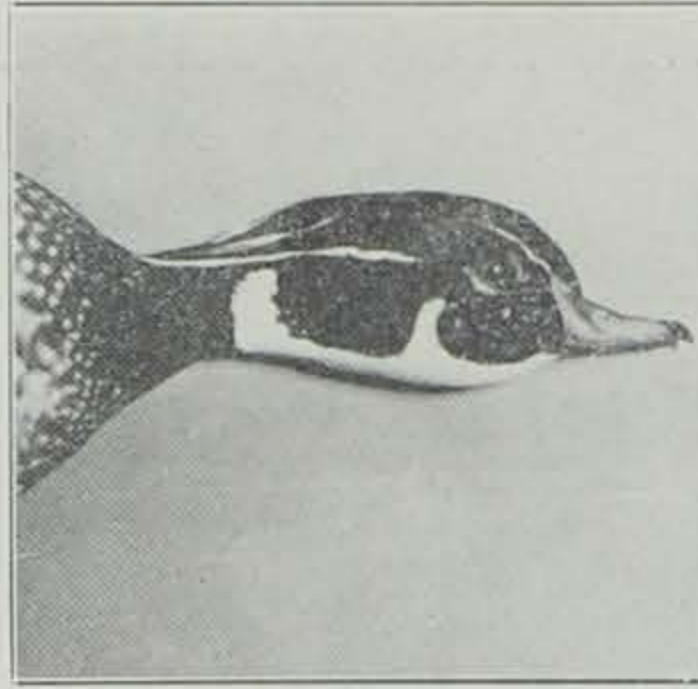
Wood ducks have sharp, hooked bills, and their feet, webbed for swimming as with other ducks, are also provided with strong claws which enable them to climb up and down tree trunks rather easily.

For the hunter unfamiliar with the "woodies" there is no easily defined, positive method of distinguishing them in flight, but the old timers on the Mississippi can spot a "woodie" at long distances at first glance.

Wood ducks are of medium size, larger than a teal, but slightly less in weight than the lesser scaup and more oblong in body than either. Three distinguishing characteristics are: their call (it is a distinctive musical whistle usually uttered when entering or leaving the water), their shape (oblong with a blocky tail which is very noticeable), and their flight, in which a waggling of the head from side to side is characteristic.

In the area along the Mississippi River extending from Du-

## Crested Beauty



The male wood duck is considered the most brightly plumaged of all American ducks.

buque to Savanna, Illinois, about 40 miles of shoreline, some 2,000 wood ducks nested this year. By observing them we find they readily adapt themselves to human surroundings, becoming almost fearless of familiar persons and easily distinguishing "local folks" from strangers to their haunts.

A pair of wood ducks that were under my continual observation nested in a cavity of an oak tree. They were about 100 yards from the Mississippi River—35 feet from the front door of a commercial fisherman's home, and 50 feet from a railroad track and the smoke and noise of passing trains.

The female worked on the nest for several days. The tree cavity, which had an opening of about four inches and a depth of about two and a half feet, was typical of the natural site the wood ducks select. The hen used both green and dry leaves for the base of her nest, then lined it with down plucked from her breast. With the nest finished, the female daily entered the cavity (adult wood ducks enter the nesting hollow on full wing with great speed, producing the illusion for the observer that they fly straight through or around the body of the tree), and remained in it from 15 to 30 minutes to lay. During this time the male remained constantly on guard on a nearby limb, his head moving back and forth in every direction watching to prevent intrusion.

The work at hand finished, both would leave to feed for the rest of the day, returning each morning until the full clutch of eggs were laid. Incubation lasted from 24 to 28 days, and near the end of this time both birds made many trips to the river, carefully exploring the ground, apparently looking for the least dangerous route to lead their young to water.

A question that has caused considerable speculation ever since it was first known that wood ducks nested in trees, is how the young,

unable to fly, were taken from high in a tree to the ground below. For many years John James Audubon's statement that the parents got the young birds on their backs, flew them to the water, and then started abruptly so that the birds slid "shoot-the-shoots" fashion into the water, was given credence. Other observers said that the parents picked the young up with their bills, clasping the young across the back, and flew them to the water. These two stories have been definitely refuted by modern ornithologists.

Until very recently it was believed that the mother wood ducks tossed the young out of the nesting cavity to the ground below; but recently some very fine motion pictures have been taken showing the method by which the young get out of the nest. These pictures show positively that the young are coaxed to the edge of the nest by the parent, and then, on their own volition, they pitch out into the air and spread their almost rudimentary wings and, in a combination sail and tumble, drop softly to the ground.

Some of the known egg predators of the wood duck are the bull-snake, raccoon, and squirrels. Snapping turtles, mink, raccoon, foxes, hawks, owls, and other predacious animals prey on the young, but within a very short time the alert youngsters are quite able to take care of themselves.

The examination of wood duck stomach contents at various times of the year has revealed that their food consists mainly of crustaceans, small mollusks, snails, crawfish, vegetable matter, seeds, and acorns, the latter being almost their bread and meat when available. The great naturalist, Arthur Cleveland Bent, reports the wood duck commonly swallows whole acorns, even those up to the very largest size, two inches or more in length.

The wood duck has become a delight to all. No native bird in this region quite equals it in interest and esteem. Many people have erected duck nesting boxes on their premises and attracted a pair of "woodies" and have, as a result, enjoyed nesting season after nesting season the comedy, tragedy, and color of grand opera in their own back yards.

Springer Spaniels originated in Spain and they were so named because of their habit of springing toward and flushing game after finding it in the field.

Cat-tails, hard stem bullrush, and river bank sedge provide most of the nesting cover for redhead ducks in Iowa.

Only the eel and catfish among Iowa's fish are scaleless.

## Wood Duck Family Plans Moving Day

For the third consecutive year, a family of wood ducks, sometimes called America's most beautiful game bird, has located its nest in a "perfect" location near McGregor.

The site is a high, hollow stump on a wooded hill above the Mississippi River, beside a path leading up from the foot of Main Street in McGregor. The setting meets what wildlife experts say are "musts" for a wood duck nest—woods, water, a hollow tree, and acorns for food.

It is believed the eggs, if not already hatched, will be by Memorial Day. It was about that time the last two years that the parent birds pushed their brood, numbering about 15 each time, out of the nest and led them down to the Mississippi. Observers said the mother duck did not carry any of the ducklings on her back, as it is sometimes said she does.

The spring moving has been dramatic each time. The Jack Slyfield and Chas. Tipp families, living at the foot of the hill, have had to help the mother get a few stragglers of her brood to the water.

Most of the youngsters have made their way down the path, guided by their mother's directive calls from the water's edge, but both years a few strays came over the cliff into the Slyfield and Tipp yards.

Their shrill, frightened peeping and the frantic quacking of the parents from the river cease when the strays are set down at the water's edge, to swim expertly away with the rest of the brood.

The Slyfield and Tipp families are keeping close watch on the nesting operations this year and all are set to aid the wood ducks again on moving day, if necessary.—North Iowa Times, McGregor.

## Wood Duck Mother Parades Young Through Town

Parades are nothing unusual these days, but residents in the 1700 and 1800 blocks in Pershing Boulevard saw a quaint one Thursday afternoon when a mother wood duck marshalled her 15 young boldly down the street.

The little ones, no bigger than your fist, waddled behind their mother in strict form and time following her every step. Suddenly terror hit the ranks; three men, a number of children, and a dog saw the procession.

The mother duck took to the

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## Poison Ivy

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poisoning may occur any time after actual contact with the plant, even in winter."

Conversations of this sort are common in doctors' offices these days. If you have not had this experience, you are indeed fortunate. Take every possible precaution to see that you do not have to make a visit of this kind. Ivy poisoning is always painful and sometimes dangerous.

Vacation time is here again. The trek to the fields, woods, and streams is at its peak. So are man's aches and pains from poison ivy. Doctors are daily treating cases, and it is certain that before the summer is over thousands will experience the painful effects brought about by ivy contact.

Poison ivy is no respecter of persons. It does not limit its toxins to the fisherman, hunter, or vacationer, but will attack any individual who may come in contact with it.

Poisoning by this plant has not diminished. In fact, cases in the past few years may have increased, merely because most people do not know poison ivy when they see it, and some, considering themselves immune, are indifferent. The medical profession advises that no one, not even a baby is immune—merely that some are less susceptible than others.

You may say, "Why, I have handled poison ivy all my life; and it has never bothered me."

You may be a fortunate one who, to date, the poison has not affected. But don't press your luck too far, for there will come a time when your susceptibility is high, and as a result of contact you will most certainly say, "I itch."

You may ask, "Why not eliminate all poison ivy?"

This would be an almost impossible task. Were it possible and advisable to completely eliminate this plant, the cost of the job would be prohibitive.

Therefore, poison ivy will continue to be a definite hazard, and inasmuch as people must learn to recognize it to prevent the consequences, a description of what it is and where found may assist you to avoid the suffering its poison causes.

Poison ivy, *Rhus toxicodendron*, "Rhus" indicating that it belongs to the sumac family, "toxic" meaning poison, and "dendron" meaning tree-like, is the scientific name of this shrub or vine. It occurs in two forms, as a vine that climbs over fences, up telephone poles, and tree trunks, or as a small plant or shrub. The bark on the older stems is gray, and on the young twigs, yellowish or brownish-

## Number Of Leaves Principal Difference Between Poisonous, Non-Poisonous Ivies



Three leaved poison ivy, shown in its bushy type above, differs from the woodbine shown at left in the number of leaves. The woodbine, often mistaken for a poisonous plant, has five leaves, while its poisonous cousin has only three.

green. The plants bear clusters of small greenish-yellow flowers in May or early June, and from these arise smooth, waxen, greenish-white berries in a loose cluster. The seeds or berries cling well and are an important bird food throughout the winter.

Perhaps the easiest and surest method by which poison ivy can be told is by its foliage. Its leaves are ordinarily divided into three leaflets; they are ordinarily taken by the average person as separate leaves, although actually the three leaflets and the stalk on which they rise make one leaf. These leaflets have no teeth at all, or a few coarse teeth.

The young shoots and young leaves in the spring are a beautiful red in color, turning to a lusterless green as the season progresses. In the fall the foliage again turns to a brilliant red. Truly a beautiful plant, for all of its vicious character. Red ordinarily means danger, which should be sufficient warning not to touch this plant.

The plant is very poisonous to touch and causes serious inflammation of the skin. The irritation is caused by an oil resin oil found in all parts of the plant and secreted by the leaves and bark. The poisonous oil is more abundant in the spring and early

summer, but at any time of the year a susceptible person may be poisoned. All parts of the plant are poisonous to the touch.

Infection is by contact with the plant only. Ivy poisoning cannot be "caught" by touching the affected portions of another person's body. If leaves or foliage are burned, the oil is volatilized, and anyone inhaling the smoke or getting the smoke into his eyes may be severely poisoned.

The seriousness of contact with this plant and the after effect cannot be overstressed. A serious case of ivy poisoning can result in hospital confinement ranging from days to weeks.

If proper measures are taken immediately after contact, the danger of poison may be avoided. A person who believes that he has handled this plant, or that his clothing or tools may have been in contact with it, should wash all exposed parts with a very strong solution of laundry soap, high in alkali content, rinsing it off and washing again. If this is done immediately, the poison will be removed. Avoid using soaps containing oil; they may spread the poison. Water alone may also cause the poison to spread.

If you have contacted poison ivy and have not been aware of it, and have not washed with laundry soap, you may, within a period of from one to 14 days, experience a rash, blisters, itching, etc. It is best to seek medical aid, and to follow the directions of your doctor in the treatment.

Poison ivy inhabits woods and open places, sandy beaches, fields and roadsides, but usually not wet places.

Another poisonous plant which has practically the same effect as poison ivy is the poison sumac, *Rhus vernix*, which is described as follows: It is a swamp shrub, reaching a height of six to 10 feet or more. Its leaves are pinnate, that is, they have a central axis with the leaflets attached along this axis, one at the end and four to six along each side. These leaflets have no teeth. The flowers are small, greenish-yellow, many in a cluster, and the berries are yellowish - white and smooth like those of the poison ivy. The foliage is a beautiful orange or red in the autumn.

The non-poisonous species of sumac with pinnate leaves are abundantly toothed along the edge of each leaflet, and the berries are lightly crowded.

The poison of the poison sumac is the same as that of the ivy, and the emergency treatment is the same.

If you are unable to recognize poison ivy, have someone identify it for you. The conservation officer in charge of the state recreation areas will be glad to show you the plant on your next visit

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## Pigeons

(Continued from Page One)

and watered will recover their equilibrium sufficiently to return to their home loft. Returning home is the thing a homing pigeon does best—instinct, heredity, and training have instilled it with the homing urge to the point where it overshadows every other thought in the bird's brain.

Many of the banded pigeons found in the Middle West are valuable racing birds bred by members of pigeon clubs and entered in racing contests with starting points in Iowa and surrounding states. In these races birds are shipped to pre-arranged starting points and released at a scheduled time. Prizes are awarded to owners of birds reaching their home lofts in the shortest elapsed time.

A severe storm occurring during such a race will force many of the birds down, sometimes to their death, or to a point of exhaustion rendering them incapable of continuing flight. Keeping highly trained birds of this type confined in strange lofts will have a derogatory effect on their basic training. Birds capable of flight should be released immediately. If they refuse to leave the immediate surroundings, carry them a few blocks distance and then release them.

Birds injured to such an extent that they are incapable of flight should be cared for in the best possible manner and reported to the owners. Dead birds should similarly be reported to owners. The legend of numbers and letters on bands identify the association which issued the band, and individual clubs and/or owners of birds as illustrated by the following serial letters:

AU—American Racing Pigeon Union, Jersey City, New Jersey.

NPA—National Pigeon Association, Kansas City, Missouri.

USA and U\*S\*—United States Army (Signal Corps), Washington, D. C.

USN—United States Navy, Washington, D. C.

Triangle — American Pigeon Club, Dorchester, Massachusetts.

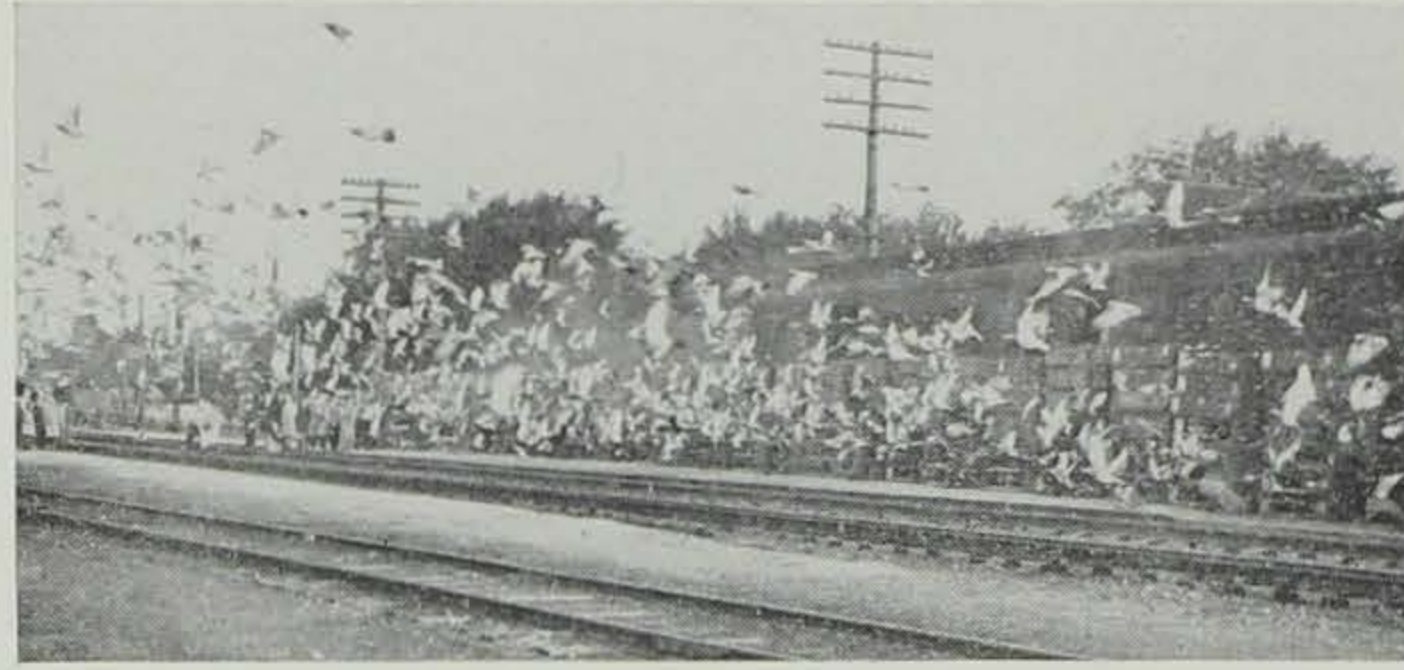
IF—International Federation, Baltimore, Maryland.

CHU and CU—Canadian Racing Pigeon Union, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Serial numbers specifically identify individual birds for the owners' distinction.

The Iowa State Conservation Commission has been furnished with lists of band numbers by the majority of large Pigeon Clubs, and will be happy to assist in tracing and reporting band numbers. Address communications to the State Conservation Commission, 10th and Mulberry, Des Moines, Iowa, giving the complete legend of letters and figures appearing on bands.

## Homing Pigeons Off For Chicago



(Photo by Des Moines Register.)

Start of one of many pigeon races.



By FLOYD H. DAVIS

U. S. Game Management Agent

The number of birds present throughout Iowa and their food habits make them especially valuable to the farmer.

It has been reported by the U. S. Department of Agriculture



"FLICK"

that birds destroy harmful insects to the extent that \$350,000,000 is saved each year. It also has been estimated that the total loss to agriculture from harmful insects amounts to the staggering sum of \$700,000,000 annually. Certainly it behooves all people in the State of Iowa to increase the present number of insectivorous birds. It has been said that if all of the birds were destroyed at one time it would be only a few short years until this earth would be uninhabitable by human beings, on account of the insects present. These feathered friends are working for our interest every daylight hour of their lives.

Birds have a high body temperature, rapid digestion, and a great turnover of energy; they therefore require proportionately large amounts of food. They usually consume as much or more than their own weight in soft-bodied insects every day. Some birds have been known to gain eight times their original weight in the first eight days of their lives. Insect-eating birds must fill their stomachs five or six times daily because of their rapid digestion and the large amount

of indigestible material in insect food. A young robin in captivity weighing three ounces consumed 165 cutworms weighing five and a half ounces. If a 10 lb. baby ate at the same rate, it would have to eat 18 1/3 lbs. of food in one day.

There is no question but what birds are of great value to agriculture as destroyers of insects and weed seeds. The present population of insectivorous birds could no doubt be doubled if each farmer would do the practical things he could do to encourage them.

Some birds are valuable as a food supply and sport, while others are valuable as enemies of mice, rats, and gophers. Following is a list of birds and the percentage of their food that consists of insects:

Bluebird	.....	.62
Brown thrasher	.....	.41
Catbird	.....	.44
Chickadee, black capped	.....	.68
Dickcissel	.....	.66
Flycatcher, crested	.....	.89
Kingbird, Eastern	.....	.89
Martin	.....	100
Nighthawk	.....	100
Oriole	.....	.84
Vireos	.....	.85-.96
Wren, house	.....	.98

This is the time of the year that you ordinarily find some of the younger boys out with their air-rifles or slingshots; some of these boys unwittingly or unknowingly violate the law by killing insectivorous birds.

The following birds are classified as insectivorous or non-game birds and are protected as such by the conventions between the United States and Great Britain for the protection of migratory birds, and between the United States and United Mexican States for the protection of migratory birds and game mammals, concluded, respectively, August 16, 1916, and February 7, 1936:

Cuckoos, flickers, and other woodpeckers; nighthawks, or bullbats, chuckwill's widow, poor-wills, and whippoorwills; swifts, hummingbirds; kingbirds, phoebes, and other flycatchers; horned larks; bobolinks, cowbirds, black-

## Parades Young

(Continued from Page Two)

air and tried to lead her offspring to safety. Dipping and flopping, as if with a broken wing, she made a feint that fooled the marauders and attracted their attention until the ducklings had safely hidden under the spreading leaves of a rhubarb plant. The mother eluded the men and their dog and sat tight until they had left. Then by signals almost indistinguishable to the human ear, she called her family to her. They disappeared and by now probably are safe in the quiet back-waters of the Mississippi.

A wood duck is one of the most beautifully plumed among duck varieties. It is unusual in that it nests in a tree, rather than on the ground near water.—Clinton Herald.

## Why Education?

More and more conservation agencies are realizing the need of work with schools and junior groups of all kinds in addition to publicity and education in adult organizations as an illustration of the timeworn but still true adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Some state game and fish departments have made tremendous strides in the field of conservation education. And as that work progresses, it is noted that the percentage of revenue needed for enforcement of game and fish laws steadily grows less in progressive proportion to the amount spent on education.

Educators themselves are recognizing the fact that conservation is the basis of all modern living—that preservation of what we have is essential to continued existence. For that reason the conservation idea is now being stressed in all school work and no longer is regarded as a separate theory or process.

This spells progress—progress which is vital to our growth as a nation.—Florida Game and Fish.

birds, grackles, meadow-larks, and orioles; grosbeaks, finches, sparrows, and buntings; tanagers; martins and swallows; waxwings; phainopeplas; shrikes; vireos; warblers; pipits; catbirds, mockingbirds, and thrashers.

Wrens; brown creepers; nuthatches; chickadees and titmice; kinglets and gnatcatchers; robins and other thrushes; all other perching birds which feed entirely or chiefly on insects; and auks, auklets, bitterns, fulmars, gannets, grebes, guillemots, gulls, herons, jaegers, loons, murre, petrels, puffins, shearwaters, and terns.

The above birds are also protected by state law.



## Boating-A Sport Everyone Can Enjoy

By VERNE PETERSEN  
State Boat Inspector

This is the time of year that one sees a great increase in boating, due, of course, to the fishing season. On the lakes you will see boats everywhere — in the bays, over the reefs, and out on the open water—boats of many types, ranging from home-made row boats to closed-cabin cruisers and varying in price from \$5.00 to \$6,500.00.

Boating is a sport that can be enjoyed by everyone. For the person who doesn't own a boat, one can be rented from the boat liveries that can be found on most of the suitable waters. These rental boats are all annually inspected by the State Boat Inspector, who, after a thorough examination as to their condition and seaworthiness, attaches a seal consisting of a metal band with the passenger capacity and date of inspection stamped thereon. This "safety seal" will be found clamped on the seat of the boat or on the seat riser.

On many of the state waters swift motorboats operate and may be seen skimming over the bays, the occupants getting a thrill that can be had only from this type of boating. Rides can be purchased at the speed boat landings at Clear Lake and West Okoboji and various river fronts.

These boats are inspected, also. The license tag can be found encased in a small container and attached to the boat in such a manner as to be visible to the occupants. This license states the passenger capacity, speed of the craft, and that safety requirements have been met.

All operators of commercial craft are licensed and must pass a rigid examination before they are allowed to carry passengers for hire. The pilot must know the area on which he operates his boat, and the engineer must be able to make minor repairs to the motor and equipment. Both pilot and engineer must know all of the Iowa State Navigation Laws, and they are required to use extreme care at all times when operating these fast boats.

The fact that Iowa's inland waters are good boating and fishing waters is revealed by the number of boats in the state. During the year 1941, there were 2,059 licensed rowboats, 2,551 registered motorboats, 48 commercial motorboats, three commercial sailboats, one commercial steamboat, one commercial seaplane, and two commercial aqua-bikes. A careful estimate of the privately owned boats shows approximately 6,500 row-

## Folks Frolic On Iowa Waters



(Photo by Jack Kennedy.)

Swift motorboats churn Iowa waters

boats, 300 sailboats, and 600 canoes.

Conservation officers, in addition to their more publicized duties of fish and game work and care and maintenance of state parks, are charged with educating and protecting the operators of this great fleet of miscellaneous boats from disaster. The personnel of the Conservation Commission during the past two years has attended water safety schools for training in all phases of water safety, including proper uses of all types of water craft, methods of water rescue, and first aid and artificial respiration.

A few safety suggestions for the boatman and fisherman:

Rent only boats that have been inspected.

Do not go out on the water ahead of a storm or stay out when a storm is approaching.

If the water is rough, ask the local conservation officer if he thinks it is safe to attempt going

out. His answer will be for your best interests.

Do not wear boots while in a boat. If a boat leaks so badly that boots are needed, do not use the boat. Rent one from the livery.

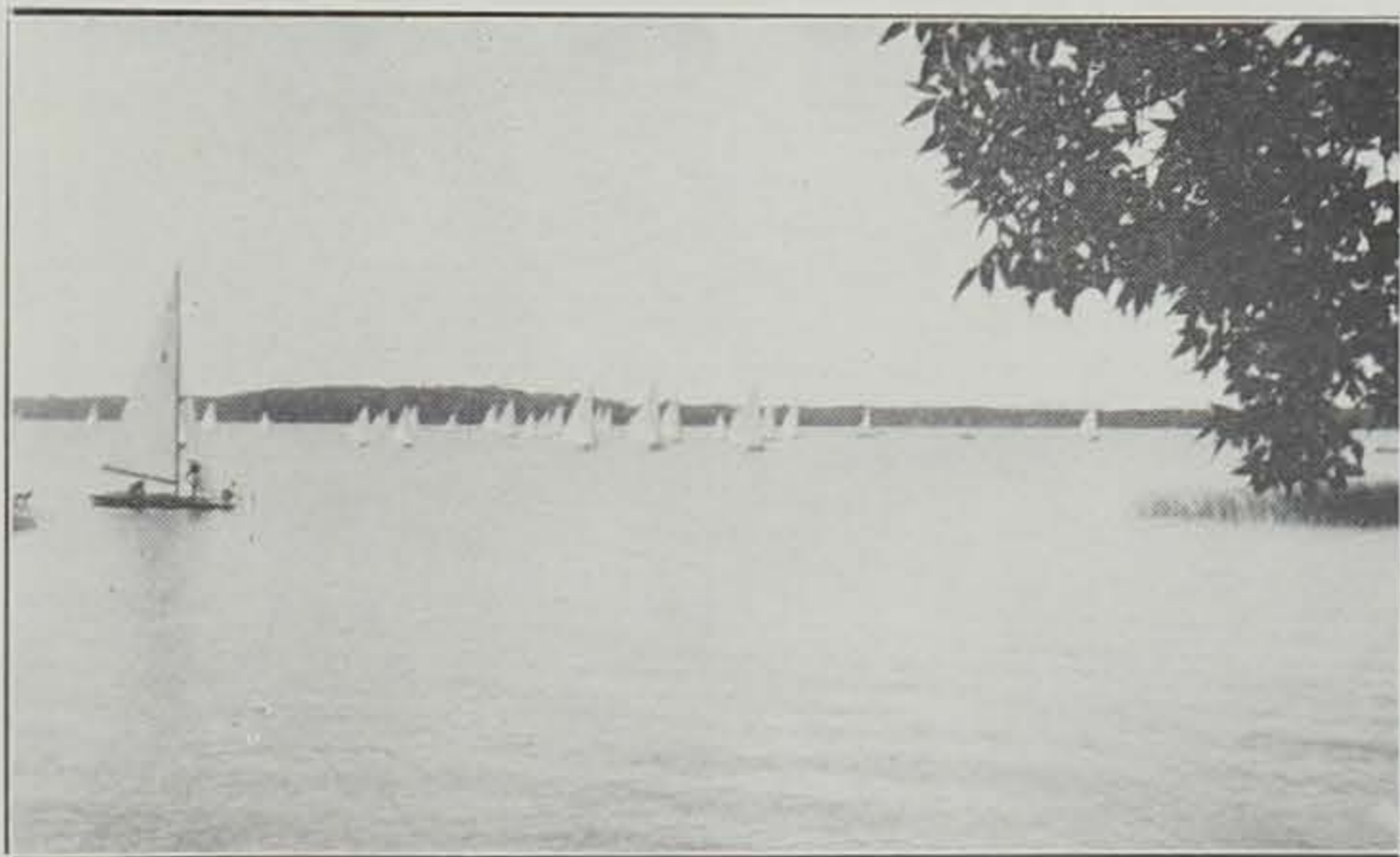
Do not purposely rock the boat; there is always danger of capsizing.

Drinking and boating do not mix any better than gasoline and alcohol.

One thought should remain uppermost in the minds of all, that the waters of the state are for the use of **all persons** and individual rights must be respected.

Redhead ducks' nests are constructed in emergent vegetation out in the marshes an average of 70 yards from the high water mark.

Instability of water levels resulting in flooded nests is the most destructive factor in production of redhead ducks in Iowa.



A fleet of 300 sailboats add summer charm to Iowa waters.

## Value of The Fish

The fisherman's family may laugh at him, and say the fish these men bring home do but little to supply the family table and have no great cash value. He may spend more in automobile operation to the fishing grounds, and perhaps return with a bad cold and have to call the doctor or stay away from work.

That peaceful scene by some rippling lake or singing brook may take the iron out of his soul, and make him better to live with. The jangling grind of life fades out of his mind amid those waving trees and under the happy bird song. If he returns better natured, he is better fitted for work and home life and has obtained an important value, even if the actual fish brought home do not appreciably reduce living costs.—Lake City Graphic.

A little spotted skunk or civet cat is one of Iowa's most valuable fur bearers, not from the fur standpoint, but because of their tremendous importance in the control of rats and mice.

Early mornings or late evenings are the best times to study birds because most birds are more active during these periods.

The State Conservation Commission maintains approximately 95 miles of roads in the state parks.

Two rescue stations are maintained by the State Conservation Commission on the Mississippi River to rescue fishes from the land locked lakes and sloughs adjacent to it.

Iowa's fur bearers provide a great many hunters with sport and recreation as well as revenue.

Need for emergency winter feeding is dependent on the severity of the winter.

Every effort is being made to produce shutable surpluses of game in all sections of the state.

The first settlers of Iowa found an abundance of wildlife, and initial efforts at cultivation actually increased wildlife populations.

## Poison Ivy

(Continued from Page Three)

to the areas. Learn it sufficiently well so that you will be able to recognize it at all times, and thereby avoid serious pain.

Learn to recognize poison ivy in all of its forms, winter, spring, summer, and fall, where it is found; and, last of all, if you do not know your plants, leave them all alone. **Above all, leave poison ivy alone,** and you will have no regrets.



## Iowa Sportsmen Provide Artificial Coon Dens

By SAM HYDE  
(Conservation Officer)

In many parts of Greene County there is evidence indicating a definite lack of den trees for raccoon. To remedy this condition the Greene County 'Coon Hunters Association has experimented with three types of artificial den trees.

The hollow log artificial den is built by using a hollow log that is at least five feet in length and big enough around for raccoon to raise young in. It is plugged at both ends so as to be waterproof, and a hole eight inches in diameter cut on the side about 18 inches from one end; it is then set on a limb in an upright position next to the trunk of the tree, preferably on a limb on the east side of the tree so the hole in the log will be facing south.

The log should be set on the limb so the opening will be a few inches from the tree. The den log is strapped to the tree with either number nine wire or old strap iron. A block and tackle is used to hoist the log into the tree.

The beer keg den is made by the use of a beer keg in two different ways: Strap the keg to a limb in a horizontal position about 18 inches out on the limb from the trunk and place it so that an eight-inch hole cut in the end of the keg faces the trunk of the tree, and also faces south, or set the keg in an upright position on a limb close to the trunk with the hole on the side of the keg as near to the top as possible.

The hollow tree dens are made by finding hollow trees that have no outside opening in them and then cutting an eight-inch hole as near the top of the hollow as possible. Sometimes a tree is found with a squirrel or woodpecker hole in it, and by enlarging the opening a fine 'coon den tree is made.

The trees that the artificial dens are established in are hardwoods generally, that have a limb big enough to support the den at least 20 feet from the ground. The higher the den and the bigger the tree the better.

Sawdust or other material is put in the den so that the bottom has a good covering.

We are unable to say at this time which type of artificial home is the best, because of our lack of experience, but we hope to establish enough different kinds in the next year or so that we can say exactly which type of artificial den raccoon prefer in this area.

## "Come Home, Henry, All Is Forgiven!"



(Photo by Waldo Johnson.)

## WARDENS' TALES

### SHOP TALK FROM THE FIELD

Almost every hunter or fisherman gets a kick out of "May I check your license, please?" and the chance of visiting with the conservation officer. The policy of checking licenses is not primarily to find unlicensed hunters, although that is sometimes the result, but rather to give the sportsman a chance to get acquainted with the game officer to see that the officer does not have horns—that he is intelligent and polite.

Recently Conservation Officer Rich had the following experience checking licenses:

"I was checking licenses at Blue Lake and met two young men just coming in with their

boat. I greeted them with the usual 'How's fishing?'—and before having a chance to introduce myself, one of them asked, 'Say, are you the game warden?' Upon my affirmative answer, he good-naturedly remarked, 'Will you please check my license? I have purchased one for the last 15 years and never had a chance to show it to anyone.' I accommodated him, of course. The boys were real sports, and we had a pleasant visit.

"A hundred yards farther on I met an elderly gentleman, and while checking his license I mentioned the two boys who in 15 years had never had theirs checked. He remarked, 'That's quite a coincidence. The license you just checked was the first one I've ever purchased, and I bought it only 30 minutes ago.'"

—WT—

A few years ago a prospective candidate for a game conservation officer's position was assigned to temporary patrol with a senior officer. Unfortunately the first contact with a violator

## Annual Fish and Game Yield Would Feed Army

There has been much speculation regarding the effects that World War II will have on wildlife. Wildlife protection and propagation depend upon the amount of revenue available for fish and game management. The funds for this work are derived solely from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. Because of the national emergency, it is difficult for administrators to estimate revenue that will be available for use during the next fiscal year.

In World War I there was a definite decrease in the game license revenue in Iowa, but in the United States as a whole, the revenue increased more than 20 per cent in 1918. Even with facts available relative to trends during the first World War, it is not safe to make predictions now because of the dissimilarity in many conditions affecting both the hunter and fisherman and wildlife.

For instance, in the past 25 years the average sportsman has become motorized and as a matter of course goes much greater distances to enjoy his favorite sport. With the present rubber shortage he undoubtedly will be, to a degree, demotorized; and wildlife in remote sections will benefit because the sportsman will not be able to travel so far.

During the past 25 years enforcement officials have also been motorized to a large degree, and the whole technique of present-day game enforcement revolves around the automobile. World War II may partially demotorize enforcement officials and make frequent patrols of remote areas difficult.

Except for one factor, limited automobile use would be definitely to the advantage of wildlife in rural sections. That factor is the game hog, perpetual

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was a difficult one. The senior officer, when making the arrest, was presented with the muzzle end of a double-barrelled shotgun, accompanied by dire threats and dramatic facial expressions.

The opening act of the show was too much for the rookie, who took to the tall timber without waiting for the curtain. After effecting the arrest and taking the prisoner before the court in a nearby town, the officer returned to find his frightened companion still trembling, well hidden in the brush. When upbraided for cowardice, the rookie replied, "I wasn't exactly scared. There was no fear in my heart. My feet just wouldn't stand still."



## Game Harvest

(Continued from Page Six)

violator, and commercial game violator who lives in or near these inaccessible game areas. With motorization of enforcement officers, the violator could and would have, almost unmolested, a carnival of game slaughter.

This thought is brought out succinctly in an anonymous poem as follows:

Ducks in season, year around;  
Hear that shootin'? Lovely sound.

Baiting's legal—so's live decoys;  
Grab your shotgun—tell the boys.

Duck-traps a-building, stools all wet,

Guns unplugged again — best year yet.

Spring shootin's with us, back from the past.

Get your share, boys, it's not going to last.

Forget those wardens; they're on the shelf;

Lead those black ducks—enjoy yourself.

What complainant? Let him squeal.

He'll not be answered now, the heel.

Where's the wardens? That's a gag;

Priority's got them in the bag.

Chained to desk-chairs, all forlorn,

Wishin' to hell they'd never been born.

Lost their speed-boats — lost their cars.

Who'll put who behind the bars?

They got no tires—got no gas—  
God's own Service—flat on its back.

Our national leaders have recognized and publicized the fact that sports and recreation are vital and necessary to national morale during wartime. Even the Nazis during their present crisis encourage outdoor sports. No sport provides relaxation and diversion for as many people in the United States as do hunting and fishing.

Although the recreational worth of fish and game probably exceeds all of its other values, its value as meat cannot be overlooked. Mention of game, fish, and war needs in the same sentence with meat gives shivers to some who remember that during the first World War, a few states let down the game law bars and allowed hunters to harvest the seed stocks for meat. After 20 years, game populations in these states have not yet fully recovered.

Nevertheless, the meat question in relation to fish and game cannot be overlooked in time of war, and it is a safe question as long as it is generally understood that game management entails

## Iowa Fishing Waters Yield Heavy Harvest



It takes many strings of fish like this to make up the 300,000,000 pounds of game fish taken in the United States each year by sports fishermen.

harvesting the annual fish and game crop.

Figures recently compiled by the Fish and Wildlife Service show the following interesting facts:

There are more than 900,000 big game animals, including deer, elk, moose, and antelope killed in the United States each year, which at an average of only 90 pounds each, dressed, represent about 81,000,000 pounds of meat. It is estimated that during the last year 15,000,000 waterfowl, 20,000,000 rabbits, 15,000,000 upland game birds, and more than 4,000,000 other small game were killed, which, if averaging only one pound each dressed, would supply an additional 54,000,000 pounds of food. This makes a total of 135,000,000 pounds of meat in game animals and birds. To this can be added the game fishes taken by more than 12,000,000 sport fishermen in the United States.

It is conservatively estimated that each of these will catch on the average more than 25 pounds of fish per year. In fact, information available shows that the average catch is above 30 pounds in many states; in California it is known to exceed 50 pounds. However, on the basis of an average of only 25 pounds of sport fish annually for each fisherman, there is supplied in this country each year 300,000,000 pounds of game fish.

Altogether this adds up to 435,000,000 pounds of food available from the annual harvest of game animals, game birds, and game fishes. According to the Quartermaster Corps of the

United States Army, the meat allowance per soldier each day is 18 ounces, but the full quantity is not always supplied.

Using this generous ration of meat as a unit, the 435,000,000 pounds of wild game and game fish used in American homes would replace enough beef, pork, poultry, commercial fish, and other meat to furnish each year sufficient of this food to an army of 5,000,000 men for more than 77 days.

It is important to note also that with proper management, this valuable contribution to our war effort can be made annually without damage to the resource. We must protect the breeding stock and harvest only the surplus that becomes available from year to year.

It is comforting to remember that in 1917 the U. S. Food Administration, after careful investigation and study, concluded that "since wildlife conservation laws had been needed in peace and had operated to maintain from year to year a more abundant food supply, it was even more important that the restrictions should be continued and adequately enforced in wartime so as to provide a continuing source of food".

Of 47 civet cats that met violent death over a two and a half year period in a research area in Iowa, farm dogs killed 36 per cent, trappers 34 per cent for fur, 25 per cent were shot or otherwise killed by farmers who suspected poultry killings, and four per cent were killed by traffic on highways. One per cent was unknown.

## Iowa Tick Bites Seldom Dangerous

By RICHARD F. TRUMP

Frequent questions asked in the state parks these days concern those pesky, little, eight-legged parasites, the ticks. Among people of some of the northwestern states, where Rocky Mountain spotted fever is more or less common, the tick has been a topic of conversation since the earliest 1900's, when it was found that ticks were responsible for carrying the fever germ.

Particular interest in wood ticks in Iowa dates back to 1933, when a case of spotted fever was reported in Fayette County. Since that time spotted fever has occurred in other parts of the state. Dr. Carl F. Jordan, of the Iowa State Department of Health, has made an extensive investigation of ticks in this region, and thousands of ticks collected over the state have been sent to the Rocky Mountain Laboratory at Hamilton, Montana. Dr. Jordan himself has visited this laboratory, where successful serum for treating the fever has been produced.

You can safely enjoy the outdoors, however, even where ticks are numerous. Investigators find that the dog tick, or wood tick, is the most common species found in Iowa's outdoors. The dog tick may carry the germs, but of the thousands that have been examined, very, very few actually did so.

Ticks, even though infected, are rarely dangerous until they have been attached long enough to be engorged with blood. It is a simple matter to get rid of the little animals after the picnic by picking them off. It is wise to put a drop of iodine on the wound where the tick was attached. The tick may be destroyed by touching with a match or dropping it into kerosene.

In recent investigations at Iowa State College, Charles R. Joyce of the Department of Zoology and Entomology has added greatly to the knowledge of the habits and hosts of ticks. He finds that white-footed field mice and many species of birds are carriers of the young ticks. Mr. Joyce says that there is little danger of the head or mouth parts of the dog tick remaining in the skin when the tick is removed. In other species, less common in Iowa, there is some danger of this happening.

Maintenance funds for all state park areas come from a fund made available to the Conservation Commission by the State Legislature.

Only about 800 miles of Iowa's 15,000 miles of streams are state-owned.



## Sportsmen Aid In Fish and Game Program

The Webster City Conservation League was organized in 1937 through the efforts of Chan Kingsley and State Conservation Officer Harry Rector, who was at that time stationed in this territory. Since that time our group has been active in many phases of the conservation program.

We have built eight low-head dams averaging three feet in height. These low-head dams are designed to provide sufficient water during low water periods in the summer to allow survival of fish, and they cause rapids which aerate the water, providing sufficient oxygen to carry fish through the critical hot weather periods in the summer, as well as to eliminate any chance of winter killing for lack of oxygen.

The Boone River is fed on springs, and we have located our dams between high banks so we don't flood any ground. We are endeavoring to improve our fishing so that we will not have to go a hundred or two hundred miles from home to fish. We start work on the dams the last of July when the water is low, and the work is carried out during the fall and winter.

A channel is cut in the ice, and rock blasted out of the nearby hills is hauled on sleds made of channel iron and placed in the stream. Our group of 152 active members at present derive considerable enjoyment from this stream improvement work, and this definite program and desire to improve our fishing is what enables us to keep 152 members in Webster City active.

For two years we have cooperated in the pheasant raising and stocking program. This year, however, with multitudes of birds in the wild in this territory, we did not raise any.

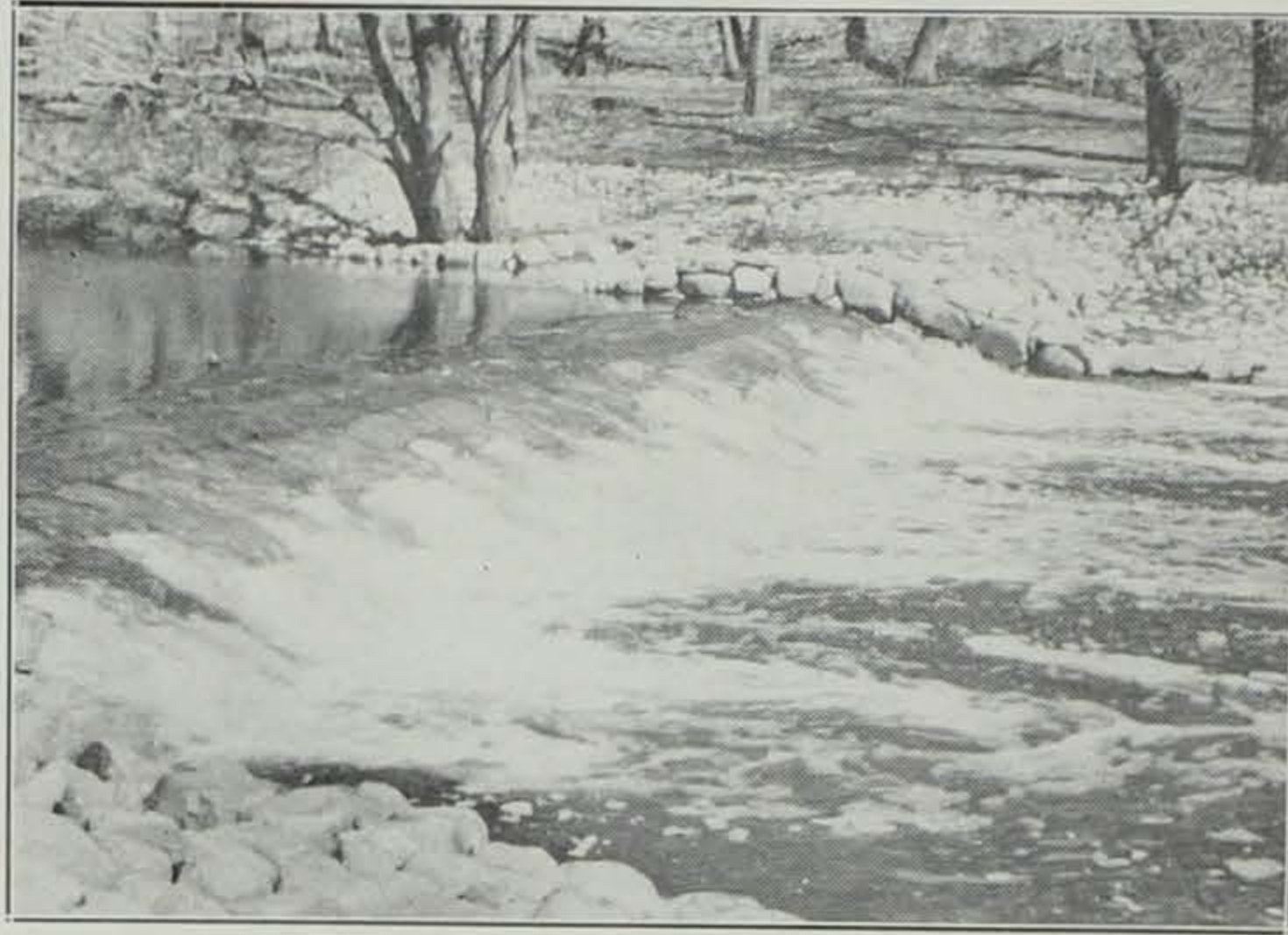
We have a definite winter feeding program, and during emergencies the rural mailmen take corn on their routes and feed wildlife at concentration points.

We have an annual field day and picnic with the usual program of casting, rifle shooting, skeet shooting, egg tossing, and other miscellaneous games.

We also cooperate with the State Conservation Commission in the rough fish removal program, and under the direction of the local conservation officer, Colby, have removed many hundreds of pounds of soft fish, giving the game fish in our streams more room and a better chance to survive.

Since our organization under the direction of the conservation officer we have rescued an average of 6,000 bass and 2,000 cat-

## Low-Head Dams Improve Streams



Sportsman-built low-head dams improve fish environment in many Iowa streams.

## "Fields of Flowers" Brighten Landscape

By ARTHUR E. RAPP

To those who have seen the wild flower fields of California and other Western states, the possibility of having what might be termed a field of flowers in our own state would seem quite remote. Yet occasionally, through fortuitous circumstances and generally not with the approval of landowners, we do have considerable areas devoted exclusively to wild flowers.

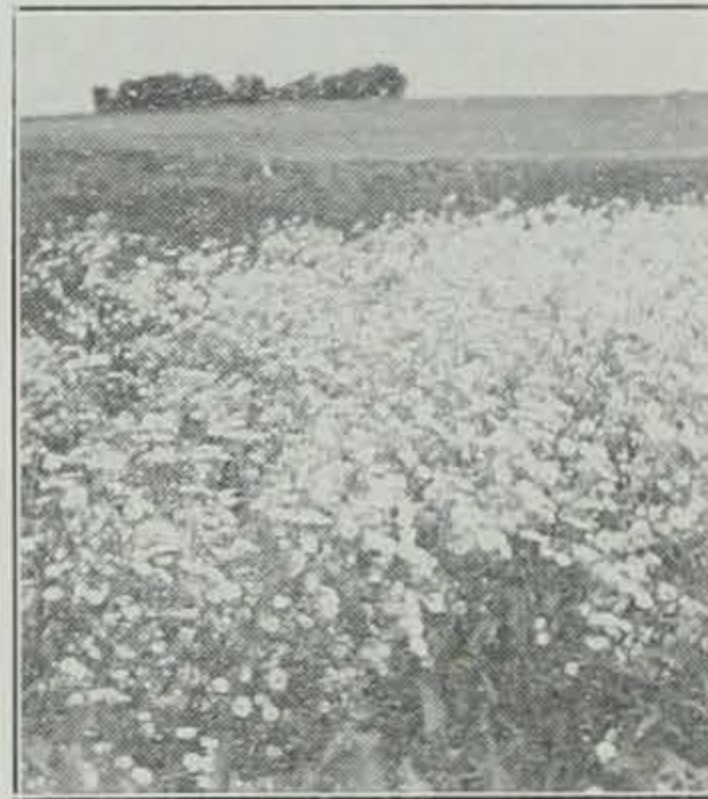
Above Sioux Rapids there was for a few years several hundred acres of Echium or blueweed, also known as viper's bugloss, growing on the hot and dry gravel banks. Blueweed is not a native of Iowa, and not even of America, but it is an escape that prefers dry and sterile banks. Cattle will not eat it, and it has no value; but it is a beautiful blue, and great masses of blueweed when seen in the late afternoon are very attractive.

Blue vervain is also attractive, and occasionally we may see a pasture so overgrown that the memory is not quickly forgotten. Snow-in-the-mountain in the early morning on a hillside has much to commend it, while the serried ranks of Pentstemons or yuccas on a steep hillside have good form, even though they lack color, of which Pentstemons cannot be accused. Spanish needles will often throw a cloth of gold

fish from the small creeks that go dry each summer and placed them back in the river.

We are proud of what has been done. We are all working together for the good of the conservation program in Iowa.—G. B. McCullough, Secretary.

## Daisy Designs



A field of daisies the plow hasn't reached

over a bit of low pasture for a week or two and then be damned by the farmer for the rest of the year.

Colonies of shooting stars in the southeastern corner of our state can often be found of considerable size, and the hillsides of hepaticas at the Ledges take in no small territory. In favorable years the valley at the Fort Dearborn State Park is almost filled with wild flowers, but here it is the wide variation of varieties that is so interesting.

Occasionally the roadsides and the steep sides of railway embankments in Warren County have been solid masses of the larger spiderwort, while on the stretch between the highway and the rail tracks on the way to Sioux City from the south, great colonies of the lesser spiderwort alternate with the white prairie anemones. This part of the state is favored by wild roses, and for those who love the yellows, the senecas and golden Alexanders are very attractive when growing in grasslands.

For several years a diligent ef-

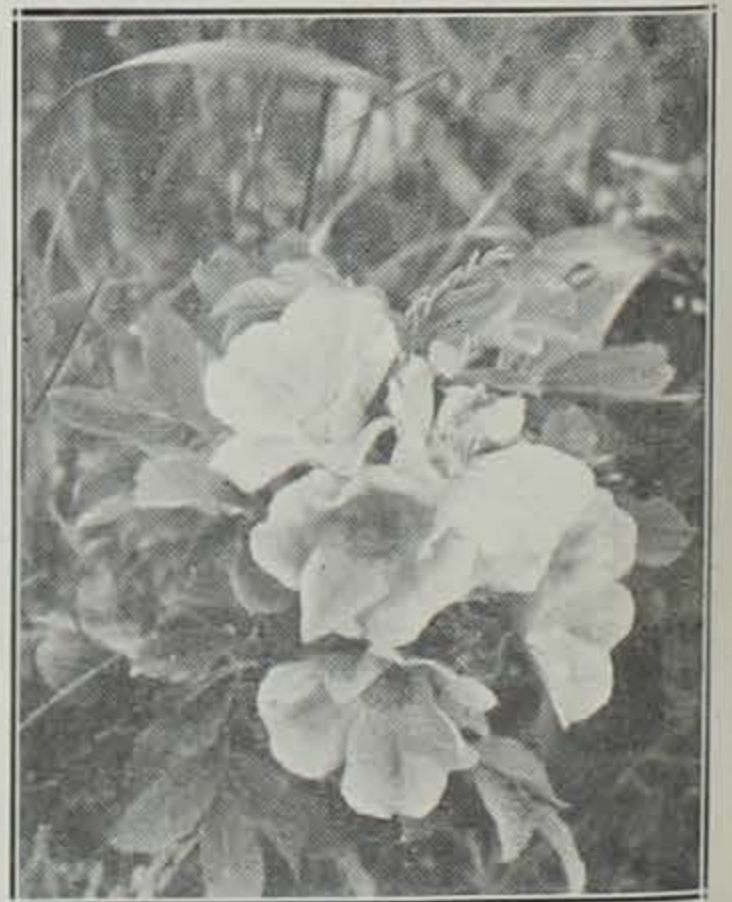
fort was made to find a tract of virgin Iowa prairie land that had never been used in such a manner as to destroy the native vegetation. Occasionally a small area was found, but never a large one. One that I have in mind was of about 20 acres in extent, and about one third of this land had been cut a bit early one year through a misunderstanding. Below the line thousands of prairie phlox would blossom each year in infinite shades of pink and lilac, lavender and white.

The gold of puccoon was everywhere, and prairie clovers were all there, and the rudbeckias held their heads above the waving green, while Jersey tea and the false indigos gave distinction to the blue-stem. Sometimes I think that this was what the pioneers saw when they came to Iowa.

## How To Kill An Organization

1. Don't come.
2. If you do come, come late.
3. Hold back your dues or don't pay them at all.
4. Never ask a friend to join.
5. Don't have anything to say when you are called upon.
6. If too wet or too dry or too hot or too cold, don't think of coming.
7. If you do attend a meeting, find fault with the proceedings and the work done by members.
8. Kick if you are not appointed to a committee, and if you are appointed, never attend a committee meeting.
9. Don't do anything more than you can possibly help to further your club's interest; then when a few take off their coats and do things, howl that the lodge is run by a clique.—Moose News.

## Iowa's Wild Rose



The wild rose was officially designated as the flower of the state by the 26th General Assembly in extraordinary session. The resolution was adopted May 7, 1897.