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NEW LAKES HAVE BIG OPENING



Thousands of fishermen visited Rock Creek Lake, and most of them were happy. It was a Memorial Day to remember, when everyone was a fishing expert—and could prove it.

By John Madson
Education Assistant

For a time it looked as if all of central Iowa was spending its Memorial Day at Rock Creek Lake near Newton and Green Valley Lake at Creston.

The two new artificial lakes were opened for fishing at 5 o'clock on a foggy May 30 morning, and hundreds of eager fishermen were on hand. Not many of them were sorry.

From the lakes' opening until 10:30 that night, nearly everyone caught fish. Pat Tilley, Conservation Officer at Creston, tells about Green Valley:

"It was misty at 5 o'clock and several hundred fishermen were at the docks ready to go. They had just started out on the lake and one fisherman who was pulling away from the dock tossed a plug overboard to begin trolling. Right away he caught a 2-pound bass. Then you should have heard those outboards!"

It was the same thing at Rock

Creek Lake. Fishermen went out in the 5 o'clock fog and began phenomenal fishing. One man at the north end of the lake took 7 legal bass in 8 casts. Another caught two bass at the same time on a plug, and limits of good bass were taken in 15 minutes. The legal bass from the two lakes were of two age groups: 2-year-old fish averaging 12 inches and 3-year-olds averaging about 15 inches. A few of the older fish, in Rock Creek at least, were just shy of 17 inches and weighed about 2½ pounds.

At 10 in the morning, when the first shift of fishermen was heading home for a late breakfast, we counted 260 boats on 640-acre Rock Creek Lake and there were at least 1,500 fishermen on the shores. About 175 boats were on smaller Green Valley Lake in the shank of the morning, and during the day officers there estimated a total attendance of almost 5,000 fishermen and sightseers.

These overflow crowds were amazingly quiet. Conservation officers reported almost no fishing

violations; there was no boat racing, wild driving or heavy drinking. Maybe it was because people were just too busy catching fish to get into mischief.

There were no serious accidents. A little girl at Rock Creek was snagged with a fish plug, and a highway patrolman was beamed with a sinker at Green Valley. That was all.

In both lakes the bass fishing remained good, and instead of falling off in the late morning it held up well through the entire day. Three of us went out on Rock Creek Lake at 11 o'clock and filled our limits of 15-inch bass by 1 o'clock—fishing with **surface plugs** in an area filled with boat traffic.

The big surprise in the new lakes was the bullhead fishing; bullheads up to 1½ pounds could be caught by almost anyone who wanted them. Ironically, these fish were not originally stocked in either lake but were recruited from small feeder streams and resisted all efforts to eliminate them. Bullheads in an artificial lake are usu-

ally an evil, prone to great overcrowding and stunting. So far, these bullheads are nothing but fine.

Black bass, bluegills, silver bass, crappies and catfish had been originally stocked in Rock Creek Lake. We saw some 6-inch bluegills but no crappies or silvers. There were many bluegills in the shallows.

In Green Valley Lake the original stocking had been walleyes, catfish, bass and bluegills. As in Rock Creek, bass and bullheads furnished the bulk of the fishing. A few walleyes were caught, running around 13 inches, and the dozen catfish seen by officers were about the same size.

The kids around Rock Creek Lake had the time of their lives. Some were using artificial baits for the first time and shattered the old "bent-pin and worm" tradition by hanging up some fine, fighting bass with spinning gear and casting rods. Many were catching their first largemouths and carried them around proudly and held them up

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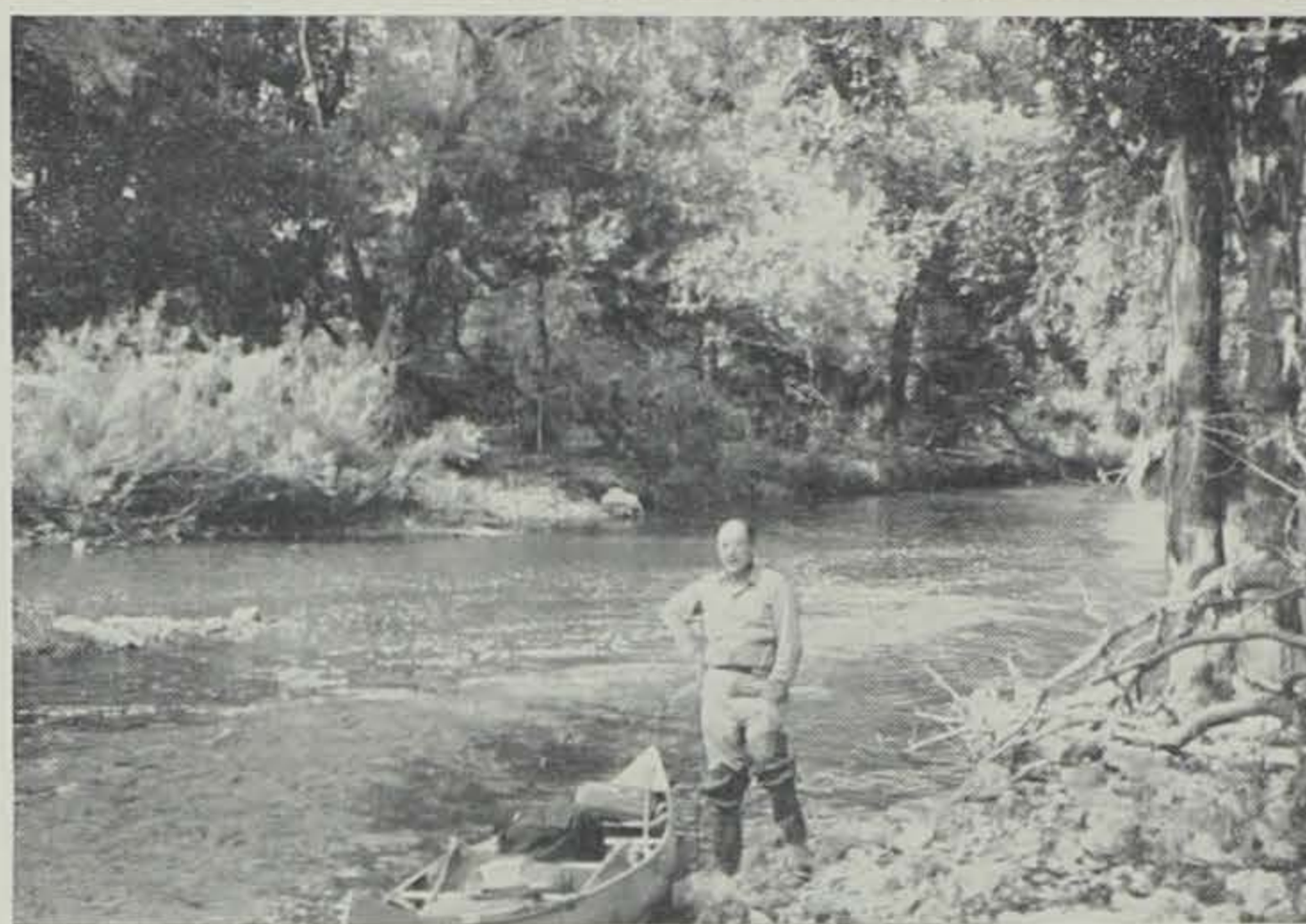
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Probably Iowa's most spectacular river, the Upper Iowa is ideal canoe country. Its rocky shores offer fine scenery; its rocky bed holds smallmouth bass.

CANOEING THE UPPER IOWA RIVER—LIME SPRINGS TO KENDALLVILLE

By Ralph Church and Harold Allen

The Upper Iowa is easily one of the most beautiful streams in the Midwest. Its appeal is not confined to the stretch between Kendallville and Decorah that was described in the July, 1954 issue of the CONSERVATIONIST. Many canoeists and fishermen favor the stretch further upstream from the old town of Lime Springs to Kendallville. The scenery isn't so spectacular but the smallmouth fishing is excellent.

The river is relatively shallow in this upper stretch with frequent bars and shallow riffles. The best time for canoeing it is in the spring and early summer when the water levels are higher. But, if you enjoy a leisurely float on a small stream with frequent stops to wade-fish, there isn't any bad time to do this river. You will do more wading and less floating later in the year, but you can be assured

of a thoroughly delightful trip.

From the old town of Lime Springs to Kendallville it's a comfortable weekend trip. It is about 24 river miles and takes about 14 hours traveling time. Throughout most of the distance the stream flows through flat prairie country, fed by numerous springs and small springfed tributaries. The stream bed is limestone rubble, limestone outcropping and sand. As mentioned, riffles are frequent, but there are also many deep holes and deep stretches. The current is fair, never dangerous. There are no dams. Fences are numerous but they can be negotiated without difficulty.

The place to put in is 1 mile north of the present town of Lime Springs, on a rocky point below the bridge on the right bank. This was the site of the original town of Lime Springs before the rail-

road went through in 1868. The site of "Old Town", as it is now known, is marked by a cluster of buildings and a dam which was built in 1860. A mill has been on this site since the early 1850's, the present mill being operated by Herman Lidtke. A French burrstone cemented into the wall of the present miller's home is of historic interest. It was originally installed in 1855 in the famous mill of William Larrabee, Iowa's 13th Governor, at Clermont on the Turkey River. Years ago Lidtke and D. W. Davis, his father-in-law and former owner of the mill, hauled this millstone by wagon from Clermont for use in the Lime Springs mill.

It is 3 3/4 miles (2 hours) from the "Old Town" dam to the Foreston bridge which was the site of the early mill town of Foreston. Crumbling remains of the old mill dam can still be seen near the bridge. In this section the current is slow and the water placid as the river flows through flat country.

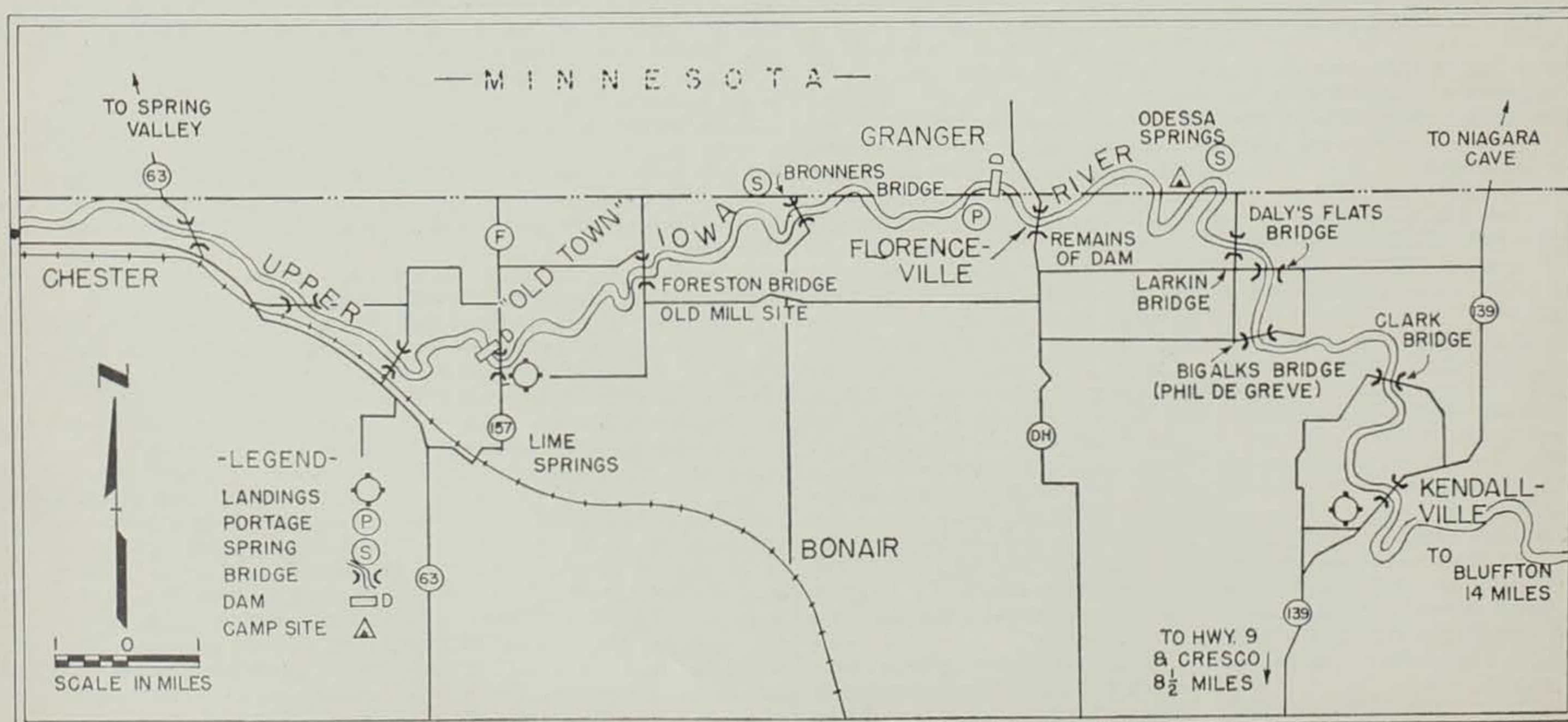
The water deepens and the current increases, however, near the bridge where there are exposed rock walls on the left bank. Below the bridge there is a long stretch of ideal wading water with lots of room for your backcast.

In the next 4 miles (3 1/4 hours) to Bronner's bridge the river follows a winding course through a succession of long riffles and deep holes. There are several small rocky bluffs in this section. About 3 miles below the Foreston Bridge the river takes a sharp bend to the east. This is a very scenic stretch of water. The banks are heavily timbered and wild. There are a number of large sand and rock bars and a series of rapids and pools. A large spring will be seen on the left bank.

In the next 4 miles (2 1/2 hours) to the next bridge, a new highway bridge, the river crosses the Minnesota line in several places. At one of these points, near Granger, Minnesota, it is necessary to portage around the remains of a low head rock dam. The short carry is on the right bank.

Five and one-half miles (3 hours) farther downstream from the new bridge, Larkin bridge is reached. Just below the new bridge are the remains of the old concrete Florenceville dam. The river divides at this point and the left or west channel will take you around the dam without a portage. About 2 1/2 miles (1 1/2 hours) below the dam there is a long high terrace on the left bank. This is a perfect campsite facing a beautiful rocky bluff on the right bank. The current is fairly fast in this section with lots of good fishing water. A large spring, Odessa Spring, is just below this point, flowing out of a cave about 30 feet from the left bank of the river proper. The spring is in Minnesota and marks a popular fishing spot.

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George Worley Photo.
Beavers do not rank high in animal intelligence, and their dam-building is instinctive, not rational. But a pipe spillway like this makes a person wonder.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Here's the stuff that animal legend is made of.

This section of beaver dam was built on a small creek south of Winterset where the eager beavers had set a hollow log into their dam and provided a ready-made spillway. After the farmer had partially destroyed the dam it was repaired, and a second time the beavers built the hollow log into their dam!

Human engineers know that certain types of dams must have spillways for overflow waters. Water flowing directly over such dams, or cutting around their ends, can soon destroy them.

On looking at this picture, Conservation Commission engineers were mildly thunderstruck. One, a specialist in water control structures, commented that the beavers might have built more freeboard above the log, raising the dam a little higher above the pond. When asked if he could be quoted, the engineer grinned and said, "I should say not! I'm not going to criticize critters that can do this. But I refuse to believe that they cut the hole into the side of their pipe spillway to relieve vibration stresses!"

(Another school of thought is that the hole was cut into the side of the log so that the beavers could periodically compute the volume of overflow.)

The engineers were reminded of a silting basin structure that was once built near Lake Wapello. Near one bank was a place where

the small dam dipped down a bit. The resident beavers, not agreeing with the design and probably a little miffed at not being consulted, raised that small portion of the dam with a structure of their own.

Actually, beavers aren't very bright, sometimes even being killed by the very trees they cut down. The practice of their dam-building is instinctive, not logical, and this hollow log spillway was probably just a happy accident. But if it was, why didn't they plug up the log—their usual practice with a leaky dam?

It makes you wonder, and it makes a good story.—J.M.

WATERBUGS

You're never quite alone while you're fishing. Skating around your bobber on the quiet water there are probably water striders and darting around them are their relatives—the backswimmers and water boatmen.

Spider-like insects that run aimlessly about on the water's surface, the water striders are true bugs, members of the insect order Hemiptera. They are related to the bedbugs and chinch bugs, but are water dwellers.

These water striders live on the thin film of water created by the surface tension of water particles. This thin film, the neuston, is a world in itself and supports a community of its own citizens. And, like our world, it's a specialized one. Some of these organisms occur only on the bottom of the surface film, some live in it, and others—like the water striders—are

associated with the surface of the film. Water striders are the "lions of the neuston", preying on dead and living insects that fall into the water. When times are tough, they have been known to leap out of the water to capture flying insects. The undersides of their bodies and long, slender legs are covered with a dense pile that keeps them absolutely dry. Independent little bugs, some species of water striders have been found in the ocean hundreds of miles from land.

Their cousins, the backswimmers, are the little black and white darting insects often seen paddling along the surface of the water or just underneath it. They swim on their backs, which are keeled like a boat. Since they always swim on their backs, you might say that their backs are

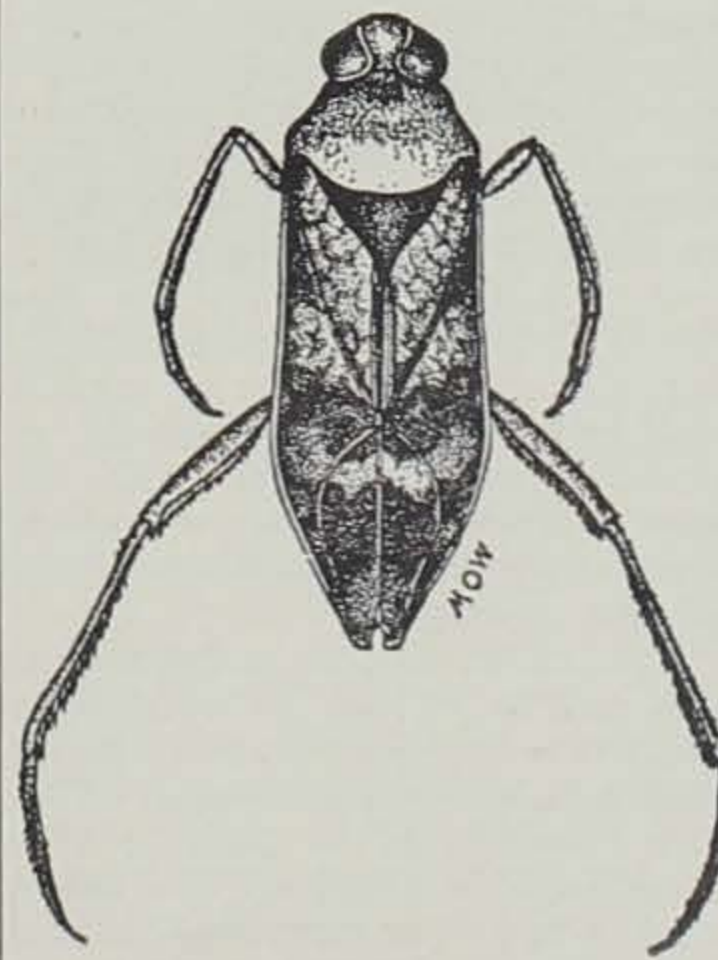


If you've never been stung by a backswimmer, there's a good reason—

their bellies in practice but in reality their bellies are really bellies and their backs really backs. It's sort of like a man who walks backward all his life, if you see what we mean. If you don't, it's not important.

Anyway, the bellies of these little insects have two double rows of fine hairs, each enclosing a small furrow that traps a pocket of air. When a backswimmer dives he takes his air down with him—a jimdandy idea.

A pair of long, fringed and flattened legs are the "oars" that send the backswimmer at a good clip



To some Mexicans, the water boatman means morning pancakes.

through the water. The bugs are predacious, feeding on small insects, crustacea and sometimes even small fish. Their sucking beaks can inflict a severe sting. We once received a jolt from one of these bugs at the base of a forefinger that we felt clear to the elbow. In the bad old days when swimming suits were swimming suits and women were women (although men were sometimes not too sure of it), backswimmers sometimes became entangled in bathing garb and stung swimmers badly. This isn't much of a problem anymore.

The water boatmen are gray and black mottled bugs less than a half inch long that also have a pair of long, flattened legs. They swim with a quick, darting motion and when diving usually encase their bodies with an air bubble that gives them a silvery sheen. While underwater they must cling to objects to stay there, for the air supply would otherwise bob them to the surface. In stagnant water they must come to the surface frequently to recharge their batteries and oxygen supply, but in fresh water their air bubble is replenished by air particles in the

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Jim Sherman Photo.
Conservation Officer Frank Tucker
1892-1955

FRANK TUCKER DIES

Frank Tucker, 63, veteran fish and game conservation officer of Cass and Audubon counties, died of a heart attack in the Omaha Veterans' Hospital on May 19.

First appointed as a conservation officer on July 10, 1933, Tucker was originally assigned to Shelby, Audubon and Cass counties and served in that area until the time of his death.

As one of Iowa's oldest and most experienced conservation officers, "Tuck" was known and respected by many and will be sorely missed by his sportsmen and his friends in the department.

He is survived by his widow; a daughter, Mrs. W. H. Glasgow of Des Moines, and two sons, William Tucker, Johnson County Attorney of Iowa City, and Frank Tucker, Jr., a Jefferson pharmacist.

Funeral services were held on May 21 at St. Paul's Catholic Church at Atlantic, and burial was in the Atlantic cemetery.



A good farm pond, a source of fishing and swimming, may be ruined during summer algal blooms. Poisoning can kill such algae or "moss," but should be done carefully and correctly.

CONTROLLING ALGAE IN FARM PONDS

By Everett B. Speaker
Superintendent of Biology

Algae blooms or pond scum are tiny microscopic plants that frequently cover portions or the entire water surface of farm ponds or small lakes. A certain amount of this material is not objectionable, and actually is of value since it furnishes food for the organisms that constitute a part of the diet of small fishes. Over-fertilization, however, will often increase the algal plants to a point where they cover a substantial part of the surface. In this case, the pond is not only unsightly, but angling is greatly impaired.

Copper sulphate in coarse crystal form is one of the best and most commonly used chemicals in the destruction of these microscopic organisms. A simple, yet effective, method of application is to place the crystals in a burlap bag and drag it behind a boat close to the surface in a zigzag course across the pond in such a manner as to triangulate the surface to be treated. A slight breeze is helpful in getting more even distribution of the copper sulphate.

It is not particularly difficult to calculate the volume of water in a small pond, and this must be done to determine the amount of chemical to be used. Recommended dosages run from one-half to one part per million of copper sulphate. This dosage will not ordinarily affect fish life in our waters. Three parts per million, however, have been known to kill fish, so care must be exercised to keep the treatment below lethal limits!

Remember: One cubic foot of water contains $7\frac{1}{2}$ gallons, and one gallon of water weighs approximately $8\frac{3}{4}$ pounds.

First estimate the area of the pond in square feet. This is done by measuring the length and

breadth of the pond and multiplying the length times the breadth. If, for example, the pond is 100 feet wide and 200 feet long, there would be 20,000 square feet in the surface area. Next, determine the average depth of the pond, making a number of soundings. For the sake of this problem, assume it is 5 feet in average depth. Multiply the square feet of surface area by the average depth to determine the volume of the pond in cubic feet. Now, multiply the cubic feet of water by $7\frac{1}{2}$ (number of gallons in a cubic foot of water), and you will get 750,000 gallons of water in the pond.

The recommended dosage for this type of treatment is one part per million of copper sulphate. Since it requires about $8\frac{1}{3}$ pounds of copper sulphate to treat one million gallons of water at the rate of one part per million, it would require $6\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of copper sulphate to treat the 750,000 ($\frac{3}{4}$ of a million) gallons that our example pond contains.

The action of copper sulphate is fast, and algae scums usually show signs of destruction (turning brown or yellow) within a few hours after treatment. The plants are actually "burned" and soon disintegrate and disappear. Sometimes periodic dosages at two or three week intervals are necessary to keep the pond clean. Copper sulphate generally has little effect on higher, rooted plants.

If people or livestock use the ponds for drinking purposes, bathing, etc., it is advisable to consult your local public health officer (or veterinarian) before treating the pond. Whenever possible, consult your local conservation officer for further advice.

The chemical recommended in this article should be used with great care and the volume of water should be accurately measured before treatment is made. This chemical is not injurious to fish if applied in proper quantity, but will kill fish either directly or indirectly.

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FISHIN' GOES TO COLLEGE

A couple of years ago Iowa State's freshman baseball coach, Chick Sutherland, was having a friendly argument with a professional baitcaster from one of the big tackle companies.

Faithful to their respective sports, they were giving each other a hard time until the fishing pro said something about teaching students how to cast. Chick thought it was a good idea, but there wasn't any tackle. There soon was; the professional had two dozen rods and reels sent to the college.

So the Iowa State College Department of Physical Education had a new course: Baitcasting.

In two years about 700 students have taken the course and it's been expanded. In the fall and spring quarters it's baitcasting; in the winter quarter it's fishcraft and the boys learn rodmaking, flytying, baitmaking and fishing in general. Professionals visit and help out. Lacey Gee of the Wapsie Fly Company gives regular lectures on flytying and professional baitcasters give demonstrations.

There are three instructors for the class: Sutherland; Bob Lamson, assistant basketball coach, and Jerry Carle, backfield football coach. Eight classes are given twice a week and to spice up the coursework there are regular tournaments. About 150 boys take the course each quarter. So far, because of an equipment lack, most of the instruction has been in bait-casting but some students are working on spinfishing and fly-casting, using their own equipment.

The constant practice and in-



The motto of Iowa State College, "Science With Practice," is being applied to fishing. Students under Bob Lamson work for their grades, but the toughest professors are fish.

CONSERVATION AWARD WON BY IOWA TEACHER

Miss Margaret Black of Des Moines, an assistant professor in the Education Department of Drake University, has been chosen to receive an award of merit for her "outstanding contribution to conservation education in Iowa through public school teaching, teacher training at Drake University, and her enthusiasm and inspiration."

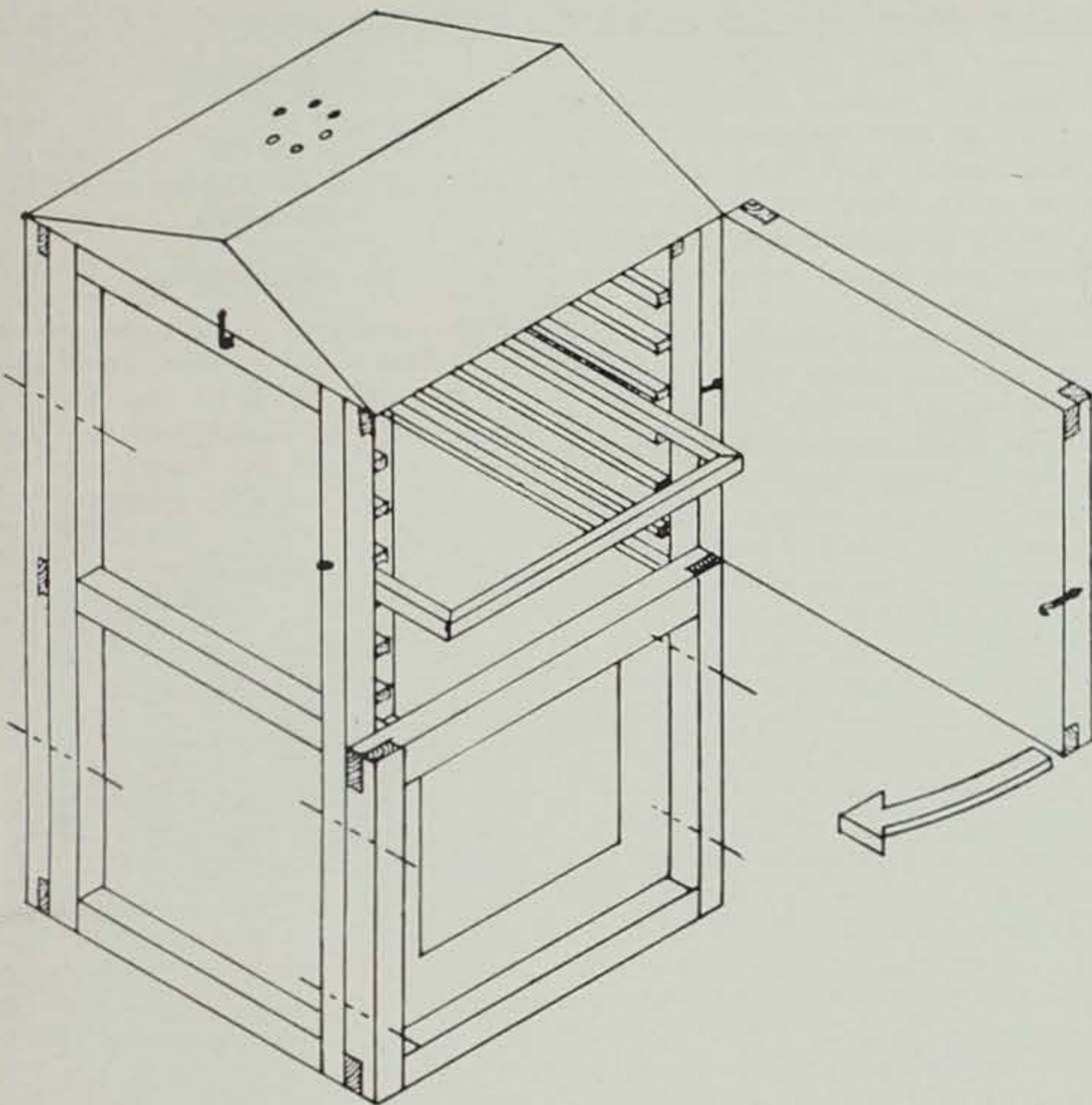
The award was announced at the May meeting in New Orleans of the American Association for Conservation Information.

Several such awards were presented at the meeting to outstanding conservationists. Miss Black was chosen at the recommendation of the Iowa Conservation Commission because of her years of experience and dedication in conservation teaching.

Miss Black is well-known to Iowa educators as a result of her extension classes and on-campus classes in science and conservation education.

The weight of an auto-top boat won't hurt your car, but there's an easy way to dent it badly through sheer thoughtlessness. That happens when you start to tighten the web straps that hold it on. Once I grabbed a strap and added my 170 pounds to the 30 pounds of boat carried by that corner of the rack. That made 200 pounds of boat carried by that inches of top—and in she went.—Charles Waterman, *Fisherman Magazine*.

struction is paying off. Last spring the boys entered the bait-casting competition in the Ames Ike Walton Field Days, and took 1st, 2nd and 3rd.—J.M.



This carp smoker is 4 feet high, 2½ feet square and covered with sheet metal. Full plans are available from the Conservation Commission.

THE ART OF CLEANING AND SMOKING CARP

Chuck O'Farrell

Supervisor of Rough Fish Control

The Iowa carp, while not our most popular fish, is here to stay and ways to use it for food should be given more attention. Carp prepared for food by smoking, baking or frying can be good eating if prepared correctly. In certain areas of the state, carp fishing by hook and line is just as important to some anglers as catfishing is to other fishermen. Carp properly smoked are good eating and don't let anyone tell you they aren't. Here's one procedure:

1. Select the kind or type of fish to be smoked. In smoking carp, as well as other kinds of fish, all fish should be of uniform size if possible. An average size of five to eight pounds makes the best size to smoke. Whenever possible, choose female carp, as they are the best and the meat is of lighter color and not as dark as the males.

2. The cleaning of the fish comes next. Cut off the head with a knife or a scout ax. Next, laying the fish on the side, with the forward part of the fish extending from your body, cut along the backbone or fin toward the tail, thrusting the knife through the body of the fish at the point of the vent. This gives a hand hold on the fish so that you can complete cutting the fish in half with the scout ax. When the fish is cut in two, scrape out the internal organs and thoroughly wash off the blood, film and loose tissue.

3. Fish are now ready for the salting. This can be done by mak-

ing a salt brine that will float an egg or dry salting. Use a coarse stock salt. In using the "dry salt method" of preparing the fish, take a generous amount of salt and sprinkle over the cleaned portion of the fish and leave for eighteen to twenty-four hours. The warmer the weather the quicker the fish will take the salt and less time is needed for the salting process. After the fish have been salted for the required time, rinse off all excess salt in clean water and drain off the water. The fish are now ready for the smoker.

4. Smoke House: A smoke house like the Model 2 can be built for about \$15. The tin is the most expensive part of the smoke house, and the cost of building one would be small if one could find some old sheet tin. This model is two feet square and four feet high with a hip roof. The hip roof lets the excess moisture escape from a vent in the roof. The five trays in the smoker will smoke about fifteen to twenty fish, depending on their size. The trays are about two feet above the fire which is built underneath a plate in the bottom of the smoker. The plate in the bottom of the smoker keeps the direct heat and smoke from the trays by circulating around the plate and then up around the trays of fish.

5. Wood and Fire: The fire is built under the plate below the trays of fish. Start the fire with dry, hard wood: ash, hickory, apple or cherry. Corn cobs can be used. When the fire is going well and has live embers, put on the green "smoke wood." Dry wood will create too hot a fire and not enough smoke. Green ash, hickory, apple or cherry are good woods to use for smoking. The main precautions in smoking the fish are not

to get too hot a fire and have lots of smoke.

6. Put the fish in the trays and place trays in the smoker after the fire has been built. After two or three hours of smoking the lower tray should be moved to the top position in the smoker and the top one to the bottom, and so on, rotating the balance of the trays. Length of time in determining whether the fish are done or not depends on the temperature and weather. Usually it takes about eight hours to do a good job of smoking in fifty to sixty degree weather. If temperatures are down around freezing it takes ten to twelve hours. When are the fish done? Experience is the best teacher and after you have smoked fish a few times, you can tell by just looking. When the fish are a good golden brown, the ribs begin to show through the flesh and all moisture has disappeared chances are the fish are o.k.

7. After smoking store the fish in a cool, dry place if the weather is cool, wrapping them in wax paper. In the summer time store the fish in a refrigerator or deep freeze.

(Another smoker sometimes used is an old ice refrigerator that still has trays in it. An electric hot plate, placed beneath the ice box, is the source of heat and fire. A thin steel frying pan is placed on

the hot plate and allowed to become red hot.

When the pan is red, feed hickory or other hardwood chips into it, these quickly catching fire and generating smoke. A vent is cut in the top of the ice refrigerator to allow smoke and moisture to escape. Such a smoker is insulated, has a front door, and ready-built fish trays. It's cheap, easy-to-use and easily obtainable.)

IOWA DOGS SWEEP FIELD

Three pointer dogs owned and handled by Conway Rhyne of Des Moines swept the field in the open derby stake of the Northwest Field Trial Association's trials at Fort Snelling last month.

Eight young dogs, some handled by professionals, were entered in the stake.

First place was captured by Spunky's Agrippa Rock; second place by Spunky's Agrippa Rick, and third place by Tyreva.

The first two dogs are litter mates and Tyreva is a half sister of the two dogs.

Rhyne is a teacher at North High School, and has long been active in field trial circles.—Des Moines Tribune.

While swimming on the surface of water, a muskrat seldom uses his front feet. He holds them under his chin, depending on his hind feet for propulsion.—J. M.



Figure it out—92% of the young bluegills must go, for their own good as well as ours.

SIMPLE ARITHMETIC

A good fish pond will support 400 pounds of fish per acre.

An average bluegill nest will produce 20,000 fry.

Therefore: By the time these 20,000 fish average 3 ounces per fish, they will be all the pond can support. Then they will not grow larger unless many of the fish

- (1) die,
- (2) are eaten by other fish, or
- (3) are removed from the pond.

To average 4 ounces, only 1,600 can survive. The other 92 per cent must go.

(That is, if there is only one bluegill nest per acre!)

Therefore: Predators are needed to keep down the numbers of bluegills. It takes about 4 to 5 pounds of bluegills to produce one pound of largemouth bass.—Dr. Kenneth D. Carlander, Iowa Cooperative Fish Research Unit, Iowa State College.



Rock Creek bass were solid, hungry and full of battle. Many were taken on surface plugs, but hundreds hit almost anything in the water.

New Lakes . . .

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at the slightest excuse, bless 'em. It was a good day all around; one of those rare days when every angler is an expert—and can prove it.

From now on you can expect fishing in both lakes to level off. Don't be disappointed; it's the natural thing. As this year's spawn hatches and fills the lakes with fry, fishing will be affected, especially for bass. It's the same thing that happens to walleyes and other game fish in the midsummer.

Records in new lakes and reservoirs, both in Iowa and other parts of the nation, show early fishing to be terrific. This soon wears off as more natural food is added and the fish become wary. Many game fish, particularly the wary black bass, become sensitive to repeated disturbances of various kinds. It is doubtful that they actually get smart. Whatever the cause,

the effect is the same. As fishing pressure increases some fish certainly become less naïve, and grow plug-shy and harder to take. But a slow-down in bass fishing doesn't mean the fish are gone—it just means that they aren't being caught.

Such shyness is a good thing in bass, for they are needed in any lake stocked with panfish. Without the predatory culling of fishes like bass, artificial lakes can overstock themselves. If and when bass fishing slows up, the thing to do is to work on the panfish that furnish more long-range fishing enjoyment for more people than any of the highly-touted game fish.

But whatever happens tomorrow, it's certain that a lot of anglers went home happy on May 30. The opening day at Rock Creek Lake and Green Valley Lake was a splashing success, and gave thousands of fishermen a Memorial Day to remember.—J.M.



Kids held their own with veteran fishermen, and many caught their first black bass; these boys will probably never be the same again.

WHAT KIND OF FISHERMAN ARE YOU?

With the melting of winter's ice and snow, men from 7 to 70 will again desert work and school in favor of the thrill of a fish bending their rod whether it be an old willow pole or an expensive custom made rod.

With so many fishing there are bound to be many different types of fisherman as there are different people in all walks of life. In addition to the amateur and the experienced fishermen there are many other kinds of fisherman. Some of the more noticeable types are as follows:

The Splash Chaser—This fellow is the fisherman who frantically runs up and down the shore casting his bait wherever he sees a splash. You can drive him beserk by tossing small pebbles into the water whenever he isn't looking.

Then there is the fellow who always thinks that the fish are on the other side of the lake or stream. He tries to cast his bait over there regardless of how many lines he snags. It doesn't do any good to cuss him. He usually has good ears and a larger vocabulary of nasty words that he yells across without stopping until everyone has left him alone. Homicide is said to be the only solution in this case, but you might get the "hot seat" if your judge isn't a fisherman too.

Another objectionable type of fisherman is the fellow who, upon seeing you catch a fish, rushes over to you and tosses his line in the exact spot where you caught your fish. It doesn't do any good to move because he will join you if you get as much as a nibble. You can only hope he soon gets his limit and goes home so you can fish in peace.

Probably the best fisherman to get along with is the one who sits near you without disturbing anyone or talking too much. You can usually spot this fellow slyly peeking around at any newcomer. He's not wanted by the FBI. But, you can usually bet that he hasn't got a license. In addition to being very courteous he will often leave you a mess of fish if you hold his rod when the game warden happens to be checking for fishing licenses.

What kind are you?—*The Lyon County News.*

CURIOUS CAT'S ACTIONS RESULT IN BOAT RESCUE

Several unidentified persons were saved near Waukon Junction, when their boat capsized in the Mississippi. Taking part in the rescue were members of the Mel Chatman family and John Bickel, of Cedar Rapids.

Their attention was drawn to the scene of the near-tragedy when the Chatman cat displayed undue interest in the river and refused to come when called. On investigation, the overturned boat and struggling occupants were discovered.—*Waukon Republican.*

FUNDAMENTALS OF FISHING

Part III

THE RIVER ROD AND DRIFT-FISHING

By John Madson

The men who know are out on the rivers now, taking advantage of June—the Moon of the Catfish. They're fishing big rivers for big fish with big tackle, and likely as not they're using heavy, two-handed brutes of fishing poles and a country mile of line.

These are the drift fishermen: the boys who stay put and let the current do their deadly work, drifting the bait downstream for two, three or four hundred yards.

Their river rods are really heavy-weight casting rods with special qualities, patterned after the surf rods of the coastal states. They are quite stiff. With 300 yards of line out, a rod must have backbone to set the hook. It must also be long, for a short rod doesn't have enough leverage to pick up the belly and slack of so much wet line.

These rods are from 8 to 10 feet long, with a conventional reel and a two-handed butt section about 15 inches in length. A few years ago most of the rods were straight, clean bamboo with thick walls and small nodes. Since the goons have taken over China, tonkin cane is hard to come by and glass has largely replaced it. It's just as well.

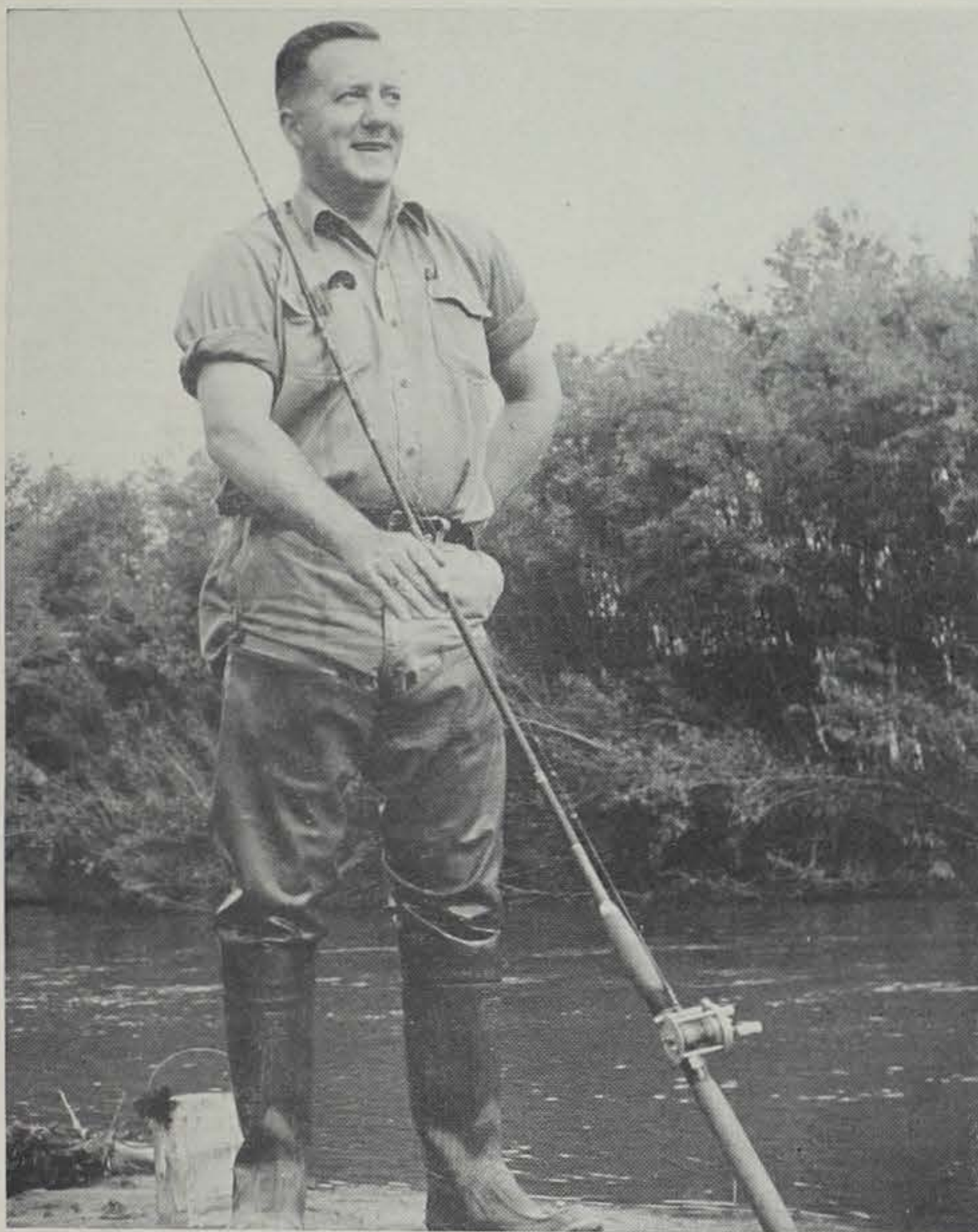
Simple Equipment

Lloyd Kiefer, Conservation Officer Supervisor for eastern Iowa, and a drift-fishing addict, likes the glass variety. He uses a 9-foot hollow glass rod with a "steelhead" action—an outfit designed for giant trout. It's a half-inch in diameter and has a 15-inch cork grip. Lloyd swears by the rod, pointing out that it is long enough to pick up slack line for a strike, stiff enough to drive home the hook, and sensitive. That's important. A river rod must be strong without being a club. It must have backbone but enough "life" to feel a nibbling catfish through 300 yards of river.

The long-two-handed grip balances the heavy rod section and provides powerful leverage. Kiefer rests his forearm under this grip to support it easily, using his forearm in the strike. His entire forearm and not just his wrist is sometimes used to haul back the rod on a long-range strike.

Smooth guides and a smooth-running reel are essential on a river rod. Line must feed freely and smoothly from the reel as it is drawn off by the tug of the current. Some river fishermen use star-drag reels that have an adjustable drag and enormous line capacity. But just as many use conventional casting reels without

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Some modern river rods are glass; long, two-handed outfits with plenty of backbone. Originally designed for steelhead fishing, they are tailor-made for big Iowa catfish.

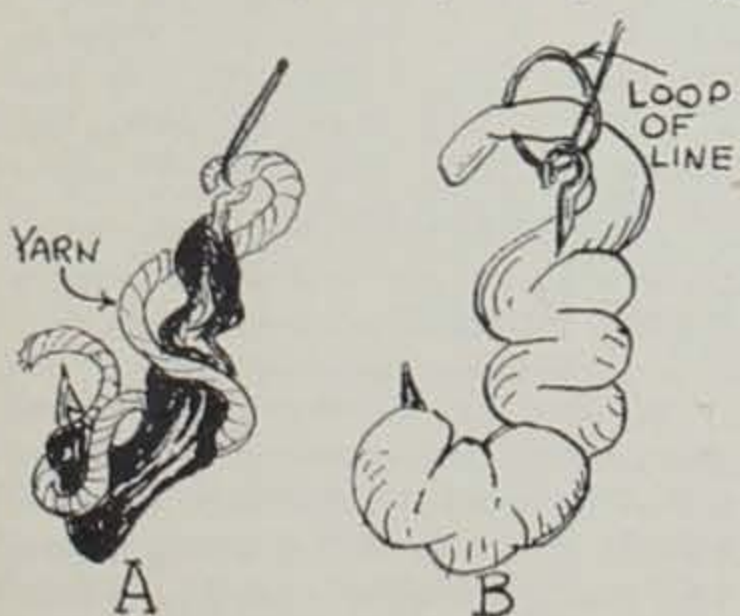
Fishing Fundamentals . . .

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arbors, and such a spool can take several hundred yards of 12-pound nylon. Heavier line is not often used. A 40-pound line limits reel capacity and the larger diameter increase drag through the water, making it harder to strike swiftly.

Most drift fishermen don't put much money into a reel. They seldom cast bait and a fine reel just isn't necessary. River fishing can be hard on a reel; the vast yardage of line picks up considerable grit and sand that finds its way into bearings and gears.

In spite of new glass models, some anglers prefer to make their own river outfits. Select bamboo cane, straight, clean (and often expensive) is an old standby. Kiefer has a fine rod he made by taping a tonkin cane to a basement hot-water pipe for two years. It makes



Two methods of securing baits to hooks. A. Blood. B. Chicken guts.

a real rod if you can wait until 1957.

Guides are then wrapped and a good reel seat is attached on the rod. Whip about 15 inches of the butt section with chalk line and finish with spar varnish. At the butt end fasten a special rubber knob to protect yourself from sharp edges, for the rod butt is often tucked into your groin as you allow line to strip off.

Best Baits

There are just about as many catfish baits as there are catfishermen, but the favorites around here seem to be shrimp, crayfish, chicken guts, cheese baits, cut baits and blood.

Most of these may be drift-fished with or without bobbers. Without a bobber, the bait and a light sinker are allowed to bounce along the river bottom. The weight of the sinker is critical, and must be matched to the current. The slip sinker (or heavy spit shot) must be heavy enough to hold the bait down but not so heavy that it anchors it. It may weigh from one-eighth to one-half an ounce, depending on the river. Because it's getting banged around, a bottom-fished bait should be fairly durable; something like chicken guts, shrimp or cut bait. The hook takes a beating, too, so keep a hone handy and touch up the point now and then.

In such fishing the bait is allowed to drift down runs or

through riffles into the holes beyond. Catfish, lying just beyond the shelf in a hole in the river, wait for food to come floating in to them. Let the bait drift in under brush, log jams and through waters above and below riffles; as it rolls off into a hole or cut in the river bottom some dramatic things can happen.

Blood bait isn't durable and must be fished with care. A bobber is often used to keep it intact and off the bottom. The blood bait is allowed to drift slowly downstream, sort of wandering along like it's looking for a home. It usually finds one.

One method of blood-baiting is to mold the coagulated blood around the hook and attach a short length of soft yarn just above the eye of the hook. Loosely wrap this yarn around the hook's shank and bend and secure the yarn by nipping the point of the hook through the end of the yarn, tying on the blood. It's fast, simple and good. Single or treble hooks may be used, but many experts prefer single hooks.

Blood baits may also be drifted through riffles and into holes, and are considered by many to be the most effective of all catfish baits. As it drifts downstream the blood slowly dissolves, sending out taste signals far downriver. It's not too easy to use, though, since it attracts many small fish, dissolves so easily, and is messy. When drifting with a bobber, some fishermen like to fish long, straight holes of uniform depth. They set their bobbers to hold the bait a few inches off bottom and make single drifts that may take twenty minutes. A good bobber is a long one with the line attached at the end: a stick of light, brightly painted wood about 7 inches long, a half-inch in diameter, and tapered at both ends. When a fish takes his first taste of the bait the bobber stands erect. When he really takes hold the bob-

ber goes under, thus giving a double warning.

Other Methods

You might try a boat, especially in big water that you can't wade. Anchor the boat some distance above riffles, holes or other good catfish water and drift your bait in. If nothing happens in several drifts, pull anchor and move downstream. Another technique is to drift beside your bait—the boat and bobber drifting about 20 yards apart in a parallel course downriver.

A lot of drift-fishing is being done from bridges. Here an angler doesn't need to wade, can wear his Sunday suit, and can work the entire channel easily. There's no danger from wading and no problems of stream access. The angler has solid footing when he gets a strike and can run back across the bridge to really sock home the hook. Of course, he may be socked by a passing truck, but you can't kill a fisherman who's hung a good fish.

Work both edges of the channel and the middle of the channel from the bridge. Twitch the rod now and then to keep the sinker moving along. When you land a fish have him plenty tired before you try hoisting him up to the bridge—it won't take much of a kick to break that line.

Most drift fishermen prefer to work rivers from dawn to about 8 a.m. and then again from late afternoon until about an hour after dark. They say that a fine time to hit the river is during a "fresh-water raise"—that period when river levels are rising but the muddy water hasn't arrived. Catfish are always at their best during a river rise; it whets their appetites.

Above all, learn your rivers. We've heard commercial fishermen claim that fish have regular

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Try drifting baits into eddies and coves like this one. Deep pockets under logs and brushpiles shelter King Cat, hungry and waiting.



A thousand Okoboji walleyes were tagged this spring by biologists. Each tag is a chapter in an important story, and should be returned to the Conservation Commission.

WALLEYE TAGS: TICKETS TO BETTER FISHING

An angler finding an aluminum tag in the jaw of an Okoboji walleye might be briefly surprised by his find but not attach much importance to it.

To the biologist who put it there, that tag is a chapter in an important story—part of a long-range study to learn more about the habits of fish and just how many fish we have.

About a thousand adult walleyes were captured this spring with electric shockers by night-fishing scientists, jaw-tagged, and returned to East and West Okoboji.

Conservation Commission biologists are urging fishermen to carefully inspect their catches of walleyes to see if any of these tags turn up. A tag will be in the left side of the lower jaw of the fish and should be returned at once to either the Commission's Biology Building at Arnolds Park or to the State Conservation Commission in Des Moines.

By comparing the number of untagged fish that are caught during the season to the number of tagged fish taken, the biologists can make surprisingly accurate estimates of the total number of fish in a lake. It also enables them to estimate the percentage of fish harvest in the lake and the location where the fish was caught will give information on the movements and general habits of the fish.

Using tags, Commission biologists estimated the 1947 Spirit Lake walleye population at about 30,000 fish. Similar studies in the spring of 1954 indicated a Spirit Lake walleye population of over 50,000 fish. By comparing annual population estimates with fluctuations in lake levels, angling pressure, competing fish species and many other factors, we can learn

something of why fish flourish or fail, and manage them accordingly.

Canoeing . . .

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The character of the river changes below Larkin bridge. It leaves the flat prairies and enters the more rugged limestone rock country typical of the river below Kendallville. Its general course at this point changes from the east to the southeast.

One-half mile ($\frac{1}{4}$ hour) below Larkin bridge is Daly's Flats bridge. Another mile ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour) downstream from there is Bigalks bridge, sometimes known as Phil De Greve's bridge. About $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles ($1\frac{1}{4}$ hours) beyond is Clark's bridge, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles (1 hour) below that is the take out place, in a timber pasture on the right bank above the Kendallville bridge.

Whether you take the stretch of river just outlined or go on south of Kendallville, you'll find the Upper Iowa is one of our scenic highlights. It is a must for the canoeist.

Waterbugs . . .

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water. They are not as predacious as their relatives, scooping up most of their food from the bottom ooze with their spoonlike mouthparts.

Down Mexico way these water boatmen are "farmed". It seems they prefer to lay their eggs on a certain type of water grass. The Mexican *indios* tie this grass together in large bundles and float it on the surface of a pond until it is covered with eggs. The bundles of grass are taken out of the water and beaten over cloths until the eggs loosen and fall away. The eggs are then cleaned and powdered into flour.

They say it's nourishing. Anyone for bug-egg flapjacks?



Men are surrounded by beauty that they seldom see. This fruiting dandelion is a hated pest, but who can say it isn't beautiful?

Fishing Fundamentals . . .

(Continued from page 143)

"streets, sidewalks and soup lines," and if a man finds these, he's got it made. Study the currents and eddies. Fish foods drift through certain "food channels" in certain ways, and it's here that big catfish are waiting to ambush their rations. Whether you fish from bank or channel, with long line or short, allow bait to drift down naturally into catfish country, rather than just chunking it down on the fishes' backs.

The various ways of drift-fishing rivers are, in our sincere opinion, the most deadly ways to take catfish. But a problem is arising as fishermen get more ambitious. Last month we saw a bridge fisherman with 500 yards of line out!

One of these days some angler standing in an Iowa river may face extradition charges—arrested for fishing without a license in southern Missouri.

A 60-pound catfish pulled from the Missouri River by Leighton McCrary at Bartlett Monday met the same fate as an ordinary fish. McCrary brought the outsize fish to Glenwood Tuesday where it was butchered and cut into steaks to be put into the frying pan by various purchasers.—Glenwood Opinion.

For "bustible" rifle and pistol targets, cut a seasoned wooden post about three inches in diameter into slices a half-inch thick. These may be painted to increase visibility. When a bullet strikes the end grain of such seasoned wooden discs they will shatter like glass.

A weed is said to be any plant that is out of place.

If wild orchids grew rampant over front lawns and city parks we would probably douse them with 2-4-D, cuss them soundly and call them weeds.

If corsage dandelions were sold in florists' shops for a dollar a piece they would be prized, praised and purchased. But they are everywhere this time of year, and familiarity breeds contempt.

An immigrant from Europe, the dandelion is viewed with despair by most home-owners and gardeners, but many naturalists list it as one of our showiest flowers. The bright gold of the dandelion, a type seldom sought or valued by man, drove James Russell Lowell to write:

*"Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye."*

The golden heads of our most common flower are turning platinum blonde—a mass of tiny silver parachutes that children will blow out like birthday candles and from which vireos will pluck lining for their nests.

Most of us probably do see beauty in the dandelions and welcome it as a sure sign of early summer, if nothing else. And if we hack, poison and dig up the flower it's not that we love the dandelion less, but that we love our blue grass more.

Farm Ponds . . .

(Continued from page 140)

ly if used in excessive amounts. The above information is taken from the most reliable sources known to us, but the Commission will not guarantee results nor be held responsible for the treatment in any way.