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CONSERVATIONIST

Page 20 November, 1961 Number 11

PHEASANT HUNTING AFTER OPENING WEEKEND

CONSERVE GAME AND BE HUMANE

One of the responsibilities of a hunter is to make sure your game is protected for the protection of the animal and for the sake of the animal. Any hunter can expect to be confronted with the necessity of dealing with crippled game he has brought down, and this is a job that must be done as quickly and as painless as possible. No matter how hard a hunter tries he cannot always make a clean, one-shot kill, and he must know how to kill a crippled animal effectively.

A hunter who is a good sportsman will agree that animals should be killed in a humane manner; therefore, a quick death is necessary. The killing of crippled game does put hunters under strain, especially when they are used to it. Most of us who practice unnecessary cruelty upon already injured creature simply don't know anatomy.

None likes to see crippled animals but we realize we must harvest our crop of wildlife, just as a farmer must harvest his crop of corn. With this harvest we should expect a loss of animals through injury, just as the farmer expects to lose a certain amount of corn from his truck while going to market.

One type of cripple is the animal which is escaping and which you get your hands on. This requires very little discussion about all that can be done is to hold the animal until it is found dead. It is always best to hold the same animal until it is dead. If it doesn't fall, then a hunter's job is in order. It is best to hold the animal get stiff before killing it.

Other types of crippled game are those which are down and helpless, which must be killed. Those to be considered are the cripples which are harmless and which can be handled without the loss of a finger. The game which falls into this category are birds and rabbits. This is where women weep and men turn pale. The broken



Jack Kirstein Photo.

Wonder where all those pheasants went? They're right here in plain sight watching you as you go crashing through the field at high speed. You won't tire as soon, and you'll have better hunting, too, if you slow down and literally kick them out.

shotguns pile up and hunters use unmentionable language. Only by adopting an orderly approach can we eliminate the brutality and mess and retain hunting as a sport to look forward to.

Suppose, for example, that you have just knocked a quail out of the air and it now lies in a weed patch unable to fly, but still very much alive. Reach down slowly and pick up the quail, being careful not to let it struggle or flop. Any quick or hasty movements are apt to frighten them into making a final effort to escape; and sometimes with success. You will probably be surprised to learn that most birds, when in a helpless condition, usually offer little or no resistance when picked up.

With the bird in one hand, place the thumb of the other hand on the back of the bird's head and place the index finger under the head. Now, exert a downward force on the base of the skull and you will see that this instantly breaks the bird's slender neck. This method is widely used by poultry men to kill chickens. The simple part about it is that the bird never flops but instantly goes limp.

You will find that the neck of all upland game birds, including doves, quail, pheasants and grouse, will break with such ease that you can feel the joint part with a small pressure exerted in this way. Some hunters insist upon placing their foot upon the neck and pulling off the head, but this is not a pretty sight to see and the beauty of the game is spoiled. This method of internally severing the neck bones is neither ugly or messy. All the necessary equipment is at hand and you need not look for clubs or sticks. Birds killed by this method will stay dead. It is also a good idea to form the habit of breaking the necks of supposedly dead birds.

Although the necks of ducks, geese and other waterfowl are much tougher, they may also be broken by a man with strong hands, or they may be struck on the back of the head with a small stick.

Rabbits may be killed by a blow commonly called the "rabbit punch." This method is employed to kill domestic rabbits. A rabbit may be killed by holding it up by the hind legs and using a stick or the cutting side of your palm to

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Dick Nomsen
Pheasant Biologist

One of the most popular topics for discussion each fall concerns the whereabouts of the Chinese ringneck pheasant. This is especially true after the first week of hunting the gaudy game bird. Mention this subject in any group and you will hear the oft-repeated remark, "the roosters are all shot!" It would be much closer to the truth to say "the roosters are half shot." And then to complete the statement by adding, "and I can't find the other half."

True, there aren't as many ring-necks after the opening weekend. Iowa's 250,000 pheasant hunters make sure of that during the first few days of shooting. And it is also true that the remaining roosters will be tougher to bag than those taken early in the season. But never in the history of pheasant hunting in Iowa have hunters shot too many roosters. Actually, we harvest too few. Normally, at season's end, we find that hunters have shot less than two-thirds of the cocks. In much of our primary pheasant range in northern and western Iowa, only 50-55 per cent of the birds are harvested. To make full use of this valuable resource, the harvest should be 75-80 per cent. There would still be plenty of roosters around next spring to take care of their primary function—reproduction.

But it's not a simple matter to harvest the extra roosters. As the season progresses, the crafty ring-necks are harder and harder to find. During recent years, the hours per hunting day were increased nearly 45 per cent but the kill percentage remained about the same. This year, hunting opportunity has again been increased to permit hunters more time in the field to pursue the wily ringneck.

I mentioned this article to one of our more famous shotgun artists and was promptly informed that I had better stick to the facts about where and how to hunt—and not to mention how to shoot. He has seen me in action! In other words, it doesn't do much good to find them if you can't hit them.

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE.....49,500

ARE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS BOTHERING YOU?

Of all the beasts that roam the woods and farms of Iowa, not more than one or two are really offensive and very few cause any real damage. Because of his defensive mechanism, the skunk for instance, might be blamed for depredation in the hen house. The farmer comes out in the morning, sniffs the air, detects "skunk," then goes on to find his chickens have suffered another raid and he immediately blames Mr. S.

This is not necessarily so. True, the skunk left his calling card, but in reality, he just happened to be around when some other creature craved a chicken dinner, and, in all probability, Mr. S. merely defended himself against a supposed intrusion of his privacy.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has prepared a guide that may prove helpful in recognizing which predator has been enjoying himself at your expense.

- "1. Birds killed every night, one or two birds at a time with their heads and necks missing, the predator is an owl.
- "2. When several birds are killed every night and partly buried, the predator is a fox.
- "3. When several birds are killed every fourth or fifth night and found with their crops partly eaten, and possibly their heads missing, in all probability a raccoon has been about the premises.
- "4. When many birds are killed occasionally and found with small bites about the head and neck it can be caused by minks or weasels.
- "5. When many birds are on occasion found badly mauled, start looking for a dog that is getting onto the range or into the pens.

"We might add to the above that when birds are found missing without any sign left behind, the predator is in all probability a man.

COMMISSION MINUTES

The Commission accepted with regret the resignations of Bob Cleary, Biologist, and Roger Fliger, Public Relations Officer.

Approval was given for a new roof for the Fairground Exhibit Building.

Travel was approved for one person to Angola, Indiana to attend a Federal Aid Co-ordinator's meeting, November 7-10, 1961.

Travel was also approved for the Fisheries Section to Salome Springs State Park near Quincy, Illinois for the purpose of picking up red-eared sunfish brood stock.

Travel was approved for five Game Section personnel to Swan Lake, Missouri to observe controlled shooting in that area.

Departmental purchasing policies were discussed and reaffirmed.

County Conservation Activities

A management agreement with the Carroll County Conservation Board for the fishing access area near Lanesborough was approved.

Land acquisition was approved for Bremer County, one acre in Tripoli to be used for an office and service building site, acquired on a lease for twenty-five years.

Polk County received approval for acquisition of 24.25 acres of woodland near Mitchellville at a cost of \$200 per acre to be used as a forest preserve. Polk County also received approval for purchase of 80 acres at \$210 per acre as a third section of the Chichaqua Game Preserve in northeast Polk County.

Development plans were approved for Black Hawk County, Lee Roadside Park, north of Cedar Falls; Hobbs Access Area in Carroll County, Alton Roadside Park in Sioux County; Briggs Woods Park in Hamilton County, and Crystal Lake Roadside Park in Hancock County.

Fish and Game

Options were approved for purchase of three units of land in the Otter Creek Marsh Project in Tama County including 70 acres at \$81 per acre, 73 acres at \$113 per acre and 129 acres at \$130 per acre.

Two land trades were approved for the Elk Creek Marsh Project in Worth County to adjust the property lines on that project.

An option for the purchase of three acres at \$200 per acre in the Bays Branch Area was approved.

The Commission voted to request the Attorney General to institute condemnation proceedings on a strip of shore line on the north shore of Clear Lake located near McIntosh Woods.

Departmental rules on duck hunting regulations on Lake Odessa were clarified.

Approval was given for a construction permit for an electric high-line to cross the Eldon Game Area in Davis County.

A construction permit was approved for highway relocation ad-

PRICE AND VALUE

Oscar Wilde is not generally regarded as a deep thinker but some of his apparently flippant epigrams contain more bitter truth than whole chapters by pundits who would shape our thinking. Take Wilde's description of people "who know the price of everything and the value of nothing." He was referring to certain drawing room types but he applies these few words to ourselves and our natural resources.

We have men who can walk through a wood and give you a good estimate of the stumpage and how many dollars cutting off the timber would bring. And they might be able to tell pretty accurately how many bushels of grain could be produced by draining a marshy area. But if you asked these men to put a value on the waterholding value that would be destroyed; the value of the birds, animals and insects whose habitat would be destroyed; the pleasure gained by persons hunting, fishing, picnicking, or just walking through the woods they are stumped, for they would not consider them.

We have others who can look at a stream or river and the land through which it flows and tell just where a dam could be put cheaply to produce the maximum power, and probably the approximate cost per kilowatt hour. But they wouldn't consider the value of the game flooded from the swamps, and the value of the fish whose stream spawning movements would be blocked.

We have others who could estimate to within a few dollars the cost of ploughing up a fence row, and the increased yield from the additional land put into cultivation. But they couldn't put a value on the covey of quail and the songbirds and rabbits who had lost a home.

The man who owns the land can do with it as he will but too many of us think of dollars as the only worthwhile product of the land, and more and more places of beauty to man and of shelter to wildlife are lost by the wind griever—to produce surplus crops we don't need and dollars we can't keep.—*South Carolina Wildlife.*

joining the Big Sioux River Access Area in Plymouth County.

Authorization was given to hold a Conservation Officer's examination in December, with age limits of 22 to 38 years inclusive and a high school education to be required.

The Commission met with Bob Bustlemeier of the St. Paul District of the Army Engineers.

The Commission also met with Charles Hartman of the Commercial Fisheries Association.

Approval was given for negotiating a contract for Garlock Slough pumping system on West Okoboji Lake.

Forestry

Ames Nursery stock prices for 1962 were approved at the same rates as last year. Evergreen \$22 per thousand, shrubs \$16 per thousand, multiflora rose \$20 per thousand.

Parks

Approval was given for a new name "Bob White" for the state park formerly called Allerton Reservoir in Wayne County.

Approval was given for an option on 22.5 acres at \$266 per acre for an access in the Snyder Bend Lake Area in Woodbury County.

Approval was given for the transfer of 824 feet of Storm Lake shore line at the south end of Storm Lake Park to the city of Lake Side, subject to the approval of the Attorney's General's Office.

The Engineering Section was instructed to advertise for new bids for the completion of the Pali-sades-Kepler Dam.

Waters

The Commission approved an increase from 7½ cents to 10 cents per ton for sand and gravel royalties for the calendar year 1962.

Approval was given to a construction permit for the purpose of cleaning shore line on Clear Lake.

THE NEED FOR HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATION

Apparently, there is a great need for hunter safety education, especially when you look at the Hunter Casualty Report for June, July, August, and September, the shooters causing the 25 casualties for this period, 73 per cent were under 20 years of age.

Fortunately there was only one casualty for these four months. However, the causes for these accidents were the usual—careless handling, "horse play," a loaded gun in storage, a defective gun crossing a fence, being hit by a stray bullet, etc.

The number of casualties according to kind of weapon were: rifle, 14; hand gun, 8; shotgun, and gas gun, 1. June, July, and August had 5-6-2 casualties respectively, with September and the opening of the squirrel season chalking up 12.

Casualties according to game hunted shows squirrel hunting leading with 12, followed by target shooting or careless handling, rats, 3; pigeons, 1; and cats (?), 1.

Now with our major hunting seasons starting or underway, it appears that there is as great a need as ever for careful handling of fire-arms. There is plenty of Iowa game without including Iowa hunters.

Fall is the time for hunting at outdoor picnics including food prepared over the campfires charcoal burner. An overnight camping trip should list high on the things to do this fall.

While all this is going on some of the best fishing of the year will be waiting for those who can take the time to enjoy it.—*Russ G. Ham, Cedar Rapids Gazette.*



Jack Kirstein Photo.

damaged even to his bow, this hunter is out to get his deer. To many Iowans it's a chance to relive the early days of this country and an opportunity to pit their skill in tracking and hunting against their quarry's skill in evading them.

BOW HUNTER—MAN OF MANY FACETS

Harlan Frankl
Conservation Officer
Clayton County

To only one who truly knows a bow hunter is another. To his wife that unpredictable someone who loves. She tolerates his bow hunting because somehow it seems safer. To his friends who hunt, he is some kind of a "square". To his dog he is his loved master who leaves him to await the day when he will come with a gun instead of bow. To the conservation officer he is a true friend of nature who respects her as well as his. To the farmer whose land he hunts, he is a gentleman, considerate and cooperative. To his children he's their best dad, best hunter, best bow and arrow shot in the world. And if he doesn't catch a deer today he'll catch one tomorrow.

A bow hunter is an imitator of nature; forest green with moss, a net over head and face in fall. Brown, red, dead grass when pounds heavier with in snow when Jack Frost has covered him and the forest he loved. White and brown like a tree covered with snow in the season.

He is a walking sporting goods store with bow and quiver prominently displayed. In hundreds of pockets in his clothing there are carborundum stone, extra heads, compass, bow strings, matches, lighter, handkerchief, cigarettes, lighter, handkerchief, matches, flashlight, axe, Kleenex, deer call, sand-

wiches, candy, pliers, chewing gum, thermos of coffee, snakebite kit, hunting license, deer tag, rope, camera, binoculars, whistle, gloves, peanuts, insect repellent and an apple. In a deeper recess, his heart, lies the hope that the next minute, hour, or day will bring a deer down the trail within bow range.

The bow hunter is full of deer lore, but has an insatiable desire to know more. He knows the wind is a tattle-tale, carrying his scent to all corners. He knows its voice in the trees and smiles when the creaking branches and drifting, rustling leaves are finally recognized as such and trembling fingers relax to wait for the real thing. He has watched the coon returning from his nightly rounds and the fox bounding away from a strange scent. He knows the twilight voice of the owl, the reveille call of crows, the chattering squirrel, hollow Morse code of the woodpecker. He knows the splash of the muskrat in the nearby waters and laughs at the spank of the beaver's tail warning him away from his domain. He has heard the whistling above the tree tops announcing a flight of mallards arrowing into view and just above them he has seen the graceful hawk and waits to hear his unmistakable mistake. He has watched the possum lying on his back, "playing possum" in the middle of the deer trail. He has silently cursed the nosey, noisy blue jay that spotted him. He has also praised the same jay when he announced a deer coming down the trail.

He has learned to be so still and quiet that he has had to brush the chickadees and gnat catchers from

CONSERVE GAME—

(Continued from page 177)

hit the back of its skull. This is both quick and easy. Be sure always to strike the animal exactly on the back of the head and not on the side of the head. You can feel a rabbit's or a bird's heartbeat by pressing in on the ribs with your fingers just behind the shoulders to make sure the job is done.

Fish also fall into the class of helpless game when they are caught. Fish, like other game, deserve to be humanely killed and not left just to "dry out." Fish should be killed immediately upon being taken. By carrying a stick with him, the fisherman need only give each fish as it is caught one sound smack over the back of the head.

Finally we come to the cripples you can get your hands on but don't want to. Included in this group are hoofed animals, wildcats, bears, squirrels and trapped fur bearers—in short any animal that you don't want to grab bare handed.

Often you will walk upon helpless big game animals that are down, and then comes the question—how are you going to kill them? If you should have a .22 pistol or other side arm on your belt, the best mark to aim for is the brain. You can mentally draw a line from the right ear to the left eye and one from the left ear to the right eye, and where the lines cross is the place to put the bullet for an instant kill.

However, most hunters won't be carrying a light pistol. If you use a brain shot with your big rifle, you will ruin a trophy head; therefore, the best killing shot to use with your regular big game rifle is the shot that breaks the neck right behind the skull. This shot spoils no meat and is very neat. It is a safe rule to kill big game as quickly as possible.

There are hunters who try to cut the throat of a crippled big game animal. These hunters will often

hit his shoulder. No one anticipates the hunt more. No one rises earlier, hunts later, has more memories of big bucks missed, or has fonder hopes for the future. No one has more factual and unexaggerated information on the amount and movement of game in his area. No one is more unselfish than he in dispensing the information to other hunters.

But best of all, in the unhurried fashion of the bow hunter, a way has been found to relax completely in this world of hurry-ups, atoms, space shots and turmoil. Unlike the tensely strung bow he carries, the bow hunter is as relaxed as his unstrung bow at the end of the hunt. And when the final deer report card is filed there will surely be a special place for him, the man who cares not so much if he wins his game, but how he hunts it.

get an unpleasant surprise. Any big game animal, when attacked with a knife, is capable of putting a hunter in the hospital. This is an extremely dangerous situation and therefore should not be practiced.

Now let us put out of misery those untouchable animals either in or out of a trap, that can bite off a finger. If you have a .22 rifle or pistol, an extra shot between the eyes will do the trick. But if you have a shotgun or don't want to shoot again because you don't want to ruin the pelt, a small club may be used.

For instance, for the fox, weasel, mink, skunk or badger, you need only select a stick the size of a broom handle about two feet long.

There is little sense in beating an animal on the rump, shoulders or back for you will only torture and bruise it. Most animals are quite good at dodging a club; therefore, it is a must to attract the animal's attention toward something else in order to deliver a sharp blow squarely on the base of the skull. The simplest way to do this is to take a piece of brush or other material in one hand and hold it in front for the animal to snap at. Then you will be able to reach around in back of him with the other hand and deliver the killing blow before he knows what is happening. This also works well on bobcats and coyotes. It is an approved method for trapped animals.

It is not intended for the reader to think that the above methods are the only recommended procedures in existence. Perhaps you have a method which works equally as well.

The killing of cripples is the most disagreeable part of hunting, but it is something that goes along with hunting so it must be learned. It is advisable for anyone who proposes to be a hunter to face at the start the fact that he must learn how to kill the cripples. We all try our best not to cripple animals, but sometimes it cannot be helped.

—Colorado Outdoors.

GOALS OF CONSERVATION

I would suggest that if the people who have earned a right to call themselves conservationists were to pool their ideas, an idealistic goal might be reached. After we had explained the need for more fish and game to take, and further explained that we didn't care whether we took anything despite the requests for more things to take, then we might agree. All of us would phrase it differently, and none as well as Aldo Leopold has already said it, but it might come out like this:

"Our goal is for men to learn respect for this earth; to learn with humility a pattern of existence that needs most clearly to be seen by those most likely to unravel the pattern."—Dan Saults in *Missouri Conservationist*.

RETRIEVERS GET LIMITS

Gene Hlavka

Area Game Manager

It all started the day I landed you know where in a muddy corn field. My gun flew in one direction, I sprawled out in another, and the crippled cock got away. I had run just as fast as I could. My eyeballs were ready to pop. Panting, sitting in the mud, I surmised "There must be a better way. That gun could have fired!" (The safety on many guns just keeps the trigger from being squeezed.) Besides, the cripple had escaped.

It was then and there I decided to get something with four legs to do my running. My first dog was a yellow Labrador presented to me by a friend and she turned out to be a dandy. "What about me?" you ask. "A lab might be just the ticket for you, but I probably go after different game."

In the dog world, as in any other, there are specialists. The pointer or English setter is tops for quail. And what is better than beagling after rabbits? For the duck hunter, Labs rank high. In my own case, my Labs are used on ducks, pheasants, and quail. I growl at them if they give rabbits even so much as a passing glance. It's true that with Labradors, the quail are flushed without a point, but I know some who prefer it this way. A pointer, on the other hand, isn't worth much in a duck marsh. Who knows? Perhaps I'm exceedingly lucky to have a "pointer" and a retriever all wrapped up under one glossy black hide.

Both of my Labs are females for a purpose; I think they tend to their business a little better. When I'm hunting, I don't want a dog to be eyeing the girls. There's another side to the story because these "girls" have minds of their own and resent being forced to do something that they don't favor. I guess it's really all in what you like—a good dog is a good dog.

Before You Buy

When you are buying a dog, remember that you get what you pay for. A good dog is just as easy to love and they don't eat any more than a "bargain." Ask questions about the parents: "Who shot over them?" "What did they think of them?" "What are some of the good points?" And don't forget to find out, if you can, what may be hereditary faults.

The Dog at Home

It is much better to have a home prepared for the new puppy BEFORE it becomes a member of the family. Home in my own instance is a kennel with a concrete floor, wire all around and on top and a well insulated dog house. Both sunlight and shade at the same time are highly desirable. I feed them with dry food plus some table scraps including raw vegetables and fruit. Pork cracklings may be mixed in during cold

weather or whenever the dogs are working hard. And most important—provide fresh water daily.

When to Train

With a brand new puppy the first thing to do is wait. Hold yourself in check until the pup is about a year old. Let the children play with it, but insist on no commands. Orders should not come before the ability to understand.

Training begins easily when "No!" and "Stop that noise" or "Quiet" are learned. Obedience to orders for action come next, such as "Sit," "Come," "Kennel," "Heel" and "Down." Use a whistle if you like, but it's probably best to limit the meaning to one thing, "Come." Advancing to what is more than likely the dog's favorite fun, single retrieves are first tried on bare ground and later on the water. Use a training dummy and the dog's name as the cue to retrieve. With these important points well in hand, you may want to go on to double marked retrieves, blind retrieves, hand signals and other difficult feats. This stuff, though, is equivalent to a college course for a dog and should only be attempted when the preliminaries are mastered. Start from the bottom and do it right! If you are really serious about this business, check at your local library for James L. Free's *Training Your Retriever*, published by Coward-McCann, New York.

What Not to Do

There are a few things to avoid such as: steadiness too soon, hard mouth, gun shyness, and dislike of water. To eliminate each one, keep your dog eager and enthused. Switch from a training dummy to freshly killed pigeons. Farmers plagued by pigeons would be happy for you to take them at night so



Paddling back with a mallard in his mouth, this Chesapeake exemplifies the added sport a duck hunter expects when he takes a fine retriever with him on his hunt.



Good bird dogs save wear and tear on legs and bring back cripples that would be lost. This English Pointer jumped the fence to make his retrieve, but when he returned he found that he couldn't negotiate the fence and bird at the same time.

you could shoot them over the dog the next day. Associate gun fire with eating or retrieving, both of which are fun for the dog. And play with your dog in the water, slip on a swimming suit yourself and show her you're not too good to get wet.

With such training accomplished, your once playful puppy is now a valuable piece of property. It's your responsibility to keep her that way. In good shape, her use as a hunting tool will be equal to that of your gun and without her in the field with you, you'll feel as helpless as if you came without a gun.

For the purposes of conservation dogs are rated A-1. Our annual crippling losses are too high a cause, as a hunter, you know what a job it is to run down a wing-s-pheasant. Every bird retrieve is like another one produced. Conservation means wise use—waste. So get a retriever and w into a new world of hunting pleasure.

LEAVE WILDLIFE BABIES ALONE!

Many state wildlife agencies and the National Wildlife Federation are appealing for people to leave wildlife babies alone. Young of the year, appearing in the spring and early summer, are frequently thought to be "lost" and kind-hearted people attempt to help them. Except in unusual circumstances, mothers of the supposed lost young are nearby and will charge again once the people leave. Young wildlife are difficult to handle for and some, when grown, are dangerous. Care in a home often renders creatures unable to resume a life in the wild.

The voice of the male golden-winged teal is a short, sharp whistle or similar trilled note; the voice of the female is a weak quack.

Surprisingly enough, the Ruddy duck lays the largest egg of all wild ducks.

Just before molting, ducks and geese fly to bodies of water where they will be safe from land mammals. The reason is because they molt their primary feathers once, and for a short period, they cannot fly.

PLUCK THAT DUCK WITH PARAFFIN

Denny Rehder
Managing Editor

putting it back into the boiling water and straining out the feathers from the previous duck.

This method works very well for ducks, but is not recommended for geese—they're too big and they take too much paraffin. If you want to try it for geese, then you'll have better luck if you strip off all the body feathers.

Young snow and blue geese have to be skinned, though, since their skin is so tender that you'll pluck it right with the feathers.

Of course, if you want to save the feathers, this paraffin method can't be used. If you don't need the feathers, though, give it a try—you won't mind the thought of cleaning those birds you hope to bag this season.



Jack Kirstein Photo.
Feathers husk right off when you let the paraffin method help you pluck that duck.

If you're planning on bagging ducks this fall and you've telling everybody so, chances are a little woman is getting a "howly" about the thought of cleaning job ahead. She's thinking of last season when there were feathers floating all over the pond and everyone was commanded to help get the ducks ready for the freezer.

Put a switch on her this year and offer to do the whole job yourself. Don't worry, I'm on your side—just follow this quick and easy method:

Get a bucket big enough to immerse a duck in it and fill it with hot water. Throw in a block of paraffin which will melt and float on top of the water.

Then take your duck and chop off the head; then the wings at the joint (this eliminates those small bones which have little value anyway). Pull out the tail feathers and ruffle or strip off a handful along the body to get them up so the paraffin will adhere to the skin.

Grab the duck by the foot and dip it into the paraffin a couple of times. Then put it under a cold tap or into a bucket of cold water until the paraffin sets and comes hard. If you husk the duck as you'd husk an ear of corn, the paraffin, feathers and all, will come off right down to the skin.

Dress the duck, just cut off the feet and split the back with a pair of game shears. Pull out the gills, clip off the tail section and the oil gland, and your duck is ready for eating or freezing.

You can re-use the paraffin by

ASPEN DAYS

Populus tremuloides, the Quaking Aspen, is perhaps the most universal tree of North America. It shimmers in a wide band across the northern United States from Atlantic to Pacific.

Mountain men a century ago sought out the Aspen less for beauty than for profit. In the early 19th century, a European or eastern American gentleman was nothing without a beaver hat. And the Aspen is sure beaver sign. The inner bark is his favorite food, and the trunk and branches are often used in the beaver's underwater engineering. Often after a year of beaver trapping, the mountain men would gather in a convenient Aspen grove with their pelts to await the supply train from St. Louis. Early journals of western exploration are full of the praises of the Aspen's beauty.

And this beauty is not alone in the gold of the autumn leaf. Many find the pale green of spring and summer equally lovely. The clear unfiltered sunlight of the mountains brings the leaves to shiny life in any of the three seasons. The smooth white trunks, often black calloused at the base, add to the delicate grace of the tree.

Then there is the unique trembling or quaking of the leaves in even the most gentle breezes—an eye-dazzling accomplishment which no other tree, however brilliant of hue, can match. There was a superstition among the *coureurs du bois* that the Aspen had furnished the wood for The Cross, and had trembled from that moment hence. A more scientific explanation is that Aspen leaves are hinged upon leafstalks longer than the blade and flattened perpendicular to the plane of the blade. As a result the leafstalk acts as a pivot and each breath of breeze sets up a lively whisper, which some claim they can identify as Aspen talk



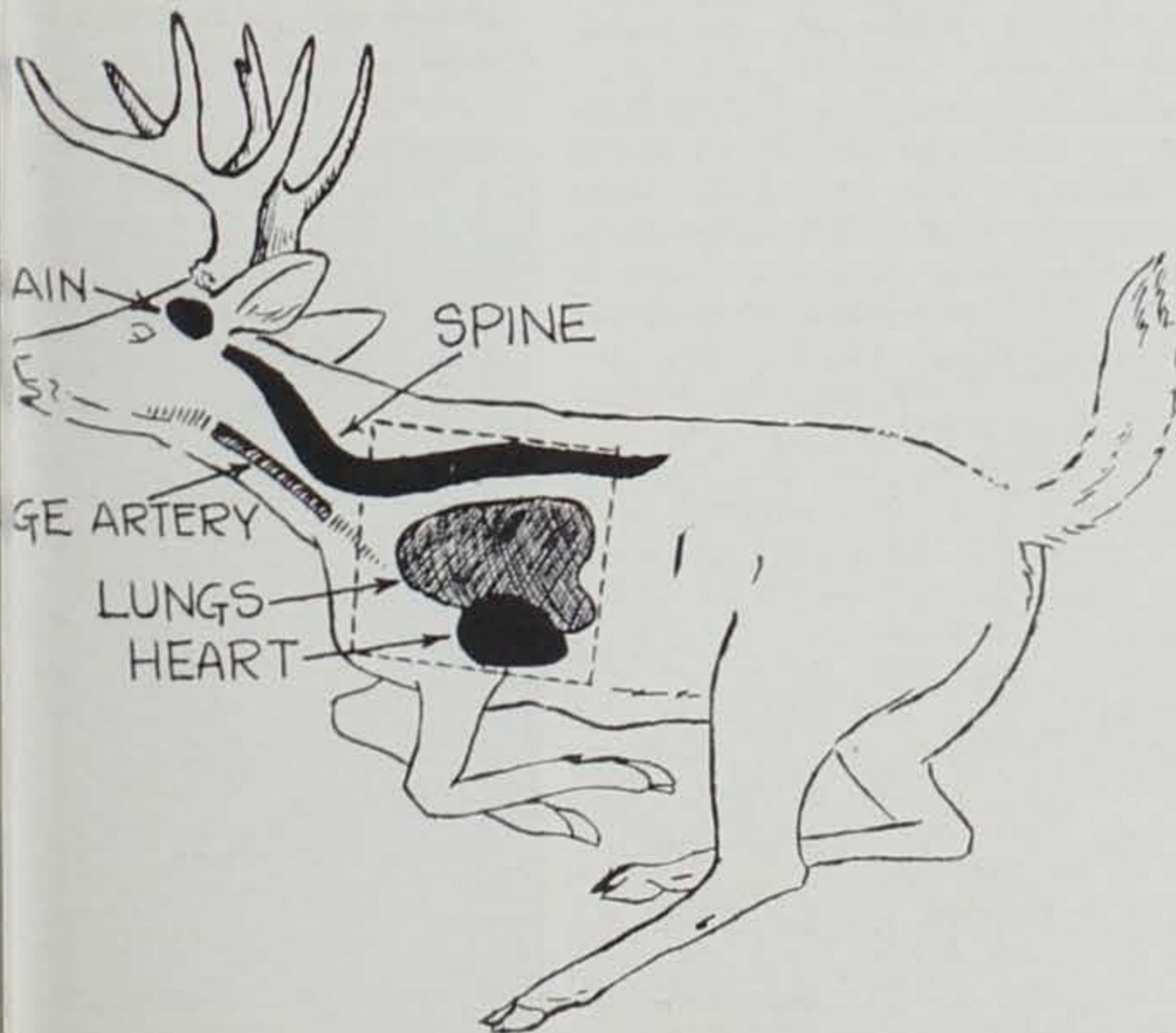
Jack Kirstein Photo.
Quaking Aspen

with their eyes closed. On bright days each leaf becomes a tiny round mirror to flash green or gold tinted sunlight in your eyes.

Scorned as unworkable by early lumbermen, the Aspen has won modest respect as a nurse tree to recover in burned out or cutover areas and rises quickly to maturity, providing necessary shade for more delicate, more valuable wood trees. Its heavy foliage and widespread, thirsty roots afford excellent watershed protection. Aspen wood has lately proved useful for such products as excelsior, matchsticks, veneers, boxing material, and, combined with other pulpwoods, book and magazine papers.

But in the main, a practical man might well dismiss the Aspen as short-lived, shallow-rooted and unworkable—a perpetual displaced person, driven from canyon to mountain as other species crowd in upon it. Yet those to whom beauty is important will forgive it these and a hundred other shortcomings for the few golden weeks before winter closes in on it.

SHOOT TO KILL



After Encyclopedia of Hunting.

vital areas of a deer. Most hunters try to shoot for the chest cavity, here enclosed by a dotted line, since most of the vital organs are located here.

BEST PLACE FOR DEER SHOT

Like any other hunter who goes into the field full of hope that he'll be successful, the deer hunter goes forth with the idea of bringing home a deer.

Mostly because of size and stamina, it takes a pretty good jolt in the right place to knock a deer down for keeps. Granted a

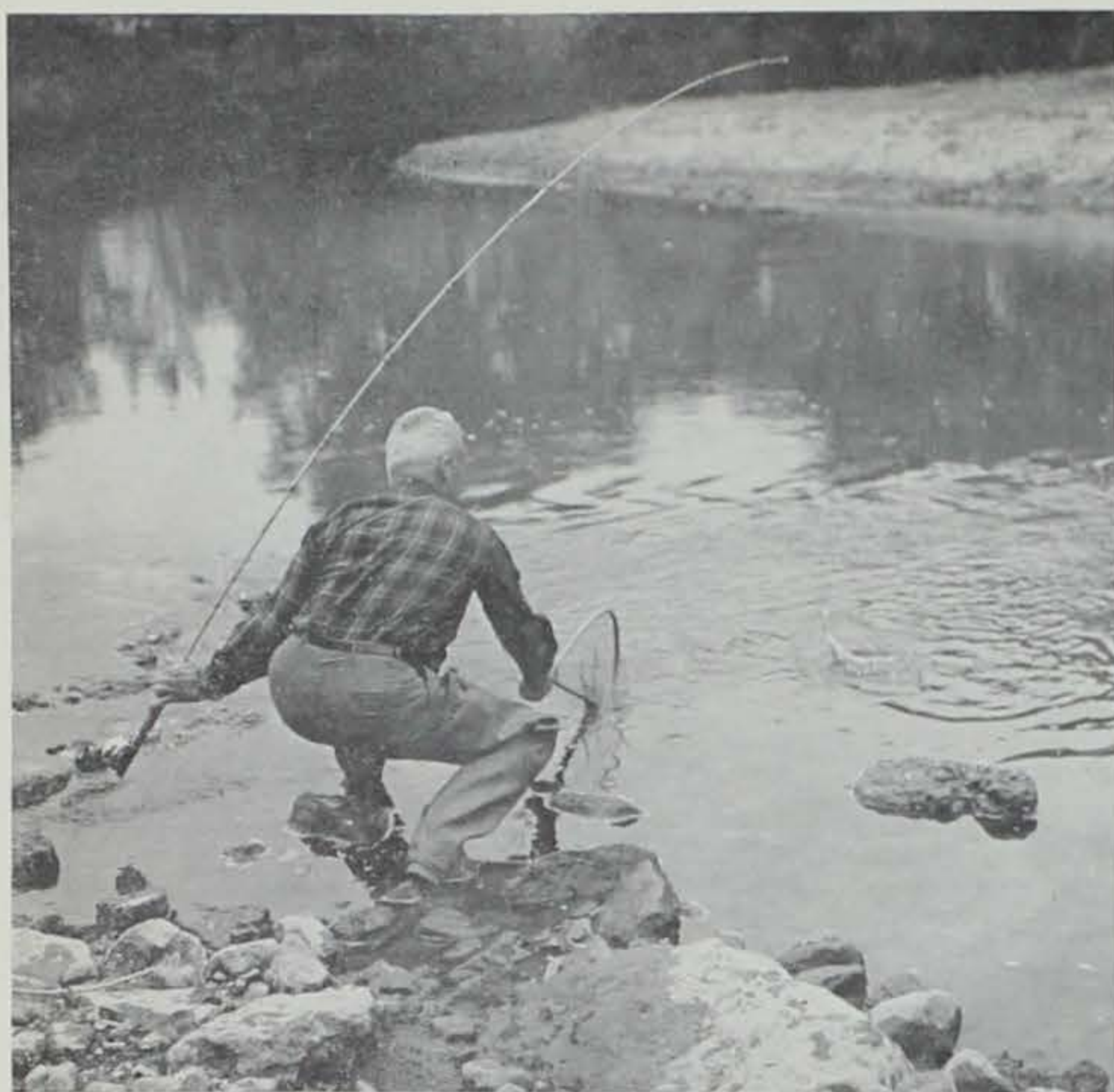
The vital killing area of a deer is the heart and lungs just above the front legs, and the spine, running nearly the full length of the deer, along the back from the forehead to beyond the flank. A shot placed in either of these areas will drop your animal almost immediately with little damage to meat. A heart or lung shot starts hemorrhaging that stops heart action. A hit anywhere along the spine will ordinarily paralyze all movement.

A shot any other place on the animal will not kill as effectively as these vital areas and may call for following a blood trail for some distance. Depending on where your

deer is hit, trailing may be a long process and almost always means bringing your deer out a greater distance to your dressing or transporting point.

When you trail, search carefully and don't assume that your animal has necessarily traveled a long distance. It is sometimes true; other times not. A mortally wounded deer will often crawl into the first thicket or brush and this may be only a few yards from the spot where you nailed him.

The accompanying drawing shows the vital killing areas of deer. Study the drawing and then try to place your shot in either of these two areas when that big buck glides near your stand opening day. Take time to make sure of your target and put your shot in the right spot. A little time here will add to your chances of bringing home a trophy and takes much of the guess work and "muscle" work out of deer hunting!



Jim Sherman Photo.

Good fall fishing can be found on many waters in the state. This November angler brings in a smallmouth on the Turkey River near Elkader. With fewer people fishing in the fall, chances are you can bring in that lunker everyone has missed.

NOVEMBER—ANGLERS MONTH

Denny Rehder
Managing Editor

You haven't hung up your rod and reel yet, have you? It's a good time of year for you to go fishing. The kids are in school, the water-skiers and pleasure boaters find the water a little cool for them and there you sit with Iowa's lakes and rivers just waiting to offer you a hungry walleye or bass.

There's some good fishing before the snow flies if you'll just take advantage of it. Those lunkers that have been in hiding all summer are out to feed up for the winter, and for the man on the scene, there can be some fine sport.

Take the walleyes—and chances are you will if you fish the wing dams on the Mississippi. Some inland rivers like the Des Moines, Cedar, Wapsi, Iowa, Shell Rock, Maquoketa, and the upper reaches of the Little Sioux provide good autumn walleye fishing. And don't forget Spirit Lake for late walleyes.

The bass fisherman will find smallmouth on such rivers as the Cedar, Wapsi, Shell Rock, Maquoketa, Yellow, Upper Iowa, and Turkey-Volga. Try some of the larger tributaries of these rivers like Buffalo Creek off the Wapsi above Anamosa.

If you're a trout man, then the

Upper Iowa River and Big Paint Creek might make a couple of good target areas for you. These are in addition to the regular trout waters of northeast Iowa. Remember, you don't need a trout stamp to fish unposted trout waters. Some good trout streams empty into the Upper Iowa which isn't posted and trout will be taken at this time of year.

Some other areas for good fall fishing include Iowa's Great Lakes for perch, especially West Okoboji and Spirit Lake's Anglers Bay. The Mississippi is a good place for crappies and bass, with some northern being taken above Dubuque. Fishermen in western Iowa might try the cut-off lakes of the Missouri for sauger pike, crappies, and bass. And there's always a good chance you'll pull a northern out of the Winnebago in November. Hit the farm ponds, artificial lakes, and city reservoirs for some good largemouth fishing this month.

Those should be enough for a starter. We aren't attempting to cover all the fish and streams for good November fishing, but the intrepid angler who goes in for such cool-weather sport just may end up with some fish stories to rival the ones he had to listen to all summer.

Fish use their tails as propellers, so do alligators, but on land the latter uses his heavily armored tail as a weapon.

The male damselfly is supplied with a coupling device on the end of his tail. With this he hooks onto the female and draws her through the water.

The gila monster stores food in his tail. The porcupine uses his like a hammer, driving sharp sharp quills into an enemy which dares attack.

Curving her tail over her back, the female opossum carries its young as if they were straphangers on a bus.

CALLING IN THE WILD

Carol Buckmann
Contributing Editor

Come fall, the words "call to the wild" will be exemplified when hundreds of hunters use their calls to lure their quarry.

With a good blind and proper set of decoys, the last act in a duck shooter's procedure is the actual calling. No matter what is stated as methods of calling, many shooters are going to disagree. But everyone to his own opinion as the old American custom goes.

For any animal, a good caller tries to imitate the tones he's attempting to call. To call ducks and geese, visit the lakes and listen to the tones in the fall before the season opens. Learn to identify their pitches and recognize birds in flight and on the water.

To call mallards and most other surface feeders, start when they come into view or as far away as you see them. A high-pitched or "high ball" call works best when the ducks are away because they can hear the high notes in the air. With the rush of wings and noises of other birds, the ducks can't distinguish your "quack" from that of fellow birds.

Use this for long distances and vary the pitch as the birds approach. As the birds move in closer, this harsh, high pitch will do more harm than good so tone your notes as the birds approach.

The main purpose in duck calling is to lure them to your decoy so keep talking until the flock is in close. When a duck talks back, keep calling. But stop when it stops or the whole flock will spook and know there's something un-duck-like about your decoys.

Calling the surface feeders to the timber requires a soft muffled call. In open water stick to a higher pitch.

For diving ducks such as the scaup, red head, canvasback and ringnecked duck use a harsh, purring call.

Calling diving ducks differs from surface feeders. Instead of luring them in to the decoy, call them back to the decoy. After they pass, use the caller to turn them in their flight and bring them back. Here timing is an all-important factor and it can only be learned with experience and practice.

The mallards are our number one duck and other surface feeders feed with them. The call used for mallards is also good for luring other web-footers.

Ducks and geese have excellent eyesight so remain motionless and well concealed. If you can't be concealed, wear clothing that blends with the surroundings as much as possible.

In Tennessee, guides pump up bellows and sound forth on calls a foot long making the most terrific high-tuned blast ever heard in ducking places. But the birds swarm in even though everyone

knows no mallard is guilty of a noise.

On larger more open bodies of water such as the Old Man River, you may blast long and loud and the birds seem to like it. But in small timbered potholes little sloughs, the sounds bounce too much. This resonance leads the birds to believe some super-duck is waiting for them when they don't care to meet. Here a well-modulated form.

Two conclusions can be drawn about duck calls. Be sparing with the chatter. They don't call a great deal to their fellows. Besides, would you call in another party you were eating free? Ducks are a bit hoggish and don't care to share their food with others.

Secondly, the pitch of a duck call has little to do with the results. Just as some people sing in tenor and some bass, not all ducks quack the same tone. A call should be tuned to a certain vibration level or timbre. If this vibration level is maintained and you stay on the beam, you can almost feel the call vibrate. If this happens, you can call ducks. A 50-cent job will suffice just as well as a silver reed and a gold-lined call.

Much the same principle holds true with geese—imitate their call and stop when the geese stop answering. Geese are better subjects since the calls can be harsher than with ducks and much the same pitch used throughout. Just imitate their honks. The trick in goose calling is to know when you are coming and imitate the noise you hear.

Canada, blue, and snow geese have higher pitched calls than white-fronted geese.

Geese can be called in to fields as well as marshes. In goose calling, sometimes several hunters work cooperatively from several blinds to call in the whole flock.

Ducks and geese aren't the only animals vulnerable to the call.

(Continued on page 183)



Jim Sherman Photo.

Calling them in will add more flavor to enjoyment of hunting Iowa waterfowl.

PREDATION AND WILDLIFE

PART I

Eldie W. Mustard
Game Biologist

ator—a noun which makes average American cringe and his teeth. When you hear word you can immediately see little Bambi being pursued by hounds, Little Red Riding Hood mercy of the bad old wolf, perhaps you see the three little valiantly seeking to survive the onslaught leveled at them by their arch foe, the wolf.

From our childhood we are taught to dislike and even hate animals which, by necessity, are other animals of the forest lands. We hold a natural aversion to the law of claw and talon which prescribes that only the fittest shall survive. We, as Americans, are inherently pulling for the underdog, or the underdog, and are on the side of the prey and not the predator.

What is predation? Odum, a biologist, describes it as an interaction between two populations which adversely affects one on which the other is dependent. In brief, it is the act of one animal killing another, usually to benefit the predator, a little bit hard on the individual prey.

It follows then that a predator is an animal which kills, while prey is the animal which is

wildlife management, predation control has received more attention than any other factor except hunting. The average hunter, or a game manager. This is our game manager has three things which he feels will do a world of good to enhance his nimrodic desires: bounties, artificial hunting, and importation of exotic

measures, of course, imply predation control and are brought up to you will realize the importance which the amateur game manager places on keeping predators down, with the idea that game numbers will automatically increase. They fail to realize that other factors in the environment also work to limit game numbers.

Predator-Prey Relationships

Why game population is limited in number which can be produced by the parent stock and by environmental factors which are against those which are produced.

If this weren't true we would be knee-deep in quail, pheasants, quail, etc., but we aren't? The relationship between the hunter and what is produced is in the following equation: $P = E R$.

In this equation, "P" is Production or the rate at which mature game stock produces mature game or a removable crop (this is



Gray Fox

Jim Sherman Photo.

the part in which most hunters are interested). "B P" stands for Biotic Potential or the inherent capacity of a species to reproduce; in brief, a given species can produce only so many young and no more. "E R" is the Environmental Resistance which is the summation of all factors operating on a given population which prevents this population from becoming knee-deep.

The Environmental Resistance portion of the equation is that part which game managers attempt to manipulate in an effort to provide more game for our hunters. Included in the Environmental Resistance are such limiting factors as: available food; cover; weather; competition, both intra- and interspecific; disease; predation; and a multitude of others.

You can see that predation is but one of the limiting factors among a multiplicity of factors which limit our game populations and reduce the number of survivors which can be harvested by the hunter.

The impact which predation will have on a given game population is determined by the following criteria as given by Aldo Leopold, who has been called the "father of modern game management":

Density of the game population—As game populations increase so does the percentage of depredation, due primarily to increasing success of the predator for his efforts.

Density of predator population—An increase in game populations

is often followed closely by an increase in the predator population, probably brought about by an influx of predators into an area, as well as greater reproduction of predators which accompanies a good food supply.

Natural food preferences of predator—Just as most of us have foods which we like and those which we merely tolerate, so it is with predators. Certain ones have a taste for rabbit, others may prefer quail, and some like mice and other rodents. Much insight into food habits is gained through food habit studies in which fecal remains, pellets, and stomach contents are studied to determine what eats what and how much.

Physical condition of prey species and escape facilities available—While most of us prefer steak we must, by necessity, exist on a hamburger diet. Predators are primarily opportunists and will take whatever crosses their path first. If mice are plentiful we will find foxes subsisting to a large degree on them instead of taking a rabbit or a quail which may not be so readily available. For instance, I've noticed gray foxes feeding almost entirely on grasshoppers when they were readily available. In these instances, the mice and grasshoppers are termed "buffer species". These are generally animals, quite often rodents, which are plentiful and are easily taken, at least at certain times of the year. They probably

CALLING—

(Continued from page 182)

Squirrels, rabbits, deer, predators, and song birds also respond.

Go early in the morning when it's quiet if you want to call squirrels. Puff your cheek and tap it with your fingers or tap a fruit jar lid with a bolt. This attracts the squirrel's attention and he barks back revealing his position. Use a predator whistle and the squirrel's curiosity overcomes him; he peeks his head from the hole or scurries down a tree.

As decoys, dogs and cats are good since the squirrels usually scold at them. This brings their position to light, but be careful not to overdo your "barking" or use of decoys.

Calls are used to stop game as well as bring it to a decoy. When a rabbit takes off across the field, use a whistle to stop him. Three short whistles stop the rabbit when he's running and gives an opening for a shot.

This whistle is also used by bow hunters for stopping deer. Make the whistle from a fruit jar rubber stretched between two blocks of wood.

Scents in the fall attract deer. (The Indians used herbs such as New England asters.) The males are attracted by sounds such as rubbing low hanging branches or a pair of antlers together. The deer comes to investigate, thinking it's two bucks in a clash over some disagreement.

In calling crows, know the notes they give and imitate with a crow call. Learn the calls but avoid giving a distress signal.

In fox calling, use a predator call which imitates the death squeal of a rabbit. The curious fox with high hopes for a Br'er Rabbit dinner, will come to investigate. Get in good fox habitat and call upwind so he doesn't get your scent.

The best aid to good hunting is a caller. You've heard the old, trite expression, "too many cooks spoil the stew." The same holds true when calling in the wild, for too many calls spoil your chances of bagging game for the skillet. Practice and trial and error are the best instructors the hunter has.

There is more thrill to hunting than merely bagging your game. The real thrill comes in being able to turn a flock or bring a wild creature to you.

form the bulk of most predators' diets because, as stated before, predators are usually opportunists and will take for food those species which are most available and easiest to take.

The author suggests that readers obtain and read the following if they are interested in learning more about predator-prey relationships.

Allen, Durward L. 1954. Our Wildlife Legacy. Funk and Wagnalls Co., New York. 422 pp. (Price \$5.00)

Latham, Roger M. 1960. Bounties Are Bunk. National Wildlife Federation, Wash. D. D. 10 pp. (Price \$0.10)

LITTLE GRAY CANNON BALL—THE HUN

Eugene D. Klónglan
Game Biologist

From the plains country of Europe to the farmland plains of northern Iowa is quite a journey for anyone to undertake. One fellow who has managed to accomplish this feat is the European gray partridge—best known throughout its American range as Hungarian partridge, or just plain "hun."

Iowa hunters are indeed fortunate to have a chance to shoot this little gray cannon ball, for in most parts of the country efforts to establish the "hun" have failed. They were first brought into this country in the late 1700's in New Jersey by a son-in-law of Benjamin Franklin. This effort failed, as did succeeding ones for a hundred years. Eventually all but four states tried to establish "huns" within their bounds. Most of the released birds soon disappeared, but the success story in those states where they took hold is exceeded only by that of another crafty foreigner—the ringneck pheasant.

This partridge is intermediate in size between a bobwhite quail and a hen pheasant—a rather plump bird weighing about three-fourths pound, and with short, rounded wings and tail. The outer tail feathers are reddish brown and form a conspicuous mark when birds are flushed at close range. When jumped, huns rise with a burst of rapid, noisy wing beats accompanied by a series of cackling "keep! keep!" calls.

Often an entire covey breaks into the air at once—perhaps flying low only about five feet off the ground, but sometimes rising to a height of around 25 feet on the first burst and then gradually dropping toward a common landing point 200 or more yards away. After the initial quail-like explosion, their flight is similar to that of the pheasant—an alternating series of short, rapid wing strokes and sustained glides. This flight, which may reach a speed of 35 miles an hour, is usually in a straight line away from the hunter, but often ends in a swing of several yards to the right or left—perhaps to confuse the pursuer. Frequently they will fly over the nearest knoll where they can drop out of sight. When refushed they usually rise as a covey, unlike the bobwhite which generally scatters when alighting.

"Huns" love open cover—no other farm game bird can get along with so little. During the fall season they will usually be found in harvested crop fields, and even in severe winter weather they seem to prefer the most exposed parts of the landscape—open picked corn fields, hay fields or grain stubble. Woody cover is relatively unimportant to this bird. Even in bitter cold weather "huns" will seldom be found in the farm



windbreaks that furnish most of the available woody cover in their northern Iowa range. Rather than use such shelter, the birds may seek out field cover on the lee side. On cold, windy days "huns" often gravitate toward the lee side of a hill or weedy fencerow, but they still tend to remain in the open.

Weather conditions, such as temperature, wind and rainfall, seem to affect the daily behavior of "huns" less than is true of most game birds. They seem to prefer a life completely exposed to the raw elements, the seeking of protection from biting winter winds being the principal exception.

The type of open cover utilized by the Hungarian partridge during the hunting season makes it a difficult bird for hunters to get. Most of those shot in the 12 northwestern counties with the November 11-December 15 open season will be taken incidental to pheasant hunting—an "extra dividend." Their numbers seldom reach sufficient heights in Iowa to encourage special hunting trips just for "huns" unless one has firsthand knowledge of a covey location or a range that is occupied nearly every year. One or two coveys to a section would seldom be exceeded over most of their Iowa range.

Yet, the thought in a hunter's mind as he plods in search of a pheasant through one of northern Iowa's large corn fields that just "maybe" a covey of "huns" will burst from under foot lends an added thrill to the hunt. Unfortunately, the moment the "huns" choose to explode generally coincides with that when the hunter's thoughts have temporarily wandered elsewhere. And by the time the rattled nimrod has argued the question of whether those gray cannon balls are young "squealer" or hen pheasants, the chance to shoot has long vanished

PHEASANT HUNTING—

(Continued from page 177)

The majority of pheasant hunters, including myself, clean our shotguns after one season and never open the case until the following fall. I'm going to take his gentle (?) hint and fire a few practice rounds before opening day. It would be wise to break several clay birds or, better yet, hunt crows a few times. They will test your shooting form and if you're hitting, you will eliminate a few more nest predators. A little practice will prevent missing some of those 'big fat ones' during the regular season.

This fall, as usual, 80-90 per cent of all birds bagged will be juveniles. The better the hatch the better the hunting. According to brood counts last summer, reproductive success was best in the western half of the state, which means that some of the best hunting will be found within the primary pheasant range of northwest and west central Iowa. Although the hatch was slightly below par in the north central district, pheasant densities will remain high in this area. Many young broods were reported in various parts of the state late last summer. These late broods were probably hatched in diverted acres which were clipped early and then left undisturbed through the summer months. Most of these chicks showed up too late to be included in the roadside count taken August 1-15. The extent of these reneating attempts will not be known until after the season gets underway. It is hoped that these birds will add substantially to the overall harvest.

To begin your hunt, ask the farmer first, and secure permission to hunt. Let me remind you again that nearly all land in Iowa is privately owned. Pheasants are farm birds and they favor our most fertile soils. So ask permission to hunt, find out which fields are closed to hunting, and let him know that you will be careful about shooting near livestock, closing gates, etc. Begin your hunt knowing that you are welcome.

Most hunters have a pretty good idea of where and how to hunt during the first few days of the season. Many questions arise, but with all the hunters around, there are usually more than enough answers. After the first few days, the birds are scattered, wary and much wiser. It takes more "hunting" to locate and flush these adult survivors. To try and predict just where the pheasants will be on a

with the sound of their whirring wings.

But if he can keep his presence of mind midst thumping heart and shaking nerves long enough to mark the covey drop, there will still be a good chance to join the ranks of those who have enjoyed the tasty flesh of this sporty game bird—the Hungarian partridge.

certain future date would be sheer foolishness. The habits of pheasants vary with the time of day, crop harvest, weather, hunting pressure, etc. The individual hunter must choose the most logical method of hunting as indicated by the various conditions. However, a few suggestions might be in order to help increase your chances of success.

First and most important—more walking than you usually do. The birds are well scattered during mild weather and it takes leg work to bag your birds. Picked corn fields are the logical first choice as they offer both food and cover. Pheasants feed in the morning on bright sunny days will remain in the same field. Secondly—walk slowly. Some birds will run and flush out of range regardless of what you do—but some will hold if you take it easy. Two or three heavily booted hunters charging through the stalks will spook the birds in the section. Also, you won't tire as quickly at a slow pace and shooting will be more accurate because you are relaxed.

Hunt completely around the edge of the cornfield including the fencerows and roadsides. Birds at the border will be the first to vacate so try to get them before they sneak into the next field. After the edge has been thoroughly searched, then start working the rest of the field. Birds that remain will probably hold tight and not be literally "kicked out." Check the areas with grassy cover, including the waterways and ridge lines. Stubble fields close to picked corn are also a good bet if the fields are muddy. Much easier walking, too.

Cold, blustery days, with or without snow, are quite common during November. Pheasants don't like wind and will normally seek heavier cover, such as drainage ditches, roadsides and weed patches. Rough weather tends to bunch the birds so be prepared to shoot when the birds flush. Roadside cover alongside picked corn fields is a good choice on wintry days. It's tough going, but marshes and lowland pastures are also favored roosting places for pheasants during rough weather.

Don't you believe it when you hear someone say the roosters are all shot. Half of them are still in the fields and each one that explodes beneath your feet can show you just as much as it did on opening day. But remember, take your time and enjoy a better hunt.

When you have bagged geese do not retrieve them immediately. Often, a downed goose will bring the flock swinging back and give you a chance to bag more.

Raccoons usually live near water, in timbered areas. Hollow trees are favorite denning places and they eat many small aquatic animals.