



1963's FISH RECORDS

Denny Rehder

The excellent 1963 fishing season has been reflected in the fish records received this past year from Iowa fishermen. This was the second year for the Commission's listing of official Iowa big fish and the interest shown by the Iowa angler was rewarding.

This issue contains the complete listing of the 1963 records as well as the standing records for fifteen species. The intention is to list the top fish in each species for both the yearly and the standing records. Only seven species have four fish listed indicating that fish such as the lone perch and sauger listed in both tables are the only ones of these species that have been entered. As yet there have been no entries for white or yellow bass.

The Largest for '63

Top of the '63 records for size is Floyd Flint's flathead of 56 pounds. The fish was taken from the Little Sioux River last spring. With only 100-pound test line, it took him two hours to maneuver the fish near shore where another couple helped land the lunker with a large dipnet. Because of the size of the fish, Mrs. Flint said it was "neither fat nor lean." The meat was quite edible.

Ed Myer of Marion enjoys the distinction of being the only angler with more than one fish listed in the tables. In late November he caught two fine walleyes from the Wapsipinicon weighing twelve and eleven pounds.

Other outstanding catches included Doug Hall's 18-pound-plus northern pike, Stifter's 13½-pound walleye, Rex Whaylen's 13-pound walleye, John Hausman's 6-pound plus rainbow, Ken McAndrew's 40-pound flathead, Willard Hunter and Don Palmer with crappies over 3 pounds, and Clarence Allen's 9-pound largemouth.

Consider also Dorin Wailes' 8-pound bass, Fred Schuneman and Clare Deater with a pair of Spirit Lake smallmouths over 5½ pounds, Roy Jones' 9½-pound brown trout, Larry Kocour's 3½-pound bullhead, Peter Hach and Sam Post with a 40- and a 35½-pound carp respectively and the three top channel catfish ranging from 18 to 21 pounds caught by Carman Smith, John Sufficool and Clarence Schwarz.

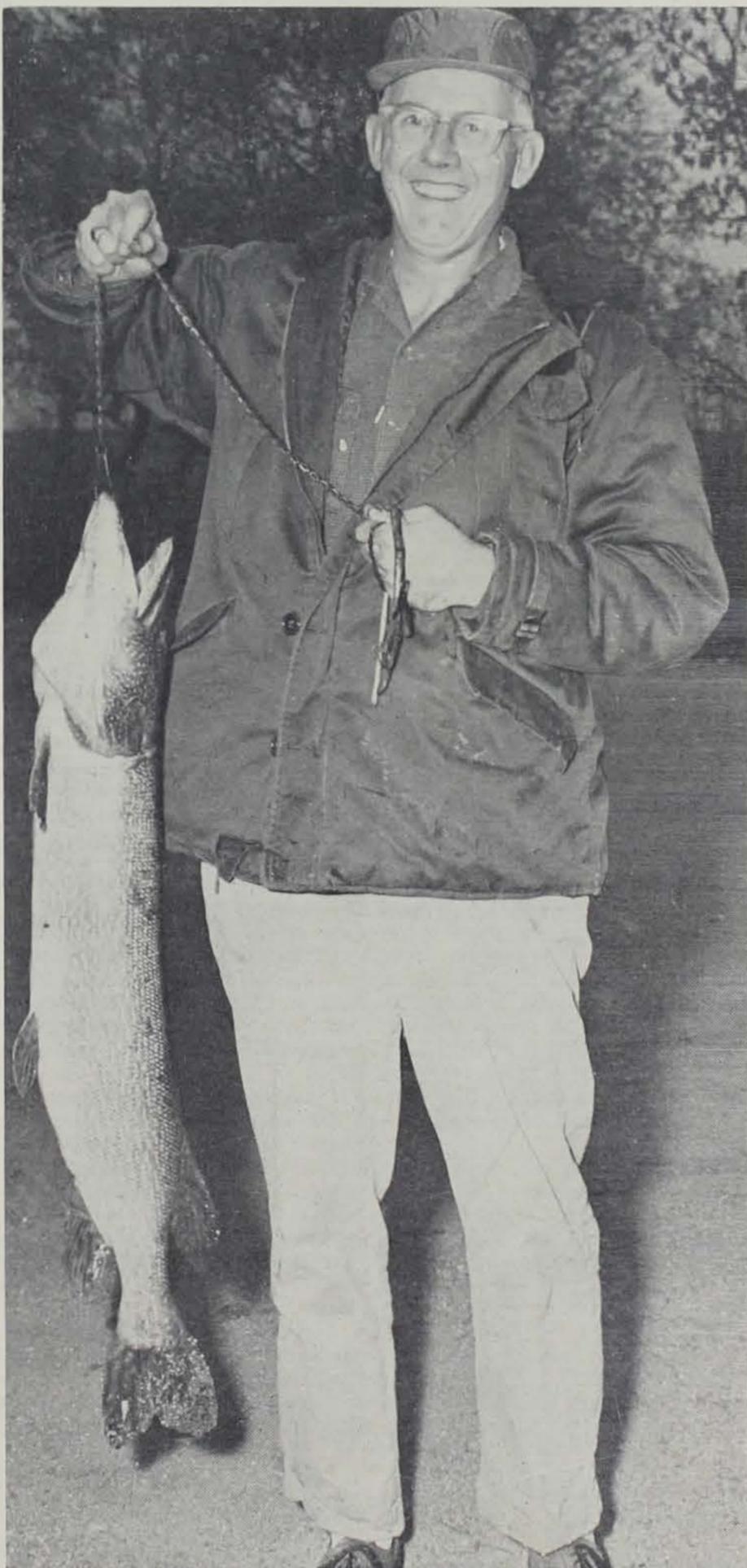
Where Caught?

When areas of the state are represented by two or more fish in the listing. Tops, and you must consider the relative size, is the Mississippi River with five fish listed for five records. Next, is Spirit Lake with five fish for two records; then the Cedar River with three fish for one record; Lake Manawa with two fish for one record; the Des Moines River with three fish for no records; the Wapsi with three fish for one record; and West Okoboji with two fish for no records.

The standing records listing eight areas are represented by two or more fish in the tables. Spirit Lake heads the list with six fish for three records followed by the Mississippi River with five fish for three records. Then in descending order come the Cedar River with three fish for one record; the Little Sioux River with two fish for one record; Lake Manawa with two fish for one record; the Des Moines River with one fish for no records; West Okoboji with three fish for no records; and the Wapsi with three fish for no records.

In addition to the above, fifteen other popular fishing holes yielded one fish for the listings.

Anglers are reminded that although they may have caught larger fish than some of those entered on the records, they must register their fish with the Conservation Commission before their fish can find its way into the Official Iowa Big Fish Records. To register, the angler should tell the Commission who caught the fish, where, when, the size of the fish—both weight and total length, and submit a photograph of the fish with the names and addresses of two witnesses to the catching.



Doug Hall's Record Northern.

Courtesy Spirit Lake Beacon.

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 52,000

COMMISSION MINUTES

December 3, Des Moines

COUNTY CONSERVATION

Carroll County received approval for the acquisition of 7.62 acres of land at a total cost of \$3,250 called the Willow Creek Park to be used for the development of a county picnic and camping area and also as a highway safety rest area on highway No. 141.

Cerro Gordo County received approval for the acquisition of 40 acres of land at a total cost of \$8,000 as an addition to present holdings on the Shell Rock River to be used for camping, archery, and horseback riding.

Cerro Gordo County received approval for the acquisition of 7.73 acres of land at a total cost of \$2,319 as an addition to the Linn Grove Park.

Crawford County received approval for the acquisition of 160 acres of land at a total cost of \$16,000 to be used as a multiple outdoor recreation area including a stand of hardwood timber and possibly a small recreational lake.

Linn County received approval to initiate condemnation procedures for the land necessary for the repair of the Coggon Dam which will include 26.01 acres of land and to establish a perpetual road easement 33 feet wide and .4 mile long for access necessary in making repairs to the Coggon Dam on Buffalo Creek. This area is to be a part of the Buffalo Creek Parkway.

Monona County received approval for the acquisition of a fraction of an acre of land by a ten-year lease from the town of Mapleton on Highway Commission land for the development of highway safety rest area adjacent to state highway No. 141.

Polk County received approval for the acquisition of 4.6 acres of land at a total cost of \$63 as an addition to Jester Park.

Worth County received approval for the acquisition of 40 acres of land at a total cost of \$7,600 called Gullickson Wildlife Preserve for the development of a county-school forest area and the preservation of 20 acres of native prairie.

Buchanan County received approval for the acquisition of 51 acres of land at a total cost of \$4,500 adjacent to the Wapsipinicon River, two miles north of Independence to be used for hunting, river access, boat launching and parking.

Boone County received approval for a development plan for the Don Williams Lake and Recreational Area located six miles due north of Ogden and which is to include a 160-acre artificial lake, a 9-hole golf course and various other recreational facilities.

Floyd County received approval for a development plan for Colwell Park to be developed primarily for camping, picnicking, and fishing access to the Little Cedar River.

Howard County received approval for a development plan for Lake Hendricks Park which will include recreational development for camping, swimming, boat launching, picnicking, etc.

Polk County received approval for a development plan for Mally's Weh-Weh-Neh-Kee Park located 9½ miles northeast of downtown Des Moines to be developed primarily as a picnic and winter sports area.

Jackson County received approval for a development plan for the Spruce Creek area located two miles north of Bellevue, to include camping, picnicking and a boat harbor adjacent to the Mississippi River.

FISH AND GAME

The Commission approved an option for the purchase of 73 acres of land at a total cost of \$4,500 located on Trout Run near Siewers Springs Trout Hatchery in Winnebago County.

The Commission granted authority to the Director to open certain lakes and streams for promiscuous fishing, when oxygen declines.

The Commission gave approval for promiscuous fishing (December 14, 1963, to March 1, 1964) on Lake Odessa contingent on approval of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

A contribution of \$10 from N. C. Koel of Caledonia, Minnesota, for the trout program was accepted by the Commission with appreciation.

LANDS AND WATERS

Elm Lake in Wright County was transferred to the Fish and Game Division for the purpose of maintenance and management as a waterfowl area.

The Commission approved an option for 6½ acres at a cost of \$125 per acre for the Lake Anita Site in Cass County.

Approval was given for the donation of surplus walnut wood from the Central Shop to the Veterans Administration Hospital in Iowa City for use in their hobby shop.

GENERAL

Travel was approved to: The North American Game Bird Breeders and Shooting Preserve Operators meeting at Cleveland, Ohio; The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (statewide recreation planning)

AFRICAN LESSON

John Madson

Earlier this year, on national television, there was a superb documentary on the African wildlife problem. The narrative was most interesting, and often frightening. Such as the conversation between a Kenya game ranger and a Masai hunter as they stood on a hill and discussed the game herds on the plain below:

"Isn't that beautiful?" asked the ranger.

"Yes," said the Masai. "I'd like to kill them."

"Why?"

"Because they are good to eat."

"Then what of the lions and other creatures?"

"I would kill them too."

"Why?"

"Because they are not good to eat."

That may summarize the modern African's attitude toward wildlife. Last month a national magazine took up the torch in an excellent article on the subject. Like the reports of game rangers and biologists it told of relentless poaching, severe misuse of land, human population explosions, and the tragic fading of elephant, rhino, lion, giraffe and other East African wildlife.

These reports indicated several things to us:

1. That many Americans are far more concerned about the problem than are most Africans.
2. That some of these Americans are more concerned about African rhinos than about Montana grizzly bears.
3. That the modern American hunter never had it so good.

Millions of us grew up with our feet in rabbit patches and hearts in Tanganyika. To most American hunters, the ultimate gunning is an African safari.

But the vaunted East African gamelands are going down the drain and as much of Africa's big game is shot out and thinned by overgrazing, erosion and people pressure, our home game fields will grow greener. In this, the American hunter should take deep pride and sense of warning.

Our United States present a fantastic situation. The population is soon to be crowding 200 million, and it sometimes seems that even man jack of the population is going hunting. Yet, our coverts brim with small game. We have more deer than we can shoot. The wild turkey has returned in abundance. There are plenty of elk and black bear, and the pronghorn antelope has come tearing back from the brink of extinction.

There is no nation in the world that supports such heavy concentration populations of humans and wildlife. Even more impressive, ours is a hunting culture in which the privilege of "free" hunting remained almost unabridged by foreign standards. How is it possible?

It rests on three things:

1. Some of the best soils in the world, and increasing use of conservation and good agricultural practices.
2. The control of our wildlife resources by professional conservation agencies that apply and enforce sound principles of game management.
3. The fact that the average American hunter—however bristling with his faults—is enlightened and sympathetic by most foreign standards.

Our own house could be more orderly. We seem determined to terminate some of our most magnificent fauna—the grizzly, timber wolf and mountain lion. We have serious waterfowl problems. Wildlife suffers from the private rape of public resource, and sportsmanly political porkbarrelling as federal drainage subsidies and the big Ripart Dam project in Alaska. But compared to the teeming hives of western Europe and the Orient, American hunters have it made.

Who knows? The day may come when the zenith of high adventure is a genuine American safari.

meeting at Madison, Wisconsin; The Missouri Basin Inter-Agency Committee Meeting at Lincoln, Nebraska; The Wing Bee meeting at Poynette, Wisconsin; a meeting at St. Charles, Arkansas to fluoroscope ducks.

The Commission granted authority to the Director to permit regattas, field trials, and organized camping and to sign minor contracts at his discretion.

Planning for possible recreational development on the Badger Creek watershed was discussed.

A discussion was held concerning deer licensing procedures.

The proposed purchase of Federal forest lands in southern Iowa and the location of a prison camp at Stephens State Forest were discussed.

Informational items included discussion of proposed development work of the Corps of Engineers Snyder, Winnebago, Omadi Browsers Bends and the California Cut-off on the Missouri River.

The Commission met with delegation of travel trailer enthusiasts and discussed the recent increase in campground rates in 26 improved state park campgrounds.

WINTER FISHING—FACT AND FANCY

Tom Moen

Fisheries Biologist

Each winter since the fishing season was lengthened to include days of winter fishing, thousands of the more hardy breed of anglers have tried their luck through the ice. Each winter since the Conservation Commission Biology Section has maintained a creel census of fish and fishermen on Spirit Lake and West Okoboji in Dickinson County. Creel census data covering summer or open water fishing periods date back to 1945. This inventory effort the biologists provides valuable information about this important resource. These are important "facts" that are used in determining the success or need of management practices. These facts can help the strictly warm weather angler understand that the winter fisherman did not take all the fish out through the ice. The Commission is also concerned about the problem and it is only through monitoring and examination of the data that we can see the picture in the right light. It is the purpose of this article to acquaint our anglers with some of the results in creel census efforts, especially as it concerns the question of winter fishing versus summer fishing.

Fewer Fish Through Ice

First of all, the average fisherman catches fewer fish for each hour of fishing through the ice than does while fishing in open water. Normally, winter fishing is about half as good as summer open water angling, and rarely equals and never exceeds summer fishing success when we compare results for the entire season. Individual days or occasionally an individual month may be better.

Winter fishing on Spirit Lake and West Okoboji Lake, the two most heavily fished lakes of north-



Ice shanties dot West Okoboji, one of Iowa's most popular winter fishing lakes.

Jim Sherman Photo.

west Iowa, removes only a small percentage of the total fish taken in any one year. Seldom more than 10 percent of all the fish from either of these two lakes are taken through the ice and during the last six years never more than 15 percent. The next question usually is, "What about the perch and walleyes!"

Walleye and Perch

Winter anglers catch a relatively few species of fish consistently. A number of fish taken by summertime anglers are not caught at all by winter fishermen, several species are taken only rarely. Walleyes and yellow perch are normally the most important species with some lakes contributing crappies, bluegills, and northern pike in good numbers during the winter period. From our Spirit Lake and West Okoboji Lake data we find

that the winter catch of walleyes never exceeds 30 per cent of the total yearly take of walleyes and seven years out of ten will make up less than 10 per cent of the yearly total, often as few as 3 per cent.

The winter catch of yellow perch may reach 50 per cent of the yearly total but normally makes up less than 25 per cent. Better than average catches of perch are usually associated with an abundance of this species in the lake. Data from seine hauls in Spirit Lake during the summers of 1950 and 1951 indicated good populations of adult perch present but there were no perch taken through the ice during the first two open seasons. An exceptionally large hatch of perch in 1960 is now producing the excellent fishing for this species in West Okoboji this season.

Are They Always Big?

There are a few fishermen who worry about their future chances of catching a big walleye and complain about all the big walleyes being removed during the winter fishing. Apparently the large walleyes that are caught through the ice receive exceptionally good publicity. During a special study of walleyes on Spirit Lake during the summer of 1961 and the winter of 1961-62, it was determined that 73 per cent of all the walleyes taken by ice fishermen were 12 to 16 inches long, another 9.4 per cent were less than 12 inches long. A combination of these figures and other data indicated that 75 per cent of all the walleyes taken during the winter fishing season were less than 12 inches long at the start of the 1961 fishing season!

The few big walleyes that were taken through the ice did influence the average size of the walleyes. By adding the weights of all walleyes caught by the summer angler, we find that the average walleye weighed 1.2 pounds while the winter-caught walleye averaged 2.1 pounds. Our figures show that the big increase in weight comes from walleyes in the 2.5 to four pound size during the winter period, not large numbers of 8 to 12 pounders. A special marking was completed on 160 walleyes over 20 inches (4 to 8 pounds) at the start of the fishing season in 1961. Not one of these fish were observed by the creel census clerk during the summer or winter fishing but 9 of these fish appeared among the big fish taken by the gill nets of hatchery crews the following spring. The ratio of marked fish to unmarked in this size range compares favorably with the ratio in the smaller sizes and provides strong evidence

number of walleyes and yellow perch taken by fishermen from Spirit Lake and West Okoboji Lake during open water and winter fishing periods as determined by creel census since 1950*

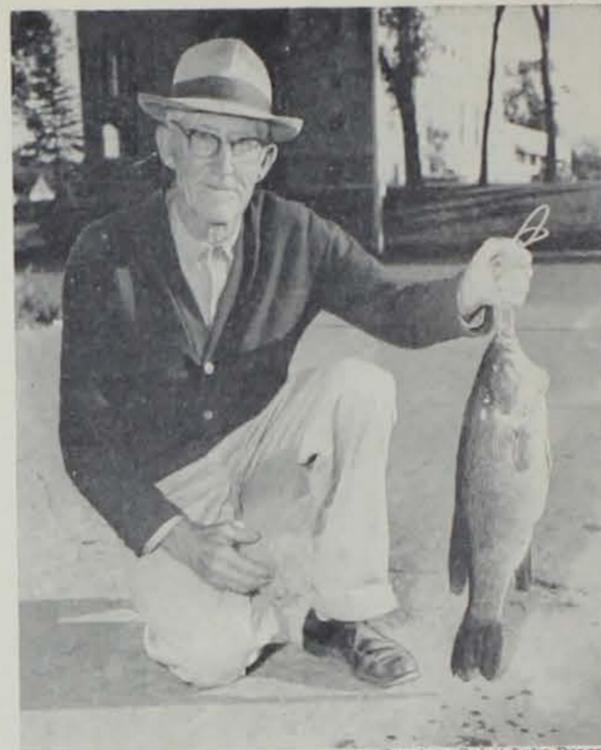
Year	SPIRIT LAKE		WEST OKOBOJI LAKE	
	Open Water	Winter	Open Water	Winter
	Walleye	Perch	Walleye	Perch
1950	4,153	657	0	0
1951	2,291	1,858	0	0
1952	1,846	4,164	1,085	7,216
1953	14,392	9,411	2,026	8,417
1954	6,915	18,689	1,653	9,295
1955	9,412	23,682	1,977	19,015
1956	29,944	17,754	3,328	14,283
1957	24,426	24,914	5,676	13,828
1958	17,166	49,421	8,387	15,443
1959	16,743	54,281	4,165	2,389
1960	36,434	18,841	6,079	7,390
1961	21,161	3,180	3,159	2,757
1962	15,678	27,789	6,464	17,181

The open water fishing season is considered as May 15 to Dec. 1 and the winter season as the period Dec. 1 through Feb. 15; thus, the year designated in the column at the far left runs to Feb. 15 of the following year. The first five years listed in the table consists of a mixture of techniques and lengths of census periods. Most of the winter periods until 1956 were checked on the spot census basis and ran the entire 75 days; some of the open water fishing was censused for only 45 days. Starting with the open water fishing on Spirit Lake in 1956 we have a complete or quantitative census. The quantitative census was started on West Okoboji in 1957 and was continuous except for the open water period of 1960 when it was checked on a spot census basis.

(Continued on page 8)

1963's RECORD FISH

Species	Weight	Length	Where Caught —County	Date	Angler
Bass (large-mouth)	8 lb. 15 oz.	24 1/2"	Lake Manawa Pottawattamie	April 8	Clarence Allen Council Bluffs
	8 lb. 2 oz.	22"	Farm Pond Warren	Oct. 6	Mrs. Angus Campbell Des Moines
	8 lb.	22 1/2"	Lake Wapello Davis	Oct. 11	Dorin Wailles Centerville
	7 lb. 12 oz.	22 1/2"	Lake Manawa Pottawattamie	April 7	Richard Jabens Council Bluffs
	7 lb. 11 oz.	21"	East Okoboji Dickinson	May 20	Robert McCoy Spirit Lake
Bass (small-mouth)	5 lb. 10 oz.	21 1/2"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	Oct. 2	Fred Schuneman Milford
	5 lb. 9 oz.	—	Spirit Lake Dickinson	June 20	Clare DeKoster Spirit Lake
	4 lb. 15 oz.	21 1/2"	West Okoboji Dickinson	Aug. 25	E. M. Rinehart Edingham, Ill.
	4 lb. 7 oz.	22"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	June 3	Harry Rogers Northwood
Bluegill	1 lb. 8 oz.	10 1/2"	Mississippi River Allamakee	Sept. 26	M. E. Jenkins Cedar Rapids
Brown Trout	9 lb. 8 oz.	28"	Hickory Creek Allamakee	Sept. 1	Roger Jones Ottumwa
	7 lb. 6 oz.	24"	Big Mill Creek Jackson	April 21	Kenneth Thomsen Davenport
Bullhead	3 lb. 9 oz.	17 3/4"	Farm Pond Harrison	July 12	Larry Kocour Missouri Valley
	2 lb. 8 oz.	16"	Three Fires Taylor	Sept. 15	Mrs. Frank Harden- bergh, Lewis
	2 lb.	15"	Fairfield Reservoir Jefferson	June 19	Walter Cross Fairfield
Carp	40 lb.	40"	Mississippi River Clayton	April 16	Peter Hach Cedar Rapids
	35 lb. 8 oz.	40 1/2"	Des Moines River Boone	June 28	Sam Post Boone
Channel Cat	21 lb.	35"	Crystal Lake Clinton	April 28	Carman Smith DeWitt
	19 lb. 8 oz.	35"	Rock Creek Lake Jasper	Aug. 10	John Sufficool Colfax
	18 lb. 2 oz.	33 1/2"	Des Moines River Webster	July 3	Clarence Schwarz Fort Dodge
Crappie	3 lb. 6 oz.	18 1/4"	Lake Darling Washington	Aug. 10	Willard Hunter Davenport
	3 lb. 5 oz.	17 1/2"	Cedar River Black Hawk	May 11	Donald Palmer Waterloo
	2 lb. 7 oz.	16 3/4"	Indian Lake Van Buren	Nov. 24	James Lishburn Farmington
	2 lb. 6 oz.	16 1/2"	Geode Lake Henry	Oct. 29	Curt Edward Fort Madison
Flathead Cat	56 lb.	49"	Little Sioux River Harrison	May 30	Floyd Flint Little Sioux
	40 lb.	42"	West Okoboji Dickinson	April 28	Ken McAndrew Spirit Lake
	20 lb.	32"	Iowa River Johnson	May 5	Robert Darling Iowa City
Northern	18 lb. 4 oz.	41"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	Oct. 30	Doug Hall Estherville
	12 lb. 3 oz.	36 1/2"	Des Moines River Humboldt	June 17	Mike Koob Eagle Grove
	11 lb. 7 oz.	36"	Wapsipinicon River Buchanan	May 23	Raymond Weepie, Jr. Independence
	10 lb.	31 3/4"	Lake Macbride Johnson	June 1	Mike McKinstry Cedar Rapids
Perch	1 lb. 13 oz.	14 3/4"	Mississippi River Allamakee	Sept. 11	Neal Palmer Maynard
Rainbow Trout	6 lb. 4 oz.	25"	Yellow River Allamakee	March 3	John Hausman Waukon
Sauger	5 lb. 2 oz.	22 1/2"	Mississippi River Dubuque	Nov. 16	Art Hurlburt Dubuque
Sheepshead	7 lb.	23"	Mississippi River Muscatine	Sept. 8	Charles Rhodes Muscatine
Walleye	13 lb. 8 oz.	36 1/2"	Cedar River Bremer	May 25	Fred Stifter Waverly
	13 lb.	31 1/2"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	Nov. 7	Rex Whaylen Sibley
	12 lb. 3 oz.	30 1/2"	Wapsipinicon River Linn	Nov. 28	Donald Myers Marion
	11 lb. 8 oz.	30 1/2"	Wapsipinicon River Linn	Nov. 28	Donald Myers Marion



Courtesy Spirit Lake Beacon.
Fred Schuneman's Smallmouth.



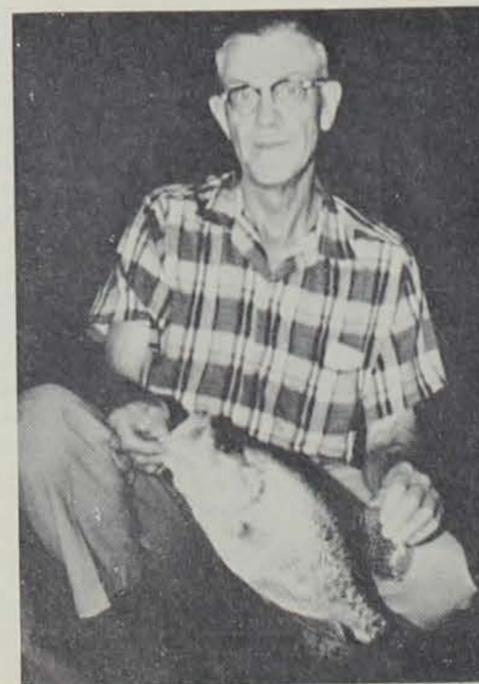
Courtesy Independence
Bulletin-Journal
Raymond Weepie's North



Courtesy Waverly Democrat.
Fred Stifter's Walleye.



Courtesy Boone News-Rep.
Sam Post's Carp.



Willard Hunter's Crappie.



Roger Jones' Brown Trout.

STANDING RECORDS — IOWA FISH



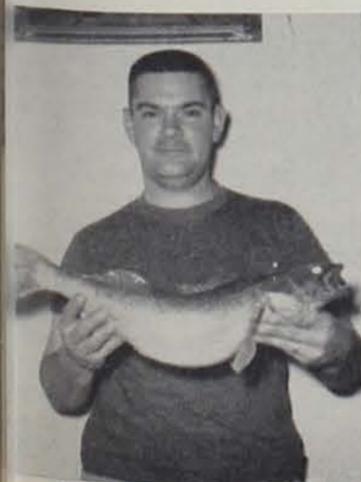
Clarence Allen's Largemouth. Courtesy Council Bluffs Nonpareil.



Mike Koob's Northern. Courtesy Eagle Grove Eagle.



Floyd Flint's Flathead.



Art Hurlburt's Sauger.



John Sufficool's Channel Cat.

Species	Weight	Length	Where Caught —County	Date	Angler
Bass (large-mouth)	8 lb. 15 oz.	24½"	Lake Manawa Pottawattamie	4-63	Clarence Allen Council Bluffs
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	7 lb. 12 oz.	22½"	Lake Manawa Pottawattamie	4-63	Richard Jabens Council Bluffs
	7 lb. 11 oz.	21"	East Okoboji Dickinson	5-63	Robert McCoy Spirit Lake
Bass (small-mouth)	5 lb. 10 oz.	21½"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	10-63	Fred Schuneman Milford
	5 lb. 9 oz.	—	Spirit Lake Dickinson	6-63	Clare DeKoster Spirit Lake
	4 lb. 15 oz.	21½"	West Okoboji Dickinson	8-63	E. M. Rinehart Effingham, Ill.
	4 lb. 7 oz.	22"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	6-63	Harry Rogers Northwood
Bluegill	1 lb. 12 oz.	11"	Lineville Gun Club Wayne	9-62	Mrs. Grant Dillon Lineville
	1 lb. 8 oz.	10½"	Mississippi River Allamakee	9-63	M. E. Jenkins Cedar Rapids
Brown Trout	9 lb. 8 oz.	28"	Hickory Creek Allamakee	9-63	Roger Jones Ottumwa
	7 lb. 6 oz.	24"	Bie Mill Creek Jackson	4-63	Kenneth Thomsen Davenport
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	20 lb.	35½"	Buffalo Creek Jones	9-62	Joe Kula Anamosa
	10 lb.	27"	Turkey Creek Cass	4-62	Geoffrey Scholl Anita
Channel Cat	21 lb.	35"	Crystal Lake Clinton	4-63	Carman Smith DeWitt
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	40 lb.	40½"	Des Moines River Boone	5-62	Harold Steuerwald Boone
	20 lb.	32"	Iowa River Johnson	5-63	Robert Darling Iowa City
Northern	18 lb. 4 oz.	41"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	10-63	Doug Hall Estherville
	12 lb. 3 oz.	36½"	Des Moines River Humboldt	6-63	Mike Koob Eagle Grove
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Sauger	5 lb. 2 oz.	22½"	Mississippi River Dubuque	11-63	Art Hurlburt Dubuque
Sheepshead	46 lb.	38½"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	10-62	R. L. Farran Clarion
	7 lb.	23"	Mississippi River Muscatine	9-63	Charles Rhodes Muscatine
Walleye	13 lb. 8 oz.	36½"	Cedar River Bremer	5-63	Fred Stifter Waverly
	13 lb.	31½"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	11-63	Rex Whaylen Sibley
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	11 lb. 8 oz.	30½"	Wapsipinicon River Linn	11-63	Donald Myers Marion

VARMINT SEASON IS OPEN!

Jack Kirstein

The hunter who matches wits with Iowa's fox, ground hog, crow, and coyote population can forget about seasons and limits, there are none. These are seasons that are not only open, they never close.

Varmints are hunted for the sheer sport of the hunt. Because of their crafty ability to outwit man at many turns, they provide much fine hunting for the hunter who will put forth the effort to learn their habits. Especially important is the study of their natural habitat, feeding habits, and individual abilities of the species you intend to hunt.

Fox and coyote, as an example, are sly and cunning, but inherently lazy. To capitalize on this laziness, you will learn that they usually take the same routes to and from their feeding areas, scent posts, etc., and will come as though drawn by a magnet to the call of a wounded rabbit which promises an easy meal. For this reason, the hunter who locates his blind along one of the known routes and uses a predator call from a well concealed position is most likely to bag a bushy-tailed fox or the dog-like coyote.

Fox and Coyote

Both fox and coyote normally include rabbits and mice as the largest part of their diet. With this in mind, and knowing that they will frequent much the same habitat as deer, many hunters set up along the edge of timber where they can survey a nearby field of corn or soil-bank land. As this kind of cover can provide both rabbits and mice, it will also be suitable for the varmints. Some hunters drive the country roads in winter's snow looking for tracks of fox entering a section of land. Where the tracks lead in and not out of an area they will stop and ask permission to hunt and set up the blind.

Camouflage clothing is best when there is no snow, and all-



Using an old sheet for camouflage, this hunter scans a brushy draw for fox sign.

white clothing in the snow provides a maximum of concealment for the hunter.

Woodchuck

Although winter is a good time to hunt the fox, it is not the time for woodchuck or ground-hog for he is in hibernation. After his winter sleep, a hillside blind near the entrance to his den can prove fruitful for the hunter. Here silence and patience are necessary. This varmint begins his sleep in September and can be counted on to emerge in February, at times coming out through several feet of snow to begin moving about his usual haunts. Many are taken because of their habit of taking an occasional sun-bath at the entrance to their dens.

Any gun from a handgun to a shotgun or a rifle is suitable for varmint hunting, depending on your ability to lure them to your blind, or to stalk them successfully.

This is also the sport for the archery addict who has already learned the secrets of stealth and concealment that provides him with deer in season. Varmint hunting often proves to be fine practice for his hunting of the larger game.

... and Crows

The shotgun is also used on crows, who will succumb to a good crow call, and will come to a decoy owl. Shot sizes range from No. 6 shot to the smaller 7½'s and 8's.

Following crows on their morning and evening flights to and

from feeding areas and roosts is a good practice. They also are creatures of habit, using the same routes at most times. In the late afternoon, it is possible to drive out into the country and follow the flights toward their roosts. After this is found, it is best not to shoot them in the roosts but return the following morning and trace their course out to the feeding areas where the blind can be set up and decoys used to attract them. If you should happen to lose them while trying to locate a roost, simply mark the spot you last saw them and return the following afternoon and continue the chase.

Varmint hunting is excitement in its purest form. It fulfills the hunting urge at a time when nothing else is in season. It also can fill out an otherwise unsuccessful day of hunting other game.

At the end of a successful varmint hunt, you will find that you have lived and learned, and will have new things to talk about and new methods to apply to other kinds of hunting.

The tanned pelt of a red or gray fox makes an excellent decoration for the den or game room, and the fireside stories will, like the varmint season, never end.

The order of rodents is made up of small to medium-size mammals characterized by having only two gnawing teeth above and two below. There is a distinct space between these teeth and the grinding or cheek teeth.

Iowan's Book Talks Hunting

The *Unnatural Enemy* by Va Bourjaily is a rare treat for those who enjoy hunting. Here is a book on hunting, but what is done is how it is done in the field, the second place to the hunter, how he acts. Bourjaily examines himself and those around him, trying to find the motives behind hunters' actions. As he puts in the introduction, he does not claim to be an expert hunter, but he feels justified in examining a hunter.

From his scathing presentation of hunting in the goose pits of Cairo, Illinois, to his own examination while hunting in "Fields Near Home," Bourjaily puts into words what many hunters have only been able to think. His work is not only interesting and entertaining.

Much of the collection presented appeared originally in the *Yorker Magazine*. Bourjaily is not to be labelled as an "out writer"—he considers himself a serious writer and rightly so. Living in North Liberty, Iowa, he teaches in the famous Writers Workshop at the State University of Iowa in Iowa City. This is Bourjaily's first non-fiction work after writing much fiction.

The art in the *Unnatural Enemy* is the work of David Levine; the book is published by Dial Press, New York and sells for \$5.



Iowa's Feathered Winter Visitors

Carol Buckmann

morning following a snow to, nature had painted the win- glass in intricate, lacy de- The whole outside world dressed in metallic, white

spite of the chilling, sub-zero signs of life soon became evi- as a pair of black-capped adees flew down from a near- k tree alighting at the feeder placed outside the window. ected by the cold, their voices upon the white silence as as the air.

white-breasted nuthatch soon its way down a tree trunk up-side-down manner toward he wire basket where a downy wecker was feeding on some These, gold finches, blue jays, and cardinals are frequent feeder isers belonging to the depend- "permanent resident" group

stay in Iowa all year. er common residents fre- ing the winter feeders are owy and hairy woodpeckers, red- and red-headed woodpeck- ad little tufted titmice. East- screech, great horned and ern barred owls remain all r while many owls come to from the north in search of

Bobwhites, eastern crows, ing doves and pileated wood- rs also remain to brave s cold.

Cold Weather Living

thing for sure, whether these nent residents are as sub- al as crows or as dainty as adees, they are all hardy, able species. The less resist- o south.

ds who choose to remain in ld must consume larger quan- of food and keep an even r pace of living than in the er. For unlike insects and mammals, they do not rely

ored body fat and none hiber- lead of slowing down and en- g the cold with every possible my of energy, they combat it reat body activity and high production.

long as food is found, birds afe but shortage means death in moderately cold weather. protection against wintry s, birds have an even more ive coat than fur-bearing an- . Their feathers not only serve eater insulation than fur but also conserve the large pro- on of body heat. Most that in are seed eaters but wood- rs subsist on larvae and in- eggs buried in the tree trunks.

Many Visitors

sides permanent residents, has many regular winter ents who journey from the far to spend the winter here a food is more accessible. But, spring, they return north to Hoyt's horned lark, long-

SQUEAL 'EM IN!

Tom Ballard

Most hunters are putting their guns and/or bows away for the winter months now, except for an occasional rabbit hunt when snow, temperature, and sunshine provide that "just right" combination, but the varmint callers are just getting started.

If you have never used a predator call before or had the exciting, near frightening experience of becoming the hunted instead of the hunter, you are missing an outdoor Iowa sport that requires little more than a predator call, a patch of cover to hide in, and a foxy area.

Varmint calling is a year round sport but January to early spring is considered to be the best time of the year. September and October, when the young fox is starting to hunt on his own, is another good time to warm up your predator call.

Iowans who enjoy this type of hunting have called up a variety of creatures. The three most likely animals to be fooled by the squealing of the predator call are the red or grey fox and the great horned owl. Don't be surprised if you see coyotes, raccoons, feral cats, crows, bobcats, owls, hawks, or any other rabbit eater you know coming in answer to the plaintive cries you produce.

When to Go?

Dawn or evening is the best time of day to tempt the Iowa predator with visions of a free meal. Conceal yourself in a spot that will afford you a clear view of the surrounding area for at least fifty feet if you are hunting with the bow, or a much wider area depending on the caliber and range of

tailed chickadee, northern shrike, eastern tree sparrow and lapland longspur commonly make Iowa their winter home. Lapland longspurs come in November to plowed fields while horned larks are often seen in open spaces and along highways.

The slate-colored junco is another abundant migrant becoming a common winter resident. Northern horned larks are also winter residents but are only seen occasionally. Greater prairie chickens migrate here in the winter but only rarely do they set up permanent residence.

As well as permanent and regular winter residents, there are many winter visitors who move erratically from place to place matching their stay to the food availability. They may be seen a few days then disappear not to return for several years, if ever.

Some of these winter visitors go farther south while many of their kind remain here such as tree and Harris sparrows, purple finches and

(Continued on page 8)



Calling is a favorite technique for the bowhunter.

Jack Kirstein Photo.

your rifle or shotgun. Ol' Red is either going to come charging in at full speed or sneak around for a reading of the wind. You want to be in a position to see him before he spies you. If you are hunting with two others, position one marksman on each side of the caller to cover that cagey fox who will circle before a near approach.

A full set of camouflage will help your chances but is not necessary for success. "Camo" breaks your outline, but taking a stand by a tree or shrub is nearly as effective. A clear silhouette or quick movements while calling will guarantee that Reynard will be in the next county before you even know he is around. Don't move much once you have started calling.

Calling

Most of the predator calls on the market will do the job if used properly. With a little practice the novice can do a good job of imitating the distress cry of an injured or trapped rabbit. You are in effect telling the predator that if he will really hurry over he can catch this trapped bunny or maybe take it away from a smaller animal that is trying for a rabbit feast.

Don't overdo the volume with your call. The normal high pitch of the call will carry for an adequate distance, especially on those ideal calm, quiet days.

Ten to twelve minutes is about the maximum time to continue calling. You will normally get results within the first five minutes of good calling. Some companies offer a long range and a short range call. The short range instrument is for bringing them right up to your feet. It is just a little squeaker similar to those found in

many toys at the dime store. A similar call can be made at home with a clothespin and a rubber band. Sandwich the rubber band between the two halves of the clothespin with enough tension to produce a high squeal when you blow it. Some of the "old pros" will produce the same sound by sucking on the back of their hand.

One Iowa varmint caller enticed Reynard up to within two steps of his stand. "He looked up at me and sorta cocked his head to one side curiously as if to ask 'What's going on here, fellah?' I shot an arrow at him but he was too close. The excitement had snuffed out what little accuracy I thought I had."

"I was laughing so hard at the obviously frightened quaver in my partner's calling when he saw the fox so close that I shot a foot high."

"A great horned owl almost knocked my hat off one evening," exclaimed a hunter who had been squealing from a tree stand. (Predator calling from tree stands is often used by the fox hunter with a scoped rifle.)

"There wasn't time for an accurate shot at him but I thought I'd better shoot. That old fox had you [the caller] boresighted for supper!"

"I never did see him but the tracks were only three feet from my snow blind. He must have circled around and come up behind us." If you want some real hunting excitement and fun during these winter months try your skill at varmint calling. You may not have any great impact on the fox population but you should have a real ball trying.

TREE ORDER TIME NEARS

WINTER BIRDS—

(Continued from page 7)

an occasional white-throated sparrow.

Common winter visitors include the American rough-legged hawk, long and short-eared owls and eastern purple finches. These dependable visitors do not establish residence in winter but move around until time to return to their nesting territories in the far north.

Occasionally, the little saw-whet owl, American magpie, red-breasted nuthatch, northern shrike, common redpoll, pine siskin, eastern snow bunting and Carolina wren are seen but are considered uncommon winter visitors.

There are always bands of winter migrating cedar waxwings searching for food and some become permanent winter visitors. Roaming bands of lovely Bohemian waxwings are sometimes seen around hi-bush cranberry feeding on the frozen berries.

Only rarely do we see the sturdy eastern evening grosbeak or the Canadian pine grosbeak. Evening grosbeaks often come in even larger numbers than purple finches. The greater redpoll, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, Montana junco, Cassiar's junco and tohees are also rare winter visitors.

Most birds have definite likes and dislikes. Insect eaters such as woodpeckers, titmice and chickadees like suet which substitutes for insects in their winter diet, seed eaters like dried fruits, grain and pet seed available from most feed dealers. Cardinals are especially fond of sunflower seeds and corn. Be sure the suet is attached as squirrels also relish this and will carry off the entire supply. Put suet in a piece of mesh hardware cloth and fasten it in a tree.

With a feeder outside your window, a suet log hung in a tree and a good bird guide, sit back and relax as the stage is set for one of the most interesting and educational winter shows you can imagine.

WINTER FISHING—

(Continued from page 3)

that the large fish are not taken as readily as the small fish.

This offers a challenge to both summer and ice fishermen. The big ones don't live forever! During the 1962-63 fishing season the creel census clerk measured all the walleyes that he observed. During the open winter fishing period his tabulation shows that 4.3 per cent of all the walleyes caught had a total length of 20.0 inches (about 4 pounds) or more, while 6.5 per cent of the winter caught walleyes fit this category. The statistician would say that the 2.2 per cent difference could be expected from sampling errors.

The Commission's first responsibility is providing recreation for as many as possible without endangering the resource. Winter fishing on Spirit Lake and West Oko-

John Stokes
State Forester

Beginning January 1, 1964, the Conservation Commission will accept orders for conifer and hardwood seedlings, wildlife shrubs, and wildlife packets from the State Forest Nursery at Ames, Iowa.

Each spring many Iowa landowners plant idle acres, inaccessible areas, and poorer class land to young trees and wildlife species. In recent years young stands of trees have provided enjoyable recreation areas, good wildlife cover, and a variety of products, at early ages, such as Christmas trees, posts, poles, etc.

The trees and shrubs ordered from the State Nursery are to be used for erosion control, wildlife cover and woodlot plantings. Trees cannot be used for windbreaks, landscaping, ornamental use, or shade trees. Trees cannot be resold as "balled stock." Trees are not sold inside cities or towns unless the land has a farm number assigned to it by the Federal Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service office in each county.

Federal cost-sharing is available to Iowa landowners who plant trees or wildlife cover plantings on qualifying land. This program is administered by the Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service Office located in each county seat.

In 1964, one important change has been made in the cost-sharing rates available for wildlife cover plantings. Rates have been raised from 50 per cent to 80 per cent of the costs of tree or shrub seedlings \$45 per acre.

County Conservation offices can give people assistance in developing wildlife cover planting projects and District Foresters for the Commission will give assistance to people wishing to make tree plantations.

Tree order blanks are available from Conservation Officers, District Foresters, County Extension Offices, Soil Conservation Officers and County Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service Offices.

boji Lake provide from 50,000 to 100,000 additional hours of recreation per season. Since winter fishing was legalized fourteen years ago there has been no demonstrable evidence that the success of either season is dependent on what kind or how many fish were caught the previous season. There are many biological factors involved that are more important than how many fish were removed by hook and line.

The musky odor of the mountain beaver is immediately and extremely noticeable to the human nose and is much like that of a muskrat.



Christmas trees are just one of the products from Iowa's private woodlands. Jim Sherman

TREES AND SHRUBS AVAILABLE FOR FARM PLANTING SPRING OF 1964

STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

East Seventh and Court Avenue
Des Moines 8, Iowa

Species	Age Class	Price for:		
		250	500	750
Austrian Pine	2-0	\$5.50	\$11.00	\$16.50
Ponderosa Pine	2-0	5.50	11.00	16.50
(Western half of Iowa only)				
Red Cedar	2-0	5.50	11.00	16.50
Red Pine	3-0	5.50	11.00	16.50
Scotch Pine	2-0	5.50	11.00	16.50
White Pine	3-0	5.50	11.00	16.50
Caragana	2-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Dogwood	1-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Honeysuckle	1-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Multiflora Rose	1-0	5.00	10.00	15.00
Ninebark	2-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Russian Olive	1-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Siberian Crab	2-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
Walnut	Stratified Seed	1.50	3.00	4.50
Wild Grape	1-0	4.00	8.00	12.00
SPECIAL WILDLIFE PACKET 4.50				

The wildlife packet contains 250 plants including 50 evergreen, 50 honeysuckle, 25 Russian olive, 25 wild grape, 25 multiflora and 75 other plants beneficial to wildlife. Illustrative suggestions for odd areas and farm pond plantings will be furnished with packet.

SPECIAL NOTICE

- (1) The nursery reserves the right to substitute species of a similar type if a shortage occurs.
- (2) **PAYMENT FOR NURSERY STOCK MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER.**
- (3) Nursery stock must be ordered in multiples of 250 and each must total at least 500 plants. The wildlife packet may be ordered singly.
- (4) All trees and shrubs will be sent to the purchaser **EXPERIENCE COLLECT** unless purchaser specifies order is to be picked.

TREES PER ACRE AT DIFFERENT SPACINGS

5' x 5'	1,742	5' x 6'	1,452
6' x 6'	1,210	6' x 7'	1,037
7' x 7'	889	8' x 8'	681

The European rabbit was originally a native of the western Mediterranean countries. Most, but not all, rodents have four toes on each front foot and five on each hind foot.

The ears of a jack rabbit are much larger than those of any other mammal, for its size. Kangaroo rats have long with tufts on the ends and extremely long hind legs.