

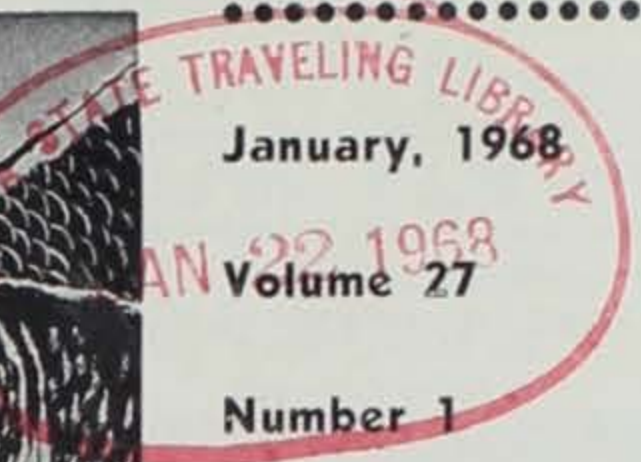


Iowa CONSERVATIONIST

January, 1968

Volume 27

Number 1



IOWA'S WINTERLAND



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Surrounded in a mantle of white, Ledges State Park provides an enchanting winter scene. Outdoor Iowa offers a constant experience of never ending beauty and delight . . . even in the winter.

Iowa Conservationist

Vol. 27 January, 1968 No. 1

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 63,054

COMMISSION MINUTES**State Conservation Commission Meeting Held in Des Moines, Iowa, November 16 and 17, 1967**

The following policy on take line of artificial lakes was adopted: "The take line of all future artificial lakes should, at a minimum, coincide with the nearest surrounding ridgeline, as far as practicable, in consideration of the topography. In every case, however, the purchase unit should include far beyond the current 300-foot line and in no case should inholdings be allowed to remain."

Lands and Waters

A motion was made and seconded that the Land Rights and Operation and Maintenance Agreements on the Walter's Creek Watershed in Adams County be executed.

An agreement with Kurtenbach-Hauge & Associates of New Hampton for land acquisition on the Volga River Lake Project in Fayette County was approved.

Resolutions to delete .34 mile and .98 mile of road passing through Maquoketa Caves State Park and Prairie Rose State Park, respectively, from the State Park Road system were adopted.

An erosion control cost-sharing agreement for an erosion control project on the watershed of Lake Ahquabi was authorized.

The application for a permit to construct a channel into the Mississippi River in Jackson County near Bellevue, Iowa, to connect an inland marina to the Mississippi River was accepted subject to the approval of the Natural Resources Council.

The proposal of Bauer Engineering, Inc. for engineering services on the design for modification of the spillway at Rock Creek Lake State Park was adopted.

Motions were made and seconded that accumulated B.O.R. funds be used for completion of the developments of Bellevue State Park and Lake Anita State Park.

Permission to purchase the permanent buildings and fixtures in-

stalled on state property for the operation of the concession at Rock Creek Lake State Park from the Emerson Hough Chapter of the Izaak Walton League was granted.

Approval was granted for the issuance of a construction permit to the Van Buren County Board of Supervisors to adjust the existing right-of-way of the road passing in front of the State Forest Headquarters at Shimek State Forest, with the stipulation that the right-of-way and borrow areas be held at a minimum and that sufficient access from the road be provided.

A Department Rule to establish "No Wake" speed zones on the off channel waters in and adjacent to the "Pinicon Ridge Park" in Linn County on the Wapsipinicon River above the dam at Central City was ratified.

The State Conservation Commission approved a program to cooperate in a research project to assist in filing past surveys and future surveys that the Commission will carry out on meandered lakes and streams.

Fish and Game

The exchange of 63 acres of land owned by Ransom Forbes for 72 acres of state-owned land at our Cone Marsh Area in Louisa County was authorized.

The option of Robert and Gerald Mohling on 30 acres of additional marsh and upland game land at our Sweet Marsh Area in Bremer County was exercised subject to the approval of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

An option for the purchase of 320 acres of combination fishing access to the Turkey River and upland game area adjacent to our Cardinal Marsh Area in Winnebuck County offered by Charles Crowe was exercised subject to the approval of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

The option of L. A. Simpkins for the purchase of 162 acres of land adjacent to our Rubio Access Area in Keokuk County was exercised subject to the approval of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

Commission approval was granted to restrict rifle shooting at all times to the present pistol range at the Banner Mine Area in the interest of public safety.

The de-watering project at Backbone State Park Lake in Delaware County was authorized.

The Commission adopted the Temporary Rule authorizing promiscuous fishing.

The check from the Rush Lake Club was returned thanking the organization for the gesture and suggesting that the contribution be used locally for a conservation project. Processing the gift would have to be approved by several departments and would be a rather costly procedure.

CONSERVATION FORUM

Gentlemen:

I'm a great believer in the Conservation Commission and the great work you are accomplishing. More power to you and congratulations.

I'm just an oldtime hunter and fisherman. I've always loved these sports. Have some great pictures taken on the Mississippi River, but I don't get to go but once or twice a season. If my son doesn't come and get me I can't go. I have my combination fishing and hunting license and migratory bird hunting stamp. . . Haven't been fishing yet, hunting once. I'm only 75 years old. Hope you don't mind me writing you this small note. Would appreciate literature you may have that you send to hunters and fishermen.

Yours very respectfully,
J. A.
Muscatine

Dear Sir:

I wish to thank you for the interesting paper which is sent to me each month.

The IOWA CONSERVATIONIST has given me many hours of pleasurable reading since it was sent to me by some kind folks in Marshalltown, Iowa.

I have retained every copy sent to me and intend to have these bound in the future.

I used to correspond with Mr. John Garwood who wrote the fishing column for the *Marshalltown Times Republican* newspaper, but I am afraid my last two letters and parcel, containing what I thought to be interesting bits and pieces, must have gone astray as I have had no reply from Mr. Garwood for some nine months.

On second thought business pressures may have prevented him from replying.

At this point may I request you pass on my sincere thanks to the people who have contributed to the cost of sending the CONSERVATIONIST to me in England. I should be very pleased to thank these folks by letter if perhaps you could send me their address. . . .

I should be pleased to correspond with any angler who is interested in angling topics covering conservation, fish disease, breeding trout or as I mentioned any angling topic.

I have camped and motorcycled and fished in Scotland and live only about 70 miles from the border between England and Scotland, the Border Country as we call the area.

I would not like to lose the contacts I have previously made by letter with the folk of Marshalltown, and would consider it a great favor if you could mention this to the Marshalltown Wildlife Society who so kindly honored me with a membership of their club and whose badge I proudly wear in my fishing hat.

Yours faithfully,
J. T.
South Stanley
Co. Durham, England

Editor's Note: This letter was addressed to Governor Harold Hughes and sent from his office to the SCC.

County Conservation

A motion was made and seconded that the Marion County Conservation Board's Roberts Creek Park Development be approved for submission to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation for Federal assistance.

Decatur County Conservation Board received approval to acquire 188 acres of land for the purpose of developing a multiple use outdoor recreational area northwest of Davis City.

The Dubuque County Conservation Board received permission to acquire 5 acres of additional land at their Swiss Valley Park southeast of Dubuque.

The request of the Muscatine County Conservation Board to acquire 27 acres of land for the purpose of developing a multiple use outdoor recreational area west of Muscatine was granted.

B.O.R.

The Commission approved submission of the two following projects to the B.O.R. for Federal assistance under the Land and Water Conservation Funds Grants-in-Aid Program:

Acquisition of 34 parcels of land in the Webster County Brushy Creek Area totaling approximately 3,544 acres for the purpose of constructing a 900-acre recreation lake and developing multiple-use outdoor recreation facilities. The project site is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Fort Dodge.

Acquisition of approximately 68 parcels of land in the Volga River Area, Fayette County, totaling approximately 5,250 acres for the purpose of constructing a 1,000-acre lake and developing multiple-use outdoor recreation facilities. The project site is located immediately northeast of Fayette.

RUFFED GROUSE STUDY

By Wayne R. Porath and
Paul A. Vohs, Jr.

Iowa's ruffed grouse are the subject of a study to learn more about this interesting bird. The research effort, undertaken in the spring of 1966, is a cooperative study of the Biology Section of the State Conservation Commission and the Agricultural Experiment Station through the Department of Zoology and Entomology at Iowa State University.

Objectives are to gather current information on the spring breeding population, longevity of individual males, description of individual drumming centers, types of vegetative cover used during the spring and summer, movement of the birds and types of cover that provide wintering areas.

This information would be necessary to study the effects of a possible hunting season on the entire population. Other studies have shown that hunting of a population that has not been hunted for a few years may actually spread the birds into new areas and allow an expansion of the range within a state. However, it is only by careful investigation and experiments that we can determine what would

be best for Iowa's ruffed grouse.

Several techniques are being used to gather information about the grouse. To learn more about their movements, individuals are marked with distinctive identification. With this marking, the bird can be observed and his movements traced.

Of course, the first step is to catch a ruffed grouse in order to mark it. This is accomplished with a mirror trap or "lily-pad" trap. A mirror trap works like this. A trap with a drop door is placed on the drumming log so the male can look into the trap. A mirror is placed in the rear of the trap. Drumming males resent the intrusion of another male into their domain. When the male observes his image in the trap he attacks it. In his rush to reach the "intruder," he steps on a treadle that releases the door behind him and he is caught. Once inside, he calms down.

The males are removed from the trap, weighed, carefully examined for coloration, and banded on the legs with four bands of various colors for individual identification. In some cases colored plastic tags are placed on the back to aid in identification. The bird is released after a blood smear is obtained for

a study of protozoan parasites being conducted by Dr. David Roslien, Biology Department, Luther College. After the mirror trap is removed from the log, the male generally resumes his normal activities—only now he is also an individual in the record book.

Female ruffed grouse cannot be taken with a mirror trap. Females and broods move around and she does not have the same response to her image in a mirror as a male. Females and broods are captured in a "lily-pad" trap that is placed on the ground. The "lily-pad" trap has an opening at each end with long lengths of chicken wire stretched from the opening out 60 feet. The female and her brood walk along the leads and enter the trap. Once inside the trap, they can't find their way out. The females and older chicks are handled like the adult males. However, very young chicks are too small to band. These little fellows are dyed about the abdomen with dyes of various colors for individual recognition. All chicks of a single brood are marked alike so that the movements of the brood can be determined during the summer. The color is lost as the small birds replace their feathers in the late summer.

Droppings on drumming logs are counted periodically to determine how much time the male is spending on the log and if he is still occupying his territory. Droppings are also collected from logs and roosting areas to provide information about food habits.

A vegetative study is also underway to determine the optimal environment for birds during each period of the year. The number of grouse is reduced as the forest becomes more mature. However, such practices as logging and clearing that are normal forest management activities might be utilized to enhance the grouse habitat, especially on state owned lands. We must identify the best conditions for Iowa grouse in order to manage the species. The 500-acre study area is covered on foot several times during the summer and records are maintained on the vegetative cover that grouse are using. In this, it should be possible to identify the relationship of the grouse to the various forest stages.

The male grouse will provide important information on the dynamics of the population and the best picture of the status of the birds from year to year. By determining the number of "activity centers" or territories that are occupied or vacant each spring on the study area, we hope to be able to appraise the potential of the population to maintain itself and provide surplus birds each fall. We want to relate the effects of various management efforts on the population and to assist in maintaining a biological balance so that if possible we might enjoy hunting in the fall and continue each spring

WILLIAM BOSWELL Assistant Director

William Boswell, 43, was named assistant director of the Iowa State Conservation Commission. Boswell had been administrative assistant, a post he had held since April, 1962.



Boswell joined the State Conservation Commission in September, 1949, as a fish and game officer. He was stationed at Centerville and his territory included Appanoose and Monroe Counties. In 1953 he went to Reinbeck where his territory included Grundy and Tama Counties and later Black Hawk County. Boswell was raised and attended high school at Marshalltown, Iowa. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1941 and served in the Pacific. He was discharged in 1943. Boswell attended the University of Iowa from 1944 to 1948, majoring in sociology and physical education. A former Marshalltown high school athlete, Boswell was co-captain of the University of Iowa swimming team in 1945. At one time he held 18 swimming records in the state. In 1946 he was elected president of the Inter-Fraternity Council at the University of Iowa.

Boswell is married and has two daughters and lives in Ankeny, Iowa.

to appreciate their aesthetic qualities that are so important to those who work closely with Iowa's "Thunderbird." As our research continues and we analyze information, we hope you will follow future articles about the ruffed grouse in the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST.

Editor's Note: This article is a contribution of the Department of Zoology and Entomology, Project 1565, Agricultural and Home Economics Experiment Station, Iowa State University and Iowa State Conservation Commission. Wayne R. Porath is a graduate assistant, Department of Zoology and Entomology; and Paul A. Vohs, Jr., is an assistant professor of wildlife biology.



Leg band is placed on ruffed grouse.

321259



Males on drumming logs can be decoyed into a trap with a mirror.

IOWA BIG FISH RECORDS

Anglers had another exciting year in Iowa judging from the record fish entries submitted to the State Conservation Commission.

There has been a lot of interest in the Commission's listing of outstanding catches since the program was started in 1962. This issue of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST contains the listing for the 1967 records as well as the standing state records for 18 species.

Raynard James of Muscatine set a new Iowa record when he pulled in a 47-pound carp last March. The lunker, caught in a gravel pit near Muscatine, was 38 inches long. He was using a worm hook which lodged behind the fin of the fish. James battled over an hour to land the whopper. The old state record for carp was a 40 pounder caught in the Mississippi River in 1963 by Peter Hach of Cedar Rapids.

Donald Cole of Lake View established a new record when he caught a 3-pound white bass at Black Hawk Lake in Sac County last September. This is the first time a white bass has been submitted for listing with Iowa record fish.

Norman Devine of Council Bluffs tied the state record when he landed a 9-pound 8-ounce largemouth bass at Lake Manawa last May. It tied a record set by Harley Bryan of Montezuma in 1964.

Anglers in eastern Iowa fared the best this year. Many of the 1967 big fish were taken in the east. Nine of them were caught in May and six in March.

Anglers are reminded that although they may have caught larger fish than some of those entered for the records, they must register their fish with the Conservation Commission before it can find its way into the official Iowa big fish records. Information on how to register a fish for the records follows.

THE 1968 CONTEST

Entries for the 1968 Official Big Fish Records are now being accepted by the State Conservation Commission. Any species of fish commonly taken by hook and line caught in state or boundary waters is eligible. There are, however, minimum weight limits on certain species; crappies must be over two pounds; channel catfish over 18 pounds; carp over 20 pounds; northerns over 10 pounds; smallmouth bass over four pounds; largemouth bass over seven pounds; walleyes over 10 pounds and flathead catfish over 20 pounds.

Any potential 1968 or state record fish must be weighed to the nearest ounce on scales legal for trade. The weighing must be witnessed by two persons. The fish's total length should also be recorded.

The angler must fill out an official entry blank or a facsimile and send it and a glossy black and white photo of himself and the fish to the State Conservation Commission, East 7th and Court, Des Moines, Iowa 50308, by January 1, 1969.

The entry blank includes the angler's name and address, the species of fish being entered, date caught, where caught, county, total length, weight, method of catch and the witnesses' signatures and addresses.



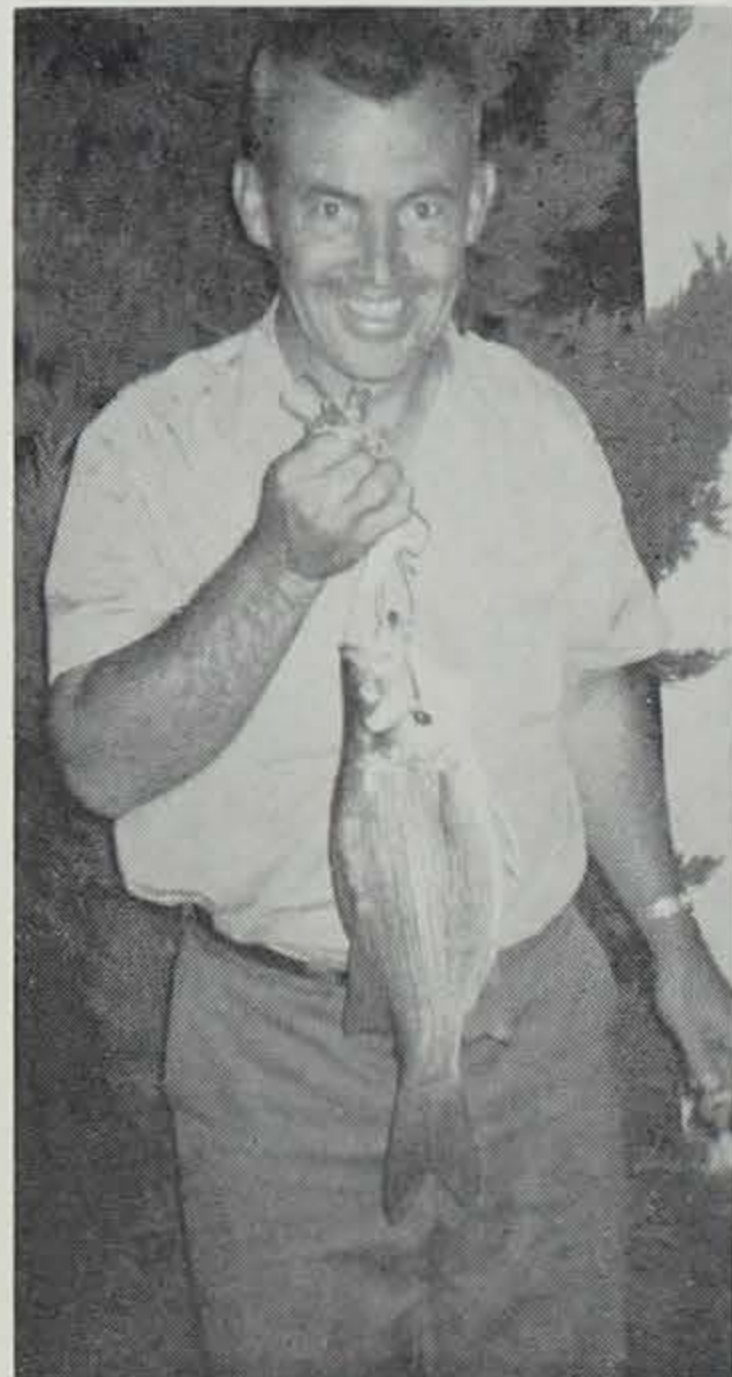
Craig Fishel's walleye.



Jerry Skelton's channel catfish.



John Senn's flathead catfish.



Donald Cole's white bass.



Lester Orr's sheephead.

1967 RECORD FISH

Species	Weight	Length	Where caught County	Date	Angler
Bass (Largemouth)	**9 lb. 8 oz.	23 1/2"	Lake Manawa Pottawattamie	May, 1967	Norman Devine Council Bluffs
	8 lb. 0 oz.	22"	Clear Lake Cerro Gordo	May, 1967	Tom Lenz St. Ansgar
	7 lb. 14 oz.	23 3/8"	Lake Geode Henry	March, 1967	Leo Welch Burlington
	7 lb. 13 oz.	25"	Wilson Lake Lee	March, 1967	Geo. R. Moore Fort Madison
	7 lb. 9 oz.	23"	Farm Pond Warren	July, 1967	Dennis Ouwerson Indianola
	7 lb. 4 oz.	21"	Lake Macbride Johnson	April, 1967	Alfred Killenberger South Amana
	7 lb. 1 oz.	23"	Lake Geode Henry	March, 1967	Leo Welch Burlington
Bass (Smallmouth)	5 lb. 6 1/4 oz.	21 1/2"	West Okoboji Dickinson	September, 1967	A. L. Smith Algona
Bass (White)	3 lb. 0 oz.	19"	Black Hawk Lake Sac	September, 1967	Donald Cole Lake View
Bluegill	1 lb. 6 3/4 oz.	11"	Lake Geode Des Moines	May, 1967	Alan Langohr Burlington
	0 lb. 12 oz.	10"	Gilmore's Pond Harrison	August, 1967	Perry Smith Missouri Valley
Bullhead	3 lb. 15 oz.	22"	Farm Pond Des Moines	June, 1967	Merlin Hamilton New London
Carp	*47 lb. 0 oz.	38"	Gravel Pit Muscatine	March, 1967	Raynard James Muscatine
	45 lb. 0 oz.	41"	Lynxville Dam Allamakee	April, 1967	Walter Teslow Waukon
	43 lb. 0 oz.	41"	Lynxville Dam Allamakee	January, 1967	Robert Piper Cedar Falls
	30 lb. 0 oz.	44"	Wapsipinicon River Linn	May, 1967	Mrs. Elsie Fee Marion
	24 lb. 6 oz.	36 5/8"	Cedar River Linn	August, 1967	Joseph F. Tvrdik Cedar Rapids
Cat (Channel)	18 lb. 0 oz.	32 3/4"	DeSoto Bend Harrison	August, 1967	Jerry Skelton Missouri Valley
Cat (Flathead)	32 lb. 0 oz.	38"	Mississippi River Des Moines	May, 1967	John Senn Burlington
Crappie	2 lb. 12 oz.	17 1/4"	Farm Pond Des Moines	September, 1967	Peter Stone Des Moines
	2 lb. 9 oz.	17 1/2"	Farm Pond Des Moines	May, 1967	George Marzeck W. Burlington
Northern	19 lb. 8 oz.	46"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	May, 1967	Roy Kirchner Estherville
	12 lb. 8 1/2 oz.	38 1/2"	Iowa River	May, 1967	Fred Bertschinger, Jr., Keokuk
Paddlefish	No entries				
Perch	No entries				
Sauger	No entries				
Sheepshead	13 lb. 12 oz.	29 3/4"	Harpers Ferry Allamakee	August, 1967	Lester Orr Iowa City
	1 lb. 4 oz.	16"	Missouri River Woodbury	June, 1967	Chuck Hinrichsen Sioux City
Trout (Brown)	5 lb. 4 oz.	24 1/4"	French Creek Allamakee	March, 1967	Thomas Caulkins Waukon
	4 lb. 1 oz.	21"	Maquoketa River Delaware	November, 1967	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
Trout (Rainbow)	5 lb. 0 oz.	24"	Maquoketa River Delaware	November, 1967	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
	4 lb. 8 oz.	21 1/2"	Turkey River Clayton	May, 1967	Alfred Mueller Sumner
Walleye	12 lb. 1 oz.	30 1/4"	Shell Rock River Butler	March, 1967	Craig Fishel Allison

*New Iowa Record
**Tied State Record

FOOD FOR ALL

"There's scarcely a species of wildlife, whether bird or mammal, that doesn't love corn," says Clark Webster, manager of wildlife management for Remington Arms Company. "Even normal meat eaters such as fox will nibble it and to ducks and geese, it's a feast without parallel.

"Of course indiscriminate gorging on a farmer's crop by wildlife can sometimes be a costly nuisance. However, it is also possible to manage corn specifically for wildlife by tying it into regular cropping operations. General farm programs normally include substantial acreages of corn, so

there's no need, or use, to plant specifically for wildlife. For squirrels and deer, leave a standing strip adjacent to a wooded area. And if, according to current land-use practices, you've planted the shade-strip of woodlands to a soil holding grass or legume, it's still all right. A corn strip needn't be smack dab against the trees to be useful for forest game. Crossing a 30-foot border is an easy leap for a deer and a quick scurry for a squirrel.

"Before the days of mechanized farming, ducks and geese stayed in the marshes and fed on the seeds and roots of aquatic plants. That's because there was nothing

(Continued on page 7)

IOWA RECORD FISH

Species	Weight	Length	Where caught County	Date	Angler
Bass (Largemouth)	9 lb. 8 oz.	25"	Diamond Lake Poweshiek	May, 1964	Harley Bryan Montezuma
	9 lb. 8 oz.	23 1/2"	Lake Manawa	May, 1967	Norman Devine Council Bluffs
Bass (Smallmouth)	6 lb. 3 oz.	21 5/8"	West Okoboji Dickinson	June, 1966	Marvin Singer Le Mars
Bass (White)	3 lb. 0 oz.	19"	Black Hawk Lake Sac	September, 1967	Donald Cole Lake View
Bluegill	2 lb. 1 oz.	11 1/2"	Farm Pond Wayne	June, 1966	Chet Ryan Seymour
Bullhead	4 lb. 8 oz.	17 3/4"	Farm Pond Taylor	April, 1966	Dennie Karas Massena
Carp	47 lb. 0 oz.	38"	Gravel Pit Muscatine	March, 1967	Raynard James Muscatine
Cat (Channel)	25 lb. 3 oz.	35"	Rock Creek Jasper	June, 1964	Lawrance Carpe Des Moines
Cat (Flathead)	62 lb. 0 oz.	46"	Iowa River Johnson	July, 1965	Roger Fairchild Coralville
Crappie	4 lb. 0 oz.	19"	Lake Darling Washington	May, 1964	Harold Conrad Keota
Northern	20 lb. 0 oz.	47"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	June, 1965	Mary E. Jones Des Moines
Paddlefish	58 lb. 13 oz.		Missouri River Pottawattamie	October, 1965	Grace Holtzmann—Ann Racobs Council Bluffs
Perch (Yellow)	1 lb. 13 oz.	14 3/4"	Mississippi River Allamakee	September, 1963	Neal Palmer Maynard
Sauger	5 lb. 2 oz.	22 1/2"	Mississippi River Dubuque	November, 1963	Art Hurlburt Dubuque
Sheepshead	46 lb. 0 oz.	38 1/2"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	October, 1962	R. L. Farran Clarion
Trout (Brown)	12 lb. 14 1/2 oz.	28"	Elk Creek Delaware	November, 1966	Billy Lee Marion
Trout (Rainbow)	9 lb. 6 oz.	27"	French Creek Allamakee	December, 1964	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
Walleye	13 lb. 8 oz.	36 1/2"	Cedar River Bremer	May, 1963	Fred Stifter Waverly



Norman Devine's largemouth bass.



Raynard James' record carp.



A. L. Smith's smallmouth bass.

What's The Difference Between a Duck?

By "Weary Willy"

Arizona Wildlife Views

One big difference between a duck is that one foot is just about the same, unless he's a coot, in which case either one will probably be different. This bothers some people. They look out across a pond at some coots and say "Oh, looky there at the ducks!"

This points out the need for a better understanding of duck feet. You can easily tell the difference between a duck and a coot by his feet, which are either webbed or sort of webbed, depending on what he is. If he's a gallinule they won't be webbed at all, but we won't discuss that because it's entirely too confusing.

If you're out duck hunting and it's during the duck season and everything is all legal and proper, it's OK for you to shoot a coot, too. Some hunters won't shoot coots, though. Maybe they feel sorry for them, or maybe they're purists, or maybe they think they're ostriches. I really don't know why some hunters won't shoot coots, but it's none of my business, anyway.

If you are one of those hunters who wants to shoot a duck but not a coot, and you see a duck-coot bird of some kind sitting on a pond, you have two choices. You can either scare him into flying and take a quick look at his feet as he takes off, or you can take off your clothes, slip into the water, swim up to him underwater and take a look at his feet from below. You have to be careful not to get your snorkel full of feathers, though. One guy who tried this inhaled a bunch of duck down and was tickled to death right there in the middle of the pond.

Anyway, look at the bird's feet, and if he has webbed feet he's a duck. If it turns out that he has sort of flaps alongside his toes, he's a coot. If he is a duck, though, then you swim back to shore, find your clothes, put them on, pick up your shotgun and blast him to smithereens.

This is called "shooting sitting ducks," and you're not supposed to do it when anyone is looking.

There is one other way to tell a duck from a coot, though, and it doesn't even involve any skin diving. This is to go look in a book of bird pictures and find out what ducks and coots look like. There's quite a bit of difference.

Once you have decided the bird in question is a duck and not a coot, it's very simple to determine what kind of a duck it is, because there are only four kinds of ducks. There are the ones with green heads, which are called "greenheads" or "mallards," and there are the kind with the long, pointy tails, which are called "pintails." All the rest are either big brown ducks or little brown ducks. Big brown ducks include gadwalls, baldpates, female mallards, canvasbacks, redheads and like that. Little brown ducks include mostly teal.

You can easily tell a big brown duck from a little brown duck by how much out of range they are when you shoot at them. Big brown ducks look closer than little brown ducks when they're all really the same distance away. Big brown ducks also make a bigger splash when they fall in the water if you happen to hit one.

Ducks come in bunches called "flocks" or "flights." Some ducks get real big and are called "geese." These geese come in flocks, too, although some people refer to them as being a "herd" when they see them grazing across the bermuda flats at Roosevelt Lake.

Once I read that a bunch of geese is supposed to be called a "gaggle," but that's a ridiculous word that doesn't deserve to be included in a serious article. Geese are also called "honkers," sometimes, because they sound like a bunch of dogs yapping.



Are puddle ducks smarter than diving ducks?

Now another thing you ought to know about ducks is that they like to sit around and rest without getting shot at. You can't really blame them for that. Most game and fish departments have smartened up to the fact that refuges don't accomplish much when you're dealing with resident game birds such as quail, but ducks are a different proposition. They can haul off and leave the country whenever they take a notion, so it's important to keep them happy once they do get here from up north.

That's why we still have state and federal refuges for waterfowl. Without them, the ducks get nervous and fly away into Old Mexico or someplace, and that's the last we would see of 'em.

Refuges are also important up north so the ducks can practice their togetherness without getting pestered.

There are probably other things you should know about ducks, but it's not good to cram too much at one time.

Ducks are divided by their feeding habits into "puddlers," (or "dabblers") and "divers." Puddling ducks stay in shallow water and just lean over when they want something to eat, but diving ducks stay in deep water and go all the way to the bottom. I think this is because they can't swim. Puddle ducks probably can't swim, either, but they have sense enough to stay near the shore. This proves that puddle ducks are smarter than diving ducks. Canvasbacks and redheads are diving ducks, and so many of them have drowned that the Fish and Wildlife Service had to close the season.

When they're not off flying somewhere, both kinds of ducks stay close to water 'cause they're too awkward to walk on land. When they take off to fly, though, you can easily tell the puddlers from the divers. Puddle ducks just leap straight up into the air like they'd been goosed. (Geese, though, don't leap into the air like they'd been ducked. I can't explain this.) Diving ducks run across the water with their wings flapping and take off like an airplane. They have to run across the water because, as I already told you, they can't swim.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, which I'll tell you more about later, has a dandy new booklet that tells you about ducks and stuff, and shows you how to tell puddlers from divers. I really don't know why this is so important, though, and I don't know why they have to put out books telling what certain ducks are supposed to do when they take off. I think this is something every duck should decide for himself, without the federal government telling him how to act.

It's also very easy to tell ducks from pillows, because ducks have their feathers on the outside. They're quite pretty, and they show up better there. Pillows, on the other hand, have their feathers on the inside because they're supposed to be soft. Ducks don't particularly care if they're soft or not. In fact, they'd just as soon you didn't sit on them.

So much for identification. I don't think there's anything else you might get mixed up with ducks.

Ducks are restless people and they don't stay in one spot very long. They spend their winters in the south and their summers up north where it's cool. In that respect they've got it made, but there are complications. As a matter of fact this next part gets real complicated, but I'll try to explain it anyway.

You see, one of the big reasons ducks go up north in the summer is so they can find a big, old marsh and raise a bunch of young'uns. There's nothing like a big, yellow moon over a marsh to make a duck feel romantic. Because ducks wander all over the country, though, they're classified as "migratory" wildlife, and Uncle Sam has the say-so about managing them. This is OK, except that Uncle Sam has a bunch of nephews working for him, and this is where the confusion starts.

One or two of these nephews have the job of draining all the marshes up north where the ducks go to practice togetherness. Another nephew has the job of keeping the farmers in business when they grow crops nobody needs, though, and he has several cousins working for him. What they do is fix the land all up for planting after they drain the marshes, and get some farmers to grow crops on it. Then one of the cousins pays him money for some of the stuff he grows, while another cousin just buys it outright from him and stores it in warehouses or silos which are built by still another cousin.

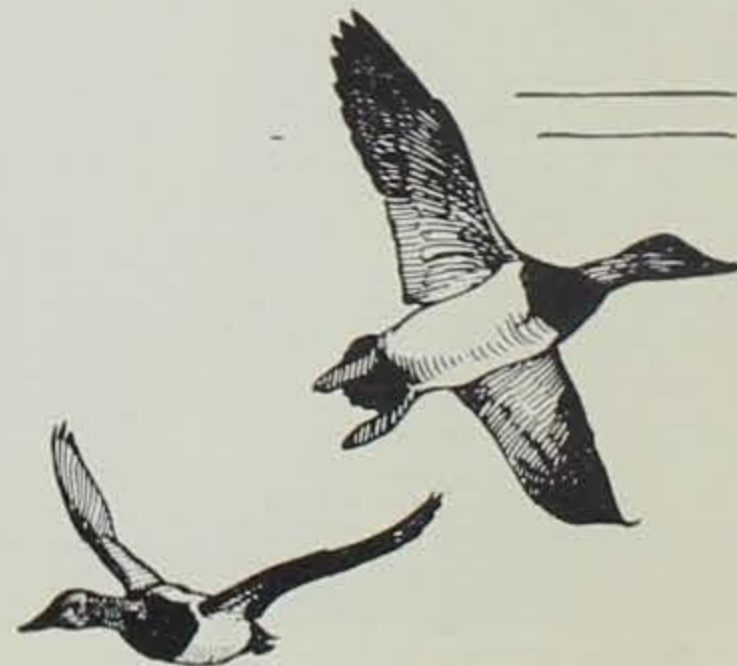
All the time this is going on the remaining nephew, who has the job of managing the ducks, is running around trying to get these new farms put back into marshland like they were in the first place, so the ducks can practice togetherness. Without togetherness on the northern marshes, we'll soon run out of ducks.

I told you it was complicated!

Once you understand it all, though, it makes a lot of sense. . . I'm sure it must!

In addition to worrying about togetherness places for the ducks, this last nephew, who is called "Fish and Wildlife Service," also has the job of figuring out what the duck hunting regulations ought to be.

It's easy to tell ducks from pillows.



FUTURE BRIGHT FOR MR. WOOD DUCK

By Richard Bishop
Game Biologist

Population conditions that now look good for Mr. Wood Duck did not always look so encouraging. His bright future, resulting from the concern of waterfowl men, has not always been the case.

There was a time from the late 1800's through the early 1900's when wood ducks were highly exploited. They were sought by hunters for their beautiful plumage and eating quality. Of course, the tendency of wood ducks to congregate in roosting areas in late evening made them highly vulnerable to the hunter.

For a time it was believed that the wood duck was on its way to extinction. Closed seasons resulted in 1920 for the states in the Mississippi and Atlantic Flyways. These flyways take in all states from Louisiana, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota east to the Atlantic coast. The season was closed in all these states until 1940, and then only a few states held a season with a one bird bag limit. In the late forties most states opened a wood duck season with only a one bird limit. From the late forties until the present, with the exception of 1954, 1956, 1957, and 1958, Iowa has held a restrictive open season for wood ducks. During the closed seasons and the later restrictive seasons the wood duck population slowly responded, and by the late 50's and 60's had increased to considerable numbers once again.

The wood duck is now the second most important nesting species of waterfowl in Iowa. They are outnumbered only by blue-winged teal. Iowa hunters harvest considerable wood ducks, depending on the date of the season. The majority of the wood ducks migrate from late September through October. Early waterfowl seasons increase the kill of wood ducks in Iowa, and when late seasons are held very few wood ducks are harvested. The three hunting seasons from 1963 to 1965 resulted in a wood duck kill of 21 percent, and 8 percent, respectively, of the total duck kill in Iowa.

Hunting season data indicates the importance of wood ducks to the Iowa hunter. The wood duck also plays an important role in the hunting picture throughout the 14 Mississippi Flyway states. The importance placed on the species by the bird lover as well as the hunter has created considerable interest among waterfowl people. This is one of the few species of ducks that live for the most part within the continental United States.

From the early 1900's, concern was being expressed about the timbered habitat being destroyed



U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Photo.

and its ultimate effect on wood duck populations. Wood ducks need holes or cavities of a certain type in trees within a mile of good water areas to raise their young. These cavities are for the most part found in old trees, and these are usually the first ones to go where cutting operations begin. Reduced available habitat alone could reduce wood duck numbers considerably even if no wood ducks were taken by hunters. This reduction in natural cavities has prompted programs in many states that provide wood duck boxes for homes. Although an enormous amount of time and effort has been put into this program, it is still not enough to influence the flyway population of wood ducks to any great extent.

For many years most of the wood ducks in Iowa were found nesting along the wooded streams and rivers in central and eastern areas. The timbered bluffs along the Mississippi River and the rivers and streams draining into this mighty river are still referred to as the wood duck habitat of Iowa. Very few wood ducks were observed nesting in north central and northwestern Iowa until a few years ago. Summer banding data indicates an increase in nesting wood ducks in the prairie pothole country of north-central and northwest Iowa. This area is characterized by flat to rolling farming country with few trees. Shallow marshes, most of which have been purchased by the state, are found throughout this area.

The land around marshes is mostly farm ground with very few trees. Trees, when present, are generally oak or regrowth timber. This timber type has very few natural cavities, thus limiting wood duck nesting. There are a few exceptions where old timber is adjacent to marsh areas and natural cavities are available. These areas are now producing some wood ducks. But for the most part such timber is limited and cavities for nesting wood ducks are at a premium. The only available cavities in many areas are found in farm wood lots where old trees remain.

The past four years wood ducks have been adjusting to this prairie existence and are becoming more plentiful as a breeding species. They are fond of the marshes with good plant growth where they can safely rear their young. These marshes supply food and offer good protection from predators. Except for the Mississippi River, these ideal rearing areas are absent from the wooded stream areas of eastern and central Iowa.

It has been stated by many authors that wood ducks show a strong tendency for migrational homing. That is they return to nest in the vicinity where they were hatched. This tendency restricts their potential to pioneer into new areas. Wood duck populations in one area tend to build from reproduction from that area, rather than from birds moving in from another area, unless there is adjacent habitat that is filled to capacity. There is an increasing number of nesting wood ducks on our prairie marshes with habitat conditions, which prior to this time were considered marginal for this species.

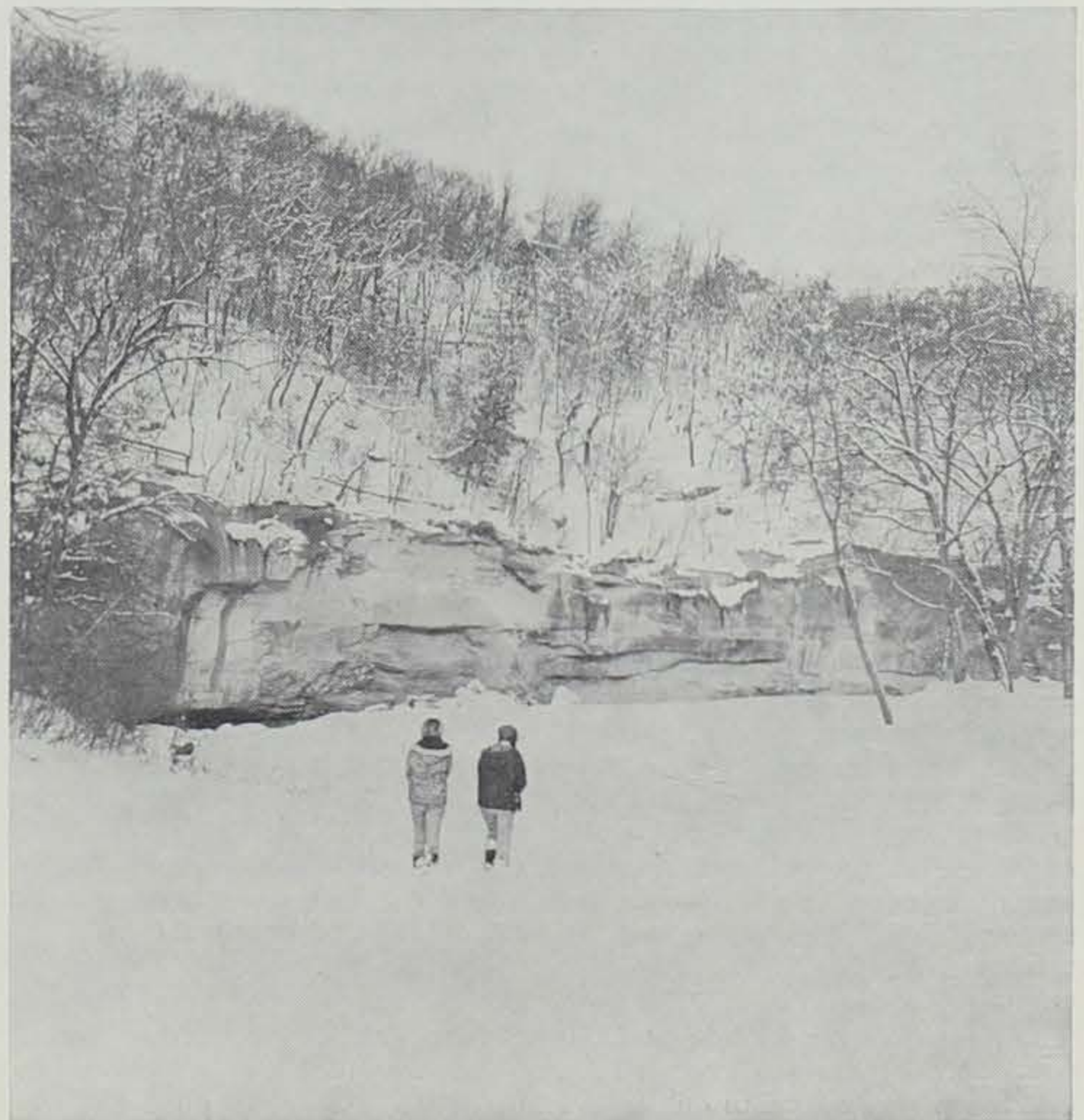
The potential of an expanded breeding range in Iowa is very encouraging. Extending the range of wood duck production could increase Iowa's fall population of wood ducks significantly. The prairie marshes of this area are very productive as far as raising the young ducklings, but the limiting factor is available nesting cavities. The wood ducks are making use of farm groves and other types of wooded areas for nesting. In some cases, natural cavities are present,

(Continued from page 5)
left in harvest crop land of yore. (When grandpa hand-husked corn, he husked all the corn.) But the mechanical picker changed that. It's a lot cheaper than hand picking but will shatter up to 20 percent of the total crop. Lots of farmers glean this harvest loss with pigs or cattle. But waterfowl, as well as pheasants, quail and other farm game still find plenty to make an easy living. Of course, ducks being ducks they would still prefer to feed in the water; so if you are situated to flood a harvested field, so much the better. Local game authorities can provide helpful tips on how to manage game on farmland and will also pass on the legality of certain procedures which change slightly from time to time.

but competition from starlings and squirrels limits the number available to wood ducks.

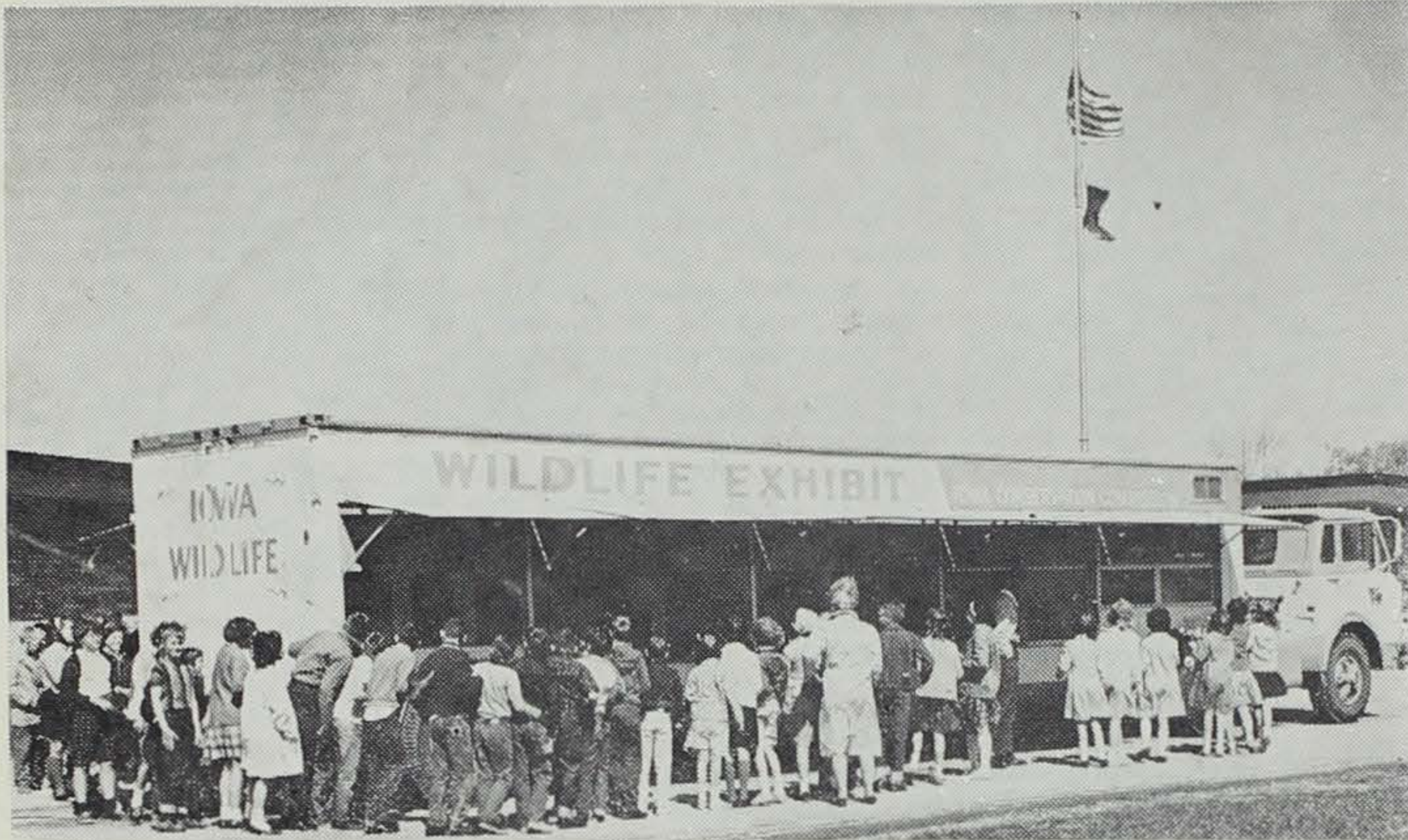
This pioneering adventure of Mr. Wood Duck could mean more wood ducks for Iowa hunters and better places to live for many wood ducks. The State Conservation Commission is now undertaking a study on establishing new nesting populations on areas where only a few wood ducks have been seen before.

Management of timbered areas on state and private land in northern Iowa may result in a much enlarged breeding area for Iowa wood ducks. This in turn would result in an expanded, more secure, population as long as waterfowl regulations remain aware of the past plight of the wood duck.



Scenic beauty in Ledges State Park after snow.

SCC Traveling Wildlife Exhibit Completes Another Successful Season in Iowa



Over 10,000,000 people have viewed Traveling Wildlife Exhibit.

By
Julius "Sonny" Satre
Circulation Manager

A familiar sight to Iowans the past 19 years has been the popular State Conservation Commission Traveling Fish and Wildlife Exhibit.

Since its first tour of the state back in 1948, over 10,000,000 persons have viewed this attractive and interesting exhibit. This year alone, over 500,000 attended showings at 187 different localities in the state. During this time the exhibit traveled over 11,000 miles.

The exhibit is housed in a 40-foot custom-built van type trailer drawn by a truck tractor. At each showing, panels on the sides of the trailer are raised so the display of Iowa wildlife is shaded and may be viewed from the outside.

Fish, amphibians (frogs, lizards and turtles) and crayfish are displayed in seven aquariums. A "snake pit" is another interesting feature containing many beneficial harmless native species.

Iowa mammals and birds are housed in 16 cages. Some of the annual residents of the cages you may see during a typical showing would be badger, raccoon, striped skunk, red fox, gray fox, coyote, bobcat, fox and gray squirrels, ground hog, opossum, red-tailed hawk, great horned owl, sparrow hawk, barred owl, crow and screech owl. Another added attraction during the summer months is a deer fawn. The fawn is exhibited in an outside portable pen. In all there are over 100 living wildlife inhabitants on the exhibit.

Two exhibit personnel from the Public Relations Section are kept constantly busy at each showing caring for the wildlife.

"Where do the animals come from, what do you do with them during the winter?" That is a common question asked exhibit personnel. The majority of the animals come from the Wildlife Exhibit and Research Station located adjacent to the Ledges State Park near Boone. Quite a number of the animals are kidnaped orphans taken from the wild illegally by unthoughtful people. The snakes are captured by Commission personnel throughout the state. The fish and other forms of marine life are taken from state lakes and streams by fishery personnel and transported to the exhibit.

After the exhibit season ends early in October the animals are returned to the Wildlife Exhibit and Research Station. Other creatures are returned to the wild. After animals have been in captivity a period of time, they are so dependent on mankind they cannot properly provide for themselves in the wild. A good rule to know and follow is: LEAVE WILDLIFE BABIES ALONE.

The Traveling Exhibit begins its tour in the latter part of April. As many schools as possible are visited in the spring and fall. Local conservation officers are present at each showing to answer questions and give talks on the importance of conservation.

During the summer months the exhibit has a very busy schedule. It appears at numerous county fairs, community celebrations and festivals. At events such as these, the exhibit has a portable booth

set up at the rear of the trailer. The local fish and game conservation officer and exhibit personnel are available to answer questions and distribute literature concerning Iowa's vast outdoor recreational opportunities.

What is the proper way to request the Traveling Exhibit for a showing in an area? It's easy! First you must contact the local fish and game conservation officer and he will in turn forward the request to the central State Con-

servation Commission office. However, a request is not a guarantee that the exhibit will be scheduled because of the many received. The scheduling policy is to try to have the exhibit scheduled in areas where it hasn't been or localities that have not seen the exhibit for a period of time. Therefore, requests from new areas have priority over areas where the exhibit truck has toured recently.

In addition to the Traveling Exhibit, the Conservation Commission has two portable camper exhibit trailers available for showing. This particular type of display provides a 15' by 7' informational booth for the outdoor enthusiast. The scheduling procedure for this type of exhibit is handled in the same manner as the wildlife exhibit. The camper display consists mainly of a neat arrangement of photographs, charts and maps, fur pelts, mounted bird and animal specimens and occasionally a live caged member of the animal kingdom. Commission personnel are present to answer questions and distribute literature. These exhibits are used primarily at county fairs, sports shows, celebrations and other similar events.

The Traveling Wildlife Exhibit goes into "mothballs" in October for its annual refurbishing. All the cages, aquariums and water tanks are dismantled, repaired and repainted. The exhibit tractor and trailer are completely checked inside and out for needed repairs. By early spring the familiar white and green display featuring native wildlife is again ready for another interesting campaign through the state bringing the important message of conservation to its citizens.



"Dear, it's the family we met at the National Park."