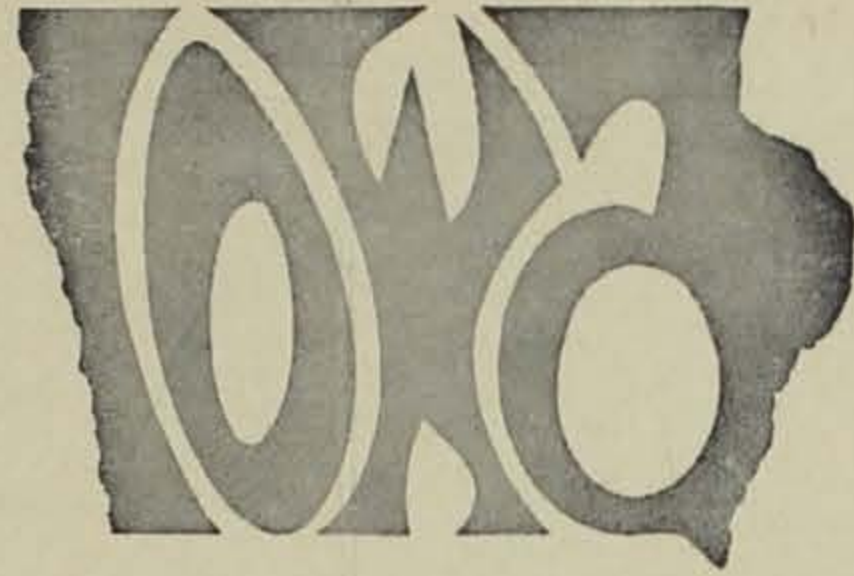
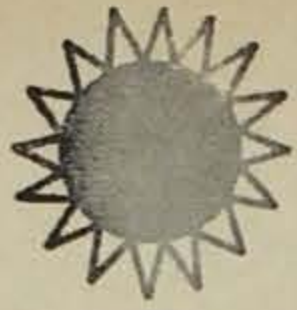


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MAY 1971



# CONSERVATIONIST



COMMISSIONERS

- EARL E. JARVIS, Chairman—Wilton Junction
- WILLIAM E. NOBLE, Vice Chairman—Oelwein
- JIM D. BIXLER—Council Bluffs
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- LES LICKLIDER—Cherokee
- DR. KEITH A. McNURLEN—Ames
- ED WEINHEIMER—Greenfield



FRED A. PRIEWERT, Director

COMMISSION MINUTES

April 6, 1971

Denied a permit for a public marina in connection with the condominium development of Lubben and Crane on the north shore of Clear Lake.

Accepted the following land acquisition options: Walters Creek, Adams County, 93.5 acres; Brushy Creek, Webster County, 512.9 acres; Volga River Lake, Fayette County, 139 acres; Badger Creek, Madison County, 160 acres. Volga River Lake, Fayette County, 16 acres.

Three flowage easements for Badger Creek were approved.

Approved a Fish and Game land purchase option for a 23-acre tract on the west shore of Lower Gar Lake. This tract contains approximately 2,200 feet of shoreline.

Contracts were awarded for the following projects: Red Rock State Park, Red Rock Federal Reservoir—Woodframe storage building, Waters Station; modern latrines and incidental work; Fairport Waters Station, Muscatine County, roads, parking area, boat ramp, camp pads, wood frame double vault latrines (2).

Rejected the request of the Corps of Engineers for a letter of intent to sponsor recreation on the proposed Canton, Doon and Little Rock Impoundments on the Big Sioux Reservoir.

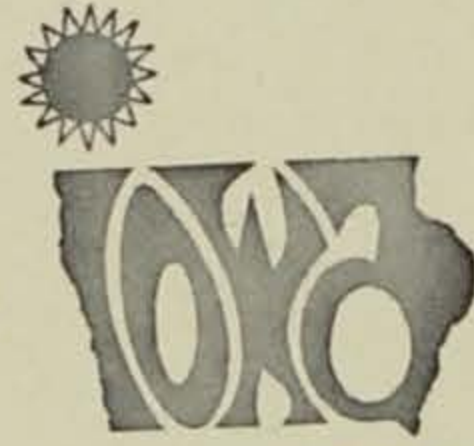
Approved the following County Conservation Board Land Acquisition Projects: Cerro Gordo County, Shell Rock River Green Belt Addition, 71 acres; Clayton County, Osborne Plantation Addition, 18.6 acres; Clinton County, Rock Creek Park, 73.9 acres.

Approved the following County Conservation Board Land Management Agreements: Carroll County, Swan Lake State Park; Hardin County, Pine Lake-Iowa River Access; Scott County, LeClaire Access.

Approved the following County Conservation Board Development Plans: Clinton County, Rock Creek Park; Des Moines County, Lower Skunk River Access Revision; Lucas County Conservation Board, Chariton Information Center.

Approved a request by 26 individual County Conservation Boards throughout the state for a cooperative program with the ICC in the cage rearing of channel catfish. This will involve the rearing of 127,100 channel catfish.

MAY, 1971



CONSERVATIONIST

DAVID R. EVANS, Editor

WAYNE LONNING, Photographer

ROGER SPARKS, Managing Editor

JERRY LEONARD, Photographer

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So Who's Fishing?

# “Great Potential for Upland Game”

by David Evans

That statement by Robert Barratt, superintendent of game for the Iowa Conservation Commission, pretty well describes the Rathbun Game Management Area.

Located within the upper reaches of the Rathbun Reservoir in Lucas, Monroe, Appanoose and Wayne Counties, it includes the flood plains of the Chariton and South Chariton Rivers. Presently the State Conservation Commission is leasing about 13,700 acres from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Two state-owned game areas were added to bring the total to approximately 14,500 acres.

The Rathbun area will be managed primarily for upland game—pheasants, quail and rabbits. However, other species including deer, squirrel and waterfowl will also benefit from the management practices.

Basically, the land will be manipulated to provide game habitat—nesting, winter and escape cover and food plots. This in turn will increase game populations and provide hunting opportunities. But, hunting is just a part of it, points out Barratt. The state will also have fishing access areas and trapping will be permitted. Naturally, hiking, bird watching, nature study and related outdoor activities will also be possible.

The area will be open to hunting, except that land designated as refuges. The entire boundary will be posted for proper identification. This will be a big job. Approximately 83 miles will be posted by the Game Section.

A waterfowl refuge will be established to provide resting and feeding areas for

migrating waterfowl. The exact size of the refuges will not be finalized until the needs of the migrating birds can be determined.

Rathbun dam and reservoir were authorized by congress in 1954 as a multiple-purpose project for flood control and water conservation. The reservoir was filled last fall. The land leased from the Corps was purchased by the federal government prior to building the dam. The land leased from the Corps (13,700 acres) borders two state game areas in Lucas County—Browns Slough, 150 acres; and Colyn, 700 acres.

“When the land was privately owned it provided good habitat for upland game,” said Barratt. “But, we believe we can improve on it.”

It's easy to see why game management men get excited about the area. It includes hills, gullies, river bottom and agriculture land. On the hills, second growth timber such as white and burr oak and hickory are found. Along the river bottoms basswood, soft maple and red oak are among the major trees. Diversified cover is a key that opens the door to good game populations. In other words, cropland, grassland, brush and woodland will be distributed in small units. Grain crops will be planted to intersperse with other cover types as well as provide food for wildlife. Tree and shrub plantings will be made where needed to improve winter cover and travel lanes.

Where possible, feeding areas for waterfowl will be planted. This may consist of seeding mud flats or planting a field to winter wheat. Of course, ducks

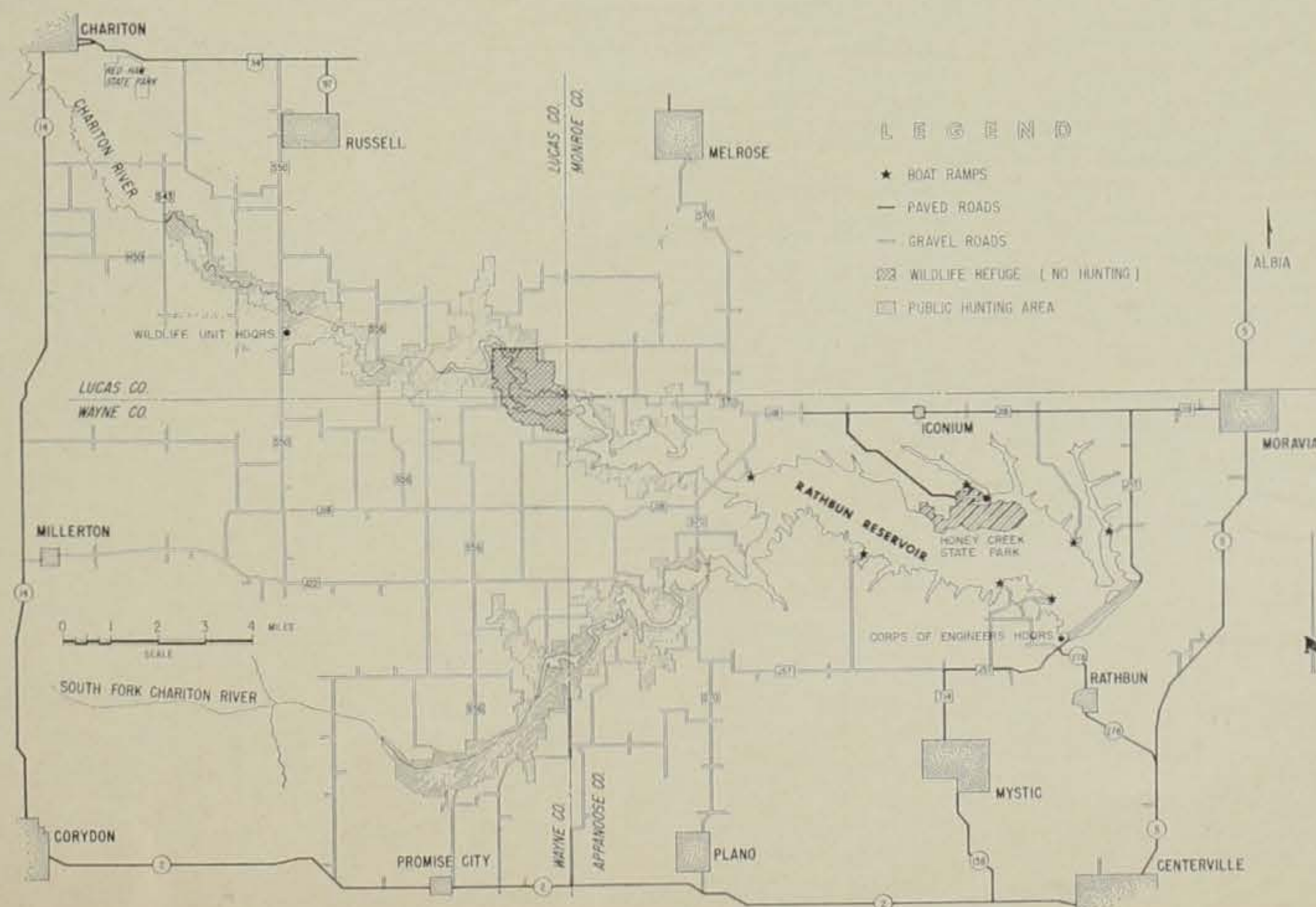
and geese will make use of the waste grain left in the fields after the corn harvest. In addition, water levels at Browns Slough and the Colyn game area will be manipulated to provide the best water and vegetative conditions for waterfowl.

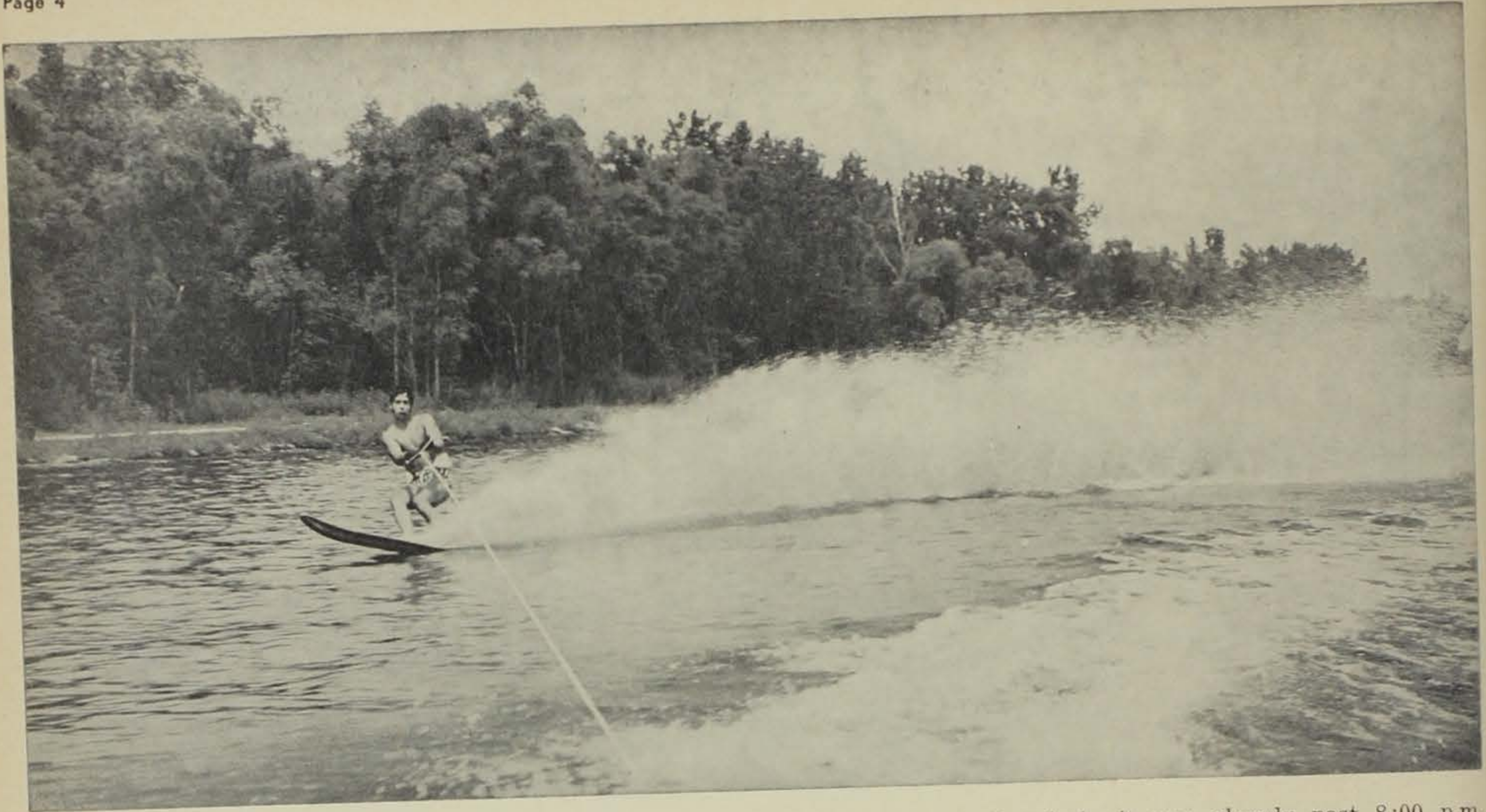
Approximately 25 acres of corn, grain sorghum and sorghum-sudan grass will be planted in isolated areas to provide winter food. Strips will be plowed to encourage growth of annual weeds which provide natural foods. This will be interspersed with cover habitat. Brush will be controlled for nesting cover. Where cut, the brush will be piled to provide escape cover for rabbits.

About 4,000 acres of cropland will be leased to local farmers under a share-crop agreement to provide food for wildlife and compensate farm cooperators.

“Rathbun game area will also provide an excellent opportunity for a long term (ten years) research project,” continued Barratt. “Selected plots will be managed in different ways—from regular farming practices, to intensive, to just ‘letting it go.’ Continued inspections will be made to obtain information on which management practices produce the best wildlife populations on the various plots.”

The lease agreement was signed with the Corps in March and work started immediately. Development plans and land management practices were outlined and activities are underway. “There is no place exactly like this in the state,” said Barratt. “It will provide us with an opportunity to develop it into a paradise for upland game and it will benefit all wildlife species.”





## Boating Safety is Their Business

by Sonny Satre  
Information Specialist

Mrs. Anderson anxiously looked at the clock—it was already past 8:00 p.m. The evening supper she had prepared for her husband was ready to eat two hours ago. He had promised to return home from his boating-fishing excursion on Lake Red Rock by 6:00 p.m. She knew that Roger usually was very dependable but tonight he was unusually late.

After much apprehension and hesitation, Mrs. Anderson finally decided to notify the local law enforcement authorities. In a matter of a moment the local police contacted the Iowa Conservation Commission waters conservation officer at Red Rock via police radio. Upon receiving the necessary information, the waters officer immediately cruised his radio-equipped patrol vessel in search for the missing man. A boat answering the description of Mr. Anderson's is spotted in a cove. Upon closer observation, the officer can see a man in the boat fishing. Sure enough, it is Mr. Anderson, alive and well! The crappies were biting and he had forgotten to check his wrist watch was his explanation.

The above is a hypothetical situation but many similar occurrences actually happen in the life of a state waters officer. Most of these situations have happy endings but, sometimes there is tragedy involved.

Although a waters officer's prime responsibility is to promote a boating education program and navigation law enforcement, he is a state peace officer by law. He is responsible for all phases of law enforcement and cooperates with other enforcement agencies. There are 14 waters officers and supervisory personnel stationed in Iowa.

From April through October are very active months for a waters officer because of the volume of boaters. During the winter months, the officer is kept busy refurbishing his patrol vessel and other equipment, enforcing snowmobile regulations and presenting boating-snowmobile safety education programs for the public.

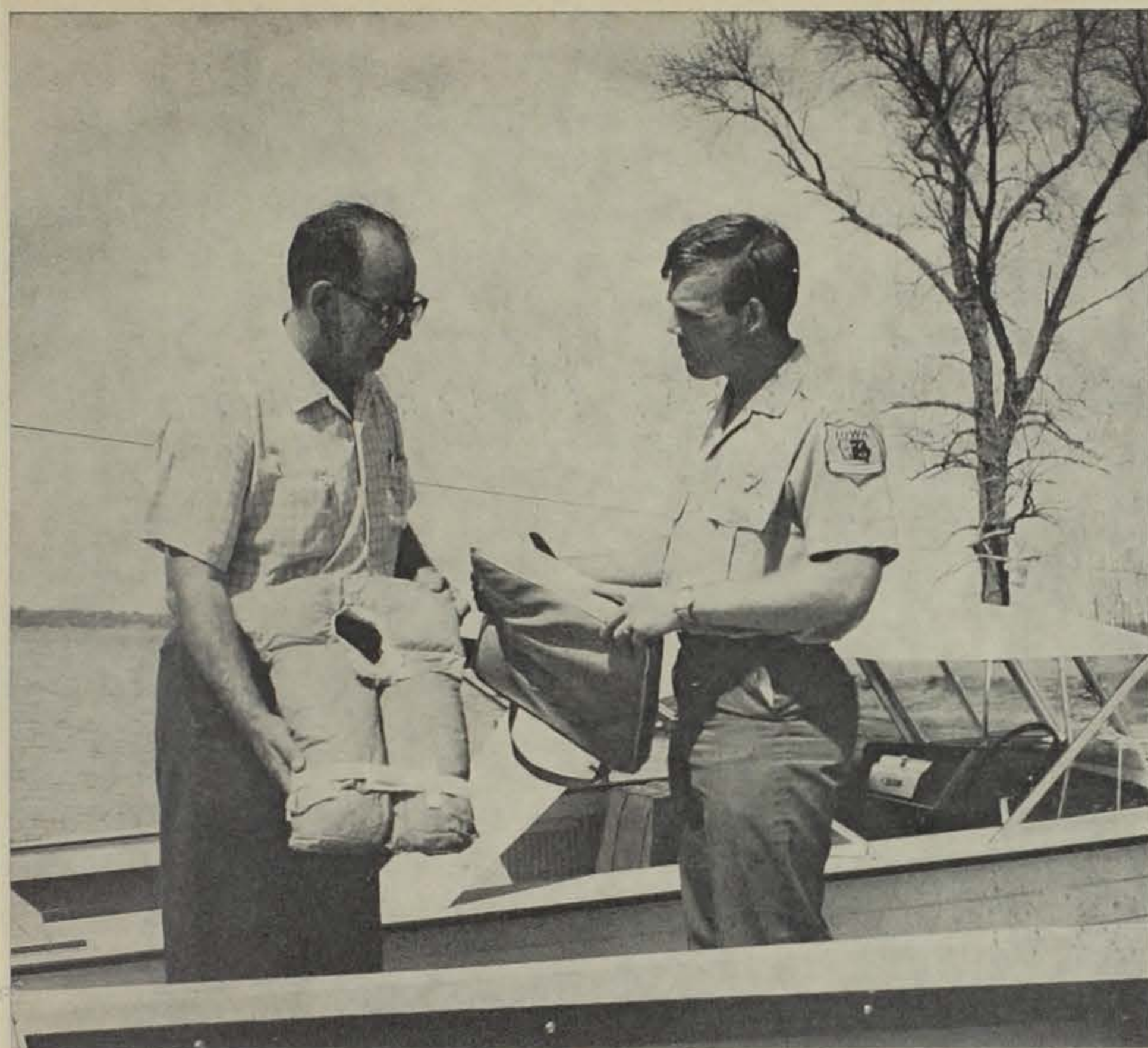
Other duties of a waters officer include maintaining and developing accesses to Iowa's public waters such as boat ramps, parking lots and docks; assisting in recovering of drowning victims; patrolling flood disasters and offering assistance; detecting water pollution; reporting encroachment on state-owned lands and waters; issuing permits for boat races and sailing regattas; inspecting boat liveries and tagging sea worthy vessels; enforcing Iowa's snowmobile regulations and coordinating boat and snowmobile registration programs with the state's county recorders.

As stated earlier, promoting a boating safety education program is a major objective of a waters officer. This is accomplished through radio and television programs and presenting lectures to schools and civic organizations.

Some of the most common navigation law violations, according to Roy Downing, state waters superintendent, include not having coast guard approved life saving devices aboard for each passenger, overloading of vessels, no fire extinguisher, exceeding 10 m.p.h. within 300 feet of shore, exceeding 5 m.p.h. within 250 feet of another craft traveling 5 m.p.h. or less and water skiing without a competent observer aboard. For a copy of Iowa's boating regulations write to the Iowa Conservation Commission, 300 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.

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Why do we need or have navigational laws? The answer is quite simple—to protect boating and water recreationists and to promote a safe boating recreation program. Because of the mounting number of boating accidents in the 1930's, navigational legislation became imperative. Today, Iowa is recognized nationwide as having one of the top state boating safety and navigation enforcement programs. Accompanying this article is a state waters officer and water patrol station directory for your convenience.

### Waters Conservation Officers

Downing, Roy L., Supt. 4000 S.E. 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50315 .....	515-281-5766
Boers, Lewis M., North Central Supv. Box 1161, Pleasantville, Iowa 50225 .....	515-281-5766
Jack, Robert, Mississippi River Box 141, DeWitt, Iowa 52742 .....	319-659-5060
Jauron, Gerald J., Missouri River Earling, Iowa 51530 .....	712-747-2355
Nuehring, Louis C., South Central Supv. 1040 Amos Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50315 .....	515-281-5766
Braesch, Tom, Red Rock R.R. 3, Knoxville, Iowa 50138 .....	515-842-3805
Brees, Danley, Storm Lake R.R. 2, Box 971, Storm Lake, Iowa 50588 .....	712-732-4491
Jauron, Steven, Missouri River 2957 Park Avenue, Apt. 9A, Sioux City, Iowa 51104 .....	712-946-4083
Johnson, Orville, Okoboji Area Milford, Iowa 51351 .....	712-337-3377
Nelson, Edgar A., Rathbun Res. R.R. 2, Moravia, Iowa 52571 .....	515-724-3304
Noble, Curtiss D., Mississippi River-Fairport R.R. 3, Muscatine, Iowa 52761 .....	319-263-2791
Parker, Rodney, Missouri River R.R. 2, Wilson Island Waters St., Mo. Valley, Iowa 51555 (temp.) .....	712-642-2069
Purtilo, Gary, Mississippi River-Nobles Island Box 15-A, Harpers Ferry, Iowa 52146 .....	319-586-2464
Roskammer, Jerry, Spirit Lake Area Gull Point Lake Patrol, Milford, Iowa 51351 .....	712-337-3377
Sharr, Ronald, Clear Lake Bayside Lake Patrol, Clear Lake, Iowa 50428 .....	515-357-5000

## It's Chance That Makes HISTORY

by David Evans

Turning back the dusty pages of time, one can see what might have transpired and speculate on how it might have changed the course of history.

School Teacher in Merry Old England: "Mrs. Walton, your son Izaak will never amount to much if he spends all his time fishing."

Sheriff of Nottingham: "Nice buck you have there Robin Hood. May I see your hunting license?"

Neighbor of Mrs. Audubon: "Mrs. Audubon, why do you let John spend all his time drawing and painting. He should be doing something constructive, like learning to be a blacksmith."

Indian to Daniel Boone: "How come you want to wear the coonskin cap. It makes you look silly."

Politician to President Theodore Roosevelt: "Mr. President, if you want to go down in history as a great statesman you got to stop messing around with those idealistic conservationists."

Teacher in LeClaire to Mrs. Cody: "According to our psychological tests, we find that your son Billy would make a good school teacher, brain surgeon or plumber. Really you should encourage him in these pursuits."

Friend to Julien DuBuque in Iowa in 1788: "Man you got to be kidding. Why settle here. You will wither away and never be heard from again. Move to California."

Mayor of St. Louis to Merriweather Lewis and William Clark in 1804: "Man, what you want to paddle up the Missouri for. There's no hunting or fishing north of St. Louis."

Nurse to Mrs. Hoover: "It's too bad your son Herbert will never get to be president. You know there can't be a president from west of the Mississippi."

Editor to J.N. "Ding" Darling: "Ding, old buddy, why spend so much time on conservation cartoons. That's no way to improve the world."

Early Iowa Pioneer "Now why do we need them durn game and fish laws. Heck, there will always be animals and birds to hunt and streams to fish in."

## Lake Red Rock Fishing Prospects:

# "The Instant Lake"

## Two Years Later

When construction of Red Rock Dam and Reservoir was completed two years ago it was truly Iowa's first "Instant Lake". Even the experts were baffled by its filling to conservation pool elevation in just three short days when a minimum of three months was predicted. But, this wasn't all of the spectacular show, there was even more to come. Eight inches or more of precipitation in the form of ice and snow was lying on the entire basin and in the following 83 days the dam impounded a lake that covered 44,000 surface acres, more than 38 feet above normal pool level.

Activity of all kinds flourished in nearby communities. Sightseers caused gigantic traffic jams, boaters blocked abandoned roadways to launch spanking new boats on a rampless lake, and even the conversation of old-timers on the benches around the courthouse square quickened in tempo speculating if the dam would hold without a leak.

Of course this wasn't only a heyday for people, but it was also a bonanza for

fish life in the lake. Even with this amount of expansion in habitat the lake wasn't exactly fishless, because the Des Moines River had vast fish populations. But, with an increase of more than 800 times the space previously available fish populations were bound to react in some way. The possibility for reproduction, survival and growth was enormous.

The Fisheries Section of the Iowa Conservation Commission took advantage of the creation of this new lake by heavily stocking it with young fish. In the first year 21 million walleye fry, 4 million northern pike fry and 500,000 largemouth bass fingerlings were planted in early spring. Survival was high and growth of these fish was almost unbelievable. By late summer walleye and bass weighed up to 2 pounds and northern pike were taken in test nets up to 7 pounds! Forage for these predatory species had been abundant throughout the summer and with clear water they took advantage of it.

Natural reproduction of fishes native

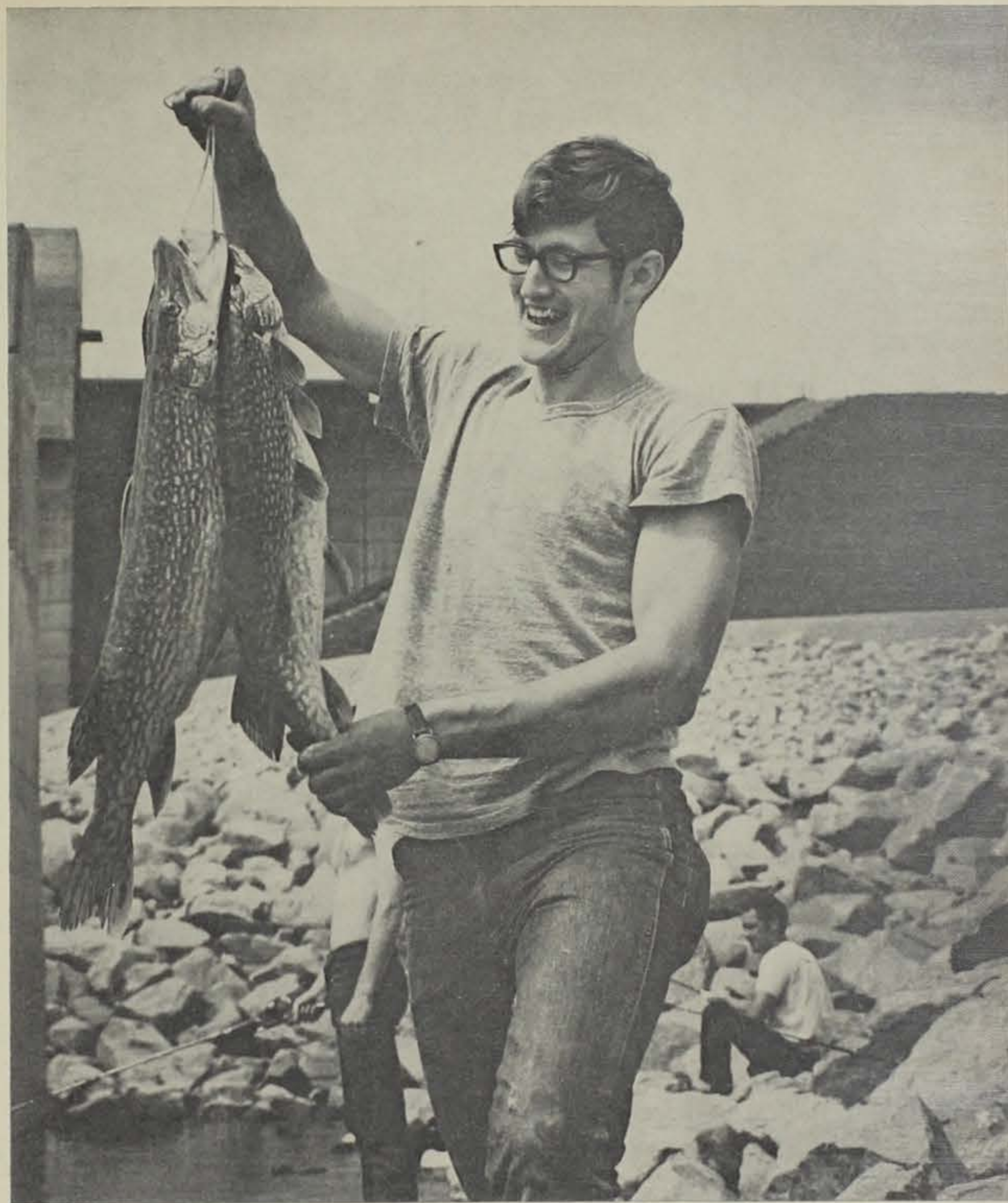
to the lake was also high. Large year classes of carp, river carpsucker, big-mouth buffalo, and gizzard shad hatched. At the end of the first year it was estimated the fish population density in Lake Red Rock was about 700 pounds per surface acre. Of this standing crop, 600 pounds were rough fish species. Bullhead were by far the most abundant game-fish species followed in order by channel catfish and crappie.

The second year of impoundment was almost the opposite of the first. Water levels were abnormally stable for a flood control reservoir with the greatest increase of almost 10 feet occurring during a seven day period in late May. Some of the consequences of the prolonged flooding in the previous year became obvious. Most species were in much poorer body condition, growth was hardly detectable and many fish were infested with external parasites. What was happening? The answer was simply stress.

When the lake was at higher water levels the fish population increased to nearly the carrying capacity of this habitat. Then the water level was lowered and the population density far exceeded the available space. Fish populations adjusted to this stress by non-growth and increased mortality. As soon as an equilibrium between space, available food and population density was reached the biological characteristics of the population stabilized once more.

Natural reproduction was quite low in the second year with only carp and gizzard shad showing numerous young. Additional stockings of walleye and northern pike fry met with total failure. Extremely high sedimentary turbidity from flooding in late May was catastrophic to the plankton supply in the lake. Since these fish depend wholly upon these microscopic organisms for food in the early life stage they also perished from a lack of food.

In the two years of impoundment Red Rock Reservoir has shown "Jekyll-Hyde" fishery potential. Success of fish production in the first year was almost unbelievable even to the trained biologist and the second year was termed a bust. Then what is the long range fishing potential of the lake? It will most



By Jim Mayhew  
Fisheries Biologist

Northerns this size are present above and below dam.

probably depend upon the characteristics of the habitat much as in the first two years, and some years will be far more productive than others.

Management of the fishery in Lake Red Rock will not be simple, but it will not be impossible. Wide fluctuations in water level and volume are notoriously not conducive to fisheries management. There is always a chance flooding and the usual accompanying turbidity will cause total mortality of planktonic organisms and eliminate entire year classes of fish life. Spawning during times of lowering water levels could result in nests being left high and dry. So management must be geared to short lived but fast growing species. To achieve fast growth rates in predatory game species, a large forage base must be maintained at all times of the year. Fortunately, gizzard shad are now fulfilling this need.

In the long run, channel catfish, bullhead and crappie will probably be the most numerous game-fish species in the

lake. Largemouth bass will be present in fairly large numbers, but angling success will be low in the summer because of the large amount of shad forage available. Best fishing can be expected in early spring before shad hatch and in late autumn after they become too large for forage. It is truly doubtful if walleye and northern pike can be maintained in the lake. Spawning sites are almost nonexistent, and the fishery must be sustained by stocking. Introduction of young fish at the time of year when the probability of major flooding is greatest would meet with limited success. Successful plantings of these fishes is far more feasible below the dam in the tailwaters.

The fish population in the lake is already dominated by rough-fish species and can be expected to continue. Many of these fish have high food-fish value but low catchability on hook-and-line. Studies are currently being conducted to evaluate the potential commercial and industrial food-fish yield from the

lake. Harvest would be controlled so the sport fishery would not be jeopardized in any manner.

In management of Lake Red Rock it must be kept in mind the primary purpose for construction of the impoundment was for flood control. Operation of a reservoir for this purpose is usually not the best procedure for fish management. In fact, many times it is deleterious to the more desirable game-fish species. Maximum utilization of a flood control impoundment would completely empty the pool during periods of low flow. Because of the high recreation demand a conservation pool level has been established. Fishing and other forms of recreation are purely secondary benefits. Southern Iowa has long been blessed with numerous small man-made recreation lakes, water supply impoundments, farm ponds and industrial pits. What was needed most of all was some big waters for full recreational potential. Lake Red Rock certainly fulfills part of this need.



A familiar sight of blue and snow geese during migration near DeSoto National Refuge.

## The Role of the Federal Re

by Wesley C. Newcomb  
U. S. Game Management Agent, Iowa

National wildlife refuges play an important part in conservation story of the United States. More than 330 refuges in excess of 29 million acres make up the national refuge system. Their lands and waters were selected to benefit America's wildlife populations—particularly migratory birds and rare mammals.

The first national wildlife refuge was designated in 1903, when President Theodore Roosevelt set aside Pelican Island on the east coast of Florida to protect a nesting colony of brown pelicans and herons. The system is still growing to secure adequate habitat for waterfowl and endangered species of wildlife.

There are four national wildlife refuges in Iowa. The largest and oldest, established in 1924, in the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge extending from near Wabasha, Minnesota, along both sides of the river, 280 miles downstream to the vicinity of Davenport, Iowa.

Included in the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge are lands owned in fee by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and areas purchased by the Corps of Engineers for navigation improvements and managed for wildlife by the Bureau under



Union Slough harbors waterfowl, also has small picnicking and fishing area.





## Refuges in Iowa

a cooperative agreement.

Large concentrations of waterfowl travel the Upper Mississippi during migration periods and, although most of the area is open to public hunting, a few designated areas are closed to protect waterfowl during the hunting seasons.

Boating, swimming and picnicking opportunities are available throughout the area from many public access points. River scenery is beautiful and especially attractive during the autumn period. The waters are rated as one of the best fishing areas of the world due to the large variety of fish species and fish production which provides commercial fishing as well as sport fishing.

The Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge along the Mississippi extends from Davenport downstream 250 miles to Grafton, Illinois. Lands purchased by the Corp of Engineers to provide navigation channels, and locks and dams allowed some 67,000 acres between Muscatine, Iowa, and St. Louis, Missouri, to be set aside for wildlife management purposes. Some 17,000 acres make up divisions of the Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge.

The Louisa and Big Timber Divisions totalling 4,366 acres are both located in Louisa County, Iowa. The Louisa Division is comprised of crop, marsh and timber lands. It is open for public use

from January 1 to September 30. The Big Timber Unit is managed for wood ducks and is open to wildlife-oriented public use the year around.

Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge—some 2,000 acres on a natural slough between two watersheds in Kosuth County in north-central Iowa—is one of our smaller national wildlife refuges. Up to 100,000 ducks and geese stop here each year and the slough is an important duck production area. A small recreational area is available for picnicking and fishing.

The DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge is Iowa's newest and probably the best known refuge. Publicity on the recently excavated riverboat "Bertrand" found on the refuge has been widespread. DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge lies in the floodplain of the Missouri River—a watercourse that is a traditional flyway for great flocks of migrating waterfowl. Established in 1959 on a cut-off oxbow of the Missouri River, it contains 7,800 acres of land and water.

The refuge provides food and sanctuary for migratory waterfowl and other wildlife, and allows seasonal outdoor recreation opportunities such as swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking and hunting. Facilities are open to visitors from April 15 through September 15.

Most national wildlife refuges serve many purposes and millions of people

visit them to see and photograph wildlife or to fish and hunt. They reflect the concern of citizens that wildlife habitat should be protected and managed as a valuable, irreplaceable natural resource that affords pleasure and inspiration to people throughout the nation. In the midst of technological and environmental upheavals, the refuge remains a bit of wild land containing nature's living creatures.

Hunting, fishing and boating are permitted on many refuges in accordance with federal and state regulations. National wildlife refuges are administered by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, United States Department of the Interior.

Refuge managers can be contacted for information concerning recreational uses, interesting areas, current regulations and any permit requirements.

DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge

R. 1 B

Missouri Valley, Iowa 51555

Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge

P. O. Box 225

Quincy, Illinois 62301

Upper Mississippi River Wildlife  
and Fish Refuge

P. O. Box 226

Winona, Minnesota 55986

Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge

P. O. Box 248

Titonka, Iowa 50480

## A First Banding and Nesting Record for Iowa

# The Chuck-Wills-Widow

Judge Charles C. and Darleen J. Ayres

We will never forget May 10, 1969. We were at YMCA camp Arrowhead, three miles southeast of Ottumwa. A cardinal and a robin were joining several whippoorwills and countless insects in nature's orchestral accompaniment to the falling curtain of night when the call came. Though we had never heard the voices before except on bird records, the name was pronounced so clearly that recognition was immediate. "Chuck-will's widow, chuck-will's widow, chuck-will's widow." Using a tape recorder, we began to record the bird's vocal effort. We decided to try and band this, the largest member of the Goatsucker family which we were sure had not been banded before in Iowa.

On May 24, we made our first try at netting the chuck, placing our nets at the edge of an open playing next to the woods where the bird had been heard and played the recording we had made. The answer came from the woods near some of our nets. At 12:55 a.m. the following morning, one of the nets was moving as we played a flashlight on it. In it was a female chuck-will's widow. We knew it was a chuck because it was much bulkier than a whippoorwill and several inches longer, its actual measurement being twelve inches. We knew it was a female because the tail feathers lacked any white. And the mouth was fully two inches wide! While banding the bird, a second chuck kept calling and this we presumed to be the male. We released the female near where she had been caught.

On July 7, 1969, we were informed that Rev. Asa Popp, resident custodial minister of the Forest Lake Baptist Camp, had a strange whippoorwill-like bird which frequented the woods near his home. This camp is located near Camp Arrowhead and about 4 miles southeast of Ottumwa in an oak-hickory woods. To check this we went to this camp on July 8. At about 8:30 p.m. we heard the call of a chuck. We played our tape recording and soon had the Baptist Camp chuck flying overhead in the waning daylight. This bird was a male,

with white on the inner part of the three outer tail feathers and snapped his bill as he flew.

At least once a week for the remainder of the summer we visited the Baptist camp. On several occasions two chucks were seen flying together, one apparently a male and the other a female.

In 1970 we first heard the chuck at the Y camp at 7:20 p.m. on April 24. On April 26, Rev. and Mrs. Popp reported the year's first vocal offering by the chuck at the Forest Lake Baptist Camp.

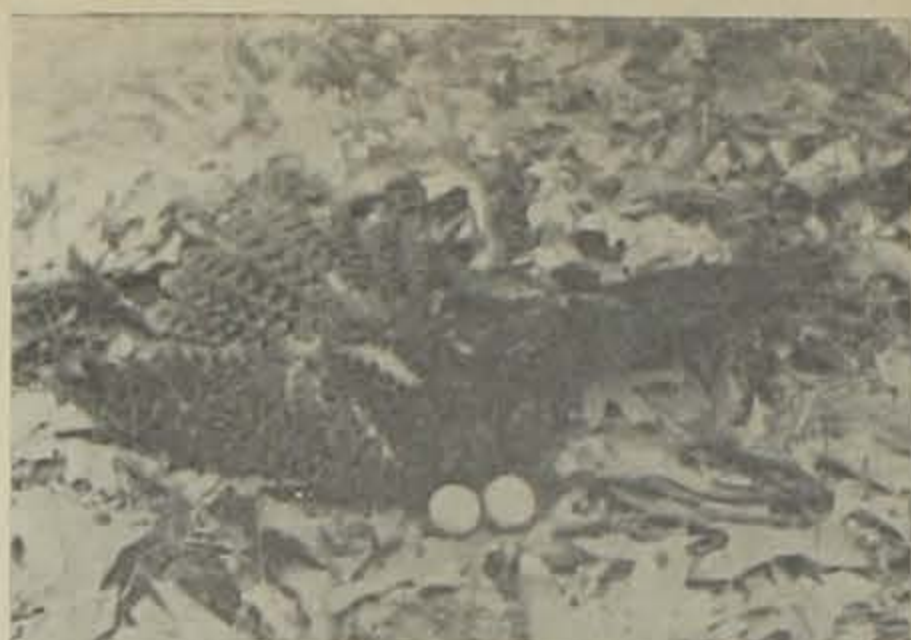
As we moved through the woods and had nearly reached the end of the netting lane, a female chuck flushed from the ground and gave every indication of being very agitated. She hissed, drooped her wings and very slyly tried to lure us away. We immediately began to search the area nearby. About two feet from a faint path we had previously used, Darleen discovered the two eggs of the chuck-will's-widow. Their semi-glossy base color was a pale creamy-white, marbled with subdued grayish-lavender and overlaid with small pastel tan to brownish irregular-shaped spots.

No nest had been made, the eggs merely having been laid on last year's oak leaves. This area was relatively level and comparatively free of undergrowth, but sloped abruptly into a tree studded gully about fifty feet away.

During the incubation period the nest area was visited often by at least one of us. Daily visits were made on the last five days and on two of these the male bird was incubating but the female was not in evidence. We found that we could walk past the incubating birds without any sign of disturbance being shown. It was a wonderful illustration of confidence the birds have in their protective coloring.

At no time did we touch the eggs fearing the birds would move them to a new location by carrying them in the huge mouth. (The chuck-will's-widow's former generic name, *Antrostomus*, was very appropriate—it meant cavemouth).

We observed certain other actions of the



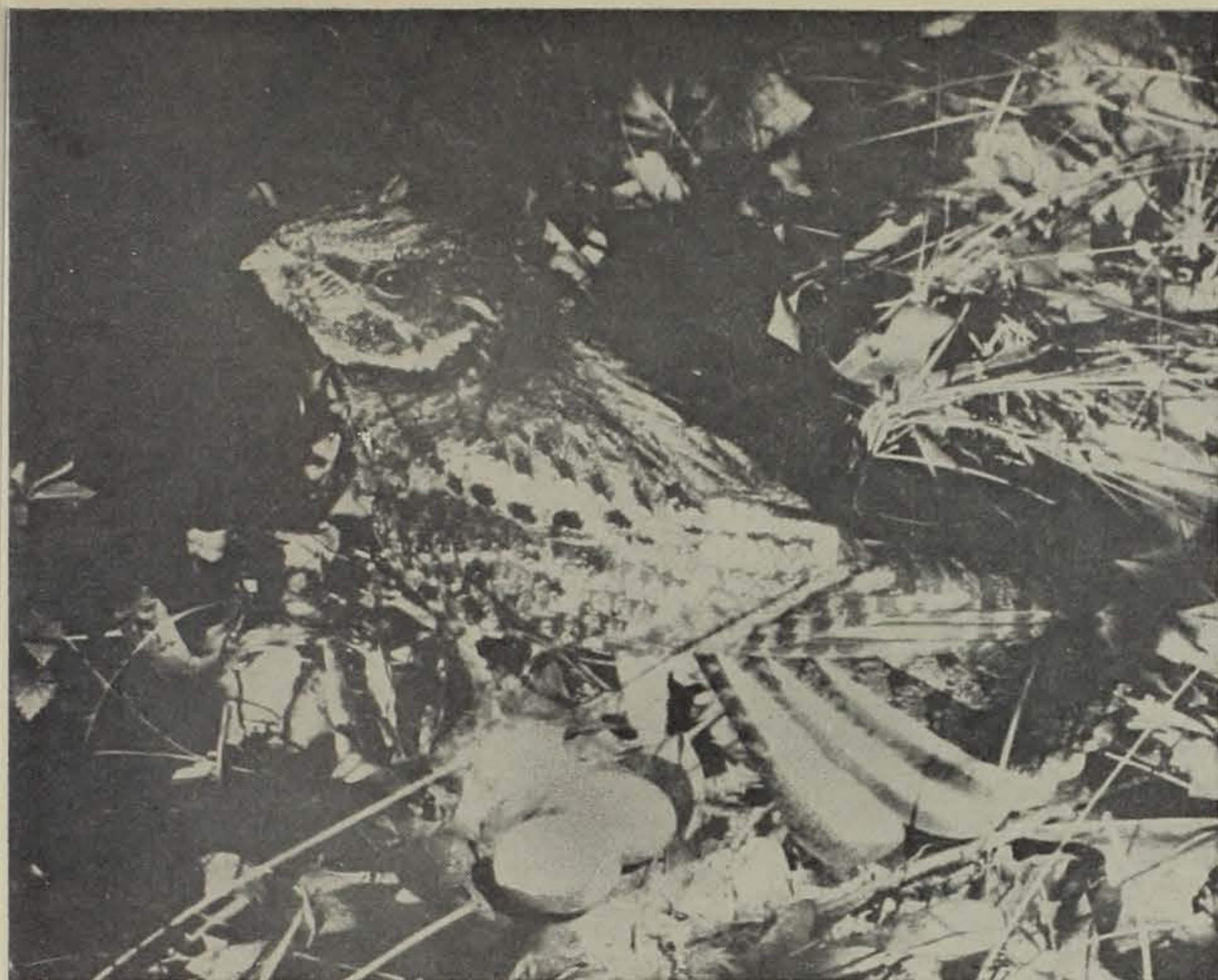
adults which we suspect are typical, including the feigning of injury, a broken wing act most frequently performed on the ground and almost invariably accompanied by the hissing.

We left the nest at 1:30 p.m., on June 10, the eggs still unhatched. The next day the female was on the nest. Her feathers seemed to be fluffed out a bit more than usual and she moved from her position with great reluctance and for two very good reasons. She was covering two little reddish-gold balls of fluff each about two inches in diameter. Here were the first baby chuck-will's widows ever found in the State of Iowa. While the mother bird was greatly agitated and flew both around and at us, the new arrivals neither moved nor made any sound. Twenty-two days had elapsed since we had found the eggs.

The nest site was visited the next day but it was raining and we did not want to disturb the female who was protecting the young. When we returned the next day, June 12, however, both the adults and the young were gone. Careful search revealed no evidence of predation, so we feel that the young were transferred by the adults to another part of the woods. The young were not seen again but the adult male was seen and heard singing June 13.

We have read that the first female and two eggs of a chuck found in Ohio were collected and placed in a museum. We would like to have banded our chucks and feel sure that we could have caught them when on the nest but we did not want to chance injury to the birds, the eggs or the young. We would like to see these 'first' birds raise their families, go south and then return to us, rather than to see them perpetuated as mounted specimens in a museum.

We look forward to this spring with great anticipation and the hope that once more we will hear what may appropriately be called 'the wandering voice in the night' announce his return from the south by calling his name, 'chuck-will's-widow, chuck-will's widow.'



Above and upper picture opposite page, Chuck-Will's-Widow on nest.

Bottom picture opposite page, Chuck-Will's-Widow chick (center of photo).



The book IOWA FISH AND FISHING explains there are two kinds of crappies . . . black ones and white ones. Actually, there are three kinds, black ones, white ones, and big old smart ones. A smart one grows to be old and wise and may weigh over four pounds. He has won many a battle of the bobber and has schooled his kids in the fish ways of life. Upon retiring to the grandpa crappie time of life, he spends the day telling people stories to the youngsters of the school. The one about the fisherman who hooked the giant catfish usually brings a round of laughter and knowing glances.

The story goes like this. There is a dam on big Sioux river and for many years there was a mill located at the dam site. In the pool below the dam there lived a Paul Bunyan type catfish. Two people type fishermen layed big plans to catch this big catfish. They fashioned a hook from a hay fork and used a hay rope for line. They planned to use their old pick-up truck as a windlass. They jacked up one back wheel and removed the tire leaving the rim on the truck. After baiting the hay hook with a frog they had had shipped in from Missouri (it takes a big frog to bait a hook that size), one end of the rope was coiled around the rim. The hook was pitched into the river and the truck was started.

At last a strike came that would surprise even the AFL-CIO. The truck was put in gear and the battle was on. High gear just burned the clutch and second made the big cat bow his neck. Low gear showed a little promise and slowly they began to pull the fish out of the water and up the bank to the truck. When the fish was about half out of the water he gave a mighty jerk and the truck jumped off the jack. Well that big fish lay there, half in the water and half on the bank swinging its tail back and forth in the water. As the two fishermen watched in amazement it reversed the current in the river and up stream at the mill it unground 100 bushels of corn. As one little crappie said to another, "Grandpa sure tells some tall people tails!"

Skin, scale, or fillet any crappie you catch. Wash and shake in corn meal and pop into a skillet of hot cooking oil and fry to golden brown. Salt and pepper to taste, and place on a slice of buttered bread.

Sip a cup of coffee and nibble a dill pickle as you sit there looking across that pool below that dam waiting for that big strike!—Dick Ranney

## At Rathbun

# LET THOSE MUSKIES GROW

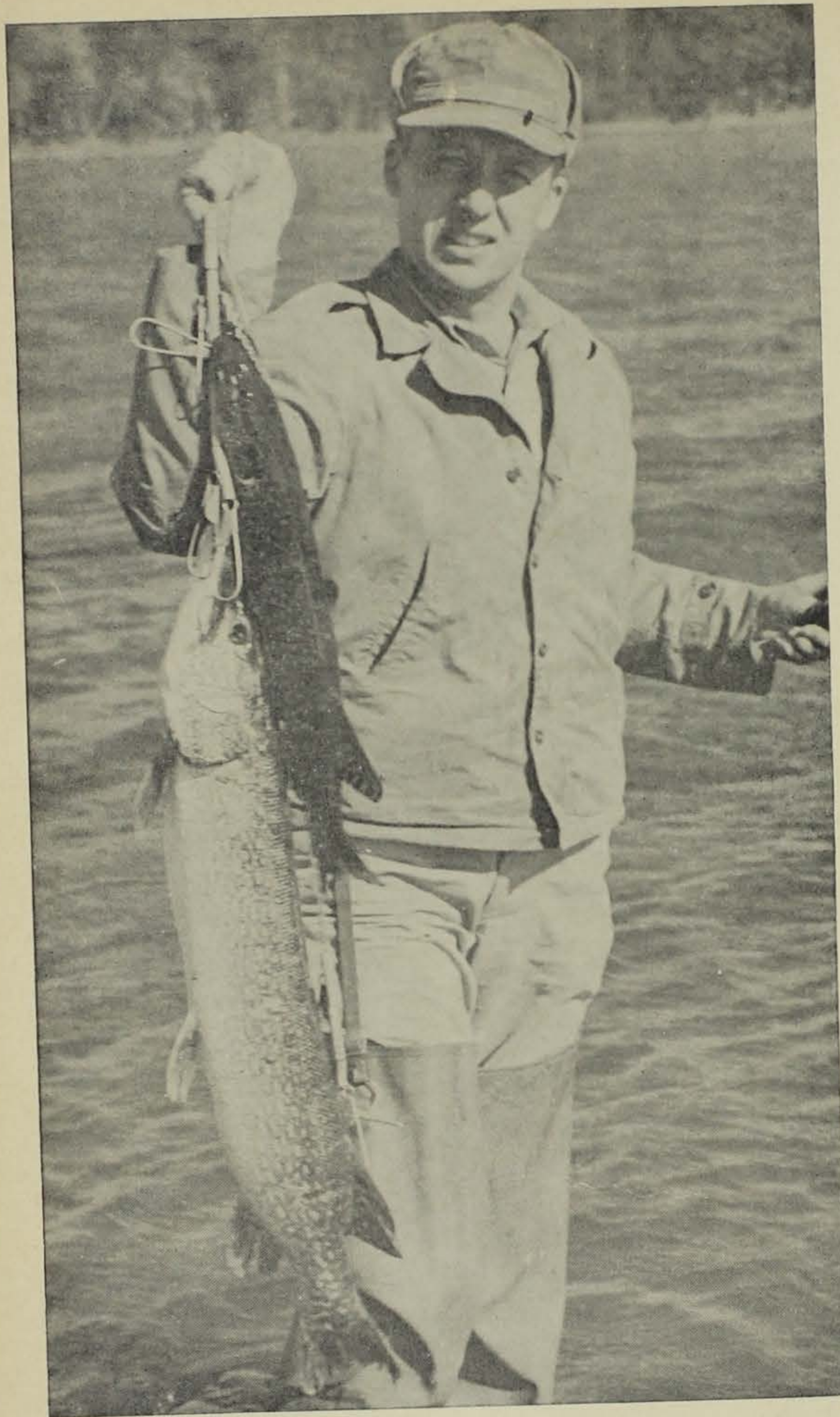
During the early summer of 1970, State Conservation Commission fisheries personnel stocked approximately 25,000 muskellunge fry into Rathbun Reservoir, located in Appanoose County. In order that these juvenile muskies survive and grow to delight some lucky, future fisherman depends greatly on YOU, the angler. Establishing a muskie population in Rathbun will enable many central and southern Iowa anglers an opportunity to try to catch this trophy fish for the first time. Another concept of the muskie program at Rathbun is it will create brood stock so the Conservation Commission will have its own source for hatching and rearing purposes.

According to Ken Madden, Superintendent of Fisheries for the Iowa Conservation Commission, "With ideal water conditions for the next two years, by the spring of 1973 the muskies should attain the legal size of 30 inches." Madden cautioned fisherman not to keep undersized muskies as state law requires that muskies must be 30 inches or longer

before being placed on a stringer. If a fisherman catches an immature muskie which has swallowed the hook or is deeply hooked simply cut the line as the hook will absorb with minimum harmful effects to the fish. Otherwise trying to disengage a deeply hooked fish will more than often be fatal to the muskie.

Anglers should have no problem in identifying muskies taken from Rathbun. The northern pike which may be confused with muskellunge because of similarities in appearance will not be stocked there. When an angler catches an "alligator jaw, streamlined critter" from Iowa's newest federal impoundment he can be sure it is a muskie.

Besides stocking muskies at Rathbun over 400,000 largemouth bass, 8½ million walleye fry and 375,000 channel catfish fingerlings were also released last summer. These fish will be somewhat immature for the 1971 fisherman but by the spring of 1972 should be very sporty in size and fight.



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# Enter That Big Fish

Any potential 1971 record fish must be weighed to the nearest ounce on scales legal for trade. The weighing must be witnessed by two persons.

The angler must fill out an official entry blank or facsimile and send it and a black and white photo of himself and the fish to: Official Big Fish Records, Iowa Conservation Commission, 300 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, by January 1, 1972.

Iowa Angling Certificates will be sent by the Conservation Commission to entries qualifying for the Big Fish Records. Minimum weight and length requirements on certain species follow:

Bass, largemouth	7	pounds
Bass, smallmouth	4	pounds
Bass, white	2½	pounds
Bass, yellow	1	pound
Bluegill	1	pound
Buffalo	20	pounds
Bullhead	2½	pounds
Carp	25	pounds
Catfish, channel	15	pounds
Catfish, flathead	20	pounds
Crappie	2	pounds
Muskellunge	30	inches
Northern Pike	10	pounds
Paddlefish	25	pounds
Sauger	4	pounds
Sheepshead	15	pounds
Sunfish	1	pound
Walleye	8	pounds
Yellow perch	1½	pounds

### ENTRY BLANK FOR IOWA RECORD FISH

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street/RFD \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Species \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_ Where caught \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total length \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Method of catch \_\_\_\_\_

**Witnesses**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_