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SEPTEMBER, 1972



# conservationist



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Roger Sparks, Editor

Wayne Lonning, Photographer

Jerry Leonard, Photographer

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# Waterfowl and the IOWA DUCK

By Roger Sparks



*Many of the questions asked of the Fish and Game staff of the Iowa Conservation Commission pertaining to Iowa's role in managing ducks are answered in this interview.*

The following is an interview with the Iowa Conservation Commission, fish and wildlife staff members. The purpose of this interview is to explain and answer common questions about Iowa's waterfowl management program. Staff members answering questions are Harry Harrison, chief of fish and game; Bob Barratt, superintendent of the wildlife section; and Richard Bishop, waterfowl biologist.

**Question:** Who sets the season and how is it done step by step?

**Answer:** Basically it's based on data gathered by various states, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Canadian agencies, and some private agen-

cies such as Ducks Unlimited. The biggest contributor, of course, is the Bureau. They spend by far the most time and effort censusing waterfowl on the breeding grounds. This information is brought together and presented to the technical sections of the four flyways in detail. The technical sections study the data and determine the harvest they think the resource can stand and the various ways of achieving this harvest by the length of seasons, bag limits, etc. They then make their recommendations to the four flyway councils. The councils then draft their recommendations and present them to the National Advisory Council, which is the staff of the Bureau and the four flyway council representatives. The Advisory Council listens to nongovernmental agencies, the Wildlife Management Institute, the National Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society, and Ducks Unlimited. After hearing

# Management

## DUCK HUNTER



all the material presented, the Bureau staff then makes its recommendations to the Director of the Bureau. He then reviews the recommendations, and if he agrees, he forwards them to the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary reviews them and either changes them or approves them. His recommendations are final. This is what we call the framework. Under the framework system states within each flyway are offered several options as to specific bag limits, shooting hours and season lengths. States must then choose from these framework options.

**Question:** Are we satisfied with this system?

**Answer:** We are satisfied with the system, but we have not been satisfied with the way the system has worked in recent years. The system is the best approach. Ideally, everyone is given due consideration and a cooperative

effort prevails. Unfortunately, in the last few years, the professional people in the business have made what appeared to be sound recommendations, only to be overruled at the level of the Secretary's office. Questionable changes were made at that level.

**Question:** Why were these changes made?

**Answer:** Well, we are satisfied that some of these changes were made as a result of political pressure, particularly that brought about by a few states and their legislative officials. This political pressure was applied for purely selfish, provincial reasons. They were apparently concerned only with their own states and their own hunters. They seemingly disregarded the welfare of the resource and of the waterfowl hunter as a whole.

**Question:** Why don't we have a longer season?

**Answer:** In a letter to the

Secretary of the Interior we protested strongly the reduction from a 55 day season to a 50 season in 1971. The data definitely showed that states taking the points system should be allowed more days. Our protest was futile, however, and we were limited to the 50 days as designated in the Federal framework.

**Question:** What data do we use to determine when the various species of ducks generally arrive in Iowa?

**Answer:** We have had people closely monitoring the migrations of each species for the past 20 or more years. We have this down to the average time that the various individual species will generally arrive. Also we use data gathered from states north and south of us. We use their average dates as additional data for determining when the ducks will generally, on the average be in Iowa. This is, of course, the way we at-



**HARRY HARRISON**  
Chief of fish and  
game division



**BOB BARRATT**  
Superintendent of  
wildlife section



**RICHARD BISHOP**  
Waterfowl biologist

tempt to base our seasons each year.

**Question:** If this is based on the past 20 years, is it impossible that recent additions of reservoirs, refuges and public hunting areas, particularly in central and southern Iowa, are making a difference in the migration dates and patterns of the various species?

**Answer:** The migration picture, particularly of the mallard, is changing slightly, but not really because of the reservoirs in Iowa. What we are witnessing in Iowa is a gradual westward movement of the migration patterns of the mallard. This is due to increased hunting pressure in the east and largely to the addition of the very large reservoirs in North and South Dakota. This seems to be pulling many of the mallards, which originally spread out pretty much over all of northern Iowa, and concentrating them more on the western half of the state. Statistics indicate that the mallard populations along the Mississippi River are somewhat down, while along the Missouri River they have significantly increased. We will need more information concerning any small changes in our migration patterns before we will greatly alter our seasons.

Many people would like to see the season set 100% around the mallard. Mallards are big ducks and most anyone would rather shoot a big duck than a small one. However, it is not wise from the

resource standpoint to set a season to encourage harvesting, or geared to harvesting only one species, and let a great number of other species go virtually unharvested. The earlier migrators deserve our consideration; they fill an important part of the hunters bag and would otherwise be going pretty much unharvested if we did not set a season in such a way as to include their migration patterns.

**Question:** Has the Iowa Conservation Commission in the past, or is it now northern Iowa oriented when it comes to the dates for setting the season?

**Answer:** The answer to this question is an emphatic no. The Iowa Conservation Commission is a statewide agency. Our waterfowl programs are an attempt to benefit in the best way possible, hunters from the northern end of the state to the southern end.

**Question:** Just because there are few hunters out late in the season, do we gear our season more to the individuals who hunt only once or twice early in the year? Or do we want to gear our season to the died-in-the-wool hunter who is out late in the season in the colder weather and who has given his support for years?

**Answer:** We simply try to provide the maximum number of hunter days that we can provide. This means that we want the duck hunter to enjoy the greatest number of days that he can harvest the resource and enjoy his

particular form of recreation. If it means that I as a Lake Odessa hunter, for instance, may miss one weekend, while allowing 100 other hunters an additional weekend, then I believe firmly that I should be cut out of my weekend. We certainly want to consider the late season, died-in-the-wool hunter who is willing to lend strong support to our programs and give him prime consideration. We also must consider the many hunters who hunt only once or twice during the season, and we must consider northern hunters as well as southern hunters, pool all the information and come up with the best season dates for all concerned.

**Question:** Wouldn't a split season be ideal?

**Answer:** A split season would be ideal, in 1972 we have it and also have the point system for our limits. But in 1971, this was not one of our options under the Federal Framework. We could have selected a split season without the point system, but chose the point system because we do believe it is the best way to manage the resource. Our arguments were in vain and we were not permitted to split the season. The Bureau contended that a split season would make it impossible to compare the harvest of this year with the harvest of 1970. However, they allowed states not taking the point system to select a split season, and they also permitted the states of the central flyway to take a split season with the point system. It's pretty obvious that Iowa hunters were unreasonably restricted by the federal framework compared to other states.

**Question:** Is the point system the best way to manage ducks?

**Answer:** Right now, yes, the point system definitely looks as though it has the best future for managing ducks. We selected the point system for Iowa as the best of the three bag limit options allowed. We believe it is the most desirable method of managing our waterfowl resource, since it allows a fairly liberal harvest of the species in good abundance,

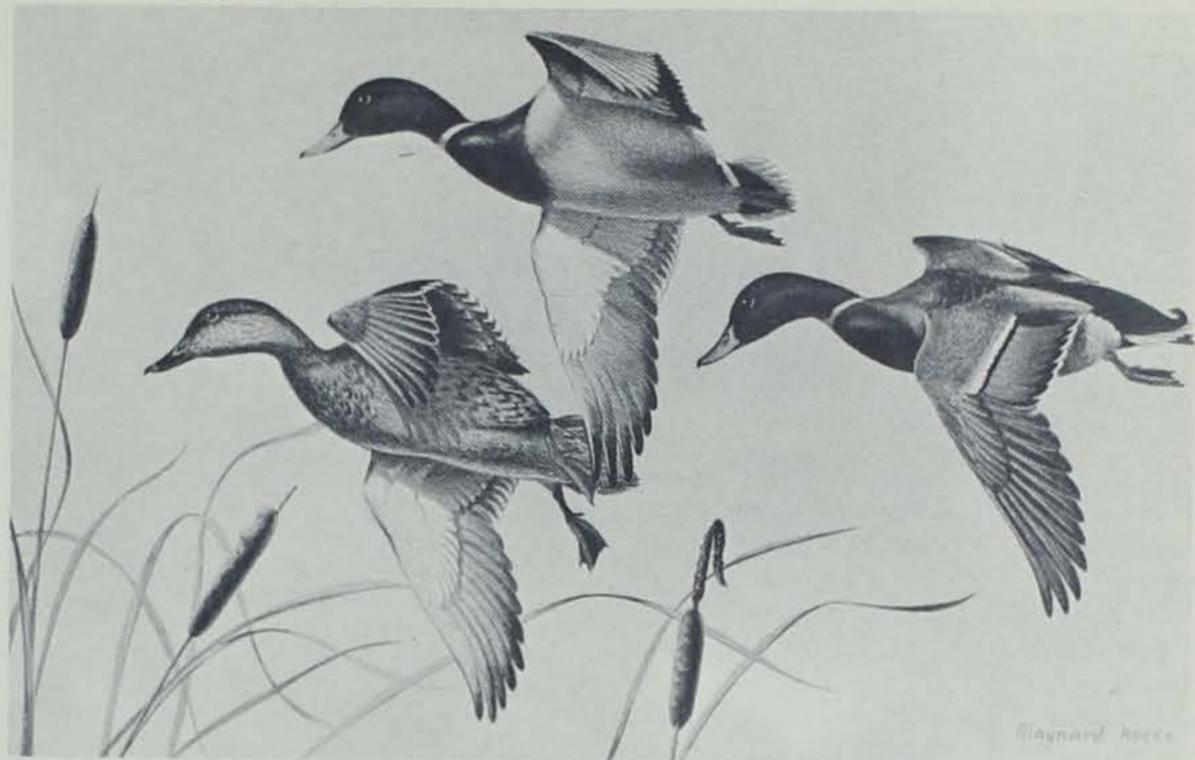
while restricting the take on those species needing additional protection. The Iowa hunters have whole heartedly indorsed the point system. We believe this gives them an opportunity to harvest all species including teal. In 1972 the special teal season was not allowed in Iowa, and other northern states where this species commonly nests. Only by selecting the point system were we able to give Iowa hunters the opportunity to harvest these birds in any numbers, as well as many of the other low point species.

Under conventional, "any duck" bag limit seasons if one or more of the various species of ducks are in jeopardy there is no way to skew the hunter away from those species in trouble. Federal framework would necessarily have to be very restrictive to protect those particular species. This would mean that even though there may be millions of teal, widgeon, gadwalls, pintails, etc., the framework would include a very restrictive limit on all ducks because of one or a very few species in low numbers. However, the point system allows for management and special consideration for birds needing protection without restricting the harvest of species that are abundantly available.

**Question:** If the point system is the best way to manage waterfowl should the point system be implemented in other states?

**Answer:** Yes, and the time is now. We should move gradually, include a couple of other states, and then evaluate the thing and see what would happen if we throw it open flyway-wide. We must see the point system on a much wider scope to find out what the end result can truly be. Unfortunately, right now the point system, even though it allows for the possible take of up to ten birds in one bag limit, is not the most liberal of the seasons options offered. Many duck hunters prefer killing mallards, and the option to kill four mallards of either sex is still probably the most liberal of all the

(Continued on Page 8)



## state duck stamp available

Iowa's First State Duck Stamp Will Go On Sale

Iowa's first State Duck Stamp will go on sale September 1. All sportsmen hunting waterfowl in Iowa this fall, regardless of age, must have in their possession a signed state stamp. Waterfowlers 16 years or older must have a signed Federal Duck Stamp in addition to the state stamp.

The stamp, showing three mallards in flight, has been designed and painted in full color for the Commission by noted wildlife artist Maynard Reece of Des Moines. Reece is the only artist to have ever won the Federal Duck Stamp design contest five times.

The state duck stamp will be available for one dollar at most places where hunting and fishing licenses are sold. Purchasers will be required to complete an application form before receiving their stamp. The application form will be used later in a survey of waterfowl hunters.

Funds derived from the state stamp sales will be used in the

development and preservation of wetlands for migratory waterfowl.

### Contest Underway for 1973

The Iowa Conservation Commission is conducting a contest to select the design for the 1973 Iowa Duck Stamp.

The contest is open to resident Iowa artists only. Entries will be accepted until midnight November 15, 1972.

Artists may submit no more than three designs and are given a wide latitude in the choice of colors or medium, such as pen and ink, oil, watercolor, pencil, etc.

Statewide recognition will be accorded the winner through use of his design on the stamp.

Interested persons may write for complete information concerning contest regulations to: Information and Education Department, Iowa Conservation Commission, 300 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. ☆



Aerial view of Wilkinson Pioneer Park and the Shell Rock

# shell rock river green belt

By Roger Sparks

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The Shell Rock is truly one of northern Iowa's top canoe streams. The Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board has recognized one particular stretch of this lovely stream as a particularly enticing canoeing and outdoor recreation area. They have acquired nearly all of the narrow strip of land bordering the stream from Rock Falls to Nora Springs.

A good place to drop the canoe in for a trip down the Shell Rock is at Wilkinson Pioneer Park which lies on the west shoreline of the river just below the Rock Falls Bridge at Rock Falls. Facilities at the park include a shelter, water, picnic tables and a camping area. Here the first stage of the road, which eventually will continue downstream along the twelve-mile green belt, has already been completed. This road will never be paved and will remain narrow and "out-of-the-way" so as not to ruin any of the wildlife habitat and natural scenery along the stream.

The character of the Shell Rock in this scenic stretch is of great interest to the canoeist. There are many riffles, numerous low limestone outcroppings, and occasional very quick turns followed by rapids. This character of the river is occasionally broken by long, flat stretches bordered by pasture and cropland. The Shell Rock is not like any of the northeast Iowa streams such as the Upper Iowa, but is more of a prairie stream. The stream bottom is nearly all rock and has formed its own small canyon with many riffles and shoots which drop off into sand bottomed pools. The water is quite clear except following rains.

One of the more interesting points along the stream comes immediately after the canoe is launched. On the right side at the lower end of Wilkinson Pioneer Park is the "newest covered bridge in Iowa." It was built in 1969 by the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board. Plans from this interesting replica of traditional Iowa covered bridges were drawn up after draftsmen had visited several of Iowa's covered bridges.



Covered bridge enhances the view at Wilkinson Pioneer Park near Rock Falls



Most of the Shell Rock along this stretch has rock and sand bottom with limestone outcroppings forming the banks.

The approximately 12 mile stretch between Rock Falls and Nora Springs takes about one-half day of leisurely paddling. Just a few miles above Nora Springs on the left hand side is the Shell Rock River Forest Preserve. This area consists mainly of mature hardwood timber supplemented with some recent walnut plantings. A small portion of this area has been set aside for camping, picnicking, and other public uses. Most of the area however, has been left in the state of natural beauty and will remain so. It is presently a haven for squirrels and a gathering point for deer. A great variety of songbirds abound all along this stretch of the Shell Rock. Pheasants, deer, racoon, and nearly all Iowa furbearers are seen occasionally along the stream.

During the low water periods, the Shell Rock can be pretty difficult to manipulate. Generally speaking the water averages per-

haps 1-2 feet deep during the late summer months but is a great deal more fun to canoe when the water is just a little bit high. This adds speed to the rapids and necessitates some quick thinking on the numerous sharp turns.

Fishing is fair for primarily catfish although an occasional northern pike is taken from this river. This stretch of the Shell Rock was once noted as one of Iowa's very fine smallmouth streams but a pollution problem caused a fish kill a few years ago and the smallmouth bass has not come back to full strength since.

The Shell Rock is a free-flowing prairie stream. The acquisition of the lands immediately bordering this valuable asset to the Iowa public is another fine example of what County Conservation Boards and other government agencies can and are doing to insure the future of these scenic areas. ☆



## WATERFOWL . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

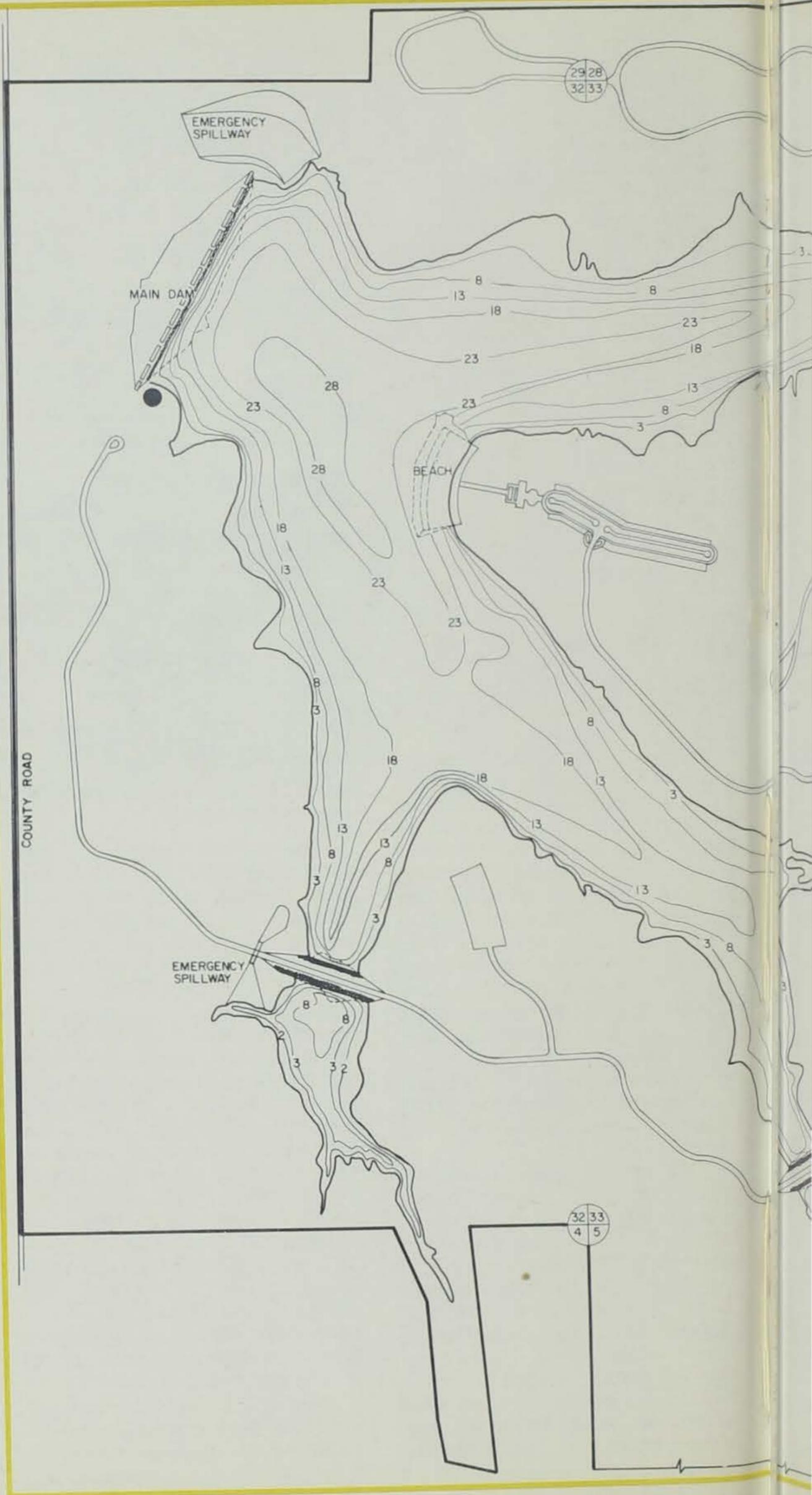
seasons. It is much more difficult under the point system to kill four mallards, because the hunter must pick out drakes, the low point sex.

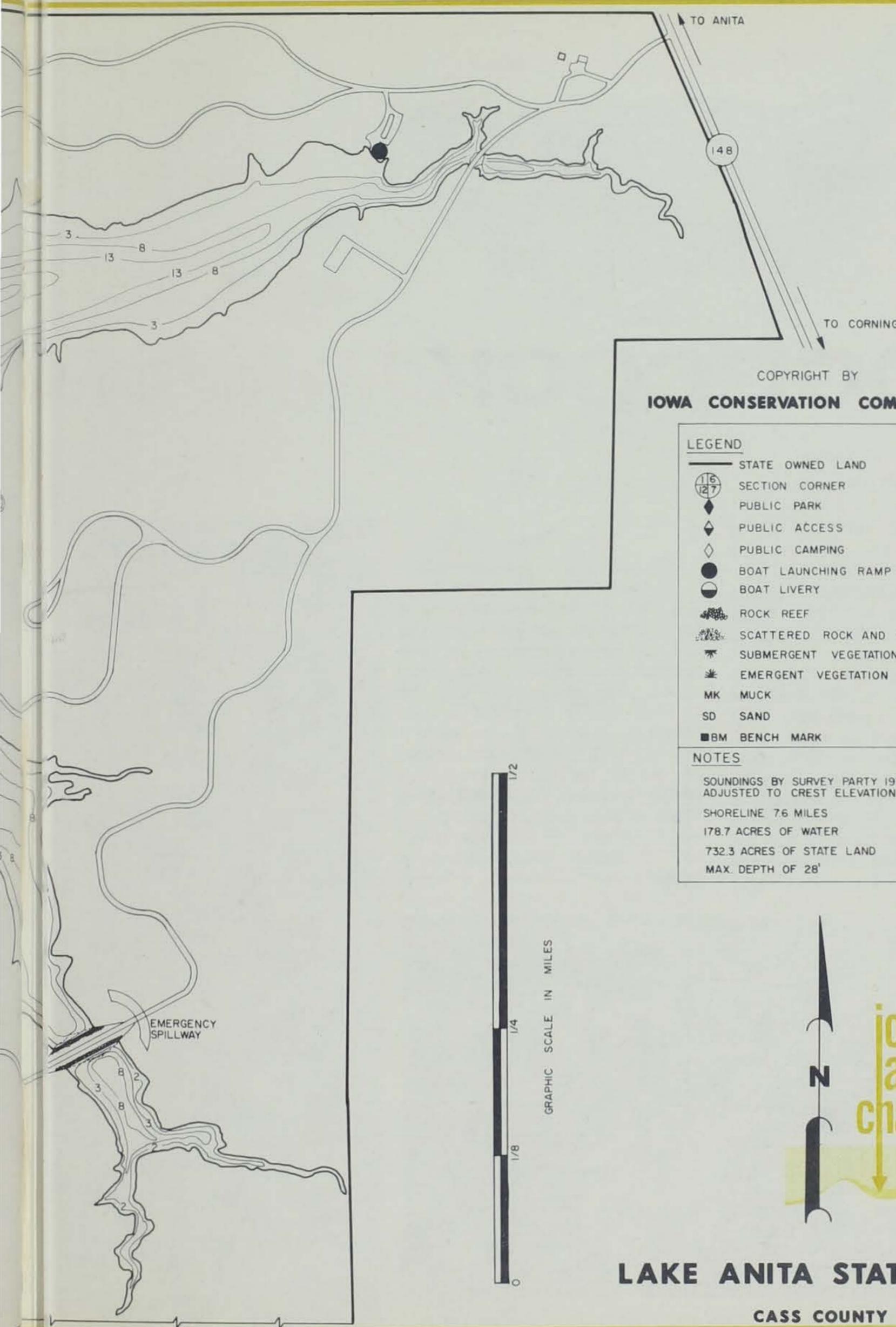
Consequently, some states are reluctant to favor the point system and seem to be trying to kill it. They don't want to observe the data. They merely want the most liberal seasons available. Actually the Iowa hunter has been very happy with the point system. He is extremely pleased with the opportunity to kill a large number of low point ducks; and he looks favorably upon the idea of killing primarily drake mallards and conserving the hens which are the mallard producers.

**Question:** We know that there was much dissention among this department and the Iowa duck hunters over last year's season for various reasons, weather factors, late migrations, etc. Has this dissention between the duck hunter and the Iowa Conservation Commission been ironed out?

**Answer:** Certainly many of the problems have been ironed out. We've held a series of public meetings, furnished a lot of literature to people, and some groups who were absolutely adamant toward us have come in and talked things over with our staff and commission and are now very much in support of our programs and policies concerning waterfowl management. One thing that stands out is that every group to date that we have been before have come out of the meeting completely endorsing our programs and backing us in our

(Continued on Page 14)





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**IOWA CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**LEGEND**

- STATE OWNED LAND
- SECTION CORNER
- PUBLIC PARK
- PUBLIC ACCESS
- PUBLIC CAMPING
- BOAT LAUNCHING RAMP
- BOAT LIVERY
- ROCK REEF
- SCATTERED ROCK AND GRAVEL
- SUBMERGENT VEGETATION
- EMERGENT VEGETATION
- MK** MUCK
- SD** SAND
- BM** BENCH MARK

**NOTES**

SOUNDINGS BY SURVEY PARTY 1971  
 ADJUSTED TO CREST ELEVATION  
 SHORELINE 7.6 MILES  
 178.7 ACRES OF WATER  
 732.3 ACRES OF STATE LAND  
 MAX. DEPTH OF 28'



GRAPHIC SCALE IN MILES



**LAKE ANITA STATE PARK**

**CASS COUNTY**

# WOODCOCK

new iowa

By Robert Sheets  
Research Biologist

When the winds haul out of the northwest this fall and the dark cloud fronts roll in just above the marsh, that restless feeling to move will hit nearly all migratory birds. And in turn, Iowa hunters will do their best to intercept their fair share of ducks and geese. But one unusual migratory species known only by a few is the American woodcock. This year for the first time since the early 1900's, the woodcock will be fair game in Iowa. His nationwide numbers appear in good shape with hunters last fall bagging approximately 1½ million birds.

## Description

The woodcock is a phenomenal member of the shorebird family. He has taken it upon himself to make some unique evolutionary turns and has wound up with several completely unexpected habits. For instance when the October 21 woodcock season opening arrives, duck hunters may as well forget him because he won't be found around a marsh with his snipe and sandpiper cousins. Instead, grouse and quail hunters will find him roosting in dense upland brush or probing for food along a wood-

land stream.

It is nearly impossible to sex or age a woodcock in the field although the female usually runs an ounce or two heavier. The plumage, basically brown and tan with patterns of blue, gray and white, is alike in both sexes. The female bill measures 2¾" while the male centers around 2½". (One thing for sure—if the bill is 6½", you have probably shot a blue heron and a trip to the eye doctor is in order!) Directly behind the bill are the eyes which are located so high on the skull they ride above and behind the ear. This allows wide range vision while the bird is probing for 75% of its diet — the earthworm. The woodcock has evolved a short stocky 6-8 ounce body with two very short legs. The breast is the primary morsel eaten by hunters, although some woodcock fanciers relish the taste of the entire bird with entrails intact! The conservative eater, however will find the breast tasting very similar to duck.

## Challenging Target

A large part of pheasant, grouse or quail hunting is the surprise of a flushing bird. The woodcock fits this bill. His camouflaged body will resist detection until nearly stepped on. Once airborne, his powerful wings give



Woodcock prefer short grassy openings in and around tickets. Photo by Wayne Lonning



## wa game bird



him the bursting speed of a ruffed grouse.

One sure fire way to identify a woodcock is a twittering or whistling associated with the flight. Whether its vocal or mechanical has not been proven but it's there every time!

### Where To Find Them

Most resident woodcock occur in the eastern half of Iowa. In the fall as cold weather moves in, these "locals" will mix with identically marked "flight birds" from the north allowing little chance of either group taking all the hunting pressure. These mixed flights will be found in areas ranging in make up from a young aspen stand near a forest edge to a tangle of dogwood and clover along a feeder spring in some unnoticed draw. One hunting secret lies in not trying to stomp down chest high cover, but rather, walking around it slowly. Woodcock prefer short grassy openings in and around thickets and do not care to flush through dense cover.

Another fact of woodcock life is that many will use the same covert year after year. Once this area is discovered, the jackpot has been found. Grouse and quail hunters often tell friends where they had good luck but woodcock hunters never reveal the location of a good covert.

Woodcock migration in the fall is even more dependent on weather than the migration of ducks or geese. When a front rolls in, hundreds of woodcock move out at night in massive flights. In the 1870's market hunters took advantage of these southbound surges by "dusking" the birds as they moved from one resting spot to another. These money-driven individuals first used torches and later spotlights to locate the birds on the ground, blast them and sell them for up to \$1.50 a pair. This continued until 1942 when federal wardens finally put a lid on the practice.

Under existing regulations and management practices, woodcock are maintaining their numbers in fine shape. The sport has grown to a fine art on the east coast, but woodcock hunting is new in Iowa and much is to be learned. A grouse or quail gun is a woodcock gun, and either a modified or cylinder bore barrel provides a good pattern for this elusive bird.

### 1972 Woodcock Season Regulations

The season will be open state-wide from October 21 through December 1, with hours running from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The bag limit is five with ten in possession after the first day. ☆

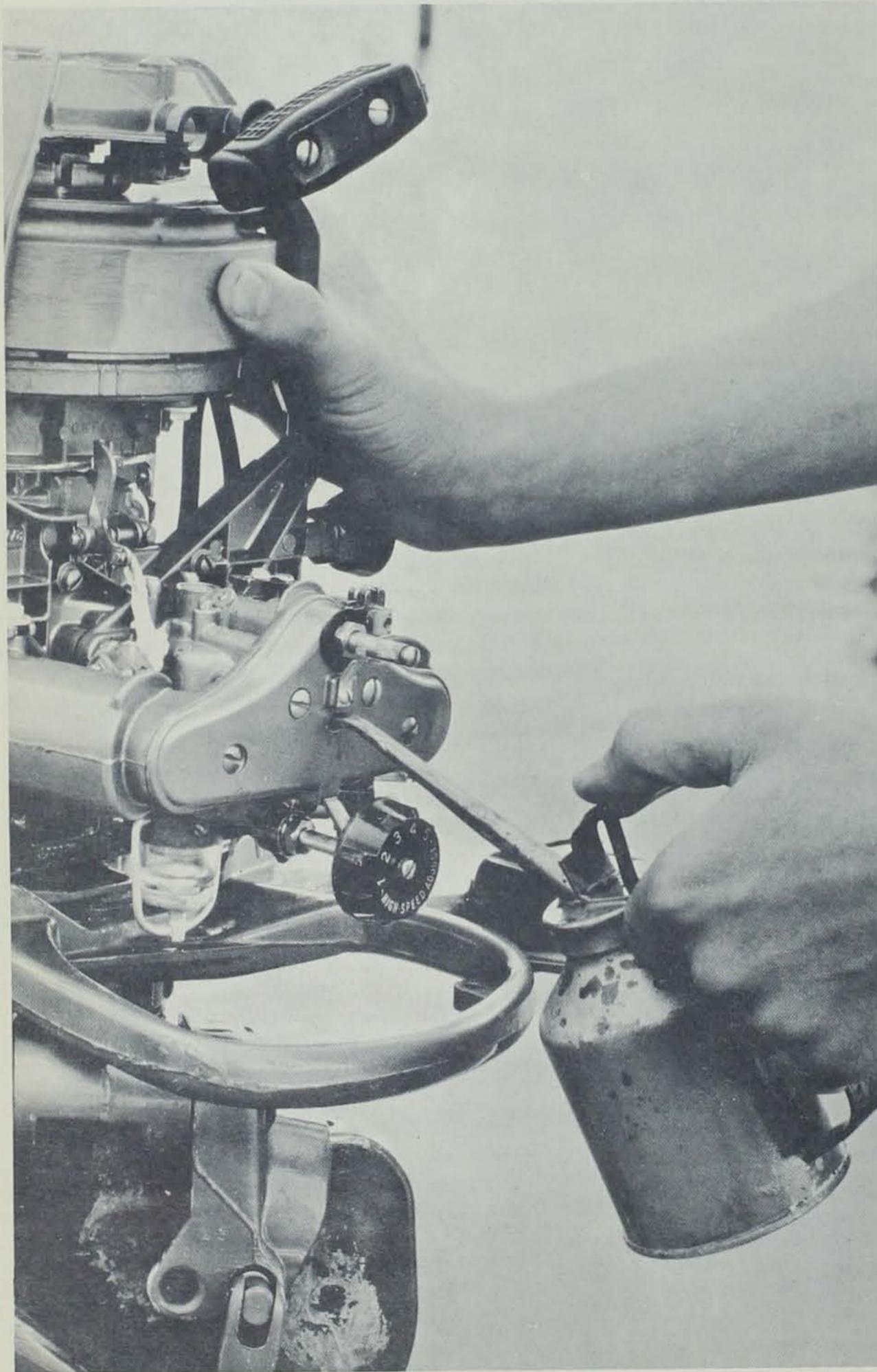


## Campfire Cookery

By Dick Ranney

Fogging the motor with preservative

# and how to keep your oi



There were approximately 125,000 outboard motors in use in the State of Iowa last year. They ranged in horsepower from 1.5 to over 100. Water skiing, fishing, hunting, pleasure riding and commercial use up the bulk of hundreds of hours people in Iowa spent using these 125,000 outboards.

Outboards today are light in weight, quiet and given a little care, will last for quite some time. Turn a key or pull a rope, the motor roars to life and every thing is big smiles and wind blown hair.

A lot of us have our smiles turned to frowns simply because we couldn't get the darn motor started. You haven't lived until you push away from the dock and spend the next 30 minutes pulling the rope, or grinding the starter (while occasionally referring to the darn thing's ancestry). Have you ever tried to find a shade tree in the middle of the lake? One of the hottest places anywhere, has got to be in the back of the boat, with the hood off the motor, trying to get it started. Add to this the sounds of enthusiastic kids arguing who gets to ski first, or a fishing partner who feels you are keeping him from the spot where the big ones are jumping in the boat. Depending on the length of your fuse, you can reach the point of unscrewing the stern clamps and dropping the motor over the side.

Outboard motor manufacturers provide each new motor owner with a manual containing information about operation and care. Many of us read the part about operation and forget to read the part on care. It takes very little time and effort to make sure the motor is ready to go.

# Protect your pistons from freezing up this winter

Outboards, by and large, do not have crank cases which hold oil. In order to lubricate the internal parts of the motor, a mixture of oil and gas is used. It is important the ratio of oil and gas is correct and should be mixed as the manufacturer suggests. Don't guess — mix your gas and oil with care. The oil-gas vapor which lubricates the motor parts ends up compressed in the head of the motor and is ignited by the spark plug. If an outboard motor burned the oil-gas vapor 100%, a gallon of gas would go a long way. However, about 30% of the mixture is burned and the rest is blown out the exhaust. If too little oil is used, the percent of burn goes up, and the lubrication goes down, and there is a good chance the motor will over heat or could freeze up. On the other hand, if too much oil is used the percent of burn goes down and by-products such as carbon, varnish and other tar like substances increase and can gum up rings, carbon up the exhaust parts,

cause heating and again cause the motor to seize or stick.

This fall before you put your motor away for the winter you should take a few simple maintenance steps. Stop at any motor outlet and pick up the factory recommended fogging oils and preservative designed for use in the motor head while it is in storage. The instructions are on the can and it can be done at home. Unhook the spark plug wires in case someone tries to start the motor while its on the rack. Make a point whenever you walk by the motor to pull the starter rope or turn it over to change the position of the pistons and keep the motor free. Check and remove any water in the lower unit housing by simply draining the lower unit. Replace the screws and do not refill with oil until spring. Do not run the motor out of the water at any time. The water in the water pump, water jacket, and housing will run out when the motor is hung on the storage rack and will not cause a problem. The chance of damaging an

outboard out of the water is far greater due to rapid heating than any benefit you might gain trying to blow the water out of the motor. Empty the gas tank, carburetor and bulb, for here again the oil-gas mixture will break down after a long period and will leave a gum like deposit.

Next spring install new properly gapped spark plugs. Before you put them in the motor, hook the ignition wire to the plug and hold the plug firmly against the motor, pull the starter rope and check to see if you have a blue arc when the plug fires. Refill the lower unit with oil and the gas tank with properly mixed oil-gas. The motor may smoke when it is first started due to the fogging oil and preservative in the head. This will clear up as the motor warms up. Check the waterpump as soon as the motor starts. Make sure the stern clamps are tight, the life jackets are on board, and remember to screw the drain plug in the boat.

As you pass the guy standing in the back of the boat with one foot on the motor and the rope in his hand, you can smile knowingly. You might offer him your big beach umbrella, cause he too will be looking for a shade tree.

Here is a recipe for a people preservative that might **keep your pistons from freezing up this fall and winter**. Cook one eight oz. package of noodles according to directions on the package. Drain and rinse, mix two cans of corn beef flaked with a fork, one can condensed milk, one can mushroom soup, one can of cream style corn, ½ pound of grated american cheese, a dash of salt, pepper and the drained noodles in a baking dish. Place in a 375° oven until heated through, about 45 minutes. Top with crushed potato chips. ☆



Drain lower unit in the fall and refill with oil (as shown) in the spring.

**WATERFOWL . . .***(Continued from Page 8)*

waterfowl management effort. Apparently, there is a big gap somewhere and it has to be that we aren't getting our programs accurately across to the people and to the waterfowl hunting public. Recently a representative from Waterfowlers United, primarily of southeastern Iowa, attended our Commission meeting and placed a list of recommendations before us as to how his organization would like to see the waterfowl seasons set this year in Iowa. Their recommendations were exactly what we desired to see in the federal framework options this year. They said they would like to give a few days to the early hunter, that is primarily the northern Iowa teal hunter, then shut the season off until about the 15th or 20th of October, then reopen and let it run for the rest of the season. That is exactly what our recommendations were when we had the opportunity to split the season.

**Question:** What's the story behind the new Iowa \$1.00 Duck Stamp?

**Answer:** First of all the new stamp will be used directly to benefit waterfowl, that is, monies derived from the new stamp will be used for acquisition, development and management of waterfowl areas. This money cannot be used for administration. The last session of the legislature requires that hunters buy a \$1.00 Iowa waterfowl stamp in order to hunt migratory waterfowl in Iowa. This means that everyone, regardless of age and whether or not they are required to have a valid hunting license, must have an Iowa waterfowl stamp to hunt waterfowl in this state.

**Question:** What can the duck hunter do to improve the seasons for Iowa hunters in future years?

**Answer:** The duck hunter can support sound waterfowl management programs and make his views and desires known not only to the State Conservation Commission but to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Department of Interior in Washington D.C.

# NATIONAL HUNTING & FISHING DAY

## September 23, 1972

Sept. 23, 1972 may be the most important day in the lives of 55 million hunters and fishermen. National Hunting and Fishing Day officially recognizes the role of America's Sportsmen in conservation and outdoor recreation. Resolutions now in Congress not only establish NHF day, but ask hunters and anglers to lead the public in a rededication to the conservation and respectful use of our wildlife and natural resources.

Every hunting, fishing and conservation club in America is being asked to hold an "open house" for the public, to dramatize sportsmen's contributions to conservation and to introduce the public to outdoor skills.

Conservation needs more friends. Tell some of yours all about it on National Hunting and Fishing Day.

## Forum

Dear Sir:

Can you give me information about the trespass laws? If I shoot a bird from the roadway and it goes onto a farmer's land, can I still legally leave my dog and gun behind and retrieve the game? Can farmers legally burn road ditches? Do I need permission to hunt dredge ditches? At what time can a person legally go out on a public hunting lake? I know its illegal to have blind and blocks set up before 12:00, but does this mean that I can not have the blind and blocks in my boat and be waiting at a favorite spot on the lake for 12:00 midnight?

James Cayler  
Fort Dodge

Dear Sir:

Your questions are answered in the order in which they were asked.

1. Copies of Iowa's existing trespass statutes are available from this office. Two forms of trespass can be committed, criminal trespass and civil trespass. I don't believe that you could be charged with criminal trespass if you leave your dog and gun behind while retrieving a bird, however you could be charged with civil trespass.
2. The burning of roadside ditches is contrary to the rules and regulations relating to air pollution control.
3. If the dredge ditches are on private property then permission would be required.
4. Blinds and decoys are **prohibited** on all public hunting areas between the hours of one-half hour after the close of hunting time and midnight each day.

Ken Kakac  
Conservation Enforcement  
Superintendent



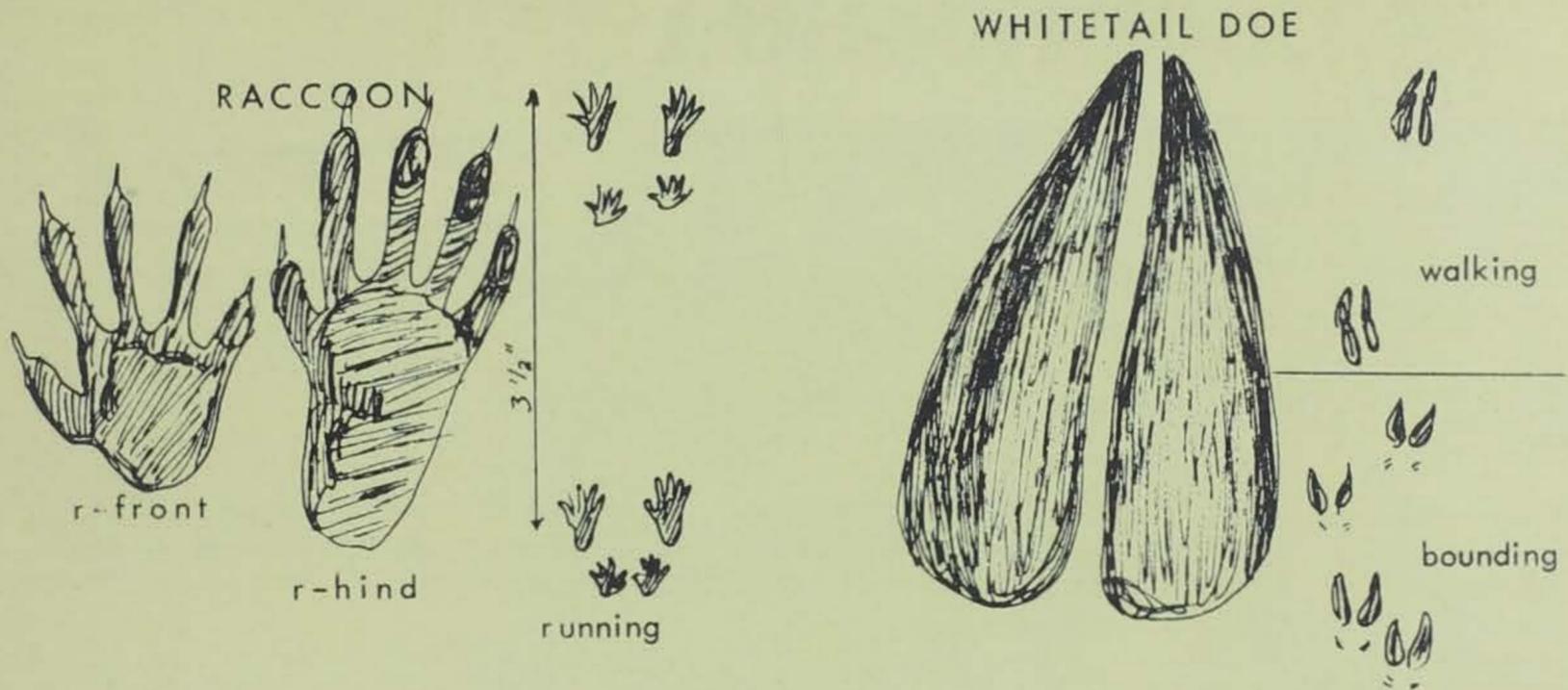
### NEW COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

Edward Weinheimer (right) of Greenfield was elected Chairman of the Iowa Conservation Commission at the July meeting. Weinheimer is being congratulated by former Chairman William E. Noble of Oelwein.

# Classroom Corner

By Curt Powell

Administrator  
Conservation Education Center



Were you successful in building your terrarium last month? Did you find it interesting to bring part of the outdoors indoors? Would it be interesting to study some of Iowa's animals without capturing them? One way you might study Iowa's wild animals and at the same time make a permanent display, is to make plaster casts of animal tracks.

There are many different types of wild animals in Iowa. We will be concerned with mammals in this article. Mammals are a class of higher vertebrates (having a backbone) that nurse their young. Examples of wild mammals in Iowa are white-tail deer, red fox, coyote, and cotton-tail rabbit. These animals all live wild in Iowa and can be observed in many sections of the State. All of them, depending on the soil, dampness, and location leave very identifiable tracks.

Raccoon tracks might be found by a stream, in the wet ground. Illustration No. 1 shows what a raccoon track looks like. Notice

how it is shaped like a small hand. How would a raccoon use this "hand" it has? What track is shown in illustration No. 2? Would you find this animal near your home?

Let's make a plaster cast of the footprint or track of the raccoon or other wild animals. Locate a track you wish to cast. Mix powdered plaster of paris (you can buy this at most hardware stores or you might use powdered patching plaster) with water and stir until all the lumps are gone. It should be mixed thin enough to pour into the track but not watery. If it is too thick it will not follow the shape of the track and therefore, you will not get a good cast.

Be certain the entire track is covered. Now, you must wait for it to dry. After it has dried, remove the plaster cast from the ground and brush the dirt from it. You have now made a cast of a wild animal track. You may wish to paint it white so that it will have a clean fresh look. Label all the casts you make and

place them on a table for a display. Now you have another part of the outdoors indoors.

Would it make a difference how much water you would use in your plaster of paris if the ground was very wet? Or very dry? Would it take a longer time or a shorter time for your cast to dry?

Where might you find information concerning animal tracks so that you might identify them? Would your library be a good place to start?

Did you know that the Conservation Education Center has day programs at the Center for elementary students? The Center also has two and three day workshops in Ecology and Conservation for high school students. Would your class like to come to the Conservation Education Center for one of these programs or workshops? For more information concerning these, contact: Conservation Education Center, Route 1, Box 138C, Guthrie Center, Iowa 50115.

