

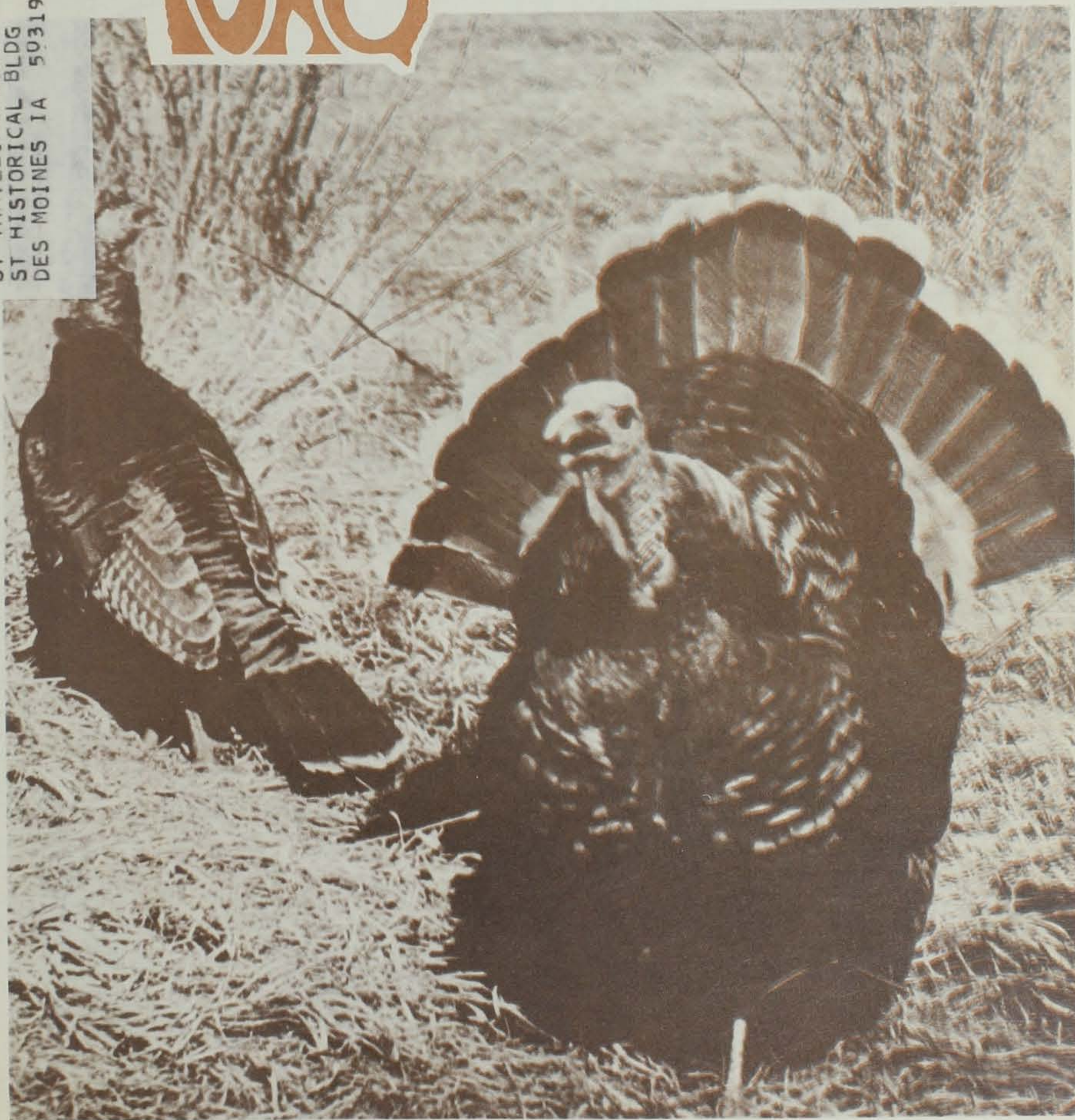


MARCH, 1973



conservationist

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conservationist

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wild turkey season now possible

By Bob Sheets

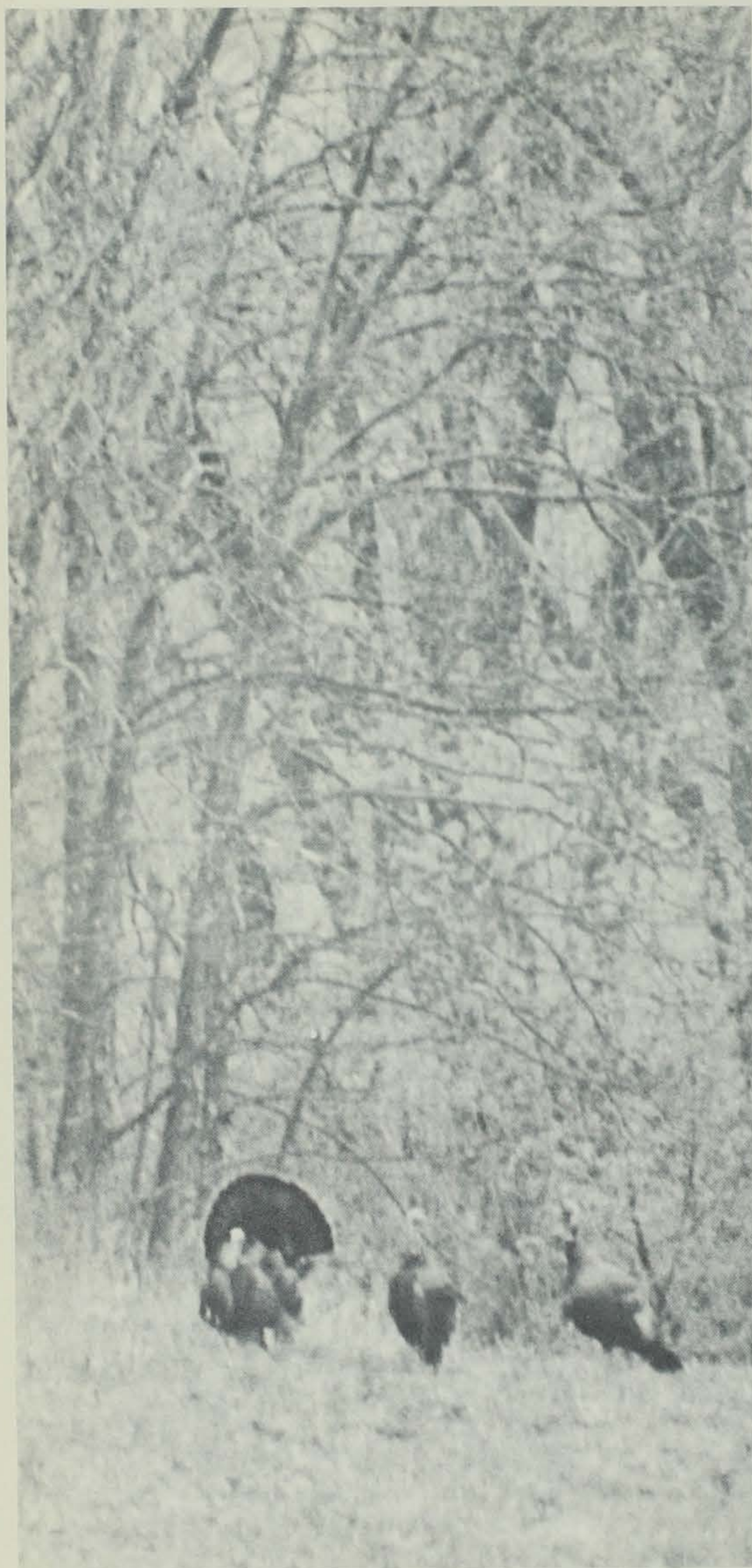
Wildlife Research Biologist
and Roger Sparks

A few, very lucky Iowans may have a chance to hunt the king of all game birds in the very near future. The wild turkey has returned to Iowa and a highly restrictive hunting season now appears possible. In the few large timber tracts around the state, wild turkeys have been successfully re-established. Healthy populations now exist in Stephens State Forest, Lucas County; Shimek State Forest, Lee County; and the Yellow River State Forest in Allamakee County. The big birds have also been stocked along the Upper Iowa River in Allamakee County, the Soap Creek drainage in Appanoose County, and the Des Moines River Valley in Van Buren County.

Two large areas, Stephens and Shimek State Forests, hold excellent populations of the Eastern

strain, which is the turkey best suited to Iowa's climate and habitat. After the introduction of live-trapped birds in the numerous units of these two state areas, turkey populations grew rapidly. For several years now turkey flocks in these areas have remained stable at the maximum carrying capacity. They have now reached the maximum number that the habitat will support.

The Yellow River State Forest in Northeast Iowa was the first area in which wild turkeys were reintroduced. The Rio Grande strain was originally stocked there in 1960. This population grew moderately, distributed well and stabilized. This strain has never been as successful as the Eastern turkeys have been in southern Iowa, but the population is large enough to support a



season. Eastern strain birds have also been introduced into the Yellow River Forest and may ultimately be the successful strain in that area.

A very limited hunting season in the three forest areas mentioned above is now possible. A spring gobbler season (bearded turkeys only) could be safely opened during the first two weeks in May. At that time, the turkeys have bred and the hens have begun to nest. Surplus gobblers — over and above the maximum number of male birds necessary to maintain the carrying capacity of the habitat — are available. The toms are still “on the prowl” and in fact, will reach a second gobbling peak while competing for any remaining females. Nearly all females have gone to nest by early May and the efforts of these “feathered Monarchs” are futile. Competition remains high at this time and although wary, the 20 to 25 pound toms are susceptible to a well handled call. If legislative approval for the spring season is gained, a computerized drawing will select a very limited number of permits each year. Applica-



tions for the hunting season would be sent out at least eight weeks before the season with licenses and transportation tags sent immediately after the drawing. Each successful hunter would be required to bring his turkey to a prescribed check station in each hunting zone.

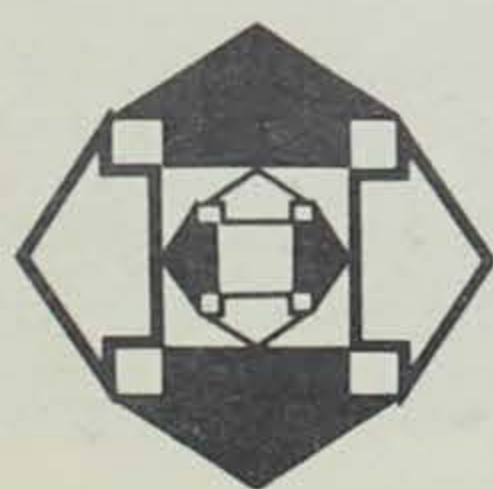
Success rates in surrounding states under similar circumstances have shown from one to three percent of the hunters harvest a turkey. So to say the least, the season would be extremely limited and only a few hunters each year would take a trophy home for their efforts.

To avoid competition in the forests, the season could be split. Half the hunters would receive permits for the first week of the season, the other half for the last week. Because the hunters would be chosen at random from all over the state, party hunting would be eliminated. A quality, one-to-one hunt would be offered, creating the challenge of matching wits with the largest and most elusive game bird, on his terms — in his own back yard.

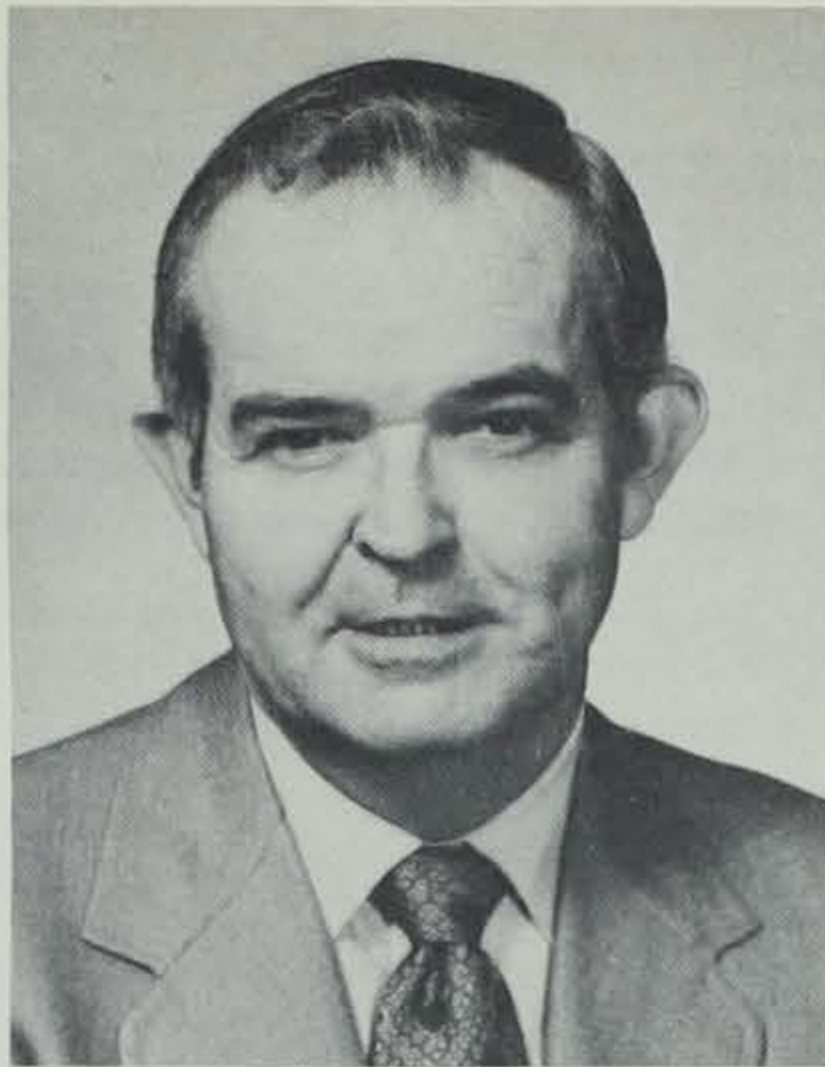
The wild turkey is a deep forest dweller. His home is limited to the dense timber tracts which provide the solitude he demands. Turkeys have done well in such areas in Iowa, and the distribution has expanded to adjoining areas where suitable habitat exists. Live-trapping and transplanting turkeys have been successful on several large timbered areas in the state. This program will continue as biologists experiment with releasing wild turkeys into smaller forests. Management will also continue on areas where turkeys are established. Besides adding a new recreational opportunity for Iowa sportsmen, the restrictive season would help maintain an alert and cautious wild turkey population. Wild turkeys domesticate faster than most game birds. With this in mind controlled hunting is vitally important to wild turkey management.

Iowans will never enjoy an unlimited hunting season for turkeys. But everyone will have an equal chance at the permits, and every permit holder will have that one opportunity—his chance to bag the regal phantom of the deep woods, the wild turkey. ☆

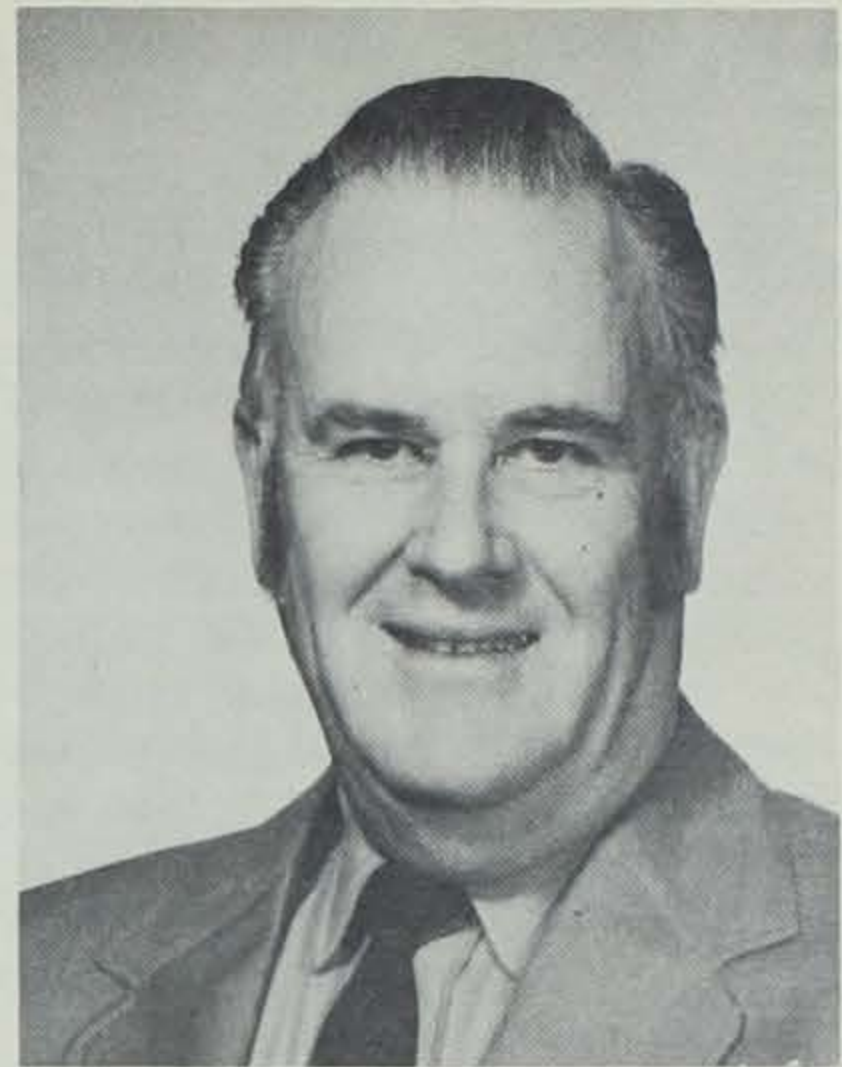




THE FUTURE OF



John Stokes



Joe Brill

Iowans are concerned over growing problems of overcrowding and crumbling facilities in their state parks. John Stokes, Chief of Lands and Waters Division and Joe Brill, Parks Superintendent for the Iowa Conservation Commission were interviewed to get their comments on what can be and is being done to solve these serious problems.

Question: What can be done to improve state parks in Iowa?

Answer: The Iowa Conservation Commission has adopted the policy of not acquiring land to build new state parks until existing facilities are repaired and upgraded and projects currently being developed are completed. For years we have been lacking maintenance on existing state parks. Historically, it is easier to get appropriations for a new project in an area, than to maintain an existing park. A new lake for a

community seems more attractive than repairing rotting shelter houses and redesigning an old area. Also, it's difficult to get money for necessary things that the public can't see. For instance, at Red Rock (Elk Rock State Park) almost a quarter of a million dollars will be spent to provide sewage lagoons and water systems and the improvements are difficult for the taxpayer to see. It is necessary because of health requirements. It is something that the public demands on a day to day basis, but it is mostly underground. The fact is we're behind in providing these systems. It is absolutely necessary for us to spend the money we receive on them and on maintaining and improving other existing facilities.

We still have several projects in various stages of development that will be completed: Volga,

Brushy Creek, Badger Creek, Three Mile Creek, Pleasant Creek and the completion of Rathbun, Red Rock, Saylorville, and Big Creek. These will be included in the budget askings, but they will be completed by phase. We will also expand certain parks without going into new projects, so the acquisition of land will not come to a total standstill. But we will redesign and modernize existing facilities and complete projects that we currently have on the drawing board, rather than to plan new projects.

Question: Won't the expense of redesigning all state parks be high?

Answer: Yes, and we'll only be able to work on them as money is appropriated. The Commission instructed us to take a priority of parks and advise the legislature that we need to redesign them. Now consider the

IOWA'S STATE PARKS

value of this to the public. First of all, in most cases we use existing land. So, instead of spreading nickels and dollars here and there, we're going to set up a few pilot projects. Each year these few areas will receive the bulk of the appropriations. Now, of course, we will still have the small projects in a number of the parks. To insure public welfare we must meet certain requirements of the Board of Health, the Department of Public Safety and other agencies. But basically, we're going to start completely redesigning the heavy use, high priority parks.

Question: How bad are the facilities in our state parks?

Answer: Well, for example, we are building a new lodge at Bellevue State Park. This is the first new lodge facility that has gone into an Iowa State Park in thirty-seven years. The point of total depreciation has been reached in many of our buildings and other facilities that were built back in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) days. Previously we have been getting just enough money each year to patch existing buildings when we spread the money evenly over all state areas. We now have reached the point that in many cases, the entire facility must be rebuilt. It's no longer a repair, it's a construction.

Question: How has the pressure on these areas changed?

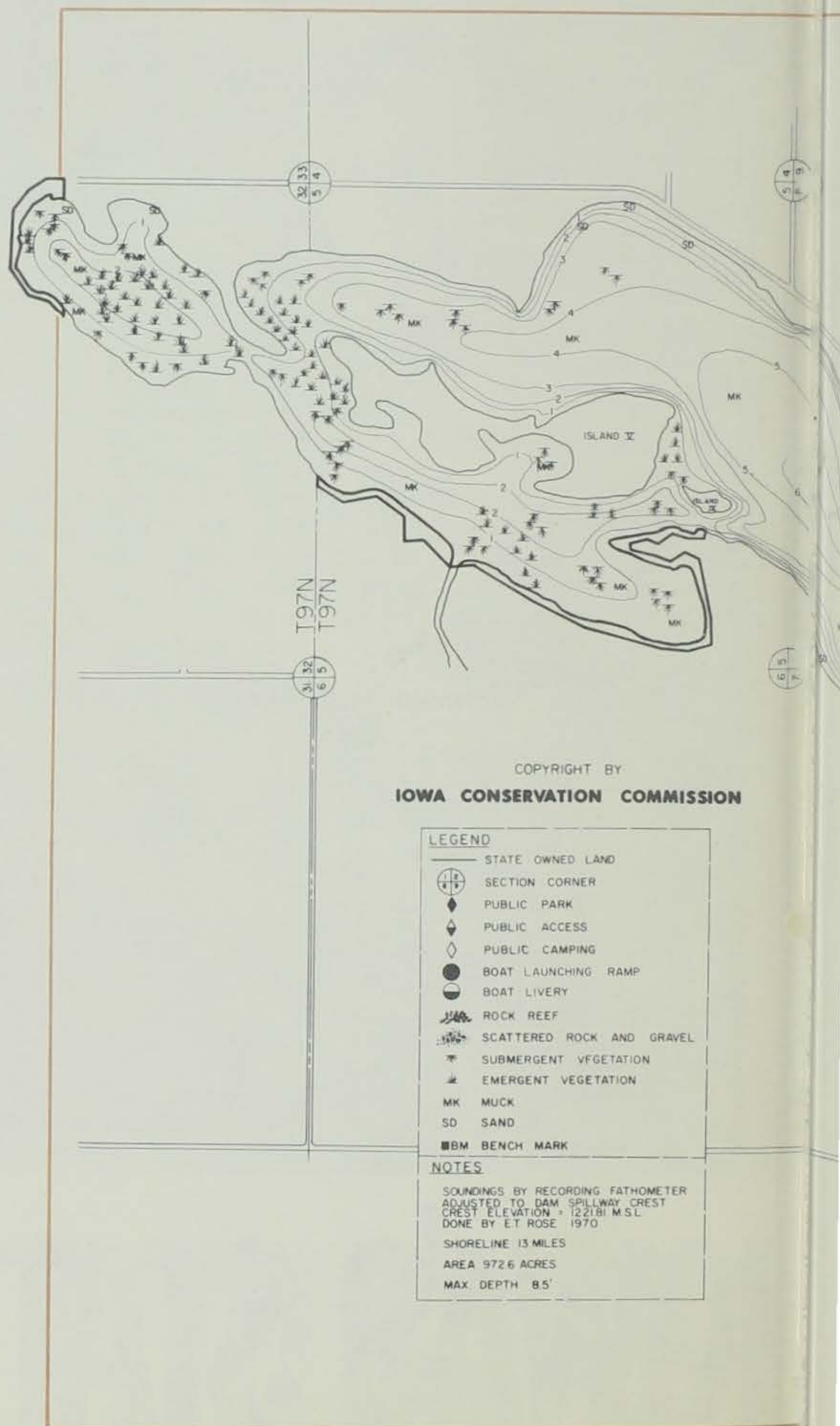
Answer: One of the problems of state parks is overcrowding, particularly on weekends. Our parks were originally designed to accommodate approximately two million people. These same parks are now receiving pressure from over eleven million visitors.

Question: Can 11 million visitors be accommodated without acquiring new areas?

Answer: By redesigning and revamping our present areas, we could do a much better job of it. Our parks are poorly designed to meet the demand. What we need to do is to build different types of facilities because of changing

and expanding uses. We can, in fact, redesign and accommodate a great many more people in most of our parks. The change in the pressure plus the change in peoples' methods of using a state park have been remarkable. For instance, we'll probably eliminate some bath houses as we have

known them in the past, and go to a more modern concept. People don't need the same type beach facility that they needed even fifteen years ago. Ninety percent of the people that come to a state park to swim have a swim suit made of modern fabrics. The car has become the storage area.



When swimmers get out of the water the modern nylon suits dry immediately and there is no problem of bringing wet stuff into the car.

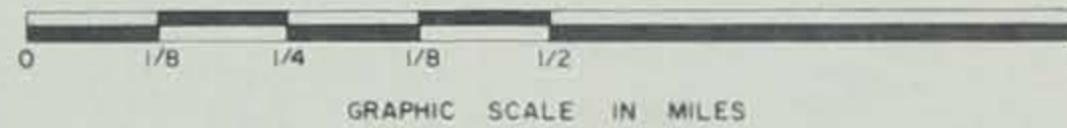
Camping has changed drastically and we need to redesign accordingly. In many areas, campgrounds are being overused. Ideas

have changed and in many cases people want to see water. In some of our newer parks, Lake Anita for example, we have accommodated their demands by tiering the campground overlooking the lake. In a few areas campgrounds can be expanded. Because of environmental considerations camp-

grounds may have to have limits placed on the number of campers and regimented camping pads installed. Where possible, alternate campgrounds can be developed so that only one area would be used at any one time, giving the veget-

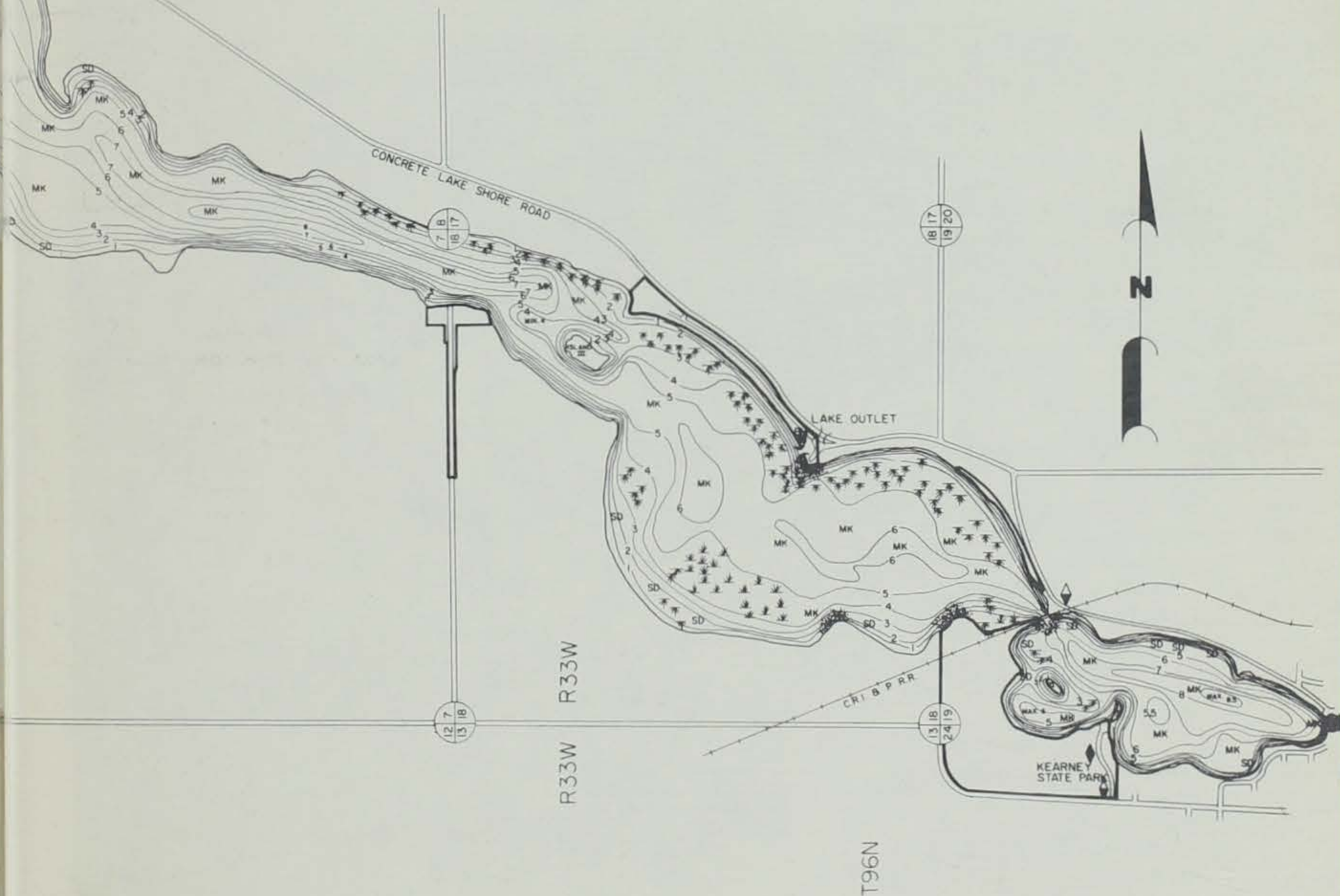
(Continued on Page 13)

Iowa
Lakes
Charted



FIVE ISLAND LAKE

PALO ALTO COUNTY



LUNKER LURES

By John Gibson
Information Specialist

Did you ever wonder what lure or bait your neighbor used to land that lunker hanging over his fireplace? We sure did! So for each popular Iowa game fish species we polled a number of Iowa record fish holders to learn what

lures and baits catch such trophies.

The lures and baits displayed below are the results. The successful anglers were contacted and asked to give detailed information as to brand, model, color

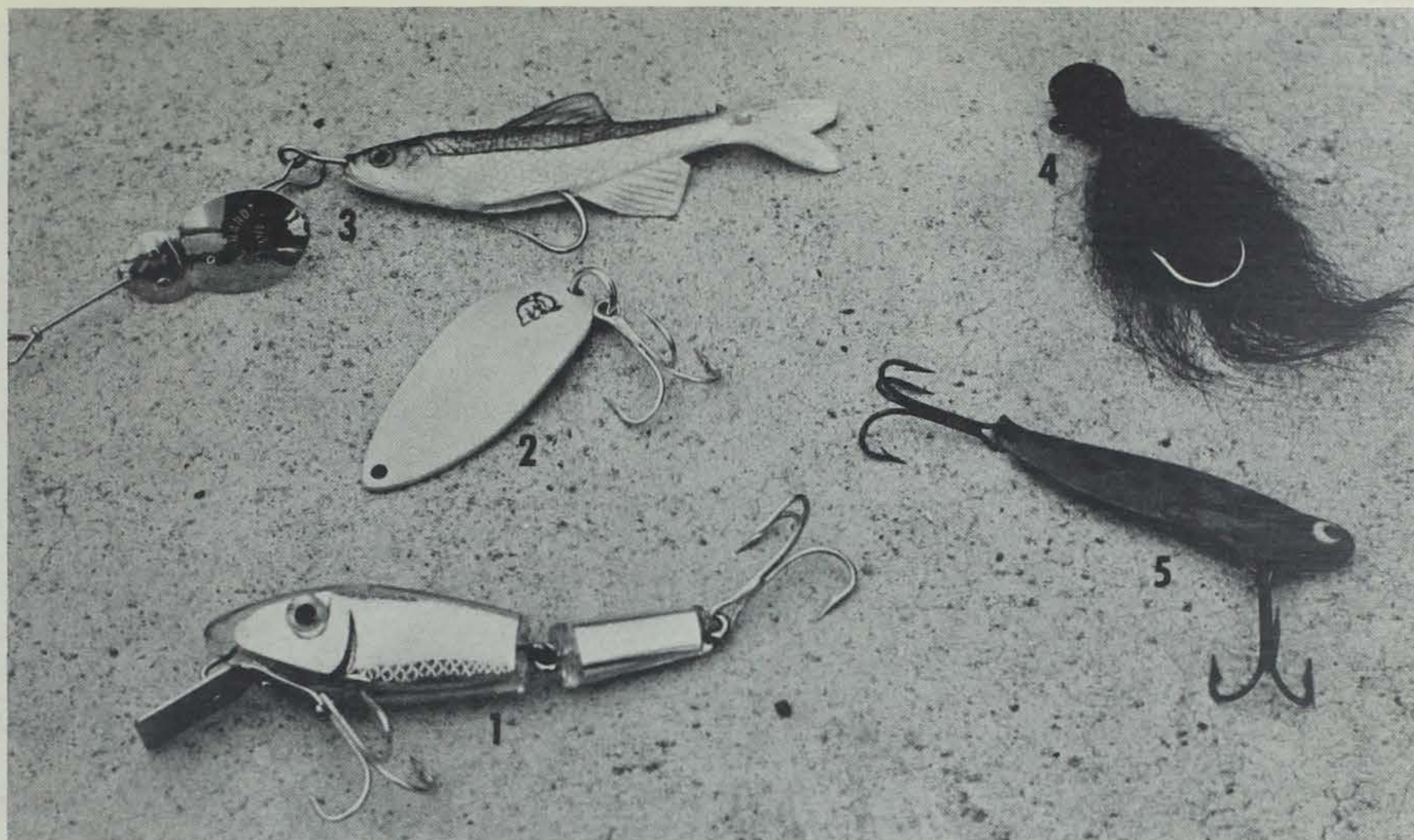
and size of lures.

The following pictures and descriptions carry no endorsement for specific brands. The lures and baits shown are identical to those specified by the anglers who landed record Iowa fish.

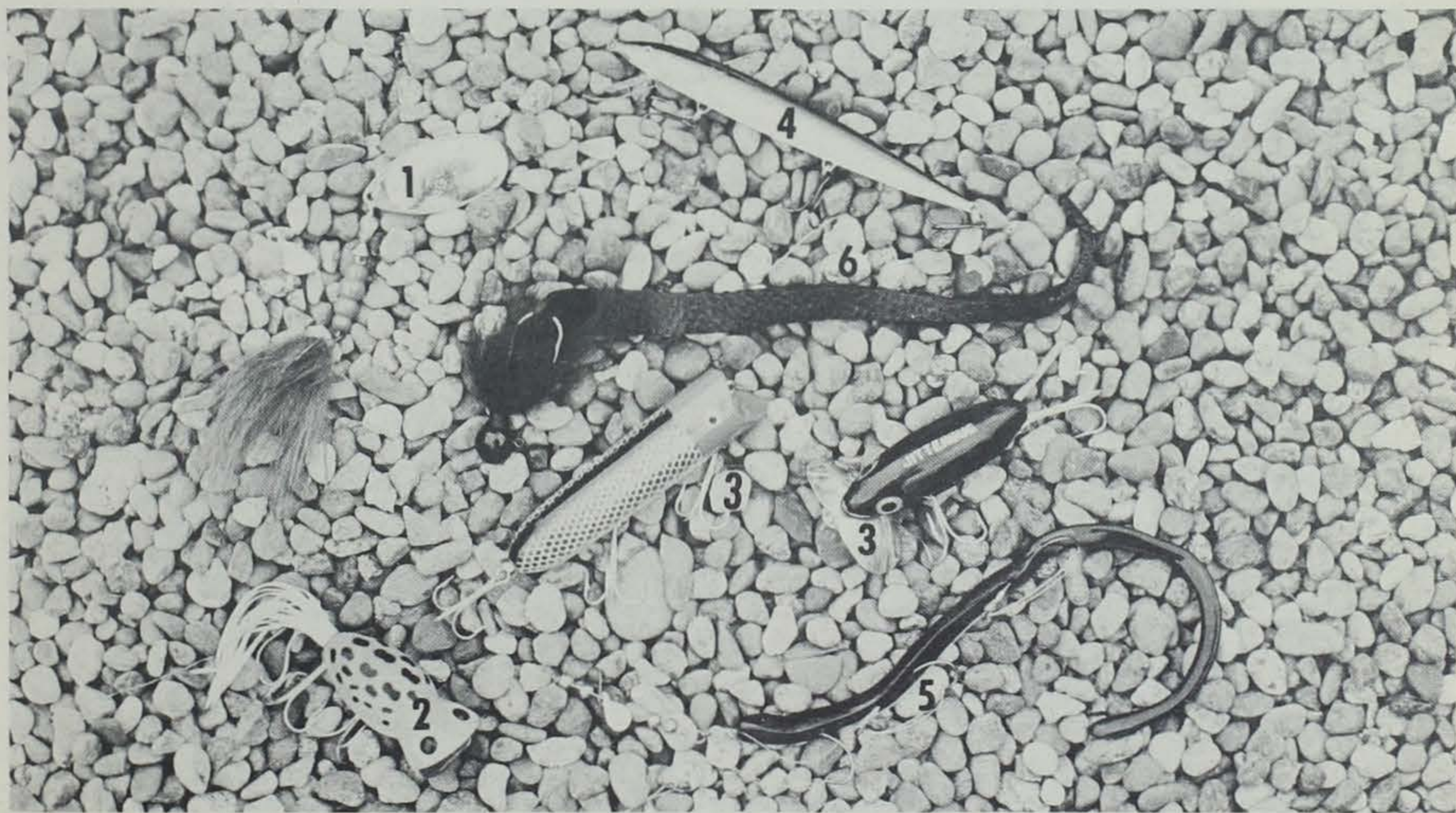


TROUT (Rainbow & Brown) FAVORITES:

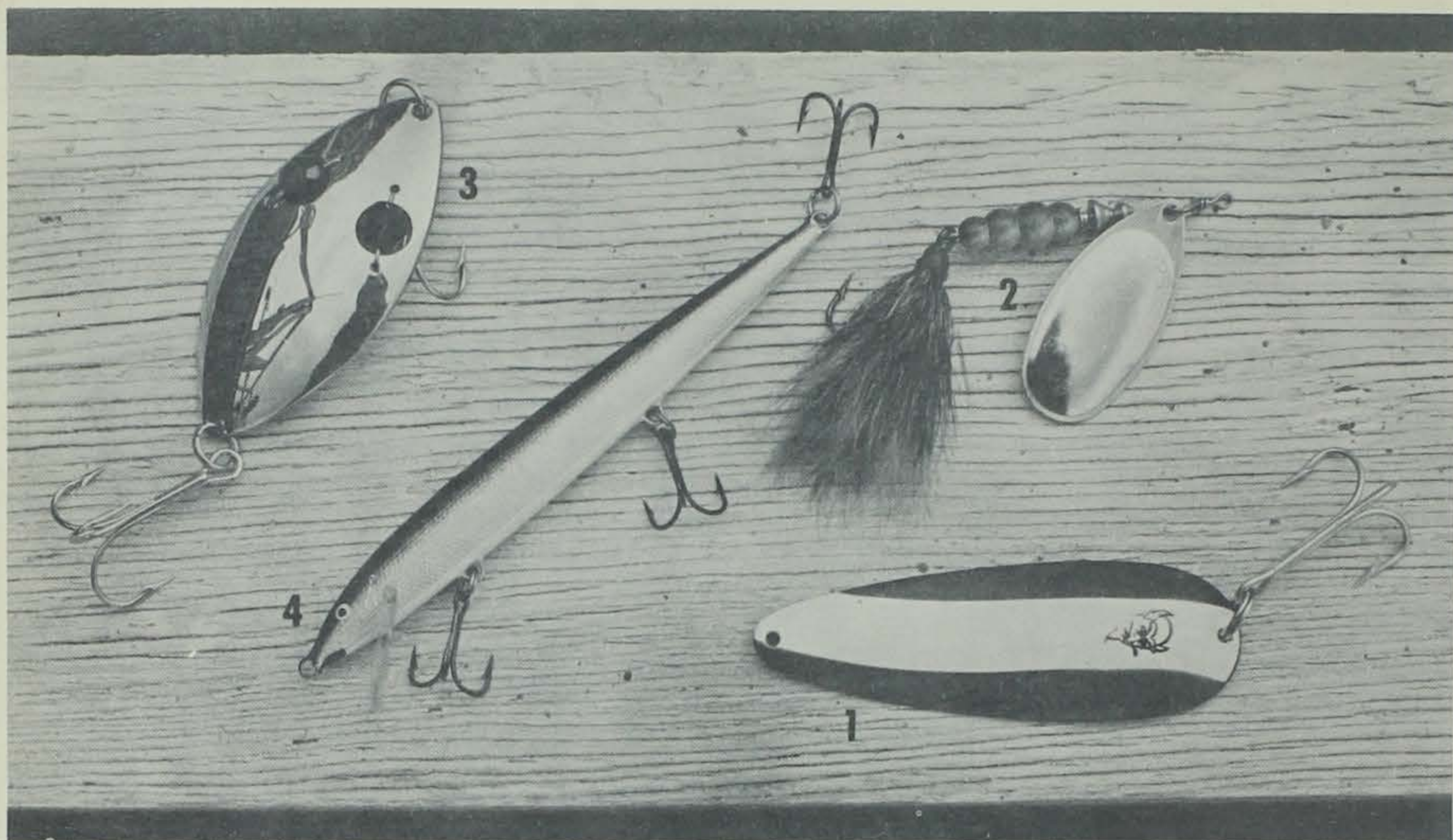
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|---|--|---|
| (1) Featherweight spoon (gold or silver finish) | (2) Midget spoon (bright colors) | (3) Small trout spinner (bright colors) |
| (4) Live nightcrawler (imitation shown) | (5) Salmon eggs, natural or florescent color | |

**WALLEYE FAVORITES:**

- (1) 3 to 4 inch jointed minnow, silver flash, medium runner (2) Pearl-finished spoon (spinning size) (3) Live minnow/spinner combination (4) 1/16 to 1/2 oz. jig, white, yellow or black (5) Metal, deeprunning and jigging lure (bright colors)

**LARGEMOUTH BASS FAVORITES:**

- (1) Purple bucktail spinner (2) Large Popper (3) Two surface chugger-types (4) Large balsa minnow floater (5) Purple or black plastic worm rig (6) Black pork eel, jig combination



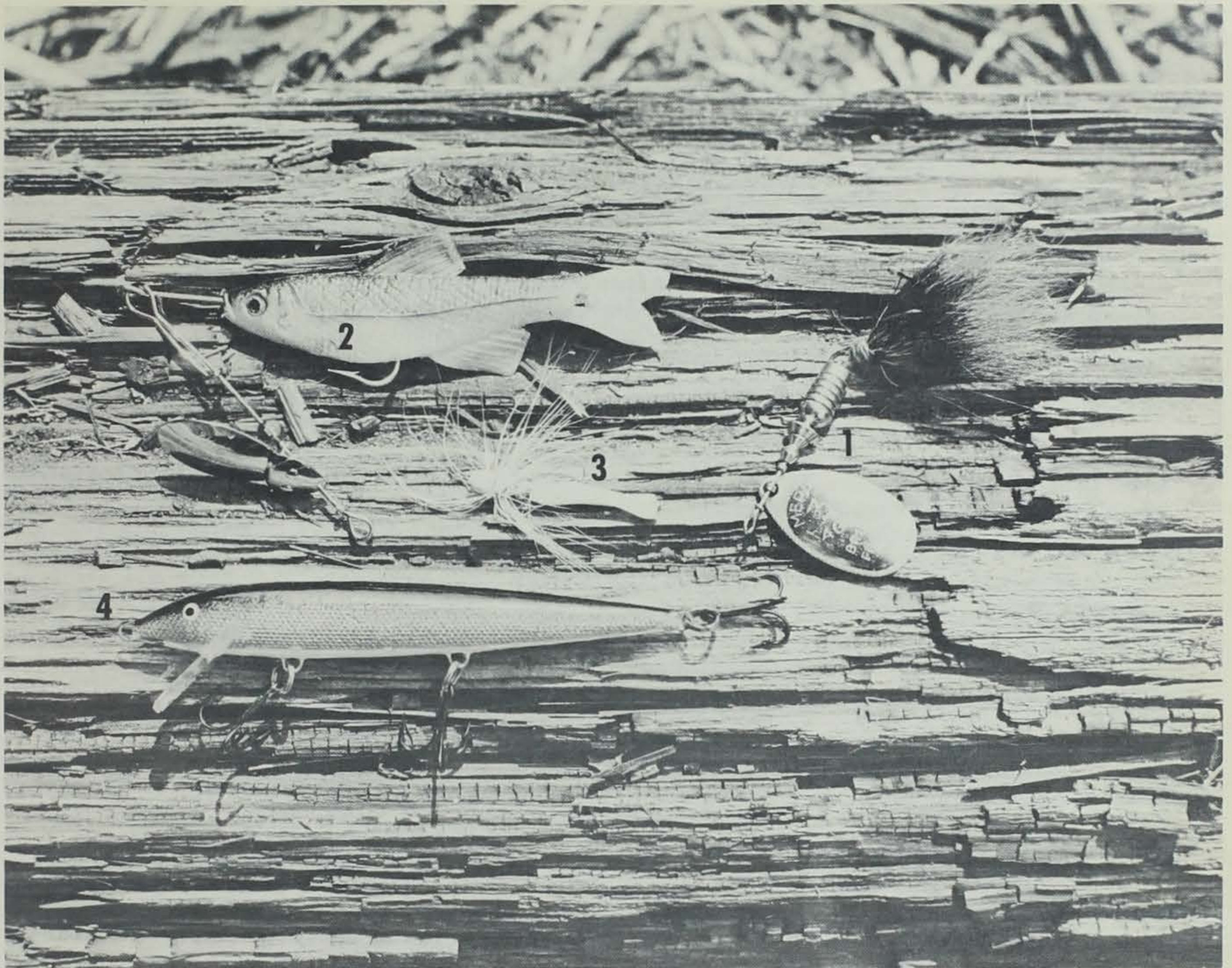
NORTHERN PIKE FAVORITES

- (1) Large red and white or black and white spoon (2) Weighted Bucktail spinner
(3) Large silver spoon (4) 4" to 7" Balsa or plastic minnow (floater)



CRAPPIE (Black & White) FAVORITES:

- (1) 1/8 to 1/16 oz. white marabou jig (plastic or hair body) (2) 1/8 to 1/16 oz. white crappie killer (3) Minnow imitation streamer fly
(4) Midget spoon (any color) (5) 4" plastic worm/spinner rig



SMALLMOUTH BASS FAVORITES:

- (1) Squirrel tail spinner (2) Live minnow or spinner/minnow combo (3) 1/16 to 1/4 oz. jig (white or yellow)
 (4) Medium size balsa minnow floater

Good Luck! ☆

STATE PARKS FUTURE . . .
 (Continued from Page 8)

ation a chance to revive.

Specific public uses should differ from park to park. Not all areas lend themselves to certain forms of recreation, but are ideal for others. We must evaluate the potential of each park, consider the present needs of the public and redesign the area according-

ly. Now, of course, because of environmental considerations, we will not be able to meet all the demands of the people. In some areas the terrain does not permit us to do what the public would like.

Another point that involves the redesigning of parks is in the



picnic area. We realize that in the redesign of state parks that picnicking and family reunions in picnic areas are a diminishing activity. Therefore, we are redesigning our picnic areas, reducing the total area in some parks. Basically, we have more picnic areas than we need and not enough camping. Of course, twenty years ago this was not the case but the pressure has changed. Forty percent of the picnics are in campgrounds now and we must add visitors parking space to the camp areas.

Question: Is the rising cost of land a main drawback to acquiring new areas?

Answer: As years pass new areas are becoming more and more difficult to acquire. For one thing, we now have the Federal and State Relocation Act. The cost of land has been terrific, but this cost alone isn't the only deterrent to the Commission buying new areas. In new projects an arbitrary evaluation is made that recreation is the greatest land use priority for the area and this may not be the case. Several thousand acres of land in north-central Iowa for instance, may be excellent farm land. Farming should have priority there. If we reach the point of again being able to acquire new lands, we will have to acquire in areas of less value to other interests.

Question: In some states they have overnight accommodations other than our cabin types. They have resort areas with elaborate motels or hotels. Is there any chance that Iowa will ever go to something like this?

Answer: A resort-type complex appeals to people who want to use recreation areas and who prefer plush accommodations. Presently, we are making a detailed study of whether this

would be feasible in connection with an Army Corps of Engineers marina at Lake Rathbun. This area would be located outside Honey Creek State Park but under lease. Other states build two ways. We have found some that are run by state operations, such as Kentucky or Oklahoma; while others are privately run and have a hotel manager. On the basis of the study it appears that the state would probably provide the facilities to meet the health requirements — basically the water and sewage system. Then private investment people would build the buildings and manage the area, under lease from the state.

Question: What types of activities would be encompassed in such a facility?

Answer: The area would be somewhat of a sports center with possibly a golf course, tennis court, central meeting hall and even planned activities for children. A marina would be built in connection with the area. This area would be separate from Honey Creek State Park and would not conflict with or disturb the park activities.

Question: Will there be a park user fee for Iowa's parks?

Answer: The Conservation Commission did not include a park user fee in its budget to the governor and legislature. A park user fee bill has been introduced into the present session of the legislature and will be debated without doubt.

Question: What would this bill do?

Answer: A user fee in selected stated parks, forests and other areas would be required. The rate would be \$5.00 annually and \$1.00 daily as proposed. This is a user fee and not an entrance fee; that is, a family could ride through the park without being required to have a permit. A permit would be required if they parked and used facilities provided in the park.

Question: Would this user fee be helpful to the Commission.

Answer: Yes or no depending on the final form of the user fee

bill that might be passed. We will recommend to the legislature several points that need to be considered.

A user fee must be administered at the lowest possible cost. We have 88 public roads running through our state parks so gate houses are out of the question. We would need a sticker which would become as well known as license plates on cars. We presently favor a bumper sticker since it does not offer any safety problems.

Fees would revert to the general fund at the end of June each year. We would need authority to spend fees one year after collected.

User fee revenue is scheduled for maintenance and operation. We are asking that this be broadened to include replacement of present facilities on existing state parks. The reason for this request is to complete replacement of latrines, cabins, etc., on our present parks. Too often these are not high cost replacements and get lost in a budget when cuts are made each session. Our capitals cover the new developments, but small replacement projects in parks just don't get done.

A user fee was passed by the House the last time the legislature met for appropriations. It did not pass in the Senate. It appears there will need to be some fee schedule to permit more than a one day stay. As a rule of thumb you can expect \$100,000 income for each dollar charged in the user fee permit. A \$3.00 permit as passed previously in the House would have brought in an estimated \$300,000. We are recommending the \$5.00 annual fee included in the present Senate bill and feel a daily, weekly, or monthly fee could be included.

Perhaps the most important point is the fact that the fees should be an additional source of revenue. If the present budget is reduced by this amount then there is really no need for the Commission to collect a park user fee. ☆

ECOLOGY COURSE

Classroom Corner

By Curt Powell

Administration
Conservation Education Center

Many times we hear people talking about wanting to learn more about their environment and the ecology of certain areas throughout the State of Iowa. Teachers are concerned with methods courses which give them the background and techniques of teaching conservation, environmental and ecological education to their pupils. The Conservation Education Center will have **exactly that type of course** this summer for teachers, education majors and others who are interested.

Drake University, the National Park Service (Midwest Region) and the Iowa Conservation Commission are sponsoring a ten-day workshop on Environmental Education July 23 - August 1, 1973 and August 1 - 11, 1973. There are two sections of the same course to allow more people to take advantage of this offering.

The course will be offered at the Conservation Education Center and will offer three semester hours of college credit, either graduate or undergraduate. There are no pre-requisites and credit is appropriate as an elective in an undergraduate teacher education program, as an elective in a graduate M.S.E. in Curriculum and Instruction Program and as a science course for elementary and secondary science majors (with prior approval).

At the completion of the course each student will have the ability to: (1) identify the relationships of soil, water, air, and biological communities; (2) identify man's relationship to his biological, geological and chemical environment; (3) identify environmental imbalance; (4) examine natural

sources for environmental problems; (5) state behavioral and content objectives related to the teaching of conservation, ecological, and environmental principles; (6) discuss critically the role of educators in environmental education; and (7) propose reasons for inclusions of the study of the environment in the curriculum and defend them.

Participants in the course will have a wide variety of field experience, such as field trips to various wetland communities, forests, and prairies. A number of resource personnel will be available for consultation and instruction. All in all, the course is a fine opportunity to receive college credit and enjoy the great outdoors at the same time. If you are interested in receiving more information concerning the course or registering for it, contact us at: Conservation Education Center, Route 1, Box 138C, Guthrie Center, Iowa 50115.

Hurry up and get your name on the registration list before the classes fill. This is the time to bring relevancy to conservation education teaching.

Fifty-six fifth grade students and teachers from Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, Newton, Iowa, recently spent Friday evening and all day Saturday at the Conservation Education Center. Hard work, intense learning, and some recreation involved all students in a fine weekend of conservation education. The topics ranged from man's relationship to his environment, to the ecology of a forest. Would your school be interested in spending a weekend at the Conservation Education Center? ☆



