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# conservationist





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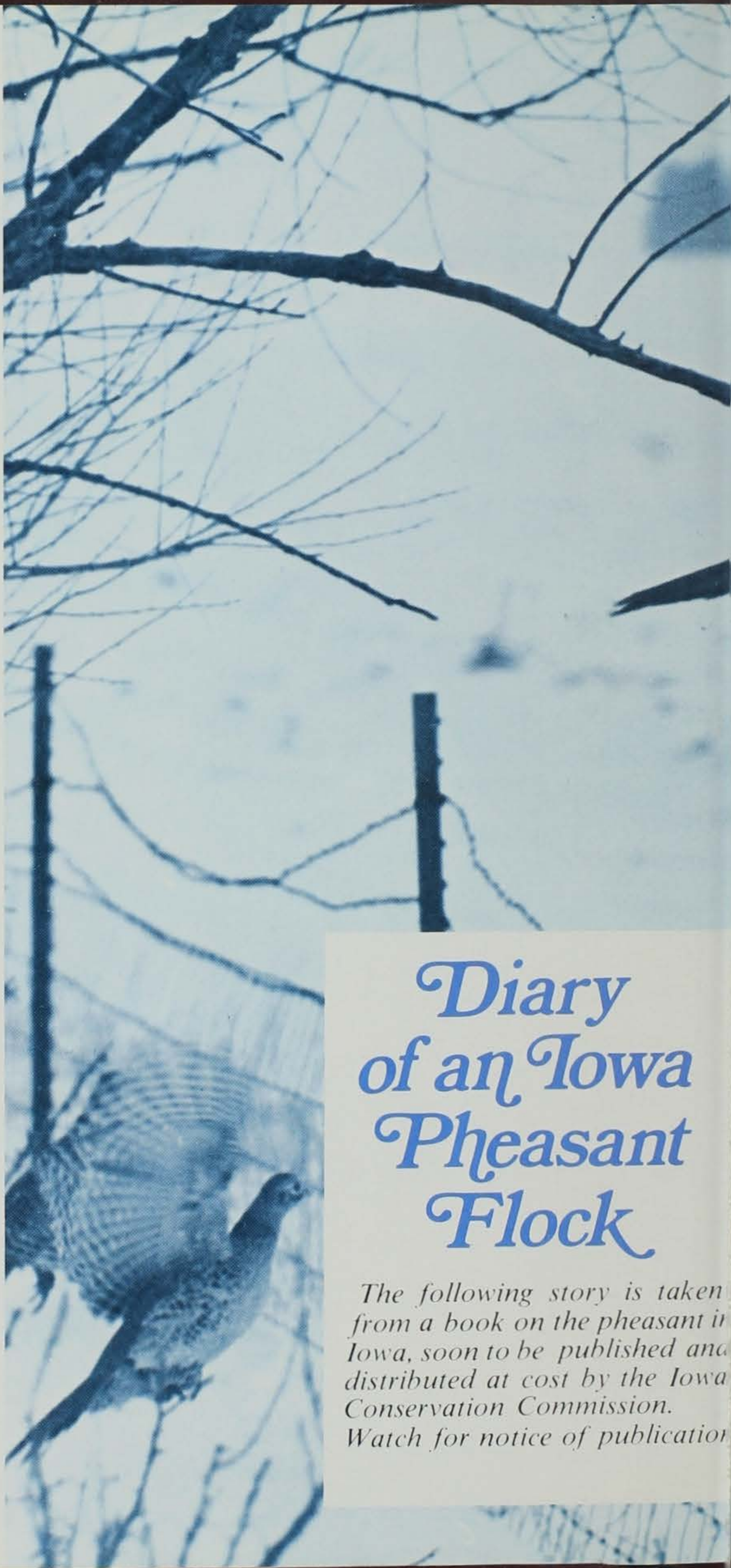
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# Diary of an Iowa Pheasant Flock

The following story is taken from a book on the pheasant in Iowa, soon to be published and distributed at cost by the Iowa Conservation Commission. Watch for notice of publication.

## Old Man Winter

A heavy snow in January covered most of the available roosting cover in the grove so some of the birds roosted in the cedar trees. A great horned owl, eventually took two hens who had unfortunately roosted on exposed limbs. One night the roaming farm dog stumbled onto a hen roosting on the ground. As the snow got older, it became crustier and harder to scratch through for food. One small group of birds found a spot where the snow plow had dug into the road ditch shoulder, exposing a good place to scratch for weed seeds and bits of leaves. Over the hill came a car, and one rooster made the mistake of trying to fly across the road instead of into the field.

Then in February a big blizzard struck at mid-day when most of the birds were still out feeding in the cornfield a quarter mile from the grove. Some birds tried to burrow into weedy clumps among the stalks. A few found a narrow fencerow with sparse cover that broke the early blasts. Others had the good sense, or luck, to make it back to shelter even though they had to buck the wind to do it. As the storm got worse, the four hens and one rooster that had chosen to sit it out in the cornfield finally moved downwind looking for a better place. The blowing snow got into their nostrils, and gradually their beaks began icing over. As they had more difficulty breathing and became weaker, each squatted behind a pile of stalks or a clump of weeds. Here they finally suffocated. Two more hens picked the fencerow as a haven and stuck tight, but the blowing snow sifted up under their feathers. Body heat melted the snow, more sifted in, and ice formed. Soon each had a cake of ice sitting astride its back atop the lungs. Its beak and eyes began caking over as well. A couple of days after the storm, crows cruising the area made a feast of the two frozen hens. Another hen managed to make it into a small clump of slough grass in a low place in the road ditch. Though weakened by the exposure to the biting cold, she made it through the storm. However, just before dawn a fox scouted the ditch for a mouse, rabbit, or whatever. Although the hen heard him at the last second, she was too weak and stiff to escape. By the time the storm subsided and the survivors had gotten together, the flock numbered 8 roosters and 25 hens.

As March dragged along, these pheasants had to range farther afield to fill their crops each day. A hawk spotted a hen crossing an open plowed field one morning. He had a late breakfast. One old rooster that had been carrying a few pellets as a reminder of the earlier hunting season had gotten badly iced up and cold during the blizzard. Finally the debilitated old bird succumbed to pneumonia. The final blow to the winter flock came the last week of March when farmers began hauling corn to the elevator as the roads became more passable. Many of the truck boxes dribbled out a few grains along the way. One hen got so wrapped up in picking up kernels that she did not hear the truck coming on its return trip. A moment's panic and a belated attempt to fly, and the flock of 45 pheasants (10 cocks and 35 hens) had been reduced to 30 (7 cocks and 23 hens).

## Spring and Nesting

The hardships of winter were forgotten as sunshine and warm temperatures spread greenery across the spring landscape. The seven roosters began looking at each other with a wary eye. The urge to crow overtook them, and they began scouting for territories to claim and defend. It was a common sight to see two of them putting on a great show of fighting as they sought to establish who was dominant and to reach a decision on where territorial boundaries lay. By the middle of April the seven cocks had divided the farm into seven territories. Each territory included areas of suitable nesting cover as well as future row crop fields.

Some roosters began crowing as early as March and continued throughout the nesting season. This activity was concentrated in the early morning just before and after sunrise, but calls could be heard at any time of the day especially in response to any loud noise. There was a slight upsurge in the evening. This crowing challenged other cocks to a fight if they wanted to argue and also attracted the

## By Dr. Allen Farris

IT WAS New Year's Day. The 45 pheasants scattered around the Iowa farm could be thankful that attention was being focused on football bowl games rather than pheasants. They were not yet aware that the pheasant hunting season would close in a few days. By this time the birds had learned that the sight of two or three men approaching their shelter foreshadowed no good.

With the closing of the hunting season, the 10 roosters and 35 hens that called this farm home could settle down to the uncertain task of surviving whatever winter chose to throw in their direction.

The flock of 45 that had chosen the farm windbreak for their winter activity center found themselves in typical straits. The windbreak had a few cedar and pine trees, a scattering of box elder, maple, some dead elms, and a few odds and ends of other trees and bushes. While this might be adequate for most winters, if a blizzard came along, a couple of rows of spruce with snug branches tight to the ground and a row or two of honeysuckle around the outside to cut the sharp winds would be better. The forebearers of the 45 that used this windbreak had gotten along fairly well. That was before the farmer cleaned up the place and allowed a few sheep to run among the trees to nibble away the good ground roosting cover. Back in those days, there had always been a cornfield right along one, if not two, sides of the grove. If the weather were bad, a hungry bird did not have to go far for a meal. However, the present generation of pheasants found things rougher. Now most cornfields were likely to be fall plowed.

attention of hens in the area and enticed them to become members of his harem. While the male segment of the population was busy displaying and crowing, the hens seemed bored by the whole business. However, as temperatures warmed and the vegetation began to grow, the hens became more agreeable to the cocks' advances.

By the end of April or early May, each hen began sneaking off to her own selected nest site to lay her eggs. Hayfields, especially alfalfa, were a preferred early location, and several hens were in these. A new oats crop, which had gotten off to an early start, road ditches, fencerows, and other areas with a fair amount of dead vegetation left from the previous fall were picked by other hens. One chose to incubate one of the dumpnests. This was in a weedy corner of the farm grove where several hens stayed. Her nest had 25 eggs in various stages of incubation from a couple freshly laid to nine just about ready to hatch. The farmer's dog found that nest.

One hen took a little over two weeks to lay the 12 eggs that made up the clutch. This occurred at the rate of one egg per day with about every third or fourth day skipped. The first egg was laid in a hastily scratched depression in the ground, right on the bare dirt. The hen spent only a few minutes at the nest for the first few eggs. As the number in the nest increased, she spent time shaping the nest and lining it with grass or other debris available at the site. By the time the last two or three eggs were deposited, she spent 3 or 4 hours on the nest at the time each was laid. One hen was flushed from her nest by a prowling skunk during this laying-incubating cycle. She abandoned the whole effort and started anew elsewhere.

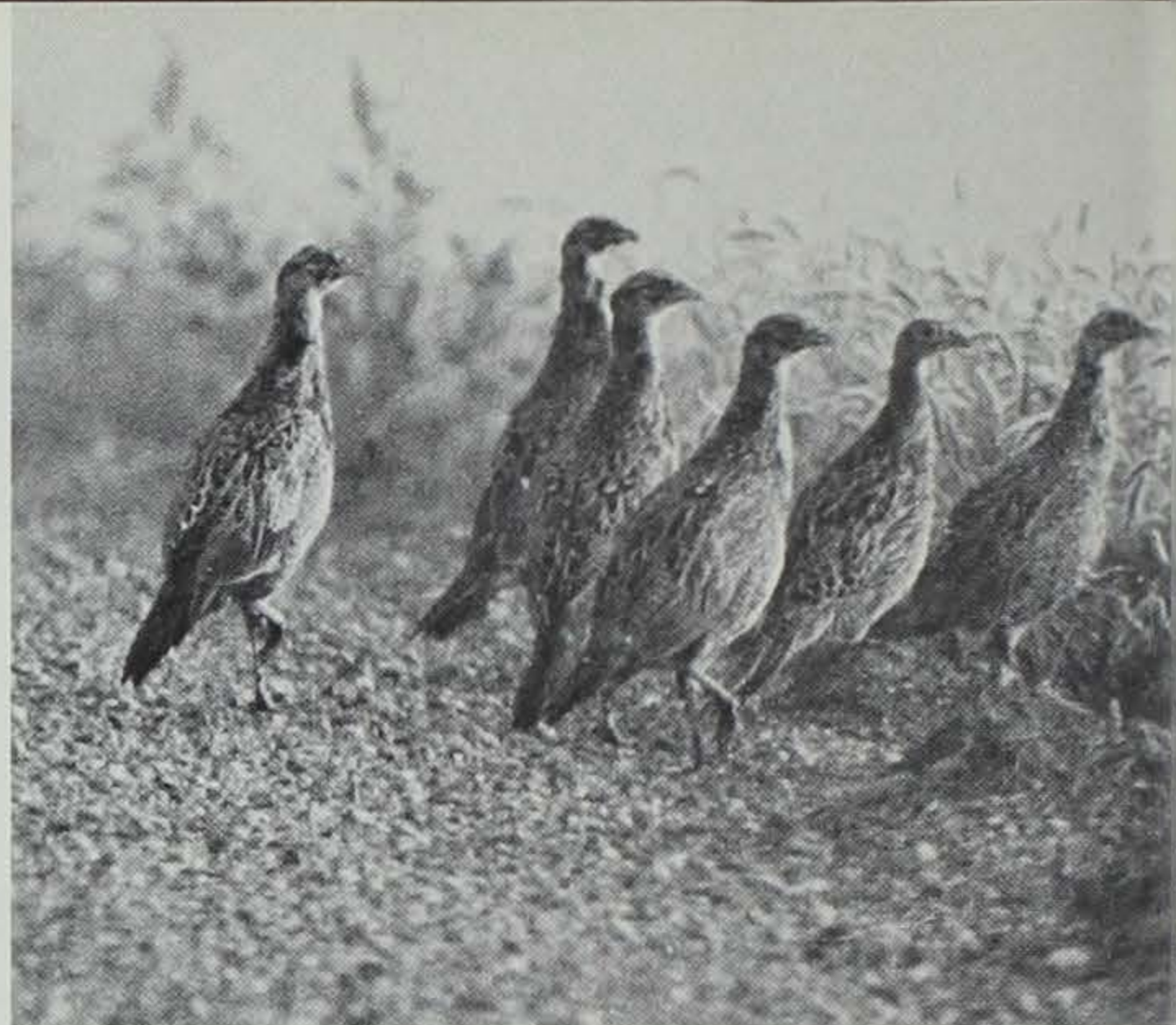
With the clutch completed, the hen began incubation. One other egg was added later. This accounted for the one unhatched egg left in the nest at hatching time. The incubation process took 23 days. The hen stuck close to her nest, leaving only for short periods to feed. As the time for hatching approached, some hens even skipped or shortened some of their daily feeding periods. They got no help from their colorful mates when it came to incubating the eggs. The cocks were too busy looking after their territories and the other hens in the harems who were not incubating at the same time.

For the seven cocks it was an easy life. They were King of the Mountain and nothing fazed them. This attitude proved to be the undoing of one of them, however. He never should have tried to stand his ground on the road when that car bore down on him. Thus there were six roosters left to enter the summer.

Many nests on the farm were destroyed by forces beyond the hens' control; farming operations, predators, human disturbance, weather, and a host of miscellaneous reasons. The most frustrated hen was probably the one that was about halfway through incubation when a gopher began building a mound in a hayfield about a foot away. As the mound grew, dirt began spilling into the nest. The hen squirmed around and shuffled her eggs for most of a day, but finally left. Within a few hours, the eggs were entirely covered.

Hens were fairly safe when off the nest, but they were quite vulnerable when on it. One hen chose a nesting site in a clump of wetland grasses in a pasture along a meandering creek. A raccoon nosing along the bank looking for a morsel got a whiff of her scent. A stealthy stalk and both the hen and eggs rewarded his effort. Another hen on a nest in a road ditch was more fortunate. She escaped the grasp of the skunk that came ambling along in search of mice, but lost her nest because of his inquisitive nose. A more unfortunate hen decided to nest in a grassy fringe along a field driveway. The farm dog, sniffing along the wheel track on his rounds, caught a familiar odor. Remembering what he had caught in the grove last winter, he cautiously sneaked up and made a second hen his victim.

In early June the farmer pulled into his hayfield with tractor and mower and began the relentless rounds of the field that would eventually lead to a neat stack of bales in the barn. There were nine hens nesting in the field, three laying and six incubating. Two of the laying hens were not at their nests but the third was. She stayed a moment too long, and the sickle fatally slashed her. This was the same hen that abandoned her nest in the roadside earlier in the spring. One of the incubating hens also happened to be off her nest feeding. She flew into the adjacent oatfield. Two others were



disturbed enough by all the commotion of tractor and mower that they slipped from their nests and ran into the next field. The other three held tight, a fatal mistake. One tried to crouch tight to the ground, and the mower bar bounced over her, slicing off her head. Another rose to fly at the last split second, but too late, two neatly severed legs remained atop the eggs as mute testimony. The other, hoping that somehow this terrible thing would miss her, froze at the approach of the mower. Instant death was the result.

In the hayfield was still another hen. Just the day before she had successfully hatched her brood of chicks in the bordering road ditch. Soon she had moved them into the security of the hay canopy. It was a good place for little chicks to catch the insects that made up the bulk of their early diet. At the sound of threatening danger, she called her ten young ones to her and covered them with her protective body. Not only did she perish upon the mower bar, but so did seven of the chicks. The forlorn peeping of the three orphans only attracted the alert ears of the vixen denning in the pasture hillside.

By spring's end there were 6 cocks and only 16 hens remaining. The nesting period was just entering its final stages, with the brood rearing period just getting under way.

## Summer and Family Chores

By early summer, most of the hatched broods were off the nest. Two broods made it out of the smaller second hayfield. This field was red clover which had not been mowed as soon as the earlier alfalfa. However, another hen was killed by the mower in this field, to run the final hayfield tally to six, more than one-fourth of the hens that began the nesting season. One of the hens that had already lost two earlier nests ran afoul of a soaring red-tailed hawk after she had been flushed from her third nest in the pasture during thistle-spraying operations.

An average of 9 or 10 chicks resulted from a successful nest. The largest brood was 19. This must have been the dean of all mothers, for when chicks were 4-5 weeks old, she still had all 19. Identity of the brood then became confused because of intermixing with other broods on the farm. This high rate of survival was the exception, not the rule. At least one-third of the chicks were lost to one cause or another between day of hatch and the age of 10-11 weeks when the broods began breaking up and the young pheasants struck out on their own. Thus, the average brood size at the point when they were no longer called chicks was six birds.

The cock pheasants were occasionally together with a brood of young, but they played no role in rearing them. It was the hen's job to care for them. She took them to good insect hunting areas. If she sensed danger, she warned the chicks to hide and freeze. One July day the farm boy happened into the midst of a very young pheasant brood. The hen called to her chicks and tried to lead the boy away

by feigning an injured wing and tempting him (a predator, to her) to try to catch her. When the boy followed her far enough that she believed her brood was out of danger, she suddenly recovered and flew off. Then after the boy had moved a short distance away and quietly had hidden, he heard the hen calling her chicks back together so she could lead them to safety.

Concern for her chicks cost one of the remaining hens her life. While crossing the road with them, she suddenly became aware of a car bearing down on her brood. In the moment's confusion, most of the chicks made it to the ditch. But the hen and one chick were run down. Since the remaining seven were nearly 8 weeks old, they survived on their own. Meanwhile, the last toll of the nesting season was exacted in the farm's oatfield. In mid-July the one large field was windrowed. Even though the cutter bar was several inches off the ground, in contrast to the mower bar, one hen flushed off the nest at just the wrong instant and was killed.

Thus by summer's end, only 12 of the 35 hens starting the year, about one-third of them, were still alive. Though 23 hens started the breeding season on the farm, the loss of 11 cut the number of potential brood-raisers by nearly half. Of the dozen remaining, only two-thirds successfully brought off a brood. Only about one of every four or five nests that were started resulted in a brood of chicks. If it were not for the persistence of the hens, there would have been fewer young pheasants raised. The nesting season had been the hens' hunting season with the sickle bar and predator replacing the gun. Again, the males had easy sailing, but one of them sailed a bit too high and broke his neck when he struck a telephone wire while flying across the road. This reduced the number of cocks to five from the original 10. The inexorable pressures continued to chip away at the pheasant population, just as is true of all wild creatures.

### *Fall, Ready for the Gun*

Fall was a good time for the pheasants. Nothing to do but loaf, eat, get fat, and stay out of trouble. Cover was at a maximum and food was abundant. Oceans of cornfields provided excellent escape cover from any predators that were around and also furnished ideal dusting baths. The birds dusted often to rid themselves of lice and mites.

By early fall, the young birds began showing their color differences. Even the casual eye could tell the young cocks from the hens by the time they were 10 weeks old. By the time another month had passed, the young males really began resembling the adult males, and even let out a few trembling grown-up squawks. At about this 10-12 week stage, the young birds began intermixing, and sizeable flocks of pheasants with various ages and sizes lumped together were seen in one choice habitat area.

Until the hunting season began in early November, the loss of pheasants was at a low level. One of the 12 adult hens was rather worn down by all the stresses of laying three clutches of eggs and finally bringing off a brood to rear. Therefore, when the big tomcat that roamed the neighborhood came across her roosting place, her reaction time was too slow. Since her late brood was not as fully grown as the others, her chicks were not quite as versed in survival tactics as they would have been in another month. A marsh hawk, whose favorite hunting site encompassed the oat stubble field where the chicks spent most of their time, took advantage of this and added two of them to his diet.

By the time November rolled around, the nine broods on the farm were down to only 56 birds, or the expected average of around six birds apiece. With half of one sex, there were 28 young hens to add to the 11 remaining old ones and 28 young cocks to go with the five old battlers. The 30 pheasants that had started out in spring to increase their kind were now 72 birds.

Better than 70 percent of the young roosters wound up at the end of a charge of shot during the hunting season. Therefore, 20 of the 28 were not around to welcome in the new year. The five veterans of previous hunting seasons were better able to elude dogs and hunters early in the season. Eventually though three of the five would up in the game bag. Hens were not legal game, but some were shot by

*Continued on Page 15*

# THE 1976 DEER SEASON

By Lee Gladfelter  
WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

THE 1976 DEER SEASON is just around the corner and it is time to get out the shotgun slugs, sight in "ol bess" and start obtaining permission from landowners to hunt those favorite spots where the giant bucks roam. As you think about the thrill of that buck busting out of heavy cover this fall let's reflect back on the 1975 deer season which was one of the best that Iowa has ever had. For the first time in many years everyone that applied for a license was allowed to hunt deer. A total of 73,824 shotgun and 13,777 bow and arrow licenses were issued. Because of the large number of hunters expected to apply for a license in 1975, the deer season was split to reduce hunting pressure and hunters were required to choose which season they wanted to hunt. A new record high harvest of around 21,450 deer was obtained with first season hunters having better success than second season hunters because of the better hunting weather, fewer hunters in the field and more deer available. Increases in licenses issued and deer harvest over the past few years has been possible because of the modified bucks-only season started in 1973. This places the major portion of the hunting pressure on the buck deer and allows limited harvest of the does who provide for future herd production.

Let's move our thoughts to some important changes that have taken place for the 1976 deer season. The major change is the number of hunting zones has been increased from 5 to 10 which will allow much better management of regional deer herds. The new zone boundaries are designed to include areas of similar deer habitat, densities, and hunting conditions. In this way, any-sex license quotas can be controlled to obtain the harvest necessary to keep the size of the herd in a stable condition. This undoubtedly will cause some problems for hunters who have traditional hunting areas split by the new zone boundaries but they can search out new areas to hunt knowing that the new zones will provide more desirable harvest of the resource in the future.

There will be two separate hunting periods this year to split up the hunting pressure of about 80,000 shotgun hunters. The first will be November 27-30 while the second will be December 4-10. The second includes more days to hunt because the number of deer available to the hunter is reduced due to harvest by first season hunters.

Another change for the 1976 season is the allocation of any-sex licenses. Because of the poorer hunting success in the second period in 1975 it was decided to issue 70% of the total any-sex license quota in the second span this year to help equalize hunter success rates between the two seasons. In some areas, such as hunting zones 2 and 10 where deer are not as plentiful, the first period will be open to bucks-only hunting with the entire any-sex quota being issued in the second. In the other zones a combination of many hunters selecting the first period (55%) and low any-sex license quotas results in very high ratios of bucks-only licenses to any-sex licenses for that first period. The chances of receiving an any-sex license were much better in the second portion in all hunting zones.

The 1976 season should produce another record harvest if weather conditions and crop harvest are cooperative. There is an abundant supply of bucks, especially of the 1½ year old category, that will be matching their instincts and elusive abilities against the skill and luck of the Iowa deer hunter.

# IOWA BUCKS RANK HIGH

NEARLY 100 WHITETAIL RACKS qualified for the 1976 Record Racks Registry. Bucks taken last season or before were measured and three ranked in the Iowa all-time top ten categories.

M. V. Bruening of Hawkeye recorded a nontypical rack which he had taken in 1954. The rack scored 215 and placed 7th on the all-time shotgun nontypical list. Dallas Patterson of Mitchellville took a nontypical rack (shotgun) of 214  $\frac{5}{8}$  in 1975 which ranks 8th on the all-time list. Terry Daniel of Marshalltown entered a 182  $\frac{3}{8}$  typical rack taken in 1967 with shotgun. The rack ranks 8th in that all-time category.

In order to enter your trophy it must be legally taken with bow and arrow or shotgun - muzzleloader within Iowa boundaries. If the rack meets minimum scoring standards you qualify for a certificate and a colorful shoulder patch in recognition of your feat. Unentered deer taken in past seasons as well as the present are eligible for entry. To have the rack officially measured simply

contact the Iowa Conservation Commission, Information and Education Section, 300 4th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. After we receive notification, we will forward a name of an official scorer who may be contacted. Because of shrinkage in varying degrees when antlers dry out, they cannot be officially measured for at least 60 days from time taken.

The scoring system used for Iowa records is identical to the Pope and Young and Boone and Crockett Clubs. The Pope and Young Club maintains scores for archery killed deer while Boone and Crockett keeps records for big game legally taken with firearms.

The four following classes with minimum scores for each will receive recognition:

Shotgun - Muzzleloader		Archery	
Typical . . . . .	150 Points	Typical . . . . .	135 Points
Nontypical . . . . .	170 Points	Nontypical . . . . .	155 Points

*Dallas Patterson proudly lifts rack of his deer.*

*Photo Courtesy Des Moines Register and Tribune*



# NEW ALL-TIME TOP TEN RECORD RACKS

## SHOTGUN TYPICAL

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Wayne A. Bills	Des Moines	1974	Hamilton	199 5/8
George L. Ross	Ottumwa	1969	Wapello	195 1/8
Dennis Vaudt	Storm Lake	1974	Cherokee	190 2/8
Randall Forney	Glenwood	1971	Fremont	186 2/8
Marvin Tippery	Council Bluffs	1971	Harrison	185 1/8
Wayne Swartz	Bedford	1967	Taylor	183 7/8
Austin Watters	Ottumwa	1974	Van Buren	183 6/8
Terry Daniel	Marshalltown	1967	Marshall	182 3/8
Henry Rolland	Washington	1969	Van Buren	178 4/8
Bob Boydston	Des Moines	1974	Polk	177 2/8

## SHOTGUN NONTYPICAL

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Larry Raveling	Emmetsburg	1973	Clay	271 2/8
Carrol Johnson	Moorhead	1968	Monona	250 4/8
Duane Fick	Des Moines	1972	Madison	228 2/8
LeRoy Everhart	Sumner	1969	Van Buren	224 4/8
Donald Crossley	Hardy	1971	Humboldt	221 4/8
John Meyers	Council Bluffs	1969	Pottawattamie	218 3/8
M. V. Bruening	Hawkeye	1954	Allamakee	215
Dallas Patterson	Mitchellville	1975	Appanoose	214 5/8
Dick Johnson	Missouri Valley	1964	Harrison	213 7/8
John Ashbacher	Waukon	1973	Allamakee	209 1/8

## BOW AND ARROW TYPICAL

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Lloyd Goad	Knoxville	1962	Monroe	197 6/8
Gary Wilson	Cherokee	1974	Cherokee	175 4/8
Gordon Hayes	Knoxville	1973	Marion	175 1/8
Jack Douglas	Creston	1974	Union	173 2/8
Ardie Lockridge	Amana	1965	Iowa	172 2/8
Bob Fudge	Burlington	1966	Des Moines	170 4/8
Brad Vonk	Des Moines	1974	Warren	168 5/8
Loy J. Brooker	Clinton	1963	Clinton	166
Norman R. Bell	Burlington	1971	Des Moines	164 4/8
Leonard Allard	Oskaloosa	1973	Mahaska	163 6/8

## BOW AND ARROW NONTYPICAL

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Blaine Salkorn	Sutherland	1970	Clay	216 3/8
Bill Erwin	Sioux City	1966	Woodbury	202 5/8
Dennis Ballard	Iowa City	1971	Johnson	197 4/8
Richard Rekemeyer	Maquoketa	1974	Jackson	186 1/8
LeRoy Spiker	Harpers Ferry	1968	Allamakee	183 4/8
H. F. Nelson	Iowa Falls	1964	Hardin	181 3/8
Dan Mueller	Donnellson	1974	Lee	169 3/8
Gordon Vrama	Davenport	1967	Scott	167 6/8
Robert Filbrandt	Dows	1974	Franklin	167
Bob Oden	Waukon	1971	Allamakee	166 4/8

# RECORD RACKS MEASURED IN 1976

## SHOTGUN TYPICAL

(Minimum Qualifying Score--150 Points)

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Terry Daniel	Marshalltown	1967	Marshall	182 3/8
Merrill Flake	Lone Tree	1974	Louisa	176
Richard D. Doggett	New London	1975	Henry	175 4/8
Arnold J. Hoch	Melcher	1975	Warren	174 7/8
Jack Saltzgaver	Keokuk	1974	Van Buren	172 6/8
Lonne Tracy	Boone	1975	Boone	172 6/8
Bob Roberts	Cherokee	1963	Cherokee	172 4/8
Joseph W. Pestotnik	Boone	1975	Boone	171 2/8
Virgil Landrum	Danville	1960	Des Moines	170 6/8
A. R. Kleinmeyer	Iowa City	1973	Keokuk	169 4/8
Ken Hanshaw	Cedar Rapids	1975	Van Buren	167 7/8
Terry Paris	Pulaski	1974	Davis	166 4/8
Richard Turner	Ames	1975	Story	166 4/8
Ron Fox	West Des Moines	1975	Union	165 2/8
Jeff Mueller	Donnellson	1975	Lee	163 5/8
Mike Baker	Lucas	1975	Lucas	163 4/8
Emil Vaisvilas	Des Moines	1974	Lucas	163 1/8
Nyle Howe	Marathon	1975	Clay	162 7/8
Terry Protector	Iowa City	1975	Clay	162 6/8
Dale Tiemessen	New Hampton	1973	Chickasaw	162 3/8
E. G. Bailey	Belmond	1959	Clay	162 2/8
Ed Huseman	Dubuque	1975	Clayton	161 6/8
Tom Sellers	Russell	1974	Lucas	161 4/8
Dale Clayton	Glenwood	1974	Mills	160 6/8
Jim Eubanks	Crawfordsville	1969	Jefferson	160 4/8
James E. Mings	Onawa	1963	Harrison	160 1/8
Virgil Landrum	Danville	1959	Des Moines	160
Ervin Ott	Spillville	1962	Winneshiek	159 7/8
Don Adams	Des Moines	1975	Lucas	159 5/8
Virgil Massner	Mediapolis	1975	Des Moines	159 5/8
Martin Mills	Cumberland	1975	Cass	159 3/8
James Eggert	Wyoming	1975	Jones	159 2/8
Dick Goldhammer	Amana	1975	Johnson	158 5/8
LaVerne Barton	Lone Tree	1975	Mahaska	158 4/8
Bernard Hynek	Swisher	1967	Johnson	158 2/8
Dick Brasfield	Fort Madison	1975	Des Moines	158
Floyd Walline	Granville	1975	Cherokee	156 1/8
Philip Speck	McGregor	1974	Clayton	156
Richard Kelly	Webster City	1975	Dallas	155 5/8
Joe Lent	Dubuque	1973	Lee	155 4/8
Harry Bries	Dyersville	1975	Clayton	155 3/8
Bill Wood	Waverly	1975	Bremer	155 1/8
Donald Holthaus	Calmar	1974	Winneshiek	154 1/8
Arlo Winterboer	Audubon	1975	Audubon	153 3/8
Ray McCombs	Knoxville	1975	Marion	153 2/8
Keith Oloff	Logan	1975	Shelby	153 1/8
Mike Snyder	Sumner	1975	Fayette	153 1/8
Wilbert Duis	Ocheyedan	1975	Osceola	152 3/8
Bob Jewell	Decorah	1975	Winneshiek	152 1/8
Larry Ridnour	Bedford	1968	Page	152 1/8
Doyle E. Brown	Dallas	1975	Marion	151 3/8
Roy Williams	Holstein	1975	Woodbury	151 3/8
Ed Tink	Waterloo	1971	Allamakee	150 7/8
Virgil A. Bries	Guttenberg	1975	Clayton	150 4/8
Tony Tallman	Guthrie Center	1974	Guthrie	150 4/8

## SHOTGUN NONTYPICAL

(Minimum Qualifying Score--170 Points)

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
M. V. Bruening	Hawkeye	1954	Allamakee	215
Dallas Patterson	Mitchellville	1975	Appanoose	214 5/8
Rodney Dean	Peterson	1973	Clay	200 2/8
Larry Thomsen	Wiota	1963	Cass	198 1/8
Robert Schmeling	Casey	1975	Guthrie	195 7/8
Randy Schulte	Waukon	1975	Allamakee	194 1/8
Alan Baake	Decorah	1974	Winneshiek	193 1/8
Rick Piel	Creston	1975	Union	187 5/8
Clifford G. Roth	Estherville	1965	Lyon	184 3/8
Jerry D. Chaney	Columbus Junction	1975	Louisa	182 5/8
Roy Parker	Rockford	1960	Floyd	181 3/8
Harold Hartman	Clarinda	1966	Page	174 3/8
Harland Smit	Iowa Falls	1975	Hardin	173 5/8
Jay L. Toney	Lamoni	1975	Decatur	171 6/8

## BOW AND ARROW TYPICAL

(Minimum Qualifying Score--135 Points)

Name	Address	Year	County Taken	Total Score
Donald Booth	Clinton	1975	Jackson	159 2/8
Leroy Ruth	Greenfield	1967	Madison	156 4/8
Michael L. Mealey	Des Moines	1974	Warren	154
Steve M. Molstad	Estherville	1975	Dickinson	152 5/8
Neil G. Heiser	Onawa	1973	Harrison	150 1/8
Bill Barringer	Stuart	1975	Guthrie	149 5/8
Robert E. Riggle	LaPorte City	1975	Black Hawk	147 2/8
Russ Keltner	Lake Mills	1969	Story	146 1/8
Phil Fleming	Burlington	1975	Des Moines	144 5/8
Gary Zigler	Tama	1975	Tama	142 7/8
Duane Gorman	Dubuque	1975	Delaware	142 5/8
Roger Rehborg	Worthington, Minn.	1973	Osceola	141 3/8
Don Brand	Fort Dodge	1975	Webster	141 2/8
Terry Fisher	Rockwell City	1975	Webster	139 7/8
Thomas L. Jordan	Clinton	1975	Clinton	139 4/8
Gary Heimdal	Lake Mills	1975	Winnebago	138 7/8
Ron Goodrich	Indianola	1975	Warren	136 2/8
Dwain Perry	Farley	1975	Dubuque	136 1/8
Timothy Leazer	Argyle	1975	Lee	135 6/8
Rock Bridges	Lake Mills	1975	Worth	135 4/8
Russell Johnson	Council Bluffs	1974	Harrison	135 1/8

## BOW AND ARROW NONTYPICAL

(Minimum Qualifying Score--155 Points)

NO ENTRIES



## ***Iowa's Little Known \$Million Fur Industry***

**By Ronald D. Andrews**  
WILDLIFE RESEARCH BIOLOGIST

*Photos by Author.*

IOWA, known nationally for its multi-million dollar agricultural crop production, receives little or no recognition for its annual million dollar fur crop. In fact, during the 1975-76 fur season, a record 7.4 million dollars worth of fur was harvested by Iowa hunters and trappers.

Because this is the bicentennial year, which reflects upon the past, it is perhaps noteworthy to mention the fur industry as it has evolved to its present state. For more than 350 years, the quest for furs in North America has pushed forward from one side of the continent to the other.

The muskrat, considered today by many as a nuisance and pest, was partially responsible for the settlement of this country. Early Iowa settlers were plagued by grasshopper invasions, devastating prairie fires and brutal blizzards that were never forgotten. The early 1900's brought similar catastrophes including the depression of the 30's. Many settlers lost everything because of one or more of these calamities. Others barely eked out a living by cashing in on fur pelts, primarily the lowly muskrat. The hind quarters of many of these critters provided meat under the more appetizing name of "marsh rabbit" or the Indian name, "mushquash".

What seemed to be an important milestone to the development and settling of this country has continued until recently as an important outdoor hobby with secondary monetary rewards.

With the turn of the century, increasing industry and mechanized agriculture placed less emphasis on the fur trade. Fur prices fluctuated considerably with mink being the big money item up

through about 1950. From 1950 to the present, the native mink market has plummeted because of competition and demand for ranch mink and their various pelt colorations.

Trapper numbers, based on license sales, reached a peak of nearly 20,000 in 1946-47. This was when native mink pelts peaked at about \$50 apiece. Fur hunter numbers remained stable until the mid 1960's at which time their numbers began to increase. Trapper numbers stabilized until the early 1970's at between 6,000 and 10,000 sportsmen. Fur hunter and trapper numbers have been increasing steadily since 1970 because of increasing pelt prices as well as increasing interest in pursuing coyote, fox, and raccoon while other upland game hunting has shown declines because of dwindling habitat.

Trapping, even though trapper numbers have shown some recent increase, is evolving into a lost art. Younger people do not have the interest in trapping that previous generations had. Part of this is reflective of the shift in population from the rural to the urban society and partly because the generation of today is involved in many other spare-time activities.

Also, across the nation today, there is an increasing outcry that trapping and hunting is an inhumane treatment of animals and that these activities need to be curtailed. Little do these pseudo ecologists, who plead upon one's emotions, understand that the healthy conservation and management of wild furbearers requires the regulated harvest of surplus populations. When certain furbearers are not harvested, they become vulnerable to disease and



starvation as a result of over population. Certainly nature's way is not humane when one witnesses a fox dying a slow agonizing death from mange or a raccoon's respiratory system becomes clogged by distemper or a muskrat dies from the "hemorrhagic" (internal bleeding) disease. Unfortunately this new wave of emotionalism is gradually making inroads into people's minds and attitudes.

Between 1948 and 1970, Iowa's total fur value, based on fur dealer reports, ranged from \$350,000 to nearly a million dollars. The 1970's brought a new upsurge in fur values. Table 1 shows the total fur value from 1969 through 1976.

*Table 1. Total fur value and pelts harvested based on fur buyer reports, 1969-70 through 1975-76.*

YEAR	TOTAL PELTS	TOTAL VALUE
1969-70	492,098	\$ 1,090,212.59
1970-71	480,574	736,023.60
1971-72	632,097	1,700,782.97
1972-73	631,572	3,061,442.27
1973-74	988,201	5,083,978.50
1974-75	845,178	4,818,166.85
1975-76	759,004	7,390,136.90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,828,724</b>	<b>\$23,880,743.68</b>

From this table we see that Iowa ranks high as a fur producing state. In fact, we rank about seventh out of the top ten states as far as total pelts harvested. This is typical of the entire Midwest. Harvest of individual species, such as muskrats on the Louisiana coastal marshes, or martens in mountain states, will be higher but these regions do not have the diversity that leads to a high overall production of pelts. Iowa ranks high in the big "money makers"—muskrat, mink, fox, raccoon and beaver. Iowa harvests more mink than Alaska for example, and Alaska takes very few muskrats and no raccoon because very few are found that far north. Alaska's beaver harvest exceeds ours but not by very much and we take far more foxes. Iowa ranks high in fur quality, exceeded only slightly by more northern areas.

Many people believe that to be a big fur trapper or hunter you have to head for the wilds of Canada or Alaska, an idea fostered by stories in outdoor magazines and the early history of many of these wilderness areas. Such is simply not true today unless you want to pursue a particular species such as marten, lynx, timber wolf or wolverine, that are found only in the north country. The fertile lands of Iowa and other midwest states support a higher per unit area population of furbearers than the more northern territories. The difference in emphasis lies in the fact that here furbearers are so overshadowed by everything else this same fertile land produces, be it corn, beans, cattle or whatever. In Alaska or Canada, furbearers can be one of the more important natural resources to be cropped and are thus given a great deal more attention.

Table 2 shows the Iowa breakdown of pelts purchased and fur value for the record breaking 1975-76 fur season. Fur value in America is pretty much determined by the fashion demand in European countries. Since 1970, the fashion world has been interested in long-haired animals such as fox, raccoon, coyote and bobcat. The lowly raccoon, still considered a pest by some because of its marauding activities in the sweet corn patch or chicken house, has gained considerable stature in the wildlife world with the recent increase in raccoon pelt prices. Over 5 million dollars (nearly 70 percent) of the fur value in 1975-76 was in raccoon pelts alone. Fur from these long-haired critters is being utilized in the fashion industry in trim for coats and other clothing. The ultimate in fur fashion, that I noticed, was in an Iowa furniture store where a waterbed was lined with fox fur.

These current high pelt prices vary on different species and have created considerable people management headaches as far as proper management of these species are concerned. The feud between hunter and trapper, while it has been with us since the beginning of man, has increased considerably with the higher fur prices. Season adjustments that more equitably distribute the harvest between hunters and trappers on a per sportsman basis,

*Table 2. Furs Purchased from Iowa Trappers and Hunters as reported by Iowa Fur Buyers during the 1975-76 Season\**

SPECIES	NUMBER PURCHASED	CHANGE FROM 1974-75	AV. PRICE PER PELT	TOTAL VALUE
Muskrat	386,679	- 17	\$ 2.85	\$1,102,035.15
Mink	18,406	- 18	9.65	177,617.90
Raccoon	292,064	+ 6	17.85	5,213,342.40
Beaver	5,154	- 7	7.84	40,407.36
Red Fox	15,838	- 11	39.88	631,619.44
Gray Fox	1,574	- 6	18.03	28,379.22
Coyote	9,444	- 21	15.73	148,554.12
Opossum	26,485	- 32	1.15	30,457.75
Civet	106	- 62	1.90	201.40
Skunk	1,937	- 51	1.55	3,002.35
Badger	1,267	- 12	11.43	14,481.81
Weasel	50	- 30	.76	38.00
<b>TOTAL PELTS</b>	<b>759,004</b>		<b>TOTAL VALUE</b>	<b>\$7,390,136.90</b>

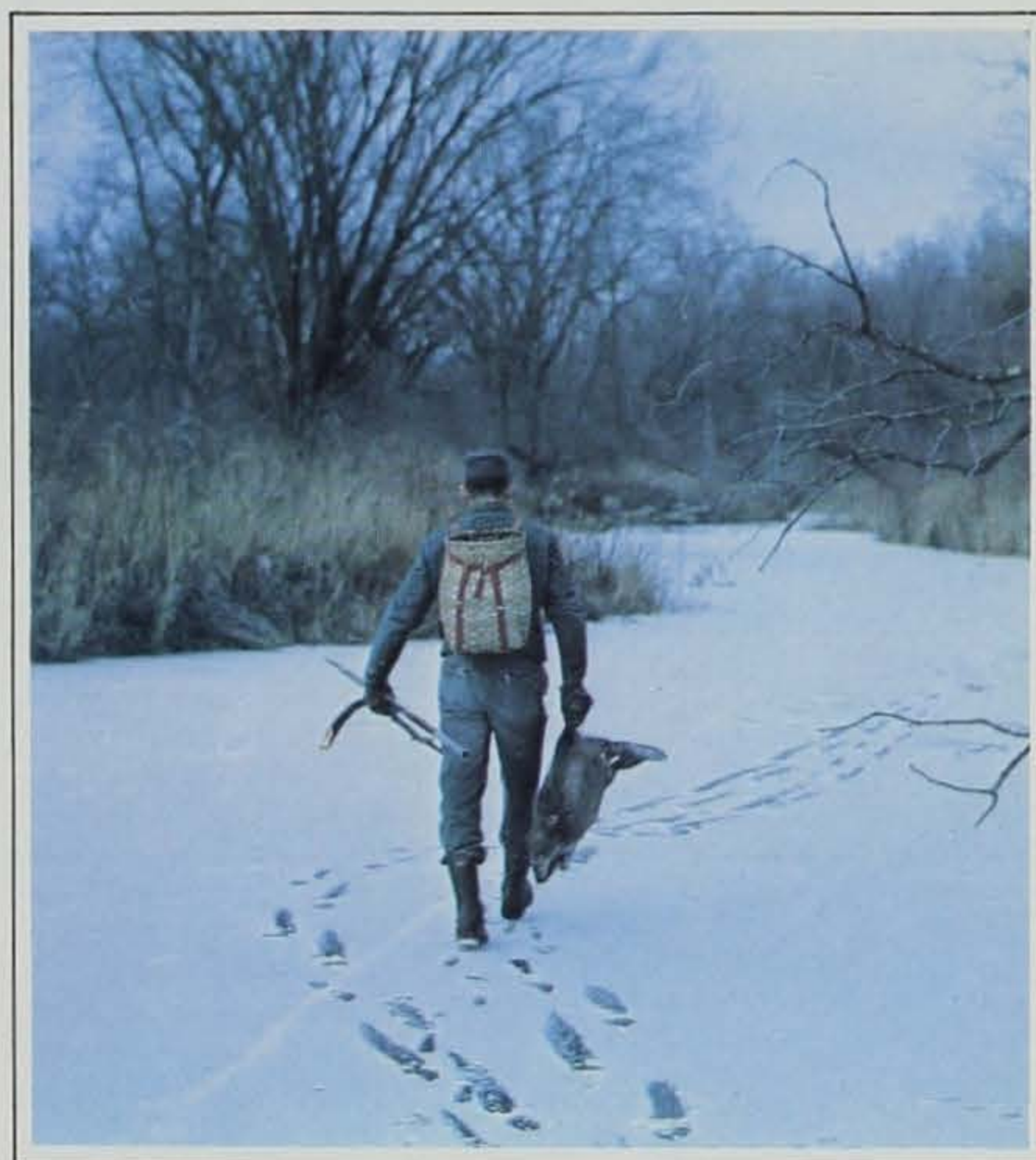
\*168 of 180 licensed fur dealers reporting.

have intensified the wrath between these groups. Increasing unsportsman like conduct in pursuing fur animals such as stealing furs and traps, or abuse of property by four-wheel drive vehicles and CB radios, have raised considerably hunter-trapper image problems.

Besides the economic importance of the record 7.4 million dollars of raw fur harvested in Iowa last year, thousands and perhaps millions more dollars are pumped into the economy by the paraphernalia needed to pursue these animals. Money spent on food, gas, guns and ammo, traps and associated gear, hounds, snowshoes, camouflage and winter clothing and many other items, mean additional dollars to local economies. Also, fur houses and trapper suppliers provide at least part-time employment for many individuals.

Besides the monetary return of pursuing fur animals, the intangible benefits can be far more rewarding. The outdoor exercise and challenge with Mother Nature and all her weather elements, can be very stimulating. The solitude, peacefulness and independence of learning with nature and walking a meandering stream or timber area, reading the signs, yet not seeing your quarry but knowing its presence, can leave refreshing memories for the rest of your life. This and the opportunity of experiencing some of the

(Continued on Page 15)



# Trout Stream Improvement Devices

By Gaige Wunder

Photos by Author

*Hewitt ramp device scours out a pool.*



**N**ORTHEAST IOWA IS BLESSED with over 50 trout streams that provide fishing recreation for thousands of Iowa anglers. Parcels of land along several of the better trout streams have been purchased through land acquisition programs of the Conservation Commission to provide permanent angler access and preserve this relatively scarce fishing resource. Some of the land, as a result of previous abuse, is not realizing its maximum fishing potential when acquired. Problems encountered include row crop farming directly adjacent to the stream bank causing excessive erosion and degradation of stream habitat and over grazing and trampling by cattle causing the stream bank to erode. Removal of trees and vegetation along the stream banks causes stream temperature to rise excessively due to lack of shade. Shallow and slow-moving pools may be fish-less deserts or deep and slow-moving pools may harbor only rough fish.

To reverse this trend of stream degradation, the Commission has been upgrading these problem stream segments. As trout stream lands are acquired, good soil conservation practices are applied to the existing cropland. Grazing is eliminated along the stream, banks are replanted with trees and shrubs, and stream improvement devices are installed. Angler interest in stream improvement has been particularly keen as the devices speed restoration of problem areas and expand the available trout habitat.

Considerable improvement in trout stream quality can be had simply by rebuilding the bank, allowing the stream to narrow, deepen and stabilize naturally. This is usually accomplished by restricting grazing on all state property and occasionally by reseeding the stream bank with selected species of long-stemmed grass. The grass forms a strong turf and provides overhead cover for the trout as it grows out over the stream.



*This stream bank has been trampled by cattle.*

This natural process is slow but can be accelerated by installing some type of stream improvement device to deflect the current away from the bank and protect it from erosion. In deflecting the current, the device narrows the channel and increases the current velocity, which in turn scours a deeper channel. The deeper, faster channel has a lower water temperature which encourages trout and discourages congregations of suckers and chubs.

In recent years the most popular current deflector used by the Commission has been the rock gabion. Almost every trout fisherman at one time or another has run across one of these wire "baskets" protruding at an angle downstream from the stream bank. These structures deflect the current away from the stream bank to prevent undercutting and erosion or to accelerate the current through slow-moving pools.

Gabions are installed by digging about one-fourth of the structure into the stream bank at a 30 to 45 degree angle. This prevents the stream from eroding behind the structure and reduces the force of the current along the face. Steel posts are set on each side of the gabion to stabilize it during high water. Rocks are then hand packed into each compartment and the top wired shut.

The rock gabion blends well with the stream scenery, at times nearly disappearing as the spaces between the rocks silt-in and support various vegetation types. The rock fill is chosen locally to match the type found along the stream to minimize any artificial look.

Over a period of years as the gabion silts-in, it becomes increasingly impermeable to the stream flow. More and more water is forced around the end of the gabion eventually narrowing the stream bed by two to four feet and scouring the bottom out an additional six to eighteen inches. The stream bank will then be more likely to stabilize; vegetation will tie the butt-end of the gabion securely into the bank and silt will collect downstream behind the structure. This silt accumulation will provide a foothold for new vegetation to build up a new bank. Thus the stream bed will be narrowed and deepened for several yards below each structure.

Tree limbs and trunks have been used similar to gabions as current deflectors to narrow the stream and stabilize the bank. These wood structures are serving well along several streams but are no longer installed because of their relatively short life span in water.

Both the wood and rock structures serve as important food production areas for trout. Soon after the devices are installed, the higher current velocity exposes the former rock and rubble stream bottom which along with the surface of the structure is soon covered with many species of developing aquatic insects. As the insects emerge during later life stages they are readily taken by trout, making up a substantial portion of their diet.

Other types of structures have been used to a lesser extent in Iowa trout streams. The Hewitt ramp is a device that resembles a miniature waterfall. These ramps are installed only on higher gradient streams where there is less danger of impounding and warming the water. They normally consist of oak slabs laid lengthwise in the stream with the lower end elevated across a pole or log. As the water flows over the end of the slabs, a small falls is created which scours a plunge pool just below the structure. As the pool enlarges back under the lower end of the structure, it provides

the trout with a combination of sufficient water depth, good aeration and overhead cover.

A device known as a Wisconsin hide has also been installed on at least two of Iowa's southern trout streams. The structure, first described by Wisconsin fisheries personnel, consists of a series of poles set in the stream bottom parallel with the bank along the outside of a long sweeping curve. Stringers are then fastened along the top of the poles. Planking, rock and dirt are added on top to create an artificial extension of the stream bank. During high water a portion of the current is forced under the structure by the rock "face" to scour a long trough under the hide next to the original stream bank. The deeper water and overhead cover of the hide provides excellent trout habitat where none existed before. The most recent hide installations promise to help restore quality trout fishing on a sand-choked section of Spring Branch Creek along the Manchester Trout Hatchery.

Other less dramatic stream improvement methods are being used to supplement the structures already mentioned. These include rock rip-rap to reduce soil erosion around the butt-end of each gabion or to protect low eroding stream banks. Tire mats have been installed around gabions on two northern streams to protect a series of 12-20 foot vertical banks. The mats slow soil erosion and reduce the vertical angle of the bank so that vegetation can gain a foothold and stabilize the bank. Vegetation soon hides the tires from visibility.

Trout fishermen should seek out these stream improvements to improve their fishing success. A gabion will almost always harbor a trout or two just off the end along the faster current. Hewitt ramps provide excellent fishing around the entire margin of the plunge pool. The Wisconsin hide, just as the name implies, is built as a shelter for trout. Even the tire mats and rip-rap will occasionally produce a trout for a well-placed lure. The basic idea of stream improvement remains the same regardless of the structure - to restore and maintain quality fishing for the Iowa trout angler. □



*Gabion has been put in to reclaim bank.*

*Vegetation now growing over gabion.*



# LAKE DREDGING

## *Taking the cautious approach*

By Floyd Thompson

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BIOLOGIST

*The dredge — and the spoil.*

**N**EARLY ALL LAKES in Iowa have gone through serious problems caused by sedimentation. The deposition of organic and inorganic sediments, derived both from within the lake and its drainage or watershed basin, often results in a shallowing which impairs the recreational and scenic value of a body of water.

By shallowing, the lakes are more prone to fish winterkills as well as to the extensive growth of rooted aquatic plants. Dredging is the most common remedy for alleviating such problems. This deepening provides additional water suitable for recreational use; can be used to reduce aquatic vegetation growth; and can create a more oxygenated water to prevent fish suffocation during ice cover periods. However, dredging operations are commonly too costly for low density populations of property owners to undertake. Dredge spoil disposal creates another problem and ecological damage can be insurmountable.

The demand on our land for more food and grain production seems to increase

sediment deposits in our lakes by the utilizing of more sloping lands for agriculture. Many areas have developed conservation practices, using catch basins for sediments while others have practiced contour farming. Unfortunately, not all areas have been subject to good practices and heavy silt runoff has resulted.

We must assess all problems concerned with dredging before considering lake deepening. It is necessary that we have an area to place the spoils, know the costs of placing them and the effects that result from removing the spoils. Actually, benefits by deepening for recreational purposes vary and, in most cases, are conflicting.

Considering everything, we must first realize that deepening a lake has serious effects on all aquatic life. First, pumping of silt results in immediate lower water levels. Movement of the sediments causes turbidity, which in turn reduces light penetration. This decreases the availability of foods for fish and other organisms on the bottom. There will also be some sediment buildup, which in turn destroys spawning areas, smothers benthic organisms, reduces bottom habitat diversity, reduces food supplies, and reduces vegetation covering. In addition, oxygen depletion is possible, suffocating organisms in the area.

The basic idea that all food starts with sunshine, carbon dioxide, water, and inorganic salts is as true in water as on land. Thus, whatever the species, whether predatory bass or bottom-dwelling catfish, the cycle of events that leads to fish on the line starts with the photosynthetic activity of green plants.

On the other side and looking at long-term projects, it is apparent that water chemistry improves while bottom fauna recolonize in greater numbers and overall fishing potential is enhanced. Motor-boating and water-skiing are definitely improved.

It is very important in dredging that selection of spoils deposit areas, basins, and artificially closed areas, are carefully planned. Return lines should also be planned for the control of water quality in dewatering settling basins. Further, watershed management, along with sewer and septic facility controls, are essential to the realization of the improved water quality expected through dredging.

Lake dredging projects cannot be termed all good nor all bad. Any proposed project must be carefully evaluated, weighing the often numerous negative impacts against the potential enhancement of recreation. □



# Iowa's Lawyer Fish... THE FRESHWATER BURBOT

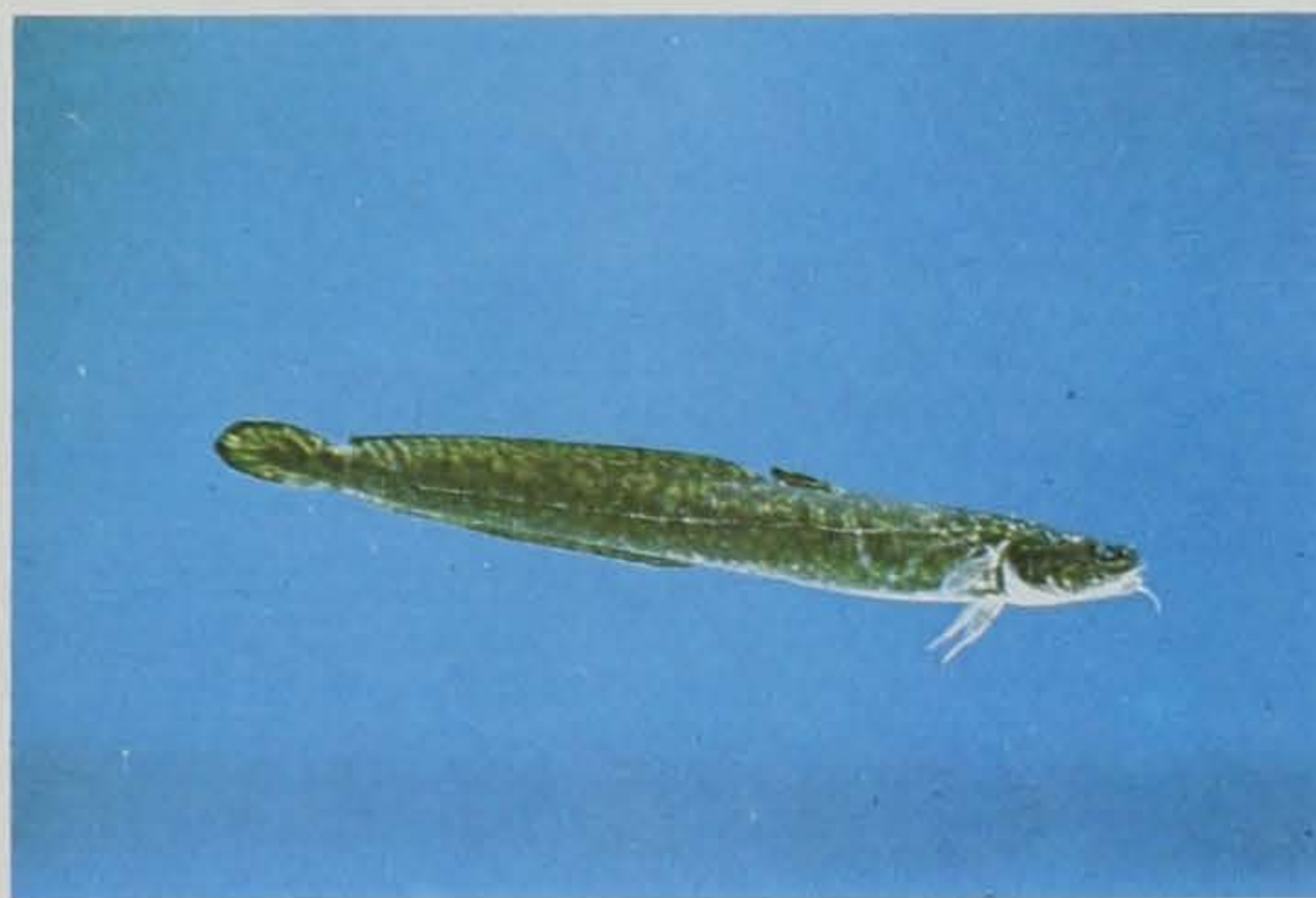
By Kay Hill

FISHERIES RESEARCH BIOLOGIST

*Photo by Nebraska Game & Parks Commission*

ONE DAY I received a phone call from an excited fisherman. After identifying himself, he asked me if catfish and eels crossed (hybridized). I replied no, to which he said I had better come and see for myself. He said the fish looked like a cross between an eel and a catfish, having a catfish head and an eel body. Finally, I asked him if the fish had a single barbel (a small fleshy projection) under the chin. He affirmed this, and I knew he had caught a freshwater burbot.

The burbot is the only member of the codfish family to spend its entire lifetime in freshwater. It is characterized by a catfish type head, a single barbel on the chin, long soft-rayed dorsal and anal fins, a round caudal fin, and pelvic fins located under the throat. At first glance a burbot appears scaleless, but closer examination reveals a body covering of minute scales. The color is olive to dark greenish-brown above with dark mottlings, fading to a dusky gray beneath. Local names for the burbot are water cod, cusk, ling, ling cod, eel-pout and lawyer.



It occurs in the northern waters, especially in the Great Lakes, Minnesota and southern Canada and ranges southward to Iowa. Primarily a large river or lake fish it is found in the Missouri River, Mississippi River and their tributaries. During spawning it ascends small cold water tributaries, which probably accounts for its presence in some of Iowa's trout streams. In the northern areas, this fish reaches lengths of 30 inches and weighs 10 to 15 pounds, but in Iowa most burbot are considerably smaller, weighing up to 2 pounds.

One of the most unusual characteristics of the lawyer is that spawning occurs in mid-winter, usually late December and January in the shallow water of streams, contrasting to the spring and summer spawning of most fish species.

Burbot flesh is firm and excellent tablefare, but some individual fish are strong tasting. The large livers are sometimes extracted in commercial operations for medical purposes.

The burbot's feeding habits change as it progresses through life. When the fish are newly hatched, main food items are plankton (microscopic animals and plants), then insects become the major food. As the fish grows into maturity it switches to a diet comprised almost entirely of fish.

Fishing for burbot has become a fairly popular sport in some parts of Iowa, both in the winter and summer. Live minnows are probably the favorite bait, cut fish the second choice with bait presentation being unimportant. In some states ice fishing is allowed through January and February and coincides with the burbot's spawning season. The ling is most active after dark; therefore, night fishing is more productive.

So, if you're night fishing, and catch an unusual fish that resembles a cross between a catfish and an eel, chances are you've just caught Iowa's lawyer fish, the freshwater burbot. □

# INSURING THE FUTURE OF HUNTING

**By Daniel A. Poole**  
**PRESIDENT, WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE**

TO HAVE HUNTING, there must be huntable supplies of wildlife. To have wildlife, there must be habitat. To enjoy wildlife, there must be access to public and private lands. And to attempt to take wildlife, there must be public acceptance.

This latter facet — public acceptance — has much to do with the future of hunting. It is directly linked with anti-hunting sentiment. And it is in this important area that our wildlife agencies do the least.

In the view of my organization, hunting's future urgently requires that more attention be given to the public-acceptance factor. We envision four avenues of approach:

Better service to hunters.

Better discharge of personal responsibility by the sportsman.

Better understanding and service to landowners by both the wildlife agency and the sportsman.

Better understanding among the profession as to what constitutes sport hunting.

Starting with service to hunters: All of us are aware of the intensification of anti-hunting sentiment. Its causes are many and complex. Some people plainly are against blood sport, and little probably can be done to change their views. They will not respond to explanation.

The great bulk of the people, however, are indifferent to hunting. Today, they apparently don't care if it continues or ceases. Who knows how they will react tomorrow? What is being done to at least maintain their neutrality? Could it be that we risk offending them?

Let me give some examples of where disservice is being done to hunters and hunting. In State X, pheasant or deer season opens on a weekend and thousands of anxious license holders turn out. Ranchers and farmers see mostly armed hoodlums, many not bothering to request permission to enter private lands, even where required. Property damage occurs and there is shooting near occupied buildings and settlements. Sometimes a hunter or even a non-hunter is shot or wounded. Farmers hang bells on livestock and pen their pets.

Land and roadsides are littered. Sportsmanship and hunting quality go out the window.

All this results in bad press and hard feelings. The hunter's image is tarnished. Landowners say never again, and more no hunting signs go up. Others root for anti-firearms legislation. Cynics say the game department doesn't give a darn because all it is interested in is selling licenses to get more money to do it all over again.

Now we can joke and laugh and say that's the way it goes. But remember, that also may be the way hunting goes — right out the window for many citizens.

In part, the future of hunting demands that the wildlife agencies — and they cannot do it alone — are going to have to exploit every opportunity to make sportsmen of all hunters and to help give them a better public image. This will involve fundamental changes in hunters' attitudes, shooting regulations, licensing requirements, proficiency in firearms handling, and all the rest. Nationally, we have barely made a beginning on this aspect of the problem. We cannot wait much longer in some areas. State agencies have got to face up to their responsibility, even to the point of ramming it down the throats of sportsmen where the alternatives are clear. Doctors sometimes must argue with their patients in order to help them. Wildlife agencies should realize a similar client relationship with hunters.

My second recommendation is that much more must be required from the individual sportsman. A European once told me that few North Americans have any respect for the animal they shoot. "You are too intent," he said, "on getting your limit in the shortest time. The essence of the hunt is lost upon you." He may be right.

My third suggestion is for more understanding and greater service to landowners by both the wildlife agency and sportsmen. This is nothing new. Leopold and his North

American Wildlife Policy Committee called for it back in 1930. But on the whole, the states have done relatively little to curry the landowner's favor. Actually, we know relatively little about the landowner, why he does or does not permit hunting or what can be done to encourage him to maintain or plant wildlife cover. We don't know because little has been done to find out. Researchers have chosen largely to focus on animal biology. We have been slow, if not reluctant, to take sociologists, economists, political scientists, and other disciplines into our councils. We have faint communication with agricultural specialists, whose work has great impact on wildlife.

A good step made several years ago was the drafting of a model liability relief act to protect landowners permitting recreation on their properties without charge. Many states have enacted it into law.

My fourth point calls for better understanding within our profession of the meaning of sport hunting. Too often, I believe, we accept the notion that more is better. But is it?

Anglers now can use electronics to locate fish. Natural knowledge is supplanted by mechanics. A big game hunter, fresh from a warm bed, attires himself with insulated clothing and electric socks, shoulders his precision-sighted rifle, and roars across the back country on his snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle in search of game. A recent ad for a new shotgun sight claims its value for the man who doesn't have time for long hours of practice. Mount it on a gun, zip into the field, get your birds, and be home in time for lunch.

Has anyone stopped to ask, I wonder, what new technological developments the good Lord has hung on deer or elk or any other wildlife in these past decades to better equip them to cope with the technically augmented sportsman? Where does application of technology exceed the bounds of sportsmanship? We have an obligation to blow the whistle on this type of thing.

By working in these four areas, the Institute believes the wildlife profession can help make the future of hunting more secure.

# Warden's diary

By Rex Emerson  
LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISOR

LAUGHING AT THE WRONG TIME can get you into trouble!

Tonight I was sitting on a hill overlooking a good deer timber. It was a beautiful night and someone could be out trying to get a deer before the season. On a night like this you need to park in the shade of a tree so the moon won't reflect off the top of the car. Earlier in the evening I had talked to a group of people about conservation. Naturally, I thought back about that. Everything seemed to go all right and they had acted like they enjoyed the program. It doesn't even bother me now to talk to a large audience, but that wasn't always the case.

My mind flashed back to several years ago. After talking to a group of people a very nice lady got me to one side and told me she could tell it made me nervous to speak to a large audience. I already knew that, but had hoped it didn't show. She had had much experience in public speaking and in the beginning it also made her nervous but now she had a system. When she got up to talk she visualized everyone in the audience dressed in long red underwear and she no longer felt nervous.

A short time after that I gave a talk to a group of about 125 middle-aged people. The red underwear had sounded like a good idea but I could do better than that. I would think of them as not wearing any clothes at all. Really, you shouldn't try to improve on something that works. It was almost time for me to give my talk when I got there. While waiting at one side to be introduced I started to smile because these people didn't know how I would be seeing them in my own mind. As soon as I was introduced I bounced up on the stage and looked out over the

group and the smile broadened from ear to ear. Can you imagine what all of those middle-aged people looked like sitting out there as naked as jay birds? The broad smile went to a chuckle.

I really think I would have made it alright but just then a lady came in a little late and came right up to a front seat. She was a stout lady. A better description would be "fat." You know the kind. This was too much and I just cracked up. The audience was laughing too, by this time but they didn't know what they were laughing at. (Maybe they were looking at me the same way.)

I knew I had to get control of the situation but how do you go from hysterics into a serious speech that you had just forgot. It called for a joke of some kind to try to get out from under this. I acted like I was thinking of this very funny joke as an excuse for my laughter. It was a good thing it was a cold night because the only joke I could think of was a cold joke (more ways than one). I said, "Gee, is it cold out tonight." Some kind, straight man in the back came back with, "How - cold - is it?" I said, "It is so cold, on the way here tonight I saw a jack-rabbit pushing a cottontail to get him started." Sure was glad I got the laugh before the joke. By this time I had everyone back into their long red underwear and went on with the speech. No doubt I was the strangest speaker they ever had.

Meanwhile back on the hill. It was 1:30 A.M. when I was snapped back to the present time in the deer timber as a car came down the road and almost stopped at the bottom of the hill. Then it pulled into a field entrance and sat there a couple of minutes with the headlights on. No spot light had been used but the law says it is illegal to hunt with any light so maybe they were just using the headlights. I decided I better have a look. They backed out of the drive and started slowly down the road as I swooped down the hill with red lights flashing. The car promptly stopped and I jumped out, ran to the door on the driver's side, opened it and shined my flashlight in. Just as I said, "State game warden" I started to laugh. There sat a skinny man behind the wheel and with him was the stoutest woman I have ever seen. When he said, "What is so funny?", I said, "Mr., you would never believe it if I told you." I just closed his door, got into my car and went home.

## PHEASANT FLOCK

(Continued from Page 5)

accident. Three of the 28 young hens and one of the 11 adult females were eliminated in this way during the two-month open season, about 10 percent of their segment of the population.

At the end of the year, 2 old roosters and 8 young ones plus 10 adult hens and 25 juvenile females were left which brought the farm's population back to 10 roosters and 35 hens. The flock's number had not changed although only 12 of the original 45 had made it through the year. If the winter had been extra mild and everything had been favorable during the nesting season, the flock might have increased. If the winter had been unusually severe and a cold, wet nesting season had hurt the hatch, the pheasant population might have been down. Generally though, as long as farming practices remain constant, there would not be much variation from year to year. □

## \$ MILLION FUR INDUSTRY

(Continued from Page 9)

"pioneer spirit" of the past cannot be valued in dollars and cents. What does the future hold for the fur industry in Iowa and North America? Are these once very abundant renewable fur resources beginning to show signs of exhaustion?

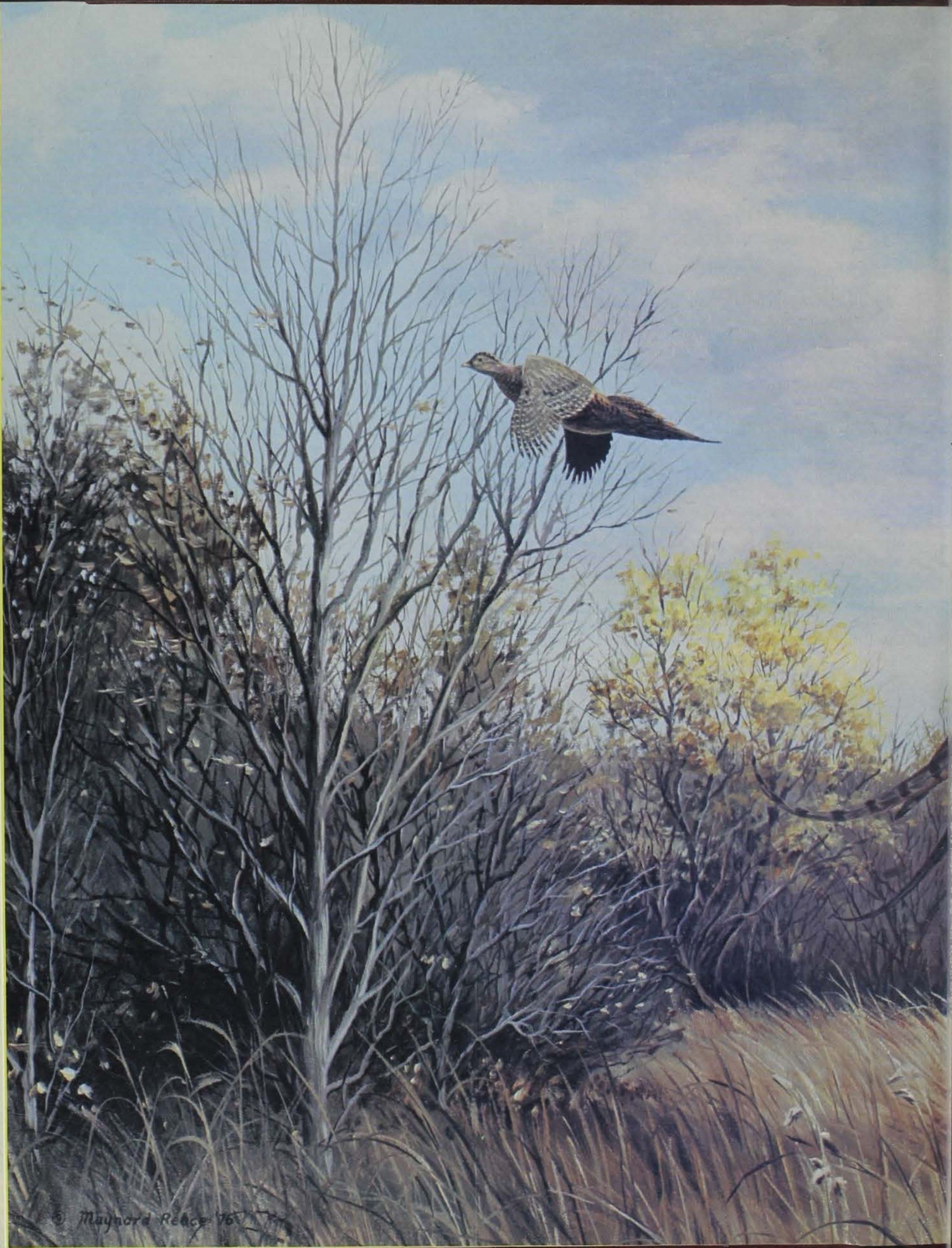
Although the stocks of wild fur have been greatly depleted, they are still quite large. The more common fur animals are not in immediate danger of extinction, but the finer fur animals have been

reduced so low that commercial quantities are becoming negligible and some species are in danger of extinction. Wildlife habitat deterioration, due to man's influence, has greatly contributed to the demise of some fur populations. Synthetic furs are replacing the use of wild furs in the garment industry. This has far ranging consequences and the energy used in producing synthetic furs is non-renewable while wild furs, under proper management, can be renewable resources.

However much the American public may treasure its fur animals for garments and the comfort they afford, the recreation and the secondary monetary rewards they provide, the non-consumptive value of just seeing Reynard fox and her pups playing on the hillside or a beaver dam with a brood of wood ducks on it; it shows little concern for the future supply. Because of the dollar signs associated with the current fur value and the need for more energy and the all out push for food production, fur animal habitat as well as other wildlife habitat is being destroyed, invaded and polluted by man.

Fur trappers, hunters, and dealers are not contributing enough in license fees to sufficiently finance required restoration and management of fur species and fur habitat. These sportsmen as well as the non-consumptive public, must be willing to sacrifice more of their own personal gain either by increased license fees, fur stamps or general tax appropriations, if they expect to see fur species continue to thrive.

Nineteen seventy-six marks the beginning of the third century of this great nation of ours. It seems only appropriate that we should stop and consider ways of maintaining all wildlife in good numbers for the consumptive as well as the non-consumptive user. □



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