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*Editorial*

**LAND USE PLANNING . . . DO WE NEED IT?**

**by George Cox**

WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST, IOWA CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**W**hy can't I sell five acres of my farm to Mr. Smith? Should we take land out of production for recreational development? I don't want a high voltage electrical transmission line crossing my farm! Have you seen that new shopping center being built on the east side of town? I don't need someone telling me how to farm my own property! What is the land best suited for? Who should decide and how?

These and other frequent comments and questions indicate "land use planning" is an issue of many meanings at many different levels of concern. At a recent meeting, the owner of a small farm spoke indignantly, "What hurts me most in all this land-use talk is the way they say 'our land' and 'our resource'. What do they mean? It's mine, I bought it and I pay the taxes." Reflecting for a moment, I could not help wishing that the world he described still existed. Considering the temper of today's society, his was the voice of an era long gone. In earlier times there was space and even room for something called private land in the strict sense. But that world is gone. There is, of course, such things as private land and private ownership but the resource has become public. We are a crowded people on a small planet and the public needs and interests will prevail. We must now learn accommodation.

The public has been extremely reluctant to participate in the so-called "public affairs" matters, especially with items as delicate as land-use planning. Governmental entities and officials are often overly sensitive to pressure from ever-alert, special interest groups who see opportunities for profit or threats of loss in plans such as these. If a public official takes a "public-interest-above-all" attitude and "let the chips fall where they may", his term in office is often quite short. The special interest groups remember who pays his debts and the public often has other things to do on election day.

The road map to comprehensive land-use planning has not yet been printed. It is unlikely that such an "atlas" will be an easy document to complete. After all, Iowa's land resource represents food to the peoples of the world; a unique wealth to all Americans; scenic pleasure and recreation to all Iowans' and a way of life for the landowner. How must we divide these various demands to insure preservation as well as distribution?

Land-use planning is really "Planning for Progress". It involves planning against facilities for growth's sake where growth is undesirable and it usually involves the roll of the devil's advocate - the unpopular approach. Without a doubt, the greatest single obstacle to the implementation of planning for progress is not ignorance nor unawareness but the lack of cold cash. How do you sell the public on purchasing an area to preserve open space when they are concerned about how their tax dollars are spent? Why protect an old historical treasure in lieu of an office building or an apartment house when we know which will bring the higher tax revenue? "Planning for Progress" is a governmental function at all levels. It might mean stopping growth in Chicago and perhaps encouraging it in Sioux City; stopping it in Atlantic and encouraging it in Des Moines.

It is estimated by the year 2000, we will increase our population in the United States by some one hundred million people. Some seventy-five million of which will live in urban communities. This could mean building the equivalent of one hundred and fifty new cities with a population of a half million people or an average of three new cities for each state. Considering the cost of today's products, the price tag for each new city is staggering. A recently completed city in England that will accommodate eighty-thousand people cost nearly \$300 million. The price for a city of five-hundred thousand could easily reach \$5 billion. This means we could only afford fifteen or twenty such cities next year if we spent our entire defense budget on such an activity. It will take more than ten years to complete the task even if we obligate all of our defense monies and throw in a few space programs besides.

Planning for progress means the development of those cities and at the same time protecting our orchards, vineyards, cornfields, and other agricultural lands against urban sprawl. It means retaining the wildlife and scenic pleasures that are a part of our natural heritage. It means a willingness to spend money and to forego income that might otherwise be available. The willingness to spend money is the key factor and that willingness is not as large an obstacle as it once was. In the last decade, environmental concerns began to receive the much needed attention they deserved and "ecology" became a household word. It is not just enough to build a new house now-a-days. Most of us now search for an environment to put it in. The willingness to buy a better kind of world is now more widespread.

Very few states, counties or municipalities have passed land-use legislation to this date. A typical stumbling block in many states has been disagreement on a state-wide "oversight" authority. Some say the proposal would create just another governmental regulatory agency.

*(Continued Page 15)*

# Lookin' Back...

## IN THE CONSERVATIONIST

### Ten Years Ago



The Commission voted to accept the name, Lake Anita, for the new lake being built in Cass County.

Approval was given to a motion urging the County Boards of Supervisors to keep certain county roads open adjacent to new federal impoundments such as Saylorville, Red Rock and Rathbun in order to provide public access to these areas.

### Twenty Years Ago



Conservation Commission engineers reported that the reconstruction of Lake Macbride was proceeding rapidly and that the enlarged lake basin would be ready for flooding by that summer. The impoundment of the Iowa River behind the Coralville Dam would not begin until the Lake Macbride dam was completed, the engineers said.

### Thirty Years Ago



The Commission authorized an expenditure of \$2,000 for completion of core borings and investigation of Rock Creek Lake site in Jasper County. Bullhead fishing was so hot at Lost Island that the average catch of bullheads per day, per fisherman was 29. The Commission took action to remove the catch and possession limits of bullheads in Lost Island.

J. N. 'Ding' Darling predicted that we would be running into oil and mineral problems by 1972 or twenty-five years from that issue of the Iowa Conservationist.

## Spring Delight:

# WILD ASPARAGUS

By Bob Mullen

STATE CONSERVATION OFFICER

Photos by the Author

**W**ILD ASPARAGUS grows abundantly throughout the state along road ditches and around abandoned farmsteads. In May, as the soil warms up from the sun's rays and warm spring winds, the asparagus plant sends up its delectable spears from its winter sleep.

Those that harvest and enjoy the delightful flavor of fresh wild asparagus seldom reveal their favorite patches. This trait they have in common with the mushroom hunters. Anyone that takes notice of wayside plants along rural roads is familiar with the sight of the mature asparagus plant. Its lacy green foliage decorates many roadsides from early spring until the first freeze. In the fall, these same plants are covered with bright red berries about 1/4 inch in diameter, each containing from one to six black seeds. The birds soon find and enjoy these asparagus seeds.

The dedicated wild asparagus hunter knows that the edible tips and spears appear long before the asparagus puts on its summer finery. The only way to locate the edible tips is by locating the drab colored stalks from the previous year. The stalks stand above every clump of new asparagus tips. For those that have never hunted asparagus before, the old stalks look quite like other dead weeds and plants that may be found along a road bank or abandoned farm. Old stalks normally stand about 3 feet tall with a central stem or "trunk" about 1/2 inch in diameter. This central stem helps distinguish it from weeds with forking stems. Winter's wind and snow have destroyed the soft threadlike foliage of the plant, but the stronger horizontal branches are still intact. Coming off the main stem are many evenly spaced side branches. The branches near the ground are larger and taper to smallest near the tip. This gives the plant a Christmas tree like appearance. The old asparagus plant is a bit lighter and brighter than the other straw colored dead plants.



It would seem all one would have to do in the spring to have an abundance of fresh wild asparagus, would be to locate last year's dead stalk. But, because of dedicated asparagus hunters, it is not that easy. Many of these dedicated hunters will break off the previous winter's stalk, so others can't locate their asparagus beds as easily.

Some people harvest the asparagus tips by cutting at ground level, or by bending the tip over until it snaps clean. One can harvest asparagus for 4 to 6 weeks from one location. After a tip is removed, the plant will send up a new shoot which can be harvested in 3 to 4 days. If the tip of the asparagus spear starts to open, it is best to leave it, as it will not be as tender as a fresh young spear. After 4 to 6 weeks of harvesting from one area, you should let the shoots grow and put on their lacy foliage. The plant needs the rest of the summer to grow and store up food in its roots for the following season's growth.

Wild asparagus can be prepared for the table in several ways. It may be boiled and buttered, creamed and put over toast, or prepared in a delectable asparagus soup. It may be eaten raw for a unique treat.

If you are one of many that enjoy the taste of asparagus, why not give a try at hunting wild asparagus. It's free! And the flavor is so much fresher and better than asparagus from the store.



# Rocks, Minerals & Fossils of Iowa

by Lee Olson

ASSISTANT, CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

Photos by Ken Formanek

ONE USUALLY doesn't associate rock, mineral, or fossil collecting with conservation. However, it is an outdoor activity and hobby which can involve the whole family and provide one with the opportunity to see and appreciate some of the natural beauty found in Iowa.

Despite the fact that Iowa lacks the type of geography conducive to finding valuable minerals, as in mountainous regions, it does not seem to hinder ardent explorers or enthusiasts in their search. Depending on the area, Lake Superior agates, jasper, siderite, dolomite, calcite, petrified wood and geodes can be found throughout Iowa. Fossils abound in the eastern half of Iowa, in the large limestone deposits and in the quarries found in abundance in that section of the state.

Western Iowa is not an extensive gem area, although there is a deposit of polishable chert known as "rice agate" located near Red Oak in Southwest Iowa. The silicified stone overlies a limestone quarry just west of Red Oak along Walnut Creek.

Many streams in Western Iowa offer good specimens of conglomerate, a sedimentary rock composed of smaller pebbles and bits of rock. The gravels will also yield good specimens of Lake Superior agate, especially those areas North of Highway 30 along the Raccoon River. Also, moss agates and good specimens of petrified wood have been found in the same gravels.

As is the case with all private property in Iowa, permission to hunt and collect must be asked and rules of safety and courtesy obeyed.

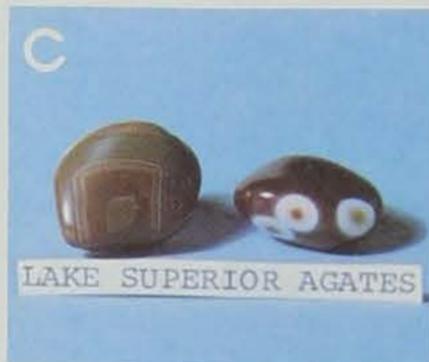
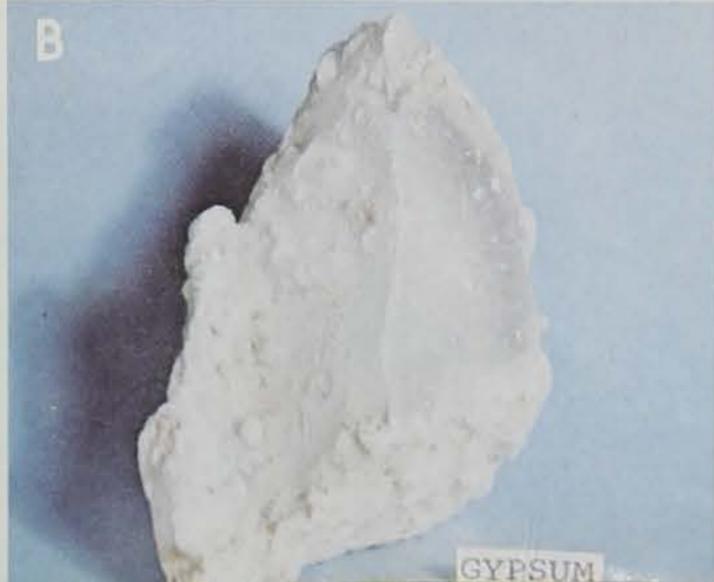
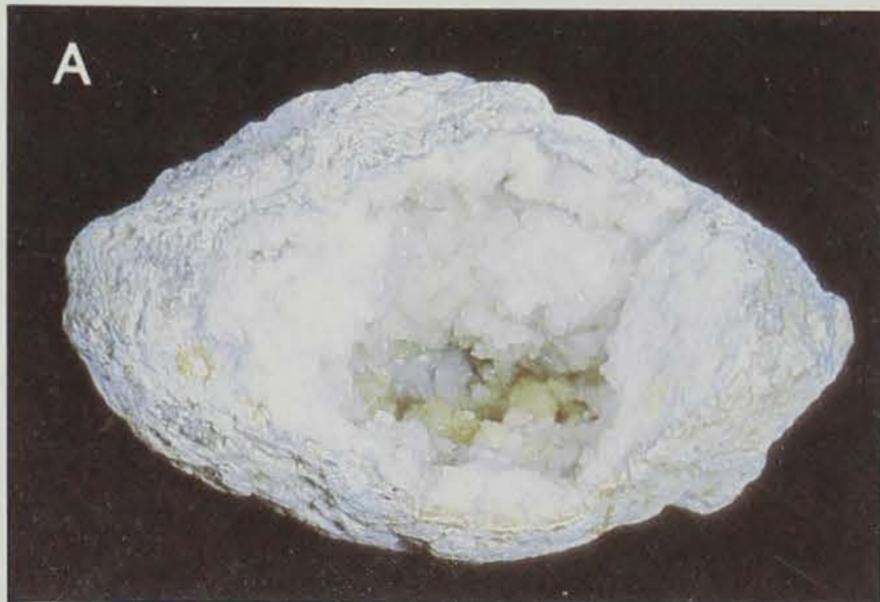
In northern Iowa, especially in Fayette, Black Hawk, Bremer, and Benton counties, good quality Lake Superior agates have been found in creek beds.

The Mason City area has some good quarries for collecting marine fossils of many species. The best bet is the Rockford Brick and Tile Co., at Rockford. With permission from the company, one can find the ground covered with brachiopod fossils. The creek beds between Elgin and Clermont yield good trilobite specimens. Nearly all of Northeast Iowa has limestone outcroppings which will yield many fine pelecypods, gastropods, corals, and crinoid stems.

One of the most unusual rock specimens from northern Iowa comes from near Webster City, in Hamilton County. This is an exceptionally attractive, well-developed cone-in-cone calcite. This strange kind of calcite resembles tiny cones nested one inside the other.

The exact location is near the small community of Stanhope. Go north from Stanhope on Route 17 to the second crossroad. Turn west until you come to the end of the maintained road. Here you will see a well-traveled trail heading north. Follow it until you reach a bridge and park on the right side of the road. From where you park, look back across the bridge and you will see the veins of cone-in-cone.

In extreme northwest Iowa, one will find the only outcropping of pre-cambrium rock in Iowa, Sioux Quartzite. Sioux Quartzite has no intrinsic value other than its extreme age of nearly two billion years which makes it a conversation piece. The greatest concentration of Sioux Quartzite is located in a State Preserve called Gitche Manitou. It is against the law to collect any rock, mineral, or artifact within Iowa's State Parks and Preserve System. However, numerous specimens may be found outside the boundaries of the State Preserve.



A, Geode; B, Gypsum; C, Lake Superior Agates; D, Bryozoans; E, Galena Lead; and F, Catlinite. G, Right: Fossils show evidence of ancient life.



At West Bend in northern Iowa, the late Father Paul Dobberstein constructed a grotto of gems, which is unmatched anywhere in the world. Each passage and grotto contains a treasure house of exquisite gems and crystals from all over the world. Father Dobberstein spent better than half his life creating this amazing garden of flowers from the mineral kingdom. Every collector regardless of faith, should see this magnificent display.

Central Iowa, especially the coal mine dump areas in the Knoxville, Oskaloosa, and Lovilia area, offers many unusual crystals of calcite, sierreite, dolomite and barite. One must get permission to dig in these slag piles. Patience has rewarded many collectors with many fine crystals.

Iowa's most famous fossil quarry is the one at Le Grand. It was at the Le Grand Quarry that Dr. B.H. Beane discovered some of the most splendid crinoid fossils ever to be found. Dr. Beane worked off and on for 26 years in this quarry. On one slab of limestone he found many perfectly preserved starfish in bold relief, as well as many perfectly preserved crinoid fossils. Although the quarry in which these discoveries were made is now closed and filled, the Concrete Materials Company has opened a new quarry across the Iowa River, and with permission, possible new finds may be made. Many of Dr. Beane's fossils from Le Grand may be seen in Des Moines at the Iowa State Historical Museum.

Southern and eastern Iowa offer many fine rock collecting areas. Most of Iowa's gems are found in eastern Iowa along the entire length of the Mississippi River. Lake Superior agates are to be found throughout the entire length. Any gravel bar, commercial gravel operation or tributary stream in the whole region has agate.

Dubuque, Bellevue, Burlington, and Muscatine lead the list of places to try, with Muscatine probably being the best. Several companies dredge gravel along the river at Muscatine. The Acme Company, Hahn Brothers Gavel Company, and Northern Gravel Company are located here. Permission must be obtained.

To get to these gravel piles, follow U.S. 61 south through Muscatine past a big pearl button factory and millwork plant. The millwork plant ends at Oregon Street where you turn left. Continue on Oregon to Stewart Street which angles right towards the gravel operations. You will soon see gravel piles of all sizes on both sides of the road. The road you are on takes you to the Hahns Brothers' dumps, while a fork to the left (after you see the first gravel) will take you to the Acme Company property.

It is possible for a sharp-eyed, well-informed collector to find a diamond in these Iowa gravels. A gem quality green diamond was found in the gravels at Dubuque, and the lucky finder sold it for \$1,500.

Also, around the Dubuque area, galena (lead) may be found. For specific areas, ask some of the local residents.

## Geodes

The State Rock of Iowa, the Geode, is probably the most sought after mineral. Whether you are an amateur collector or professional, the geode is on every person's list of rock and minerals to find.

The largest concentrations of geodes is located in southeast Iowa. However, excellent geodes have been found in central Iowa in the Eldora, Union, Hampton and Hubbard areas. Usually limestone quarries and road cuts offer the best hunting in this area. The gravels of the Iowa River also offer good hunting.

The best known geode formation in the United States is the Warsaw formation and though the city for which the formation was named is on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River, so many of these geodes have been found in Iowa that they are quite commonly referred to as "Keokuk Geodes."

Virtually every stream in southern Iowa from Ottumwa to Keokuk, and the Des Moines River into which they flow, will yield a harvest of geodes. Geodes are sometimes in banks and cliffs, sometimes on gravel bars, and often in the streams. Commercial gravel operations also have their share of geodes. Road cuts and construction excavations sometimes yield a new supply. The best time to look is after high water has receded in the spring.

Another geode-bearing stream is the Skunk River, especially south of New London, and while in the New London vicinity be sure to visit Geode Industries and see their display of geodes.

The geodes which collectors prize are those with inclusions of something other than the usual clear to white quartz crystals. Of course, any interior showing crystals of unusual beauty is a welcome addition to a collection, but the following are some of the inclusions which make some geodes even more highly prized: dolomite, goethite, marcasite, pyrite, sphalerite, ankerite, aragonite, chalcedony, kaolin, limonite, calcite and millerite. The rarest is millerite, others of value are those geodes containing pink calcite and amethyst.

The variation in the sizes of geodes is tremendous, many of these round "rocks" being smaller than a golf ball and some of them larger than a beach ball. The baseball to softball size seem to be the most common.

Some collectors prefer to saw their geodes, however, this writer prefers to break them open carefully so the larger part has a little cave and the other portion becomes merely a lid to close the cave. They are easily broken with a hammer and chisel, that is, if they are good ones. The solid quartz variety is very difficult to open. You soon learn by the heft of the geode whether or not it is likely to be hollow.

Iowa geodes are highly prized and good specimens can easily be traded in other parts of the country for minerals or gem stones not found in Iowa.

Nearly all geode collecting areas are located on private property, and the collector must obtain permission from the owner for access to and from the "diggings."

## Safety Tips

Looking for rocks and minerals, as well as fossils, can be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. However, some adventures have ended up being disastrous. Collecting can be dangerous for those not prepared.

If you follow these few suggestions, it may later save you, as a collector, an injury or possible legal action. 1. In rocky areas, limestone outcroppings, and abandoned quarries, beware of possible rattlesnakes. Use a stick or pole to probe around with. Rock areas are natural habitats for rattlesnakes. 2. Wear clothing that fits the weather and terrain you're going to be in. 3. Wearing a hard hat can prevent blows on the head from loose shale or stones falling from above. 4. Limestone quarries are potentially very hazardous. Construction and blasting may be going on and blasting caps may be left in the area. Also, many quarries and abandoned strip mining areas may have filled with water and drownings have occurred. 5. Sunburn, bites of insects and poison ivy also take their turns at the collector. Be prepared and recognize these hazards. 6. Carry a first aid kit. Cuts, smashed fingers and falls are not part of the fun. 7. Get permission to enter and hunt an area. 8. Meandered streams, roads, and road cuts are the only areas that I know of where you can hunt without permission. If in doubt inquire. 9. It is against the law to collect rocks and minerals from any State Park or Preserve. 10. Be sure you have your equipment along. Include a hand lens or magnifying glass and preferably a mineral hammer, if not, a good hammer and chisel. A good rock and mineral book will also be of advantage to you.

Iowa's greatest natural resource is her soil, but with a little perseverance one can find many unusual rocks and minerals in our state. *Good hunting!*

Iron Pyrite.



by Tom Putnam  
FISHERIES BIOLOGIST

Photos by the Author

# GARST PONDS

## One family's contribution to fishing

**A** NGLERS of the Guthrie County area have long been aware of where to go in their vicinity for a day of fishing. The Middle Raccoon River is the place to try for channel catfish or smallmouth bass. The South Raccoon River is also the place for "cats" if one fishes the holes. Springbrook State Park is the spot to wet a line for largemouth bass, panfish or catfish. These areas, in the past, just about summed it up for public fishing in Guthrie County. Taking a second look, however, reveals an area developing that holds as great a fishery potential as any other in the county.

Nestled within the gently rolling pastured and rowcropped terrain just south of Coon Rapids, lie the 45 farmponds of the Roswell Garst family. These ponds, which are scattered throughout a 40 square mile area, offer a rare opportunity to "get away from it all" and enjoy a day of fishing and relaxing in the solitude of their isolated surroundings. Several of the ponds are situated in or near mature timber tracts which add to their aesthetic peacefulness. Wildlife abounds in these areas, and a chance meeting with a raccoon fishing for his daily ration; the sight of a deer pausing for a cool drink; or the sound of a squirrel chattering a warning of an intruder's presence are not uncommon. Other ponds are in more open terrain, mainly pastureland, but are also secluded. Many are located in clusters of two to four ponds, with only a few minutes walking distance between them.

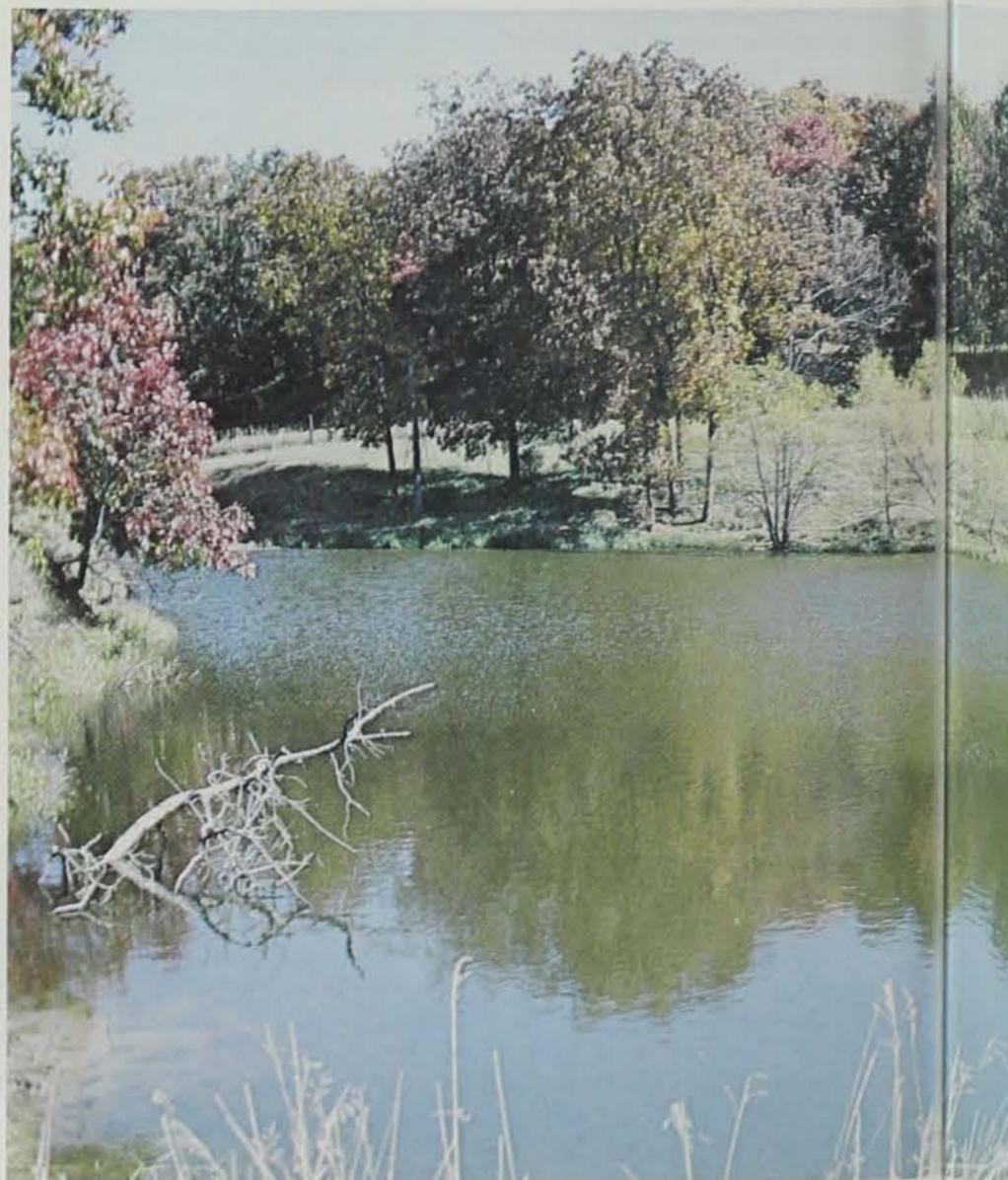
The Garst Ponds are not new to the Coon Rapids area or its fishermen. The first were constructed on the Whalley Farm in 1951 and a few have been added nearly each succeeding year. Plans have been developed to continue this trend so that one or two new ponds will be added to the fishery each year.

The Garst family originally stocked many of the ponds at their own expense. Several species were introduced including largemouth bass, walleye, northern pike, yellow perch, channel catfish, bullhead and bluegill. Well-meaning fishermen also "helped" by stocking several ponds with additional undesirable species including carp and green sunfish.

Many of these ponds, as they began to age, showed a decline in the quality of fish caught. Largemouth bass were overharvested leading to a large increase in bluegills, the primary food source for bass. Since bluegills were left unchecked, they sufficiently destroyed the nests of bass during the spring spawn to lead to a



further decline in bass populations. The addition of walleyes and northern pike, though both predator species, could not control the expanding bluegill populations. Neither is able to successfully reproduce in ponds and build up their numbers to become effective regulators of the panfish. The fish populations of many ponds continued to decline until, in all practicality, the only species to be caught were small bluegill.



Several other ponds, however, did not succumb to overpopulation or "stunting" of panfish. Quality bass and "keeper" bluegill are still being taken in these areas because the predators were not overfished.

The Garst family has, for many years, allowed the public access to their ponds. In March 1975, however, they also signed an "Agreement for Public Access to Fish" with the Conservation Commission. This agreement not only allowed for continuing fisherman access but also provided for an active program by the fisheries section to manage the ponds for their maximum fisheries potential.

In late summer 1975, the first series of ponds was selected for management consideration. Through interviews with anglers familiar with the Garst pond complex and the fishing condition of the ponds, 12 were selected for total renovation and restocking. The fish toxicant *Pro-Noxfish*, a rotenone based chemical, was used to eradicate the existing populations. With the exception of a few catfish in two ponds, gamefish of a size suitable for the creel were almost nonexistent. Largemouth bass were a rare commodity to be found, whereas bluegill, due to lack of adequate predation, had taken over.

These areas were then restocked by the fisheries section with fingerling bluegill and channel catfish in the fall of 1975. Largemouth bass fingerlings were introduced in the spring of 1976. This method of stocking has been utilized recently in the commission's statewide farmpond stocking program and has proved very successful. It can be expected that bass and catfish will begin to reach "keeper" size three years after stocking. Many bluegills, on the other hand, may reach creel size late in the second year after stocking, depending upon the fertility of the particular pond.

Again in 1976, five more ponds went through the renovation - restocking process. They, again, were stocked in the same manner as the previous year. In addition two other ponds have been stocked with adult bluegill, where an adequate bass population was established but no forage base was present. Two recently constructed ponds are also in the process of being stocked. This adds up to 21 ponds upgraded and stocked in the past two years. Others may be renovated in future years as the need arises.

Two management techniques are being suggested to help ensure continued balance in the fisheries populations of the Garst ponds. A 12-inch minimum size limit on the harvest of bass is suggested to decrease the chances of overharvest of this species. The protection of a segment of their population will help establish a predator base to control the bluegill, thus keeping their number in check.

The harvest of five pounds of bluegill for each pound of bass is also recommended to aid in sustaining a quality fishery in each pond. Bluegills are important to the pond as a food source to insure continuing bass growth, but they must be harvested by anglers so their population also remains healthy.

Neither of these techniques are regulations, therefore, they are not mandatory or enforceable. If an angler is interested in continued good fishing on the Garst area, however, he will follow these recommendations as best he can.

The Garst family has been a friend to conscientious fishermen since the inception of their farmpond program by allowing the public access to fish. They have even recently revised and reprinted a map of Coon Rapids area depicting the locations of all their farmponds suitable for fishing. This guide also reveals the species of fish stocked in each pond and points out the ponds that have been recently restocked. These guides can be picked up, free of charge, from the Garst Company in Coon Rapids. Also included in the guide are a number of rules and suggestions to help maintain these ponds as prime fishing areas in their natural surroundings.

Public access to the Garst farmponds is a unique situation for the anglers of Iowa and should be treated as such. By correct use of the area and respect for private property, we can be assured of many enjoyable fishing trips in future years. Thanks to the Garst family, there is a new fishing "hotspot" in Guthrie County. □

The Garst ponds are stocked and managed by fisheries personnel to provide good fishing in pleasant surroundings for the public.



# WILDLIFE CARVINGS

## These almost breathe!

by Wendell Simonson

CONSERVATION OFFICER

*Photos by the Author*

VISITOR'S to Iowa's unique Amana Colonies soon take note of the fine craftsmanship that is evident in the locally made products. These seven villages are known world-wide for their fine furniture, woolens, freezers, meats, wines, and restaurants. Not the least known would be the old open-hearth bakery operated by 36 year-old Jack Hahn and his wife Doris, at Middle Amana.

About five years ago, Jack began carving duck decoys in a small workshop in his residence at Middle. He had worked at carpentry and cabinet work, had some art training, but needed something to work off the surplus nervous energy. He had heard of the International Decoy Contest held at the Mississippi Valley Fair at Davenport each year, so he took along a couple of his carvings to enter in the show. Jack is the first to admit that when he saw the quality of the work from several different states, he felt the urge to take his work back to his car. He failed again the second year to pick up a ribbon, so he started asking a lot of questions of other carvers and intensified his research. In the past three years his work has become recognized nationwide.

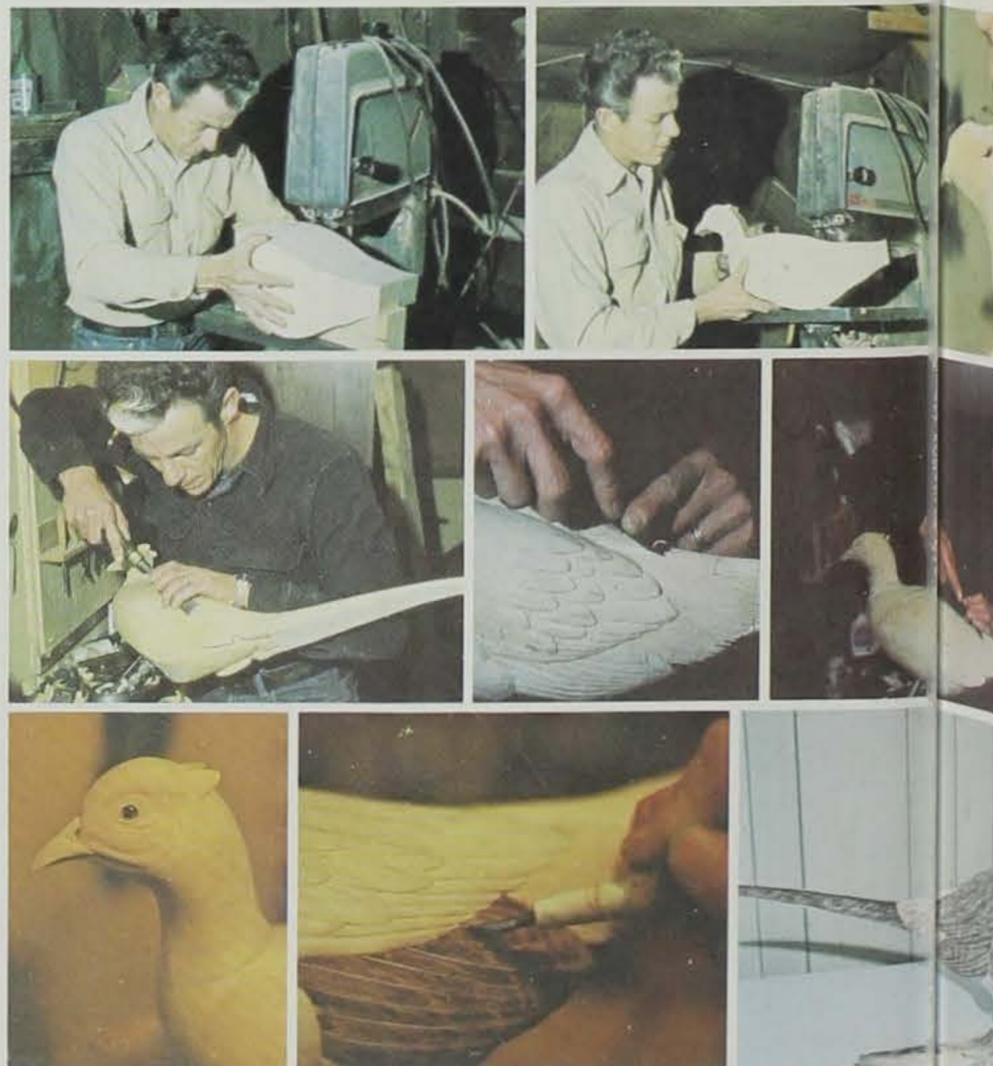
Jack has entered contests in Lincoln, Nebraska; Salisbury, Maryland; Monroe, Michigan; Babylon, New York; and in California and Virginia. In that short time he has earned a couple dozen blue ribbons and a host of second, third, and honorable mentions. The Amana tradition of old world craftsmanship was beginning to surface.

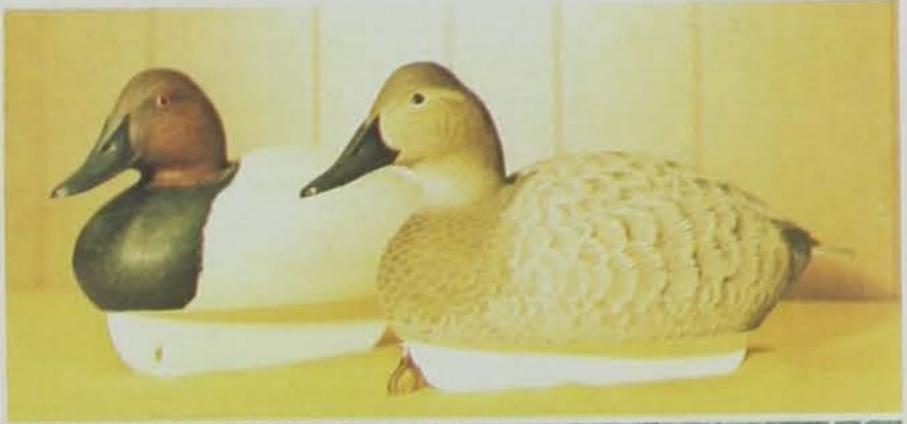
A few months ago, Jack advised me he was beginning to do research and planning for carving a full size cock pheasant. To better show the great amount of detail work, I was in his work shop with the camera when he set the basswood plank down on the band saw table and started to make the first rough cuts. In the following days I would drop in and take photos of the rasping, the chisel work, the sanding, the marking and the carving of the feathers. There were long and tedious hours using a small, sharp wood-buring tool to cut in the vanes and barbs of each feather. Installing the eyes, making the feet, and mounting the carving on a rustic base took many more hours. And finally, the painting. Hours were spent mixing acrylic paint and doing the painting. Getting the iridescent sheen just right on head and neck feathers was tough. As with his duck carvings, Jack's research had been complete. Not content to follow someone's painting in a magazine, he hunts himself, takes pictures from a small photo blind during the spring waterfowl migration, and borrows study skins from the University of Iowa museum at Iowa City. When he starts working on a carving, he does it with an all-consuming passion. His wife and daughters have been most understanding about the pile of chips on the floor, and his suddenly getting up in the middle of the night to work on a hunk of wood!

I was there the day Jack leaned back from his bench, cleaned his artist's brush, and pronounced the pheasant finished. Somehow, with a few tools in his hands and some paint and brushes, he had almost created life in the rough block of basswood. Quoting Jack, "*Enjoying nature, and trying to capture a small part of it in carved birds, has given me a greater awareness of our Creator's outdoor world.*"

We agreed that the most natural place to take a portrait of the beautiful pheasant would be in one of Iowa's rich cornfields, with standing corn as a backdrop. And so we posed him — in the Hawkeye wildlife area where a few rows of corn had been left standing for wildlife food.

Pictures of the long and tedious hours from the basswood plank on the bandsaw to the com





Shown above, posed against an antique lamp, is a blue ribbon mallard drake. Right, above, drake and hen canvasback. Below, another of Jack Hahn's prizewinning mallards preens his feathers.

This man has not been selfish in sharing his talent with others — several carvers have visited his residence for guidance. He helped them, as did the others help Jack when he first started carving. He has also taught several young people the art of carving decoys in the Amana school.

Some of the Hahn decoys are on display in museums in Los Angeles and Denver. Many others rest proudly on fireplace mantles in several states. Whoever acquires this Pheasant Carving No. 1, will have collected a truly outstanding work of art!

the completed carved pheasant shown below in an Iowa cornfield.





Photo by Richard Bishop

Top photo: Bobolink in flight. Lower left: Common Egret. Lower right: Goldfinch nest.

# Symbol of the Bobolink

by Richard A. Bishop

WILDLIFE RESEARCH BIOLOGIST



Photo by Ken Formanek

THE graceful, fluttering flight of the bobolink from goldenrod stalks to bending stems of giant bluestem is a symbol of the once majestic prairies that covered much of Iowa. One can almost visualize the herds of buffalo and elk and the numerous flocks of prairie chickens. The buffalo, elk and prairie chickens are gone but a few hearty bobolinks remain to remind us of what once was. Bobolinks do not inhabit our painfully designed fields of row crops, but are found in the few remaining ungrazed grasslands. Many of these areas are now state owned and managed for wildlife. The ones that are not will either one day become public land or will be drastically altered by the ever pressing demand for agricultural products.

The bobolink, like many other non-game birds and animals, finds a home on our wildlife areas. We could name a long list of birds and animals that inhabit the upland areas and a longer one for those species favoring water areas as their home. By far the majority of these birds are not hunted, in fact only a minute percentage are hunted, yet it is the sportsmen of Iowa who are preserving these areas. Through their concern for the wildlife species they pursue, they contribute over 2 million dollars annually which in part goes to preserve and manage wildlife areas. They enjoy these areas during a short period of the year and the rest of the time, the land is left to the bird watcher, nature observer, picnicker, etc., and of course the birds and animals themselves.

Following a presentation to a civic group a few years back, a woman asked if we were interested in any type of wildlife other than ones we could shoot. Somewhat surprised with the tone of the question, I readily assured her that we most certainly were. In fact, the Conservation Commission is the only agency, other than County Conservation Boards, that does anything to preserve the vital habitat needed by non-game wildlife.

Presently the Commission owns over 200,000 acres of land encompassing all types of habitat and offering life requirements to many diverse species. The land varies from original prairie and marshland to intermediate brushland, river bottoms and climax forest. We have not publicized the non-game bird benefits of our management programs because we were confident people realized that contribution. Perhaps we were wrong.

Those people who do not purchase hunting and fishing licenses, regardless of their emotional vocal outbursts, are doing little for these species compared to the sportsmen they so readily criticize. It is time we allow these people, who wish to be involved, some avenue to help contribute to the purchase of this valuable habitat. Presently there is no other avenue but perhaps we could sell a nature stamp or something resulting in funds which could be earmarked for land acquisition and management for non-game wildlife. It would be most interesting to see how many stamps would be sold. Hopefully someone will come up with a method to represent those individuals' desires to safeguard some of these birds and animals.

In the meantime, we will continue to provide responsible management for all types of wildlife, whether they are game species or not. The call of the marsh wren, the grace of the American egret, the silhouette of the great blue heron, the beauty of the goldfinch and the authority of the red-tailed hawk will always be part of the "symbol of the bobolink."



Photo by Richard Bishop

# Dr. Savage named WOODLAND OWNER OF THE YEAR

By Roger Sparks

*Photos by the Author*



Above: Existing timber has aesthetic, recreation values for Savage Family.

THIS SPRING Dr. Robert Savage of Monticello will plant walnut trees on another 60 acres of his northeast Iowa farm. Dr. Savage, a District State Veterinarian, continues to get the most out of his land and his life. For his forest management efforts he has been named "Woodland Owner of the Year" by the Iowa Conservation Commission.

In 1948 he bought the worn-out, 216-acre farm to supplement his then private practice income and provide a bonus to his family. His philosophy then and now is to maximize the use of the area without abusing the land. That called for good conservation measures such as strip and contour cropping and the development of erosion control structures. Much of the farm was later seeded to grass for rotation pasturing before Dr. Savage began adding to the 40 acres of existing, ungrazed timber on the area.

The first planting came in the late fifties when he and his scout troop planted walnut and pine near the existing timber area. Since 1973, walnut seedlings have been established and maintained on another 40 acres of the farm. In close cooperation with the district forester, those trees have received proper care which involved pruning and vegetation control during the early growth period.



"I've personally been interested in deriving the best, most productive uses of the land," Savage notes. "People before us had tried to do things for which the land was poorly suited. Now the farm is productive and profitable."

"The farm has always been a family project," he recalls. "My daughter and sons participated in the operation of the farm, helping with the livestock and fencing. It has provided a healthy environment for youngsters."

Dr. Savage continues to seek new ways to make his farm more productive, but always with a watchful eye on long-range results of that use. "Conservation, wildlife and aesthetics have always been of utmost importance to me."

Besides being named Woodland Owner of the Year, Savage has received for his forestry and conservation efforts the Silver Beaver Award from the National Scouting Organization and the Hornady Award from the New York Zoological Society.

Below: Young walnut stand required many hours of planting and pruning but help make the farm productive and profitable.



*FOREST COVER is an essential ingredient in the environment of Iowa. Originally there were 7,000,000 acres of timber in this state. It has now dwindled to 1,500,000 acres or 4% of the State's land area.*

*The value of our timber is well known. It provides vital habitat for woodland animals. It enhances outdoor recreation such as camping, picnicing, hunting, hiking, bird watching, snowmobiling and horseback riding. It provides cover to prevent wind and water erosion on steep slopes and can provide protection from siltation for certain streams and water impoundments. It provides dozens of forest products and many jobs for Iowans. Most people agree that Iowa forests provide something for everyone, but -- there are conflicting uses for this land.*

*(Continued Page 15)*

**M**OSQUITOE BITES, chiggers, ticks, poison ivy, mud and sweat stains served as a few of the battle scars on these young people as they admired the projects their crews had completed in cities, counties and state areas across the Hawkeye State. Who are they? They are the members of the Iowa Youth Conservation Corps or better known as the YCC. They built bridges, banded geese, painted latrines, planted trees and shrubs, controlled erosion, constructed shelters and trails and this is only a partial list of the myriad of projects that took place within the Iowa borders. My first exposure to the YCC program occurred when I was chairman of the Iowa Conservation Commission. Phil Smith, State Youth Coordinator for the Office of Planning and Programming, made a presentation to the ICC about the first year's activities of the Iowa YCC. After seeing the film of this fine summer program, it was "love at first sight". I visited with Phil after the meeting and asked him to appear with me on my TV show and tell the story of YCC. The show was such a success that I had kids from South Dakota and Nebraska inquire as

to how they could enroll in the program.

The Iowa Youth Conservation Corps is made up of boys and girls, ages 15-18, who have an interest in conservation related activities. They are hired for a period of seven to eight weeks for work projects on school, municipal, county and state lands. Don Criswell of the ICC serves as a liaison between that office and the Office of Planning and Programming. Criswell also serves on the YCC advisory council. The youths are paid for a 28-30 hour work week at the rate of \$2.30 per hour. The remainder of the 40 hours is spent in educational programs that stress environmental study. Soils, water quality, fish and game management, forestry and insects are some of the fields of study. Each enrollee also completes a basic first aid course. One aspect of YCC that gives the camps an additional outdoors living experience is called a "spike camp". The term "spike camp" means to "spike" out to a new adventure. Each of the camps went to a new environment where they worked at various projects. The two sites were at Pine Lake and Red Haw Lake State Parks. Here they camped out in tents

and worked on state lands.

The spike camp was under the direction of Jerry Dunn of Ames. Probably the highlight of the summer was the State Wide Camp which was held at the 4-H Camp near Luther. Most of the state's 15 camps attended or three days and two nights. Here the enrollees got to meet their counterparts from all over the state. They spent half days working on nearby state lands and half days on educational and recreational programs. The crews were made up of individuals from each of the various camps and new friendships developed. Crews competed in athletics and various outdoor skills such as scuba diving, rappelling, muzzle loading, fishing, obstacle course, nature lore and rapped with legislators and conservation officials. This statewide camp ended with skits and a dance.

Iowa YCC operated for two years with what is called the non-residential type camp. That is, the youths lived at home and reported to a central point each day with lunch. They then traveled to nearby worksites. In 1976 a new concept in Iowa YCC was adapted. This was our first try at a

# YCC... A Program for Youth, a Plan for the Future

by Les Licklider FORMER CONSERVATION COMMISSIONER

*Photos by Bill Horine*



residential camp. The YMCA camp at Boone was selected for this due to its ready access to nearby Conservation Commission lands at the Ledges, Big Creek, Brushy Creek, etc. Both the nonresidential and the residential (Genesis—as they called themselves) camps have been highly successful in their communities. Community leaders have acclaimed the work done by the YCC.

The camps are made up of a director and three or more crew leaders. These for the most part have been school teachers and college students. The success of the camp lays squarely on the shoulders of the director and his staff. A good portion of their job is to coordinate work projects, keep records, make out reports, repair tools and maintain enthusiasm. It takes a "special breed of cat" who can develop an "esprit de corps" and feeling of self worth in each of their enrollees. One of the unique facets of YCC is that the young people have a say in how the job is done. They survey the possibilities of various areas and decide as a group which way is the best to proceed. They inventory for needed manpower, equipment and materials. They learn to share responsibilities and work as a

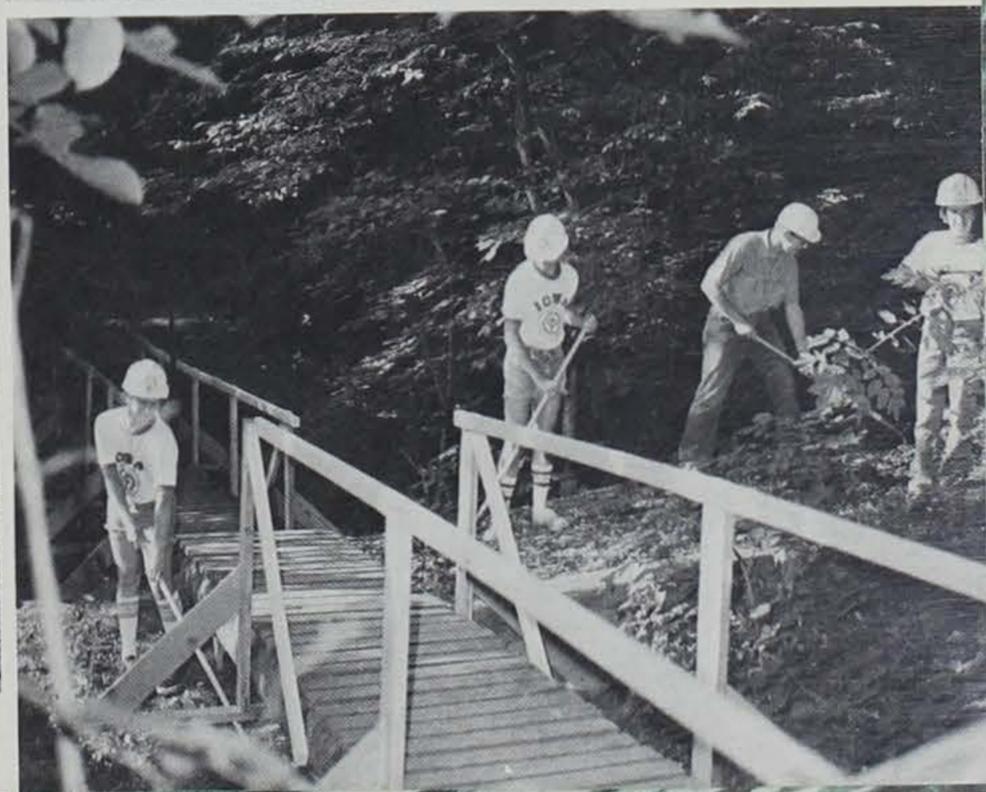
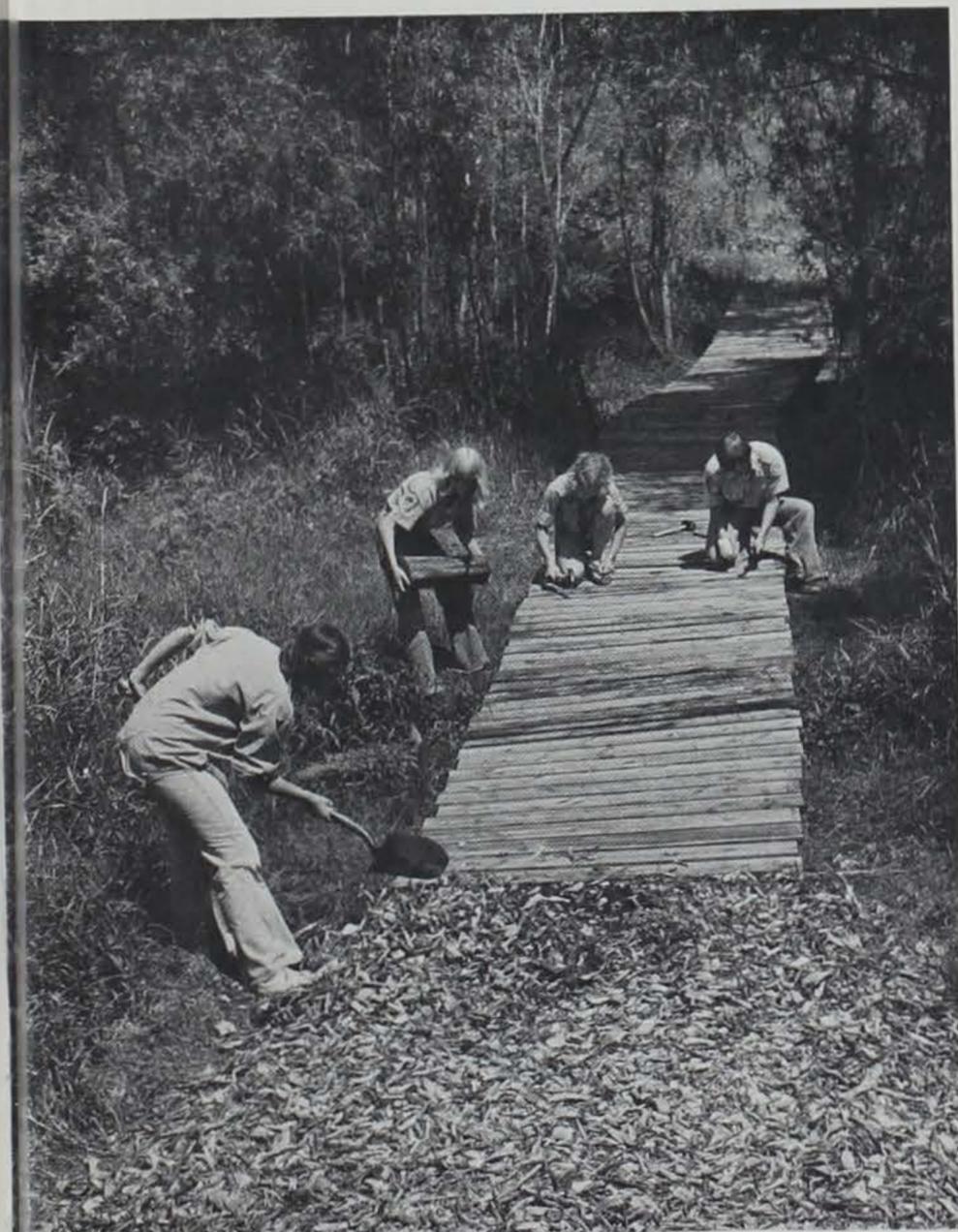
team and as a result find they all have individual skills and abilities that when shared, turn a task into one of enjoyment instead of boring drudgery.

The uniform worn by the YCC enrollee is a hardhat, blue jeans, chambray shirt, safety shoes and a shoulder patch. To most of the kids, it was a heck of an experience. They might not have ever used a shovel before or cleared a trail with a weed whip but they learned if work is meaningful or has its purpose explained to them, regardless of how tedious, it can be attacked and completed with enthusiasm. One County Conservation executive officer was amazed at the quality and quantity of work produced by one crew. Ninety nine pound girls worked right along side two hundred pound boys and carried more than their share of the load. The enrollee works for just one season and then a new group comes in the following year. Ideas were shared and teamwork carried them out—for many this was a first time experience. No one had ever asked their opinion before and suddenly it was valued. They felt needed and that someone cared.

These young people built bridges that not

only connected two banks of a stream or a gully together but bridged the cultural and social gaps of their communities. Trails that might have led to a hill top also led to a new understanding of ones self and other people. They not only carved camping and picnic areas out of brush and weeds but carved self esteem and confidence into their own character. I envision some day that some of our YCCers will be sitting on school boards, city councils, boards of supervisors, legislatures, governors office, congress and maybe—yes maybe the White House. I wonder then if conservation might not become the NO. 1 priority? Why are these kids so great? Because they are ours—they come from the land—Iowa's land.

Communities that had nonresidential camps were: Clarinda, Council Bluffs, Sioux City, LeMars, Iowa Lakes Area-Emmetsburg, Fort Dodge, Ames, Des Moines, Marshalltown, Ottumwa, Clayton County-Elkader, Waterloo, Davenport, Cedar Rapids, and Muscatine. Two federal camps were located at the Hoover National Library, West Branch and DeSoto Bend Wildlife Refuge, Missouri, Valley.



# Warden's diary

By Rex Emerson

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISOR

MY OLD FRIEND who lives down by the river said his wife's brother was so ugly when he was a kid his folks had to disguise him as a pork chop before the family dog would play with him. You can see he is a fun'ol boy to talk to. The old man had traded shotguns, so we took the gun and the hand trap out to shoot a few blue rocks. We walked along the edge of the timber where a few early blood-roots and spring beauties were blooming as the sun was warming the south slope of the forest floor. Spring was finally here. We stood on a high bank overlooking an open field and threw out some of the blue rocks to try out the not-so-new shotgun.

The old man said, *"I like to shoot blue rocks because you don't have to clean them and take them home to eat."*

We sat down on an old log. I watched some black ants working while the old man admired his shotgun. Then he came up with a mind-boggling question, *"How did the last hunting season go and what is the future of the sport of hunting?"*

My mind flashed back over the problems of the last hunting season. Without a doubt the biggest problem had been people hunting without permission. With the increase in population this problem was sure to come, and it did. It has resulted in more posted property and some farmers patrolling their property lines to keep people out. Some even think we should assign a game warden to work in their particular areas during the entire hunting season. This is impossible with only sixty officers for the entire state. When a landowner or tenant calls about trespassers, the conservation officer or sheriff's officer can find out who is on their place and the person in charge of the land can then file the charge in court. In past years most farmers were afraid to do this, fearing the trespasser might come back and burn the barn down. I have never heard of this actually happening, and I don't think it will. The penalty for trespassing is not nearly as severe as it is for arson. This past year more and more farmers did sign the complaint for prosecuting this violation. Most landowners want the officer to file the charge. Too many times the officer could get into trouble if he did this.

Often when the farmer finds out who was actually out there hunting, he says, *"Oh, that's all right, he is a neighbor,"* or *"He saw me in town last week and I told him he could hunt any time."*

I have also run across cases where the farmer wants the officer to go out in the field and arrest "those hunters", only to find out his wife had given them permission. In one case, the owner of the land who lived in town had given the permission. If the officer filed the charge for trespassing and it went to trial on a "not guilty" plea the whole case would hang on the farmer coming in to testify. I want the farmer to file the charge and then if he doesn't want to testify in court it doesn't leave me with egg on my face.

Hunters ask me questions, such as, *"If I shoot a pheasant from the road and it lands dead on private property, can I go get it?"*

The answer is, *"No, you cannot without permission."*

It is true that after you have killed the bird it is in your possession. One farmer told me that statement was not true, that anything that fell on his land was the property of the landowner.

I asked, *"What if it is a hen pheasant?"*

He said, *"Then it is the hunter's bird!"*

Some people think we should stop all nonresidents from hunting in Iowa. Actually, there are more Iowa people going to

other states to hunt than non-resident hunters coming to Iowa. If we passed a law like that, no doubt the other states would tell us to go back to Iowa to hunt. That just wouldn't work out too well.

One non-farmer landowner's solution to the problem would be to organize all the farmers to prevent anyone from hunting. If he could do this, what he would actually accomplish would be to force the good hunter to hang up his shotgun and quit hunting, but the so-called "slob" hunter would still be out there. This "slob" hunter doesn't ask permission anyway, so it would not discourage him one bit. Another solution that is always suggested is, *"We need a law—"*. We have more laws now than we know what to do with. Every time something happens, someone passes a new law. If one doesn't work, it isn't taken off the books, we just pass another one.

Periodically some new trespass law gets put in the law book. You wouldn't believe the number of trespass laws that we have. And now, some want a new one that requires written permission from the farmer to hunt on his place. Can you imagine the reaction you would get from a farmer out in his field trying to get the last load of beans combined when it looks like rain, if you asked him to write out a permit for each one in your hunting party? If the hunters had a signed permit, the officer checking them might not know if they were on the right place or not.

There are thousands of acres of public hunting land in Iowa that are called "road ditches". Some want to pass a law to prevent any hunting on the roads. We already have a law to prevent a person from carrying any loaded, and/or assembled gun in a vehicle on a public road. Also, one that prevents a rifle from being shot from or across a public road. If someone wants to hunt the road ditches with a shotgun, what is he hurting? The "slob" hunter would benefit from a ban on roadside ditch hunting. He's going to be out there anyway, and that would merely make more game accessible to him. He would think he had died and gone to heaven with all that game, just for him!

One southern state has a law that we don't have. It says you cannot hunt barefoot after you are eighteen years old. In Kentucky, it's against the law to shoot clay pigeons during the pigeon breeding season. We might as well pass those laws too.

What does the future hold for the sport of hunting? That is going to be entirely up to the hunter. There is certainly something lacking in the sport of shooting clay targets. It just doesn't take the place of hunting game. Whole books have been written about the biological necessity of hunting game. People are not like the ants that I had been sitting there watching. These ants work all the time. They get no days off and I imagine they have a short life. People need relaxation of some kind, or they too would have a short life span. Hunting and fishing are among the best forms of relaxation for the mind that I can think of. I know everyone doesn't agree with that. We have a lot of people who are anti-hunting and we are getting a lot of people who live on farms who are becoming anti-hunter. Why? Because of that "slob hunter" who won't ask permission to go on someone's property.

When I get a call concerning someone hunting without permission, I try to get the hunter and farmer together and get them talking to each other. Most of the time the farmer soon turns to me and says, *"He really isn't such a bad guy. I don't want to file charges against him."*

Do you get the picture? This problem would never have been a problem if the hunter had had the courtesy and common sense to stop and ask permission in the first place.

The hunter who likes the sport of hunting, and *only* the hunter, can save or destroy his sport. The fact that you have a license to hunt does not give you the privilege to go onto someone's land without permission. That farmer out there does not owe you anything. The "slob" hunter had better clean up his operation, and I mean *"like now"*. The good hunter had better help see that the "slob" is weeded out, or all will suffer the consequences.

On the way back to the house the old man didn't say a word. I said, *"You sure are quiet."*

He replied, *"Well, it's nigh on to supper time. After the answer I got from that one question, I didn't dare ask another one!"*

# CLASSROOM CORNER

by Robert Rye

ADMINISTRATOR, CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER



Photo by Ken Formanek

Rue Anemone.

BLOOD ROOT, Dutchman's breeches, liverwort, dog's tooth violet and rue anemone make a distinctive sounding list. Many will wonder "who you're calling what".

If you're in the forest, you're naming some of the flowers which are signaling the end of winter and the start of their spring beauty. The forest has a very short time to sport its spring color. Soon its green canopy will shade the forest floor.

One flower that catches the eye of students at the Education Center (as we study the out of doors in Springbrook State Park) is the rue anemone. The word anemone means "wind flower". We find a small delicate plant with a very slender stalk. It bears white with slightly pink or lavender, five parted, green centered flowers. The blossoms occur in three lobed-leaflets and the plant is usually 5 - 9 inches high. Early bees and bee-like flies do the job of cross-fertilizing these plants. The anemone blooms in the middle of March or a little later. It is found in great abundance in the fairly mature, open or light woods at Springbrook.

One group that uses the Center and unfortunately misses this flower is the Youth Leadership Program sponsored by the County Conservation Boards of Iowa. The four-day and three-night program will be into its third year this June. Its objective is to form a nucleus of interested and concerned young people who will promote and support conservation and the wise use of natural resources at the local county level. The program is aimed at 15, 16 and 17 year-olds and includes information about county government, park design, soil, water, forestry, law enforcement and wildlife. The students return to their respective counties and complete a project. Their projects might include working with the rue anemone or other wild flowers so that people in their county can enjoy their natural beauty.

If you are interested in this program, or know of someone who is, contact the County Conservation Board Executive Officer in your county. He will be more than happy to hear from you.

## LAND USE PLANNING

(Continued from Page 2)

An alternative proposal in many cases has been the creation of local autonomy; each of the state's counties administering their own plan. In Iowa that would mean 99 different plans. Do we want this? It seems to me, that's exactly where we are today prior to any land-use work at all.

We cannot construct a perfect environment and if we could, we would probably tire of it since we are imperfect beings. To quote Raymond Dasman, a noted ecologist and environmentalist, "I would not want to design a Utopia and then be forced to live in it; at the least, I would want access to other people's Utopias." Could we identify a Utopia if we saw it? Some people travel the world to see what is in their own back yard. It is vitally important we make a deliberate effort through *planning for progress* to maintain and create diversity with the wilderness and wild creatures, and the farmlands and varied urban centers that must coexist, feed and contain room for our diverse peoples.

NOTE: Director Fred Prewert has asked that his space be used for this guest editorial. Mr. Prewert will include further viewpoints on land-use planning in a coming issue.

## WOODLAND OWNER OF THE YEAR

(Continued from Page 11)

*Present economics dictate that other uses of this land will prevail. In the place of our forests we will have cropland, pasture, urban development, highways and power lines. How much of Iowa's remaining forest are you willing to sacrifice for other uses? Only you can be the judge of that.*

— Bruce Plum, District Forester



Photo by Ken Formanek

For those who wish to "clear," the bulldozer is a powerful tool. Shown below, the smoldering remains of lost wildlife cover.

Photo by Bruce Plum





*Jack Hahn's magnificent ring-necked pheasant carving.*