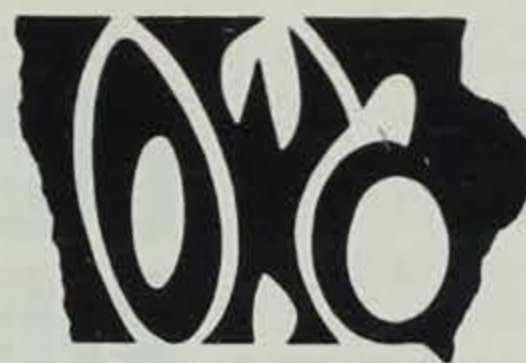


OCTOBER 1979



conservationist





(USPS268-780)

conservationist
MAGAZINE

Volume 38, No. 10 • October, 1979

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COVER: Detail from 1979 Iowa Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Design by Andrew Peters, R. 2, Box 201, Missouri Valley, IA 51555. Prints are available from the artist.

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Published monthly by the Iowa Conservation Commission, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319. Address all mail (subscriptions, change of address, Form 3579, manuscripts, mail items) to the above address. Subscription price: one year at \$2.00; two years at \$3.00; four years at \$5.00. Second class postage paid at Des Moines, Iowa and other points.

LACEY KEOSAUQUA STATE PARK

by Wayne Buzzard

PARK RANGER

TREE COVERED HILLS, limestone ledges, deep gorges and cliffs; this is beautiful Lacey-Keosauqua State Park located in Van Buren County in southeast Iowa and bordering the Des Moines River at the great horseshoe bend.

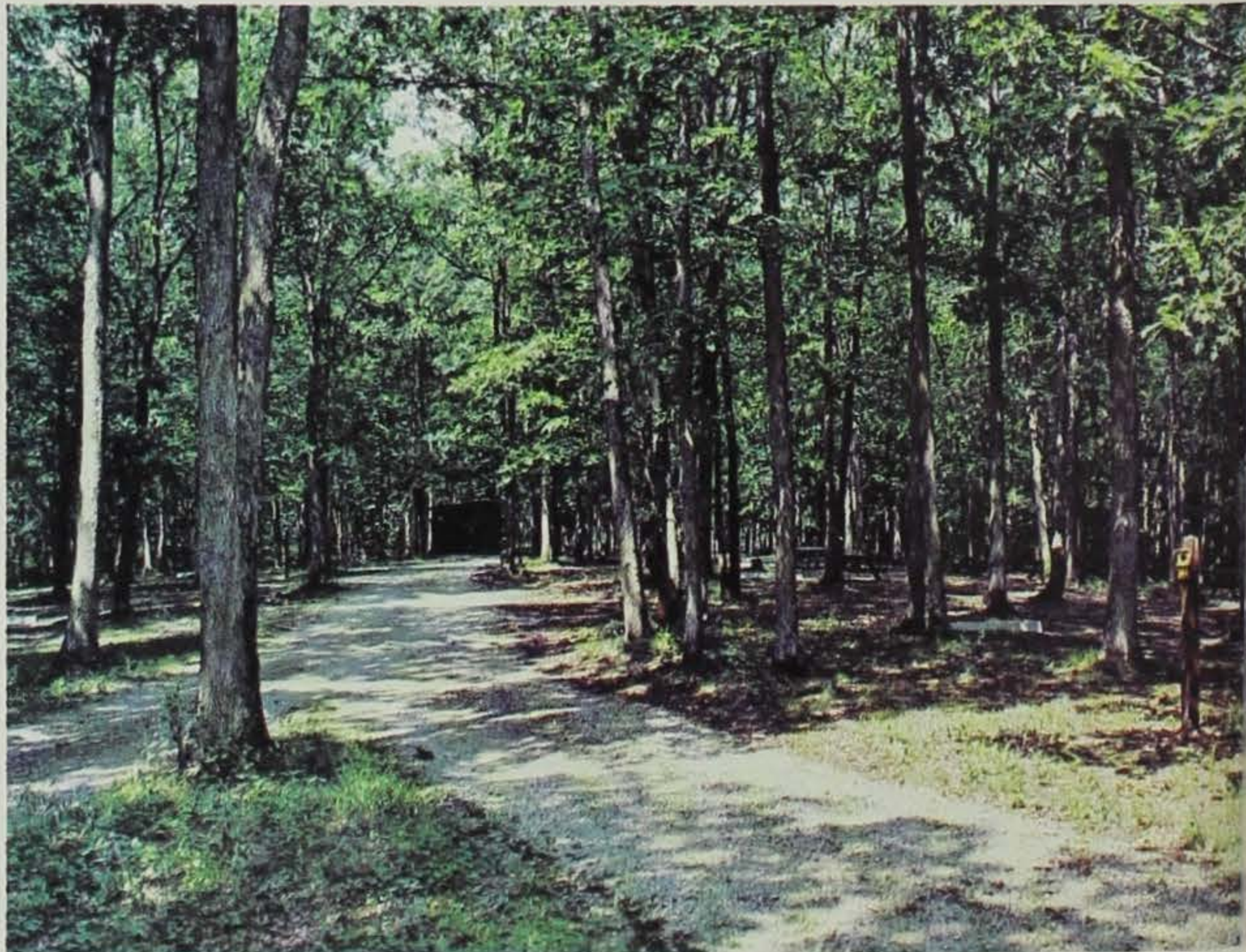
The Sac and Fox Indians roamed these hills as late as 1837. They came early in spring to the sugar groves and stayed through the summer and into early winter when they would move their families closer to the mighty Mississippi. When the Indians left for the winter they left part of themselves behind. Loved ones that had died were taken to the mounds and covered with leaves, dirt or snow. Rocks were carried up from the ravines and placed over the body along with more dirt,

then the sacred place was raised, bringing to the gently falling leaves 22 acres. The friendly grass which gradually covered the 1,653 acres hid the grave. Today the only evidence of their having been here are the mounds along the river (just down from the second shelter).

Edgar Harlan had a vision. In 1919 he came to Keosauqua to talk to a group of businessmen about that vision . . . a state park. He thought if the citizens of Keosauqua would present the state with 160 acres of land the state would add another 160. Each one was urged to buy an acre of land at \$40 an acre.

A committee went to Des Moines and presented the idea. There is a story about the acres to the state of Iowa. After officials had looked at the area over it was decided that the area should indeed be made into a park. More land was

Photo by Ron Johnson



place was used, bringing the total
 ing leave 22 acres. Today we
 rich grade 653 acres, making it
 day the the largest in the state.
 having normal opening and
 nds along the park
 wn from October 27, 1920. The
 is dedicated to
 had a vssman John Fletcher
 to e of Oskaloosa, Iowa.
 k to a gss to the area will want
 about the ure and visit Ely Ford
 e park. A clinic and some fishing
 zens of hope just to sit on the
 d present and watch the river as it
 res of is ently past. It is easy to
 add and of yesteryear when
 as urgen s forded the river
 and at Ste of the Mormons as
 ere moving west in
 vent to Dr of freedom to worship.
 ented the here is a sign there
 e of Iowa ing people of the
 d looked n's crossing.
 decided ou sit there on the river
 ed be m ou can hear the ring of
 e land wss the bee trees were

cut and the rumble of angry
 voices. The Honey War was
 about to begin. The Honey
 War was a dispute between
 Missouri and Iowa over the
 state boundary. Missouri
 claimed the boundary was



Photo by Ron Johnson

horseshoe bend just south
 of Ely Ford and so Missouri
 tax collectors were trying
 unsuccessfully to collect
 taxes from Iowans.

About this time some
 Missouri citizens cut three
 bee trees and the Iowa owner
 sought their arrest. Missouri
 was unhappy about the arrest,
 feeling the cutters were within
 their rights, and so they called
 in about 600 armed men. Iowa
 had about 300 armed men
 ready to fight. The Clark
 County (Missouri) Court took
 steps to prevent actual
 conflict. A committee met with
 the Iowa Territorial Legislature
 to determine where the
 boundary was. On December
 12 it was decided in favor of
 Iowa and so ended the
 bloodless Honey War.

According to the late W. W.
 McIntosh, who had many
 interesting and often amusing

stories of the area, the area
 where our present 30 acre
 lake is was once a pickle
 patch supplying cucumbers
 for the pickle factory in town.
 Today, instead of picking
 pickles, how about some
 fishing or swimming?

There are some lovely stone
 bridges in the park which,
 along with the lodge, shelter
 assistant's house. The steps to
 the beach (110 of them) were
 built by the CCC from
 limestone mined from the
 quarry in the park.

If you like to hike, the park
 has 15-20 miles of trails. The
 river trail is especially pretty
 in the spring and has an
 abundance of wild flowers
 from early spring when the
 first snow trillium bloom until
 the latter part of May.

Almost any evening you can
 take a drive through the park
 and see deer. Or if early
 morning is your time of day,
 take a slow drive through the
 park and you may see wild
 turkey feeding along the
 roadside, but look quickly
 before they slip silently into
 the timber. You may just want
 to sit by the campfire at night
 and listen to the whippoorwills.

If you like to visit historic
 places, be sure and visit
 Bentonsport just 6 miles away;
 and don't forget the Pearson
 House and Hotel Manning in
 Keosauqua.

If arts and crafts are among
 your interests, the Arts festival
 is held the last weekend in
 June. This is county wide with
 something going on all over
 the county. Sheep Empire
 Days is another time you won't
 want to miss. This is usually
 the second weekend of
 September, with a parade,
 entertainment and of course
 bar-b-qued mutton.

No matter what time of
 year you come to Lacey-
 Keosauqua you are sure to
 enjoy one of Iowa's most
 beautiful parks.

Photo by the Author



Past, Present and Future of IOWA'S INLAND RIVER DAMS

by Jeff Joens, OUTDOOR RESOURCE PLANNER

Iowa's inland rivers have been manipulated in many ways over the course of history, and probably no more frequently than through the use of dams. Currently, there are more than 200 dams on Iowa rivers ranging from small, rock structures to large masses of concrete with elaborate gating systems. They serve a variety of purposes including hydroelectric generation, water supply, recreation, erosion control and channel stabilization. Commonly they are referred to as low-head dams; meaning, they are less than 30 feet in height as measured between headwater and tailwater elevations.

Many of the low-head dams in Iowa were originally constructed to harness the energy of moving water for the production of power. However, this function has largely been abandoned in favor of more efficient coal and fuel-powered generating plants. As a result, many low-head dams are now used only for the indirect recreational benefits they provide.

Concern for their future as a water resource to once again be utilized prompted the legislature to ask the Iowa Conservation Commission to conduct a statewide assessment of low-head dams.

The statewide study was conducted to collect current information about all types of low-head dams around the state. This information included a complete inventory of low-head dams to determine current use, ownership, condition, and physical condition. Benefit and cost data was then collected on several individual dams across the state. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were developed to indicate how low-head dams might operate most effectively in the future. The report prepared from this study will be reviewed by the legislature this fall.

History

Historically, the development of low-head dams can be traced to the early settlement of the state and the advent of the milling industry. As pioneers began arriving in Iowa in the 1820's, settlement often centered around a millsite. A mill was a very important part of an early community, providing lumber for buildings and food in the form of flour and meal.

The first milldams in Iowa were crude structures, built primarily out of necessity without the engineering considerations they receive today. Most of these dams were constructed of brush, logs, stone, or a combination of these materials. Constructing dams with these materials was difficult and consequently smaller streams were preferred sites for the milling industry. This characteristic remains evident yet today. Concurrently, the majority of dams in Iowa are located on the smaller streams of northeast Iowa, just as they were back in the 1800's.

As the milling industry flourished, the building of mills and milldams was soon to become a matter of legislative concern. Iowa became a territory in 1838 and shortly thereafter laws were established governing milldam construction. In many cases, however, the mills and milldams had already been constructed making legislative approval of little concern to the present millowners. Therefore, in 1843, the authority to grant permission to build milldams was shifted to the counties where construction could be more readily monitored.

The milling industry reached its peak in the 1880's when it was estimated that over a thousand mills and milldams operated in the state. They included numerous flour and gristmills in addition to sawmills and woolen mills. In terms of economic growth, the milling industry was very important to Iowa's early settlement, producing millions of dollars' worth of goods annually.

The 1890's produced a gradual decline in the milling industry. Fires, floods, and ice jams were frequently destroying these structures to the point where it was becoming impractical to rebuild them. The failure of wheat, which had long supported the milling industry, was also a source of decline. Add to this the advent of new machinery and a new interest in grain crops such as corn, and one can see time had taken its toll on the old mill and mill dams.

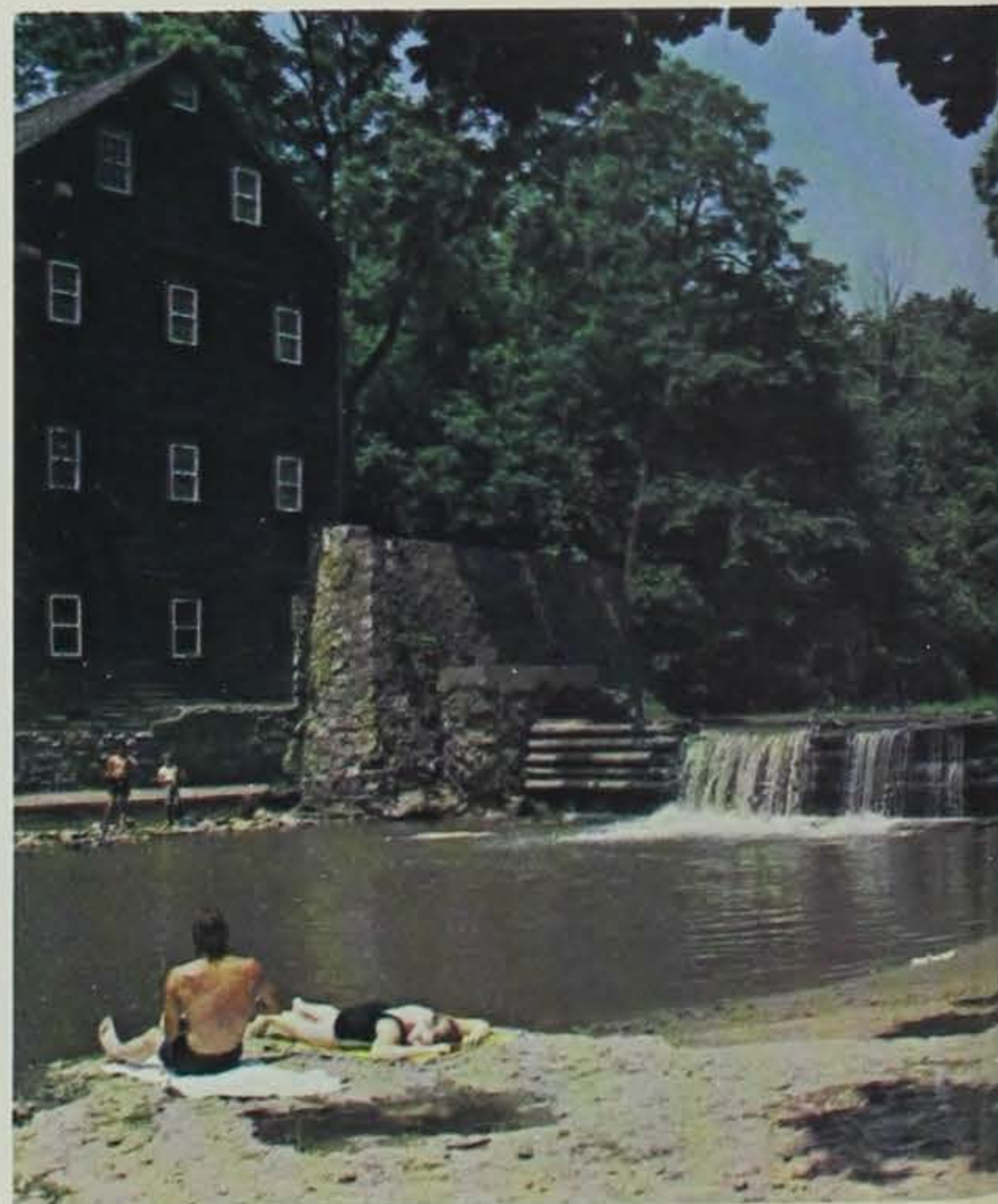
The milling industry remained in Iowa through the 1930's, but numbers of millsites had declined considerably. By 1940, only about 30 mills operated in the state and these were soon to disappear.

As Iowa's economy grew, the need for new and larger sources of power to replace the water-powered mill wheels became evident. The development of hydropower in Iowa in the early 1900's saw some of the old mills and millsites converted to generate hydroelectricity.

The use of hydropower was initially viewed as a very promising source of energy to be used long into the future. However, because of the nature of Iowa's streams it was never as effective as anticipated. The limiting factor was that Iowa's river flows are erratic ranging from devastating floods in the spring to a bare trickle of water during the dry season. Also, Iowa's topography is flat, making it very difficult to maintain a constant flow to turn the hydroelectric turbines.

As the demand for electricity increased rapidly, the amount which could be produced by hydropower grew smaller and smaller. By the 1920's many of the best hydropower sites in the state were already operating at capacity and further expansion was limited.

Dam at Wildcat Den



time wore on, the number of dams which utilized hydroelectric generation began to dwindle, taking the same course as the old mill. Coal-fired steam plants were constructed to take their place. Only 5 low-head dams generate electric power (Ottumwa, Keosauqua, Iowa Falls, Amana, and Maquoketa) in comparison to just 50 during the late 1920's.

After 1930, low-head dams were constructed for purposes other than the production of power. The Civilian Conservation Corps, the Progress Administration, and local conservation leagues were responsible for constructing many "beautification" dams. These were mostly rock-rubble structures built to improve the aesthetics of the river as well as providing fisheries habitat. Some low-head dams were constructed by local communities as diversion structures for water supply. Others were built as stabilization structures to control channel degradation and bank erosion.

Since the peak period of the 1880's, the number of low-head dams that have been abandoned has far surpassed the number which have been built. Many of the existing low-head dams are old and continue to deteriorate steadily. Others have almost totally washed away to the point where they are barely noticeable during periods of average or low flow.

Ownership of low-head dams has also changed over the years. Until 1920, the majority of low-head dams was privately-owned. As their commercial use became outdated and sites were abandoned, ownership and title often reverted to a public entity. Today, about 15 percent of Iowa's low-head dams are owned privately. States and counties now own the majority of low-head dams.

Recreational benefits are realized at many low-head dam sites. Fishing is popular particularly in the tailwater reaches of a low-head dam. This is largely due to the fact that the dam acts as a barrier to the downstream movement of fish. Additionally, the dam aerates the water flowing over it, and serves as an area of food suspension. Together, these characteristics make the tailwater region a congregation point for fish.

On the other hand, the impoundment above the dam provides a less desirable habitat for sport fisheries. This is primarily because silt and debris become trapped behind the dam destroying sport fisheries habitat throughout the entire length of the impounded stretch. The amount of silt which is trapped increases with the height and age of the dam. Therefore, from a fisheries standpoint, smaller dams are most desirable. Smaller dams more readily "drawn out" during floods, which act to "flush out" some of the silt trapped in the impoundment.

Looking into the future, low-head dams will continue to be needed and used. Many still serve as sources of water supply and erosion control. The possibility of once again generating hydroelectricity is also being considered as our country searches for new sources of energy. New turbines and generators have been developed to more efficiently utilize the flow of water. The possibility of modernizing some of the existing dams with this new machinery is currently being evaluated. From a historical standpoint, many county historical societies have undertaken efforts to restore and preserve some of the old millsites as recognition of our cultural heritage.

Looking back in time, some of you can probably recall the picturesque charm these structures once brought to the valleys of Iowa. Their value as reminders of our past should be preserved for future generations.

In years to come, the construction of new low-head dams in Iowa will depend on increasing their multipurpose functions. Low-head dams can be very expensive to construct, operate and maintain, particularly when large, concrete structures with gating systems are desired. These structures can only be justified from a cost standpoint if a combination of direct revenue-producing uses, such as water supply, hydroelectric generation, and erosion control, are considered.

The challenge of creating new uses or reviving old uses for low-head dams will require a great amount of careful thought. Recognizing their potential as a water resource of the future is a good beginning. □

Cott Street Dam in Des Moines



Dam at McGregor



Lower Dam at Fort Dodge





Back to back feather boats

DUCK BOATS

by Bill Aspelmeier

DISTRICT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SUPERVISOR

A SQUEAKY PUMP HANDLE sounded in the background. The smell of frying bacon filled the air as a big man with a red beard, standing before a cook stove, asked how everyone wanted their eggs. Not that you would get them as ordered. You get them as they are cooked, part by design and part by accident. At the other end of the room four guys were around a table, three of them urging the other to put down the girlie magazine and pay attention to the card game. Another man was grumbling about the palatability of the food, but doing it quietly so that he would not be heard and thus inherit the cooking chores for the next meal.

This scene might have taken place at a fishing camp or a hideout of some kind, but the setting was at one of the big duck blinds on the Mississippi River. This particular blind will accommodate 12 shooters and about a half dozen dogs (depending on the compatibility of the dogs) and not be even a little crowded. The blind is appropriately named the Ponderosa. The Ponderosa is equipped with a gas cooking range, gas heater, gas lights, food storage cabinet, sink with pump, two tables, one cot, a bunch of chairs and a modest library (modest in number of volumes, not in material).

Hunting waterfowl from a blind like the Ponderosa may not be your style, but they are not uncommon where permanent blinds are allowed. Neither is it unusual to hunt ducks while standing on a creek bank with nothing for shelter but the trunk of a tree. This illustrates the varied ways to hunt waterfowl, probably showing more variance than is used in hunting any other game species.

A popular way to hunt waterfowl on some of the larger marshes and reservoirs is from a "featherboat". These are generally a lightweight wood or metal frame covered with blind material, and mounted on a flat bottomed boat. Most of these outfits are propelled with outboard motors, from the smallest size up to the big jobs. Some of the featherboats at Lake Odessa, Coralville Reservoir and other large hunting areas are pushed with 200 horsepower motors. These high powered blinds are often referred to as "flyin' brushpiles". There is considerable variety in the way that these boats are equipped. Some have only sparse brush to hide behind. Others are elaborately covered and equipped with cooking facilities, sleeping bunks, gas heaters, chemical toilets and removable covers for the shooting ports. It often appears that they try to outdo each other, with more importance placed on the featherboat than on the duck hunt.

One relatively successful way of shooting waterfowl on our major rivers and large reservoirs is from a scull boat. It is a rare sport, and enjoyed by comparatively few, especially when one takes into consideration the number of people who hunt these birds and the various means they employ in their hunting methods. If there were such a thing as an average scull boat it would be 15 feet long, 36 inches at the beam, very low in profile and would accommodate two hunters. The scull boat is propelled by a single oar that extends through the boat's transom. A man proficient in sculling can drive his boat forward at a steady pace with very little or no rocking motion. Some scull boats are equipped with small outboards to use when travelling to and from the hunting spot. The bow and sides of the scull boat are designed so that the waves lapping against the hull make no sound. A very low blind is constructed across the bow so that when the occupants crouch low they are concealed from view of birds resting on the water.

Scull boat hunting is usually done by one of two different methods. One way is to put out a large stool of decoys and make up a lookout point some distance away. When the decoy spread has attracted birds in numbers that suit the hunter, a scull is attempted. The other common method is to scout the river by motorboat while towing your scull boat. When a raft of birds is sighted, then change to the scull boat and make your sneak.

The hunter in the front of the scull boat takes any position that will allow him to face the front, stay low and be ready to shoot. The hunter in the rear usually lays on his left side facing the front. This allows him to work the sculling oar with his right hand and also be able to get into a shooting position with little difficulty.

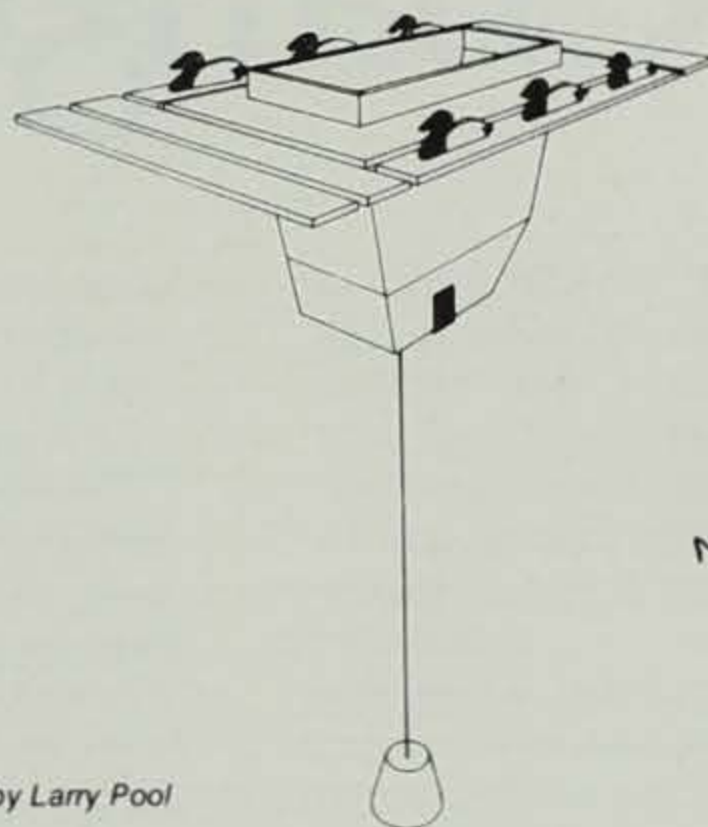
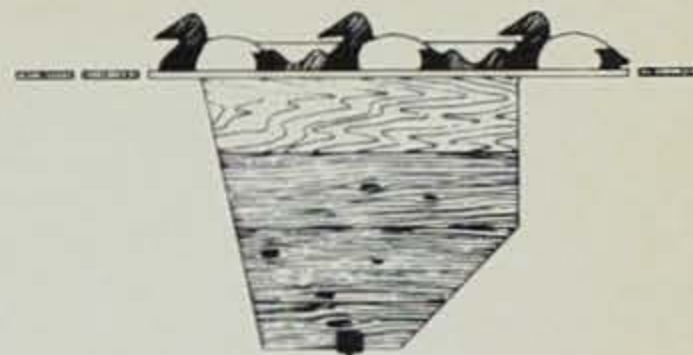
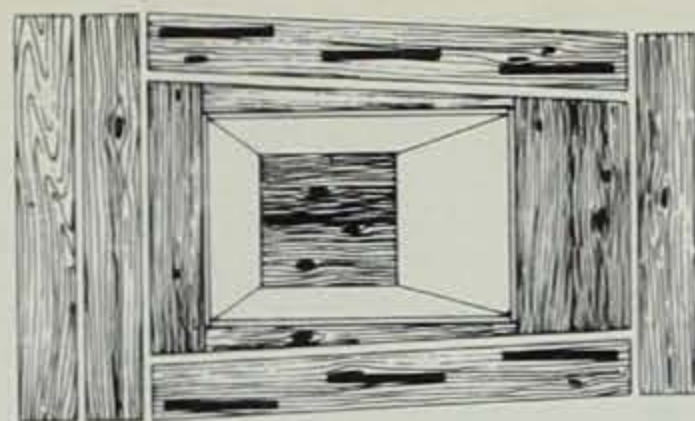
Like any other duck boat or blind you can use your imagination when camouflaging a scull boat. I have heard accounts of hunters arranging cakes of ice on the bow of a scull boat and being able to actually float right through a large raft of ducks that were resting on the river where the floating ice was present.

The term "layout boat" applies to a variety of regional boats, usually small, low lying and with narrow cockpits in which the gunner lies on his back until time to shoot. The boat is usually decked over front, rear and sides with coaming around the cockpit to protect the hunter from wave slop. The layout boat is basically a one man outfit. Two man boats are sometimes built, but the mere increase in size tends to defeat the purpose for which they are designed, which is to be nearly invisible when anchored in the middle of a large spread of decoys.

True layout boats are essentially used in the large bays along the east coast or on the Great Lakes. When used on big water, the layout boat is anchored, bow to the wind, with the gunner lying with his head upwind so that he sees the ducks coming into his decoys. If wind or current make it necessary, a stern anchor is also set. In large open water sets the layout boat is generally used to hunt divers, and has no camouflage, relying for concealment on its low freeboard and on being painted in the color which most nearly matches the water where it is anchored.

The grassboat, often a layout boat with grass added to the decks and along the rails as camouflage, is used in much the same way, the chief difference being that the grass boat is customarily used in marsh areas.

Some say that layout boats became prominent after the battery, or sink box as it was called in some localities, was outlawed more than fifty years ago. The battery was basically a box in which one or two hunters reclined below water level. Canvas wings attached to the sides of the battery helped break up the waves, and a coaming around the top kept out the slop. These contraptions were anchored right in the middle of large decoy spreads. Cast iron weights



BATTERY OR
SINK BOX —
NOW ILLEGAL

Drawing by Larry Pool

were placed in the battery to adjust the freeboard to an absolute minimum. Diving ducks were extremely vulnerable to this type of hunting, and it was considered to be one of the deadliest devices used by market hunters. Skillful guides or hunters used to rig decoys around a battery to swing ducks right or left, depending on which way the gunner preferred to shoot. This practice is sometimes followed with layout boats today.

I have covered a few of the types of craft used for duck hunting. Ducks have probably been hunted from nearly anything that will float. The featherboat, floating blind, scull boat, Great Lakes layout boat, Bornegat Bay sneak box, the grass boat of the northern lakes, the pirogue of Louisiana and the nondescript boat of any old pond — all serve the same purpose — to hunt ducks. Each fits a particular habitat but would not do well in a setting to which it is not adapted. □

Shallow marsh "pumpkin seed" boats



Photo by Richard Bishop

Changes of Autumn

AUTUMN ON THE MARSH brings to an end the raucous call of the frog as the long summer is over. October could well be the month the Good Lord created for the lazy person. It is a time to look back on the toils and activity of summer and a time to look forward to the crisp freshness of fall's approach.

Early autumn brings the task of preparing for the not-too-distant harshness of winter. Those that enjoy and appreciate autumn anxiously look forward to the first skeins of geese from the northland as they migrate to the warmer southern climates. The autumn

moon seems to be larger and brighter than at any other time of the year. It has a warmth to it as it bathes the forest and fields on a cool crisp night.

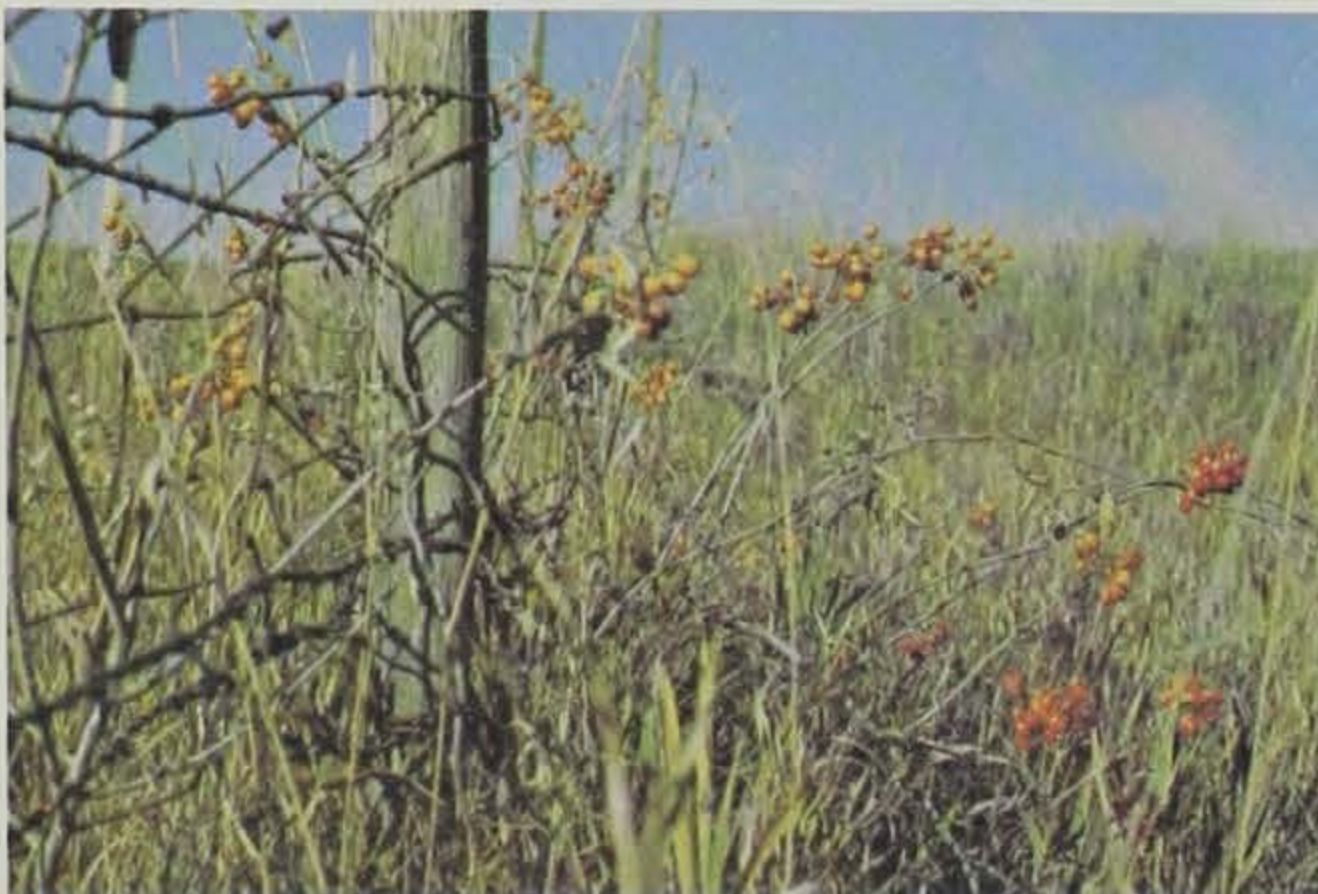
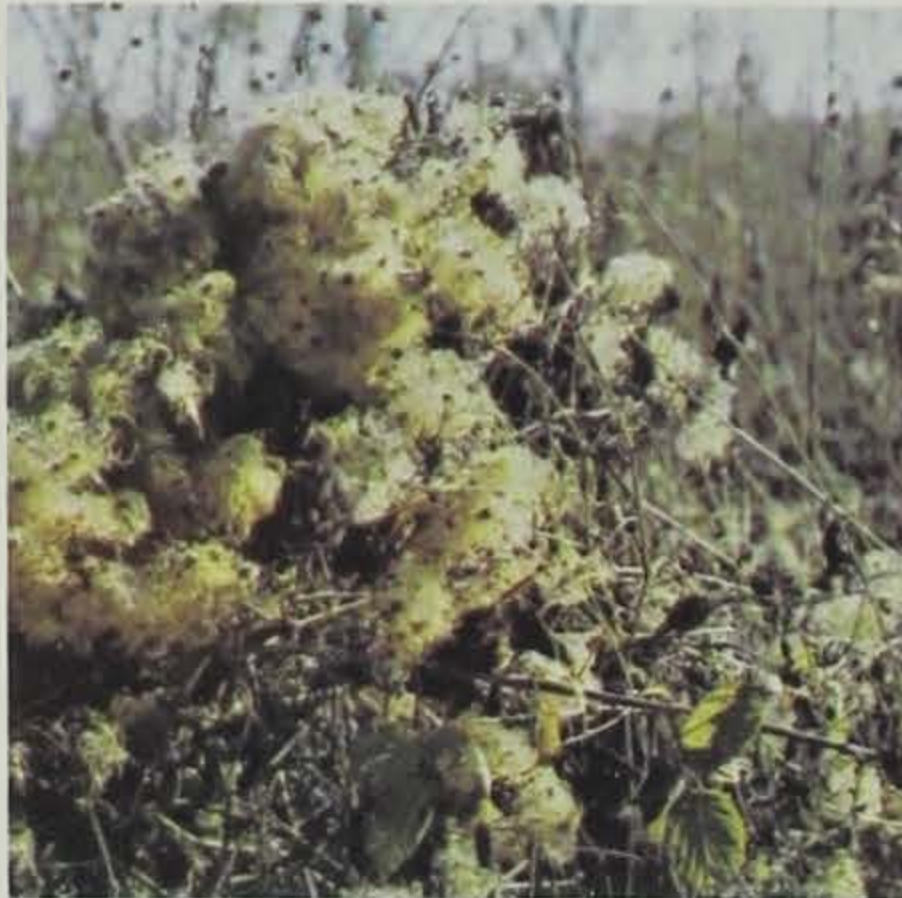
Autumn is a time of harvest for all. The farmer harvests his abundant crops of golden grain, and wildlife harvests food to be stored away for the bleakness of winter. Autumn is also a time of harvest for the hunter, as he reaps the enjoyment of acquiring wild game for the table.

Autumn is the sound of the woodcutter, cutting and splitting wood for the approaching winter. The first tantalizing

smell of a wood fire on a crisp fall night is enjoyable. Setting in front of a wood stove, hearing the crackling of the logs, and the warmth of the fire warms the body and allows one to relax and contemplate the days ahead.

Autumn begins with the weather pleasantly warm and advances to the stage where the leaves are seared by Jack Frost. The paths of autumn lead to a variety of pleasures. The lakes and rivers take on a sparkling clarity as the waters cool and algae growth ceases. For the fisherman it means walleye and perch fishing time. The hunter's path leads to the marshes, forest, bird covers, and deer stands.

Seeds of milkweed, bittersweet and other plants are food for many animals as well as the "crop" for next year.



by Bob Mullen

STATE CONSERVATION OFFICER

sp fall. Autumn is a time to go softly through the
a wood hearing the rustle of a fox squirrel in
ne to re- es, seeing where a buck whitetail deer
s bobbed the velvet from his antlers on a
ther plun sapling, and watching a red-tailed
age whw effortlessly soaring in the sky above as
ost. The hes for a field mouse on which to dine.
riety of d p fall means an extra abundance of
sparkl us ooms for the fall mushroom hunter.
algae do to the enjoyment of harvesting
means us ooms, one can enjoy the beauty of the
e hunter re and fields painted with the changing
bird cover of autumn.

My look at autumn as a time when the
re prepares for its sleep over the winter,

and a time when plant and animal life stores
food for the coming weather. But autumn is
much more than a time of preparation, it's a
time to enjoy the spectacle of the changing
season. The placid green of plant life takes on
a completely new dimension in autumn.
Grasses and weeds take on a brilliant splendor
which goes unnoticed by many. Examples of
these are the delicate beauty of the milkweed
as the pods burst open, the seed plumes wav-
ing in the cool breezes of autumn, and the
long stemmed grasses waving their ripe seed
heads in the breeze. These seeds hang on until
reluctantly wrenched free by the tug of the

crisp autumn winds. The seeds of many of the
weeds offer tantalizing treats for birds and
many of the smaller mammals. Some of the
seeds will nestle among the leaves and dead
vegetation. With correct soil, moisture, and
temperature conditions the seed will sprout in
the spring and perpetuate its numbers for
another year.

Autumn has a harshness, but also exhibits
a gentle softness in the changing plant life.
Autumn is a time when sounds and sights take
on a special meaning and our senses can be-
come more acute and aware of the natural
splendor of the changing of the seasons. □

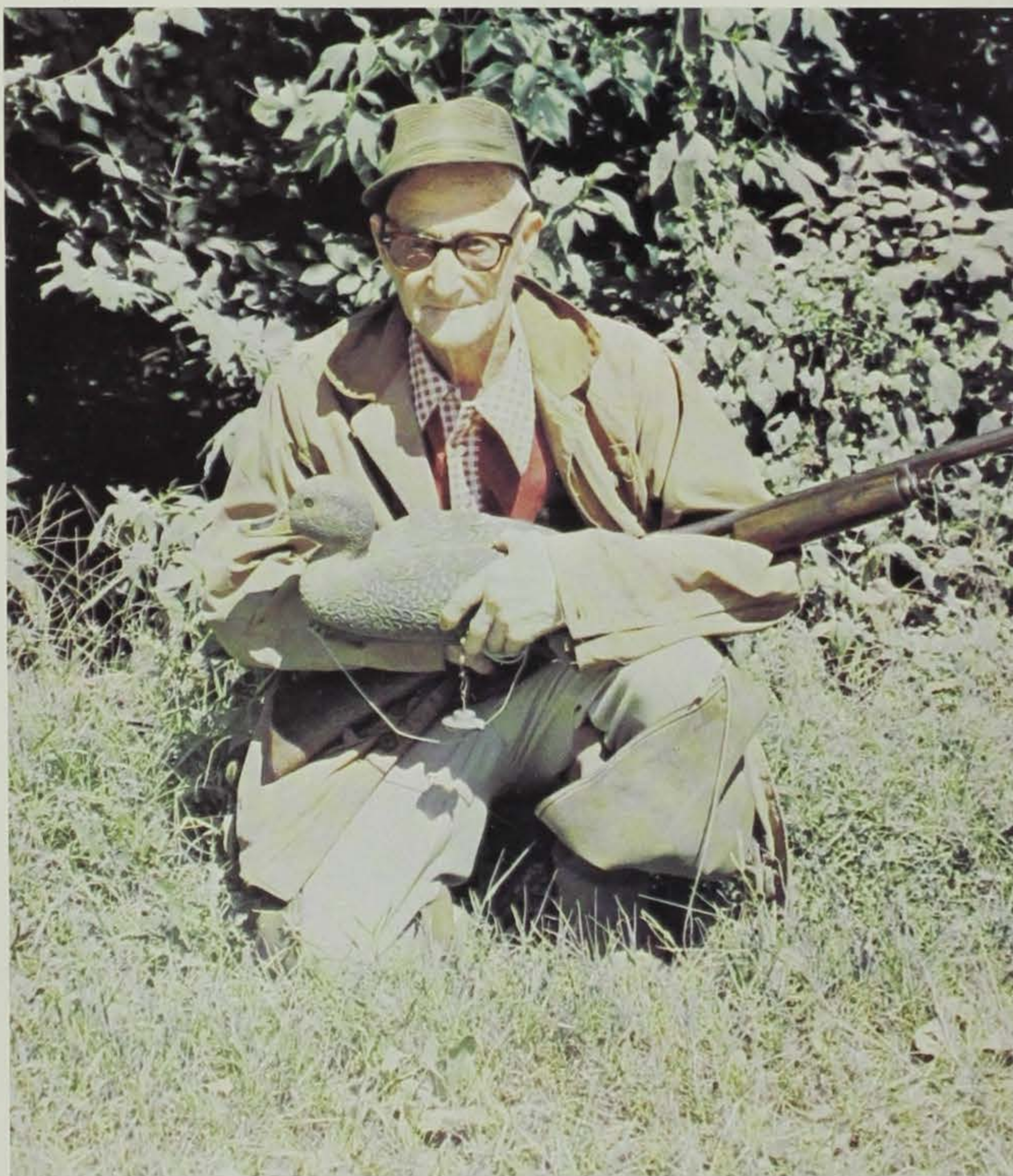


One of the remaining few: MARKET HUNTER

by Wendell Simonson
Conservation Officer

Photos by the author

Carl Bower



"I came to Camanche in 1909 — and I headed for the Mississippi River! Never had seen the big river before. First thing I saw was the log rafts coming down the river. Went to school for a couple of years, quit, and got lined up with an old market hunter, Lute Howard, he's dead now — he taught me how to hunt and fish."

So began the interview with 80 year old Carl Bower of Camanche, Iowa — one of the few remaining hardy breed of men who made their living around the very early 1900's by

hunting and fishing — market hunting.

Conservation Officer Mick Anderson and I stopped at Bower's residence, a little trailer home parked perilously close to the railroad tracks in Camanche. This was a man's castle — no feminine touch here! The old gentleman was easy to visit with. When introductions and small talk were over I told him I thought a lot of people would like to hear his story — and I asked if I could write it. He was surprised that anyone would want to hear the ramblings of an old timer, but he agreed to the interview. The tape recorder was running, and with a little urging, the memories began to brighten . . .

"First gun I owned was a Baker, damascus barrels, cost ten dollars. Black powder shell for that shotgun cost forty-five cents a box; Winchester Repeater cost sixty cents; the Leader grade seventy cents (three and one-half drams of powder.)"

"Lute Howard had built his scull boat back before 1900. He was a big man, his dad had been a market hunter, too. Used to go with him to shoot ducks — was getting twenty cents apiece for bluebills, thirty cents apiece for mallards. Sold some in Clinton and Davenport, also sold some at the fish markets who sent them to Chicago by rail. I didn't have clean them, sold them to these markets by the barrel. Used to hunt in the spring and fall."

"Did most of my hunting on Iowa side; however, did lots of hunting in the Dosie." (Mereu Bottoms, a huge wilderness situated along the Mississippi on the Illinois side, where Carl used sink box and iron decoys to bring the sink box down low on the water). "Back in them days there was only about three groups hunting out of Camanche — Platt boys (Bill and Walter), Clyde "Brownie" Hugunin and his gang; and Lute Howard and me."

g — the old man pulled a home
 plaque out of a nearby
 officer M... on which he had
 topped... a total of 56 bands
 a little... ducks and geese that he
 d peril... taken over the years. He
 id track... kept track of the expenses:
 as a ma... one dollars for duck
 ine tou... ps; one hundred and
 tleman... ty dollars for hunting
 When... ses; and four hundred and
 small... dollars for fines for
 im I th... ating the hunting laws! He
 ould lik... y commented that he
 and I as... ably should have been
 He was... ht one more time — make
 one wo... even five hundred dollars!
 ramblin... We killed to make a living,
 he agre... te it — or sold it to someone
 e tape... o eat — it wasn't wasted.
 ing, and... Used to hunt with live decoys
 ne memo... est on the Mississippi River.
 a ... d attach about 15 or so hens
 ned was... rivels out in the water, and
 arrels, ... we'd see a flock of mallards
 powder... ng we'd toss out the drake
 t forty-f... rs". I had one female flier —
 Repeater... I tossed her out, she'd guide
 Leader... wild flock right in towards
 and one... blind.
 here's lots more geese now than
 was back in the old days.
 thing that helped goose
 ing around here was when
 built the locks and dams
 formed the large pools above
 dams."
 then brought up the
 ect of using scull boats to
 t ducks. A scull boat is a
 , pointed-bow boat with a
 ded shield built up on the
 t deck to crouch behind
 small slots to look through
 eep track of the rafted
 ks or geese. One long oar is
 l, it sticks out of the back
 he boat through a hole in
 transom. This one oar is
 d in a twisting, figure-eight
 ner to slowly propel the
 towards the unsuspecting
 ks. When they were in
 ge the hunter fired. Only
 man would shoot, the man
 ling would not shoot —
 ply a matter of hunter
 ty. Some were designed in
 r years, however, in which
 hunters could shoot.

Carl had stored his old scull boat in the hangar of an aircraft pilot friend, Reynold Harsen of Camanche. We told Carl that the pilot had brought his scull boat along with him, towed behind his pickup, and would he consider going over to the Mississippi river and give us a demonstration for photographic purposes? Within less than a minute he had grabbed a cap, an old hunting coat, one decoy, and "My pump shotgun — she's better than 50 years old — it goes along too!" While Reynold and Mick were taking the old boat off the trailer and slipping it into the water, Carl told me something of scull boats. "Had several scull boats — used to get them built for thirty dollars — Milt Lamb built them — they

were good boats. Scull boats showed up around Lyons near here in the late 1800's."

I think all of us were a little astonished at the speed with which this 80 year old man stepped into the boat and shoved off. I was glad that he took Reynold along in the boat — the old man might have started right on down the Mississippi — he had a lot of memories to catch up with. He put the scull boat through all sorts of maneuvers for us. "Take all the pictures you want," he said — "I got lots of time."

After the pictures were taken, and the boat loaded, we sat on the bank of the Mississippi River and listened to him reminisce. "During the First World War I used to do a

lot of clamming with the crow-foot bars — used to send tons of clam shell down to Muscatine till the clamming industry folded. They're starting to do a little clamming again, but it'll never be like it was."

We talked of the dangers of the Mississippi — the tragic Armistice Day storm of 1940 when so many duck hunters and commercial fishermen lost their lives. We discussed the coming of the conservation laws, and the desperate need for them. Carl is a supporter of these conservation measures, and on several occasions has discussed lead poisoning problems with Frank Belrose, an Illinois biologist.

When I look at Carl's gnarled hands, I can see him hunched down in an icy-cold, wet sink-box, waiting for the flock to settle in a little closer. I can almost hear him knocking the ice from the old wooden decoys before tossing them into the boat and heading across the windy, already darkened river towards shore. I can feel a blistering hot summer when he would scoop clams into boiling tanks of water to cook the meat out of the shell. And then I find it hard to blame some of the old market hunters for the havoc they raised with the huge duck flights. When I think of the marshes that have been drained, the streams straightened, the silt and insidious chemicals we're letting sift into our streams and reservoirs — I then find myself wondering who is causing the most havoc with our waterfowl, fish, and game!

I hope Carl will permit me to spend a few winter evenings at home and pore over the voluminous notebooks of records that he has kept these many years. He is one of the very few remaining market hunters and scull boaters. Letting me tell his story has been a privilege.

Bower still sculls with the best



Fishing Clubs: friends to Iowa's anglers

by Tom Putnam
FISHERIES BIOLOGIST

The Hampton Fish & Game Club, the Mid-Iowa Bassmasters and the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association. What do these groups have in common? They are a few of the more than 30 clubs located throughout the state whose primary interest, in one fashion or another, is the avid pursuit of the angling sport.

With the ever-growing emphasis on outdoor oriented recreation, the fishing club has recently become a popular item. Although the majority of these clubs prefer to limit their size to facilitate tournament accommodations, several have nevertheless reached a membership of 100 anglers or more.

The majority of these clubs are largemouth bass oriented. At least one monthly club tournament is scheduled, during the open water months, to pursue this elusive predator. Elaborate bass boats as well as location and angling equipment are often employed in an attempt to increase success rates during these tournaments. Strict tournament rules must be adhered to, however, and points are deducted for an infraction of these rules from the total points awarded each angler. Regulations include the use of live wells to keep the fish in healthy condition and adherence to the club's minimum size limit or that limit set by the Conservation Commission on a particular lake. Another rule deducts points for dead fish brought to the final weigh-in or for live fish not released after the weigh-in, thus assuring the safe return to the lake of most bass caught during each tournament.

Several other fishing clubs cater to a wider spectrum of angling interests. Their monthly outings are targeted toward whatever species can best be caught during that particular month. Although they may hold several contests each year, these clubs are not usually as tournament oriented. This diversity frequently allows for a larger membership.

Most clubs also hold one or two meetings each month where members, through programs, films and "shop talk", expand their knowledge of fish habits, haunts and angling techniques.

In the past few years, there has been a growing concern within many of these organizations to become more actively involved in fish management and other public service projects. One of the most widely used management techniques has been the construction and placement of habitat improvement structures in man-made lakes. These are designed to utilize the manpower available in the club to complete a project that can be of further benefit to all using the area. The lake beds of many of our impoundments do not provide sufficient habitat to concentrate fish in areas where they can be readily caught by anglers. So, even though there may be abundant numbers of fish in the lake, as is usually the case with panfish such as bluegill and crappie, they may often be difficult to locate. Providing habitat artificially offers an attractive area to fish and allows the angler to more fully utilize the fishery.

The types of materials used for habitat construction are limited only by the imagination. For example, one of the larger projects took place several years ago when the Mid-Iowa Bassmasters, Des Moines, placed 1400 discarded car tires in Lake Ahquabi. About 150 units, each unit made of 3 tires wired together to form a triangle, were sunk at 3 locations and marked with "Fish Reef" bouys.

Several other clubs throughout the state have also utilized tires as habitat material due to their seemingly endless supply and the eagerness of retailers to part with them. Some of the lakes receiving these structures include Lake Macbride, Pleasant Creek, Easter Lake, Saylorville Reservoir, Prairie Rose Lake, and Viking Lake.

Another readily available material, discarded Christmas trees, has been used by several clubs to develop prime fish habitat in lakes. The Nishna Valley Bassmasters, for example, have constructed Christmas tree reefs at Viking Lake during 1976-77 and these are being utilized by many anglers with good success, especially for bluegill.



*Mid-Iowa Bassmasters at tire reef construction
Hawkeye Fly Fishing Assoc. at work in stream*



Photos by the author

The Mid-Iowa Lakes Fishing Club will tap still another source of material by utilizing natural fieldstone in a 3-year project that will begin this summer. The fieldstone will be collected in the vicinity of Big Creek Lake and used to build several "lingering" sites for walleyes and largemouth bass on small knolls, points and flat unstructured areas on the lake bed.

This club is one of several that also hold an annual "clean up day" along the shoreline of a lake in their locality.

Fish habitat enhancement has not been limited to lakes, however. The Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association, for instance, scheduled two work days last summer specifically for trout stream improvement projects. Three rock gabions were installed on Buck Creek and six slab trout hides were placed on North Cedar Creek, both located in Clayton County. Additional work days are also planned for this summer.

Although the focus of attention has mainly been on habitat structures, other projects have also been carried out to promote the angling sport. The Hampton Fish and Game Club, for example, initiated a project last summer to cage-rear channel catfish for stocking in streams and creeks throughout the Hampton vicinity. Approximately 600, 8-inch fish were released in September. This club also purchased and reared 400 fingerling smallmouth bass in a state rearing pond at Beeds Lake for a similar fall stream stocking. Plans are being formulated to expand this program next summer. All stocking programs were, of course, coordinated through local fisheries biologists.

The Des Moines Bass Club initiated a project last year to tag largemouth bass during tournaments at Big Creek Lake and Saylorville Reservoir. Data derived from tag returns will be utilized to determine bass population estimates for future management recommendations at both lakes.

Assisting Iowa State University graduate students with fisheries research projects has been the task of the "Iowa Great Lakes" Fishing Club. A recording depth sounder was purchased by the club for use during the ongoing research on West Okoboji Lake. This club has also purchased, installed and provided service for security lights at several boat launching sites.

Through still another program, members of bass clubs throughout the state will be contributing to a major effort to evaluate present bass populations in many Iowa lakes. Through a diary system, information will be collected from bass caught especially during fishing tournaments. Data recorded will include the lake fished, length of time fished, lengths and weights of all bass caught, tag numbers if applicable and the types of lures used. These diaries will then be forwarded to the fisheries section for compilation on a statewide basis.

These are a few of the many projects that have been completed or planned for coming years. Past projects have been beneficial not only to club members but have been responsible for putting more fish on

the stringers of many anglers throughout the state. So the next time you see a fisherman with a club patch on his jacket, remember this, he is not only apt to be an avid sportsman but a friend to Iowa anglers as well. □

Des Moines Bass Club at Big Creek Tourney



Warden's Diary

by Rex Emerson

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISOR

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST to go duck hunting? While checking out hunters on a state owned marsh I came across a man and his two sons hunting from a boat with a blind built on it. The dad and the sixteen year old son had the required hunting licenses, waterfowl stamps signed in their names, properly signed and signed. The young man in the front of the boat was not sixteen years old so he didn't need a license or any of the stamps as he was with a licensed adult. He is entitled to take his license the same as the licensed adults are. I soon learned that he was fourteen and he was smiling ear to ear as he proudly showed me his hunting license and stamps.

Heating a statement that I heard from some of the other hunters during the day I said "This duck hunting is getting very expensive."

When this the dad asked if I would pull my boat around behind them out of sight and get their boat for a little while. It was sort of a quiet Sunday afternoon so I agreed to join them for a short time.

It was quite comfortable in their blind. They had a little propane stove and I was given a choice of coffee or hot chocolate. When they were out there on early mornings bacon and eggs were cooked, and at noon some soup was heated for lunch.

The big brown dog that I sat down beside was almost too friendly. He had the wettest tongue I ever had sloshed across my face. His name was "Dog" — not very original, but that was his name.

The boys' dad had taken his license and stamps out of his billfold and was still holding them in his hand as he said, "I thought about the cost of hunting ducks when the price of licenses went up. Now look at this hunting license. It cost \$6.00 plus a twenty-five cent writing fee. It goes to pay for all kinds of conservation. It, along with the tax on our guns and ammunition, paid for this marsh area where we are hunting. Without that money this would probably be a cornfield. Why, it is even paying your salary and for your equipment to make sure we will continue to have wildlife in future years." I certainly agreed with him on that point.

He continued by holding up his three dollar habitat stamp and

said, "I checked into this new habitat stamp, and that money must be used for wildlife habitat. It can be used with matching federal funds to buy land for wildlife, and if it is used to buy land that land will not be taken off the tax rolls. The taxes will be paid from this same fund. Any land purchased will be from willing sellers. It will all be used right here in the state of Iowa. County Conservation Boards can use some of it for wildlife habitat plantings on their areas too." Well, there sure wasn't any argument there.

Next he held up his state waterfowl stamp and said, "The five dollars we paid for that goes strictly for waterfowl habitat. Some of it has been used in Canada to create nesting marshes for ducks and geese."

I said, "Yes, I know," and Dog washed my ear with his wet tongue.

Next was his federal waterfowl stamp and he said, "This federal stamp went up to seven dollars and fifty cents this year. It means more money available to improve our duck hunting. It goes for waterfowl management, and not very far from here is a federal refuge for ducks and geese."

Dog tasted my coffee. I was about through with it anyway.

The duck hunting father continued. "That adds up to \$21.50 for licenses and stamps for each one of us. The youngster there wouldn't need any of them, but he wants to buy a 'piece of the flock'. He will have a nice collec-

tion of licenses and stamps when he gets old. Each year we plan on at least four duck hunting trips. That would make it only \$5.38 per trip for each of us."

"We don't figure our other expenses. The boat is also used in the summer to do some fishing. The blind on it is made from branches of trees that we trimmed in our yard, plus some scrap metal. The decoys are some we have had for years, so I don't know the cost of them. And we don't count Dog in on any expense because he's around all year anyway. Today, so far, we have two nice drake mallards. They will make a feast fit for a king."

His next statement will really make you think the next time you wonder if duck hunting costs too much.

He said, "The greatest thing about hunting out here on the marsh is that I can be with my boys doing something we really like to do. They are learning firsthand about nature. They see the sun come up, the leaves turning in the fall and muskrats storing food for the winter. And they are learning that everything in nature has a purpose and one thing depends on another. I feel I really know my boys and they know me. How do you put a value on that?"

As I stood up to leave I shook his hand, and Dog decided to wet down my leg. Isn't it too bad there aren't more dads like that one, and fewer dogs like Dog?



by Jerry Hoilien

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISOR

It's one a.m. and the driver is headed home along the river road where deer signs mark the next 2 miles. He isn't watching the roadsides when suddenly a deer appears in front of the headlights, the deer is killed instantly and the car loses a head light and its grillwork. *Darn the luck!!*

This scene is repeated hundreds of times each year on Iowa's roadways. Can it be avoided? In the past score of years with the Commission as a Conservation Officer, I've talked with literally hundreds of individuals who have accidentally hit deer with their vehicles. To be sure, not all of these could have been avoided, but . . . there are certain things you can do to avoid this happening.

First, what happens to bring deer and cars together? Deer certainly are not trying to commit suicide. Deer move basically at night, dusk and dawn seem to be their favorite times to feed, their eyes are designed by nature for that very purpose. Ever notice the "glow" or "reflection" from the eyes of night animals, particularly deer?

When bright headlights of a car strike the eyes of a deer, they are literally blinded. (Poachers are well aware of this.) As the car approaches, the deer will stare into the lights — hearing the noise of the motor and tires, suddenly he becomes aware of something moving closer. He doesn't have the slightest notion which way to go, but go he must to avoid this thing coming down on him . . . and

often it's the wrong direction — WHAM!!!

The number of deer hit on different types of roads is interesting. Very few deer are hit on gravel roads. At first you think of speed, but with the 55 MPH speed limit, this can't be correct. The crunch of the gravel under the tires tells the deer where the car is coming from and how close it is. On the hard surface roads, no such warning is available.

Now, the question is, how can these accidents be avoided? With the help of the Highway Division, "deer crossing" signs have been put up where the majority of the deer are hit. *Watch* — when in these areas — watch the roadsides and ditches for the reflective shine of deer eyes. When you see a deer — *slow down!*

The first thing to do is *blink your lights*, up and down. Many will throw their lights on high to better see the deer and this only blinds them more. Flashing your lights high and low, breaks the steady blinding light, giving the deer a chance. *Honk the horn!* Not a steady long blast — but a series of short honks. This lets the deer know from which direction the car is coming.

Many individuals tell me they saw one deer but another came from the ditch. *Slow down.* Just because you only see one, doesn't mean it's the only one. When one deer moves across the road, others naturally want to follow.

Watch, slow down, flash your lights, honk your horn. This may save you an accident and money, and incidentally save the deer!

During the past few years I've experimented with honking my horn at pheasants along the road in daylight. A series of short honks seems to prompt a quicker reaction than a long steady blast which seems to "freeze" them on the spot.

Our highways waste thousands of our precious wildlife each year — waste is the correct word because for the most part road-killed game is only fit for the rendering works or the scavengers. While we're on this subject, let's clear up another thing. A few years ago the legislature gave the Commission the power to dispose of road-killed and seized game. The Commission has set up certain rules, including a green permit tagging system which the Conservation Officer is responsible for. If you hit a deer, nothing in the Code of Iowa awards this to anyone. A Conservation Officer is to be contacted, either by phone or radio for disposition and possible tagging if fit for possession. Any unlawful transportation or possession of a deer without proper authorization could lead to a citation.

The season on deer is closed most of the year and yet we kill almost as many on the roads as by legal hunting. Let's save our deer and ourselves — **WATCH OUT FOR THEM!!!** □

IOWA CONSERVATIONIST/OCTOBER, 1979

LOOKIN' BACK

the files of
the CONSERVATIONIST

Ten years ago the Iowa conservationist explored the hunting outlook for 1969. Good weather conditions contributed greatly to game populations and a good season was expected especially for pheasants and quail.

The Iowa record deer rack program was established and was met

with great enthusiasm by Iowa hunters. Deer taken in Iowa are among the largest in the United States each year.



Twenty years ago the subject was also hunting but this time it took a look at shooting preserves where you could hunt pheasants from September 1 through March 31. An operator of the farm said he was lucky if hunters recovered 50% of the pheasants he released.

In the 1968 season an antlered doe and a mule deer were taken in separate hunts.



Thirty years ago the Conservationist ran a story on winter bird feeding. This is one area that hasn't changed much in thirty years. There is only one basic rule: once you start, don't stop. The birds become dependent on your feeding station. It was reported that Conservationists throughout Iowa were opening a war against the destruction of cover in road ditches. The "thirty year war" is still not going too well.



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Classroom Corner

by Bob Rye

ADMINISTRATOR, CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

BIRDING, forestry, wildflowers, water studies, nature hikes, mammals, math, English and leadership are all classes at the Conservation Education Center.

Group participants ask, "Where do these fit into Conservation?" Or, "Why is this important to me?" As the subject variety continues, the group perceives the total conservation picture and how all aspects are connected to the base. The base is soil.

Iowa Conservation Commission foresters, biologists and officers have at times assisted the Center in the education of Iowans. The personnel are all well-trained in their specialty and present programs in their area. But soon we find that soil is important to every field. (No pun intended.)

For example, in surveying animals, we find they are very restricted to certain areas. Areas which will grow corn, beans, grasses or trees each have certain types of animals because of the plants which are present.

In the Center's native grass area meadow larks, ground squirrels and red foxes are found. In the forest you will find woodpeckers, chipmunks, and gray foxes.

The plants are restricted to the type of soil present. We know all plants can't grow everywhere. There are plants which grow in poor soil, others only in rich soil.

One class activity on soil, specifically called soil characteristics, has an objective of understanding the characteristics of various soils and how they are related to the ground cover. This study can be used in any location that has several different ground covers.

First, the class is divided into three groups. A soil sample is collected in each of three areas. Each third of the class studies part of each

sample and writes a sentence describing how each soil is related to the area.

The samples are surveyed for evidence of plants, animals, rocks (sizes), humus etc. The evidence is sometimes small so a hand lens is useful. This activity will involve the thinking skills of observing, interpreting data, and classifying.

Direct observation programs like the one just described and those which are indirectly related such as "the animals," "recycling" or "living soil" are of interest to students. Participants at the Center are eager for information on soil, an area in which they are generally uninformed.

There is a classroom instructional booklet of soil activities and one of forestry activities available from the Iowa Conservation Education Council. The activities are designed for a wide range of ages and interest levels. The

booklets also contain a history of the topic for the past one hundred years. The Council is composed of a group of agencies and institutions, including the Iowa Conservation Commission, which are interested in assisting educators in teaching conservation.

There are also fall and winter workshops sponsored by the council. These workshops are designed to provide information and activities in many areas for use by all educators-administrators, school teachers, and educators of the general public. They are located at the Conservation Education Center for the western part of the state and in two locations for the eastern part. The workshops are scheduled on three different weekends.

The soil and forestry activity booklets are available free at the workshops. For more information on the workshops or to purchase booklets (50¢), write to Min Amemiya, 117 Agronomy Bldg., Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50010 or Conservation Education Center, RR #1, Box 53, Guthrie Center, Iowa 50115.



