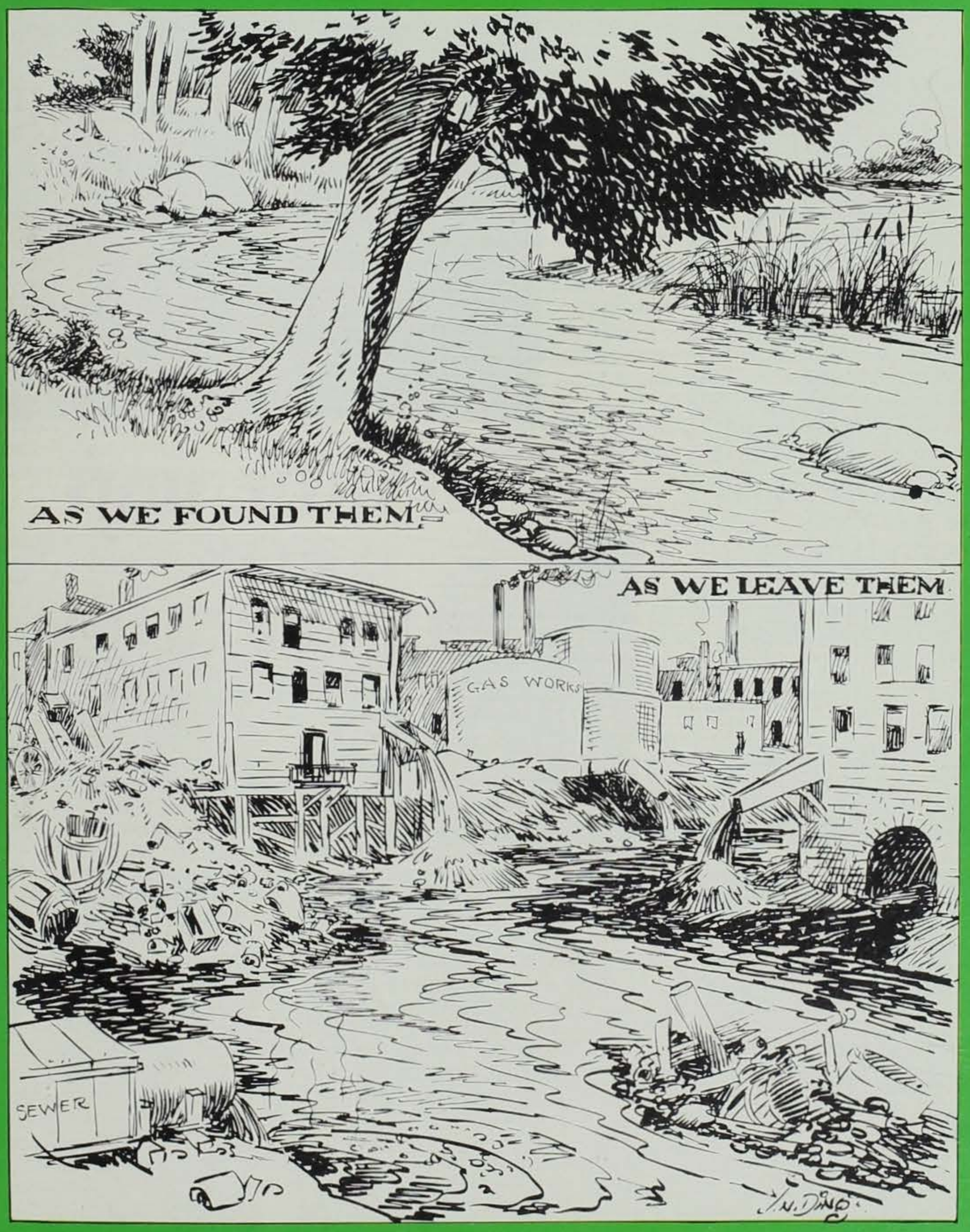
Iowa CONSERVATIONIST

APRIL 1981



Iowa CONSERVATIONIST

MAGAZINE

Volume 40, No. 4 • April 1981

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IOWA CONSERVATIONIST (USPS268-780), *is 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 $2.00; two years $3.00; four years $5.00. Second class postage paid at Des Moines, Iowa and other points.*

GARDENING FOR BUTTERFLIES

AS YOU PORE over stacks of seed catalogs consider garden plantings that will be attractive to you and will attract brightly colored butterflies, beautiful in their own right. Most butterflies do no harm to your plants, and they add another pleasure to gardening.

The marigolds surrounding your garden provide nectar for adult butterflies, and supposedly keep insect pests away. Zinnias perform a similar function. Alyssum, daisies, chrysanthemums, and pink or purple phlox and asters also attract fluttering visitors. Simply not mowing a portion of lawn will allow vervain, milkweed and other flowering plants to assert themselves, again attracting interesting insects. Wildflower seeds are now available from a number sources*, and you should consider a patch of prairie flowers for both you and the butterflies to enjoy. Butterfly weed, various coneflowers, spearmint, ironweed, blazing stars and bee-balm (bergamot) are good choices. Shrubs and trees, like privets, butterfly bush *(Buddelia)* and flowering crabapple remain attractive year after year.

Remember that butterflies are insects, and pesticides have disastrous effects upon these beautiful visitors. Plan your plantings to repel insect pests, and apply pesticides sparingly and judiciously if necessary.

**Some wildflower seed sources (besides regular seed catalogs) are: Stock Seed Farms, Inc., R. R., Box 112, Murdock, NE 68407, (402) 867-3771; Prairie Seed Source, P.O. Box 1131, Des Moines, IA 50311, (515) 255-2426; and Horizon Seeds, Inc., 1540 Cornhusker Highway, P.O. Box 81823, Lincoln, NE 68501, (402) 475-1232.*

Fishing and Weeds Do Mix

BY ROBERT MIDDENDORF

IT IS WELL KNOWN that excessive amounts of aquatic vegetation in our ponds and lakes create adverse conditions for good fishing. Dense growths of plants provide small fish with too much cover from predation. The result is often an overpopulated and stunted panfish fishery. Intense vegetation growth along shallow shorelines makes difficult fishing conditions for shoreline anglers. Also, instances of fish kills may result in densely vegetated impoundments when plants die and decomposition reduces the oxygen in the water.

Control is the key word when addressing a problem of vegetation in ponds and lakes. This does not mean total elimination is essential to have good fishing. In fact some weeds will promote good fishing and provide young fish a needed hiding place. The Conservation Commission's free *Iowa Farm Pond* booklet recommends that control be utilized when aquatic vegetation covers more than 20% of a pond's surface.

For many years the primary method of vegetation control has been the use of approved chemicals. Although oftentimes effective, these chemicals are expensive and need to be applied several times a year.

In 1979, after 5 years of research by the Iowa Conservation Commission, the white amur (grass carp) was approved for vegetation control use in Iowa waters. These fish, which feed on aquatic plants for food, have gained wide acceptance and have been stocked in a large number of ponds and lakes throughout the state.

Another method employed for vegetation control is planned prevention. When a water impoundment is being constructed the shallow shoreline area is deepened to reduce without eliminating the zone plants grow in.

When on a fishing trip, successful anglers locate habitat that provides shelter areas for attracting fish. Many bodies of water are short of this natural habitat, and the Iowa Conservation Commission is artificially adding trees, stake beds, old tires and vegetative plantings to increase fish habitat and attractor structure. These habitat improvement programs are designed to congregate panfish, primarily bluegill and crappie, thereby making them easier to catch. When panfish are attracted to these areas, predator species will also be there.

Limited growths of vegetation can be a beneficial form of structure for attracting and congregating fish. Like other types of habitat, vegetation affords protection to panfish and provides organisms for fish to feed on. Predators use clumps of weeds for establishing a territory and lie in wait to feed on smaller fish. Some fish species, such as northern pike and yellow perch, deposit their eggs on vegetation.

How many times have you gone fishing in Iowa or some other state, and the first place you hit is a weed bed? It may well be that you have read articles saying to fish in or near, close to, over, or in open spaces of weed beds for a variety of fish. But more likely the best reason is that you have had good success previously at those areas.

Excessive growth of aquatic vegetation in most cases must be controlled, but all vegetation should not be eliminated. It is important to remember that weeds and fishing *do* mix.

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

In some cases weeds get out of control

PHOTOS BY KAY HILL

. . . but all weeds are not bad.

A SPOTLIGHT SURVEY FOR RACCOONS AND DEER

BY WILLIAM B. RYBARCZYK
WILDLIFE RESEARCH TECHNICIAN

It is a warm, humid night in late April and a pick-up truck with two spotlights rhythmically sweeping the countryside moves slowly down a gravel road. Suddenly, one of the spotlights comes to rest on a pair of bright yellow eyes a hundred yards down a fencerow and the pick-up skids to a halt. Just as quickly the bright yellow eyes become a gray-brown blur lumbering across muddy corn stubble and into the darkness. After a minute or two, both spotlights begin piercing the night again in wide sweeping arcs and the pick-up continues slowly on down the road.

Who are these people in the pick-up? What are they doing? Are they poachers? Cattlerustlers? Vandals? No, they are Iowa Conservation Commission personnel conducting their annual raccoon and deer spotlight survey. This survey was born out of an ICC research project conducted in cooperation with the Department of Animal Ecology at Iowa State University.

The project was designed to determine whether a spotlight survey might serve as an "index" to deer population trends in the state. In Iowa, as in other parts of the Midwest, habitat and environmental conditions prevent the use of deer population surveys commonly used in the Great Lakes states. When a total count of a wildlife population is not possible, such as is the case with deer in Iowa, indices of the population are a valuable substitute. An "index" is a condition which can be measured, and will vary in proportion to the population which cannot be measured. In other words, if the population increases the index will increase, and conversely, if the population decreases the index will decrease. However, an index may lead to inaccurate conclusions unless the variables which affect its accuracy are determined.

Deer indices used in Iowa include the conservation officer winter estimate, sex and age analyses based on hunter report cards and tooth sectioning, and the number of deer killed each year on Iowa's roads. However, the accuracy of these techniques is difficult to measure. Therefore, in the summer of 1975 a graduate student was selected to determine the feasibility of a spotlight survey. I was that graduate student. My responsibility was to determine under what conditions designated routes could be spotlighted and similar numbers of deer observed. Specific conditions tested were weather, time of night, month and year, and habitat types along the routes.

The study was conducted in Lucas and Monroe counties in south-central Iowa. This area was selected because it contains habitat and deer populations typical of high-density Iowa deer range. One spotlight route was located in each county and each route was approximately 50 miles long. During a given spotlight period each route was surveyed every other night. Spotlighting was initially conducted in August and September, 1975, to determine what technical problems might be encountered. The vegetation at that time was very dense making visibility difficult. Consequently, few deer were observed. However, it was immediately apparent that good numbers of raccoons were observed on most nights.

PHOTO BY RON GEORGE

Raccoons are often initially observed in trees.

The increased prices paid for raccoon pelts in recent years has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of raccoons harvested, but the effect of this increased harvest on Iowa's raccoon population is often disputed. Thus, a technique for determining raccoon population trends was also desirable. Therefore, the number of raccoons observed along the spotlight routes was also recorded.

Spotlight counts were conducted in January and February of 1976 and 1977 and March and April, 1977. Counts were conducted regardless of weather conditions. Our initial belief was that most deer would be observed feeding in harvested grain fields during the winter months. However, this was not the case as similar numbers of deer were observed no matter what month spotlighting was done. We did find that in April more deer could be observed on nights when the relative humidity was high.

Raccoons, however, were much more observable in April than during any other month. The average count was 31 per night compared to 3, 13 and 18 per night in January, February and March, respectively. Similar to deer, more raccoons were observed in April during nights when the relative humidity was high.

The Iowa Conservation Commission went operational with the raccoon-deer spotlight survey in spring, 1978. Statewide, 57 25-mile spotlight routes were established. In 1979, 26 additional routes were added in the southern half of the state — Iowa's primary raccoon range. This survey is now aimed primarily at raccoons, but data on deer and other wildlife are also collected. It is conducted during a two to three week period immediately preceding "leaf-out" of the woody vegetation and only on nights when the relative humidity is greater than 60 percent. All residents along the routes were contacted before the survey was conducted the first time. Operationally, route lengths were shortened to 25 miles to cut down on expense and because observers were less able to concentrate on finding animals after a couple of hours of squinting into the darkness. Spotlight counts begin one hour after sunset, and routes are traveled at 10-15 mph with periodic stops necessary to identify animals.

Eyeshine is usually the first indication of an animal an observer notices. Cats are the most common species with which raccoons are confused. Cats will tend to freeze in one spot whereas raccoons look, then generally lumber off if they are on the ground. About an equal number of raccoons are observed in trees as on the ground. Eye reflection color on both cats and raccoons varies and may be yellow, green, or red. Deer eyes tend to reflect a very bright green though they occasionally will look red. Many livestock are also observed. Unlike deer and raccoons that are often frightened by the light, livestock are unaffected and remain calm in their behavior. Objects are often seen that initially look like eyeshine but turn out to be something else. These include tops of metal fenceposts, reflective tape on farm machinery, bumpers and taillights on junk cars, bottles and cans.

The spotlights used are effective to a distance of about one-quarter mile where terrain permits. All types of habitat are surveyed, including feedlots, as raccoons are often observed near farmsteads. All spotlight vehicles are clearly marked with Iowa Conservation Commission emblems, and when houses are passed the spotlight on the side of the vehicle adjacent the house is held in such a position that the emblem is clearly visible.

The results obtained from the 1978 and 1979 surveys are encouraging. In 1978, 10.8 raccoons per route were observed or one raccoon per 2.44 miles and 6.9 deer per route or one deer per 3.63 miles. In 1979 the count was 11.3 raccoons per route or one per 2.22 miles and 6.8 deer per route or one per 3.65 miles. The survey will be continued for another three or four years, and the data then analyzed before we know whether this technique can provide an accurate index to raccoon or deer populations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the residents along the spotlight routes for their patience and cooperation each spring and to extend an apology to those new residents along the routes that were not personally contacted in regards to this survey. If there is any doubt as to who is operating a spotlight in a vehicle passing your residence don't hesitate to call the proper authorities because they know the location of the routes and the nights on which surveys are conducted. ■

Eyesline is often the first indication of an animal the observer notices.

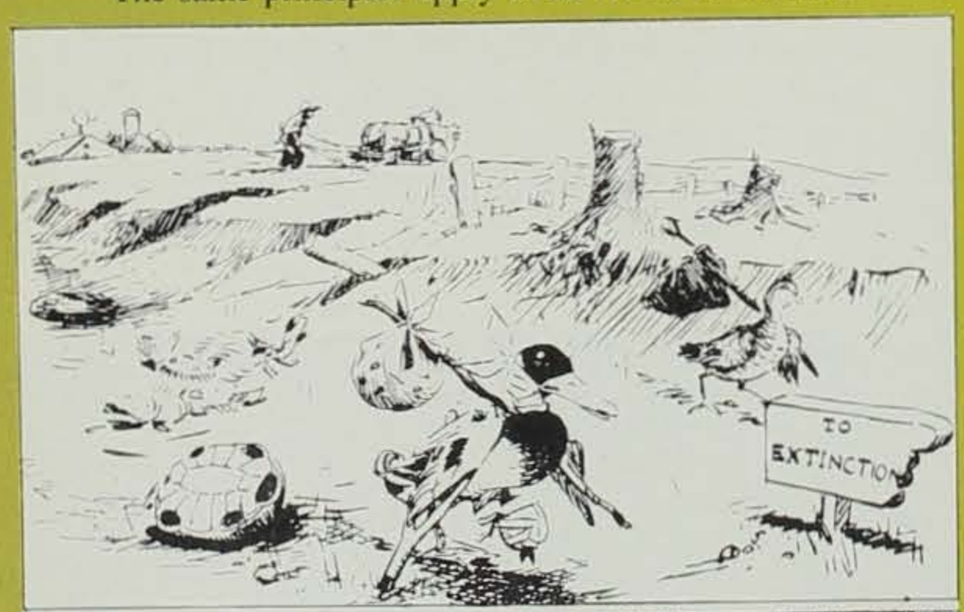
PHOTO BY LEE GLADFELTER

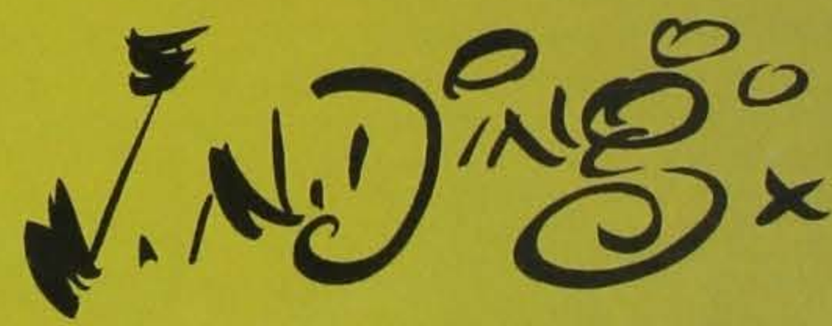
BOOK REVIEW

"Ding," The life of Jay Norwood Darling

By David L. Lent
Hardback $10.95, ISU Press

The same principles apply to all forms of wildlife.





BY KEN SMITH

Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling, probably best known as a political cartoonist, was a man of strong conviction who waged a dedicated lifelong battle in the interest of conservation. His life was fun, frustrating, energetic, and profound. His name was a household word and his distinctive signature was his trademark. Against a nostalgic backdrop of Ding's time and his people, author David L. Lent traces the story of the cartoonist's life and career. Lent follows Darling from his birth in Michigan through his flamboyant college days to his years as a nationally syndicated cartoonist whose work appeared in more than one hundred daily newspapers.

Jay Norwood Darling was born in 1879 to Reverend and Mrs. Marcellus W. Darling. Following his graduation from Beloit College in Wisconsin where he earned his nickname "Ding" and acquired an interest in biology, he accepted his first job as a news reporter for the *Sioux City Journal*. There he became known statewide for his cartooning ability. Ding joined the staff of the *Des Moines Register and Leader* (later the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*) in 1906 where, except for a few years at the *New York Globe*, he worked until his retirement in 1949. While at the Des Moines paper Ding gained a national reputation for his cartooning, won two Pulitzer prizes, and waged an unending battle for conservation.

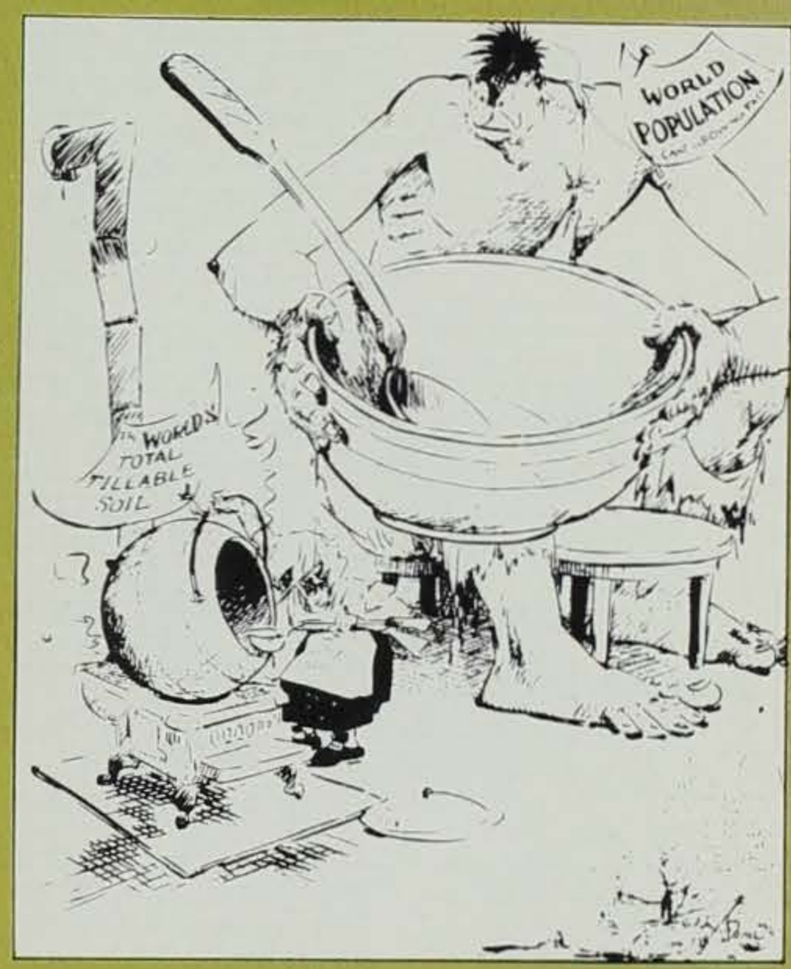
Ding was an outspoken conservationist and an advocate of keeping the laws of nature for the sake of human survival. Darling, a conservative Republican, served as Franklin D. Roosevelt's Chief of the Biological Survey (forerunner of the Fish and Wildlife Service) and during his brief term, reinvigorated that agency. He fought successfully for the creation and expansion of a federal wildlife refuge

system. Darling later formed and was the first president of the National Wildlife Federation, the largest organization of its kind today. Ding was also active in state conservation matters. He was a charter member of the Iowa State Fish and Game Commission (later merged with the Iowa Board of Conservation to form the Iowa Conservation Commission) and was instrumental in initiating the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at Iowa State College (now Iowa State University). Ding was also a firm supporter of conservation education and lent his hand in the establishment of the Iowa State Teachers Conservation Camp at Springbrook State Park (today known as the Springbrook Conservation Education Center).

Ding's accomplishments were many and his life long and active. Throughout he remained a conservationist. Ding in his time had witnessed how waste and needless abuse of natural riches could short change every generation to follow. Darling once commented that *"If I could put together all the virgin landscapes which I knew in my youth and show what has happened to them in one generation, it would be the best object lesson in conservation that could be printed."* In his work as a cartoonist and a conservationist, Ding still communicates that lesson.

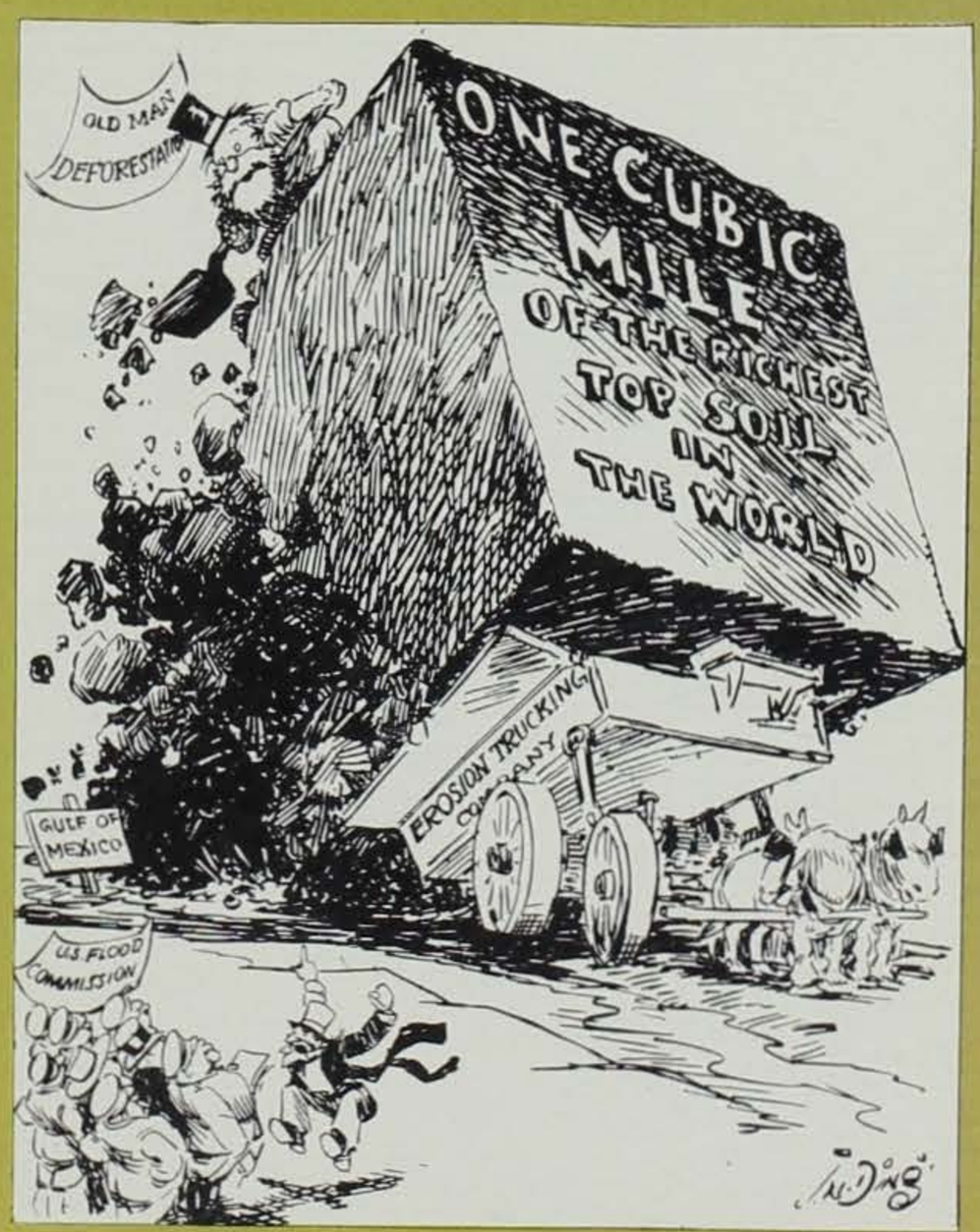
The book is good reading on two accounts. First, because it chronicles the truly remarkable and interesting life of Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling and second, because the book is well researched and written. The book also contains a large selection of photographs, drawings, and cartoons.

"Ding," The Life of Jay Norwood Darling is published by the Iowa State University Press. David L. Lent is an assistant professor of journalism and assistant vice president for information and development at Iowa State University. The book is available from *ISU Press, 2121 South State Avenue, Ames, Iowa 50010*. Please add $1 for postage and handling.



The only kettle she's got.

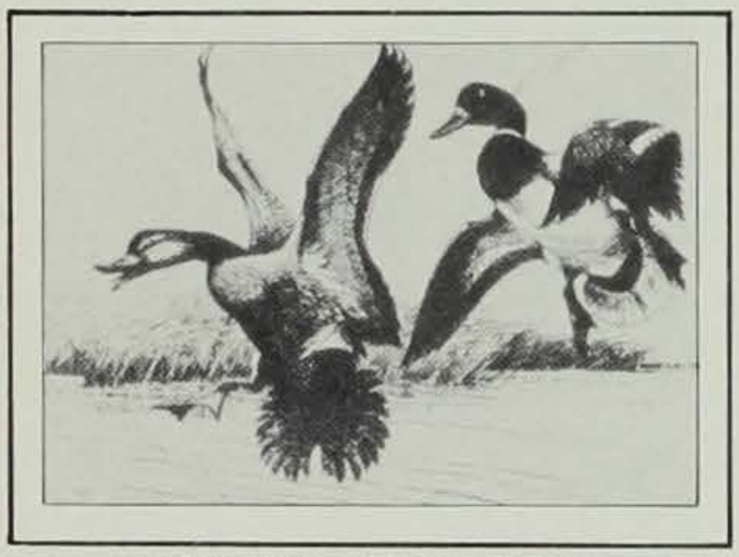
Why call them sportsmen?



It's nice somebody can enjoy it.

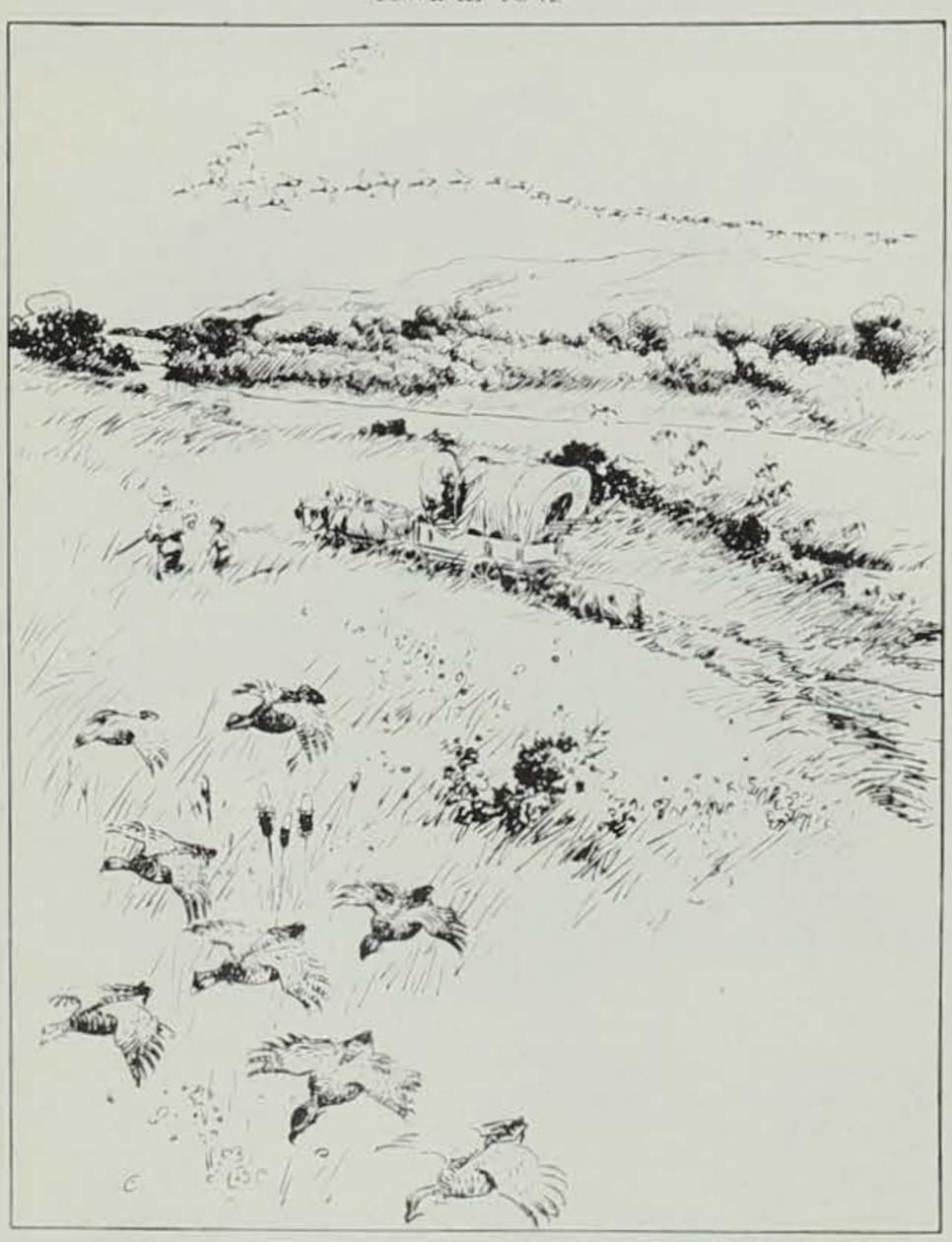
"Ding"
(Continued)

Eventually,
why not now?



1934-35 Duck Stamp design.

Iowa in 1843



Reprinted from the Iowa Conservationist magazine of March 15, 1

Poverty or ons

(Ed. Note: Article written toward end of WW II.)

Jay N. Darling, internationally famous cartoonist and conservationist, believes that "some day a new historian will revolutionize our study of the past." Instead of telling us in detail HOW great battles were fought, he will tell us the WHYS of wars of conquest, and the reasons will exactly parallel the causes which led the Japanese to invade the Asiatic continent, the Italians to slaughter Ethiopians, and Hitler to shatter all the international covenants to loot Europe. He will tell us that from the first racial conflicts of written history on down to the present day, wars have sprung from the same background. An increased population wore out its national resources and relieved the pressure within by arming its surplus men and moving in on the less depleted pastures of its neighbors.

Some day a new historian will arise who will revolutionize our study of the past and give us a much better understanding of the problems which we ourselves are meeting. This new history will give us an interpretation of the causes which produced the events, rather than a compilation of dynasties, dates and victorious generals. Instead of telling us in detail HOW Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great fought their battles, the new historian will tell us WHY they fought their wars of conquest. And the reasons will exactly parallel the causes which led the Japanese to invade the Asiatic continent, the Italians to slaughter the Ethiopians and Hitler to shatter all the international covenants to loot Europe. From the first racial conflicts of written history on down to the present day, wars have sprung from the same background: an increased racial population wore out its natural resources and relieved the pressure within by arming its surplus men and moving in on the less depleted pastures of its neighbors.

Archaeologists tell us that this process started in the Gobi Desert, and whether or not that was the cradle of the human race, the fossilized remnants of profuse vegetation and abundant animal life are all that remain to show that man once lived there in obvious abundance until depleted natural resources forced the inhabitants to seek new lands. Out of this area came successive waves of migrations which moved westward into Mongolia, India, Persia, Arabia, Turkestan, Palestine, Mesopotamia, the Nile and the Sahara, the Caucasus, the Mediterranean state, and finally into what we now call continental Europe.

Buried in the dust and rubble of ages along these ancient migration lanes are crumbling palaces of kings and buried cities which once housed thriving populations, convincing evidence that those desert lands were once sufficiently productive to maintain prosperous communities.

oConservation Your National Problem

BY JAY N. "DING" DARLING
Honorary President, National
Wildlife Federation

What vast natural resources must have blossomed on the sandy astes of Egypt to support the armies employed to build the Pyraids! For every stone in their vast bulk there must have been at least a ndred acres of land in full and continuous production to feed the borers who quarried the rock and hoisted it into place. Let your nagination fill the gap between the vast operations during the build-g of the temples of Karnak and this flea-bitten remnant of Egypt hich dips from the Nile enough water to raise a handful of rice, the er diem ration of its remaining population.

What vast natural resources must have blossomed on the sandy astes of Egypt to support the armies employed to build the Pyramids! ew know that the mysterious city of Timbuktu, now isolated by miles of rid sands in the middle of the Sahara Desert, was once surrounded by rtile fields as rich as those of our Mississippi Valley. Let your imagina-on fill the gap between the building of the Temples of Karnak and the ea-bitten remnant of Egypt which now dips from the Nile enough ater to raise its handfuls of rice.

Few know that the mysterious city of Timbuktu, a ghost town of ehistoric origin isolated by miles of arid waste in the middle of the ahara Desert, was once surrounded by fertile fields and olive groves. uried beneath its desert sands is complete evidence that Africa's eat "dust bowl" once was as rich as the Mississippi Valley. Giant imitive forests, lakes and rivers once spread across the vast wastes the Sahara.

Between the Gobi Desert and Mesopotamia, a thousand Genghis hans, Attilas and Nebuchadnezzars fought for the riches which these ncient lands once produced. They wouldn't be worth fighting for ow if it were not for the oil deposits (of which the ancients had no nowledge) hidden deep beneath the earth's crust.

Is it just a coincidence that those rich lands where civilization has ved the longest are all now deserts and unable to support a one-ousandth part of their former populations, or is there a lesson which e have overlooked hidden in crumbling ruins of departed civiliza-on? Could it be that our own falling water table, dried-up springs, an-made dust bowls and abandoned cattle ranges are the early mptoms of the same blight which turned the ancient garden spots to deserts? The scientists who have read the hieroglyphics written in e sands of time say it is not a coincidence but an invariable rule. ther scientists, seeking a formula by which we may avoid such a ture, have given us assurance that, taken in time, soils, vegetation nd subsoil water tables can be made to persist indefinitely and yield a alanced production of life's necessities.

Boiled down to the fundamentals, the history of civilization since man was created is largely made up of the rise and fall of governments, kings and empires through the exhaustion of resources. History, therefore, in reality turns out to be the story of hungry man in search of food. Conservation is the job of so managing our soils, waters and gifts of nature on this continent of ours that man's search for these necessities shall not be in vain.

If we do neglect conservation, as history has ignored it in the past, and any considerable portion of our population does search in vain for existence, we shall have increasing poverty, social upheavals and, in spite of our high ideals and worship of peace, we shall have more wars instead of fewer, for wars are the spawn of empty stomachs, and empty stomachs follow, as the night follows the day, the excess of demand for natural resources over the supply. Sociologists and economic doctors should study Biology.

No one can look at this continent today, compare it with the way we found it, and deny that we have ruthlessly ignored this law of Nature.

America is no richer than her remaining resources.

And where was the great voice of the aroused conservation-minded public all this time? There wasn't any voice and there wasn't any aroused conservation-minded public. The reason is simple enough. The great American public had grown up under an educational system which taught that America could feed the world; that our natural resources were inexhaustible.

"Ding" is convinced that until a new generation is taught in the public schools man's utter dependence on natural resources, and until the teachers of botany, chemistry, biology, and geology emphasize the functions rather than the terminology of their respective sciences, and until a majority of the American public is schooled in the fundamental principles of conservation, criminal waste will continue to reduce our heritage of natural resources. "Education has become the only pathway that can lead us out of the doldrums."

After all these years of effort to find some formula of conservation which would work I am convinced that until a new generation is taught in the public schools man's utter dependence on natural resources, until the teachers of Botany, Chemistry, Biology and Geology emphasize the functions rather than the terminology of their respective sciences; until in fact we have a majority of the American public schooled in the fundamental principles of conservation, criminal waste will continue to reduce our heritage of natural resources. If you will begin to work soon on the youth now in the grade schools, it will not be too awfully late.

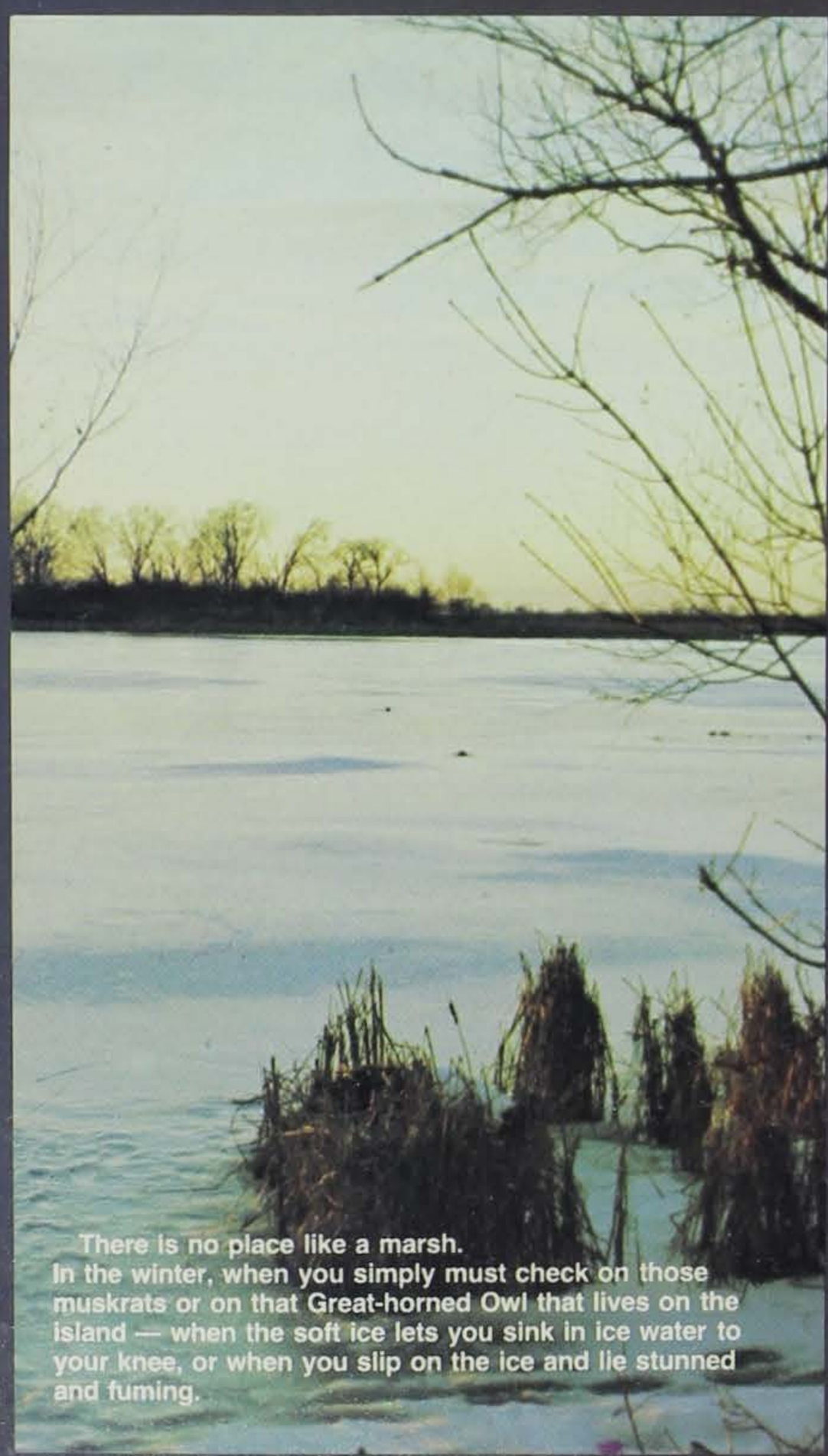
To me, education has become the only pathway that can lead us out of the doldrums.

The Many Moods of a Marsh

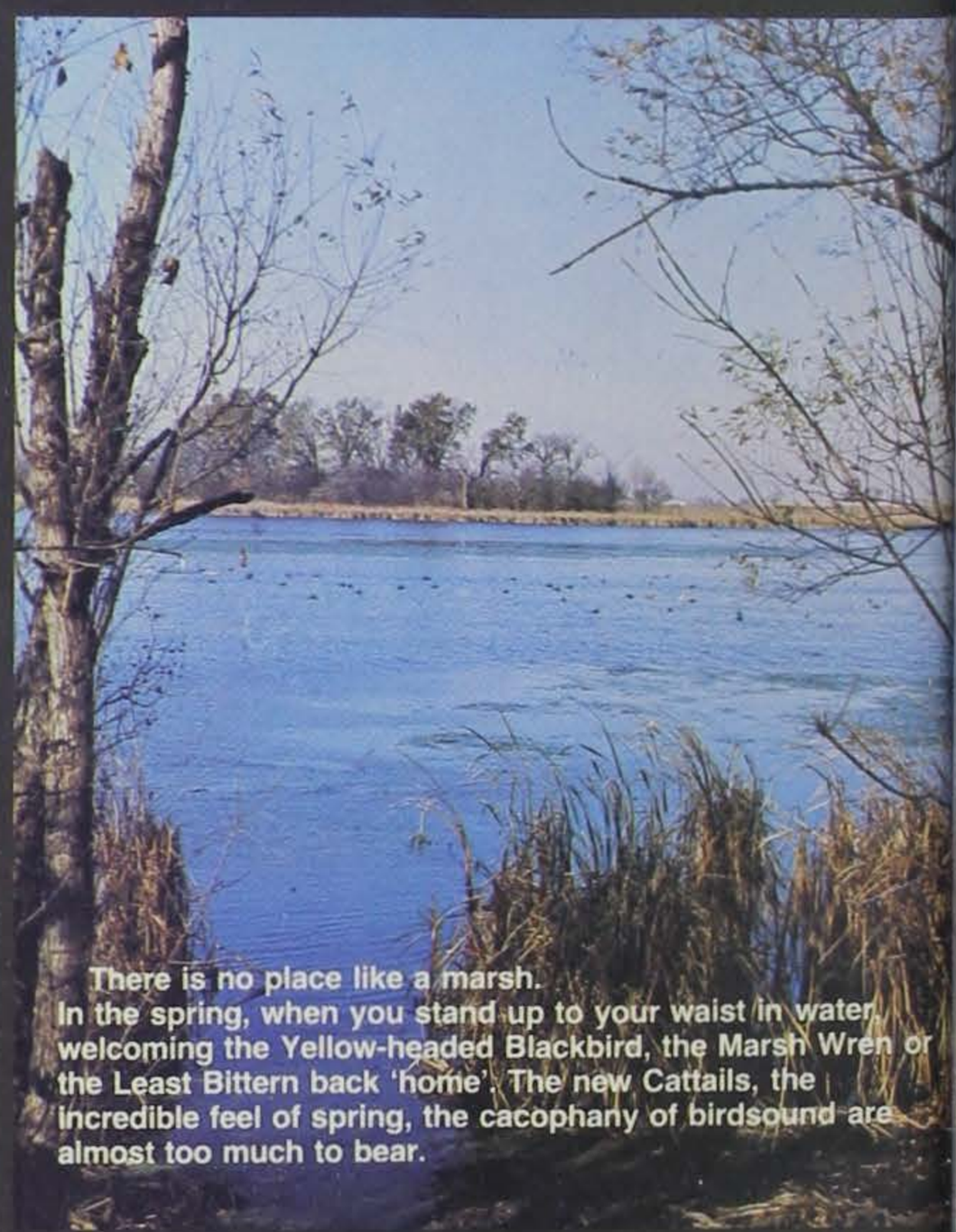
BY DEAN M. ROOSA
STATE ECOLOGIST

Photos by the Author

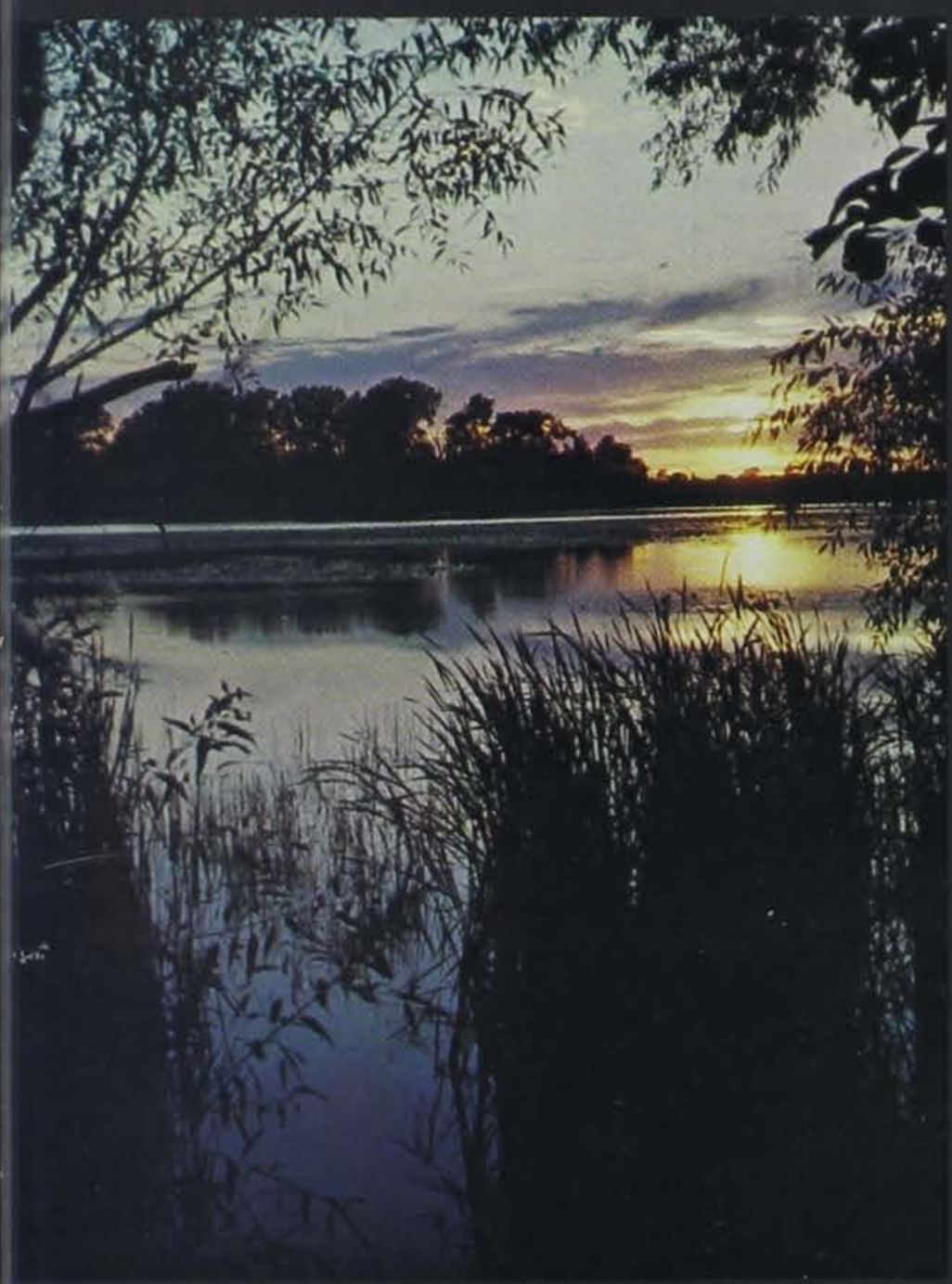
There is no place like a marsh.
At sunset, in a canoe — the wind has died, the unforgiving sun is sinking. It is the best place in the world to think — to let your cares slip softly away.

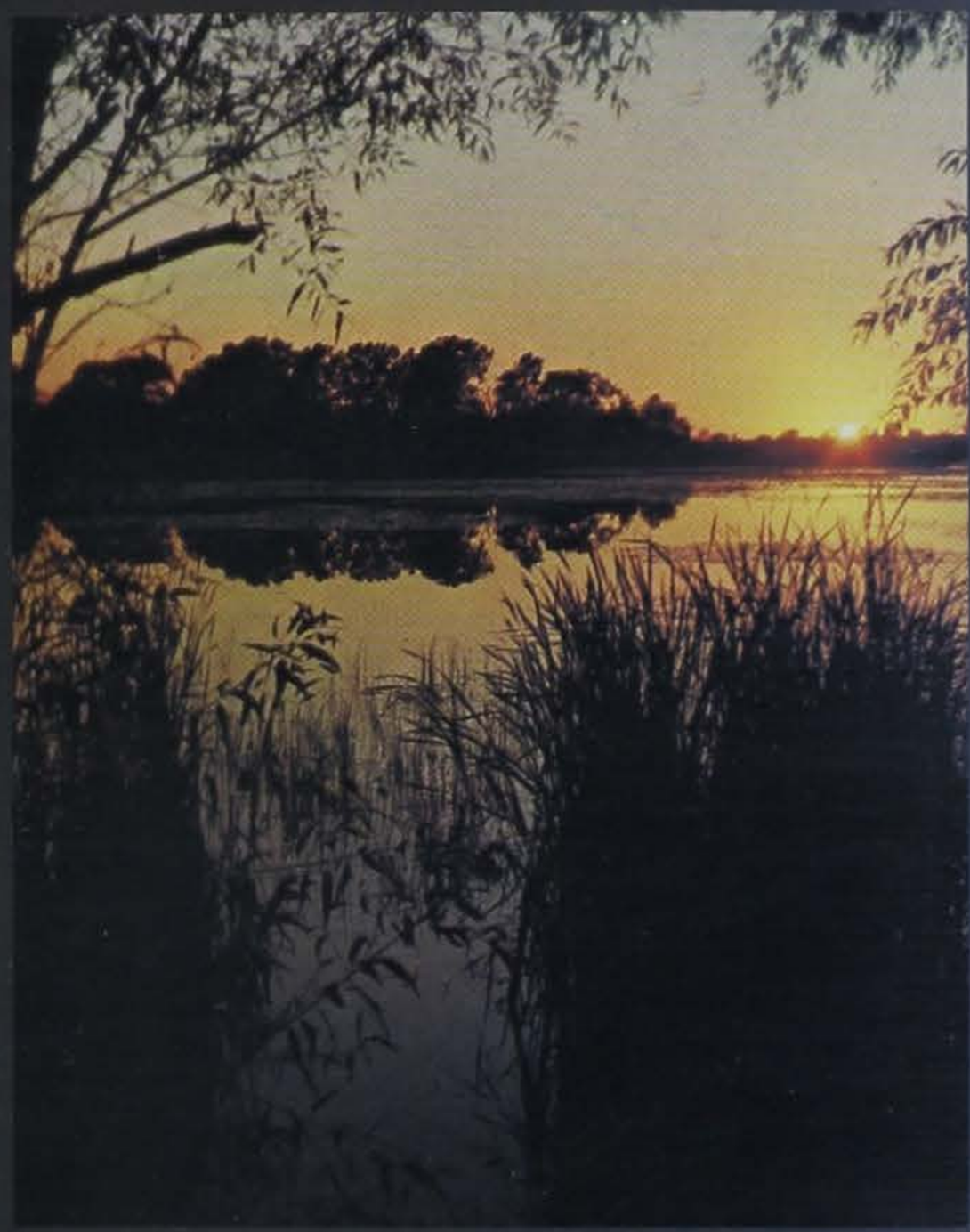


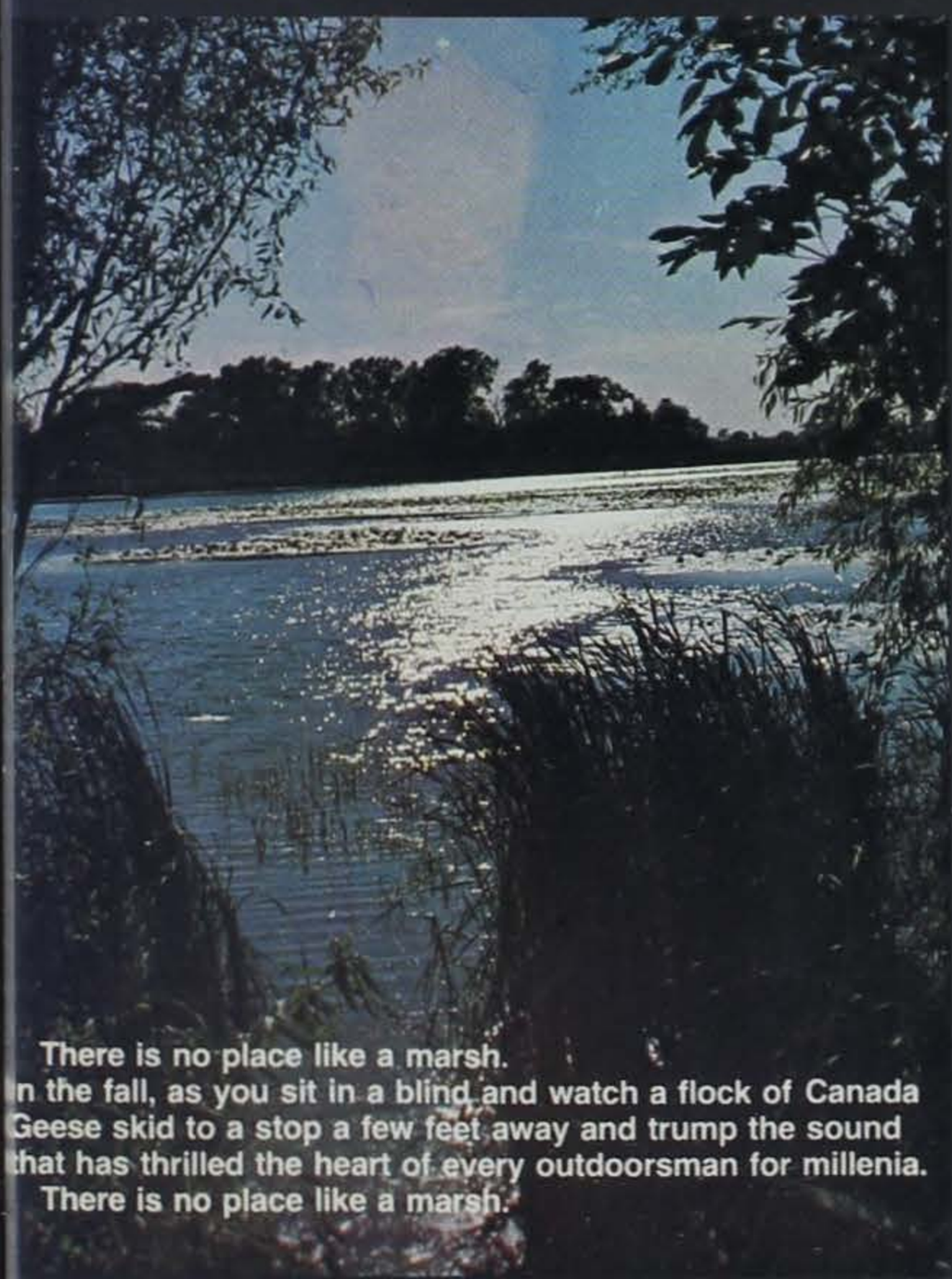
There is no place like a marsh.
In the winter, when you simply must check on those muskrats or on that Great-horned Owl that lives on the island — when the soft ice lets you sink in ice water to your knee, or when you slip on the ice and lie stunned and fuming.



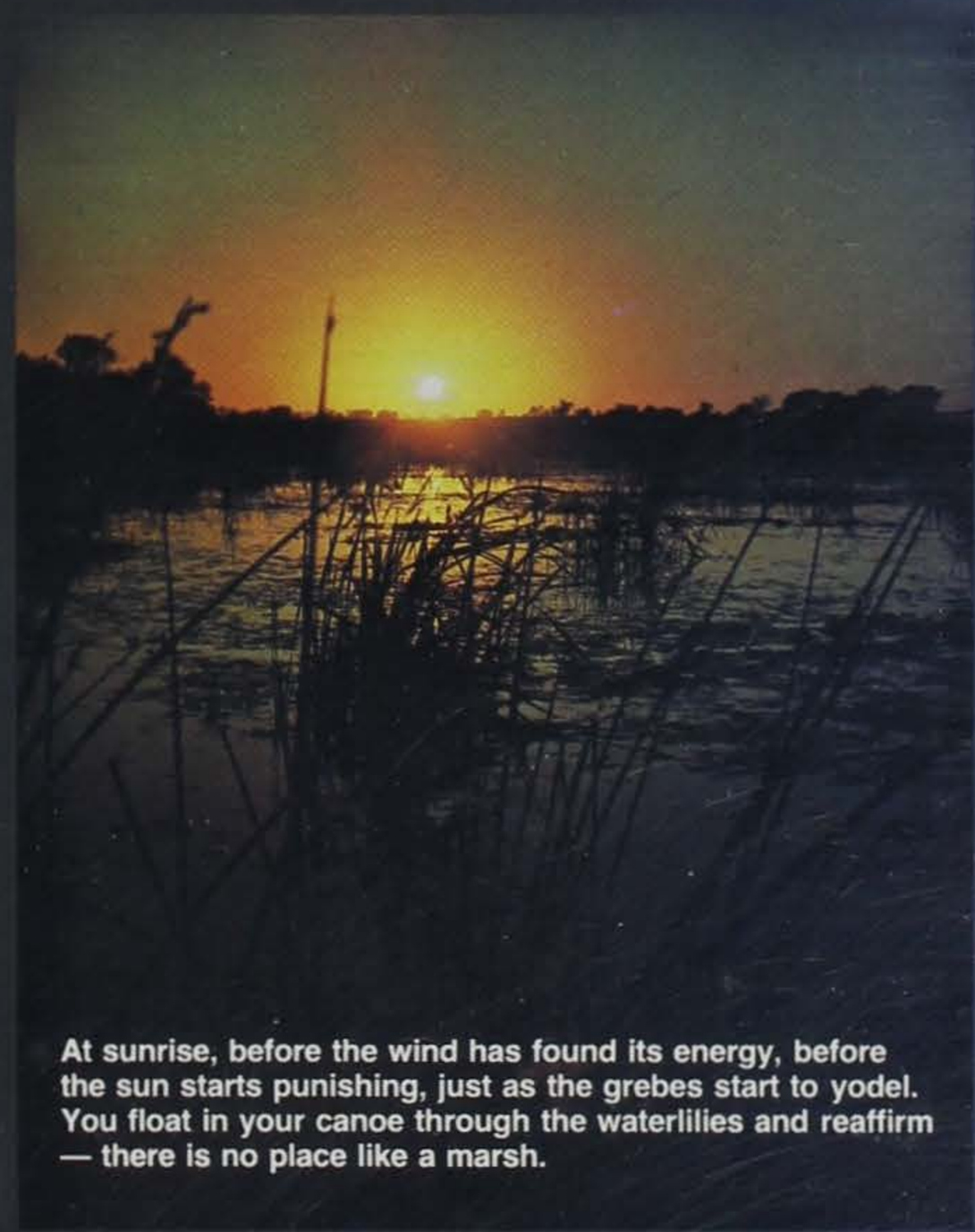
There is no place like a marsh.
In the spring, when you stand up to your waist in water, welcoming the Yellow-headed Blackbird, the Marsh Wren or the Least Bittern back 'home'. The new Cattails, the incredible feel of spring, the cacophany of birdsound are almost too much to bear.







There is no place like a marsh.
In the fall, as you sit in a blind and watch a flock of Canada Geese skid to a stop a few feet away and trump the sound that has thrilled the heart of every outdoorsman for millenia.
There is no place like a marsh.



At sunrise, before the wind has found its energy, before the sun starts punishing, just as the grebes start to yodel. You float in your canoe through the waterlilies and reaffirm — there is no place like a marsh.

Early History of Wapsipinicon State Park

by Mike Brewer, Park Ranger
and Bert Finn, Anamosa Area Historian

WAPSIPINICON STATE PARK is in eastern Iowa (Jones County) just outside the southwest city limits of Anamosa.

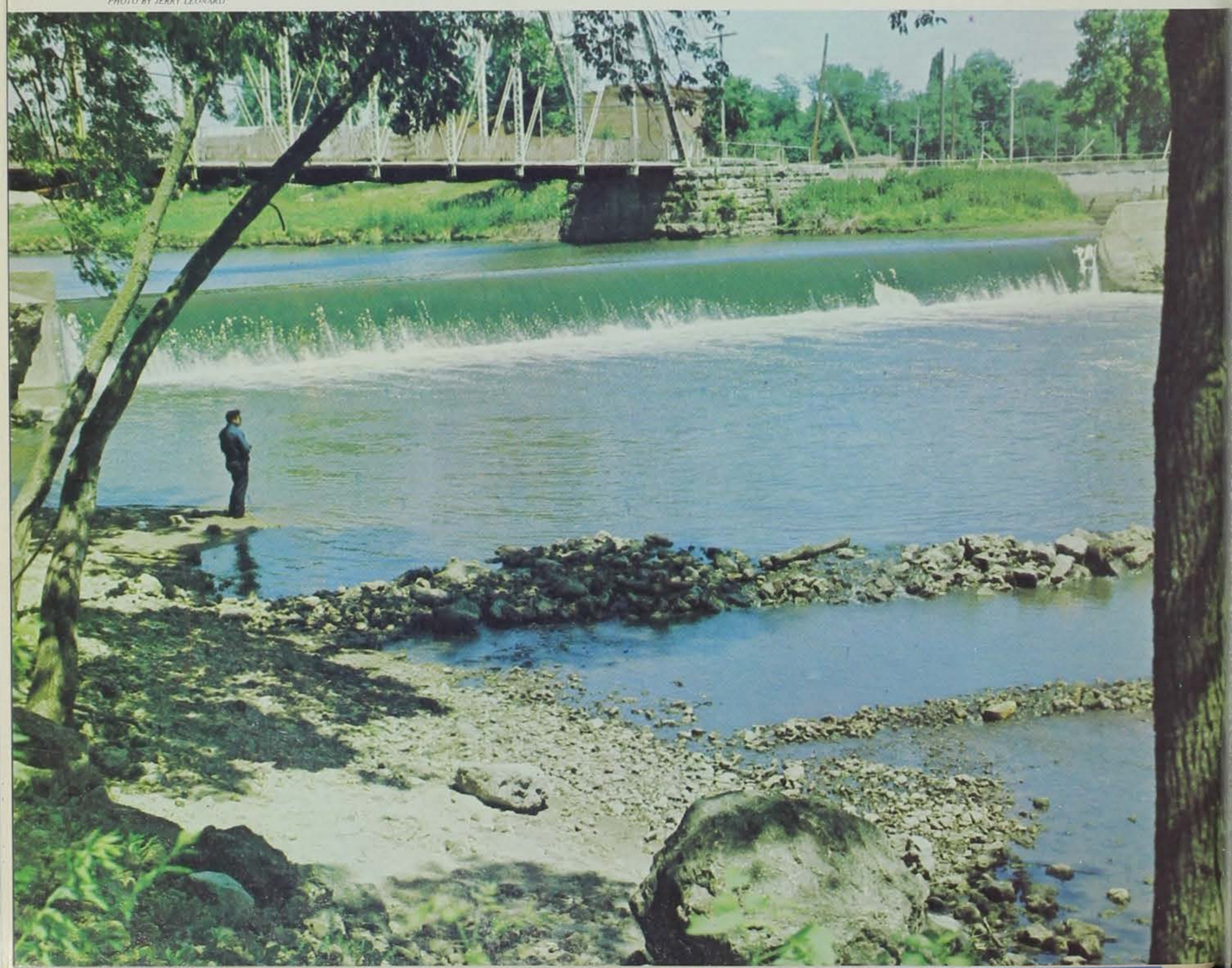
With the recent land gift to the state of Iowa it contains approximately 251 acres. Most of the park area is a rolling upland, wooded area with very steep limestone bluffs bordering the flood plain of the Wapsipinicon River. The river cuts through the park on the north and east side.

The initial planning and interest in a park in the Anamosa area started at a meeting in the old courthouse (now no longer standing) in February of 1921. The meeting was being held to see if there was enough interest to purchase approximately 180 acres and then donate the land to what was then called the State Board of Conservation. This land was then being farmed by Asa W. Smith who raised horses he purchased in the west. The committee which planned and set up this meeting knew of plans by the Men's Reformatory at Anamosa to start clearing the timber on the Smith farm in return for ½ of the wood which would be used at the reformatory. The committee and the citizens worked very quickly and enough money was pledged that night to purchase an option on the Smith property and the timber was left standing. In the next few weeks a committee spearheaded a drive that raised $24,000. The State Board of Conservation also acted quickly in accepting the unusual offer as this was believed to be one of the first times that a park was being given to the state as a gift. The State Conservation Board formally approved the acquisition of the land one day and the following day the State Executive Council formally approved the site and the State Board of Control passed a resolution pledging labor from the reformatory prisoners to develop the park.

The deed to the site which originally included 183.49 acres at a cost of $22,936.00 was presented to the State in April.

August Pearson, who still resides in Anamosa, was one of the crew chiefs employed at the reformatory in Anamosa. The first project he

PHOTO BY JERRY LEONARD



was in charge of was the building of the roads and bridges through the park. In order to do this his crew would begin with the dynamiting of the limestone bluffs to build the entrance into the park. He recalls the superintendent of Anamosa Schools asking to be notified when the blasting was to begin so they could dismiss school in order that the students could watch the proceedings. Thus the students and other people observed the start of a road and bridge project that would take nearly 5 years to complete. Blasting was necessary at many intervals along the river road and the interior park roads due to the large limestone bluffs. The work was accomplished by hand using picks, shovels, malls, and many wheelbarrows.

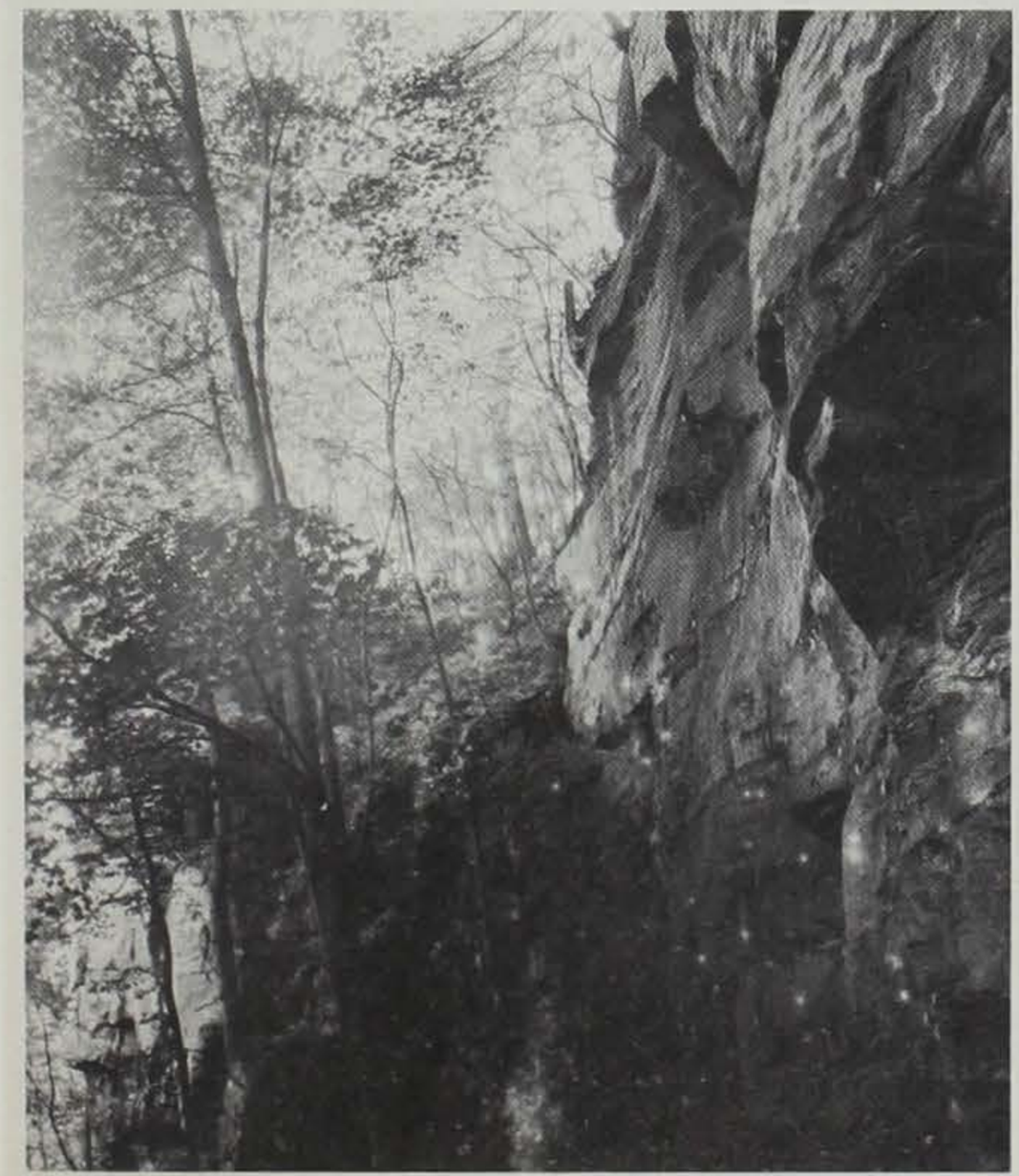
In May an additional 14 acres was purchased by the local committee from Asa Smith which would later be used for a 9 hole golf course and clubhouse. Shortly after the purchase the local committee signed up 118 charter club members. They also made plans for the construction of the golf course and clubhouse and a board of directors was formed calling itself the Wapsipinicon Country Club. The clubhouse and golf course were also built with prison labor and the project took 3 years to complete. Rock for the footings and fireplaces, white oak logs for the walls and ceiling rafters for the clubhouse were hauled in during the winter from a nearby timber along Buffalo Creek using horse-drawn bobsleds. The club was formally dedicated in June, 1924. The clubhouse still stands today, is in fairly good shape and is still used daily. The golf course is open to the public and is still run by the Wapsipinicon Country Club board of directors. No tax dollars are spent on the operation of the golf course or the clubhouse as they are supported by the club memberships and green fees.

In March, 1922 a crew of workers began improvements on the entrance to Horse Thief Cave which was to be viewed by many tourist in the coming years. Following the blasting of one large boulder at the entrance, a quantity of broken bones and ashes were discovered which ultimately drew nationwide attention.

A.D. "Gus" Corcoran of Anamosa, a student of Anthropology was called in by the state to study the discovery. His findings were completed and mailed to the State Historical Society some 50 years ago. There were 9 human skeletons found buried in sitting positions facing the entrance to Horse Thief Cave. Much evidence of cannibalism was found throughout the cave area. A considerable amount of pottery and animal bones were also found. Several bone tools, pottery shards, arrowheads, spearheads, flint chips, buffalo teeth and a large mastodon tusk were found. Corcoran believed the skeletons were from the Archaic period and that the site was occupied as early as 4000 years ago.

One of the popular attractions of the park in its early years was the reformatory band and vocal concerts which were normally held on Sunday afternoons or holidays. However these free concerts drew the wrath of Local Union 137-Cedar Rapids Musicians who wanted to halt the performances. However the concerts were continued until the second World War and then discontinued.

Another part of early park history was the day officials announced plans to construct one of the largest and finest outdoor swimming pools in the country. Construction was started in the fall of 1926 when a dam was constructed on Dutch Creek which runs in front of Horse Thief Cave. This dam was named Indian Dam. After many construction errors and disappointing trials, the pool was officially opened in June, 1928. The pool was 264′ long, 108′ wide and ran from 1 inch to 8 ft. in depth. The sides of the pool were made of cut stone and cement but efforts to cement the bottom proved unsuccessful. The pool was fed through a gate on Indian Dam that could be opened and closed to take water from the pool above the dam on Dutch Creek. During the drought years of 1931-1932 low water forced the closing of the pool. Attempts to drill a well to furnish water to the pool failed and it was finally closed in 1934. There are a number of local residents who remember using the pool daily in hot weather when it was in operation. Indian Dam still remains on Dutch Creek but serves only as a reminder of the good old swimming that people once used, many years ago.



Left: Limestone Bluffs along Wapsipinicon River — Looking upstream toward lower entrance to park; Below: Looking upstream at old river bridge which has been recently rebuilt for pedestrian traffic only. Used to be the only bridge to cross the Wapsipinicon River to enter the city of Anamosia; Bottom: Horse Thief Cave, Wapsipinicon.

Wildflower of the Month

MARSH MARIGOLD

(Caltha palustris)

by Dean M. Roosa and Sylvan T. Runkel

PHOTO BY TOMMY LOU MAAS

About the time the Pasque flower is beginning to wane, a colorful show is beginning in prairie swales, wet woodlands and seeps. The Marsh Marigold *(Caltha palustris)* comes bursting forth with a bold show of deep yellow. Just as surely as the Pasque flower loves the dry, sandy knolls, this plant loves the permanently waterlogged soil that seldom freezes. The bright flowers (actually composed of sepals, as the plant lacks petals) appear stout but are very fragile and, at maturity, the slightest touch will cause all to drop to the ground. The leaves are kidney-shaped to broadly heart-shaped. The underground system, a myriad of spongy rootlets, supports the plant which ranges up to two feet in height.

Along with many of our common spring wildflowers, this species is in the Buttercup family *(Ranunculacease)*. The scientific name means *"cup of the marsh,"* taken from the shape of the flower and the place where the plant likes to grow. It is found fairly frequently in northern Iowa but is nearly unknown in the southern half of the state.

Livestock have been poisoned by eating large amounts of this plant, but early doctors and pioneers made wide use of it in treating colds, dropsy, anemia, warts and convulsions. The blossoms have been used to make a yellow dye and wine.

You cannot appreciate this plant without getting your feet wet, but get them wet! Discovery of this species in the spring means winter is rapidly retreating and bearing down upon us is that most unforgettable of events — an Iowa Spring.

CLASSROOM CORNER

MAKING A LIVING on your own has always required certain skills or adaptations. A wild animal has a life-long struggle to provide for itself and/or its young as there are few helping hands in the natural world.

To exist, all creatures need at least three basic items: food, water and shelter. Some animals are more adaptable than others. These will likely be the ones that survive the longest in areas where their habitat is being changed by man or nature. Most of the more adaptable creatures show a good tolerance for human disturbances; eat a wide range of food items; and can live in a variety of places.

It is more than just adaptability that makes an animal able to live in diverse settings. The kind of eyes, feet, body covering, leg length and thinking ability are some physical attributes that determine where and on what an animal will live.

Crows are prime examples of adaptability sometimes being called "those clever crows." Even the least bird-conscious among us is aware that the crow, the best known of all black birds, is smart. Black may not be beautiful in the bird world, but it certainly is brainy. I have noticed that the crow is so wary that even if it sits in a tree hundreds of yards away, it instantly flies when a walking man stops.

Most of us have no idea of what a remarkable thought machine the crow really is. Our respect has been tempered by prejudice which is mainly unwarranted. I have heard stories of crows fishing, opening bottles, making food raids and storing shining objects they had collected.

The crow is clannish, a social bird that will gather in a communal roost during winter migrations. Many nonbirders are unaware that crows migrate because crowds do not fly south in huge, noisy, organized flocks as waterfowl do. On top of this we are able to see crows all year round because some stay here while others migrate here from the north for the winter. Crows are found in all areas and rank in the top ten most frequently sighted species in the United States. Crows are individuals, not always following behavior patterns that have been developed by scientists.

Crows are supposed to be loyal mates, a pair staying together for life. But there are many examples to the contrary. The birds work together building their nest. They choose an isolated area with a pine tree. They lay four to six eggs for their yearly brood. When full grown they are 17-21 inches long with a wing spread up to 39 inches.

Crows can be told from a distant hawk by their frequent, steady flapping. They seldom glide more than two or three seconds except in strong updrafts or when descending.

This coarse-voiced communicator, the largest of the perching birds, is also technically a songbird with a syrinx of the singer (similar to our voice box) enabling it to make melodious music for its mate. Crows also can talk like a parrot or parakeet because they posses a complete set of voice muscles and are great imitators, crowing like a rooster, mimicking human laughter and crying like a baby. Their own caws are cadenced sounds ranging in meaning from assembly calls to warnings and alarms.

Studies of the crow's diet show they feed on insects, spiders, snails, wild birds and poultry and their eggs, reptiles and amphibians, and mammals. Carrion (dead animals) is a large part of their diet. They perform an excellent job of keeping highways clear of animal carcasses.

The crow's adaptations for obtaining food, water and shelter account for their still being found in our environment. Their "brainyness" allows them to avoid many dangers. Their many adjustments to humans, such as eating the insects produced by our monocultures (where we plant a single species crop) and eating carrion, insures them an adequate diet.

Take time to study the crows in your area, and see if you can take a picture of a crow.

Lookin' Back

Ten Years Ago

the *Iowa Conservationist* featured an article on safe camping. Every year many campers are injured or even killed while enjoying their sport. Fire, electrocution and drowning are among the dangers.

Pine Lake State Park had its 50th year anniversary complete with a festival put on by the people of Eldora.

The two most common Indian relics found in Iowa are the arrowhead and the axehead.

Twenty Years Ago

the magazine voiced its concern over the use of herbicides and pesticides like 2, 4-D and DDT. One study involved robins and showed that continued meals treated with DDT killed the birds in 7 to 15 days. Use of some of these chemicals has been severely restricted in recent years.

Big Springs hatchery near Elkader was purchased from a private owner and designs were being prepared to make it the primary production station for the Iowa trout program.

Thirty Years Ago

the *Conservationist* announced the availability of a new book . . . Iowa Fish and Fishing. There were 10,000 copies printed in the first edition and the books sold for $2.00 each.

A rabid beaver turned up in Boone County. University veterinary professors had not seen a rabid beaver before this case.

REX EMERSON

FROM THE WARDEN'S DIARY

THE FIRST STOP TODAY was to see the old man who lives down by the river. He was telling his neighbor about the first time that he met me. He had just pulled in a fish trap which he had tied to a tree on the bank, when I walked up behind him.

He said, *"I was just trying to get a mess of fish!"*

I asked him if that wasn't an expensive way to get some fish.

His reply was, *"Well, money is like manure. It's no good unless you spread it around."*

When asked why he bought a rod and reel right after that, he said, *"Well, I didn't have that kind of money to spread around any more."*

The next stop was to see a man about a letter he had sent to our Des Moines office concerning some violations of the game laws in his area, and he wanted something done about it. Letters like that are sent from the Des Moines office to the district offices for the officer supervisor to handle. We have four such offices in the state. I work out of the district office at Lake Darling, Brighton, Iowa 51544. In the southwest part of the state Jerry Hoilien is the supervisor. His office is at Cold Springs State Park, Lewis, Iowa 51544. In northwest Iowa the supervisor is Ben Davis, Spirit Lake Hatchery, Box 7722, Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360. Curt Smith is the officer supervisor in northeast Iowa with an office at Manchester Hatchery, R.R. 2, Box 269A, Manchester, Iowa 52057. Letters sent to Des Moines will get to us; it just takes a little longer.

The man that I went to see today was complaining about his neighbors hunting deer out of season last winter. He waited quite awhile to say anything about it. There isn't much we can do about catching them now, four months after they were doing this illegal hunting. After talking to him almost an hour, it began to get a little more clear. He hadn't actually seen any illegal hunting, but he was *sure* that they had done it. What he really wanted was to be deputized so that he could arrest this neighbor for something, he didn't care what. It was explained to him that while we don't have enough officers, we don't have deputies.

At one time there was such a program, but in many cases it was more difficult trying to keep the deputies out of trouble than they were worth. Law enforcement is a specialized occupation now, and requires intensive training. It is only for those wishing to make a lifetime career of it. It takes a dedicated and trained individual with a lot of common sense mixed in to be a successful law enforcement person. Also, if the officer is married, it takes a very understanding spouse to accept the danger of the job and the unusual hours that are required.

The last item on my agenda for the day was an evening meeting with a civic group. After talking to them about the spring turkey season the program was opened for questions from the audience. One man said, *"I saw an item in the paper last winter about one of the officers who chased a jacklighter for 75 miles before catching him, with the aid of the state plane. What ever happened to that case?"*

The case wasn't in my district but I knew about it. The young lawyer who was the magistrate set the date for the trail, but *did not* notify the officers. The day of the trial, naturally, the officers didn't show up to testify, so the magistrate dismissed the charges. He had sent a note to the assistant county attorney about the trial date, but the note was still lying, unnoticed, on the assistant county attorney's desk on the day of the trial.

The current trend is to use attorneys as magistrates. Evidently law schools train their students to be defense lawyers, and they want to defend every violator who is brought before them. Maybe some day in law school they will teach a class on common sense.

Someone asked the question, *"Are 'chicken hawks' protected?"*

It is hard for anyone who knows anything about birds to realize it, but I get the same question many times each year. There are many different kinds of hawks in Iowa, but none have the name "chicken hawk". Some people think there are just two kinds of hawks, "big chicken hawks" and "little chicken hawks". Not true! The one you see most often during the summer months would probably be the red-tailed hawk. In my opinion the hawks are the best friends that the farmer has in the air over a farm. They don't have an appetite for grain, but they sure like to eat the rodents that do damage crops. All hawks are protected by law. That includes all parts of their body, their plumage, and their nest and eggs.

After the meeting they served pie and coffee. Now, that's *MY* kind of meeting.

Photograph by Ken Formanek