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State Conservation Commission  
10th and Mulberry Sts.  
Des Moines 8, Iowa

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

VOLUME 5

DECEMBER 15, 1946

NUMBER 12

## HOTFOOT AND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

### PUT AND TAKE

A few years ago there was in vogue a small device in the form of a top with hexagonal sides. On each of the sides was one of two words, either "put" or "take." In fact it was a simple gambling device. The player spun the top with a flip of his fingers and when the top had ceased to spin rolled over on one of its many sides exposing to view one or other of the fatal words "put" or "take." It was a game with elastic possibilities, but the essential feature was that everything taken from the pot had first of all to be put in, and every time a player exercised his right to "take" it was necessary to renew stakes.

Life is a game of "put" and "take"; a mild gamble with unknown and unforeseen hazards which may spell success or failure; and it is certain we shall take nothing worth while out of it unless we make a definite contribution on our own behalf.

What the sportsman continues to take from the wildlife field will depend upon what he is prepared to put into it. Conservation is a cooperative endeavor in which all must play their part. It is not a negative policy which prohibits take, for it is based primarily upon wise use, and it is this factor which necessitates cooperation. Game and fish are self-renewing resources, but unlimited take would ultimately destroy the power to reproduce. Protective laws and administrative policies are intended to forestall such a danger while restocking and environmental improvement are intended to secure the take at a more or less constant level.

The sportsman is expected to assist in keeping the pot replenished by making a personal contribution to the success of every conservation measure intended to

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—Allen Green Photo.

### WE PLANTED A TREE

By Allen Green

*We planted a tree in the yard one day  
And the tree seemed pleased for we heard it say:  
"For this start in life you have given me  
Some day I'll grow into a beautiful tree".*

*Years marched on and the tree grew strong,  
Till its trunk was stout and its branches long;  
Then the snowflakes fell and we shouted with glee  
For there in the yard was our CHRISTMAS TREE.*

### Thousands of Iowans to Hunt Cottontails on Christmas Day

THE Christmas rabbit hunt has become an Iowa institution and for many it is as much a part of the holiday as mistletoe, gift giving, and dinner with the home folks.

Typically, all over the Hawkeye state, while the turkey carcass still stands on the table like the skeleton of a derelict ship, Dad half groans, "Boys, we better get some air." Down comes the old 97 and out of the spice laden air of Ma's kitchen, into the winter wonderland. Soon the booming of a shotgun along the creek bottom announces the opening of the Christmas rabbit hunt.

Rabbit hunting is a sport that tests the skill of the best of the shotgun artists for Hotfoot is a past master of the old game of now-you-see-him-and-now-you-don't. This is especially true when rabbits are concentrated in deep grass or dense brush where they are most likely to be after winter sets in in earnest.

In making the gunner look foolish in the open the cottontail uses all the tricks of an All American open field runner, in addition to speed for which he is famous. He has a deceptive change of pace and can reverse his field with an abruptness and grace that would make Doc Blanchard appear like a cart horse. Although to date Hotfoot has not been accused of using the stiff-arm to elude his pursuers he does, with the most disconcerting lack of warning, pop into the safety of some convenient hole in the ground where he laughs up his furry sleeve at the hunter.

One reason for the great popularity of rabbit hunting is the general abundance of this game. Ashbrook and Slater in their excel-

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## Iowa Conservationist

Published Monthly by

THE IOWA STATE CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION

10th and Mulberry—Des Moines, Iowa

ROBERT D. BLUE, Governor of Iowa

G. L. ZIEMER, Director

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE.....27,000

Subscription Rate.....40c per year

3 years for \$1.00

Subscriptions received at Conservation  
Commission, 10th and Mulberry, Des  
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## JUST A FABLE

Once upon a time there was a farmer. He noticed that a lot of folks came to his place in the hunting season, never asked permission, and climbed fences and left gates open all over the place. He didn't say anything, being a very even tempered man, but just noted who the guys were who hadn't stopped to ask permission to hunt on his land, which permission would have been gladly given. A few days later the farmer, and his six offspring and his better half, drove up to the prettiest places in town. They backed the farm truck up onto the lawn, got out and staged a picnic right on that feller's lawn. And, what do you know? . . . It Made The Guy Mad. He thought it took a lot of nerve, to use his own words.

—Thornton Enterprise



Nothing is so discouraging to a dyed-in-the-wool duck hunter as the wild shooting of amateurs at birds far out of range; and nothing marks a hunter as a greenhorn more quickly than his inability to judge the range of his shotgun.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## RECOMMENDS DESERT ISLAND FOR STAR POKERS

THE hoodlum hunters of the entire universe apparently concentrate on Barringer's slough northwest of Ruthven.

Because it is a public shooting ground they have as much right there as anyone else but they have no right to display the kind of brainless shooting they were doing over the weekend.

The change in the weather last Thursday night indicated a duck flight on Friday morning and the moon shooters, bar shooters and shore stompers were up early, on hand and with the crack of dawn doing their worst.

As a result they spoiled the hunting for nearly everybody on the Outlet Friday. A couple of energetic shotgun toters stood on the east shoreline and blasted away at everything, ducks, owls, hawks, blackbirds, drifting cobwebs and low-hanging clouds with a senseless disregard of range.

Time and again bunches of mallards swung in from the east into the northwest wind looking for a spot to sit down but they never got beyond those two rocket shooters. These two men actually shot at birds that must have been two thousand yards up.

They never got anything, of course. All they did was make enough noise to turn back ducks that otherwise would have given a couple of dozen hunters out in the slough some good shooting. In a year when ammunition is so scarce we wonder how it happens that the moon shooters always have such ample supplies on hand they can waste it that way.

You may have noticed it is usually the hunter without a boat, decoys and other duck hunting equipment that shows these bad manners. He selfishly points his

50-yard range shotgun up and pulls the trigger on sky-high birds when he can't possibly reach them. Shorebound, he feels handicapped but if he isn't going to get any birds nobody else is either, by gum!

All of us are guilty of shooting beyond range once in a while but it becomes a crime when it is done deliberately to spoil the hunting of the others. We wish all of these star poker could be corralled on one lake which they could call their own—then let them go to it.

Even a lake wouldn't be necessary; a desert would serve them as well.

—Emmetsburg Democrat

## WILDLIFE SENSITIVE TO CHANGE

It is surprising how sensitive wildlife is toward unnatural trends in their environment. Last summer, when the state conservation department drained about two thirds of the water out of Trumbull Lake, the wildlife began to migrate. Even the snapping turtles, that one would think would remain there as long as there was a pool of water, pulled out. Their natural instinct seemed to tell them that the lake was going dry.

Most of the snapping turtles in the northern part of Trumbull Lake migrated northwest to Green Slough, a distance of about a mile and a half. Those in the south part of Trumbull Lake went east to Lost Island Lake, about a mile away.

While natural instinct prompted this snapping turtle migration, we wonder what instinct or sense of a better environment informed or led those apparently dumb appearing snapping turtles to locate and travel overland to more stable water areas.

—Ruthven Free Press

Careless people have no license to hunt even if they've bought one.

## The Sportsman Speaks

### "Remarks" From The Sportsmen's Questionnaire

**Malcom:** "I would definitely favor a license increase if it could be worked out so that a license would cost three bushels of corn or a half day's work. Now we can pay more, easily; but soon prices may be lower and then with an increased license fee we would not sell as many licenses and thus decrease our income."

**Burlington:** "I think boys and girls under eighteen years of age should not be allowed to go hunting with a rifle without an adult along. I am also in favor of some kind of a test with guns for all hunters, that is, a safety test."

The problem of "plinkers" with .22 rifles is one of great concern to conservation officials. Thousands of dollars worth of damage is done, either carelessly or maliciously, to highline insulators, telephone and light cables, official road signs, livestock, etc., and no song of the outdoors is so disconcerting and annoying as the whine overhead of a .22 slug, fired from some unseen rifle. Most of the damage and annoyance, but not all, is caused by unsupervised youngsters.

**Chariton:** "I favor a raise in license fees but no state tax that will call for another payroll and make a lot more records and reports for people selling sporting goods. Let's be sure and call the raise a license and not a tax."

**Grundy Center:** "People are more than willing to drive hundreds of miles into neighboring states to hunt and fish. Let's have a license raise and use the money here at home to build up a conservation program and make Iowa a place for Iowans to hunt and fish."

The hunting and fishing license dollar is used solely for the conservation program in this state. While Iowa policy, for more than twenty years, has been to serve the out-of-state hunter when he comes, there has been no effort to solicit out-of-state hunters and fishermen as is done in South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and many other states.

**Harlan:** "I favor a definite license increase and I also think that at least one person in each household should receive your little conservation magazine."

**St. Ansgar:** "I believe if license fees are increased many who buy them now and only hunt and fish a little would quit and not buy any at all. It seems to me that an appropriation could be made by the legislature to cover in-



reased costs, as we all hope this high cost is temporary."

**Fort Madison:** "There will be just as many licenses sold if women are allowed to fish without them because more men will get a license so the family can go."

**Sanborn:** "I always thought that here should be a special license for pheasants only and all funds from same to go to replace pheasant stock."

Many special licenses for quail, trout, pheasants, etc. have been suggested. Experiences by other game departments with special licenses have been in many cases unhappy ones and, except in rare instances, have not produced the desired results.

**Milford:** "More people will come to the lakes if license fees are kept down. They feel they are getting cheated white at the park concessions now."

## Put and Take

(Continued from page 89)

guard his sport. He can do this by observing the laws himself and by making it less easy for others to break them; by cooperating with the enforcement officers to the same end; by avoiding waste and by restricting his take to his immediate personal needs, within the limits set by law. These are conservation measures of importance from the standpoint of those who love to spin the recreational loop which represents the sports of fishing and hunting.

PUT — and — TAKE; for "As ye sow so shall ye reap!"

—Department of Game and Fish, Ontario

## COUPLE WISH FOR PHEASANT —IT'S THERE

While Mr. and Mrs. George Schrader were on their way to Des Moines to visit their son, Harold and family, they expressed a wish that they had a pheasant to bring along with them.

While the pleasure of this thought was still fresh in their minds, a young cock pheasant flew directly through the windshield, landing on the floor board of the car at the feet of Mrs. Schrader.

With the pheasant came a shower of splintered glass which left Mrs. Schrader's nylons in shreds. The top of her hat was literally covered with glass particles. A watermelon on the back seat of the car resembled a pin-cushion, with tiny particles of glass penetrating its surface. Neither occupant of the car was injured. As they continued their trip Mrs. Schrader remarked: "Well, here's Harold's pheasant."

—Mason City Globe Gazette

One Roman pure-food law prohibited the sale of any fish that had lost its lustre.



Seven fireplaces in the Plum Grove Lucas home have been restored to their original condition; and period furniture, much of it belonging to the Lucas family, has been placed in the rooms.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## HOME OF FIRST IOWA GOVERNOR BECOMES STATE SHRINE

On November 2, 1946, the governor of Iowa and the State Conservation Commission dedicated Plum Grove, the picturesque Iowa City home of Robert Lucas, the first governor of the Territory of Iowa. Erected by Lucas in 1844, three years after he was retired from office, Plum Grove is older than the State of Iowa and is one of Iowa's most priceless historic shrines. The preservation of Plum Grove for posterity will do much to help preserve the memory of one of the ablest chief executives in Iowa history.

Few men came to Iowa with a richer training in statesmanship. Born at Sheperdstown, Virginia, in 1781, Robert Lucas moved with his family to Ohio in 1800. After receiving a private education he became a surveyor. He served as brigadier general of Ohio militia and fought in the War of 1812, advancing from captain to colonel in that conflict. Lucas served nineteen years in the Ohio legislature, and was chosen by his associates at various sessions to preside over both the house and

senate. In 1832 he presided over the Democratic National Convention which nominated Andrew Jackson for the presidency. He was elected governor of Ohio that same year, and was re-elected for a second term in 1834. In 1838 Lucas was appointed governor of the Territory of Iowa.

Robert Lucas left the impact of his personality, his experience, and his philosophy on Iowa history. During his three years as governor he refused to appoint a gambler or drinker to office. He was a member of the first temperance society in Iowa. He was also a member of the Johnson County Claim Association. He laid the cornerstone of the Old Stone Capitol at Iowa City and took an active part in the constitutional convention of 1844. He was active in promoting both secondary and higher education in Iowa, and did much to encourage internal improvements during his declining years. He was a staunch Methodist and an active Mason. Robert Lucas died at Plum Grove in 1853 and lies buried in Iowa City.

—Bloomfield Republican

## CAT CATCHES QUAIL IN EDITOR'S YARD

The next time we go quail hunting we are going to take Taffy, our six-months-old Persian cat along. Sunday afternoon he came to the back porch with a nice, fat quail in his mouth.

Being young and inexperienced with birds, he let the quail loose, expecting to tantalize it with his paws as he does the mice. Taffy was surprised and looked longingly in the air as the quail took wing.

The quail was evidently caught in the orchard in the back yard. The kitten is the best mouser we have ever seen and frequently catches sparrows and starling on the fly when they are close to the ground.

—New London Journal

## CARELESS HUNTERS

From reports released the past week it is noted that the greatest share of hunting violations are those where a hunter or carload of hunters has been picked up for carrying assembled guns in a car.

The law against this practice was not made solely for the protection of our game bird supply—its primary purpose can better be interpreted: "that the law was enacted to protect human lives."

Too many hunters become careless with guns, and when an assembled gun is carried in an auto the chances that it is loaded exceed the chance that it is not. And because it is loaded, the chances for accident are high.

—Rock Valley Bee

## Wardens' Tales

Shop Talk From the Field

Conservation officer Bernard Severson, in charge of Clay and Palo Alto counties, recently met a party of successful pheasant hunters coming out of a slough. In face of the fact that most hunters in the region had been having trouble finding game, Stub asked an old man, the leader of the group, where the party had found the birds. The reply was, "I'll tell you, sonny, we found them in two places, one where they still is and the other where they ain't."

While George Kaufman, conservation officer in charge of Allamakee and Clayton counties, was checking licenses on the opening day of the trout season along one of the over-crowded trout streams in northeast Iowa, he had an opportunity to display a little of the wisdom of Solomon. Two trout fishermen, fishing on opposite sides of the stream, simultaneously hooked the same trout. The anglers, about to come to blows over the ownership of the fish, appealed to the conservation officer to decide. Kaufman promptly awarded the fish to the angler whose hook was deepest down the fish's gullet.

Conservation officer Ward Garrett, in charge of Pottawattamie County, was "chaperon" for the Iowa delegation of wardens at the Midwest Enforcement Officers meeting at Omaha. Upon returning home he received a bill for \$1.75 and a letter from an Iowa fire chief with the following explanation:

"Dear Sir: While at a fire chief's meeting at the Paxton Hotel last week I met an old friend who was a game warden in Nebraska. We were talking near a table and a lady asked me my name and address. I gave it to her. Then she said, '\$1.75 please'. I asked her what for and she said for dinner. I gave her the money and told my warden friend the dinner was on me. When I got home I received a book about a game warden's meeting and I saw my name in the Iowa list as a game warden. That was an error on the lady's part because I have all I can do without being made a game warden."

Walt Harvey, conservation officer at Marshalltown, is known among his fellow workers as a crow man. He writes:

"The nesting crow requires about ten ounces of food per day, or about 13 1-4 pounds for its nesting life of three weeks. At the end of three weeks the young crow will weigh about a pound. During this time it will have eaten two and a quarter times its own weight in May beetles. The grasshoppers

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One of the least known and understood industries in our state is commercial fishing on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. It is an enterprise that runs into the million dollar figure each year and provides a livelihood for hundreds of families.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## THE HOW OF COMMERCIAL FISHING ON THE MISSISSIPPI

By Ed Robinson

One of the least known and understood industries in our state is commercial fishing—least understood that is by the average layman. It is an enterprise that runs into the million dollar figure each year and provides a livelihood for hundreds of families. In a single year from three to four million pounds of fish are taken from the Mississippi River and find their way into the American market.

There are several kinds of commercial fishing and in each a different type of gear or tackle is used.

Fishermen known as "liners" take fish by means of hooks and lines. This type of fishing is particularly productive during the hot summer months of July and August when the small lakes along the Mississippi River are at their lowest level, and at a time when bait is easy to catch. Principal baits used by the "liners" for catfish include crayfish, chubs, fingerling carp (legal only on the boundary waters), small dogfish, and shad. By the use of hooks and lines thousands of pounds of catfish are taken from the waters of the mighty river each year as it flows past Iowa shores. The bulk of these are sold locally.

In "buffalo" fishing large hoop nets are used. During the spawning period in the spring of the year the buffalo fish invade the lakes and backwaters of the main river in immense numbers to deposit their eggs in the warm water of these spawning areas. Here they are captured by the use of buffalo nets equipped with wings and leads.

The nets are usually four to five feet in diameter at the first hoop

and tapered to two and one-half or three feet at the tail hoop. The webbing of which the net is made is from two to three inches bar measure, permitting small fish to go through unharmed and insuring a catch of only large, marketable buffalo. The large netting, in addition to allowing the small fish to pass through, also admits light readily, and the buffalo, unlike catfish, does not enter a net which is dark or shady.

The buffalo net is usually fished in shallow water. It is held in place by means of two sheets of webbing, one on either side of the first hoop, and stretched in opposite directions at a forty-five degree angle from the entrance. The webbing is held upright like a fence by means of a long stake or pole. This fence of webbing is called the wings. After the wings are in place the net is stretched tightly lengthwise and the tail end is secured by another pole through the tail line or, as the layman calls it, the drawstring at the rear of the net.

Buffalo nets are set crosswise and some distance from the shore line of a lake or pond and usually have a "lead" or sheet of webbing leading from the center of the front hoop, outward between the wings, and all the way in to the shoreline. This lead web is held upright by a stake or pole every ten or twelve feet and forms a fish proof fence from the bottom of the lake to, or a little above, the surface. Fish, while moving up or down the lake, encounter this fence and follow it, searching for a way around, and are led into the net itself.

After the spawning period for buffalo is over and the fish have left the shallows and returned to the deep water of the river, another type of buffalo fishing is carried out on the channel of the

river itself. For this fishing the same type of large mesh net is used, except that it is fished minus the lead and the wings.

The net is held in place by an iron stake attached to some fifty or sixty feet of tail line and driven into the river's bed with a stake driver. The net itself is kept in an upright position by the current of the passing water.

Most buffalo taken in commercial operations—and these are a very important part of the commercial fishing industry, totaling some 629,000 pounds in 1944—are shipped to the eastern, big city markets. They are shipped in the rough, never dressed, and often reach the markets still alive.

Another type of fishing, particularly for catfish, is carried on by means of basket traps. The basket trap is constructed of hardwood slats five to six feet in length. The trap is some ten to fourteen inches square and has two throats made of thin, pointed wooden strips called fingers. The first throat is built in the trap's entrance and is opened enough to allow free passage. The second throat is placed back about a third of the length of the trap entrance and is closed tightly enough to make escape impossible once the fish has entered. As the catfish enters this dark hiding place and passes the first set of fingers, backing out is difficult, and, with a slight pressure on the second set, the fingers spread and quickly close, as the fish passes through into the main section of the trap.

Various kinds of bait are placed in the trap to lure fish in but the basket trap, like all other types of tackle, has a season in which it works well while at other times success is limited.

Another kind of tackle used in taking catfish is the "fiddler" net. The "fiddler" net is constructed almost the same as the buffalo net used in the main body of the river to take carp and buffalo. It is made of much smaller mesh webbing and the hoops are correspondingly smaller. The "fiddler" net is held fast to the river bottom by a tail stake and, as in

the trap, various kinds of bait are used.

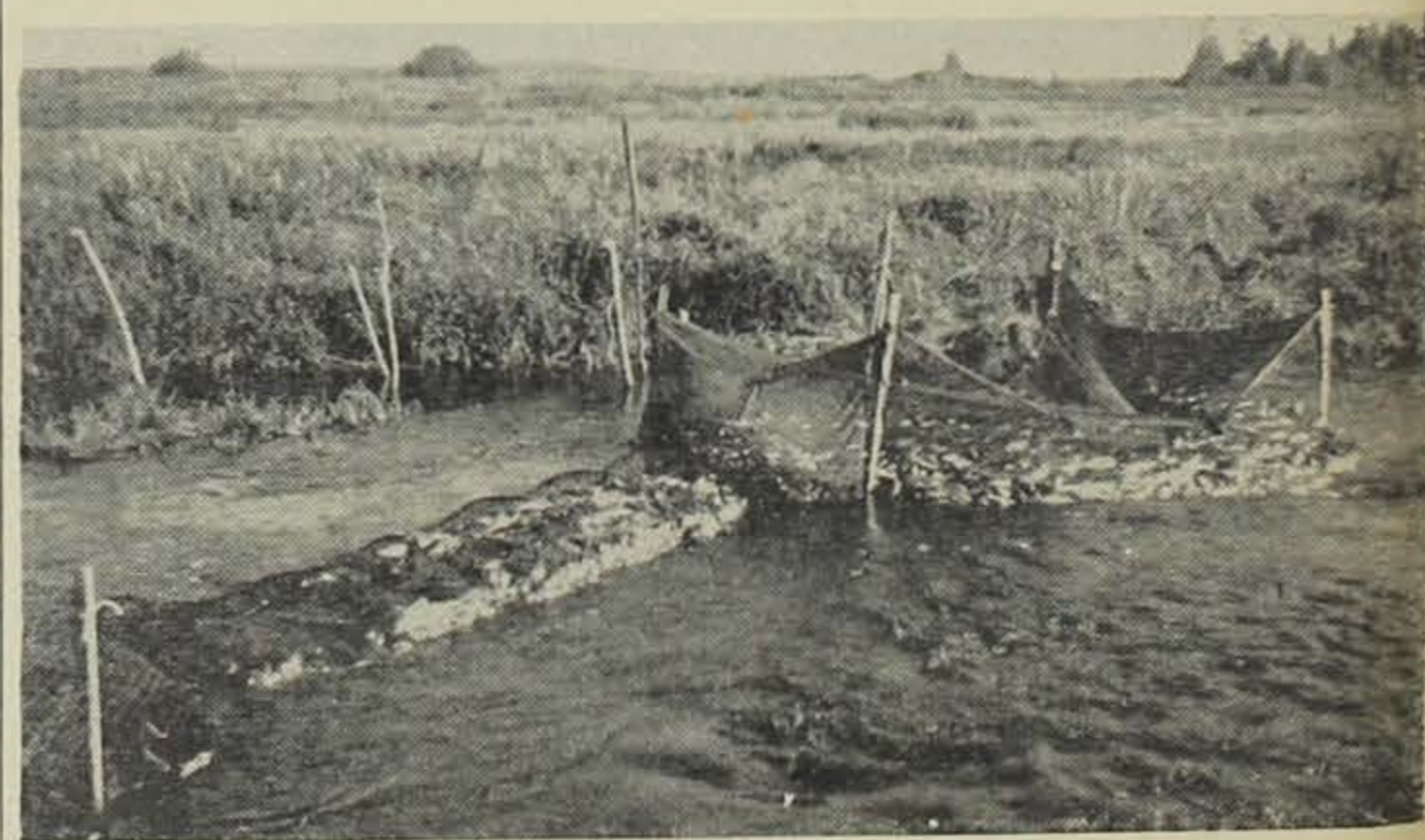
Seine and trammel net fishermen also take many commercial fish and these crews, perhaps most commonly known to the layman, usually consist of from two to four men, depending on the amount of webbing in yards used. In fishing a seine the depth of the webbing is determined by the depth of the water to be fished. For instance, if five feet of water is to be fished in, a seine seven to ten feet deep is usually employed. This gives enough surplus webbing to form a large bag and handle the fish if the haul is a heavy one.

The size of mesh in seine webbing is determined by the kind of fish to be taken. The laws of Iowa permit the use of one and one-half inch bar measure webbing, no smaller. This size webbing prevents the gilling and injury of small catfish and other type of game fish.

The trammel net is a three walled affair, the two outside walls being eight to ten inch measure; the inside wall is usually two to three inch measure. For every yard of outside wall or web, there is usually three yards of inside or center web. All three are hung on the same cork and lead line.

When this net is in use it stands vertically like a fence. The fish pass freely through the first or outside wall, strike the loose inside wall of small mesh web forcing the small web through the second outside wall, thus forming a pocket with the second outside wall serving as a drawstring which holds the fish securely in the pocket formed.

Trammel nets are usually used where one end can be secured to the bank. The free end is then run out one-fourth to one-third of its length into the stream and the remaining length angled downstream. The fisherman then creates a noise or disturbance between the net and the short line, driving the fish to deep water. In their attempt to escape they encounter the net and are trapped in its pockets.



A net loaded with buffalo that had entered the shallow spawning grounds. The hoop net is solid with fish, the holding weir so full that some of the fish are forced out of the water by the jam below.—Kay Setchell Photo.





Courtesy and consideration on the part of the visiting hunter pays important dividends. Many hunters and many landowners have found that pheasant season contacts often ripen into lasting friendships.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## What Do You Mean Southern Hospitality?

A GROUP of Waverly hunters drove into Butler County Sunday morning to see if they could shoot a few pheasants. They didn't do so well with their shooting, but they did just fine when the lady, on whose land they were shooting, invited them into the house for coffee. The lady had not only made coffee for the group of five, but she had whipped up a batch of nice hot biscuits and these biscuits served with butter and "home grown" honey and

washed down with wonderfully brewed hot coffee, served with good old fashioned country cream, started that hungry crowd of town men to eating. They ate and ate until the woman should have known they appreciated her kindness and her food, but she apologized for having no sugar to go with the coffee. And then we have heard how mean the country folks are to hunters. It could be that hunters themselves are to blame for the treatment sometimes accorded them by the farmers who raise the pheasants.

—Waverly Independent

## The History of Stocking And Management Of Ringneck Pheasants in the State of Iowa

By Lester F. Faber  
Game Biologist  
(Part 3)

AT THE end of 1936 the biennial report carried a very definite opinion of policy as to stocking. "The policy of the Commission for stocking birds and animals to repopulate Iowa is based on sound practical facts and experience. No stocking is done unless careful investigation shows that all factors affecting the plantings made are as favorable as possible. The old policy of stocking birds or animals without paying attention to the environment has been discontinued . . . for instance, during the past 20 or 25 years there have been thousands of pheasants released in southern Iowa with very little attention paid as to whether or not these birds would have suitable living conditions, and in most cases these stockings have not produced hunting."

By 1938 the need of a game farm seems to have arisen again. The following excerpts of the biennial report covering 1937 and 1938 indicate the line of reasoning for the establishment of a new game farm:

"The only need for artificial propagation of game birds is to supply parent stocks where birds are near extermination because of over-shooting, drought, severe winters, unfavorable nesting seasons, disease, etc., . . .

"The department has been depending on game breeders to supply parent stock . . .

"Up to 1935-36 the need for seed stocks has not been heavy, the series of unfavorable conditions since then has increased the need . . .

"Other than the major pheasant territory the pheasant range has very few birds and parent stock would materially speed up the comeback . . .

"The department had had some difficulty in securing birds for stocking purposes. In order to insure good, healthy, disease-free birds that will survive in the wild the Commission believes a game bird hatchery is necessary.

"The Commission believes it must set up programs that will actively interest sportsmen and

farmers in their own game problems. For example, if the sportsmen and farmer can have the care of pheasants and quail, help rear them to maturity, provide winter cover, nesting cover and food at critical periods . . . this active interest will develop a feeling of personal ownership, will materially reduce law violations, will develop the proper management of this crop, stop over-shooting and will point to necessity of proper predator control.

"The Commission has been paying about sixty cents each for eight week-old pheasants. It is apparent that the Commission, in the future, will not be able to purchase the type of birds desired at this price."

Ninety-six acres were purchased for the game bird hatchery at the south edge of Ledges State Park. Construction was completed in 1938. Its producing capacity is set at 7,500 quail and 40,000 pheasants.

Actual production of birds started in the spring of 1938. Wild birds were trapped for breeding stock from state lands in northern Iowa that had heavy pheasant populations. A total of 1,016 pheasants were taken.

This original breeding stock did not produce enough eggs in the first year so additional eggs were purchased. Thereafter, breeding stock was raised on the farm from year to year.

By the end of 1938 hatching season a total of 11,462 two-week old pheasants had been distributed to 37 cooperating counties. The average cost to the cooperator was \$.1868 and the Game Farm producing cost was \$.6667 per bird or a total of approximately 85 cents per bird. By 1939 the production had gone up and the cost per bird reduced 66 cents per bird. This report should not be burdened with an array of figures. Suffice to say that the cost of production has gone up and down depending upon existing conditions. Data on number of eggs set annually, chicks set out, number of cooperating agencies, costs, etc., can be found in the biennial reports of 1940, '42, '44 if such information is desired.

The game program built up around the game bird hatchery has had far-reaching public rela-

tions values. The sportsmen and farmers by actively cooperating in rearing programs have developed an interest in game management and have been much more cooperative toward the objectives of the Commission.

Many game technicians are now of the opinion that the stocking of pen-reared pheasants where even meager numbers of wild pheasants exist is not practical. This view seems to be gaining ground. However, the game farm still has a place in management by providing a source of birds when extreme conditions lower seed stocks in favorable areas to the point where stocking probably will do some good.

(Concluded next month)

## Wardens' Tales

(Continued from page 91)

it has eaten, if combined, would form a mammoth insect twice the size of the bird. Wild birds and poultry would each make a bird about the size of a sparrow, and corn, an ear about one and one half times as big as a large Iowa ear. The diet of a young crow includes small mammals, spiders, caterpillars, May beetles, poultry, wild birds, miscellaneous beetles, carrion, amphibians, crustaceans, and grasshoppers. In fact, no less than 656 different items have been identified in the food of the crow.

"As Henry Ward Beecher once said, if men wore feathers and wings, very few of them would be clever enough to be a crow."

—"Walt"

## IN-LAW GUNNING

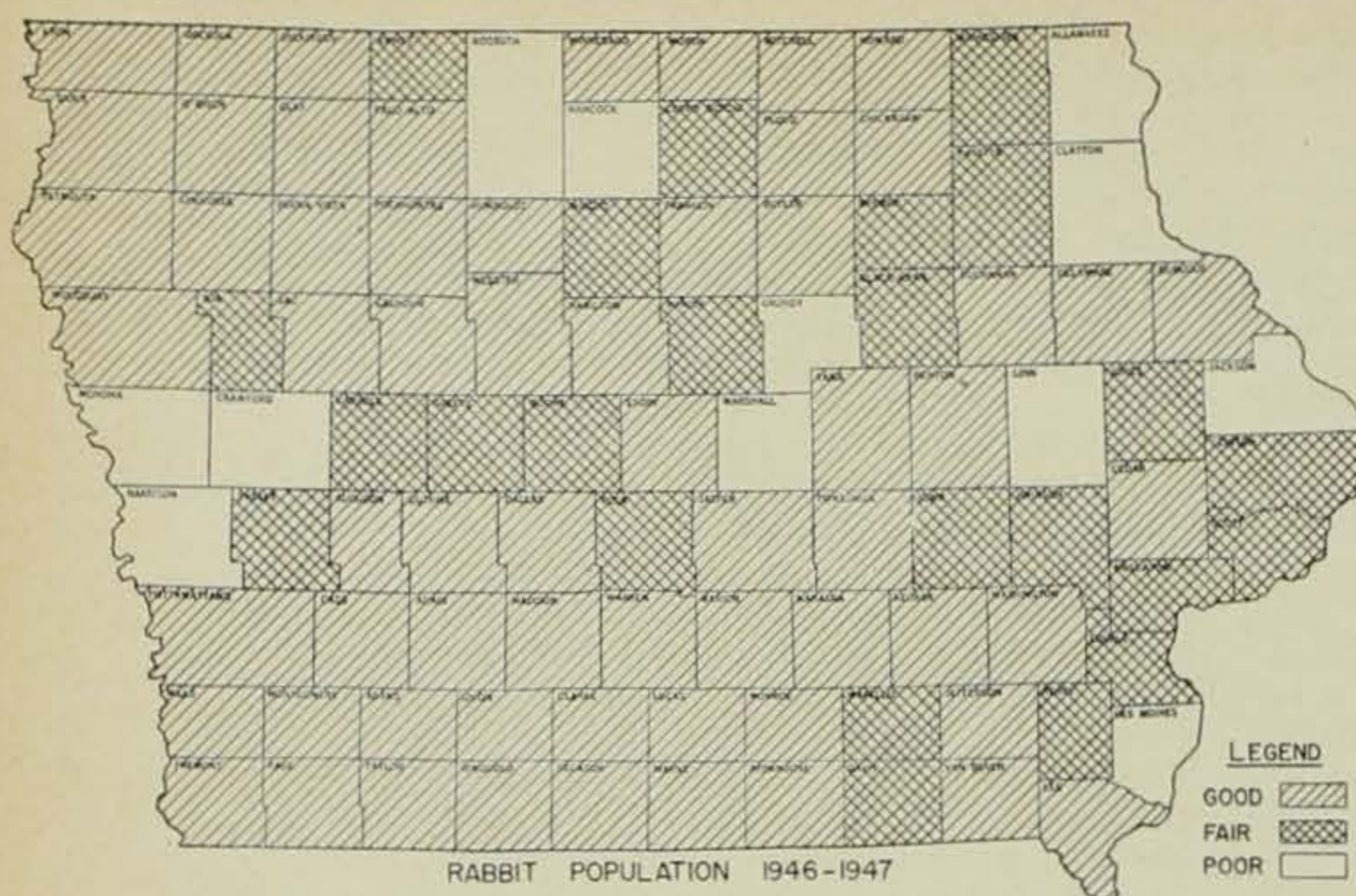
A Boone hunter has decided that "all they say about in-laws" is true and he's gunning for his brother-in-law, who loaned him a gun. The would be hunter drove several miles into the country, parked his car and walked more miles with "cold and rough" going. No pheasants in sight, for some time, and then his bird dog routs out a beauty—easy shooting distance. He shoots—but nothing happens. Thinking he had a dead bullet, he tries again—still no "bang." He looks — no firing pin. To make matters worse, he sees three more pheasants on his way back to the car. The bird dog was disgusted.

—Boone News Republican



Ninety-six acres were purchased for a game bird hatchery at the south edge of Ledges State Park. Construction was completed in 1938 with the unit's capacity set at 7,500 quail and 40,000 pheasants.





## Hotfoot . . .

(Continued from page 89)

lent book, "Cooking Wild Game", say, "Wild rabbits undoubtedly constitute the largest, cheapest, and most generally available supply of game in the United States . . . Abundant most everywhere, shot for market and free from non-sales restrictions in many states, they form an important food supply. This fact has been true from the earliest settlement of America to the present day."

Rabbits build up tremendous populations and, in spite of the fact that they are an important food for foxes, hawks, owls and almost all other predators, Brer Rabbit has been known to occur as thickly as two per acre in Iowa over large areas.

As a food animal the cottontail is first class and recipes for preparation of rabbit meat are legion. Ashbrook and Slater recommend no less than twenty-two recipes,

including rabbit fried, baked, stewed, creamed, jugged, and in Hasen Kutchen and Hasenpfeffer. It has been said that more pounds of wild rabbit meat are consumed in the United States than the combined total weight of all deer, elk, moose, antelope, bear, pheasant, duck, geese, partridge, quail, dove, and squirrel.

In Iowa an estimated 200,000 hunters will harvest well over two million rabbits this year and it is believed that a fresh snow Christmas Day will bring 100,000 rabbit hunters into the fields that day alone.

This year rabbits will be found in abundance in much of the state. The accompanying map, compiled from conservation officers' reports, shows where the best rabbit hunting may be expected.

To date the cottontail has not been hunted much; but oil up your running gears, Hotfoot, the boys are coming home for Christmas.

within gunshot range around here with a duck call.

—Fort Dodge Messenger

## COMPLAINING FARMERS CAN HAVE BEAVERS SENT ELSEWHERE

State game wardens are at present engaged in the work of trapping beaver, upon complaint of farmers who don't want them on their land, for removal elsewhere where they will be encouraged to set up new colonies.

While most farmers rather like the idea of having a beaver dam or two on small streams running through their lands, because the little dams conserve water for livestock, and the water seeps into the ground and helps to protect against wells running dry during dry seasons, there are also some objections on the ground that the beaver will steal a little corn from nearby fields.

The beaver are protected against molestation and illegal trapping by heavy penalties, but where damage can be shown, the State Conservation Commission will issue trapping permits, or trap the animals alive for removal.

—LeMars Globe Post

## MEN ARE NATURALLY HUNTERS

On Monday of this week, men from all over Iowa, and from surrounding states, trekked their way to this community to partake of the annual hunt for ringnecked pheasants. Men are natural hunters. They love to kill. They thrill at the thought of capturing an animal, shooting a bird, killing a deer, and hooking a large fish. We are inherit Indians. We love to mimic the Indian, and for a time each year, camp out, and "rough it."

The Courier sells hunting licenses, and on Monday morning we sold dozens of the permits to in and out-of-state hunters. Men dressed in hundreds of dollars worth of hunting clothes, armed with high price shotguns, and also carrying several dollars worth of ammunition, ready at ten o'clock to enter the corn and bean fields in search of the coveted pheasant.

Men in general sought permission from the farmer to hunt his lands, and hunting this year was less wanted than usual by the farmers as practically no fields had given up the golden crop of corn as yet.

Many hunters remarked to us as they purchased a license, that they did not particularly care for

pheasant meat, but they loved to shoot the birds—strange, isn't it? Maybe that is one reason for the wars, men love to kill, to be shooting at something, even if it is only a clay pigeon, they love to shoot and hit something, and most men would rather shoot at something alive.

—Reinbeck Courier

## DUCK HUNTERS SEE MONKEY

Duck hunters see rabbits, foxes, squirrels and sometimes even ducks, but a trio from Burlington came home with a new one—they declared they had seen a monkey.

James and Roy Wachutka and Walter Woelhaf rounded a bend in a slough, where ducks were supposed to be, came face to face with the fugitive from a South Sea island. The furry little animal was sitting on a log washing its face, they reported.

Startled, they did nothing but look, the monkey did the same and then vanished among the trees.

Joe Risburg, operator of the Risburg amusement park on Madison avenue, reported a monkey had escaped from his collection some time ago, and the three nimrods believe the animal they saw belonged to Joe.

—Burlington Hawkeye Gazette

A starfish will eat more than eight oysters in a day.



There is no reason to be peeved if the warden checks your game and license. That's his job, and you help pay for his looking after business.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## THE INSIDE TRACK

THERE is no reason to get peeved if the game warden checks you or your car. That is what they are paid for. We have had our license checked several times and what of it?

Years ago we were in a boat fishing on May 15. It was colder than the dickens. We had on several shirts and a few pair of pants. Milt Hardman, a friend of

the writer, was game warden. He made the writer stand up in the boat and strip down to the last pair of pants where the license was in the billfold. We did not get mad about it but just laughed and waited. Our turn came one day and we finished him off until he said he had enough. So just laugh if you get investigated. The warden has the inside track and it's his business. We help pay for his looking after business.

—Estherville Enterprise





Each winter some of our shallow lakes freeze out because of lack of oxygen. No known effective method has been devised to replenish the supply of oxygen during the winter once it has become depleted.

## WINTER FISH KILLS

**F**ISH sometimes die in shallow lakes during winter months when a combination of thick ice, heavy snow blanket and cloudy weather prevail.

The primary reason for such a die-off is lack of oxygen. Dead vegetation, etc., uses oxygen in the process of decaying. About the only manner in which this oxygen can be replaced is through the photosynthesis of plant life. In other words when plants make food by sunlight they give off oxygen. If the sunlight can not penetrate the water due to a thick blanket of snow and ice, aquatic plants fail to keep up the oxygen supply necessary to maintain the fish supply. This, of course, may happen only in quite shallow lakes where a large supply of oxygen is not available to begin with. The deeper bodies of water often possess enough volume to tide the fish over critical periods.

Shallow lakes and sloughs subject to winter kill should enter the winter season with as much water in them as can be safely maintained without damage to surrounding farm lands, etc. Furthermore such shallow lakes are apt to "freeze out" periodically anyway. Restocking, if practical, is the only measure of controlling fishing. A lake that freezes out on an average of once in ten years and then in a year or two comes back through restocking provides several years of good fishing and is worth the effort of a restocking program.

The sunfishes, bass, crappie, etc., are the first fish to die when a lake "freezes out"; next go the buffalo and carp; and finally the bullhead. Not all lakes are suit-

able for production of gamefish but will produce bullheads currently. While the bullhead is not a sporting fish he provides a lot of entertainment and a tasty meal. The production of the bullhead in shallow sloughs and lakes should be reckoned with perhaps as the next best thing to a game fish lake. After all, not every girl is born a "queen". Neither is every lake a deep crystal clear pool.

—"Doc" Dare, Wapello Republican

## PLANES SCARE DUCKS

If you happen to see a cylindrical protusion from duck hunters' blinds in this territory, it may be an anti-aircraft gun and not a chimney.

For local hunters are incensed over the activity of airplane pilots. Flying hunters paid several visits to all ponds in this region Sunday. Whether they were "spotters" for hunters or planned to take pot-shots from the air was not learned as the planes kept many flights of wild ducks from settling into range of other hunters.

One local hunting party was thankful they had no decoys set out as a plane kept scouting their pond. They protested, "If the air-men had shot our way we might have been 'dead ducks' and if we weren't, we might have been tempted to shoot back."

Several local sportsmen plan to protest hunting from the air, first taking their grievance to the county Wildlife Protective association, and recommending that the association seek to have aerial gunnery against all game outlawed.

"That kind of hunting isn't sportsmanship," they insist.

—Elk Horn Review

## PITY THE RINGNECK HUNTER, HIS REWARD: ACHES GALORE

**P**ITY the poor pheasant hunters!

They come for miles after begging and finagling shells for the past year. They have gone into sporting goods shops and bought things they will never use to impress the store owner with the fact that they are customers and so eligible for shells. They have bought clothes they never wear any other time except this one or possibly two days. They arrived wreathed in smiles and what the real sportsman should wear. It is probably the first time they have walked farther than from the house to the car since last open season, so they more than step out as they laugh and joke on the way to the car for the big day.

Then the day begins actually with the briefing for the first cornfield attack. They walk over muddy hummocks, pull through long wet grass and finally a pheasant flies up. At first they are perfect gentlemen and the man who has the best chance or the one who has come the longest distance is allowed to take a crack at the bird. It sails off and all the rest of the crowd wonder why some men try to hunt anyway. Now if I had had that perfect shot, it would have been a bird in the bag, each hunter says to himself. Pretty soon several birds are scared up and everyone blazes away. A small son of one of the hunters shouts, "You got that one, Daddy!" And Daddy smiles a triumphant smile knowing all the while he never came within forty feet of hitting one of the birds, but he goes over and picks up the pheasant and gets by with it.

Pretty soon it starts to rain but what is a shower between sportsmen. Well, perhaps the old rheumatism left from the last war won't get too bad if he can walk

until he dries off, worries one hunter. The rest are afraid even to think about it and keep going.

They come to a small cornfield. The son wearily thanks a kindly providence that the field is ONLY a mile across.

So it goes all day from 10 till 4. They are supposed to return to the local host's home at noon for dinner but they decide to keep going. In the meantime the local housewife keeps the food hot. Makes coffee at least four different times and decides THIS is the last time. She has been saying it for years but this is the first time they have not come at noon.

An ex-tailgunner who was a whiz over Germany pours forth the most amazing flood of expletives ever heard in these parts as he misses every single shot. So it goes.

Comes four o'clock and they troop in, paralyzed with weariness but trying to keep going so that no one will suspect that age is creeping up on them. All crowds are alike. The opening day they got enough to go around. Saturday all day netted one bird. To make good a Des Moines dinner, the host takes frozen birds out of the locker. The hunters plan a tale of shooting 'em frozen out of the sky in Kossuth.

—Emmetsburg Democrat

The ordinary dog wags his "tail" but the hound wags his "stern." An otter wags his "pole," a rabbit his "scut," a fox his "bush," and a deer his "single."

Snakes cannot travel as fast as some people suspect. One species of king snake has a maximum speed of .72 mile an hour, a bullsnake 1.18 miles an hour and the red racer of California 3.60 miles an hour.

Horses can sleep standing up because their legs are provided with muscular mechanism which causes them to lock, making a horse stand as if he were on stilts.



Pity the pheasant hunter if you will for his "aches galore," but these three nimrods seem to be enjoying themselves, thank you.—Jim Sherman Photo.



## COMMISSION ACTION NOVEMBER 1946

The November meeting of the State Conservation Commission was held at the Ottumwa Hotel, Ottumwa, Iowa, November 18, 1946.

Members present were E. B. Gaunitz, F. W. Mattes, F. J. Poyneer, R. E. Stewart, and E. G. Trost.

### The Commission:

Authorized attendance of Superintendent of Parks at the meeting of the American Institute of Park Executives in St. Louis, Missouri, on November 17, 18, 19 and 20, subject to Executive Council approval.

Authorized attendance of Superintendent of Public Relations and Chief of Administration at meeting of the National Conference of Conservation Education and Publicity at Roscommon, Michigan, on December 6, 7 and 8, subject to Executive Council approval.

Authorized attendance of three Commissioners and three staff members at a meeting of the Twelfth North American Wildlife Conference to be held in San Antonio, Texas, February 3, 4 and 5, 1947, subject to Executive Council approval.

Accepted resignations as follows: Mrs. Hazel Silverman, P. B. X. operator and receptionist.

Mrs. Lavonne Beck, claim clerk. Rae Sjostrom, Spirit Lake, fish and game conservation officer.

Paul R. Wille, conservation officer at Ambrose A. Call Recreational Reserve.

Raymond W. Purhmann, lake patrolman at Black Hawk Lake.

Lester Pollard, conservation officer trainee at Stone Park.

Authorized a 3-day meeting of Commission employees to be held in Des Moines in January.

Approved the termination of employment, effective November 30, of J. A. Dunkel, Superintendent of Dredges.

Approved the proposed Request for Appropriation budget of the Lands and Waters Division of \$405,000 as presented, plus an additional amount to represent a 20 per cent increase in salaries.

Approved conditional acceptance of deed to the Petrus Memorial Forest.

Approved recommendation of Chief of Lands and Waters Division for re-allocation of certain funds in the Conservation Works Fund.

Approved transfer of funds in the amount of \$881.28 from the Conservation Works Fund for co-operation with the town of Lake View in construction of a free beach at Crescent Park beach on Black Hawk Lake.

Accepted offer of the town of Elgin to purchase for \$1.00 the abandoned Turkey River channel inside the city limits of Elgin.

Approved entering into a temporary agreement with Mahaska

County for the maintenance of the Lake Keomah Park road.

Granted a permit to the city of Lake View to construct a free public skating rink on state property near Black Hawk Lake.

Approved the request of the Prairie Cold Area Council of Boy Scouts for camping privilege at the Mini-Wakan camp grounds from June 15 to August 4, 1947.

Granted permission to the Storm Lake Gun Club to temporarily use and develop an area of state land in the Storm Lake Park area for trap shooting.

Granted the request of Clarence Ruehle of Ruthven for a permit to place a drain tile from his cellar to Lost Island Lake, subject to certain conditions.

Issued a concession contract to Victor Robinson at Lake of Three Fires Recreational Reserve for a one-year period.

Issued concession contract at Pikes Peak to Bridget M. Broderick of McGregor, for a one-year period.

Authorized a Refresher Lake Patrolman School to be held at Boone in February or March.

Approved the purchase of two new 22-foot patrol boats for use on Clear Lake and Lake Okoboji.

Approved the list of trees and prices for erosion control planting during the spring of 1947.

Approved for acquisition the Miller Christiansen option on 105 acres near Mt. Ayr in Ringgold County at the price of \$45.24 per acre to be paid from Pittman-Robertson funds.

Approved the purchase from Howard Graesing of three lots adjacent to the Orleans Hatchery grounds at Spirit Lake at \$250 each.

Approved entering into a one-year lease with Donald Anderson for the area to control the outlet of the Allen Green Refuge.

Authorized the construction of carp traps at various locations at a cost of approximately \$3,500.

Authorized the deepening by dragline of Pierce Pond at Storm Lake at a cost of \$200 to \$250.

Authorized repair of the fishways in the dams at Humboldt and Rutland at a cost of \$100 to \$150.

Authorized construction of a service road and new outlet at the Silver Lake pike pond near Lake Park for the sum of \$1,080.

Authorized a letter of appreciation to be sent to the Cerro Gordo Board of Supervisors for their work in improving the road at Ventura for hunters and fishermen.

Meeting adjourned.

### A SHORT TALE OF LONG TAILS

Bob Randall, Cherokee railroad brakeman, entered the longest pheasant tail feather in the contest sponsored by the Cherokee Implement Co. and the Daily Times to date with an entry measuring 26 and seven-eighths inches in length.

—Cherokee Times

Whale milk is not essentially different from cow's milk.



Good old Iowa came through with a bumper crop of hybrid corn so tall that when hunters did get a shot it was at a bird behind a heavy screen of corn stalks.—Jim Sherman Photo.

## PHEASANTS LAUGH LAST

HATS off to the State Conservation Commission. They did a magnificent job of protecting the pheasant population for future hunting seasons.

When the Commission selected the three week period from Oct. 28 through Sunday, Nov. 17, they gave the pheasants a break, because the dates come so early that only a wee portion of Iowa's bumper corn crop is harvested.

Which means that the birds don't have to bunch up in a relative few unpicked cornfields to find cover. And good old Iowa came through with a crop of hybrid corn which is so tall when you do get a shot at a pheasant you have to get your shot in quick between a couple of stalks of corn or the wily old cocks never get more than a foot above the corn as they sneer on their way to safety. Cover underfoot is so thick in many cornfields that unless you step on a pheasant he just sits there unnoticed and lets the hunters pass by.

Commission scored again in making the shooting hours 10 a. m. until 4 p. m. That eliminates finding the birds in drainage ditches and sloughs where they roost and gives them time to get out in those gigantic fields of corn. There's no late afternoon meadow shooting and the 4 p. m. closing hour is too early for the birds to be working out along the roads for gravel to aid in settling their meals of corn and soybeans.

Cold weather hasn't come to bunch the birds.

Like other hunters who have tramped all day with only a shot or two for the effort, we've said some harsh words about the Conservation Commission. But with a record number of hunters in the field and the war teaching many more men how to handle guns effectively, the Commission probably made a wise move. Otherwise, so many pheasants might have been killed that we could have had no open season in 1947.

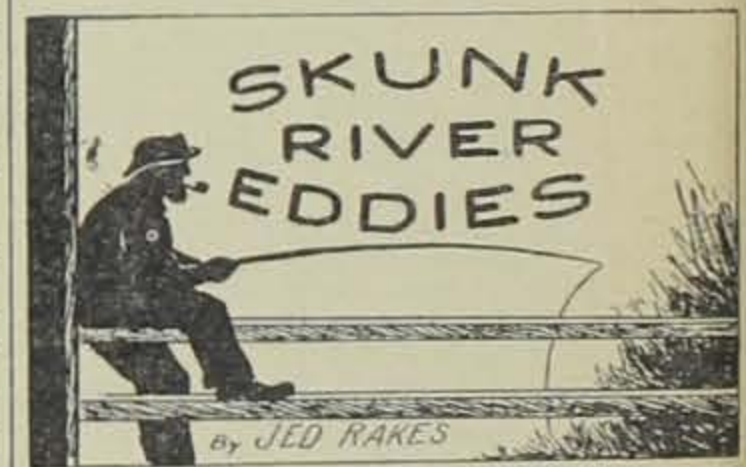
Starting next Monday morning, pheasants will be giving us the merry ha, ha from every roadside. Scarcity of pheasants will vanish miraculously overnight. That's what makes pheasant hunting such sport—they're so cussed smart.

—Anamosa Journal

### DIVE BOMBER

And speaking of pheasants, hunting stories are a dime a dozen around town now . . . the boys are still laughing about Herman Weihe's surprise the other morning while lying-in-wait for a crack at some ducks . . . crouched low and quiet, the silence was suddenly broken when, Whop! . . . something hit Herman on the head . . . knocked his hat right off . . . and away flew an owl that had swooped down to battle.

—Tripoli Leader



They had Lem Snoddy up before the squire fer fishin' without a license. Lem said he was only ketchin' gars jes fer the fun o' it. The squire tol' him he'd let him off but he'd have to pay \$10.00 amusement tax.

I guess about the only way there is to keep everbuddy happy is ter have congress pass a law ter have standard time in the morning fer the farmer an' daylight savin' time in the afternoon fer the fishermen.

The annual Mill Bend community picnic at Green's Grove hez bin postponed till sometime when the catfish ain't bitin'.

When a feller'll set out in a boat all day in a cold wind in November, jes to ketch a few half frozen crappies, it's a sign he's gettin' ole.

Andy Gillam says, "If they was ever a fisherman by the name of Reginald I ain't never met up with one."