

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

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Number 3

## CURRENT LAND AND WATERS DEVELOPMENT

### BLUEGILL— PISCATORIAL BANTAM-WEIGHT

Among anglers who pursue the sport of panfishing, the unanimous choice, for both scrap and downright good eating, is the bluegill. Just as the largemouth black bass is appropriately called the king of American game fishes, the bluegill certainly rates as the prince of panfishes.

Nearly every angler fondly recalls barefoot boyhood days when a jaunt to the "ol' fishin' hole" seldom failed to produce a dandy string of bluegills. Cooperation seems to be the characteristic of this piscatorial bantam-weight.

Be it a bent pin with a piece of sandwich meat, dangling from wrapping string tied to the finger of a youngster, or the accurately placed dry fly—the bluegill shows no preference in personalities. When on the feed, and this is most of the time, the bluegill will take a bite of anything remotely resembling food.

For a session of utmost fishing enjoyment, with delicious eating the reward for a heavy creel, no panfish sport surpasses that which can be had with a light fly rod, once the bluegills are located. They seem to school readily, strike vigorously and feed often—a most inviting combination for angling sport.

However, despite the greediness of the smaller bluegills, which makes them easy victims for the frying pan, the larger brethren are much more cautious and selective in their eating habits. Catching the limit of bluegill heavyweights requires study, skill and "know how"—but, the satisfaction is worth the effort.

Although monster bluegills are constantly being reported, the average size will approximate one-half pound. By the fisherman's thumb rule, a bluegill from six to eight inches is a "nice one," from

(Continued on page 24)



Of great significance is the fact that the General Assembly has recognized the necessity and desirability of expanding our recreational facilities and that Iowans are willing and able to finance such a program out of general revenue. Jim Sherman Photo.

### EVEN THE DUCKS HAVE HOUSING PROBLEMS

By Thomas G. Scott, Leader  
Iowa Cooperative Research Unit

The housing problems of ducks, coots, rails and other marsh birds in the vicinity of Ruthven, Iowa, have undergone investigation by Dr. Maurice W. Provost, Research Fellow, Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. This "house to house poll" of nesting preferences involved a careful search for the nests and an analysis of the many factors influencing their location and success. The findings have been reported upon in a 310-page thesis filed by Dr. Provost in the library at Iowa State College.

Dr. Provost found that an understanding of the nest requirements involved more than the mere identification of the plants in and around the nest. Suitable nesting vegetation in itself was not necessarily indicative of good nesting habitat. There were other considerations.

Dr. Provost particularly stressed the importance of water depth and advised that water levels in

marshes be adjusted in accordance with the needs of the nesting birds and the character of the land basin. He found, too, that diving ducks, coots and grebes preferred to nest in vegetation extending above water and near open water areas. These particular birds seemed to show a preference for a balanced distribution of nesting vegetation in and around open water areas.

It was also found that even in the best habitat the number of birds nesting was limited to some extent by the degree of tolerance they exhibited for one another.

During the course of the study an effort was made to list those characteristics of nesting cover that were of importance to the birds nesting in the marsh. The several items considered most important were: structure of plants, density of vegetation, rate of growth of plants, duration and nature of dead vegetation, intermixture of plants, depth of water and relationship of vegetation to open water areas. Each of these prop-

(Continued on page 23)

By V. W. Flickinger

Chief, Lands and Waters Division

Financed through an appropriation from the Fifty-Second General Assembly, the State Conservation Commission has initiated one of the most extensive state-wide development programs in its history.

Known officially as "Lands and Waters Development," it has been termed by some "The Capital Improvement Fund." Commission and staff members, however, are using the term, "Extension Budget," which indicates that the work being done under its provisions is not a part of the regular maintenance activities on existing properties.

Of great significance is the fact that the General Assembly has recognized the necessity and desirability of expanding the recreational facilities of the state; that conservation of natural resources is of vital importance to the state's welfare; that Iowans are willing and able to finance such a program out of general revenue.

"There is hereby appropriated and set out of the general fund of the state to the State Conservation Commission the sum of two million seven hundred thirteen thousand one hundred dollars (\$2,713,100) or so much thereof as may be necessary for construction, acquisition, replacements, alterations for state parks and reserves, state forests, state waters, for dredging, for artificial lake development, for erosion control, for streams and lake access, for land acquisition, and for design and investigation, the same being allotted in the following amounts:

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. State parks and reserves    | \$ 451,600.00 |
| 2. State forests               | 35,000.00     |
| 3. State waters                | 71,500.00     |
| 4. Dredging                    | 600,000.00    |
| 5. Artificial lake development | 1,272,000.00  |
| 6. Erosion control             | 77,000.00     |
| 7. Stream and lake access      | 50,000.00     |
| 8. Land acquisition            | 67,000.00     |
| 9. Design and investigation    | 89,000.00     |

But said funds appropriated and set aside by this act shall not be expended until it shall be deter-

(Continued on page 22)



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**FEBRUARY COMMIS-  
SION ACTION**

A meeting of the State Conser-  
vation Commission was held in the  
Des Moines office on February 16.

Members present were Mrs. Ad-  
dison Parker, F. W. Mattes, F. J.  
Poyneer, and E. G. Trost.

**The Commission:**

Granted a Scientific Collector  
Permit to Dr. Ralph Nestler of the  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Endorsed the bill before Con-  
gress to establish the Quetico Su-  
perior Forest in northern Minne-  
sota and Canada as a National  
Wilderness Area.

Authorized attendance of six  
staff members and five commis-  
sioners at the 13th North Ameri-  
can Wildlife Conference at St.  
Louis, March 8-10, subject to Ex-  
ecutive approval.

Authorized attendance of one  
delegate at Cooperative Wildlife  
Research Conference in St. Louis,  
March 5 and 6, subject to Ex-  
ecutive Council approval.

Accepted resignations of Joan  
Willets, effective February 14;  
Peter Fazio and Irene Brennan,  
effective February 7; and Harry  
Rector, effective June 30.

Authorized conservation officer  
examination be given to qualified  
applicants, 20 applicants receiving  
the highest grade in Fish and  
Game examination to be certified  
for that division, 12 applicants to  
be certified for Lands and Waters  
Division.

Approved continuing the Memo-  
randum of Agreement for Fish Re-  
search, Education, Extension and  
Demonstration with the Depart-  
ment of Zoology and Entomology,  
for the present fiscal year.

Approved printing 5,000 copies  
of souvenir pamphlet to be distrib-

**"DEAR EDITOR"**

Spirit Lake, Iowa.

Dear Jim:

Perhaps I am over-sensitive  
about the food habits of fish or per-  
haps there are some exceptional  
fish in Dickinson County. In the  
February issue of the "Iowa Con-  
servatist" (page 11) you have  
a little note to the effect that, "A  
fish, when swallowing a smaller  
fish, will always turn it around to  
make sure it goes down head first."  
I seriously doubt that statement,  
particularly the "always."

On the 16th of September, 1947,  
I examined six walleye fingerlings

\* \* \* \* \*



A pike found choked to death by a silver  
bass along the north shore of Spirit Lake.

uted at Plum Grove Historic Mon-  
ument.

Approved proposed plans for  
scheduling the traveling exhibit in  
the schools during the spring sea-  
son.

Adopted a Declaration of Inten-  
tion to transfer to the U. S. Gov-  
ernment 204.39 additional acres in  
the Effigy Mounds National Monu-  
ment, subject to an enabling act  
of the legislature.

Authorized the Director to sign  
a petition for vacation of Goose  
Lake drainage district in Greene  
County, and approved obtaining an  
easement on the outlet tile line  
area.

Approved master plan for dredg-  
ing of Five Island Lake.

Approved remodeling the house  
on the "Boston 80" and relocating  
of the road through the Oak Grove  
picnic area in Ledges State Park.

Granted a one-year lease and  
commercial dock permit to C. L.  
Baumgartner of Clear Lake for  
operation of boat livery at the  
Parker Tract on Clear Lake.

Granted permission to the City  
of Fort Dodge to remove a small  
island in the Des Moines River.

Prohibited swimming and wad-  
ing in the Cedar River through  
Palisades-Kepler State Park and  
authorized posting that area.

Authorized the use of south  
lodge at Dolliver Memorial State  
Park as a recreation hall for group  
camping, to be reserved for private  
use only when it is not in use by  
group camps.

Approved purchase of a com-  
plete unit of flood rescue equip-  
ment.

Accepted the quit claim deed for  
63 acres of surplus land at the  
Burlington Ordnance Plant for  
\$2,870.

Meeting adjourned.

from Welch Lake. These six fish  
contained a total of 28 fathead  
minnows; of this number only  
three were taken head first, 22  
were taken tail first and three  
were too far along in digestion to  
determine just which way they had  
been taken. No doubt the relative  
sizes of the prey and predator have  
a lot to do with how ingestion takes  
place.

About the only way a fish could  
turn its food around would be by  
spitting it out and taking it again.

Perhaps the fact that a number  
of fish are found dead each year,  
with a large fish caught head first  
in its mouth, has lead to the belief  
that they always turn the food-  
fish around so that it can be taken  
head first.

I hope that I don't seem to be  
making a "mountain out of a mole  
hill," just thought my viewpoint  
should be added.

Yours very truly,

/s/ Tom Moen,  
Fisheries Biologist.

Marshalltown, Iowa.

Dear Jim:

Bob Large, working for Krant-  
mans Hide, Furs and Junk, Mar-  
shalltown, Iowa, handed me a  
paper and as we checked through  
the items we found the game mar-  
kets as listed. I am sending you  
this paper thinking that maybe a  
story could be made from it.

After you are through with it I  
would appreciate it very much if  
you would return the paper and  
we can use it for a local story.

Yours truly,

/s/ Walt Harvey,  
State Conservation Officer.

**Produce Markets**

South Water street markets  
were slow, with moderate supplies,  
but they were ample for the de-  
mand, and prices remained steady.  
Cold weather interfered with the  
potato trade. Arrivals were 29  
cars. Butter was easier, both here  
and at Elgin, with a limited busi-  
ness.

Game—Prairie chickens, \$6 per  
dozen; partridge, \$5.50; quail,  
\$1.25; venison carcasses, 7c per lb.;  
saddles, 7c; ducks, mallard, \$3.50  
per doz.; red heads, \$3.50; blue-  
wing teal, \$2; green-wing teal,  
1.50; small, \$1.25; bear carcasses,  
hide on, \$10; saddles, 12c per lb.;  
plover, golden, \$1.50 per dozen;  
grass, \$1.25; small, 30c; jack-  
snipe, \$1.25; sand, 25c; rabbits,  
50c; jack rabbits, \$1.75.—The  
Weekly Inter Ocean, Chicago, Il-  
linois, December 6, 1898.

**MINK CATCHES BIG CATFISH**

George Nelson of Osage writes  
the editor that he has hunted and  
trapped and fished for 55 years  
and now believes that he has seen  
everything. While setting mink  
traps this past fall he saw a dis-  
turbance in an open patch of  
water and upon investigating saw  
a mink struggling in the water.  
Upon seeing the trapper the mink

**OUTSTANDING CONSERVA-  
TION EDUCATOR TO BE  
HONORED NATIONALLY**

The National Association of Con-  
servation Education and Publicity  
is going to honor the individual or  
organization who has made the  
outstanding contribution toward  
furtherance of conservation educa-  
tion. Details of such an annual  
award, the first to be made in 1948,  
have just been announced by Pres-  
ident James R. Harlan of the Iowa  
Conservation Commission.

Any North American individual  
or organization may be nominated  
for the award, which will cover  
services rendered in behalf of con-  
servation education for a period of  
twelve months prior to June 1,  
1948, on which date nominations  
will close.

Three of the nation's outstand-  
ing conservation leaders will serve  
as judges. Their names will be  
announced when the award has  
been made. The individual or or-  
ganization so honored will be an-  
nounced and awarded an appro-  
priate plaque or cup at the 1948  
annual convention of the National  
Association of Conservation Edu-  
cation and Publicity to be held in  
the State of Ohio in September.

Nominations for the award are  
to be sent to the Chairman of the  
Awards Committee, Isaac D.  
Chapman, care Louisiana Depart-  
ment of Wild Life and Fisheries,  
126 Civil Courts Building, New Or-  
leans, Louisiana.

Persons desiring to suggest  
awards are requested to send their  
suggestions in to the editor of this  
publication.

Members of the 1948 Award  
Committee of the National Asso-  
ciation of Conservation Education  
and Publicity, in addition to Chair-  
man Chapman, are William W.  
Weeks, Director Information and  
Education, Florida Game and Fish  
Commission, Tallahassee; Oliver  
Hartley, Director Public Relations,  
Ohio Division of Conservation and  
Natural Resources, Columbus; W.  
H. Bostwick, Supervisor Conserva-  
tion Education, California Division  
of Fish and Game, Sacramento;  
and H. W. Clover, Chief Visual In-  
formation, Missouri Conservation  
Commission, Jefferson City.

Persons or organizations desir-  
ing copies of the rules and regula-  
tions covering this award may ob-  
tain them by writing to the editor  
of this publication.

Girls with bent pins stand very  
little chance of catching big fish.

dove under the ice and left a  
10-pound channel cat floating in  
the water. Nelson reports that the  
catfish was about dead and bleed-  
ing badly along the backbone which  
the mink apparently had been try-  
ing to bite through. The trapper  
reports that he had seen mink  
catch many fish in the wild up to  
a foot long but none that could  
approach the size of the luckless  
channel cat.





How far do catfish travel and where do they go is one of the questions being answered by catfish tagging. There is little doubt as to the destination of this young lady's channel catfish. Jim Sherman Photo.

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER A STREET OF TAGGED CATS

By John Greenbank

How far and how fast do catfish move? In an attempt to answer this and other questions pertaining to the habits of this important fish, the fishery biologists of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee are carrying out an extensive catfish tagging study.

Thousands of channel catfish have been, and will be, marked with metal tags and released in the river at various points in the section between Dubuque, Iowa, and Hastings, Minnesota. Fishermen are requested to advise the State Conservation Commission each time they capture one of these marked fish. Since each tag bears a serial number, it is a simple matter to tell how far the point of capture is from the point of release.

One of the first fish to be released last year was taken on a trot line five days later and twenty miles away, showing that in this instance he really did some traveling. Many fishermen believe that there is a large-scale, long-distance migration of channel catfish in the Mississippi River; and it is expected that tagged fish returns will throw some light on this subject.

Also, the number of marked catfish caught will give biologists important leads as to the abundance of catfish in different sections of the river. All such information will lead to recommendations for the fair and sensible regulation of the sport and commercial fishery of this highly important fish species.

### HARRY RECTOR TO TAKE NEW JOB

Conservation Officer Harry E. Rector of Vinton has resigned, effective June 30, and will become Executive Secretary of the Iowa Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. Rector will succeed C. R. Hallowell of Dubuque. Rector will also serve as part-time Secretary of the Vinton Chamber of Commerce. He is now conservation officer in charge of Benton and Tama counties.

The new Walton League secretary has been with the Conservation Commission since 1937. He was one of the Commission's outstanding conservation officers and has been particularly effective in education and public relations work.

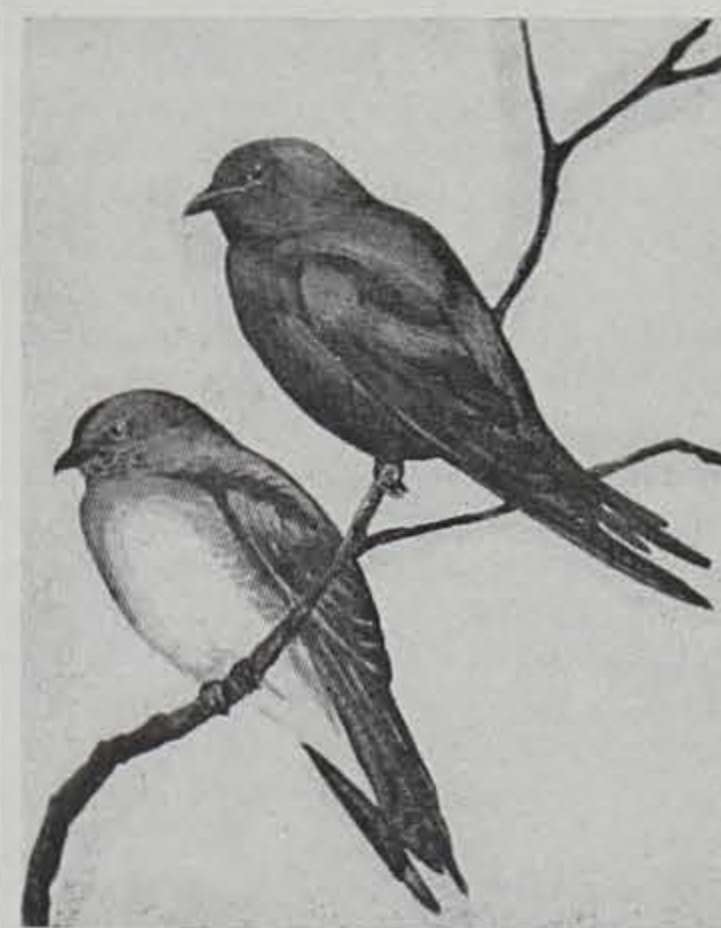
Multiflora rose fence is valuable for protection against wind erosion during the late fall, winter, and early spring months.

### PURPLE MARTINS IN THE SKY

By the end of March the purple martins have come up from their wintering grounds over the flood plains of the Amazon and over Brazilian jungles, and have arrived matter-of-factly. The martins' guttural chattering and their excited gurgling and tweeting as they fly about or sit on telephone wires is a new note in the catalog of arriving bird voices.

These large purple-black swallows since early times have lived close to the homes of men. Originally, perhaps, they nested, as some martins still choose to do today, in rock crevices, on cliffs, and in old woodpecker holes in dead swamp trees. But even in the days of the Indians, it is said, martins nested in great hollowed gourds hung up for them on a pole or sapling in the Indian villages. Even then the cheerful commotion and pleasant ways of these swallows somehow belonged to men.

Martins are insect-eating birds—their chief food is mosquitoes and flies caught on the wing—so they spend long hours in the air. Over many thousands of years in which martins seldom came down on the ground to walk about, their feet have become so small and spidery that they are almost useless for anything but perching. Nevertheless the birds come to the muddy pond-shores in spring to gather bits of mud and grass to add to the nests; the birds hobble painfully about, fill their beaks, and then in apparent relief take to the air.



Purple martins. Living Museum Illustration.

In some localities there is a growing problem of sparrows and starlings nesting in martin boxes, a problem which may be solved by blocking the entrances all winter, or by removing the boxes until the martins have returned.—The Living Museum.

The largest fresh water fish in the world is the giant sturgeon, *Huso huso*, inhabitant of the Volga and other large rivers flowing into the Black Sea. The largest known was 14 feet 2 inches, weight 2,250 pounds.

### AIR WAR AGAINST WATER-FOWL VIOLATORS SUCCESSFUL

Over 140 operating duck traps have been destroyed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the air war being waged with the seaplane presented them last November by the Wildlife Management Institute. Forty-four violators have been apprehended in the Chesapeake Bay and east coast area where the new float plane was in constant use by the federal game management agents prior to the freeze-up when the ducks moved farther south.



The war against game violators has definitely taken to the air. Violators need not be too surprised in the future if parachuting game wardens drop in for a visit.

Arrests were made by Game Management Agents Leon D. Cool of Chincoteague, Virginia; A. W. Souder of Cambridge, Maryland; and Roy Ferguson of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, all of whom piloted the plane at different times. The speed with which this crew has been able to operate in the apprehension of duck trappers and the destruction of their traps is remarkable. A score of violators now is under bond and awaiting trial in the federal courts. The others, arrested for hunting out of season and without licenses, were prosecuted in state courts.

The progress made during this short campaign graphically illustrates the value of seaplanes in game law enforcement work. Float planes are particularly valuable in spotting duck traps which are difficult to detect from the land or water.

### THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

By using its sensitive tail as a guide, the pocket-gopher can run down his hole backwards almost as fast as he can forwards.

All bumble bees die in the winter, except the queen bee. She alone survives to produce another generation.

The chipping sparrow is the smallest of all sparrows. It weighs less than one ounce.

A pigeon's bones may weigh less than its feathers.

All herons fly with their necks drawn in, and their feet extended.





The Knoxville Express is right—the value of fishing cannot be expressed in terms of dollar signs. Jim Sherman Photo.

## WHAT COST SPORT?

Fishermen in Iowa caught an average of one fish every two hours, according to a survey of conservation officials. Now let's see, this means that every fish must have cost at least two dollars in time alone, and if it were one of John L. Lewis' followers it would have cost a lot more. If one would figure out the cost of any sport or hobby on a time and dollar basis the result would discourage anyone from doing anything along this line. Some men have become so rabid in the pursuit of the almighty dollar that they could not resist figuring out

the cost of their enjoyment. This ruins any sport, hobby, enjoyment or vacation that might be your good fortune in which to indulge. These conservation officials have really done the people of Iowa a disservice by figuring out the time it takes to catch a fish. Many a man goes fishing all day and never gets a fish, yet he has had a good time and it was well worth the time and effort demanded if he forgot that it cost him so much to do it. We have with us the followers of many sports and diversions, but if they are true sportsmen they will not figure in dollars and cents the cost of their time spent. —Knoxville Express.

## PERIOD FURNITURE SOLICITED

Mrs. Addison Parker, member of the Conservation Commission, has advised that the Commission is in need of certain period pieces for furnishing the Plum Grove Historic Monument. Plum Grove is the home of Iowa's first Territorial Governor.

Mrs. Parker is anxious to secure "cupboards like the old kitchen cupboards, also used in a dining room, which had shelves and glass doors above and cupboard below, a secretary with desk below and similar glass doors above, a kitchen table, grandfather clock, small bedside tables, and kitchen equipment."

Recent gifts to the Commission for use in the Lucas Historic Monument are "two fine old hooked rugs which will be used in one of the bedrooms and also a very beautiful white glass bowl with a fluted pink ridge, presented by Mrs. Carl Weeks of Des Moines, and a very old butter churn and a small bedside lamp presented by Mrs. Bonnie Marshall," also of the capital city.

Individuals having period furniture suitable for use in the Plum Grove Historic Monument may write Mrs. Addison Parker, 4215 Grand, Des Moines 12, Iowa.

## BOOST FOR FUR

The Kansas State Fish and Game Department calls attention to the fact that more stringent methods are needed to keep up production of fur-bearing animals in that state. That goes for other states, too.

Proper care of stream banks, ponds, marshes, and swamps is needed to keep the harvest of fur pouring in. More and more fur is used and if fur-bearing animals are wiped out in America this nation will be dependent more and more on imports.

This calls attention to a business few city dwellers know about. Since the settlement of America, farm boys have depended upon furs to keep them in spending money. The farmer boy often rises long before school to see how many peltries his traps have yielded.

In these days of big farm crops and high prices, fur is not so necessary to bolster farm income, but there are years when extra money from fur is highly welcome. —Clinton Herald.

Traces of gold were discovered in Otter Creek near West Union in 1858. The next year the Wells boys washed a dime's worth of gold from a panful of Otter Creek gravel.

With destruction of forests came erosion and floods, which have plagued China through the centuries.

## HIS OWN ALLOTTED SPHERE

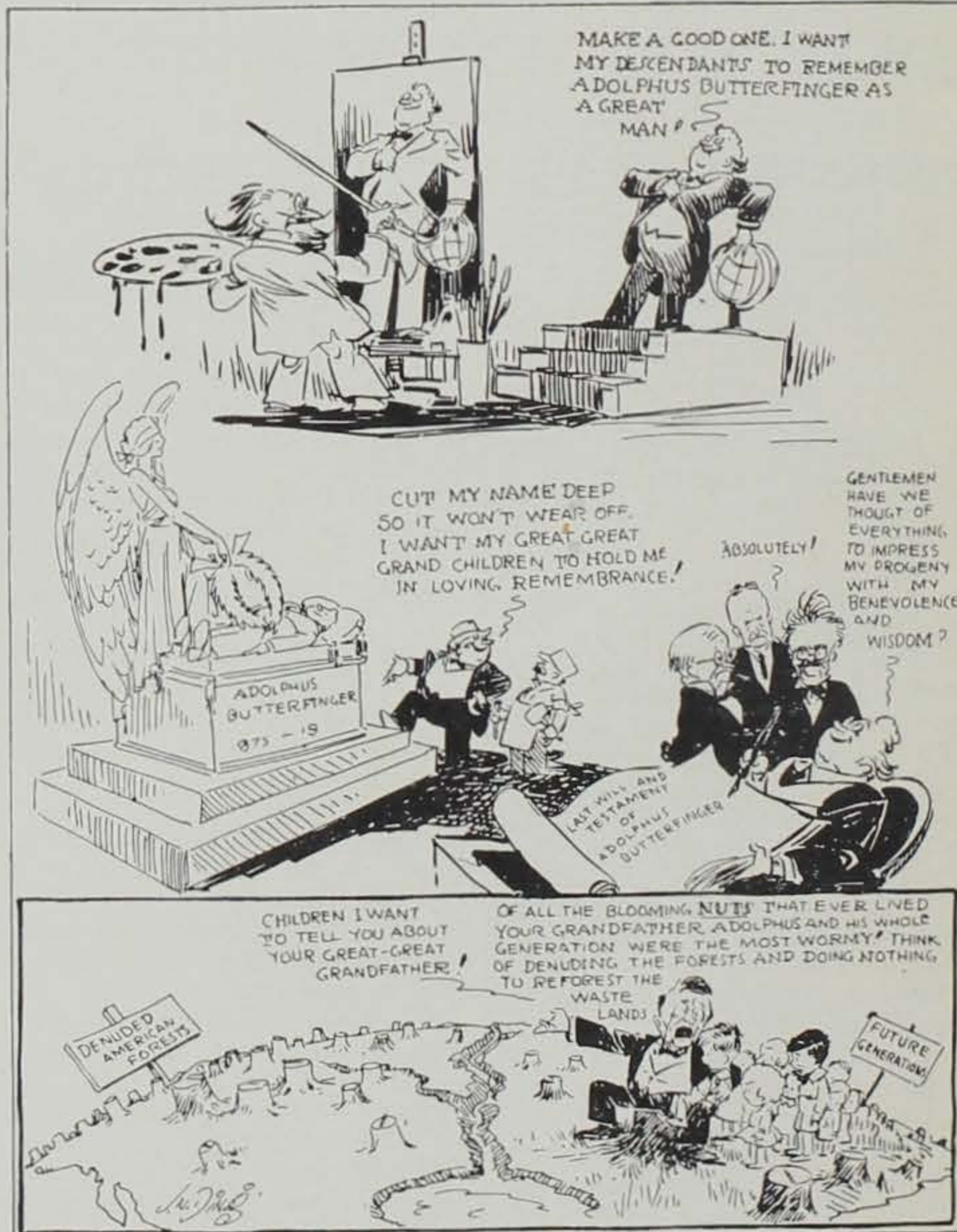
By Allen Green

I dreamily sat at the water's edge  
When a fish swam slowly by,  
And I called to the fish as it swam along,  
"Pray, fish, why don't you fly?"  
The fish turned 'round with a graceful whirl,  
And I heard it, bubbling, say:  
"Why should I fly when there's none can swim  
Like a fish?" and it swam away.

I leaned me back on the mossy bank  
And gazed on the balmy skies;  
And I saw on the branch of a nearby tree,  
Two very glistening eyes.  
"Who, who!" cried an owl as it spied me there;  
"O-ho! were you speaking to me?"  
"Yes I can fly!" and flapping its wings  
It flew to a nearby tree.

I watched the feathery one alight  
And there at the base of the tree  
I spied a snake as it lazily dozed  
In the sun, quite happily.  
I called to the snake, "Why don't you run?  
Or better, why don't you fly?"  
It gave a laugh and it answered, "Well,  
I gracefully crawl—that's why!"

I quick arose, and raised high my hands  
And cried to all of these:  
"Fly on, you bird! Crawl, graceful snake!  
And fish, swim well the seas!  
God made us all—all living things,  
And each is happy here  
If he but live contented in  
His own allotted sphere."



## Providing For The Future

Reprinted from "Our Great Out-of-Doors," published by Iowa Division Izaak Walton League.



## Wardens Tales

Shop Talk From the Field

Conservation Officer Tom Berkeley, in charge of Dallas and Madison counties, writes:

"Officer Warren Wilson and I were patrolling North Boone River by plane when we spotted a spearing party on the ice. We set the plane down in a field a mile or so from the spearkers and walked in. We failed to see a spotter parked in a car on the hill but he saw us and frantically honked his horn. The spearkers scattered like a flock of quail. Warren took after one group and I a bunch that crossed the river. Warren's group reached the false safety of farm buildings and mine scattered down the river in the brush and high weeds where I lost them, all but a boy about fourteen. This youngster was very talkative and as we walked back up the river to pick up the spears and fish the lad told me the names of the spearkers. As we crossed one patch of clear ice we saw a big bunch of catfish. The boy said, 'Hot dog, I'll bet my pa didn't know about these fish. I'll have to tell him when I see him.' All the way back up the river he insisted I walk in front, explaining, 'You'd better go on ahead of me because if I'd go through the ice you'd lose your evidence.' You pick out the moral to this tale. Incidentally, the 'quail' all pleaded guilty to spearing informations and were fined fifty bucks apiece."

Bill Ellerbrock, in charge of Fremont, Mills and Montgomery counties, writes:

"The state trapper and I were

checking beaver damage in the vicinity of Riverton. We heard a loud bang, looked up and saw a freight train moving slowly down the track. We took it for granted that they had hit a track torpedo, but just then one man jumped off the engine and started toward the rear of the train. Then I saw the engineer eject a shell from a shotgun. In a minute the retriever came back to the engine with something in his hand which looked like a hen pheasant.

"I was approximately 85 yards from the engine and had a fence and a bunch of brush piles to cross. When I broke into a run the train crew saw me and started up the train. I swung up on the engine as the train moved past and told them to stop. Then I asked to see the pheasant. They insisted they had killed a rabbit which had warts and they had thrown it off the train. I looked the cab over but couldn't find the bird. I couldn't find any rabbit along the right-of-way either. After questioning them for some time I decided I shouldn't hold the train any longer. I picked up their hunting licenses and guns and told them I would meet them the following day.

"After the train had gone on we found man tracks that led to some hen pheasant feathers, blood and a shot pattern in the snow. The next day when Conservation Officer Ward Garrett and I contacted the crewmen in Shenandoah they admitted that they had shot a hen pheasant but had thrown it into the fire box when they saw me charging down on the engine. After a hearing in which each was fined \$100 their only question was, 'What were you doing down in that area?' My answer was, 'Oh, we get around'."

(Continued on page 23)



Conservation Officer Dave Fisher, fourth from the left, received a Christmas card with four kisses. Conservation Officers Dan Nichols, Cecil Benson, Charlie Adamson, Fisher and Ken Madden stand by on flood rescue work.

## BOUNTIES ON WILD ANIMALS

Chapter 275, Code of Iowa 1939

Section 5413—The board of supervisors of each county shall allow and pay from the county treasury bounties for wild animals caught and killed within the county as follows: for each adult wolf, five dollars; for each lynx, fifty cents; for each wildcat, fifty cents; for each pocket gopher, five cents; for each cub wolf, two dollars.

Section 5414—The board may by resolution adopted and entered of record authorize the payment of bounties as follows: for each crow, ten cents; for each groundhog, twenty-five cents; for each rattlesnake, fifty cents; for each European starling, five cents; for each pocket gopher, an additional bounty of five cents.

Section 5415—The board may determine what bounties, in addition to those named in sections 5413 and 5414 if any, shall be offered and paid by the county on the scalps of such wild animals taken and killed within the county as it may deem expedient to exterminate, but no such bounty shall exceed five dollars.

Section 5416—All claims for bounties shall be verified by the claimant, and filed with the county auditor, with such other proof as may be required by the board.

Section 5417—The verified claim shall show that each animal for which bounty is claimed was caught and killed within the county within thirty days next prior to the filing of the claim, and the claimant shall exhibit before the county auditor:

1. The whole skin of each wolf, lynx or wildcat.
2. Both front feet and claws of each gopher.
3. The head and feet of each crow.
4. The head or scalp of each groundhog.
5. Two inches of the tail, with rattles attached, of each rattlesnake.

Section 5418—The auditor shall:

1. Destroy or deface the skin of each wolf, lynx and wildcat so as to prevent their use in obtaining another bounty, and may return to the owner any such defaced skins and the rattles of any rattlesnake.
2. Destroy the heads, scalps, feet, claws and other portions required to be exhibited of such animals.

Section 5419—Any person who shall claim or attempt to procure any bounty provided for in this chapter upon any animal killed in another state or county, or upon any animal which has been domesticated, or who shall attempt to obtain any bounty by presenting any false claim or spurious exhibit, shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars nor less than fifty dollars for each offense.

It's not fishing I enjoy, said the fisherman in the speed boat; it's the people I run into.

## OUTDOOR ODDITIES

BY  
WALT HARVEY



WILD GEESE  
HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED  
BY PILOTS AT 30,000 FT.

DEAR W. SAUNDERS

## STATE TO PROVIDE TREES FOR EROSION CONTROL

Orders for trees for erosion control and water conservation plantings upon farm lands are being accepted by the State Conservation Commission. The trees are available from the State Forest Nursery operated by the State Conservation Commission in cooperation with the United States Forest Service under the provisions of the Norris-Doxey and Clarke-McNary Acts of Congress.

Included in the list of one-year old trees are black locust, green ash, black walnut, cottonwood, American elm, white oak, osage orange, burr oak, black cherry, Russian olive, western yellow pine, Virginia pine, and red pine. Prices range from \$5.00 to \$13.00 per thousand and no orders will be accepted for less than 500 trees.

To encourage replanting of walnut trees, the Conservation Commission is this year providing stratified walnuts at \$1.00 for 200 nuts in quantities of not less than 200. The stratified walnuts will be ready for planting as soon as the frost is out of the ground in the spring.

Order blanks and price lists for trees may be secured by writing to the State Conservation Commission, 914 Grand, Des Moines.



"I believe in practical gifts, my dear. Plant this bouquet of little trees and some day they will build you a home."





The law has provided \$25,000 for improvement and development of four forest areas. Jim Sherman Photo.

## Current Land...

(Continued from page 17)  
mined by the conservation commission with approval of the joint legislative committee on retrenchment and reform that its expenditures shall be for the best interests of the state."

It will be noted that the act provides a specific amount for each of the foregoing sections. The name of each heading implies the general type of work contemplated and its relationship to the program as a whole. Under the general heading of the section are from one to thirty-seven areas listed by county and name with each item or type of work indicated, together with the amount to be expended. These projects and amounts were approved and earmarked by the General Assembly and may not be diverted or changed by the Commission. When approval of the committee is requested and received, these funds are available for their intended purposes until expended or the work completed.

### Release of Funds

Prior to the enactment of the law, preliminary work such as surveys and plans was well under way. Actual work cannot be initiated until after the approval and release of funds by the Committee on Retrenchment and Reform. The first release of funds from this appropriation was on May 22, 1947.

Since that time various projects have been released and are going ahead as fast as the present limited staff can prepare plans and specifications.

(See article in December "Conservationist" on artificial lakes.)

### Dredging

Under Section 4, dredging, actual silt removal has been completed in accordance with plans at Storm Lake in Buena Vista County, and at Cornelia in Wright County. Work incidental to dredging operations in these areas remains to be

done during the summer. Dredges have been dismantled and moved to Five Island Lake in Emmet County and to Browns Lake in Woodbury County. They are being reassembled at these sites and will be ready for operation as soon as the ice goes out of the lakes.

### Erosion Control

Section 6, erosion control, has been approved in its entirety and results are already evident. A full time soils technician has been retained to handle this phase of the program which is limited to the control of silt on the watersheds of ten existing artificial lake areas and one proposed lake. In each section of the state where these lakes are located, agreements with the local soils district commissioners are in effect. In some instances, where almost the entire watershed is within the area now held by the state, work is already contracted for to get soil conserving practices in operation. The Commission recognized the undesirability of attempting to own all the land in the watershed and is therefore asking the owners in the watershed, above an artificial lake, to exercise control over their holdings. In the case of Backbone, where the watershed involves some 75,000 acres in four counties, a special committee composed of representatives of the counties of Buchanan, Clayton, Delaware, and Fayette, was set up to handle the problem in the watershed. A total of \$77,000 has been approved for these items, which on the basis of information available at this time, will not be sufficient to complete the work.

### Land Acquisition

Stream and lake access areas have been acquired, approvals have been received in the amount of \$50,000. The Allerton Reservoir in Wayne County, the Parker tract on Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo County, providing additional lake shore, and a small tract for access

to High Lake in Emmet County, have been purchased. Several tracts are under consideration and will be acquired in the near future.

Land acquisition is somewhat difficult at this time due to increased costs. Under this section it was contemplated that outstanding tracts of virgin prairie would be purchased and preserved. There are on file with the Commission recommendations for the purchase of prairie tracts in six counties which still have such sites available. Iowa has many different soil types, and it is desirable that unplowed grounds be preserved for scientific study as well as preserving the all but extinct prairie flora.

Fifty-seven thousand dollars is approved and available for prairie acquisition and \$10,000 is available for the purchase of lands to increase holdings of existing parks. These are scheduled and are being completed as rapidly as negotiations can be completed and abstracts examined.

State waters, natural lakes, artificial lakes, and meandered or state-owned streams are for the first time receiving some attention. Three natural and three artificial lakes are being riprapped. Stone is being placed at the water line by state crews to prevent further shore erosion. Two meandered streams are being surveyed preparatory to drawing plans for the realignment of their channels, and the protection of banks by the installation of wing dams or other structure to prevent further washing. A total of \$51,500 has been approved for this work.

### State Forests

State forests are scheduled for some much needed development. These areas, for the most part, were not acquired in time to receive material assistance in the way of development during the CCC program, and during the war years no improvements were possible. Of primary importance in



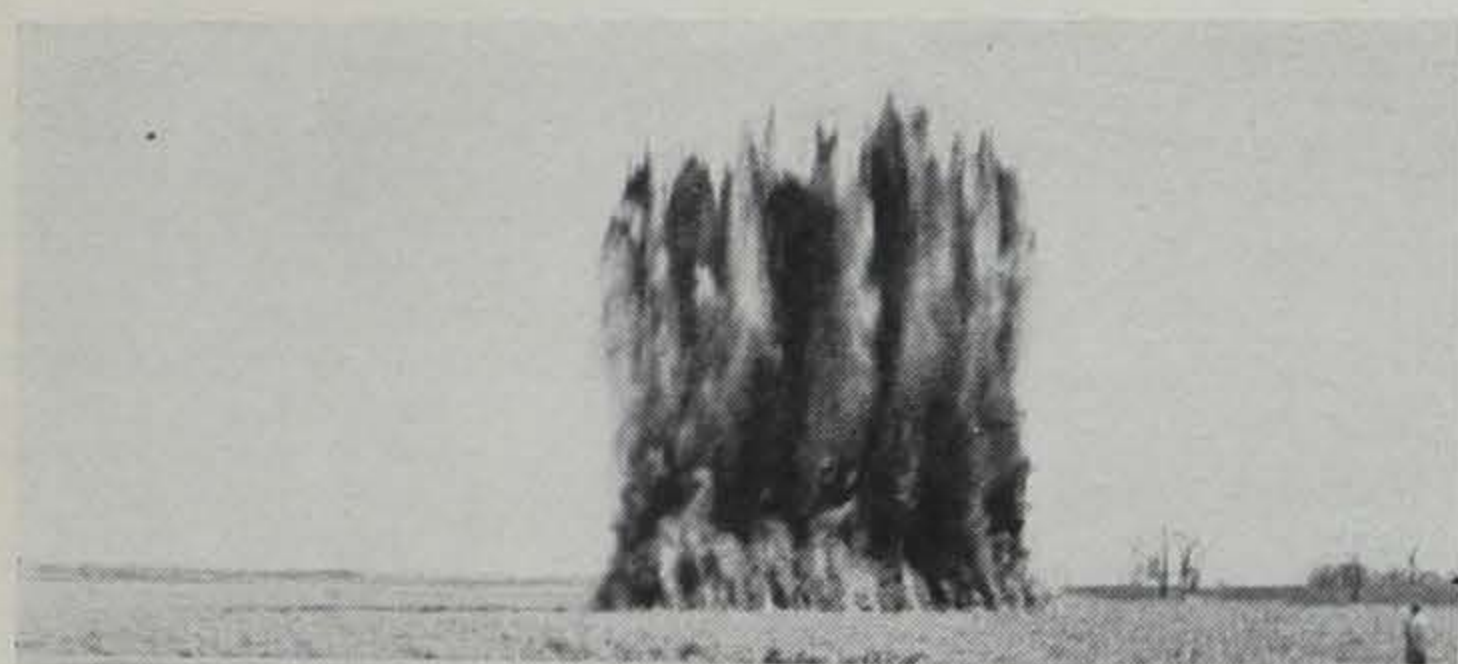
Prior to the enactment of the Lands and Waters Development Law preliminary work such as surveys and plans were well under way. Jim Sherman Photo.

any forestry program is the necessity of keeping livestock from the stand. This can only be done by having areas properly fenced. Boundary surveys on many of the forest areas have been completed for some time, and fencing has been going ahead as fast as funds and labor will permit. Five areas have been set up for fencing, though only approval has been requested and received for the Yellow River area in Allamakee County  
(Continued on page 24)



During the days of C.C.C. and other federal work programs extensive improvements were made in the state recreation areas but many necessities were overlooked.





Often water depth in marshes cannot be increased by raising the level. Sometimes blasting produces the desired results. Tom Scott Photo.

## Even the Ducks . . .

(Continued from page 17)

erties was given careful consideration as they related to one another and to each kind of bird.

Dr. Provost made an effort to determine how to maintain or create the most desirable nesting habitat for the marsh birds studied. Observations showed that if the water was clear the emergent plants grew at greater depths than if the water was turbid. A balanced growth of suitable nesting vegetation with open water necessitated consideration of turbidity together with maintenance of water levels in proper relationship to the shape of the land basin. If the water was too high in the basin the desired shallow-water habitat was reduced to a narrow area along the water's edge. If too low, open water areas disappeared and more unsuitable nesting vegetation appeared. Optimum water levels were best obtained by correct use of control structures such as dikes and dams.

It was apparent, too, that muskrat populations were helpful in maintaining suitable nesting habitat, for in their feeding these animals cropped off part of the

vegetation and thereby created desirable openings in nesting cover. It was found that where all nesting requirements of diving ducks, coots and grebes were met, excepting for open water, this deficiency could be corrected forcibly by the use of dynamite.

The experiments with blasting indicated that 50 per cent straight or "ditching" dynamite was best adapted to ditch-type openings. For deep, round openings post-hole charges of 60 per cent "Red Cross" Extra dynamite appeared most effective. The ditch type openings seemed to be most efficiently obtained by the use of four sticks of dynamite, one above the other, every two feet in parallel lines four feet apart. The charges are so spaced that the detonation of one capped cartridge is propagated from charge to charge through the saturated soil, exploding the entire lad almost simultaneously. The initial cost of this ditch-type opening was approximately \$8.00 a rod. Dr. Provost estimated that such an opening might be valuable for over 20 years but that possibly re-blasting after 10 years might be desirable, depending to some extent on soil conditions and water currents.



These baby redhead ducks have just hatched and will soon leave their bullrush nest. Jessup B. Lowe Photo.

The researches of the Cooperative Unit have shown repeatedly that suitable habitat is a basic requirement of wildlife. Dr. Provost's findings have not only re-

emphasized this need but have made available to wildlife managers a number of excellent suggestions for improvement of marsh environment.



Blasting has created an open water area four feet deep and ten feet wide in this marsh. Tom Scott Photo.



Redhead ducks nest in bullrushes over water. The eggs in this nest are pipping and the young will soon hatch. Jessup B. Lowe Photo.

## Warden's Tales . . .

(Continued from page 21)

Dave Fisher, in charge of Henry and Des Moines counties, writes:

"I don't believe in getting 'tough' with the game violators but I do insist that they come along when arrested. This fall I arrested a commercial fisherman on the Mississippi River for not having his hoop nets properly tagged, brought him into court, and he was fined \$25 and costs. I heard no more of the incident until about 11:30 Christmas eve. I heard a knock on the back door and there was my fisherman quite happy in 'spirits.' He wished me a merry Christmas, gave me a Christmas card, and said, 'There's a present for you under the back steps.' Then he left hurriedly. I looked under the steps and there was a case of beer, and, believe it or not, the Christmas card he handed me had four kisses on it."

Walt Harvey, conservation of-

ficer in charge of Marshall and Grundy counties, relays this yarn about a goose hunter: Herman Becker, 80, a semi-invalid who uses a cane and crutch, fulfilled a forty-year-old ambition during the duck season. Mr. Becker, who lives with his son three miles east of Tama, was seated in an easy chair looking out over a bean patch. He heard the clamor of goose talk and then noticed four blue geese circling. In a few minutes the geese sat down fully three hundred feet from the window. In answer to his excited call, his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Bernice Becker, brought him a 56-year-old shotgun. Leveling the ancient piece across the window sill in true blockhouse fashion, Grandpa Becker took careful aim, killing two of the honkers on the spot. Although Mr. Becker came to the United States sixty years ago and hunted for forty years, it was the first time he had ever killed a goose.



## Current Land . . .

(Continued from page 22)

at this time. A total of \$10,000 has been set up for fencing on forest areas in Van Buren County, Monroe County, Boone and Dubuque counties. Work on the latter will be underway in the very near future. Set up for the development of four forest areas is a sum of \$25,000. This will consist of road construction, bridges, culverts where required, fire trails, timber stand improvement, planting, and other forestry operations.

State parks and reserves were, during the days of the CCC and other federal works program, the recipients of extensive improvements, however, with all the assistance from these programs, many necessities were overlooked or their construction and completion cut short by Hitler and Hirohito in the early '40's. Provision has been made at this time to proceed with portions of previously scheduled development and facilities. Priorities have been assigned, and on the basis of previously prepared plans, work will go ahead as fast as contracts can be let or arrangements made to do the work.

Contemplated work in this section includes major repairs, remodeling, construction and completion of 39 structures. Twenty-four latrines are required to replace obsolete and unsanitary structures in existing areas. Water, sewer, and power lines, together with road relocation are necessary to accommodate ever increasing demand for facilities. Additional picnic and parking areas will also be provided. Two road bridges and two footbridges are contemplated. Vehicle bridges on main park entrance to Springbrook in Guthrie County is in poor shape, and requires replacement. The Sixteen to One Bridge at Ledges in Boone County is unsafe for present traffic. Two break-throughs have already occurred. Requests for release of funds for repair of this bridge have not been granted. Footbridges are scheduled for Backbone in Delaware County and Okamanpedan in Emmet County. The footbridge in Emmet County will be a replacement, and in Delaware County a new footbridge at the central picnic area will be constructed. Of the \$451,600.00 allocation for this section, \$149,500.00 has been released.

It is contemplated that a substantial portion of this program will be completed by the end of the present biennium, however, since these funds are subject to certain restrictions beyond the control of the Commission it may not be possible to move ahead as rapidly as one would like. Furthermore, the factors of labor and materials costs will have a direct bearing on each and every item of the program.

Throughout the program, the Commission has indicated that only these items which are absolutely necessary for the use of existing



Nearly every angler fondly recalls barefoot boyhood days when the old fishin' hole seldom failed to produce a dandy string of bluegills. Jim Sherman Photo.

## Bluegill . . .

(Continued from page 17)

eight to ten inches is a "dandy" and anything exceeding ten inches is a "lunker."

Although no official records have been recognized, a number of authentic catches between two and three pounds have been recorded in various local fishing contests. These are as exceptional as a 60-pound muskellunge, a 15-pound largemouth bass, or a four-pound crappie.

Regardless of the water it inhabits, the bluegill can be given the blue ribbon for excellence in flavor. The meat is sweet and firm, and it is practically no trouble to prepare for the skillet.

It has been said with conviction that the bluegill will eat any-

thing digestible and is the nanny-goat of the fish family. Its favorite foods are small minnows, worms, grasshoppers, crickets, countless insects, small crustaceans, as well as any candy, popcorn or picnic leftovers tossed its way.

Ounce for ounce, the battling bluegill is the most concentrated package of fun in the entire fish family—if you care to take the word of that majority of fishermen who consistently bring home bluegills instead of alibis. — Heddon Fish Flashes.

To keep worms in hot weather, use two cans—one inside of the other. Put the worms in the inner one and pack wet paper or moss between it and the outer can. Evaporation of the moisture will keep them cool and alive.



By the fisherman's rule of thumb a bluegill from six to eight inches is a "nice one," from eight to ten inches a "dandy," and anything exceeding ten inches is a "lunker." Jim Sherman Photo.

areas, essential protection for others, the acquisition of strategically located access areas, the con-

trol of erosion, dredging and riprapping, should go ahead without delay.

## NEW FEDERAL GAME LAW ENFORCEMENT CHIEF

Jesse F. Thompson, former Regional Supervisor of Law Enforcement, Region 3, for the Fish and Wildlife Service, has been transferred to Washington to assume the duties of Chief of the Division of Game Management. He succeeds W. E. Crouch who retired last year. Mr. Thompson has gained wide recognition throughout the Mississippi Valley where he is regarded as one of the outstanding game law enforcement officers.

Chief Thompson is "looking forward to a modern and progressive program in the enforcement of federal game laws. Increased hunting, modern transportation, and more efficient hunting methods make it imperative to speed up and improve wildlife management and enforcement techniques."

Floyd "Flick" Davis, former Iowa state conservation officer and United States Game Management Agent recently stationed in Minneapolis, has been appointed as Acting Regional Supervisor of Law Enforcement for ten middle-western states including Iowa.

The popular "Flick" is widely known in Iowa, having been state warden at New Hampton, Clear Lake, and Spirit Lake. He was appointed U. S. Game Management Agent in 1939 in charge of the State of Iowa, at which time he wrote a regular column for the "Iowa Conservationist" on federal wildlife matters.

"Flick's" many Iowa friends wish him success in his important new ten-states job.

## FINS, FURS AND FEATHERS

Some nice people have a notion that the real job of a conservation officer is to catch law violators. Really, that concept is far from the truth. The conservation officer is an apostle of conservation. His real job is one of education, of helping others, of pointing out the right ways, of winning people to the side of right and justice. The conservation officer is constantly on the alert to promote better fishing and hunting. He knows our birds, our fish and our wild animals. He is the man who labors in all seasons and under all weather conditions to maintain our fish and wildlife so we can indulge our desires for outdoor life, fishing and hunting. When next you see a conservation officer, don't think he is the law hunting a criminal—think of him as the man who is doing his very best to guarantee you and your family and friends a good time in Iowa's out-of-doors. —Hopkinton Leader.

Thomas Jefferson early discovered the benefit of contour farming and in 1813 he wrote to a friend, "We now plow horizontally, following the curvature of the hills and hollows on dead level, however crooked the lines may be. Every furrow thus acts as a reservoir to receive and retain the water. Scarcely an ounce of soil is now carried off. In point of beauty, nothing can exceed that of the waving lines and rows winding along the face of the hills and valleys."