

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

Volume 8

DECEMBER 15, 1949

Number 12

## THE PHEASANT SEASON IN THE PRESS

### MISTLETOE

By Roberts Mann  
Forest Preserve District of  
Cook County, Illinois

Among our cherished customs at Christmas time is that of decorating our homes with mistletoe, particularly with branches of it hung over doorways and from ceilings. Why do we do this? From whence came the custom of kissing under the mistletoe? Where did it get its name?

No one knows, nor can botanists tell us how or where this strange plant originated. Its mysterious habits of living and reproducing, high up on the branches of trees, caused it to be credited with magical properties and regarded with superstitious fear or religious reverence by primitive and ancient peoples. During the feasts of Saturnalia, in mid-December, the Romans ornamented their temples and dwellings with mistletoe to propitiate gods to whom it was sacred. In Norse mythology, too, there is a complicated legend involving the death of Balder, son of Odin and Frigga, and the wicked Loki, whereby the mistletoe was condemned to be a parasite with no power to cause misfortune, sorrow or death, and beneath which anyone might receive a kiss as an assurance that it was an emblem of peace and love.

The ancient Druids held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and it played a prominent part in the ceremonies and religious sacrifices at the time of their New Year. There is a very old tradition, in England, that the mistletoe was once a "fair tree" in the forest; that from its wood was made the cross upon which Christ was crucified; and that therefore it was cursed and condemned to live forever as the most despised of plants.

There are as many curious customs, myths and traditions involving the mistletoe as there are races and nations of people. It is distributed over the earth in all the

(Continued on page 192)



The opening of Iowa's pheasant season, as usual, depends upon the viewpoint of the hunter. Those who bagged the limit without much trouble say "good." Others less fortunate say "poor."

### MOONLIGHT ULULATION

While the music halls of the country are readying things for another winter concert season, here in the Midwest a group of sportsmen are getting ready for some sweet music of their own. This group thrills to the music of an open trailer under the star-studded ceiling of Mother Nature's great concert hall. Few of these music lovers enjoy the gift of absolute pitch, but they respond to the haunting notes of their favorite coon hound's bugling with a fervor that is matched in few other activities. They have been bitten by the strange bug that produces a temporary nocturnal insanity called coon hunting fever. The disease reaches its peak in late autumn and early winter, but usually runs its course by spring.

Joe DeArmond of Coralville,

Iowa, has been chasing the wily ringtails for 15 years, and he still finds each opening night more thrilling than the last. He says that coon hunters are prone, like others among the great hunting and fishing fraternity, to tamper with the truth when the occasion demands. While you wouldn't come right out and say they are lying, you might accuse them of being guilty of slight terminological inexactitudes.

The average Iowa coon weighs about 15 pounds, with exceptions running as large as 30 pounds. Then of course there are some like "the one old Blue 'un," "the big old three-toed 'un," and others that must have weighed upward of 40 pounds. These, of course, were never treed.

(Continued on page 191)

The Iowa pheasant opening, as usual, depends upon the viewpoint. Hunters who bagged a limit without much trouble are inclined toward the "plenty of birds" theory. Others, less fortunate, believe ring-necks are scarce in certain areas. On the whole, it looks like the opening days could be termed at least fairly good. Reports from northwest Iowa, where pheasants are most plentiful, indicate shooting was good.—*Davenport Times*.

Pheasant hunting remains good, although the birds are getting a little wild after a week's shooting. Nearly everyone I talked to has had good luck. It doesn't seem to make any difference where they go—there are pheasants aplenty this year, it seems.—*Council Bluffs Nonpareil*.

Local nimrods report pheasant, as plentiful but cagey and hard to bring down. Most Cascade hunters have secured birds but have worked hard to get them.—*Cascade Pioneer*.

Crawford County pheasant hunters fared well in general over the weekend as the 1949 pursuit of ringnecks opened Friday. Most hunters reported at least some pheasants, and the majority came home with the limit.—*Denison Review*.

Hunters were out en masse again over the weekend in search of the reportedly large crop of pheasants, but their luck in general was only fair.—*Clinton Herald*.

Many hunters have had the best of luck, but with the pheasants hearing so much gunfire, they have become wary and harder to get.—*Danbury Review*.

Pheasant hunters in Franklin County are reporting varying degrees of luck in their quest for the game bird. Friday afternoon the largest number of birds were killed

(Continued on page 190)



**Iowa Conservationist**

Published Monthly By

THE IOWA STATE CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION914 Grand Avenue—Des Moines, Iowa  
(No Rights Reserved)WM. S. BEARDSLEY, Governor of Iowa  
BRUCE F. STILES, Director  
JAMES R. HARLAN, Editor  
LOIS RECKNOR, Associate Editor**MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION**E. G. TROST, Chairman.....Fort Dodge  
E. B. GAUNITZ.....Lansing  
ARTHUR C. GINGERICH.....Wellman  
F. J. POYNEER.....Cedar Rapids  
J. D. REYNOLDS.....Creston  
C. A. DINGES.....Emmetsburg  
MRS. DAVID S. KRUIDENIER.....Waukegan**CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE.....38,500**Entered as second class matter at the  
Post Office at Des Moines, Iowa, September  
22, 1947, under the Act of March 24, 1912.  
Subscription rate.....40c per year**3 years for \$1.00**Subscriptions received at Conservation  
Commission, 914 Grand Avenue, Des  
Moines, Iowa. Send cash, check or money  
order.**UNITED WE STAND**

The conservationists who call themselves sportsmen and the conservationists who call themselves land users are getting closer and closer together all the time as they find that their interests lie precisely in the same pattern. Conditions that bring about what each seeks is good also for the other group. When this gets to be a hunting and fishing paradise it is very likely also to reach its peak of productivity.—*Estherville News.*

# Outdoors

with G. K. Jr.



The Iowa Conservation Commission predicted a record of 100,000 hunters would open the pheasant season. We believe they were right and that 50,000 of them opened it in Palo Alto County. Have never seen more shooters out, excepting those early three-day sessions years ago, and what is a little surprising about this is that there can be so many in one place when most of the state is open territory. Although many central and

south Iowa counties are open, Palo Alto County was crawling last weekend with Des Moines ears and others from such places as Council Bluffs and Boone. We must have a reputation up here for having lots of birds, to lure hunters from so far from home. Years ago there were more, probably, in the block of northwest Iowa counties surrounding Palo Alto, but we don't believe ring-necks have been as thick in this



"The Iowa Conservation Commission predicted a record 100,000 hunters would open the pheasant season. We believe that 50,000 of them opened it in Palo Alto County." Jim Sherman Photo.

**CHRISTMAS GIFT SUBSCRIPTION**

Do you enjoy your IOWA CONSERVATIONIST?  
Do you have a friend who would enjoy reading it?  
Do you send Christmas gifts?  
Do you wonder what to send?  
Would you be remembered 36 successive months as well as Christmas morning?

If the answers are "yes," fill in the blank below, enclose in an envelope with a dollar bill, and mail to the State Conservation Commission. We will send a Christmas greeting for you and begin the gift subscription in January.

State Conservation Commission  
914 Grand Avenue  
Des Moines 9, Iowa

Date .....

Enclosed is \$1.00 for a 36-month gift subscription to the IOWA

CONSERVATIONIST for .....

(Name)

(Address)

This gift subscription is sent by .....

(Name)

(Address)

PLEASE PRINT PLAINLY

much cleaner than usual. Thus with little cover, they don't look birdy and many hunters have been passing them up.

The season lasts up to and including December 5, and there will be much good shooting. After the pheasants settle down again, following the opening weekend blast, the sport should pick up, and it will help when you don't have other shooters charging into your field from all sides without permission.

For some reason, it seems the longer distance a man travels from home to hunt, the more liberties he feels free to take when he gets there.—Gib Knudson, *Emmetsburg Democrat.*

**VIOLATORS PAY**

In an unusually flagrant violation of the state's game laws, a pair of West Virginia men paid fines totaling \$400 for illegal squirrel hunting near Steamboat Rock.

Arrested Sunday night by Kay Setchell and Verne Hicks, state conservation officer and Pine Lake park custodian, B. J. Farley and M. W. Walthall of Hinton, West Virginia, entered guilty pleas and paid fines in the justice court of Fred Marshall at Union Monday as follows:

Each man was penalized \$100 for exceeding the squirrel limit and \$100 for hunting without a license, plus \$4 costs each. They paid the fines in cash and started on their way back to West Virginia.

Farmers in the area northwest of Steamboat Rock were aroused by the out-of-state hunters' plundering tactics. Officers reported that they had 50 squirrels in the Steamboat locker in addition to what they killed Sunday, using 12-gauge shotguns.

The squirrel daily limit is six with the possession maximum being 12 animals. — *Eldora Herald Ledger.*

Over a million pounds of mussel shells were taken from the Iowa streams during the biennium ending July 1, 1946. These are used for pearl buttons and novelties.

**"JOE BEAVER"**

By Ed Nohziger



"Of course I appreciate your wanting to help, spa, but—well—I shi— that is—"

Illustration by Ed Nohziger, U. S. Department of Agriculture



## PISTOL PACKIN' PUSSY

By Ralph Pogue

Missouri Conservation Commission

No creature that walks or crawls has the easy-going, devil-may-care manner of the skunk. Combine the arrogance of a mule with the courage of a jet-pilot, and you have the skunk's personality. Intensify a thousand times a liquid stench of burning glue, condensed sewer gas and essence of garlic, capable of being sprayed ten feet with deadly aim, and you have the reason. The mere sight of a skunk apparently strikes terror in the hearts of bird



"One more step and I'll let you have it!"

and beast. A dog, for instance, may be brave in the face of bull, bear or lion, but will likely tuck-tail and slink shamelessly away from the little stink-kitty.

Should you meet Mr. Skunk on any warm, sunlit day, you will marvel at his nonchalance, his swaggering insolence as he waddles about his business. A member of the weasel family, he is about the size of a cat; thick-set, carrying the hindquarters high and the head low. His heavy fur is jet-black except for a white patch on the head, from which white stripes of varying length extend back, sometimes to and even along the tail. He will not run upon your approach but may stamp his feet and watch you out of the corner of his eye with the deadly caution of a gunman loosening his pistols in their holsters. Come too close and he's apt to stiffen, facing you with a beady stare, as if to say, "One more step and I'll let you have it." You'd better take steps in the opposite direction, for the stink-kitty doesn't need to aim his business-end at you. Throwing his swivel-hips into action he can fire right over his shoulder!

The skunk's formidable weapon, his exclusive patent, is a liquid musk secreted by two large glands located strategically under the tail. The tail serves as a flag of battle, and of warning—when the flag is raised, and the feet stamp, look out! Each of the two musk glands contains enough ready ammunition for about six rounds, repeating action. Both six-guns can be fired separately or simultaneously at any angle up to 90 degrees of the body. The aim is deadly at close range, provided the skunk can see his target. Hamper his vision, thus spoiling his aim, and he's apt to

fire blindly, gassing innocent bystanders and generally stinking up the whole neighborhood.

The skunk knows where his liquid shrapnel does the most good so, when possible, he deliberately aims at the eyes and nose, blinding and suffocating his enemy in one action. Entering the eye, the musk causes a painful, temporary blindness. Entering the nostrils, it produces a swelling of the mucous membrane, resulting in choking, gagging, and sometimes vomiting.

The musk was once used for medicinal purposes, in the treatment of asthmatic conditions, but was soon discontinued. The treatment proved to be worse than the disease! We pause here and pay tribute to woman, her powers never to be slighted. For years she's worn the lowly skunk's fur and called it "Alaska Sable." Now she's wearing skunk musk and calling it "Evening in Podunk." Skunk musk, deodorized, of course, is used as a base in the manufacture of expensive perfumes.

Skunk musk is so potent that the skunk tribe has outlawed its use in civil battles. Males of the species frequently fight, especially during spring mating season, but they rely entirely upon tooth and toenail, main strength and awkwardness. Gas warfare is definitely out.

Aside from its trigger-happy tendencies, the skunk is a lovable and useful creature. Not only is it a valuable furbearer, but it rids the land of many harmful insects. It is particularly fond of wasps, crickets, grasshoppers and beetles—actually, such citizens of the crawly-clan make up over 40 per cent of its diet. Other staples include berries and fruit, mice, grain and carrion. Contrary to popular belief, few skunks venture to raid the farmer's poultry.

If you haven't made the skunk's acquaintance, this winter would be a good time to do so. And if you have the misfortune of getting "skunked," you have this antidote from an experienced Ozarkian: "Upon reaching home, remove all



Should you meet Mr. Skunk on any warm sunlit day, you will marvel at his nonchalance, his swaggering insolence as he waddles about his business.

## SHOTGUNS ON THE HIGHWAYS—HEADACHE No. 1



The dangerous practice of carrying loaded and assembled guns in automobiles is currently the no. 1 enforcement problem of game officials.

Anyone who took a look at the story in the *Reporter* last week reporting pheasant hunting arrests will notice nearly all of them were for carrying assembled, uncased guns in automobiles or loaded guns in automobiles.

This indicates the widespread road hunting going on this season and also the risks a lot of the boys are taking to get their birds. It used to be there were as many pickups for hunting without a license as anything else, Conservation Officer Harold Johnson tells us, but there have been few for that offense this fall.

Many shooters who would not clothing and bury at a depth of six feet. Bathe for two hours in a tubful of strong lye-soap suds, being sure to thoroughly wash the hair. Sprinkle the body moderately with the contents of a dime bottle of toilet water and put on clean clothes."

And you'll still stink to high heaven.—*Missouri Conservationist*.

think of hunting without a license or of knocking down a hen pheasant will take a chance on carrying a gun illegally in their cars. But such transportation of firearms is as unlawful as any other violation of the fish and game code, and if you're doing this thing prepare to pay a fine when you get caught.

The game wardens are as worried about the risks to themselves the hunters are taking when they do this as they are about the illegal status of the act.

Harold was telling about a case up in Emmet County a week ago. It was past the 4:30 shooting deadline when he spotted a car crawling down a grassy road with gun barrels poking out of three windows.

The hunters saw him coming, and when he reached their car the two men in the front seat had unloaded their shotguns and jammed them in cases. But in the back seat was a boy about 14, who was all thumbs trying to unload a lever-action .410.

He had the butt of the gun on the floor of the car, the muzzle pointing right in his face, and with his right hand was working the lever as fast as he could, pumping shells out of the magazine.

Johnson was so afraid the boy would kill himself he reached in the car and knocked the gun out on the ground. Fortunately there was no accident, and Harold wonders if there had been one, how much of the blame for it the men in the front seat would have been willing to shoulder.

They were setting a dangerous example for a 14-year-old, not to mention the illegal aspects of carrying a loaded gun in an automobile. In hunting, as it is practiced in northwest Iowa, there are few things more foolhardy and dangerous than carrying a loaded gun in a car, especially if there are

(Continued on page 192)





"Some birds fell on opening day, some flew faster and got away." Jim Sherman Photo.

## OUTDOOR POTPOURRI

The best headline of the pheasant season comes from the *Grand Junction Free Press*. "Some Birds Fell on Opening Day, Some Flew Faster and Got Away."

The *Waverly Independent* reports a muskrat that starved when a cartridge case locked in its mouth. C. H. Rohrsen, who farms near Denver, related the "Believe-it-or-not" incident when he brought into the *Waverly Independent* office a dead muskrat that had starved to death after biting into the casing of a .22 caliber cartridge. He found the animal near his corncrib. The muskrat had its mouth open full width, the empty cartridge keeping it forced open after the animal's teeth fastened in opposite ends of the shell. Unable to get its jaws closed, the muskrat starved to death.

Reports received in Grinnell indicate that Police Chief John Reiser is quite a sharpshooter. On one hunting trip he took four shots and bagged a pheasant, a rabbit and two quail. The next trip out, he took two shots and got his limit of two pheasants.—*Grinnell Herald Register*.

Walter F. Kee, who lives five miles northwest of Knoxville, last spring set a fishing goal for himself of 100 carp during the season. Friday he caught his one-hundredth carp in the Des Moines River.

He used various types of bait. The largest fish of the hundred weighed 10½ pounds.

Last reports, Kee was out on the river working on his second hundred.—*Knoxville Journal*.

"Four skunks in a maroon coupe with Illinois plates got at least one pheasant without firing a shot last Sunday. Me 'n Verne Harris flushed a rooster, hit it, and watched it fall in a field. Knowing the bird was done for, we walked up the road a short distance look-

ing for another possible. The Illinois 'sportsmen' saw the bird fall, ran into the field, picked up our pheasant and drove off. I repeat, the 'skunks'.—*Hampton Times*.

"After hunting pheasants around Independence and noticing the number of cars in the farm lots and around fields, we suggest farmers borrow the parking meters in town and install them around the farms so that more hunters can park their cars.

"Farmers could receive some income, too, in return for having their fields tramped over. Charge 50 cents or a dollar for half an hour, give the towns 20 per cent for their use. Everybody would be happy. The towns would make more money, farmers some profit, and pheasant hunters—shucks! What do they care about money, if they can enjoy the thrill after finding parking space of marching down the cornfields abreast, seeing the pheasants take flight 300 yards ahead."—*New London Journal*.

Watch out for this one!

"I was told of an unusual pheasant hunting incident this morning. Some Decorah hunters saw a likely looking hunting place and stopped to get permission from the farmer. 'If you'll do me a favor first,' he said, 'you can hunt all you want.' His request was that the hunters shoot an old horse he wanted killed but couldn't bring himself to do the shooting.

"These hunters said they would be glad to comply. As they headed for the field in which the horse was grazing, they came upon another group of hunters from Minnesota. All agreed to hunt together. Then the first group decided they'd have some fun with the second. They didn't tell of the mission to slay the old horse.

"Suddenly coming close to the decrepit critter, one of the capricious Decorah hunters exclaimed loudly, 'I wonder how it would feel to shoot a horse!' Without further ado he raised his gun, shot the old steed squarely in the head and

(Continued on page 192)

## RINGNECK REVERIE

By L. Dale Ahern

Bagging my limit of ringneck roosters on opening day of the pheasant season this year looked like a cinch from the first crack of dawn on that fateful morning of November 11. That's the moment we climbed into my new Rilling Special and headed westward. The first 50 miles I divided my time between driving, rubbing the sleep out of my eyes, and digging Derwood's tall ones out of my ears.

We knew the season didn't open until noon and that the bag limit was only two, but we had apprehensions of getting a late start without our share of pheasant-infested hunting grounds. We had sharp memories of some hunters who scrambled out of the fields ahead of us at noon last year with gunnysacks full of wild roosters. We couldn't forget how wearily we combed those fields in a vain effort to flush a bird after those human vultures had cleaned up ahead of the opening hour.

This year, however, all signs and indications pointed toward a successful hunt. I had my usual opening day marksmen with me—Derwood Darling, local claw and feather authority; Ken Galloway, eloquent advocate of the theory that if one shot won't down 'em there's no use wasting two; and Ken Ingvaldstad, who gets downhearted if he doesn't score an eye hit on two out of three birds dropped with a rifle!

What gave us the most hope, though, was the precaution Derwood had taken. Weeks before opening day he had scouted the brush-and-swamp country in north central Iowa and had brought us fascinating statistics on the prevalence of game birds in a certain section.

And ever mindful of the happiness of his hunting partners, our scout had made special arrangements with the farmer who owned the largest, most strategically located, and best stocked ranch in the very heart of that pheasant haven!

So, with tantalizing visions of roasted pheasants filling our heads, we approached what Derwood said was a veritable game preserve. The nearer we got, the sharper our visions became.

"It seems a pity," I philosophized, "to get our limit so quickly. With a whole day to put into it and nothing to do but hunt, it seems a shame to knock off those roosters too early. We'll miss the fun of hunting for them."

But about that time we were entering Derwood's promised land of plenty. Then, suddenly a strange new note was sounded. It was something that Derwood was mumbling to himself. The full significance of it didn't hit any of us for about a minute. Then we grew panic-stricken.

"This is the road. . . . Yes, this is it. . . . I'm sure of that, and I can remember the way the trees looked . . . but I can't remember the name—the farmer's name. . . ."

"What?" All three of us barked the question in unison. "You don't know his NAME?"

Galloway began laughing a bit hysterically. He'd drop his chin on his chest for a moment, then pitch his head up and back while emitting an eerie cackle.

Ingvaldstad was smoking a cigarette. He made the mistake of sticking his finger into his mouth!

But Derwood's feathers were smooth as usual—not a ruffle in them. He just kept mumbling to himself.

"I can remember the barn, and the windmill . . . or was there a windmill?" I felt the car lunging

(Continued on page 192)



"Bagging my limit of ringneck roosters on opening day of the pheasant season looked like a cinch on that fateful morning of November 11." Jim Sherman Photo.



## PHEASANTS THE EASY WAY

While picking up corn Tuesday afternoon on his father's farm, John Schildroth bagged a rooster pheasant without the use of a gun. Coming to the end of his corn row, he spied pheasant feathers in a clump of weeds. As he stopped to pick them up, he realized that the frightened bird was hiding there. With one quick sweep he caught the bird in his hands, and it was his first of the 1949 season.—*Grundy Center Register*.

L. E. Page reported that he bagged two pheasants in the field one day last week without firing a shot.

"I was in a cornfield when a pheasant was chased over a hill by some hunters on the other side. The frightened pheasant was flying right toward me," Page related. He said that he crouched down in the cornfield and, as the pheasant flew over, he raised the barrel of his gun, striking the bird on the wing. The pheasant fell to the ground, he said.

Page saw another pheasant on the ground that had been shot by somebody else. It appeared to be a hen. Upon closer examination Page and the farmer discovered that the bird was a cock pheasant that had apparently been abandoned by the person who shot it after mistaking it for a hen. Page had his two pheasants without firing a shot.—*Waterloo Courier*.

A telephone wire enabled five Mount Pleasant hunters to bag a pair of pheasants without firing a shot.

Gilbert Mason, Jr. and Sr., Maynard Bittle, Cal Stichler and Rex King were driving near Keystone after they had finished hunting for the day and saw a flock of

pheasants flying over the road. One of the birds hit the telephone wire and dropped to the ground with a broken neck. The hunters got out of the car, ran over to the spot where the pheasant fell and were looking at it when another pheasant hit the same wire and fell dead at their feet.—*Mount Pleasant News*.

Details of a story, how a pheasant got it in the neck the hard way, came Monday from Cedar Rapids Public Improvements Commissioner David L. Williams, who didn't pot the bird himself but saw it happen, and nearly died laughing.

This particular pheasant was skittering through a cornfield near Keystone as Williams watched from his car on the road. In hot pursuit, crashing through cornstalks, came one lone hunter.

"He looked about 18 or 19 years old," the commissioner remarked, "and it seemed as if the bird had been winged—one wing was dragging."

Suddenly the hunter stopped, rammed a shell in his 20-gauge, single-shot gun, and cut loose a blast. The pheasant sped onward. The youth gave chase again. He was gaining.

Then as the bird went through a fence beside the road, it got stuck. The hunter came up and was reaching to grab him, but a final desperate lurch unloosed it once more.

"He dashed up the road and the kid climbed over and started in running," Williams went on. "When the pheasant saw him on that side of the fence, it darted through again and kept on going."

So the hunter climbed up, too. At the top he got desperate—drew back his empty shotgun and heaved it at the fleeing bird.

That was all, Williams said. The



It's the time of year when a man will put on 20 pounds of clothes, 14 pounds of shoes, carry 5 pounds of shells, a 10-pound cannon, and walk 20 miles through a pouring rain. Jim Sherman Photo.

## THE BEST SPORT GOING—AND COMING

Yes, dear friends and gentle hearts, the pheasant hunting season is with us again. It is the only time of the year when a man will put on 20 pounds of clothes, 14 pounds of shoes, carry 5 pounds of shells, a 10-pound cannon, and walk 20 miles through a pouring rain or snowstorm, come home wringing wet, triumphantly toss a

fugitive was knocked unconscious 15 or 20 feet away.

It was a clear case, the commissioner added, of a pheasant getting his goose cooked, but good.—*Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

### DUCK!

Each hunting season brings many humorous incidents. This year has been no exception. Here is one of the funnier ones that we've heard about this year.

Three hunters sitting out in their boat blind at Forney's were quite surprised by the large number of birds which started coming in suddenly. All three raised their guns. The quick action overbalanced the boat and they all toppled over into the water.

Two regained their footing and were trying to get a shot lined up, but the third fellow was in their way.

"Get down! get down!" they shouted at him.

"Get down, what the hotel!" he snorted. "I'm up to my armpits now. If I get down any farther I'll drown!"—*Council Bluffs Nonpareil*.

The fox family is equally distributed over the countries north of the Equator, but there are no true foxes native to any of the countries south of the Equator.

Beauty helps to make strong the will to live—makes living seem more important.—Howard Braucher.

bedraggled mess of feathers and bone into his wife's lap and say nonchalantly:

"Here, hon, clean it up and we'll have it for supper, huh?"

There is, we must confess, something different about hunting pheasants. To us, it's the best sport going. And the funny part of it is, most pheasant hunters don't have very good luck! You hear stories, plenty of them, about "that time I went hunting up in northern Iowa and got 17 pheasants, 4 quail and a rabbit in three hours," but that kind of pheasant shootin' never seems to happen to YOU.

The best YOU can do, it seems, is a couple of wild shots at a fluttering ball of fire that later couldn't be truthfully identified as a hen or cock, and maybe the scalp of an unlucky cottontail that happened to be within range. Yet that's the lure of pheasant hunting. When you do get a bird, or two or three, you know the pheasant had a fair chance, better than a fair chance, to beat the hunter at his own game.

Most birds are so wise by the second or third day of the season they're gone before you're within a hundred yards of them. And when you do snap your gun to your shoulder smoothly and crisply and the charge whams against the rigidity of your body and the bird suddenly collapses in mid-air, the release of the tension in the hunter's spirit and mind is a good antidote for the troubles of this machine age. (And let's not feel too sorry for the demise of the game bird, either. He leads a good life, is polygamous, and has only to dodge hunters for about 15 full days out of every year. We humans have to dodge automobile maniacs ALL the time.)—*West Branch Times*.



Dozens of pheasants were hand-picked during the open season as they lay hidden in heavy cover.





As in previous years the use of a good dog increased the pheasant hunter's chances. Jim Sherman Photo.

## Pheasant Season . . .

(Continued from page 185)

in this vicinity, with the number of hunters running into the thousands. Later huntsmen have reported the birds hard to find and alert to approaching danger.—*Sheffield Press*.

Many local hunters returned last Friday afternoon with their limit of two pheasant roosters, but from all reports there were as many or more who either shot only one or none at all.—*Rock Valley Bee*.

The annual army of pheasant hunters broke from cover Friday noon for an opening invasion of Iowa's most beautiful game bird, the famous ringneck. Hotels, restaurants, oil stations and shotgun shell salesmen report heavy business, and a great time was had by all, except maybe the pheasants themselves. Most hunters report many birds, but the shooting difficult, as the open nature of the cornfields gave the birds a chance to keep ahead and to fly up out of shooting range. Ditch banks, fence rows, some unhusked fields or weed-filled patches provided the best hunting, and most of the better or more experienced hunters found little trouble in collecting their limit of two cock birds daily.—*Buffalo Center Tribune*.

Hunters who went afield for pheasants at the opening of the season at noon last Friday had only fair luck. Some got their limit quite quickly, while others failed to get a good shot. Each succeeding day they have been harder to flush from hiding.—*Wyoming Journal*.

The pheasant season is progressing with the birds becoming more sly each day. With so much corn blown down or already harvested it is not always possible to see the birds slinking along ahead of the

hunter. By nature's oldest rule, "the survival of the fittest," it is easy to see why we are developing a sly, running pheasant. Recently one cock bird ran ahead of a pointer, holding its distance the length of a good-sized cornfield. That pointer ran alongside our car at 28 miles per hour.—*Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

From reports from the scores of hunters that journeyed through cornfields, brush patches and other places that are really not the best for walking, we came to the conclusion that the pheasant population in this territory will not be reduced to a very great extent. Most of the hunters say there are plenty of birds, but that it is next to impossible to flush them from cover. Even trained dogs do not seem to be of much help, as the birds stay on the ground in spite of a good chase by dogs.—*Cumberland Enterprise*.

Central Iowa pheasant hunters are saying these days that the army strategists could well afford to take lessons from the rooster pheasant. There's a fellow who possesses a wealth of knowledge in camouflage and defense tactics. Opening day central Iowa hunters found he was a bit confused, and well he might be after the roof fell on him at 12:00 noon Armistice Day. After giving him a day to think it over he made Houdini look like a third rate performer.—*Marshalltown Times-Republican*.

A number of pheasant hunters in the Hawarden territory reportedly bagged their two-bird limit with comparative ease as the season opened Friday, although the birds were said to stick pretty close to heavy weed cover.—*Hawarden Independent*.

Pheasant hunters generally were

having trouble bagging their limits over the last weekend. While earlier there seemed to be a good supply of birds, most of the corn being picked, coupled with warm or windy weather, has made the game hard to find and hard to kick out of dense cover.—*Kingsley News Times*.

The pheasant season opened Friday with the usual number of hunters here from a distance, and the reports were about as usual. There were lots of birds, more probably this year than for several years. That is what the fellow thought who got his limit in a short time, while the fellow who had trouble getting any thought the birds were pretty scarce. It is the same every year.—*Titonka Topic*.

The sport of pheasant hunting seems to have become almost universal. The farms and fields are sure full of hunters on opening day, and the pheasants get smart all at once, or they don't last until the second day. They are a fine game bird, and most of them make it by out-maneuvering the hunters. There won't be any scarcity of the birds due to overhunting.—*Sigourney Review*.

Nearly all hunters who returned opening day evening reported limit bags of pheasants. Sunday's scouts generally got what the little boy shot at. Reports are to the effect that the pheasants, with the north wind behind them, flew into the air and whizzed away like bullets.—*Griswold American*.

Who passed the word that all the pheasants were congregated in Fayette County? It sure got around in Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and points north, south, east and west. We would roughly estimate the hunters opening day at six per farm in Fayette County. From

## FISHER SEASON OPENED IN NEW YORK

One of America's most valuable and rarest furbearers, the fisher has staged such a comeback within recent years that the New York Conservation Department has declared a month-long trapping season, according to the Wildlife Management Institute.

This is the first time since 1936 when the "black cat" of the north country appeared on the way toward extermination, that the animal has been off the protected list. The season is restricted to eight counties and a limit of three pelts per trapper has been imposed. All furs taken must be tagged by a game protector. No open season has been declared on the marten, which still remains on the danger list.

what we hear, they had good hunting, too.—*Fayette County Union West Union*.

Hunters were pleasantly surprised at the large number of pheasants seen on opening day Friday. Reports varied from several up to hundreds of birds sighted. By the time the second day rolled around, the general picture still included ample birds, but since then they have been wild and canny with bag limits rare.—*Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*.

Living conditions for pheasants have become somewhat untenable on the farms during the past week Tuesday morning a live male pheasant was sitting nonchalantly on the sidewalk in front of the Grundy Cafe. The bird apparently had flown into the building or was stunned from some other cause. Passers-by thought perhaps the bird had simply become hungry and dropped in for an early morning breakfast at the cafe.—*Grundy Center Register*.



At the close of the pheasant season roosters were hard to find and difficult to flush within range. As the cannonading ceases pheasants will again congregate along fence rows, and many of them will be roosters. J. A. Patnaud Photo.





Good coon hunting depends mostly upon the dog. He must find the tree in which the coon has sought safety.

## Ululation . . .

(Continued from page 185)

Good coon hunting depends mostly upon the dog; he must find the tree in which the coon has sought safety. Then he must bark his noisy vigil until the hunter crosses a swamp, six barbed wire fences, up and down a dozen steep hills and 40 rods through a bramble thicket to the tree.

The United Kennel Club registers six breeds of coon hounds, American Black and Tan, Redbone, Bluetick, English, Treeing Walker and Plott. Of these six breeds the American Kennel Club recognizes only the American Black and Tan and has indicated an intention to register the Redbone as soon as a suitable club is formed to sponsor the breed.

The Redbone seem to be the best locally because their small size plus their agility makes it easier for them to cope with our hogtight fences. However, and in spite of seven generations of pedigree, the dyed-in-the-wool, hunt-all-night, fall-in-the-creek coon hunter still swears that "Old Tige" or "Lead" or "Sounder," whose father was an Airedale and whose mother was indiscreet, is the best doggone coon dog in the whole world.—Solon Economist.

## BELLE IN A BASKET

Speaking of cameras, we missed the shot of the year, and probably one of the funniest hunting scenes, last week when a couple we know went pheasant hunting. They stopped in Brooklyn, Iowa, to get some supplies. Dora Bell was walking through the general store there when she stumbled and sat down ker-plunk in an empty bushel basket. Weighing close to 180 and being hardly 5 feet tall, it was a neat fit . . . and took a little pulling to get her out. Later, C. L.



After Bre'r Coon is treed, the dog must bark his noisy vigil until the hunter crosses barbed wire fences, swamps and a dozen mountain ranges.

said, "We didn't bag any birds today, but they darn near bagged the ole lady at the general store."  
—Carlisle Citizen.

Man reveals himself most fully in his worship and his play.—Howard Braucher.

## BROOKLYNITE IN BENTON COUNTY

Dear Louie:

You'll never guess what your dear cousin has went and did, Louie. I went peasant hunting last week and a good time was had by all, including the peasants. You know me, Louie, all I've ever hunted is places to park, but a bunch of fellas wanted I should go with them after peasants, so after peasants I go. Now, Louie, I wouldn't know a peasant if one should walk up and say, "Hello, Joe!"

We started out in the car from a farmhouse and, for some reason which I ain't figured out yet, we all had a gun. They hand me a beaut which has on the side, "War is Hell—1863." I start the day out with two resolutions firmly in my mind (1) to be a good sport and go along with the gag, (2) to keep that gun unloaded. We are heading down a back road, that the only way you could tell you was off of it was the simple fact that the ditches were smoother riding, looking for game when I spots a babe walking toward us set up nice in a tight sweater, which she must have been breaking in for a younger sister, and a plaid skirt. There, I thinks, is a peasant if I ever saw one. I'm sitting there, quiet like, trying to decide whether to shoot or whistle, when Pete growls to cut it out and keep my eyes on the cover, which same was all I was doing anyway, but they'd been there before, so I didn't say anything. I found out later it was O. K. as the season is closed on the hens.

We bounce into a lane and all pile out of the car each heading up a corn row. Keep a sharp eye out, they tells me, which is just what I'd been doing ever since I spots that first hen peasant. We walk and we walk and nothing

happens and I can't help thinking that the hunting would be a lot better out on the road. But since they'd been here before, I still don't say nothing. I do mention to Pete that, as we pass through Omaha, I'd like to stop and get a drink, which remark is met by the curl of a sweaty upper lip.

We walk like this for about 40 miles and nothing happens—oh, yeah, I almost forgot, one of the guys shoots some kind of a bird with a lot of pretty but unnecessary feathers on it. He must have something in mind for it, cause he sticks it in his coat. But nothing important, like flushing a peasant, happens. The next 500 miles was the same old stuff. Every once in awhile they keeps their shootin' eye sharp, while waiting for a peasant, by knocking down some more of them pretty birds. Seemed kinda unnecessary to me, all that extra shootin'. I believe in sticking to what you're goin' after, but then, as I said before, this was my first trip, etc.

Well—when we finally got back to the car I am leaving three tracks behind me and am pretty fed up on this whole peasant deal. I'll always feel that I'd of done better in front of the cigar store on Saturday night. I don't rub it into the other fellas, but here I am, my first trip and I'm the only one who gets within whistling distance of a peasant. But then the fresh air is good for them and they aren't jealous so why should I kick?

That's about all that happened, Louie, except, and I shouldn't say this, them other guys, to put on a good front, lugged them fancy birds clear back to town with us. When they let me out of the car they wanted to know when we  
(Continued on page 192)



"We started out from a farmhouse, and for some reason which I ain't figured out yet we all had a gun. They hand me a beaut which has on the side 'War Is Hell—1863'." Jim Sherman Photo.





Among our cheeriest customs at Christmas time is that of decorating our homes with mistletoe, with branches hung over doorways or from the ceiling. Jim Sherman Photo.

## Mistletoe . . .

(Continued from page 185)  
warmer climates and almost to the limits of the temperate zones.

In the United States there are two types: the true mistletoes and the dwarf mistletoes. The latter—small scaly degenerate plants that are wholly parasitic—grow only on coniferous trees. The true mistletoes grow only on deciduous, or hardwood, trees. The best known of these is found as far north as southern New Jersey, central Ohio, southern Illinois and eastern Kansas, and is the state flower of Oklahoma. There is a closely related species in the Pacific Coast states and many other species varying in leaves, flowers, fruit, size and habits of growth.

The mistletoe is an "evergreen plant" and in the South it grows in dense large bunches that give a peculiar but pleasing touch to the forests in midwinter, when it is conspicuous among the naked branches. Our common mistletoe has yellowish-green leaves that are about two inches long, oval, thick and leathery. The male flowers and female flowers, both tiny and yellowish, are always on separate plants. The female flowers are followed by clusters of berries that ripen in autumn and hang on for months. The berry is ivory-white, about one-eighth inch in diameter, and filled with a juicy sticky pulp which encloses a single seed. These

berries attract birds. The pulp is digested but the little seed passes through unharmed. This, plus the fact that many seeds stick to birds' bills and feet, accounts for the spreading of mistletoe from tree to tree.

The true mistletoe, being green, manufactures part of its own food, but derives water and other necessary substances from the plant upon which it grows. Its roots penetrate through the outer and inner bark to find crude sap in the sapwood. When too many bunches of mistletoe grow on a tree, sooner or later the whole tree dies.

It can be a pest, particularly to a bashful guy.

The doe of the white-tailed deer rarely has more than one offspring at the first birth, commonly two at the second birth and it is not uncommon for her to have three at the third or any year thereafter.

The Swedes have a proverb that goes like this: "Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less, breathe more; talk less, say more; hate less, love more; and all good things will be yours."

As early as 1910, President Van Hise of the University of Wisconsin declared that conservation was more important than any other problem confronting the American people.

The fur trade recognizes nearly a hundred different types of animals as fur-bearers. Peltries are sold under hundreds of different names.

## Shotguns . . .

(Continued from page 187)  
several hunters riding in the car. Muzzles are poking up too close to heads, and in jumping out they are often waved within inches of a companion's face. At the same time, the right hand is grasping the grip on the stock and more often than not the trigger finger is floating around up where it doesn't belong—in front of the trigger. A perfect setup for a tragedy, and it's surprising there aren't more of them.

Roadside hunting is popular and will be so long as the law allows it. Many shooters do it the legal way, with gun unloaded in a case in the car, and they seem to get as many roosters as anyone else.

This kind of easy shooting is a break for elderly men and for those with heart ailments or other ailments which prevent them from hiking through the fields.

There is usually good cover along the country roads, and the hunter doesn't have to ask permission to shoot there. But if too many continue to break the law when they do it, you can look for a full stop to roadside hunting some day in the future.

There are so many arguments against it the men and boys who persist in violating the law are only speeding the day when all road shooting will be illegal. Some wardens hope the day comes soon. It would greatly simplify their enforcement problems.—Gib Knudson, *Emmetsburg Democrat*.

## Potpouri . . .

(Continued from page 188)  
dropped him in his tracks. The horrified Minnesota hunters didn't say a word. They took one look at the dead horse, then took to their heels in fright and ran completely out of sight.—*Decorah Public Opinion*.

Expensive guns and high-powered ammunition are a lot of nonsense, say two Cantril youngsters.

The boys, Lel Rae Newlon, 11, and his brother Larry Joe, 13, are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Emert Newlon of Cantril. They took an air rifle out on a hunt and a half-hour later returned with a fox. Later in the afternoon they proudly displayed their trophy as proof to their grandfather, Ray D. Angstead, a veteran hunter who lives four miles southeast of town.—*Fairfield Ledger*.

## Brooklynite . . .

(Continued from page 191)  
could get together for a peasant dinner, and I comes back, right quick like, and say, "Oh any time. The sooner the better!" You know me, Louie, I can go along with a gag!

You will hear more from me later, Louie.

As ever, your lovin' cousin,  
Joe.  
—Under the Sky,  
*Burlington Herald*.

## Reverie . . .

(Continued from page 188)  
forward. Unconsciously, in my anxiety, I was kicking the accelerator.

"And the house," our veteran guide continued, "I'd remember the house, but I don't know where it is . . . and the farmer—he was a nice fellow, said we could hunt all we wanted on his place, said there were lots of birds, plenty of birds, I'd remember him—but I don't know his name . . . nice fellow, nice fellow. . . ."

"But you can't remember his name and you don't know where he lives!" the rest of us wailed in despair.

Suddenly at Derwood's command, I swerved off the pavement onto a little north-running gravel road. "This is the road," our grisly guide assured us.

Then just as if he had arranged it, our dependable scout sat up erect and announced, "There they are, boys!" And would you believe it—just as if they were waiting for us—a covey of about 20 pheasants, including five or six large roosters, strutted out into the open on the edge of a large swamp right beside the road.

But it was only 10:30. Hunting didn't start until noon, and we weren't sure we had the right farm—the one on which Derwood had obtained permission for us. We parked there a few minutes, leaning hungrily at those friendly birds, then fell prey to Derwood's troublesome curiosity over location of that bird-infested farm we were hunting. "We'll return," we agreed, "and pick them off."

Unhappily I drove away from those beautiful ringnecks, but I didn't realize I was destined to drive for hours and miles before finally reaching a farm Derwood "felt satisfied" was the one we sought. . . .

Then somewhat too near the shank of the evening we managed to race back to the swamp. A thorough combing of the tall, wild grass flushed a jackrabbit and a large gray fox—both just out of gun range—but NOT ONE RINGNECK. All the way home you can imagine whose neck I WANTED TO RING!—*Decorah Public Opinion*.

The passing out of a recreation center building, a recreation system to the people without their having any other part than acceptance, is a great mistake, even though it be from the best motives.—Howard Braucher.

Female deer have been known to fish in small streams, using their hoofs to stun suckers and trout, then turning the fish head foremost in their mouth they will chew and swallow it.

Parks are taken for granted, as are roads, drinking water, air, sunshine.—Howard Braucher.

We indict ourselves when we play areas for living and do not provide playgrounds.—Howard Braucher.