

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

Volume 13

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## AUTUMN, CLEAR RIVERS, AND PIKE

### NOTES ON DECOYING DUCKS

By John Madson  
Education Assistant

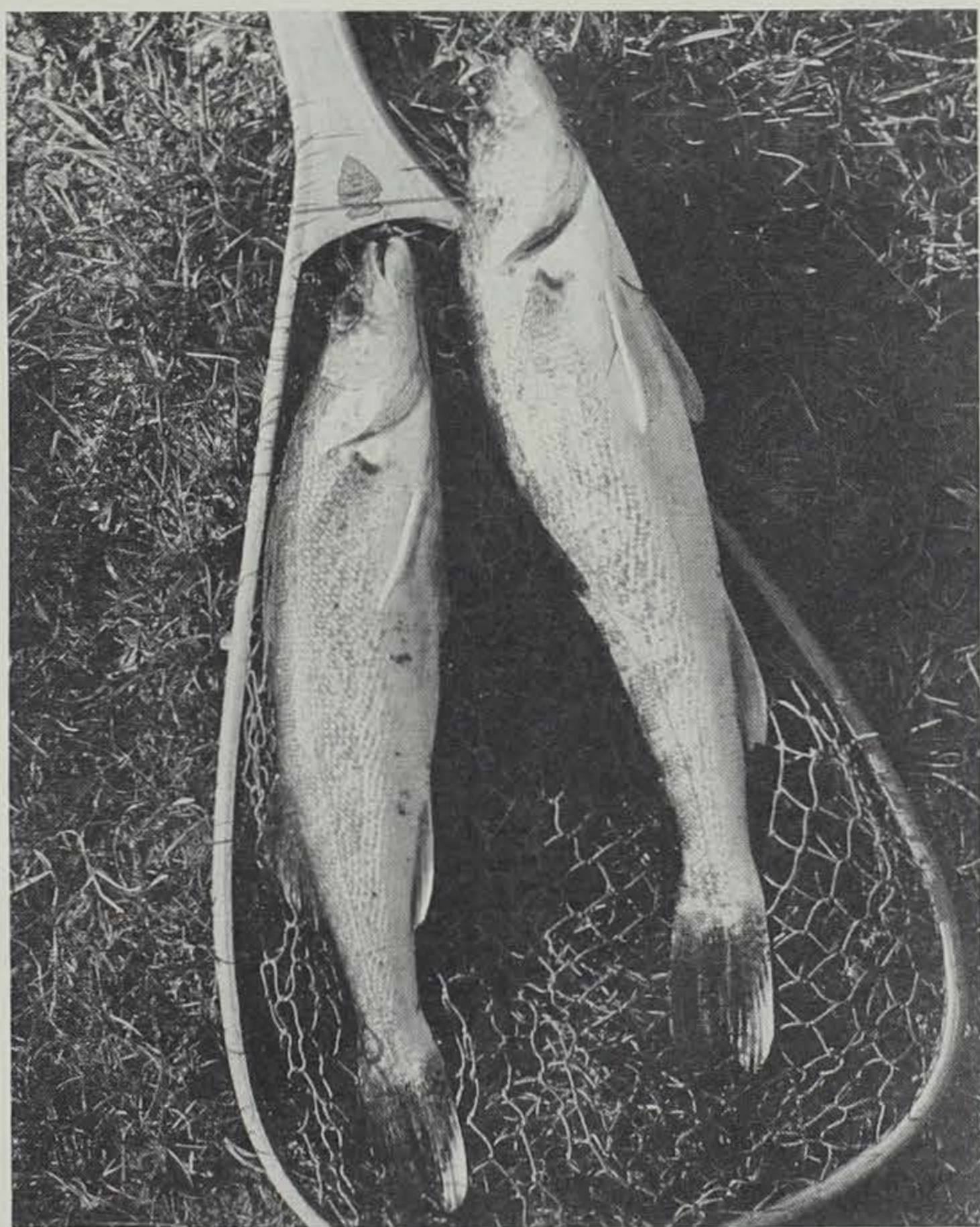
Fooling ducks is an art. Sometimes it's simple, depending on weather, water and the kind of duck being hoodwinked. But it's usually difficult, and many hunters fool only themselves. Take decoys—most ducks can spot the average decoy spread for what it is: chunks of lumber floating in a marsh. But ducks aren't interested in driftwood; they're interested in ducks. It's up to you to give them what they want.

Like any art, decoying ducks is mastered by attention to detail. Details, for example, such as a decoy's seaworthiness. Many commercial blocks roll from side to side in rough water; living ducks do not. Ducks may pitch up and down waves, but they don't wallow. If your decoys roll badly, try attaching a keel about one and one-half inches deep along the bottom of your blocks. Use a good waterproof glue and brass nails.

Another detail is one of anchor cords, which should be black, brown or gray so they won't be seen from above. They can be almost any color but white, yellow or orange. Adjust your anchor cords to the depth of water you're setting the blocks in. If the cord is too short the anchor won't hold; if it's too long the decoy won't have the best swinging action. An anchor cord should extend from the decoy to the lake bottom at about a 45 degree angle. For average conditions when there is a little water chop, tie the cord to the front of the decoy, and the block will swing and move like a living duck. In quieter water, attach the anchor cord a couple of inches back for the best movement.

Instead of wrapping the anchor cord around the decoy when you pick it up, have a loop tied in the cord just above the anchor. When you pick up the decoy, just slip

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Star performers in autumn's big show. These walleyes, taken from clear, cold rivers, can't be beaten for eatin'.

Jim Sherman Photo.

### Canoeing The Little Sioux—Linn Grove to Cherokee

By Ralph Church and  
Harold Allen

There are many things that make a stream attractive to the canoeist. Among them are good fishing and interesting local history. In both of these respects the Little Sioux is outstanding.

It is one of the topnotch catfishing streams in the state, with all the characteristics of a catfisherman's paradise.

At the same time, the story of human habitation in its valley goes

so far back into the distant past that it is only now becoming imperfectly known. In the time of the early French traders the river was important in the fur trade, and was a route of the plains Indians to the pipestone quarries of Minnesota. Archaeologists have established the existence of the so-called Mill Creek Indian Culture in the valley in 1200 A.D., over 700 years ago. Recent discoveries indicate that humans inhabited the

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By K. M. Madden  
Superintendent of Fisheries

Fall is the golden season for outdoor recreation. To those of us whose special interest is angling, it's like a small boy at an eight-ring circus. Squirrel hunting, duck hunting, lake fishing, nut gathering and football compete for our attention with the sparkle and excitement of low, clear-water streams full of hungry fish.

In many Iowa streams the water is low and clear, and the sight-feeding walleye, northern and smallmouth bass are on a feeding rampage. Many of the insects that free-swam through the summer have passed into their dormant stage and are now removed from river menus. The hordes of young fish have been thinned out during the late spring and summer, and the ones remaining are getting too big for the grandparents to eat. As the food supply diminishes the big fish become hungry and careless, and they can be caught if properly sought after.

In October we find river stages much lower, and rocks, snags and sand bars are easier to find because of the diminished depth and increased clarity of the water. Many streams are so turbid in the summer that they can be approached quietly from any angle without spooking fish, but these same streams are now so clear that great caution must be used if you are to fish them productively.

Avoid casting shadows over these clear autumn waters. Approach from the low side of the river, and stay off high cut banks where your figure will be sky-lined. If the stream is new to you, survey the possible cover—deep holes, riffles, rocks and snags before starting to fish. Rivers are easier to read in the fall than any other time of year because the water is usually clear and the volume reduced, thus crowding and confining most of the fish of catchable size to the deeper holes or runs that can be more readily observed. Even though tempted by beautiful catfish water, good carp eddies, or a nearby trout stream, remember

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## ASK THE FARMER FIRST!

### An Editorial

In this issue of the CONSERVATIONIST there is a list of Iowa's newest public hunting grounds. The complete list is a big one, totalling thousands of acres, but it is just a drop in the bucket compared to the private hunting grounds—woods, fields, and marshes on which the bulk of Iowa hunting depends.

About 97 per cent of the state is in private hands. Last year over 338,000 hunting licenses were sold. Nearly all of the hunting done on these licenses was on private property. Any thinking hunter can see that the future of Iowa hunting is in the palm of the farmer. There is no other way to put it.

In some states the impact of the hunting public has shown up in commercialization: hunting not only by permission of the landowner but by his being paid as well. Free hunting as a sport is almost gone in Europe, and is dwindling in some states. A few pessimists are already beating the drums of doom, predicting that in a few years American hunting will be on a cash basis and that free hunting, your sport and mine, will be ended.

A number of years ago the Conservation Commission tried an experiment that is still being used in some states. A plan was set up whereby the farmer would be paid for the privilege of hunting on his land and forms were furnished hunters who, on obtaining permission to hunt, gave them to the farmer. The farmer could then collect one dollar per day per hunter from the game fund. Few coupons were ever cashed. Iowa farmers just didn't want money for granting hunting rights. Our hunting is still by permission only, on a guest-host relationship. How long it remains that way depends on the strength of that relationship.

Fish and game belong to all of



Our farmers don't want money from hunters. They want friendship, courtesy and consideration.

us, but not the right to enter any private property to take them. That's where the farmer comes in. He controls our hunting by controlling the access to game.

A few farmers are hard to get along with, but so are a few sportsmen. During this season keep a record of the number of times you ask permission to hunt and the times you are turned down. Harold Titus, the outdoor writer, once approached 41 Iowa farmers in seven different counties, asking permission to hunt. Although a total stranger, he was turned down only three times. The average Iowa farmer is also a hunter. Forty per cent of last year's deer hunters in this state were farmers. As hunters, most farmers can understand your point of view and will meet you half way if you approach them with courtesy and consideration.

And here's a note to the farmer: If a hunter drives into your place to ask to hunt, don't storm up to him and get rough. If you don't want him to hunt, tell him so without striking fire. If you have a reason for not allowing hunting, explain it to him.

Understanding between farmer and sportsman should be a 12-month job, not just an opening day chore. The groundwork for hunting season should be laid long before the season begins. Get in touch with farmers in your favorite hunting area and keep in touch with them. They can give you a lot of dope on where to hunt and you'll have things lined up for opening day. Wait until the last minute and you may spend the opening day hunting for hunting

## THIS BUSINESS OF SHOTGUN CHOKE

Choked boring in shotgun barrels originated with the first breech loading shotguns and self-contained shot cartridges, probably sometime around the Civil War. Before this it was impossible to constrict gun barrels because the guns could not be loaded from the muzzle if that muzzle was smaller than the firing chamber at the breech.

Designations of shotgun chokes vary with designer and manufacturer, but there are roughly six standard types of shotgun borings: extreme full choke for very long range shooting; full choke for long range shooting; modified choke for average ranges; improved cylinder bore for moderate ranges; cylinder bore for close range; and a skeet boring in which the barrel is little more than a straight tube that allows a maximum shot pattern at very close range.

A shotgun's choke or boring has but one purpose—to constrict the shot charge to a greater or lesser extent to allow various densities of shot pattern. A full-choked gun does not shoot harder or further.

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A double gun usually has two different chokes: one for close in; the other for far out.

instead of hunting for birds.

Be courteous and friendly. Don't demand to hunt, and if you're turned down, take it with good grace. Find out where livestock is, keep gates closed and don't shoot near farm buildings.

Above all, ask the farmer first! He has the right to know who is

on his property, and a man who shows the responsibility to ask to hunt will seldom be turned down.

We said earlier that the future of Iowa hunting lies in the farmers' hands. But it also lies with you, the sportsman, and how you meet and treat the landowner and his property.





Jim Sherman Photo.

Every year new public hunting grounds are added to the list. Some are famous old areas; others are manmade, brand new.

## YOUR NEWEST PUBLIC HUNTING GROUNDS

Scattered over Iowa are thousands of acres of prime hunting grounds, open to the public without cost or obligation. Many of these areas are old ones and have been in use for many years. But since last hunting season over 4,000 acres of new public hunting areas have been added to the list.

These new areas include:

### 1. Big Marsh in Butler County.

Six miles north of Parkersburg—1,779 acres. There is still little water in this marsh area, but there should be enough potholes to furnish limited duck shooting. The entire area furnishes pheasant and rabbit hunting.

### 2. Brown's Slough in Lucas County.

Three miles east,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Russell—700 acres, of which 250 acres are water. Quail, pheasants, rabbits, squirrels, waterfowl.

### 3. Colyn Area in Lucas County.

Five miles south of Russell—700 acres; no water development as yet. Quail, rabbits, squirrels.

### 4. Blue Wing Marsh in Clay County.

Three miles northeast of Ruthven, or one mile west of Lost Island Lake—160 acres of marsh. Waterfowl, pheasants.

### 5. Pella Strip Mines in Marion County.

One mile south,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Pella—293 acres. Water-filled pits; hilly, brushy habitat. Waterfowl, quail, pheasants, rabbits.

### 6. Williamson Pond in Lucas County.

One and one-half miles east of Williamson—25 acres of water; 100 acres of upland. Waterfowl, squirrels and rabbits.

### 7. LaHart Area in Monroe County.

Two and one-half miles southwest of Lovilia—40 acres of water; 135 acres upland. Waterfowl, rabbits and squirrels.

### 8. Lizard Creek in Webster County.

One mile east, two miles north of Moorland—95 acres; many small ponds. Pheasants, waterfowl, rabbits.

### 9. Jemmerson Slough in Dickinson County.

One mile west of Spirit Lake—180 acres of marsh have been added to the original 100 acres of water. Pheasant, rabbits, waterfowl.

### 10. East Twin Lake in Hancock County.

Five miles west of Goodell 40 acres of new area on the east side of the lake have been filled with water.

### 11. Garlock Slough in Dickinson County.

One mile west of West Okoboji Lake—86 acres of marshy land of which 25 acres are water. Waterfowl.

In addition to these, some old areas are having their faces lifted to make them more attractive to fish and game. Lake Odessa, south of Muscatine, is having water control structures added, and development work is being done on the Riverton Area, one-half mile west of Riverton in Fremont County, to improve waterfowl habitat.

Don't overlook your public hunting areas. Some of the well-known areas are crowded and heavily hunted, but there are others that are only lightly hunted each year.

If there are some nearby public hunting grounds that are unfamiliar to you, do some exploring. It might pay off.—J. M.

## Shotgun Choke . . .

(Continued from page 74)

but simply has a denser pattern at long range. It is thus easier to kill game that is far out, but since the pattern is tighter and smaller, that game is also harder to hit.

## NOW'S THE TIME TO PICNIC!

If you've ever been on a picnic, and if you ever plan to go on another one, go now.

During these crisp, golden days your state parks are at their best, filled with the tang of fall and the maples, oaks and aspens that are masses of color. The bugs have vanished with the overflow crowds, and the fish that you missed in July can be caught in October.

You'll need a sweater and a jacket, and instead of a thermos of lemonade, you'll want a jug of hot coffee. As the leaves change, so do picnic fashions, and fried chicken and potato salad have given way to weiner roasts, steak fries and hot drinks. It's the season of bittersweet and roast marshmallows again.

Most people are occupied with storm windows, leaf-raking and Saturday football this time of year. Many of our most beautiful parks will be virtually deserted, and you'll have them and the golden autumn to yourself. In the "water parks" the fish are hitting again, and the midsummer doldrums of angling have given way to the coldwater, ravenous strikes of walleyes, bass and northern pike. Long hikes over park trails aren't the sweltering, bugridden affairs that they were in August—last week's frost killed the mos-

quitoes and chiggers.

Hike along the trails and look out over valleys that are filled with blue autumn haze and a patchwork of color. The wood-smoke of your cooking fire will hang on the air for hours—an October incense. In the morning and evening you'll want that fire for something besides cooking. . . .

If you're a football fan and can't make the game, take your portable radio out to a park and make a day of it. Take your supper along, too. And when you've finished your steak sandwiches, baked potatoes and pumpkin pie, stick around for awhile to watch the hunter's moon come up and have just one more cup of coffee.

You can even stay overnight in most parks. Cabin facilities aren't crowded this time of year and although the cabins are unheated, some good blankets or sleeping bags will take care of chill nights. However, October is the last month that cabins are available. If you want some details on where to go and how to get there, and on the camping regulations and cabin facilities of Iowa's state parks, drop a line to the Conservation Commission in Des Moines.

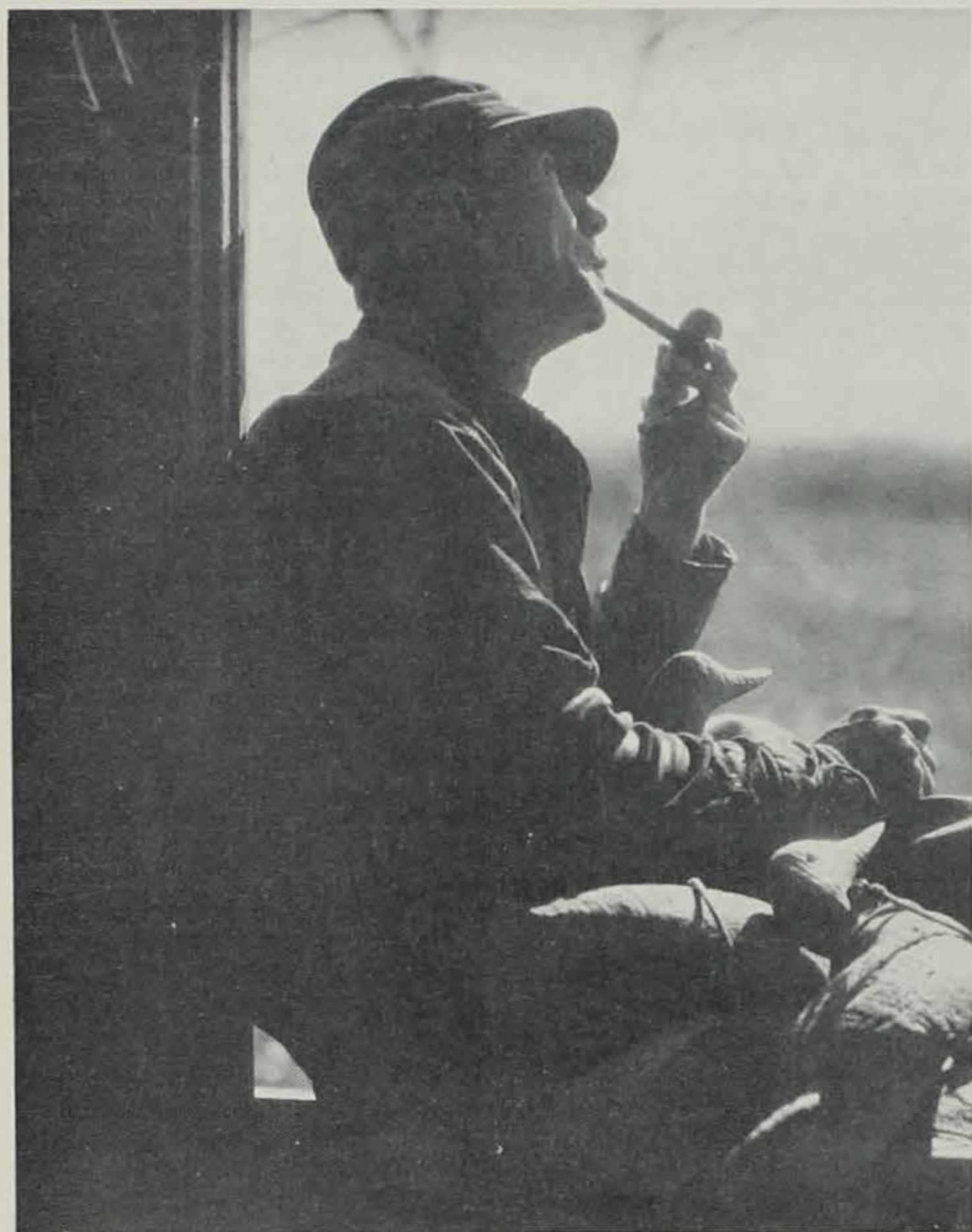
October may be the month of the hunter, but it's also the month of the picnicker and weekend vacationist. Your state parks will never be more beautiful than they are now, and a hot picnic meal will never taste better.—J. M.



Jim Sherman Photo.

For picnics, the days are bright and cool. For walks in the park there are golden valleys and leaves to play in.





There's only one real way to learn flying ducks: spend 50 years on the marshes.

## THOSE DISTANT DUCKS

The eastern sky is just turning gray. The decoys are set, you are snug in the blind and your fanny isn't cold yet, and old Killgoose is lying loaded and cocked across your knees. You're ready for shooting, but if you're like most of us, you won't know what you're shooting at. Ducks in the hand are hard enough to identify, but those distant ducks really give trouble.

Here are a few tips that may help you recognize flying ducks. The best way to learn distant ducks is by actual practice, but maybe these tips will give you a head start.

### Puddle Ducks

**MALLARD:** Flight is not particularly rapid. Head and neck carried slightly upward, big body, ample wingspread. Underwings flash white while in flight and foreparts and hindparts of the drakes appear dark, with white bellies.

**BLACK DUCK:** Swift, direct flight. Large, very dark bodies with silver-white underwings.

**PINTAIL:** Fast and graceful, with long, slender outstretched necks and long tails. A slim, streamlined duck. Both sexes have pointed wings, and drakes have white breasts and long, white necks.

**TEAL:** Flight is very rapid, with much wheeling and circling like a flock of pigeons. Small, fast ducks with wings that whistle audibly.

**WOOD DUCK:** Flight is swift

and direct. In flight the head is held high with bill pointing downward, and head is often turned this way and that as if the duck was looking around. Tail is long and broad and both sexes show much white underneath. In flight the duck cries *cr-r-ek, cr-r-ek*. This duck may not be killed in the 1954 waterfowl season.

### Diving Ducks

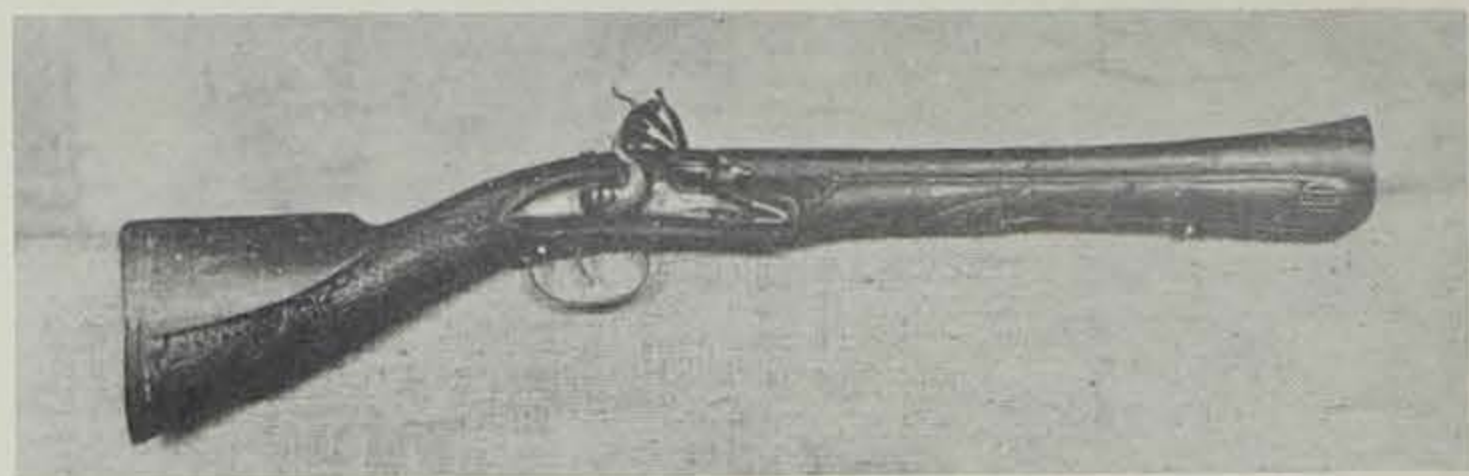
Diving ducks usually have more rapid wingbeats than the puddle or surface-feeding ducks. The puddle ducks, such as mallards, always spring from the water in a single bound, while diving ducks take off like airplanes.

**CANVASBACK:** Large size, flight is swift, labored and powerful. Our fastest duck. Drake has a long, sloping head profile, very streamlined. Drake has white body, dark tail, and long, slender head and neck. Wings are long and pointed. Migrate in V's, but on feeding grounds they fly in compact, irregular formations with much wing noise.

**REDHEAD:** Appear shorter and darker on the wing than canvasbacks, flight is more erratic and wings beat more rapidly. Flight always appears hurried. A chunky duck with a round, puffy head. Drake has black neck and chest, grayish body.

**BLUEBILL:** Flight is swift and erratic with much twisting and turning. Often in large, closely bunched flocks. Drakes have black

(Continued on page 79)



Be careful in buying this number—the manufacturer is out of business.

## BUYING A USED GUN?

Used guns, like used cars, can be a good deal or a headache, depending upon the caution and experience of the buyer. Most modern American guns are rugged, well-made and almost never wear out under normal use. But there are bad used guns as well as good ones, and these tips from the *Hunter's Encyclopedia* may keep you from getting stung:

1. Be certain that the manufacturer is still in business if you plan to use the weapon. If he is not, don't buy it.

2. Get a currently popular model. Repairs may not be available on some discontinued types—and if they are, they will be costly.

3. Do not purchase a gun for an obsolete or rare cartridge unless you are buying it as a collection piece.

4. Do not buy a gun which requires repairs. Factory parts and labor are expensive—and if parts are handmade by a gunsmith, the price may astonish you.

5. Do not purchase a gun "sight-unseen." Always inspect carefully before you close a deal.

6. Do not buy a gun which shows excessive wear or "play" in the action.

7. Do not buy a gun if the outside shows signs of abuse. Internal parts may be worse. (Beware of a gun that has been "screw-driven," with screw slots burred and torn. Someone has been inside that gun that had no business there.)

8. Do not buy a gun with a barrel that is rough, rusted, or pitted inside.

9. Do not become a victim of sales talk. Study your proposed purchase and make your decision on the basis of your own examination—and needs.

10. Do not buy a gun if the seller will not permit you to try it out before you decide. There may be reason for his refusal.

Study these general rules care-

fully before you buy that used gun. Old-time horsetraders have nothing on some modern gun-swappers and dealers.



"California, here I come!"

## DUCK RACING LATEST SPORT IN CALIFORNIA

If you read in your sports page next month where Foot Goose and Fancy Free ran one-two at Eider Downs don't be misled into thinking a new horse racing track has opened.

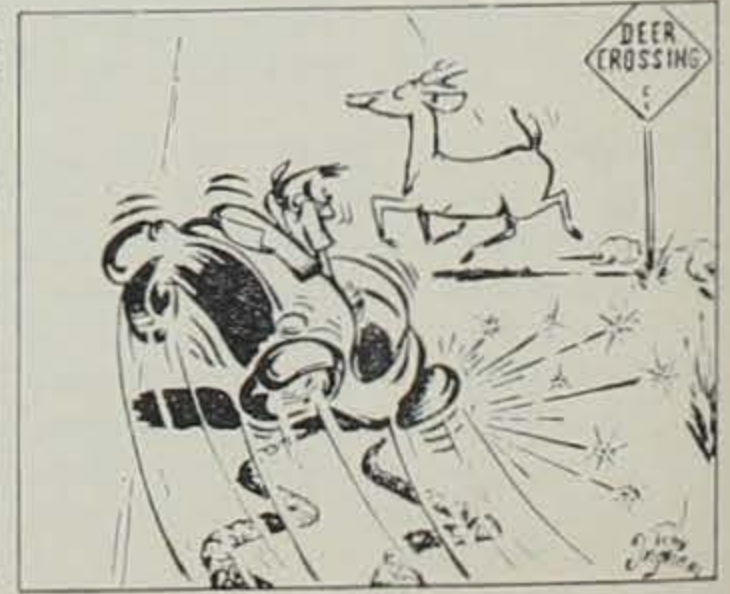
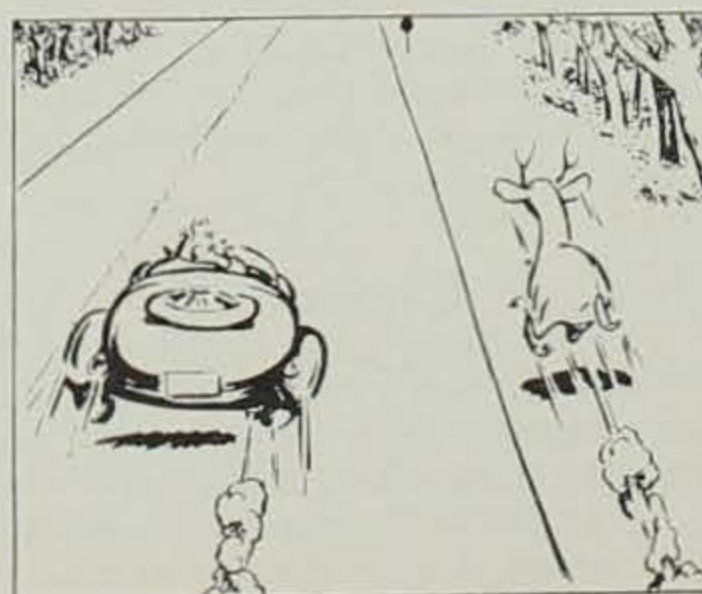
Eider Downs is the name of the new 70-foot track at the Los Angeles County fairgrounds, and Indian runner ducks, noted for speed and egg-laying ability, are going to hotfoot it over the course daily from September 17 to October 3 for the amusement of spectators. There will be no parimutuel betting, however.

Favorite for the Canvasback Handicap opening day is Native Gander, but he presently is suffering from a recurring web ailment. Eligibility rules place no ban on ducks with names resembling geese.

Winners of the bigger races will get an extra handful of choice grain, and their portraits will be painted on a large mural.

The ducks are trained to run by placing grain at the end of the lane. They learn fast, and the few who disdain the sport are retired to the laying bins, where they really star. One set a European record of 360 eggs in 365 days.

But racing is easier.—Associated Press.







Jim Sherman Photo.

Doing the morning's chores. In a single spread, these hunters set 128 mallard decoys.

## Notes . . .

(Continued from page 73)  
the anchor loop over its head. This will leave some line hanging down in a long loop, but if the cord is fairly heavy it won't tangle with other blocks.

Set your decoys according to the water and species of duck you'd expect there. Small water usually means a small number of puddle ducks. Three or four blocks are as many as you'll need on a half-acre pothole. Jack Musgrove, the hunter-author of *Waterfowl in Iowa*, likes to use three hand-made mallard decoys near the marshy edge of small ponds with a single highly-colored drake pintail out in open water to attract attention. It's a realistic setup, easy to transport, and it kills ducks. As Jack drops a bird he runs a willow switch in its mouth and down its neck, folds the wings over the back, and floats it in the water to simulate a feeding bird. This won't work in the rough water of a large lake or marsh.

Early in the season many drakes are still in their eclipse plumage and closely resemble hens. With this in mind, some hunters prefer to use very few drake decoys early in the fall. As the season progresses these hunters "whiten" up their spreads by adding more bright-colored drake decoys, just as occurs in nature.

On big water you'll need a lot of decoys, particularly for diving ducks such as canvasbacks and

redheads. The more decoys the better, for cans and redheads often raft up in large numbers in the centers of big lakes. Large canvasback spreads are rare these days, but old-timers sometimes used several hundred decoys in a single setup. These huge rafts of blocks will attract other divers, too: baldpates, bluebills, and buffleheads. Mix in a few decoys of these species of a more realistic effect.

Mixing decoys is also good for puddle ducks—mallards, gadwalls, teal and others. A mallard spread is always made a little better by having a couple of coot decoys hanging around the edge. (So don't shoot coots and let them lie—they make fine live decoys.) However, don't mix species of ducks that don't belong together. Avoid such combinations as canvasbacks and teal.

When you arrange your decoys, don't set them evenly with the same distance between each block. A flock of real ducks is arranged in groups, with several ducks rather close together, then a couple of singles, and another group of ducks a couple of yards away. Sometimes there will be a couple of lone ducks hanging around the fringes of the main flock. This is the general pattern of feeding, resting and undisturbed puddle ducks. Mallards usually bunch up in a close, rather dense flock just before they jump, but if they are at peace with the world they are scattered at random. Diving ducks,

on the other hand, usually bunch up fairly close even when they are undisturbed.

On lakes and big marshes there are two general methods of arranging decoys in front of the blind: one for the divers (redheads, canvasbacks and bluebills) and one for puddlers (mallards, teal and pintails).

Diving ducks are among the world's fastest birds, and when they stoop to a set of decoys they often overshoot the spread. For these ducks, set your decoys downwind from the blind. The divers will come in against the wind, overshoot the decoys, and land in front of the blind. Set decoys 10 or 15 yards from the blind; never more than 20 yards.

Upwind from the blind, scatter out a few canvasback decoys. If you can scrounge enough decoys you might try using "stringers"—a long, staggered line of single canvasback decoys about 20 feet apart that leads downwind from the main raft of decoys. In a big canvasback setup, these stringers sometimes lead a mile and a half from the blind and cans pick them up and "fly down the line" to the main raft of blocks. Because it demands as many as 500 decoys this decoying method is dying out these days, but is extremely effective.

Set your canvasback and red-head decoys as far out on the lake as possible, building your blind on an island or on a long, narrow point. However, keep in mind that all big Iowa lakes have open water refuges 50 yards beyond the farthest emergent vegetation.

Divers are fairly immune to cold winds and rough water, but puddle ducks are more tender and prefer more sheltered locations. Set mallard decoys in the lee of the wind in a large bay or cove close to the main shoreline. On a marsh they may be set almost anywhere the ducks are known to occur. (Set any duck decoys only in areas that you know are used by ducks.)

Because of their slower speed, puddle ducks will usually under-shoot decoys, landing downwind from them. So make your main

set of about two dozen mallard decoys about 15 yards from the blind in the loosely clumped groups described earlier. Make this set upwind from the blind, just the opposite of the diving duck set. About 30 yards out try using a couple of gaudy pintail drakes, or better yet, set out a couple of snow goose decoys if you have them.

River shooting calls for mallard or pintail decoys. Choose a big sandbar that juts out into the bend of a river. Ducks will seldom land in close to a sheltered river bank, but desire a big sandbar from which they can watch for danger. Later on, when they're assured of safety, they may move in under the banks.

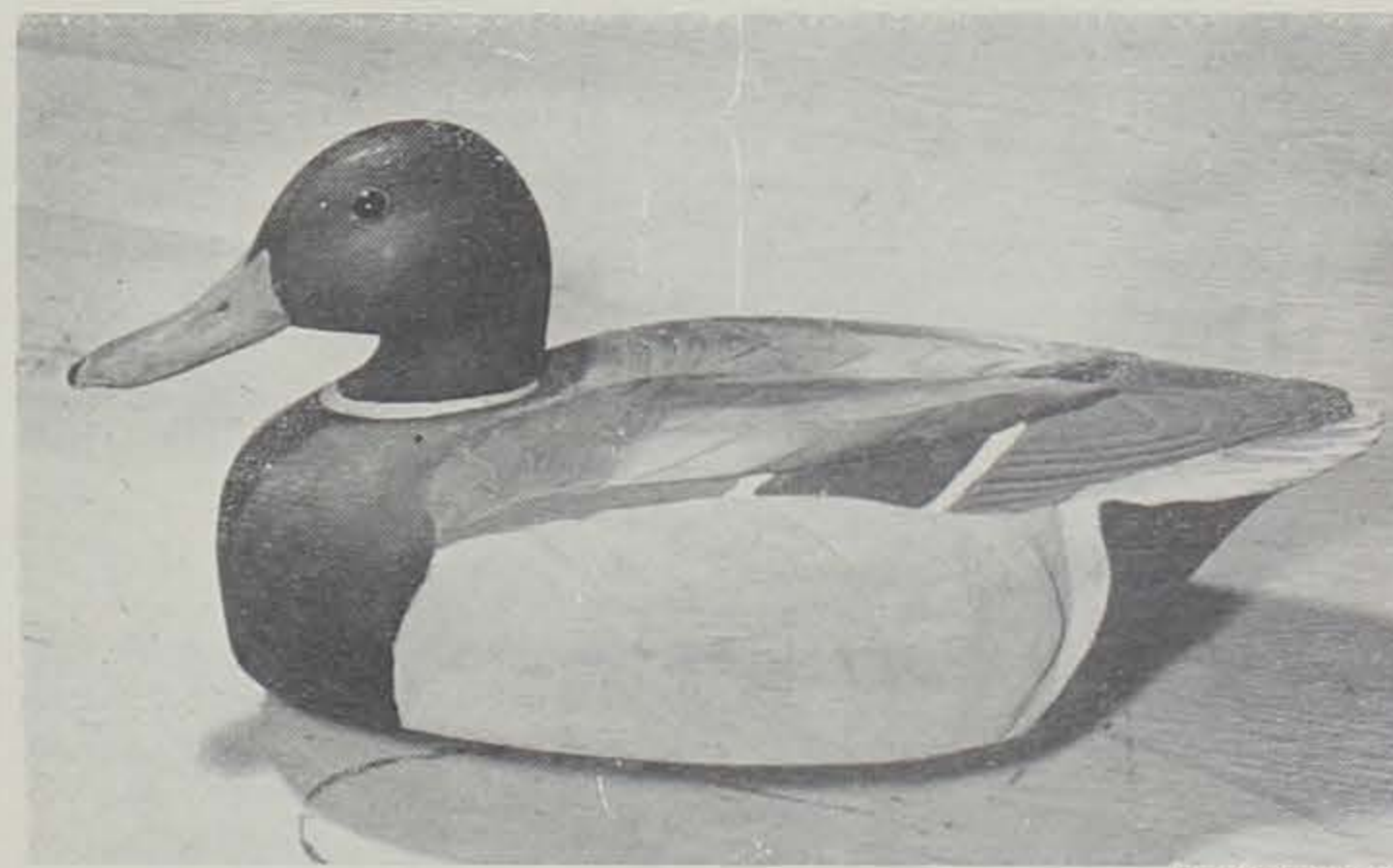
Scrape out a shallow pit blind some 15 yards from the water's edge. If you can find an old driftwood log to lie beside, fine. Some hunters spread part of an old tarp over them—a white one if there is snow on the sandbar. If there is no snow, they may spread a thin layer of sand over the tarp, just enough to break their outline as they lie in the pit. If you're beside an old log, lean a couple of driftwood branches up against it and crawl under them. Avoid a sandbar blind that looks as solid as a blockhouse.

Just off the end of the sandbar set your decoys, with a few dekes up on the sand itself. Don't move when there are ducks in the air, and don't look up at them. From up high a man's face is a beacon of danger to a duck.

Here are two more miscellaneous notes: A hunter does not have to be completely hidden by a blind if his body outline is broken by camouflage. And unless you're pretty good with a duck call, it might be best to leave it at home. Generally speaking, no calling at all is better than very poor calling.

Late in the season, try breaking a hole in pond ice and setting some decoys in it. Another interesting trick (we've never seen it used, though) is mixing up a few gallons of laundry bluing and water. Pour this mixture on thick ice, set some decoys in the blue

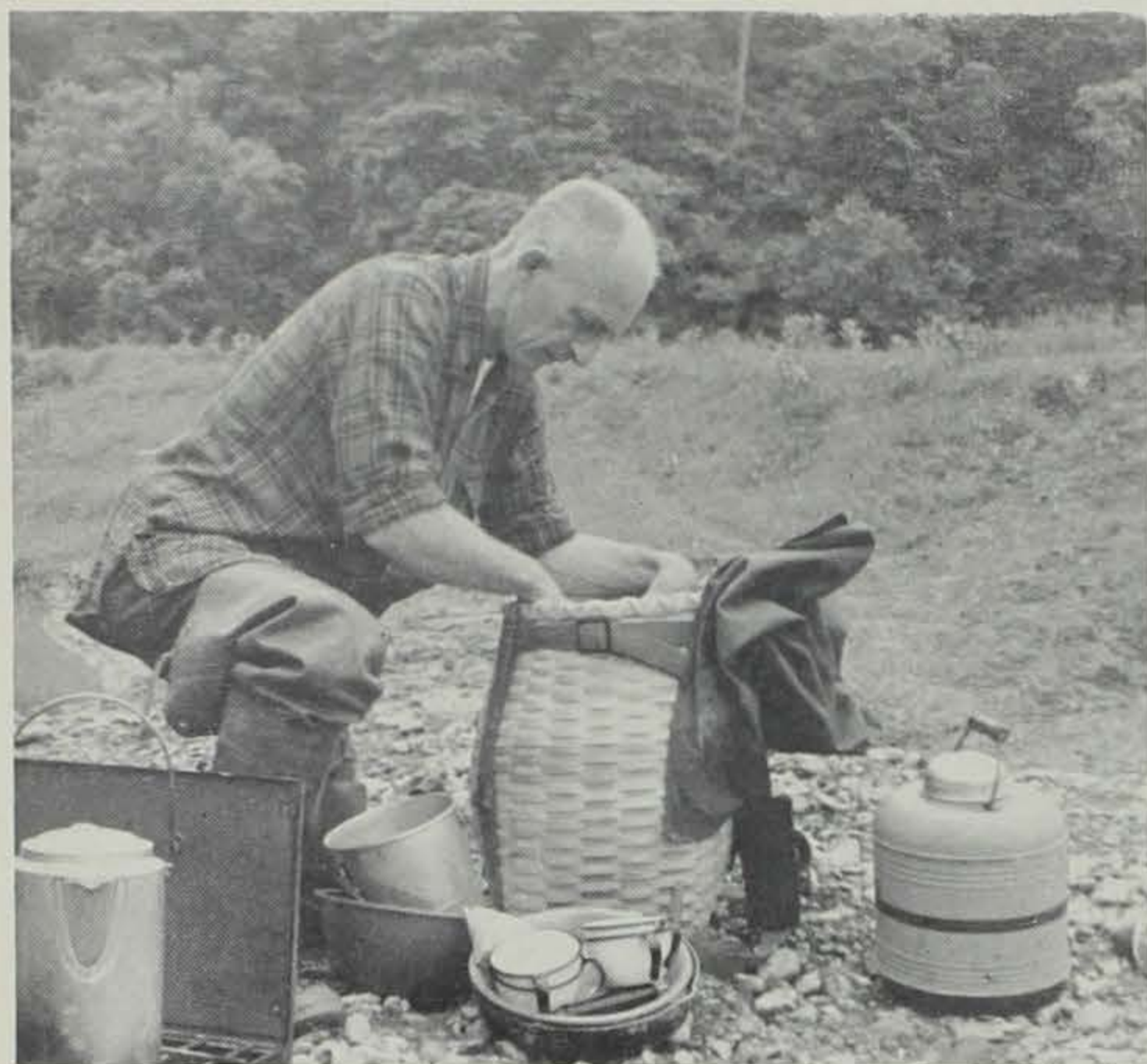
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Jim Sherman Photo.

Some hunters, like Jack Musgrove, prefer fine handmade decoys. Other hunters may use tin cans or chunks of wood painted black.





Ralph Church making camp. Other campers were Inkpaduta and his Sioux warriors, who stopped near here before the bloody Spirit Lake Massacre.

## Little Sioux . . .

(Continued from page 73)

valley long before that, perhaps 4,000 years ago.

The Little Sioux Valley is also one of geological interest as marking, at different points, the western limits of three glacial advances of the Wisconsin, the last major glacial period. Pilot Rock, a huge boulder deposited by one of these great ice sheets, is three miles south of Cherokee. This rock has been a trail marker for prairie travelers since prehistoric times, and has given to the Little Sioux the Indian name of "Woven Rock River."

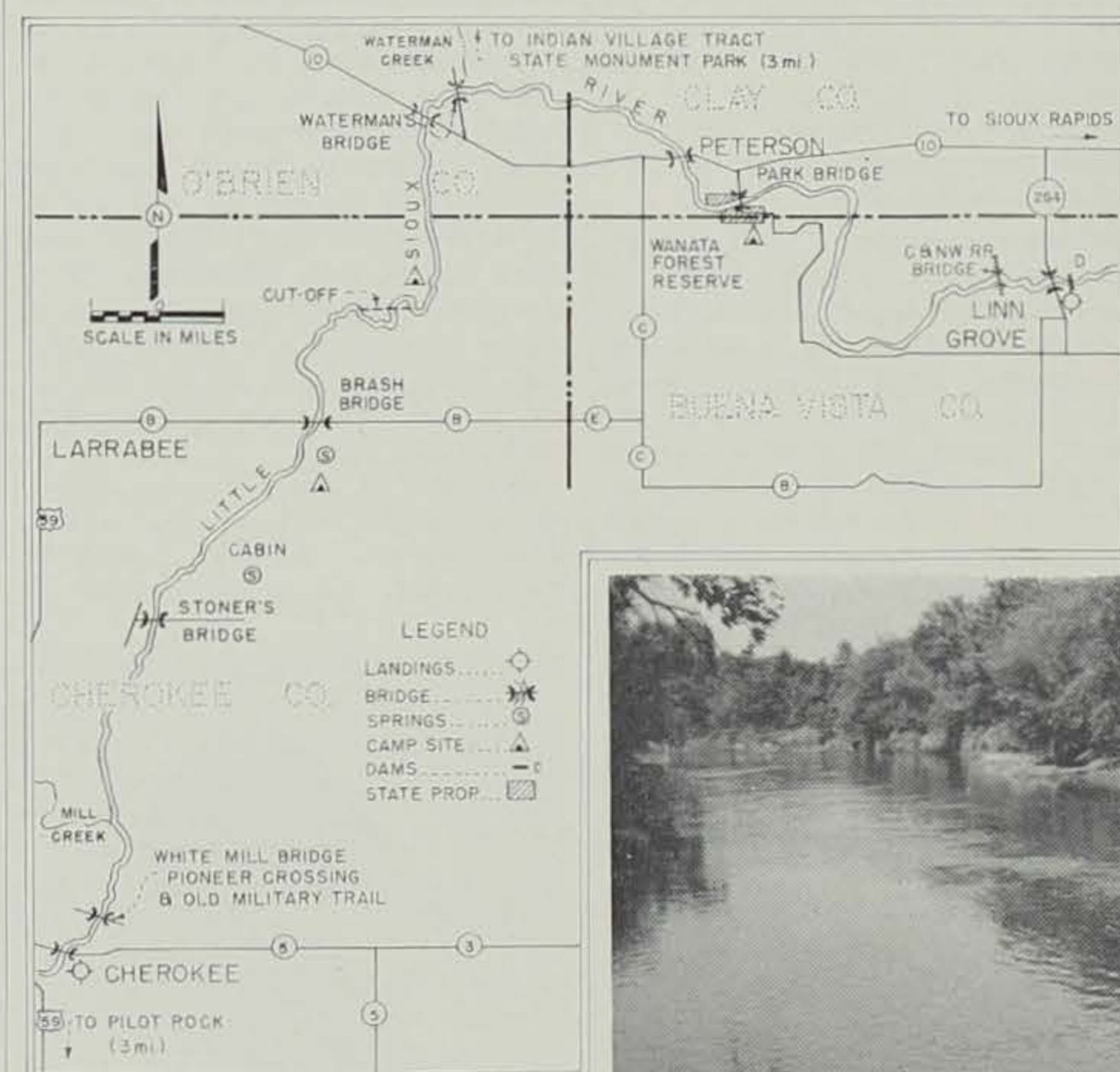
The river itself is a typical prairie stream, sharply meandering, with a sand, mud and gravel bottom, and high mud banks throughout most of its course. The rate of fall averages only about two feet per mile, and the current is therefore quite slow. The stream seldom exceeds 100 feet in width.

An excellent stretch for a "close to home" canoe trip is that from Linn Grove to Cherokee. The total river distance is about 35½ miles. This makes an easy two-day trip, but a third day should be added if a considerable amount of fishing or exploring is to be done. The total approximate traveling time in late August, but with water one and one-half feet to two feet above normal, was 11 hours. At normal water levels for that time of year the trip might take 15 hours. There are no dams in this stretch to be portaged, and no dangerous rapids. Log jams block the channel in some places. Good camp sites are scarce because of the high banks.

The put-in place is just below the main dam at Linn Grove on the south or left bank of the stream facing downstream. High-

way 264 bridge and the C. & N.W. Railway bridge will be passed a short distance below.

There are several places down the river where the stream divides into two or more channels. The channel carrying the most water is usually safe to take and passable. One exception to this occurs about six miles (two hours) below Linn Grove. At this point the



stream divides and it is important to take the right channel. The left channel is blocked by an impassable log jam at its lower end.

From here it is 3¼ miles (¾ hour) to the Park Bridge south of Peterson. Wanata Forest Reserve

is passed on the left bank. Immediately below the Park Bridge is the partially destroyed dam at Peterson, which is passable near the right bank.

One and one-half miles (½ hour) below Park Bridge is the Highway 10 Bridge west of Peterson. Four and three-fourths miles (1¼ hours) beyond that is Waterman's Bridge, named for the first white settler in O'Brien County. Waterman Creek enters the Little Sioux at this point. On this creek, three miles north of the bridge, is the Indian Village Tract Monument State Park, the site of one of the Mill Creek Indian villages.

One mile (¼ hour) below Waterman's Bridge another bridge is encountered where Highway 10 again crosses the river. It was in this vicinity in 1857 that Inkpaduta and his band of renegade Sioux Indians camped en route to the site of the bloodiest Indian outbreak in Iowa's history, the Spirit Lake Massacre. Five and one-fourth miles (1¼ hours) below this bridge the channel has been dredged and straightened for about a mile to cut off several of its meandering loops. A big sandbar on the right bank just above this cutoff makes a passable camp site.

Below the cutoff the river gradually widens and becomes shallower. The bottom is sandy and the current slower. Along the right bank, back from the river, eroded hills can be seen, almost bare of trees, and spotted with exposed glacial rock.

Two and one-fourth miles (¾ hour) from the end of the cutoff is Brash Bridge where County B highway crosses the river. Below Brash Bridge a creek enters from the left bank along the face of a high bluff running back from the river. This creek is believed to be the original bed of the Little Sioux in pre-glacial times.

Four and one-fourth miles (1¼ hours) below Brash Bridge is Stoner's Bridge. The site of another of the Mill Creek Indian villages is in this stretch on the flat top of a high bluff on the left bank. There is a good spring at the village site, most easily reached by following the bed of the little creek flowing from it. Also in this stretch a log cabin, with an excellent well, will be seen, on the left bank.

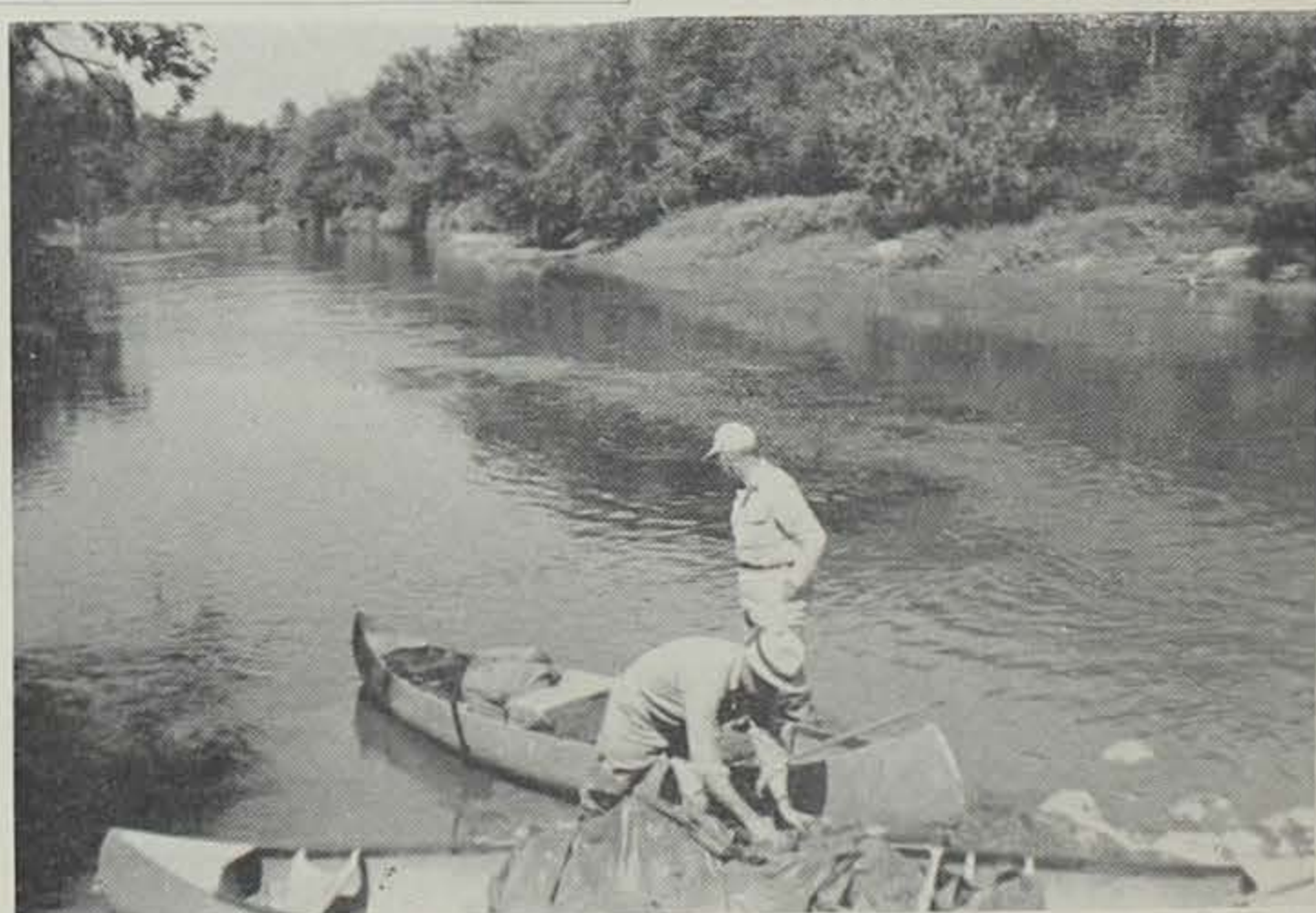
Three and three-fourths miles (one hour) below Stoner's Bridge, Mill Creek enters the river from the right bank. This is the creek which has given its name to the Mill Creek Indian culture. Several ancient village sites have been discovered on its banks.

One and three-fourth miles (½ hour) below the mouth of Mill Creek is the "Old White Mill Bridge," the site of an early mill built in 1871, a pioneer ford, and a crossing on the old military road from Sioux City to Fort Snelling. One-half mile northwest of this spot was the first settlement in Cherokee County, established in 1856 by the Milford Colony from Massachusetts, which became Cherokee.

One mile (¼ hour) below the White Mill Bridge is the Highway 5 Bridge at Cherokee. One-half mile further on is a convenient take out point on the left bank, above the Highway 59 bridge and the remains of an old dam.

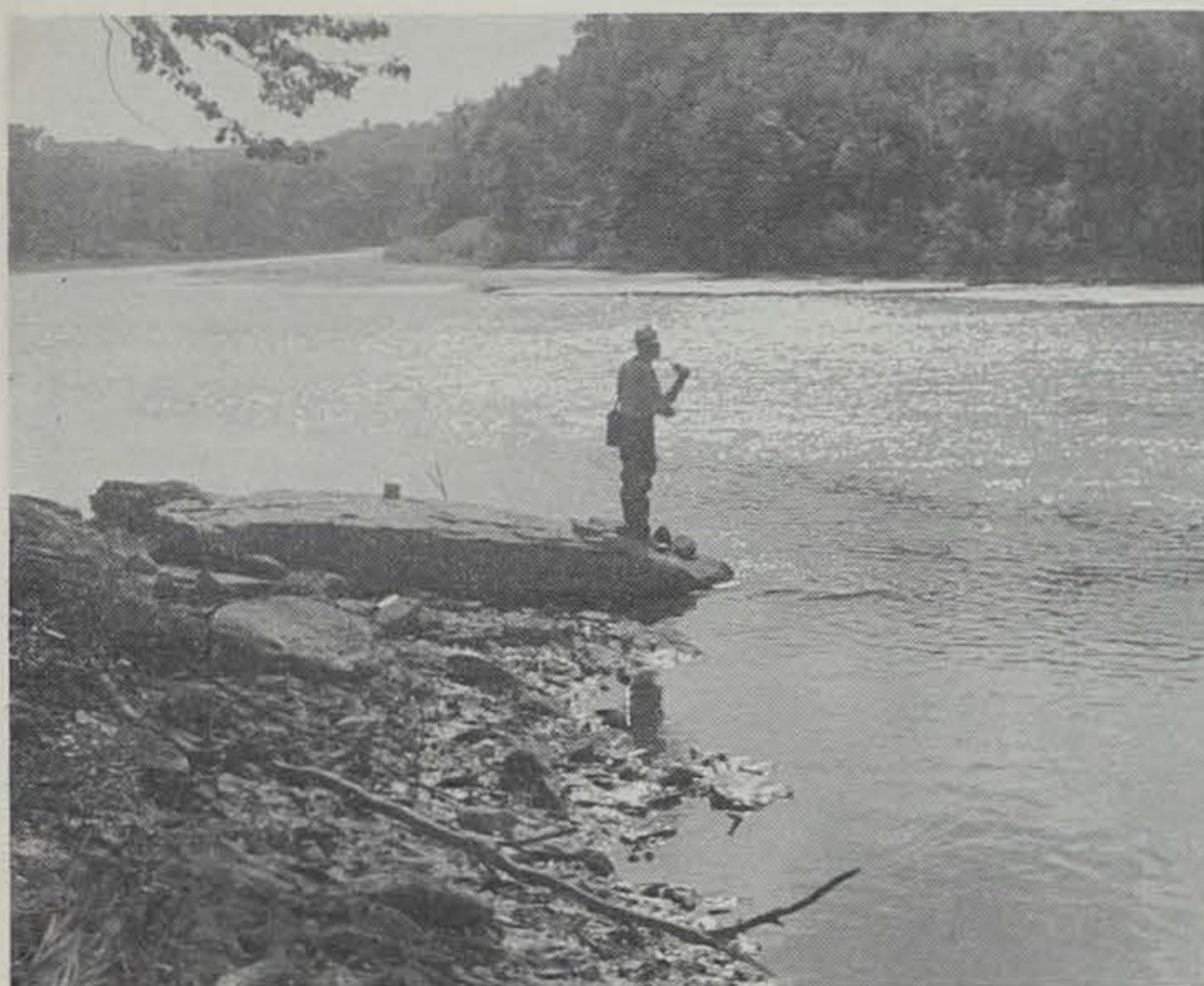
The trip can be extended if desired. For example, 7¾ miles and about 2½ hours of traveling time would be added by putting in at the Highway 71 bridge at Sioux Rapids, upstream from Linn Grove. Another 20 miles and seven hours traveling time could be added by continuing downstream from Cherokee.

(Continued on page 79)



The Little Sioux is an ideal canoeing stream, rich in history and fish.





Jim Sherman Photo.

Fish the clean streams with rock or gravel beds. If the pike don't want a meal, give them dessert.

## Autumn . . .

(Continued from page 73)

that you don't often get a chance at walleyes, northerns or even a nice mess of smallmouth bass from the rivers that are now clear, low and in prime condition.

Conservation workers who are in a position to observe Iowa's fishing habits find that from a standpoint of numbers and use, the bait rod occupies first place. Coming up, but still in second place, is spinning tackle. Third place is held by that steady winner, the cane pole. In fourth place is the fly rod. So if you are equally skillful with bait rod and spinning rod, take your choice. The fact that the cane pole is in third place doesn't reduce its lethal efficiency, and if you are ready to subject your pet fly rod to heavy baits, split shots and tackle busting fish, you're ready for autumn stream fishing.

By all standards the favorite walleye or northern pike bait is a large creek chub. Big shiners replace these chubs in some parts of the state, probably because of availability. After chubs come frogs and crayfish. In the artificial class, red and white or the brown-scaled finish or black-ribbed scale finish sub-surface plugs seem to be most effective with spinning gear or fly rods. Smaller plugs of these types with an orange and black or red and black combination work just as well, if not better. For some fishy reason, red and yellow is a particularly deadly autumn bait color. In addition, red and white or yellow and white flies with or without spinners but weighted to fish deep, are the order of the day.

In reading a stream for walleyes, look for clean coarse sand, gravel bars, or rock ledges with deep holes immediately below them. Don't forget that northern pike inhabit shallower water than the walleye, and that an adjacent shallow sand or mud flat eddies

may produce a one to twelve-pound northern pike. The walleye requires considerable depth for his way of life. If you are boat fishing anchor next to a long, deep hole and float your chub with or without a bobber across and through the entire deep hole or run. Watch for the characteristic walleye nibble, run, and the pause for turning the minnow. The second run is the time to set the hook. The same thing applies to the northern pike.

If you are fishing with a bobber, try different depths in the deeper water until you locate the walleyes. If you are fishing with a fly rod, bait rod or spinning rod without a bobber, cross-float your live bait to cover as many depths and as much of the area of the pool as possible. If you are a plug fisherman or are going to fish a weighted fly or fly-spinner, follow the same technique as with the live bait, working the whole deep area or deep run if it is along a deep channel cut. During the autumn, walleyes and northerns will hit about as well during the middle of the day as in the preferred summer hours of early morning and late evening.

If your artificials or large chubs fail you, try frogs or soft-shelled crayfish if you can find them. They may provide just the dessert that the pike have been waiting for. Again, don't pass up any small creeks emptying into the major streams. These feeders often serve as a constant source of feed and the fish really gang up in the deep water waiting for their lunch. If you know of any fair-sized swamps or sloughs adjacent to the river where there is deep water, they may be a good place to fish for walleyes. Boulders, wing dams, or complete dams where there is fast, aerated water with lots of cover and deep holes in the vicinity are usually productive of both walleye and northern pike.

The general area in Iowa for

good walleye fishing is generally described as that part of the state from the middle Raccoon River in the southwest, north to the Minnesota line and east to the Mississippi River. Exceptions to this general rule are the Rock River in Lyon County and parts of the Big Sioux between South Dakota and Iowa—both rivers furnish fine walleye angling. Farther east and north, limestone rubble, rock faults and ledges with deep holes near them also provide suitable habitat for walleyes. When you find sand, gravel or rubble bottom in a river with deep holes, you'll also usually find that there will be clear autumn water and excellent localized walleye and northern pike fishing.

The main ring in this fall's recreation circus is clear-water fishing for walleyes and northerns, and the big show has already begun.

## Notes . . .

(Continued from page 77)

puddle, and it's supposed to look like open water from high up.

Fine quality of decoys probably means less than their arrangement and natural mass appearance. Some purists use finely made, hand-carved decoys. Other experts paint their decoys with flat black, or make them greatly oversized so that high ducks can see them easily—mallards the size of geese and geese the size of whooping cranes.

But no one will probably ever surpass a goose hunter seen a few years ago on the Missouri River.

He was using painted Canada goose decoys with bodies made of 50-gallon oil drums! Honest.

## Little Sioux . . .

(Continued from page 78)

okee to Washta. Below Cherokee the valley is wider, more farm land and less timber is seen, and the river is deeper. Catfishing in this lower stretch is said to be excellent.

The canoeist interested in the history of the region should visit the Sandford Museum in Cherokee. The fine community cultural center, under the direction of W. D. Frankforter, is doing important work in the geological and archaeological history of the Little Sioux Valley. Many individuals like Nestor Stiles, a retired Cherokee banker who has made a lifetime hobby of Little Sioux history, have made valuable contributions to this effort.

There is much to be seen and done in the valley of the Little Sioux. The canoeist who visits the region once will want to return.

## Ducks . . .

(Continued from page 76)

heads and frontparts, with white sides and breasts. Lively, restless birds, both on water and in flight.

If this doesn't help you in naming distant ducks, don't give up. Do what everyone else does. When the first specks appear over the horizon turn to your buddy and say with authority: "Bluebills—way out!" He won't argue with you. Chances are he doesn't know either. —J. M.

Christmas  
is  
coming!



It won't be long now—

Don't wait until the last minute to do your Christmas shopping and mailing. Let us do it for you! For your favorite sportsman or farmer there is year-around reading enjoyment in:

— WATERFOWL IN IOWA - \$1.00 —  
— IOWA FISH AND FISHING - \$2.00 —  
— IOWA CONSERVATIONIST - \$1.00 for 3 YEARS —

ORDER NOW, AND WE'LL SEND YOUR GIFT TO WHOMEVER YOU WISH—JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS, WITH A GIFT CARD BEARING YOUR NAME.





It's shooting time!

## DUCK HUNTING HOURS

1954 IOWA CONSERVATION COMMISSION

STATE OF IOWA—30 MINUTES BEFORE SUNRISE AND 1 HOUR BEFORE SUNSET SCHEDULE  
CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

(Note: Shooting ends at sunset on Iowa portions of the Missouri River. Closing times for this area may be computed by adding one hour to the listed closing times of Sioux City or Omaha.)

	DAVENPORT		BURLINGTON		DUBUQUE		KEOKUK		CHARLES CITY		DES MOINES		OMAHA, NEBR.		SIOUX CITY	
	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset	30 Min. Before Sunrise	1 Hour Before Sunset
Oct. 15	Noon	4:22	Noon	4:24	Noon	4:22	Noon	4:27	Noon	4:29	Noon	4:33	Noon	4:44	Noon	4:44
16	5:45	4:20	5:46	4:23	5:46	4:20	5:48	4:25	5:56	4:27	5:58	4:31	6:07	4:42	6:09	4:42
17	5:45	4:19	5:47	4:21	5:47	4:19	5:49	4:24	5:57	4:26	5:59	4:30	6:08	4:41	6:10	4:41
18	5:47	4:17	5:48	4:20	5:49	4:17	5:50	4:22	5:58	4:24	6:00	4:28	6:09	4:39	6:11	4:39
19	5:48	4:16	5:50	4:18	5:50	4:16	5:51	4:21	6:00	4:22	6:01	4:27	6:10	4:38	6:12	4:38
20	5:50	4:14	5:51	4:17	5:51	4:14	5:52	4:20	6:01	4:21	6:02	4:25	6:11	4:36	6:13	4:36
21	5:52	4:14	5:52	4:15	5:52	4:12	5:53	4:18	6:02	4:19	6:04	4:25	6:12	4:35	6:15	4:35
22	5:53	4:13	5:53	4:14	5:53	4:11	5:54	4:17	6:03	4:18	6:05	4:23	6:14	4:33	6:16	4:34
23	5:54	4:11	5:54	4:12	5:54	4:09	5:55	4:16	6:04	4:16	6:05	4:22	6:14	4:32	6:18	4:32
24	5:55	4:10	5:55	4:11	5:56	4:08	5:56	4:14	6:06	4:15	6:07	4:20	6:16	4:30	6:19	4:31
25	5:56	4:09	5:56	4:09	5:57	4:06	5:58	4:13	6:07	4:13	6:07	4:19	6:16	4:29	6:21	4:29
26	5:57	4:07	5:57	4:08	5:59	4:05	5:59	4:12	6:08	4:12	6:08	4:18	6:17	4:28	6:22	4:28
27	5:59	4:05	5:59	4:07	6:00	4:03	6:00	4:10	6:10	4:10	6:11	4:16	6:20	4:26	6:23	4:26
28	6:00	4:04	6:00	4:05	6:01	4:02	6:01	4:09	6:11	4:09	6:11	4:15	6:20	4:25	6:24	4:25
29	6:01	4:02	6:01	4:04	6:02	4:01	6:02	4:08	6:12	4:08	6:13	4:13	6:22	4:23	6:25	4:24
30	6:02	4:01	6:02	4:03	6:03	3:59	6:03	4:06	6:13	4:06	6:14	4:12	6:23	4:22	6:27	4:22
31	6:03	4:00	6:03	4:01	6:05	3:58	6:04	4:05	6:14	4:05	6:14	4:11	6:23	4:21	6:28	4:21
Nov. 1	6:04	3:58	6:05	4:00	6:06	3:57	6:05	4:04	6:16	4:04	6:17	4:09	6:26	4:19	6:28	4:20
2	6:06	3:57	6:06	3:59	6:08	3:55	6:06	4:03	6:17	4:02	6:18	4:08	6:27	4:18	6:31	4:18
3	6:07	3:56	6:07	3:58	6:09	3:54	6:08	4:02	6:19	4:01	6:19	4:07	6:28	4:17	6:32	4:17
4	6:08	3:55	6:08	3:57	6:10	3:53	6:09	4:00	6:20	4:00	6:20	4:06	6:29	4:16	6:33	4:16
5	6:09	3:54	6:09	3:56	6:11	3:52	6:10	3:59	6:21	3:58	6:21	4:05	6:30	4:15	6:34	4:15
6	6:11	3:53	6:11	3:55	6:13	3:50	6:11	3:58	6:22	3:57	6:23	4:04	6:32	4:14	6:36	4:13
7	6:12	3:51	6:12	3:53	6:14	3:49	6:12	3:58	6:23	3:56	6:24	4:02	6:33	4:12	6:37	4:12
8	6:13	3:50	6:13	3:52	6:15	3:48	6:13	3:56	6:25	3:55	6:25	4:01	6:34	4:11	6:38	4:11
9	6:14	3:49	6:14	3:51	6:16	3:47	6:15	3:55	6:26	3:54	6:26	4:00	6:35	4:10	6:39	4:10
10	6:15	3:48	6:15	3:50	6:17	3:46	6:16	3:54	6:27	3:53	6:27	3:59	6:36	4:09	6:40	4:09
11	6:16	3:47	6:16	3:50	6:19	3:45	6:17	3:53	6:29	3:52	6:28	3:58	6:37	4:08	6:42	4:08
12	6:18	3:46	6:17	3:49	6:20	3:44	6:18	3:53	6:30	3:51	6:30	3:57	6:39	4:07	6:43	4:07
13	6:19	3:45	6:19	3:48	6:21	3:43	6:19	3:52	6:31	3:50	6:31	3:56	6:40	4:06	6:44	4:06
14	6:20	3:44	6:20	3:47	6:22	3:42	6:20	3:51	6:32	3:49	6:32	3:56	6:41	4:06	6:45	4:06
15	6:21	3:43	6:21	3:46	6:24	3:41	6:21	3:50	6:34	3:48	6:33	3:55	6:42	4:05	6:47	4:04
16	6:22	3:42	6:22	3:45	6:25	3:40	6:23	3:49	6:35	3:47	6:34	3:54	6:43	4:04	6:48	4:03
17	6:24	3:42	6:23	3:44	6:27	3:39	6:24	3:48	6:36	3:46	6:36	3:53	6:45	4:03	6:50	4:02
18	6:25	3:41	6:24	3:44	6:28	3:38	6:25	3:48	6:37	3:45	6:37	3:52	6:46	4:02	6:51	4:01
19	6:26	3:40	6:26	3:43	6:29	3:37	6:26	3:47	6:39	3:44	6:38	3:52	6:47	4:02	6:53	4:00
20	6:27	3:40	6:27	3:42	6:30	3:37	6:27	3:46	6:40	3:44	6:39	3:51	6:48	4:01	6:55	4:00
21	6:28	3:39	6:28	3:42	6:32	3:36	6:28	3:46	6:41	3:43	6:40	3:50	6:49	4:00	6:56	3:59
22	6:29	3:38	6:29	3:41	6:33	3:35	6:29	3:45	6:42	3:42	6:41	3:50	6:50	4:00	6:56	3:58
23	6:31	3:38	6:30	3:41	6:34	3:35	6:30	3:45	6:44	3:41	6:43	3:49	6:52	3:59	6:56	3:58
24	6:32	3:37	6:31	3:40	6:35	3:34	6:32	3:44	6:45	3:41	6:44	3:49	6:53	3:59	6:58	3:57
25	6:33	3:36	6:32	3:40	6:37	3:33	6:33	3:44	6:46	3:40	6:45	3:48	6:54	3:58	7:00	3:56
26	6:34	3:36	6:33	3:39	6:38	3:33	6:34	3:43	6:47	3:40	6:46	3:48	6:55	3:58	7:01	3:56
27	6:35	3:35	6:34	3:39	6:39	3:32	6:35	3:43	6:48	3:39	6:47	3:47	6:56	3:57	7:02	3:55
28	6:36	3:35	6:35	3:38	6:40	3:32	6:36	3:42	6:50	3:39	6:48	3:47	6:57	3:57	7:03	3:55
29	6:37	3:34	6:36	3:38	6:41	3:31	6:37	3:42	6:51	3:38	6:49	3:46	6:58	3:56	7:04	3:54
30	6:38	3:34	6:37	3:38	6:42	3:31	6:38	3:42	6:52	3:38	6:50	3:46	6:59	3:56	7:05	3:54
Dec. 1	6:39	3:34	6:38	3:37	6:43	3:31	6:39	3:41	6:53	3:38	6:51	3:46	7:00	3:56	7:06	3:54
2	6:40	3:34	6:39	3:37	6:44	3:30	6:40	3:41	6:53	3:37	6:52	3:45	7:01	3:55	7:07	3:53
3	6:41	3:33	6:40	3:37	6:45	3:30	6:41	3:41	6:54	3:37	6:53	3:45	7:02	3:55	7:08	3:53
4	6:42	3:33	6:41	3:37	6:46	3:30	6:42	3:41	6:55	3:37	6:54	3:45	7:03	3:55	7:09	3:53
5	6:43	3:33	6:42	3:37	6:47	3:30	6:43	3:41	6:56	3:36	6:55	3:45	7:04	3:55	7:10	3:53
6	6:44	3:33	6:43	3:37	6:48	3:30	6:44	3:41	6:58	3:36	6:56	3:45	7:05	3:55	7:11	3:53
7	6:45	3:33	6:44	3:37	6:49	3:30	6:45	3:41	6:58	3:36	6:57	3:45	7:06	3:55	7:12	3:53
8	6:46	3:33	6:45	3:37	6:50	3:30	6:46	3:41	6:59	3:36	6:58	3:45	7:07	3:55	7:13	3:53

(Note: This table has been compiled from official schedules furnished by the Weather Bureau Stations listed. A schedule from the Omaha, Nebraska, Station is used because there is no station in southwestern Iowa. The difference in time between stations should be taken into consideration in figuring the exact time at your particular location.)