# Volume 14

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**APRIL**, 1955

Number 4

# THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FISHING

# THE BIG CLASSROOM

### George Worley Supt. Public Relations

"Do you mean those are school teachers? No kiddin'!" To the small farm boy it came as a blow. The blue-jeaned and straw-hatted group crawling through the fence certainly didn't meet the youngsters' specifications for teachers. This being July, our hero's wariness of anything having to do with school discouraged further investigation. Had he followed the group, the boy might have received even more surprises. While he was on vacation, the teachers were going to school. What's more, they were enjoying it. They were from the Iowa Teachers Conservation Camp. and for them this jaunt was no one-day, unusual experience. For nearly three weeks they'd been at it—hitting a pace that even a small boy would respect. Up at dawn two mornings a week to study birds during their (the birds) most active hours. Sausage, eggs, toast and gallons of coffee at 7:00 A.M. Out in the fields or woods at 8:00; back to camp at 11:30. After lunch, a session with the staff and visiting specialist to review the morning's experiences and plan how to apply them at school. Free time before dinner for swimming, boating, photography, leather work, handicraft or shut-eye. Fried chicken and ice cream. Now there's volley ball or soft ball for the young at heart, and less strenuous relaxation for the realists. To end the day, an evening session to plan and preview the next day's field work. Sandwich in the gathering and mounting of rocks, insects, leaves or other specimens for teaching collections. Add a dash of hammer and saw craft as teaching aids are constructed in the industrial arts shop. Is it any wonder teachers say the three or more weeks spent at the Iowa Teachers Conservation Camp are the shortest they've ever known? Time gets lost when you're busy doing interesting (Continued on page 127)



### By John Madson

(Editor's Note: This is the first of several articles on basic fishing methods, intended to inform the beginner and refresh the expert.)

### Part I: The Cane Pole and a Few Tips

The bamboo cane fishing pole and its willow cousin, even in this age of spun glass and plastics, is still the backbone of American fishing. In spite of millions of casting rods, fly rods and spinning outfits owned by modern anglers, the cane pole is our basic angling gear and probably will be as long as men fish.

With its fixed length of line the cane pole has some good points and some bad. It is cheap, easily available, there's no great investment involved and you needn't take care of it. It's long enough to get bait out where you want it without worrying about a backcast. On the other hand, the cane pole is clumsy to carry along thickly grown river banks and in many cases the fisherman can't land a good fish with solidly attached line. We've seen some good bass lost on cane poles that could have been landed with casting rod and reel. An expert cane poler can take a big fish with a fixed line but the average fisherman may have trouble. To compensate for the heavier, stronger fish he uses a heavier line, limiting the effectiveness of the tackle. But for the average catfish and bluegill, tackle busting is no problem and a cane pole is just the ticket. Of all fishing pole woods, bamboo stands alone. This tough, resilient tropical grass is tailor-made for angling. Old-time rod makers preferred good bamboo when they could get it, but they also used ironwood (hornbeam), lancewood, greenheart, seasoned red cedar and second growth shagbark hickory. Some fishing pole purists use selected Tonkin cane poles; straight, solid shafts of beautiful bamboo with small nodes, that are nearly as expensive as good fly rods. (You can't hardly get these no more.) Such experts may screw small cleats on the butt of the (Continued on page 126)

Jim Sherman Photo

Not a thing of beauty, maybe, but the old cane pole is the backbone of American fishing. Rugged, functional and cheap, it can be a deadly fishing tool when used with proper baits, tackle.

# CATCH CATFISH IN THE SPRING

### Harry M. Harrison Fisheries Biologist

If you are one of the thousands of catfishermen who, about this time of year, develops a gnawing hunger for a plate of channel catfish fried to a golden brown, your chances for satisfying this gastronomical desire is better now than at any other time of the year.

Spring is the time to catch catfish. It is this time of year that our whiskered friend puts on the old nose bag and sets about the business of laying on the avoirdupois. There are a couple of good reasons why catfish hit better in the spring than at other times of the year. One of these is probably due to the fact that catfish seldom, if ever, eat during the winter and after this long fast almost anything in the way of food is taken with gay abandon. Then too, many items such as seeds, fruits and insects used as food by catfish are not present in the river early in the season.

Of course the spring catfisherman has high and turbid waters to contend with, and this little annoyance keeps a lot of catfishermen away from the river. It should not, however. Remember this: catfish are equipped with a very delicate sense of smell to find their food, and a little thing like mud in the eye does not keep him from the pleasures of filling his belly.

There are a few things, however, that will better your chances of catching catfish at this time of (Continued on page 127) Page 122

# Iowa Conservationist

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# FASHIONS FROM THE FIELD

Thurman, Iowa-To paraphrase an old adage it might be said that L. E. (Dutch) Lemke concluded "it takes a fox to catch a fox."

Whatever the reason, it is certain that Lemke can, when the spirit moves him, adopt to a considerable degree the habiliment of Mr. Fox . . . 24 of them to be exact.

Lemke is a state conservation officer for Fremont and Page counties and is the envy of the entire force because of his fox skin parka jacket. "I always hated to see the beautiful fox pelts simply thrown away," Lemke said in recalling just how he came to acquire the jacket.

### IOWA CONSERVATIONIST



The Devil's Backbone is something lifted out of a western movie. Known for many years and seen every summer by thousands of visitors, it has always kept its wild, rugged interest.

# THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE

hole in the earth that abounded to northern Iowa. with bobcat, timber wolf and wild turkey.

beneath the huge white pines and black cherries. Twisted red cedars grew from the cliff tops, and out

rock faces falling away on each side of the summit. There was little soil, and everywhere low red

landed in the river bed eighty feet fish. below. He was badly hurt, but lived.

ledges. The infernal, tormented shapes of the rock have named two small caves the "Devil's Ovens." A steep crevice leading down is called the Devil's Stairway. Not a bad name—it's a devil of a climb.

At the foot of the Backbone to the north runs the Maquoketa River. Just a few yards away, at the foot of the south wall, lies Backbone Lake.

It's an artificial lake, but not a new one. Years ago there was a mill dam at one end, backing up a good-sized lake. Schmidt tells of some young blades who once launched a steamboat on the old lake, giving Sunday afternoon excursions to young ladies. The boiler was fired with cordwood, filling the air with sparks and raising havoc with lace collars and long skirts. The boat finally sank, and one can't escape the conclusion that the ladies may have scuttled it.

In 1925 a flood took out the old mill, its two approach bridges and the dam. The present dam was built in 1935 and raised the lake seven feet, creating a body of water about 21/2 miles long and 14-mile wide.

The lake is stocked with trout, cedars clung to the gray lime- and also has some bass running up The old-timers in northeastern stone. It was the canyon country to six pounds. The stream flowing Iowa knew it as a rugged, wild of northern Arizona, transported through the park is regularly stocked with trout and in spite of It was here that a young woman heavy fishing pressure some of the fell to her death in 1939. Two lunkers under ledges in the deeper There were lost Indian mounds weeks later to the day, a CCC pools are never caught. All fish worker lost his footing at the same are stocked from the Backbone place. At the last moment, to Hatchery, a fisheries unit in the avoid falling on the rocks, he central park area that helps supply leaped out as far as he could and northeastern trout streams with

### Some Were Gifts

"A number of trappers and hunters gave me their fox and I saved the hides that matched the best. I finally bought a number of pelts from a fur dealer for about 25 cents apiece to make up the needed number."

In all, Lemke sent something over 30 pelts to the furrier who made the jacket for him. However, only 24 of these actually went into the garment.

Lined with a woolen plaid the jacket is very warm and Lemke (Continued on page 126)



Council Bluffs Nonpareil. Dutch Lemke has taken some ribbing about his parka, but his turn is coming next January.

of the sheer stone walls gushed hidden springs that fed the Maquoketa River in the valley below. No one fished the river much in those early days, but a good man who was willing to fight the thickets could catch big native brook trout all day.

Down the valley, lying in a sharp loop of the Maquoketa, there erupted an immense stone wall that rose to the level of the surrounding hills, over a hundred feet above the valley floor. Capped with great blocks and slabs of weathered limestone, the huge stone spine suggested the backbone of a giant to the pioneers who named it.

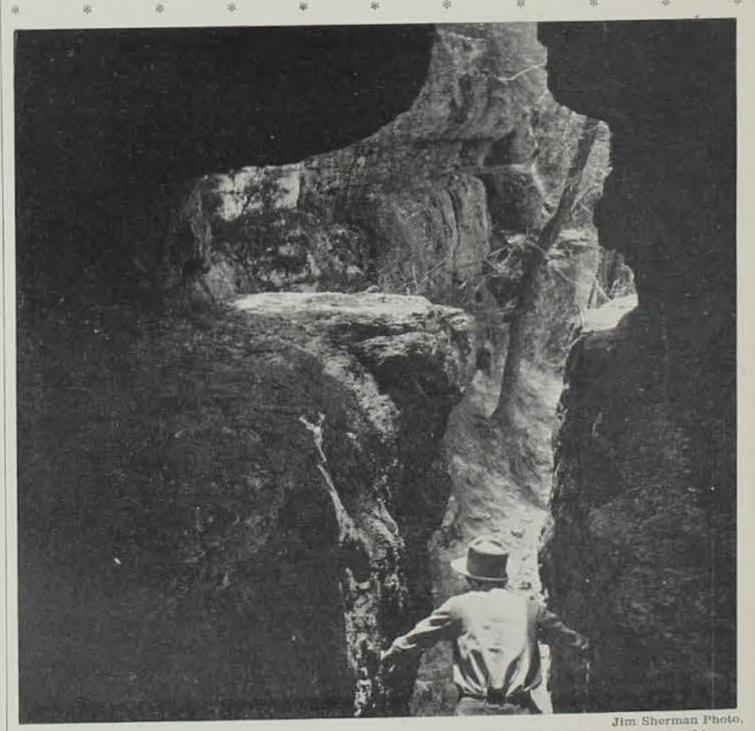
So when the valley was made a park in 1919, they called it Backbone State Park. It was the first of its kind, and the beginning of our modern park system.

It's changed a lot since the 1870's, mostly for the better. The wolves and turkeys are gone, which is to be regretted. But the impassable thickets have been cleared, roads have opened the valley up to visitors, and the hills, cliffs, river and Backbone can be seen by whole families, and not just lone hunters.

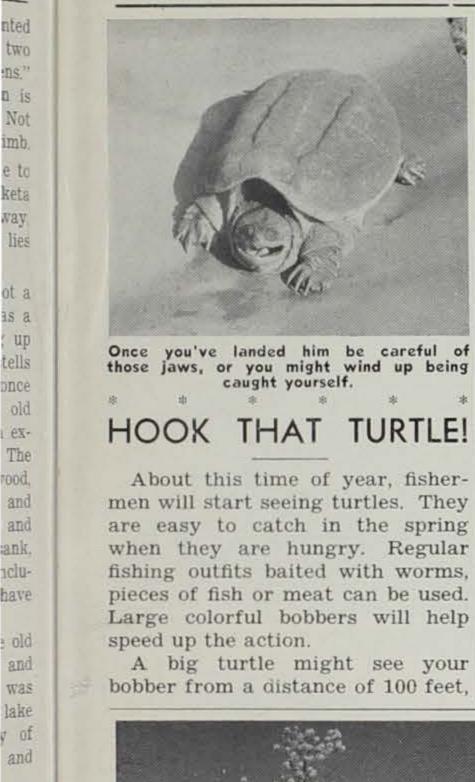
We walked out on the Devil's Backbone the other day with Louis Schmidt, who has been stationed at the park for nearly 20 years. We stopped where the ridge was a bare 50 feet wide, with sheer

seamed with caves, fissures and

Parts of this stream are broad and shallow-spring water flowing This great rock wall is split and over clean sand that are natural (Continued on page 128)



The Devil's Stairway is nothing for small children. Leading down from the Backbone, it should be reserved for mountaineers, steeplejacks, and Old Scratch himself,



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and then swim over to investigate. If your bait is tied about a foot below the bobber, you need only wait a few seconds after the turtle has ducked his head before you set the hook. He is clever enough to eat your bait without moving the bobber, so it is all a matter of timing.

> After you have hooked him, just pull him near to shore and take over with a long handled gaff. After you have your turtle, you have a tough dressing job, but it can be easy if you scald and scrape him first and then field dress and par boil. After 15 minutes, he is easy to skin and cut up for turtle soup, frying or stewing. A 30 pounder usually yields 10 pounds of meat. — Russ Graham, Cedar Rapids Gazette.

Nylon leaders are sometimes hard to straighten out. This can be easily accomplished by drawing them through a piece of rubber. A A big turtle might see your boot strap will serve the purpose bobber from a distance of 100 feet, well.-Outdoor Notes.



Jim Sherman Photo

Is trapshooting in trouble? Some major gun clubs say it is, blaming the high price of shells. They say that expensive ammo keeps youngsters out; thins ranks of veteran shooters.

# GRAND OLD SPORT IS TROUBLED

Are increases in the price of shotgun shells—hit by 15 separate boosts since 1946—putting the cost of America's grand old sports of wingshooting beyond the reach of many shotgun enthusiasts?

Yes, say spokesmen for 10 of 12 major gun clubs around the country, queried in a random sampling by the Associated Press.

Their comment came as Rep. Reuss (D-Wis) said in Washington that Fair Trade Commission Chairman Edward F. Howrey had advised him FCT would undertake the investigation into the shell pricing situation as requested by Reuss.

In a formal complaint to Howrey, Reuss declared that the 15 increases came with the competing U. S. ammunition companies usually raising prices almost simultaneously, indicating what he called "a deliberately unlawful sys-

at a saving of 40 cents a box, 90 wanted reloading done on a club basis, at a similar savings. The remaining 57 held for another brand of foreign shell at a 20-cent saving.

On the other hand, B. B. Lotspeich, director of the Miami Trap (Continued on page 128)



Page 123



Jim Sherman Photo.

In spite of its delicate white blossoms, the shadbush's wood is bone-hard and very heavy. If larger it might have commercial value, but that's like asking a fairy to be a scrubwoman.

In late April, as if impatient with the slow coming of spring family, was a favorite tree of and their own leaves, two small George Washington, who planted ists for years in handloading. Iowa trees flower out in masses of it at Mount Vernon. It's also a facolor.

The shadbush or serviceberry breaks out with bright, long-petalthere are many shadbushes in the Ledges Park near Boone. The name small flowering trees. "shadbush" is an old one, stemming from the tradition that the tree blossoms when the shad run up the rivers. The other name, "serviceberry" is thought to come from one scientific name of deer, Cervus, since the berries of this redbud, and that should be good low tree are favorite deer foods.

The redbud, a legume of the bean vorite of Iowans visiting Lacey Keosauqua State Park in Van Buren County, and Waubonsie Park led white flowers that are vivid in Fremont County in late April. Often growing atop clay banks, this time of year, its hills tinted savings of \$1 a box. purplish-pink and magenta by the

> There has been controversy over the tree's name; some claiming it should have the foreign title, "Judas-tree." But George Washington and Thomas Jefferson knew it as enough.

tem."

Meanwhile, these were some of the comments from important trap and skeet clubs, which use millions of shells in year-around firing at clay birds:

W. R. Beamish, president of the Twin City-Hopkins Gun Club at Minneapolis said, "Shotgun shell manufacturers are pricing both professional and amateur shooters out of the target sports. High prices have caused the number of shooters to dwindle to near nothing. Youngsters can't afford to use established facilities to learn intelligent use of firearms."

Beamish said that many members of his club had taken up reloading used shotgun hulls with newly marketed devices similar in use to those used by rifle hobby-

A spokesman at Chicago's Lincoln Park Gun Club said many members were "pretty sore" at recent increases and favored the FTC inquiry. Club members who have against its gray, leafless branches. The park is a showcase of redbuds taken up reloading there, report Beryl Morley; two daughters, Mrs.

about \$2.60 for 25 at club prices.

With 274 members of the Waukesha Gun Club—Wisconsin's larg- a brother, James, of Portland, est, using 300,000 shells last year Oregon.

-voting on the question of future favored importing foreign shells was in the Fontanelle Cemetery.

Floyd Morley, veteran conservation officer for Worth and Winnebago counties, died March 12 in the Forest City Hospital of a heart attack. He was 54.

Floyd had been a field officer with the Conservation Commission since 1937, serving as a park officer at Pilot Knob until 1941, and as park officer at Ledges Park from 1941 until 1944. In 1944 he transferred to the Fish and Game Division and served as a state conservation officer in Worth and Winnebago counties until the time of his death.

He was active in Boy Scout work, many civic and church affairs, and had been a Free Mason for 34 years. A hard-working, efficient officer, Floyd served in the best traditions of the department, and will be greatly missed by his many friends.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Caroll Gullickson and Leanna Mor-Factory trap loads now cost ley; two sisters, Mrs. Arthur Miller of Fontanelle and Mrs. Larry Roskamp of Eugene, Oregon, and

Funeral services were held at shell supplies this week, only 29 the First Congregational Church wanted to continue using U. S. in Forest City and also in Fonfactory loads. Of the voters, 98 tanelle, Morley's birthplace. Burial



Church and Allen Photo

One of the Red Cedar portages is the St. Ansgar dam, the site of a famous old mill. Just below this are several fine campsites, a feature that Church and Allen watch for and report on.

# CANOEING THE RED CEDAR RIVER OTRANTO TO CHARLES CITY

### By Ralph Church and Harold Allen

The Red Cedar in Mitchell and Floyd Counties is an excellent canoeing stream and provides topnotch smallmouth fishing. It is an eve opener to the canoeist-fisherman who feels that he has to go to faraway places for his recreation.

per mile. The stream bed is hard, of limestone rock rubble, sand and gravel. Springs are numerous. Outstanding campsites are frequent. There are lots of red cedars and hardwoods on the limestone bluffs. The bottom lands are wild and heavily timbered.

For convenience in planning the trip and as an aid in determin-The stretch between Otranto and ing location on the stream all distances mentioned have been Charles City is particularly good. converted into approximate travel-The distance is about  $41\frac{1}{2}$  miles. ing times. The times shown are There are no dangerous rapids. for normal water levels in Septem-Two power dams, a beauty dam ber, when the wheel at the West and a low footbridge require port-Mitchell Hydro Dam is not runages, but they are short and easy. ning. Under these conditions the The current is moderate with an total traveling time will be about average rate of fall of 3.1 feet :10

18½ hours. These times should be increased if the water is particularly low and decreased if the wheel at West Mitchell is running.

The place to put in at Otranto is on the west bank just above the bridge. Below the bridge on the right bank are the remains of an early mill and dam and a spectacular bubbling spring.

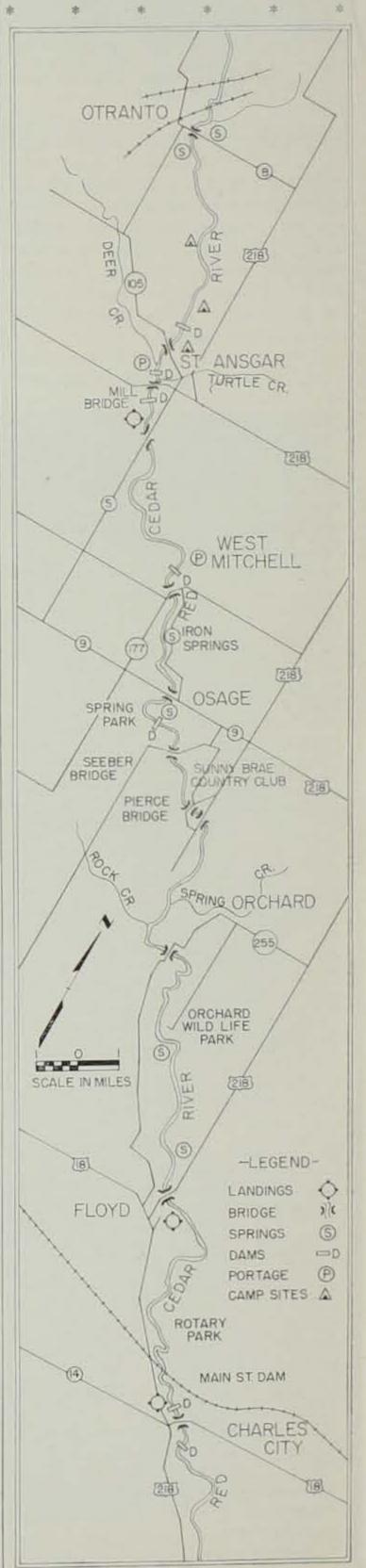
It is  $6\frac{1}{4}$  miles  $(3\frac{1}{2}$  hours) from Otranto to the remains of an abandoned power dam just above the Highway 105 bridge northwest of St. Ansgar. The river is wide and shallow in this stretch, with some wading necessary. There are good campsites all along especially above and below the dam on the left bank. There is a break in the dam near the right bank so no portage is necessary. Beyond the bridge a trout stream, Turtle Creek, enters the river from the left, and Deer Creek, a fine smallmouth stream, flows in from the right.

The backwater of the St. Ansgar dam begins immediately below the Highway 105 bridge and continues 11/2 miles (1/2-hour) to the mill bridge and dam. The mill at the dam is one of the few water powered mills still operating in Iowa. Its site is closely linked with the early history of St. Ansgar which celebrated its centennial in June of 1953. The unusual name of this pleasant town, which means "God's Spear," honors the French Saint who brought Christianity to the Scandinavian countries.

It is necessary to carry around the St. Ansgar dam. The best

 $(\frac{1}{2}$ -hour). It is another  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles (1/2-hour) to an excellent campsite in Spring Park on the left bank. This park is sponsored by the Osage Conservation Club. It includes an enclosed spring with a flow of 700 gallons per minute of the best water you ever tasted. At the lower end of the park area is a low rock "Beauty Dam" over

(Continued on page 128)





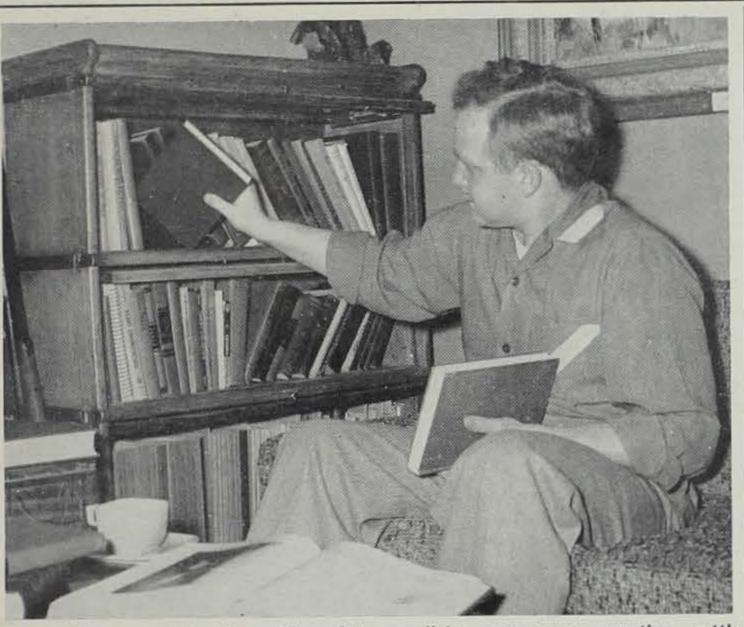
Of the many springs in the limestone banks of the Red Cedar, one of the finest is in Spring Park at Osage. Each minute it gushes 700 gallons of "the finest water you've ever tasted."

portage is on the right bank about 50 yards above the dam. There are several fine campsites below the dam in the next 11/4 miles (34-hour) to the Highway S bridge.

The Interstate Power dam at West Mitchell impounds the river for the next 5 miles (1¼ hour). This is all paddling. The mill pond is wide and has lots of deep water. The powerhouse at the dam is on the site of an early flour mill built in 1856. The millstone from the old mill has been built into the powerhouse wall, and the keystone of the powerhouse is from the old Paragon Woolen mill built in the vicinity in 1865.

The portage around the dam, about 100 yards, is on the left bank, starting close to the powerhouse and ending just above the Highway 177 bridge. Travel below the dam will be much easier if the wheel is running. Otherwise the water will be shallow to Osage and more wading will be necessary. From April 16 to September 15 the wheel ordinarily operates from 8:00 a.m. to noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 3:40 p.m., except Sundays.

The river is guite pretty for the next 134 miles (34-hour) to Iron Springs. The spring is on the left bank at the base of a heavily timbered bluff, beside the river road running from Mitchell to Osage. From Iron Springs to the Highway 9 bridge west of Osage is 11/2 miles



A good library can bring the outdoors into your living room, answer questions, settle arguments, and make you a wiser sportsman.

# THE SPORTSMAN'S LIBRARY

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To the man who seriously works at his sport and thinks on the mysteries of fishing, hunting and nature, a good library is as valuable as rod or gun.

Authoritative reference books are more than good reading; they are sources that give the right answers, setting up new patterns of thinking, and teaching new skills.

This month and next the CON-SERVATIONIST will run a list of reference books compiled by experts -one list on wildlife and hunting, the other on fisheries and fishing.

Underwood. Practical Science Publishing Co., Orange, Conn. The Clever Coyote. S. P. Young and H. H. T. Jackson. Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa.

### WILDLIFE FOODS

Wildfowl Food Plants, W. L. McAtee. Iowa State College Press, Ames, Iowa. American Wildlife and Plants. Martin, Zim and Nelson. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, N. Y.

### CONSERVATION AND MANAGE-MENT

Our Wildlife Legacy. D. L. Allen. Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York, N. Y. North American Waterfowl (Administra-

tion). A. M. Day. Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa.

The Land and Wildlife. E. H. Graham. Oxford University Press, New York, N. Y

Wildlife Management. I. N. Gabrielson. MacMillan Co., New York, N. Y. Wildlife Refuges. I. N. Gabrielson. Mac-

# HAVE A SQUIRREL ON YOUR PARTY LINE?

In many parts of the country, squirrels have been eating their way into telephone conversations.

For some reason they like to gnaw small holes in the lead sheathing of telephone cables. Telephone company officials believe this may be due to the lead oxides and certain salts formed as the lead weathers. Whatever it is the squirrels like it, and the holes they've been chewing are a telephone maintenance headache.

According to A. K. Higgins, a Bell Telephone cable maintenance official in Des Moines, the small holes admit air to the inside wires and with the air comes moisture. eola, Missouri, got fed up with so Water vapor condensing within the cable can knock out a telephone line. Higgins says the holes are hard to find, and in a city the size of Des Moines such squirrel damage can amount to \$1,800 per year, to say nothing of disruption of telephone service.

About four years ago Bell Telephone engineers came up with the answer-salt. Small salt disks like those used in rabbit hutches are fastened to telephone poles in problem areas. The squirrels are distracted from the lead cables and lot happier. work on the salt blocks instead.

Higgins reports that the use of these salt blocks has almost stopped Des Moines cable damage by squirrels and that everyone, in-

# HE RIDES AGAIN!

Last summer Conservation Officer Gene Newel arrested a man in Plymouth County for fishing without a license.

Newel asked the man what his name was. "James," the man answered, "from Fort Scott, Kansas."

"And your first name?" Newel asked again.

The man sighed resignedly and reached into his wallet for his social security card. "You aren't going to believe this, but here it is," he said.

And there it was, indeed. Newel had arrested Jesse James.

### FISH AND MELONS

A. M. Ward, a farmer near Minmany "No Hunting or Fishing" signs that he placed the following item in the county paper: FREE HUNTING AND FISHING permitted on my farm. One watermelon will be given with every four squirrels killed." If there were only more farmers like Mr. Ward -and more good sportsmen who wouldn't take advantage of his kindness with reckless behavior on his farm. . .- Outdoor Notes.

cluding the squirrels, is a whole

Only one major problem remains: the "squirrels" who think it's sport and a sign of skill to shoot the glass insulators on telephone poles with rifles and shotguns.

Page 125

The following books are recommended by Dr. George Hendrickson and Dr. Edward Kozicky, professors at Iowa State College and authorities on wildlife and its management. The books were chosen for usefulness, general interest, and accuracy.

### Wildlife Books George O. Hendrickson and Edward L. Kozicky

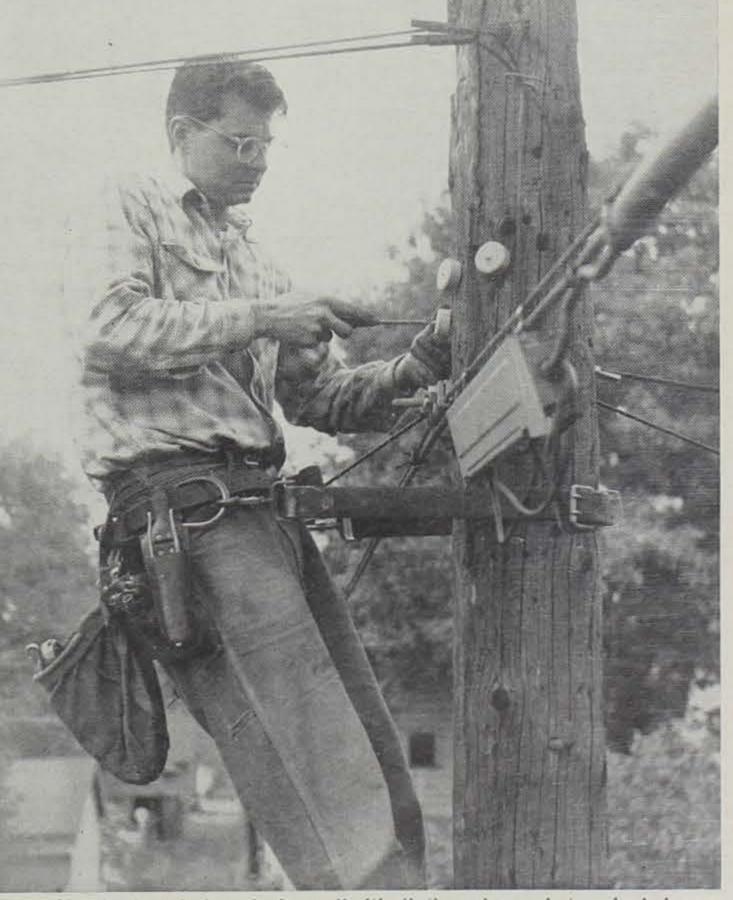
- BIRDS The Book of Bird Life. A. A. Allen. D. Van Nostrand Co., New York, N. Y. Pheasants Afield. D. L. Allen. Stackpole
- Co., Harrisburg, Pa. The Blue-winged Teal. L. J. Bennett. Iowa
- State College Press, Ames, Iowa. Bobwhites on the Rise. V. E. Davison.
- Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y.
- American Game Birds. F. E. Edminster. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y.
- Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North Amer-ica. F. H. Kortwright. Wildlife Man-agement Institute, Washington, D. C. The Ring-necked Pheasant. W. L. McAtee,
- Editor, Wildlife Management Institute,
- Washington, D. C. Waterfowl in Iowa. J. W. and Mary R. Musgrove. Iowa State Conservation Commission, Des Moines, Iowa.
- Audubon Bird Guide (Small Land Birds). R. H. Pough. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N. Y
- Audubon Water Bird Guide (Game Birds). R. H. Pough. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N. Y

### MAMMALS

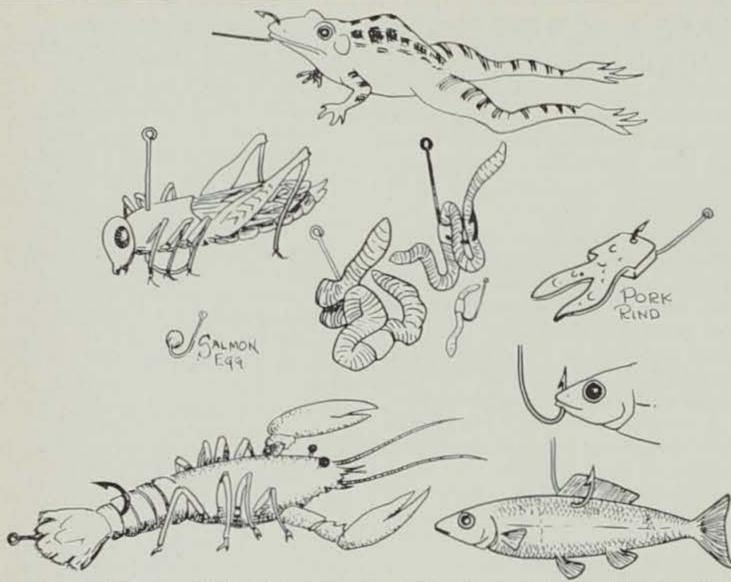
- Mammals of North America. V. H. Cahalane. MacMillan Co., New York, N. Y How to Know the Mammals. E. S. Booth. Wm. C. Brown Co., Dubuque, Iowa.
- Field Guide to the Mammals. W. H. Burt
- and R. P. Grossenheider. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass. The Mammal Guide. R. S. Palmer. Double-day & Co., Garden City, N. Y. The Raccoon. L. F. Whitney and A. B.

- Millan Co., New York, N. Y. Wildlife Conservation. I. N. Gabrielson.
- MacMillan Co., New York, N. Y. The Way to Game Abundance. W. S.
- The Way to Game Abundance. W. S. Grange. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y.
  Those of the Forest. W. S. Grange. Flam-beau Publishing Co., Babcock, Wis.
  Game Management. Aldo Leopold. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y.
  Wildlife Management. Vols. 1 and 2.
  R. E. Trippensee. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, N. Y.
  Transactions of North American Wildlife
- Transactions of North American Wildlife Conference. Yearly volumes beginning with 1936. Wildlife Management Insti-
- tute, Washington, D. C. The Practice of Wildlife Conservation. L. W. Wing. John Wiley & Sons, New York. N. Y
- HUNTING AND TRAPPING Hunter's Encyclopedia. R. R. Camp. Edi-
- tor. Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa.
  Modern Dog Encyclopedia. H. P. Davis Editor. Stackpole Co. Harrisburg, Pa.
  Hunting Whitetails. E. C. Edminster.
  Wm. Morrow & Co., New York 16, N. Y.
  Hunting Ducks and Geese. E. C. Janes.
- Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa. The Duck Hunters Manual. Bob Kennedy.
- Hanover House, New York, N. Y. Guide for Trapping, H. J. LaDue, Animal Trap Co., Lititz. Pa.
- Calling All Game. Bert Popowski. Stackpole Co. Harrisburg Pa. Coon Hunter's Handbook. L. F. Whitney and A. B. Underwood. Practical Science Publishing Co., Orange, Conn.
- Shotgunning in the Uplands. Ray P. Holland. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York. N. Y.
- Shotgunning in the Lowlands. Ray P. Holland. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York. N. Y.

And here's an idea: this basic library would be a valuable addition to a sportsmen's clubhouse, where it would be available to members for reading and to give answers to the arguments that are always coming up. Another fine idea-and an excellent project for a sportsmen's group— is providing such books to public or school libraries.



A new idea in the telephone business-"salting" the poles against squirrel damage.



Methods of hooking natural baits. Some fishermen choose pork rind, frog or crayfish for bass; minnows for perch, walleyes and crappies, and worms for just about anything that swims.

# Fishing Fundamentals . . (Continued from page 121)

pole for line keepers, thus having enough line to even troll if they wish. Some cane poles are available in sections: these are easily joined by brass ferrules similar to fly rods. They are easy to take down, easy to transport, but sometimes are a little too limber in the middle.

When tying a line to a cane pole, try using a line length about as long as the pole itself. Then you can move on at a moment's notice without wrapping the line around the pole tip and wasting poses, treble hooks belong on time. Many old fishermen tie their lines in two places to the pole; tying it about four feet back from the tip, then running it forward to the tip and tying it again. Then, if the limber tip breaks with a big fish, the line is still attached to a stronger section of pole. One of those little rubber hook keepers is handy-just slip it on the butt of the pole and put the hook in it and your tackle is secured. If you can avoid it, don't stick your hook in the bamboo itself; it dulls the point and a hook should be kept needle-sharp if you're going to catch bony-mouthed fish such as northerns, walleyes and some panfish. Carry a small hone in your shirt pocket and touch up the hook now and then. Use a smaller hook rather than one that's too big. For example, about a number 4 carlisle for carp, a number 8 sneck or kirby for panfish, about a number 1

sproat for walleyes. An average channel cat hook is hard to recommend, since different sized hooks may be used for the multitude of catfish baits. For worm-fishing channel cat, we've always liked the number 1 carlisle with the long shank. A catfish or bullhead hook should have a long shank, since these fish often swallow a bait and create a disgorging problem with a short hook. In our opinion, the finest general fishhook is that of the "Eagle Claw" type, particularly effective for bonymouthed fish in which other hooks are not easily set. For most purother fish. Lively worms should can often be eliminated by skinas to display their talents.

Large nightcrawlers on big hooks can be used whole for catfish, walleyes, bass and other sizable fish. For panfish it is best to break these big worms into inch lengths, threading them on the hook so as to cover the point and barb and bend of the hook. For panfish, large gobs of bait are out.

For walleyes, silver and yellow bass, bluegills, crappies, catfish and bass, lively minnows are irresistible. Nip your hook through the minnow's back muscles, but not so deep as to sever the spine. For panfish, minnows are usually fished with a light leader, small hook, split shot and quill bobber. This is a crappie rig supreme. Minnows can be kept lively in a good minnow bucket or aerated container; they will quickly die in an ordinary pail or can. Small shiners are among the best baits; lively, durable and fatally attractive. A good general rule is to use small minnows for small fish; big ones for the lunkers.

Now, assuming you've caught fish with all these hot tips, we come to stringers. Never string a fish through the gills with cord stringers. It's sure death. We've always preferred the metal clip stringers, passing the point of the safety-pin clip through the fish's lower jaw just behind the jawbone. Metal stringers will keep fish separated on a stringer, keep them alive longer, and single fish may be taken off any part of the stringer. The fish are securely strung and seldom lost. However, buy the best, most expensive metal stringer you can find. At a few cents more, it's cheap. The poorer stringers won't hold "spring," come unclipped, and are generally a nuisance. If you don't have a stringer or sack for carrying fish home, string your catch on a thin, limber willow switch or on the fork of a willow twig, hooking the fish on the short fork of the crotch and using the long fork as a carrying handle. Don't worry if you can't keep your fish alive. But once they're dead, keep them dry and cool. Many anglers remove the gills and entrails at once, believing that the blood-filled gills are the first to spoil. Some professional guides simply make certain the fishes' mouths and gills are closed and leave the innards in the fish. One of the worse fates of a dead fish is to be soaked in water. Never put a dead fish in a container with thawing ice or sopping wet grass or cloth, particularly in hot weather. A creel lined with damp watercress or bluegrass is widely used for trout, but just keep the fish cool, don't soak it! Many anglers prefer to skin fish taken from warm, roily waters to eat fish. They may fish in shalsince the skins of such fish often lows, striking at small fish with cause the "muddy" taste so offend- their hooves, picking the fish up,

be used and baited in such a way ning. We have always preferred to skin bass and bluegills taken from midsummer lakes and rivers. During seasons when the water is clear and cool this may not be advisable. A scaled fish usually means better eating than a skinned one, unless you don't care for a golden-brown crust on fresh walleyes or bass fillet.

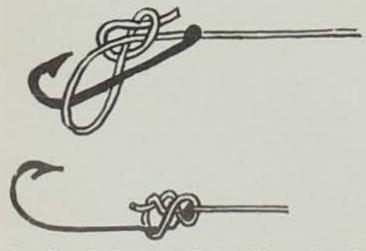
> Catfish and bullheads, of course, should be skinned. Small trout are almost never skinned or scaled, but fried heads, fins, scales and all; only the gills and entrails are removed.

Wetting your hands while handling a hooked fish isn't necessary, and the belief that dry hands will kill a fish by breaking its protective film has been questioned. Dry hands mean a better grip on the fish. Novice anglers handling fish with wet, slippery hands often squeeze the fish roughly in order to hold them. This may injure the fish fatally.

Unfairly, the cane pole is scorned by many fishermen as a crude device that is just one cut above dynamiting. However, there are few anglers alive today who can realize the full potential of the common cane pole. In the hands of an expert it can be a deadly fish-taker. However, it does have some shortcomings, and to remedy these the bait rod and reel was developed. That'll be taken up next time.

# Fashions . . .

(Continued from page 122) only wears it in the coldest weath-



The "turtle knot" and the "jimmy knot"; good ways of tying hook to line.

plugs. They're all right for blood and some prepared catfish baits, but many experts use only single hooks for doughballs, cutbaits, worms and natural baits.

If you must use a heavy line with a cane pole, say about 20pound test or more, at least use a nylon leader. A 12 or 15 pound leader will handle the average catfish or carp and cannot be easily detected by the fish. Some cane pole fishermen are using monofiliment lines—15 to 18 feet of limp nylon spinning line.

Avoid big, clumsy bobbers. They are difficult to "read" and may create more tension on a line that a fish cares for. Remember that the more delicate the fish you're after, the smaller the bobber must be, but such bobbers call for light sinkers such as split shot. If fishing without a bobber, try using light slip sinkers which create practically no "drag" when a fish runs with the bait.

When the first prehistoric angler discovered the fishworm, he really found something. It is probably the greatest all-around bait and will catch practically any fish that swims in our waters, particuarly in the spring. Some fishermen, when after big flatheads, like to use great gobs of worms on large hooks. As a rule a single worm carefully threaded on the hook is much deadlier for most ing to delicate palates. This taste and swallowing them headfirst.

er. "Can't stand it any other time," he grins.

Why aren't the fox skins worth more on the fur market? "They are long-haired," Lemke explains. "When long-haired pelts are made up into garments for the ladies they have a tendency to make the wearer look a bit-dumpy, I guess you would say. At any rate the ladies will have no part of them," he concluded.

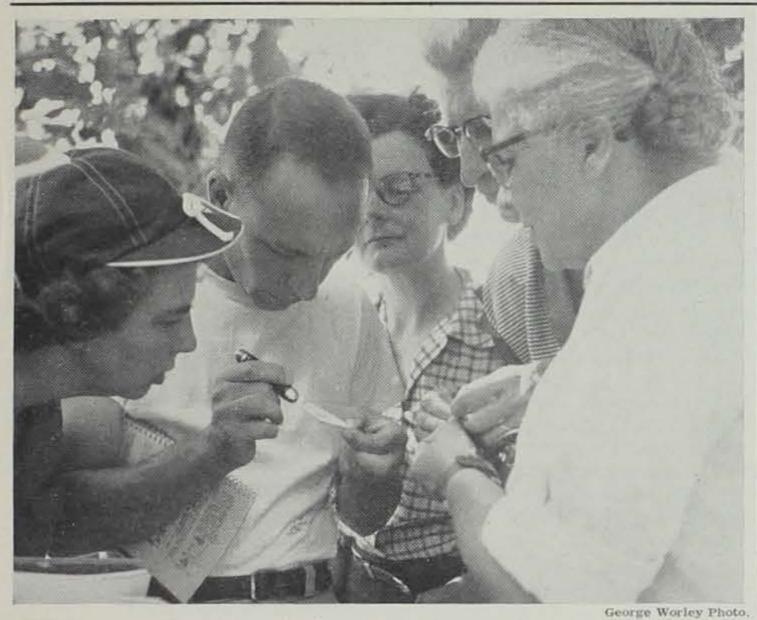
### Not Really Cheap

Lemke, who stands well over six feet, does not worry about the effect of the long-haired jacket on his figure. "It is not exactly a cheap jacket, though," he smiled. "In spite of the low cost of the furs I guess I have about 60 dollars invested in my fox fur piece."

Lemke still hates to see the fox pelts "go to waste." He has hopes that the dictates of fashion will change or that some other practical use will turn up to utilize the warmth and beauty of the red fox.

"There are hundreds of them trapped and caught here in southwest Iowa every winter and I doubt that even a small percentage are pelted out," he reflected .- C. W. McManamy, Council Bluffs Nonpareil.

Whitetail deer have been known



Learning to know plants in the big classroom is only one assignment. Before they leave Springbrook these teachers will have a working knowledge of fish, wildlife and conservation.

# Classroom . . .

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(Continued from page 121) things, for college credit, in a pleasant place, with people you like.

The base for all this activity is the annual Teachers Conservation Camp at beautiful Springbrook State Park in Guthrie County, 65 miles west of Des Moines. Here, each summer about 100 teachers enroll in one of the three 3-week courses in conservation teaching offered by Iowa State Teachers College. Five quarter hours of un-

appreciation and understanding of our soil, water, forests, minerals and wildlife, and the importance and urgency of conservation.

Recreation at Conservation Camp is built-in. Swimming, square dancing, fishing, boating, photography, metal and leatherwork, nature study and other hobbies are all available as spare time activities.

Cost of attending each three week session is \$72.50. This amount covers tuition, board, room, and industrial arts fee. Only other expenses are transportation to and from camp, one or two field guides. and optional personal items. Scholarships paying part of the cost are available through local Soil Conservation Districts, Sportsmen's Clubs, civic groups, banker's associations, garden clubs, and others. Teachers, if you want college credit, worthwhile training, expert instruction, new learning experiences, informal classes, and fun and recreation in a comfortable camp setting, check up on the Iowa Teachers Conservation Camp. For further information write to Dr. H. Seymour Fowler, Camp Director, Science Department, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Iowa, or contact your local State Conservation Officer.

bait where it should be, and you the stream's load is settling out won't have to spend half or more and the current is much reduced. of your angling time fiddling around with poor equipment. The less disturbance that you make with your fishing the better your chances for success. Reliable fishing gear will help with this more than any other single thing.

With regard to bait, such things as worms, nightcrawlers, minnows or chunks of larger fish, and chicken guts are particularly effective this time of year. These are items, or very similar to items, that occur naturally in our streams now. In addition, they are foods not altogether unfamiliar to catfish, and although we can't ascribe powers or reasoning to catfish, they do seem to form feeding habits, and these food items that are common in the river are the ones most used.

With a little experience you will find that catfish are contrary critters, and because of this it is recommended that you take several different kinds of bait along. Often "old whiskers" will fall for one certain bait and leave all others strictly alone. The more kinds of bait that you have in your tackle box the better your chances of having just the right one. Another thing worth remembering is not to be stingy with your bait. Use a big one. Big baits can't be taken by small fish, but the little fellows will work on it, and these little fish make good decoys for the big 'uns.

And where to fish? In answering this question, common sense

Catfish, like most of us, do it the easy way. So for Pete's sake, don't tie your bait to six pounds of lead and heave it out into the middle of the stream. If you will use a light sinker, no more than an ounce, this will permit the current to settle your bait in the same place that the stream is settling out its load of debris, and that is exactly where our good friend the catfish will be looking for his next and perhaps fatal meal. Usually this will be quite close to shore, which is the spot to fish during high water. Fish close to shore on the upstream side of drift piles or in back waters. Another good place that should not be overlooked is in or very close to grape vines or bushes that have grown close to the stream and have become submerged by high water stages. These act as a strainer and collect a great deal of things that catfish use for food as the

water flows through them. Another important fishing technique is to try different places. In other words, look for feeding fish instead of letting them look for you. A catfish will often spend most of his life in a very small area, and if he wants food you are not going to get him unless you fish in the area in which he resides. Allow 15 to 20 minutes of fishing time to each hole, and if you have no strikes in that time move on to another. This is always an important rule to follow.

The time of day to fish catfish will give the best answer. Put is something further to consider.

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dergraduate or graduate college credit are given for each course. Many teachers stay for six weeks. The three 1955 sessions begin June 5, June 26, and July 17. Training offered at the Teachers

Conservation Camp is unique in several ways. Teachers live in a quiet, restful camp situation. Cabins replace tents and there's electricity, hot and cold water, food prepared and served by experts. and other modern facilities. It's only a few steps, however, to deep woods. Whip-poor-wills and the sound of a brook take the place of traffic noices, and birds take over as alarm clocks.

Whenever possible, actual field experience replaces lectures and classroom tedium. Campers may travel a thousand miles by bus or car to see natural resources in their natural state and to study resource waste and conservation year, and for the novice or unsucpractices.

Few, if any, conservation courses mentioning. have as many or as excellent instructors as those at Springbrook. Each phase of study is led by a recognized educational specialist tackle will give you good angling. in that field. Soil experts lead soil Continuing with the car analogy, study; expert foresters lead trips it is true that we can't all drive to woodlands and sawmills; spe- Cadillacs, but we can get a good cialists in wildlife management ride out of a much less expensive come in to guide learning in that car. So it is with fishing tackle. field. A teacher may benefit from You don't need a \$50 outfit but a the superb instruction of 25 differ- reel that runs smoothly, a good ent specialists in a three week ses- rod and a strong line are essential. sion. The final result is a deep These will enable you to put your

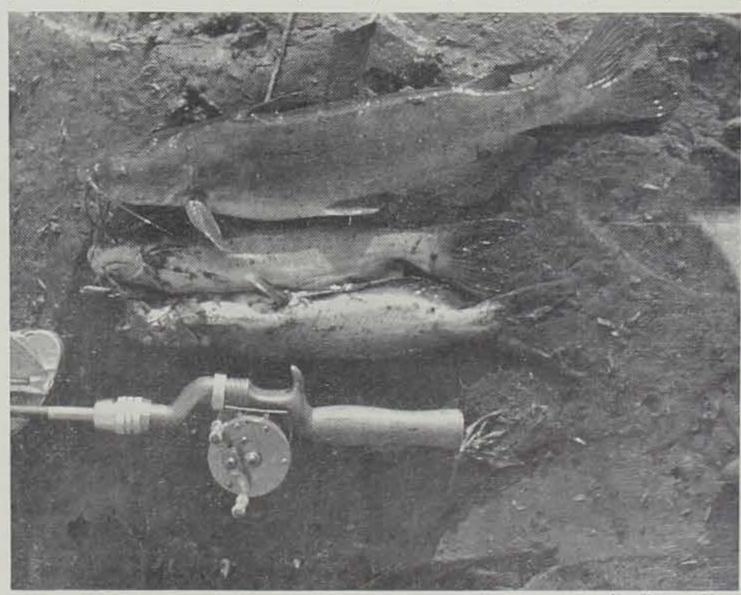
# Catfish . . .

(Continued from page 121) cessful fisherman they are worth

First of all, you need good equipment. Like a modern automobile gives you a good ride, good fishing

Where would you look for food? that catfish are night time feed-Certainly not out in the middle ers. However, the muddy or turbid of the river where everything is waters of spring offer a measure being scoured clean and where it of darkness to the catfish throughwould take every energy at your out the whole day, and because command to keep from being car- of this he is just as apt to feed ried downstream to New Orleans; at high noon as at any time. no-you would take the easy in- Actually then, the time of day to telligent way and seek your sus- fish at this season is of little imtenance in the quiet waters where portance. Go whenever you can,

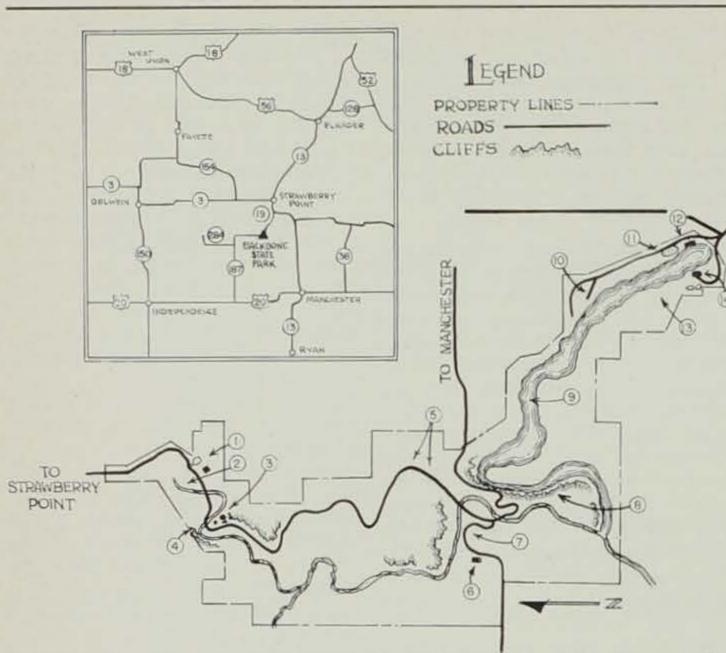
yourself in the place of the catfish. Of course, it is fairly well known



Here's something for your fishing fever: solid, fighting April catfish. Caught on worms in an eddy out of the main current, they were prime eating!

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### IOWA CONSERVATIONIST



Backbone State Park. 1. The auditorium. 2. Picnic area. 3. Fish hatchery. 4. Cave. 5. Central picnic area. 6. Assistant Custodian. 7 Overlook. 8. The Backbone. 9. Backbone Lake. 10. Cabin area. 11. Parking lot. 12. Bathhouse and beach. 13. Boy Scout camp grounds. 14. Park conservation officer.

# Devil's Backbone . . .

(Continued from page 122) wading pools for small fry! Years ago, before the area was a park, the kids had a merry-go-round on the east end of the Backbone. Someone had even started a resort hotel nearby, but the deal fell through and he never finished the foundation.

Near the north entrance, at the on a lonely knoll surrounded by base of a broad limestone wall, is red cedars and hardwoods. a hole about eight feet high, the Geologically, the Backbone Park front door of an ancient underis ancient. As parks go, it is the ground river. Just inside the engrandfather of our public playtrance a visitor must stoop to walk grounds. But to every small boy through the cave, but it soon opens who "discovers" the cave, and to up and a man can stand erect. every girl who finds painted cup It is possible to follow the winding and moccasin flower, it's always passage back into the hill for young-always new.-J.M. about 300 feet before it peters out. Inside the cave are walls covered with "flowstone" and sometimes Red Cedar River . . . hanging bats. There are no dan-(Continued from page 124) gerous side passages or pits. The which the canoe can be easily cave is a small boy's dream and lifted. perfectly safe, but give him a good In the next  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles  $(\frac{1}{2}$ -hour) flashlight. to the Seeber Highway bridge the There's a deer herd in the park river is shallow and rock riffles are now, and the visitor who will get frequent. It is another  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles off the main roads may see it. (34-hour) to the Sunny Brae Coun-Deer were native to the wild valley try Club. A low footbridge on baryears ago, but became extinct until rels crosses the river and requires they were restocked in the late a short carry. Three-quarter mile 1920's. Bobcats were trapped and (1/2-hour) farther the Pierce bridge shot regularly before the area was and a new highway bridge cross a park, and Louis Schmidt, who the river. Below them is a series was raised in the Backbone vicinof shallow rapids. ity, tells of hearing wolves-not It is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours) to covotes, but real old-fashioned, the next bridge. This is a scenic .45 caliber, rip-snorting, cow-killstretch of the river. The water is ing timber wolves. deeper and the current faster. The an item about a Dyersville phy-"Around the turn of the censhoreline is heavily timbered. There tury," Louis recalls, "you often is a series of rock bars, riffles and heard them howl at night. Often pools and the river divides into as not, it was when you were going several channels. In this section out to the little house in back. Spring Creek, a trout stream, en-When you heard a distant lobo cut ters the river from the left, and loose you forgot about visiting the Rock Creek, a fine bass stream, 'facility' and headed for the kitchfrom the right. en." The terrain is wild in the next The Backbone area was lumbered for years and most of the 4 miles (11/2 hours) to the cottage

old virgin tree stands are gone. In a few places that were inaccessible to loggers' teams there still stand huge white pines, some of the last of their kind in the state. One of these old trees is in the central picnic area and is believed by some foresters to be the biggest white pine in Iowa today. Another grove of white pines grows on the west end of the Backbone

and spring of Dr. Fox of Charles Edwin L. Crozier of Springfield, City.

For the next  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles  $(2\frac{1}{4})$ hours) downstream to the Highway 218 bridge at Floyd, there is plenty of good fishing water and \$8.00 more a year for the trapthe river scenery is picturesque.

The character of the river changes about 2 miles (34-hour) below Floyd as it leaves the limestone rock country and enters a wide flood plain. This is the start of the backwater of the Main Street dam at Charles City. This is all paddling again for the next  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours) to Rotary Park on the left bank and the suspension foot and railway bridges which cross the river. It is another 1½ miles (½-hour) to the take out place. This is on the right bank about 100 yards above the held annually at Vandalia, Ohio, Main Street dam.

For canoeing, fishing, camping and wild scenery the Red Cedar ranks with the best. You'll be missing a good bet if you don't try

# Grand Old Sport . . .

(Continued from page 123)

and Skeet club said "everything else has gone up" and sees no reason why shell prices shouldn't go up too. Miami club members, he added, are "finicky" about shells and wouldn't use reloads.

Norbert Nielson, financial secretary of the Maywood Sportsmen's club at Elmhurst, Illinois, said some of the club's 300 active members are "doing a respectable job" of reloading, with a substantial flying 4,000 miles every 24 hours saving.

Ohio, secretary of the Southern Ohio Trapshooters League. Crozier said that the most recent increase -10 cents a box—would mean only shooter who fires 2,000 shells in that time.

"He may not like it," Crozier said, "but I don't think that's going to stop him."

But Robert E. Clyne, owner of the Troy Gun Club at Troy, Ohio said he favors the FTC study because shell prices are "ridiculously high." He said he's rigging a machine at his commercially-run club to reload shells and estimates it'll save shooters 40 cents a box.

The Grand American Trap Shoot, world series of the clay bird sport requires that all of the 1,500,000 shells fired there during the week of the Grand be factory loads, bought on the grounds.

A director of the St. Louis Skeet & Trap Club, George Henderson, said the club lost 9 cents on every round shot. Present charge there also is \$2.60 a round and Henderson said "we can't raise that without cutting down on shooting. We'd certainly welcome an investigation—Cedar Rapids Gazette.

### MOONFOWL!

In a pamphlet published in 1703, an anonymous writer advanced the idea that migratory birds wintered on the moon. He figured the birds could reach the moon in 60 days by and sleeping on the wing!

Another dissent to the majority

opinions in the sample came from his name to the pamphlet.)

(We can see why he didn't sign



The hunters up around Dyersville have had a lot of fun at Dr. Griffin's expense. But be careful, boys. A good doctor with a sense of humor is something to reckon with . . .

A couple of issues ago there was sician, Charles Griffin, who alibied his tardy deer hunt report by claiming that he had shot a deer, removed the heart and liver, but that the deer had recovered and run off. With no heart the deer left no blood trail, and the good doctor had been tracking it for liver back into that deer and turn about a month.

The other morning Dr. Griffin came to his office to find a stuffed deer with a heart on one antler, a liver on the other, and a sign around its neck.

But be careful of a man with Griffin's imagination, boys. He's thinking hard, and we don't like the expression on his face. He might actually put the heart and it loose in the middle of town.

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