

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

Volume 18

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Number 9

## BUCKSKIN REVIEW AND PREVIEW

### HEADWATER

By W. O. Nagel

The little pool stretched out its 50-yard length invitingly, between a wide gravel bar and a steep, tree-and-brush fringed bank. The water was so clear I could see the gravel bottom, except where the cut-bank cast its shadow. There didn't appear to be a fish in it—but I knew better. I knew, too, that there were deep pockets along the far bank, and several large boulders—just where a smart fish would hide.

And these fish were smart, just as all fish in small, clear-water pools are smart about not showing themselves to humans. Especially to noisy, gravel-crunching, loud-talking, boot-stomping humans. A fisherman could walk out on that gravel bar (it offered a nice, clear space for a cast into the far-side pockets) and fish all day, without seeing a fish or having a strike or a bite. In fact, I'd seen them do it—many of them, and I'd done it myself. And, like other disgruntled fishermen, I'd sworn there wasn't a fish in the pool.

But one day I got a notion. Maybe I remembered something I'd read, or something I'd heard; maybe it was a recollection of how I used to fish when I was a youngster and had plenty of time—before I matured into the hurry-hurry-hurry pattern of grown-up life. Anyway, this day after I'd cast an assortment of favorite "sure-killers" thoroughly (and sometimes quite skillfully) over every foot of that pool, without results, I suddenly decided to sit down and think it over. So, in the shade back in the woods I thought it over through two cigarettes to an idea. I'd be real quiet, out-of-

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DON'T SHOOT—IT'S A HEN!

### HUNTING REGULATIONS SET

The State Conservation Commission has set the regulations for the 1959-60 hunting season with few changes from last year.

Most important of the new regulations are:

*There will be no drawing for deer licenses this year. All 6,000 will be sold on a first come, first served basis.*

*Pheasant may be hunted one hour earlier at 9:00 instead of 10:00 a. m.*

*Because of a high rabbit population, the season has been extended three weeks over that of last year.*

*The squirrel season has again been lengthened by two additional weeks, this year.*

The 1959-60 regulations in detail:

#### Deer

As in former years, the 1959-60 Iowa deer season is for Iowa residents only. Deer of any age or sex may be taken by shotgun all over the state on December 12 and

December 13, 1959, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.; and by bow and arrow from October 31 to November 30, 1959, during the hours 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The daily bag limit, season limit and possession limit is one (1) deer.

Deer may be taken with 10, 12, 16 and 20-gauge shotguns with rifled slugs only, and by bows of 40 pound pull or more with broad head arrows only. Crossbows or any mechanically operated bow is prohibited. The use of dogs, domestic animals, cars, aircraft or any mechanical conveyance, or the use of salt or bait, also is prohibited.

A metal locking seal bearing the license number of licensee and the year of issuance must be affixed to the carcass of each deer, between the tendon and bone of a hind leg before the carcass can be transported.

Owners or tenants of land and their children may hunt, kill and

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Eldie W. Mustard  
Game Biologist

"And they said it couldn't be done!"

Back in 1953 when the State Conservation Commission, with the permission of the General Assembly, announced the first open deer season in the memory of most Iowa hunters, the skeptics declared the idea of an open deer season in Iowa was preposterous and that all of our deer would be killed off the first season. They continued, saying Iowa wasn't a deer-state, and all the few deer we did have were good for was to glimpse occasionally while driving or walking through the countryside.

In all fairness to those who were pessimistic and apprehensive about Iowa having a deer season without erradicating our herd, I must admit that hind-sight is a lot clearer than fore-sight. However you may be assured that a lot of thought and study preceded the first deer season. That we still have a good deer herd in Iowa wasn't entirely an element of luck!

It was calculated that part of the annual surplus of the Iowa herd should, for the good of the herd, be removed by hunting. As our herd was relatively small, it was determined that the most equitable way to accomplish this removal and still maintain an adequate breeding population was to permit a fixed number of hunters to attempt to harvest a deer. This plan is still sound game management in Iowa.

That the original plan has worked is evidenced by the fact that the size of our deer herd, with minor fluctuations, remained relatively stable, and should, with proper management, continue to furnish sport for the hunters and thrills for those who wish only to see an occasional white-tail flash into the woods. The graph is included to show that the Iowa deer have maintained their numbers even though hunted; it is paramount to understand that the deer are classified as a renewable resource, and as such cannot be

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### Iowa Conservationist

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### IOWA'S FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS Made Possible by FEDERAL AID WILDLIFE & FISH RESTORATION ACTS

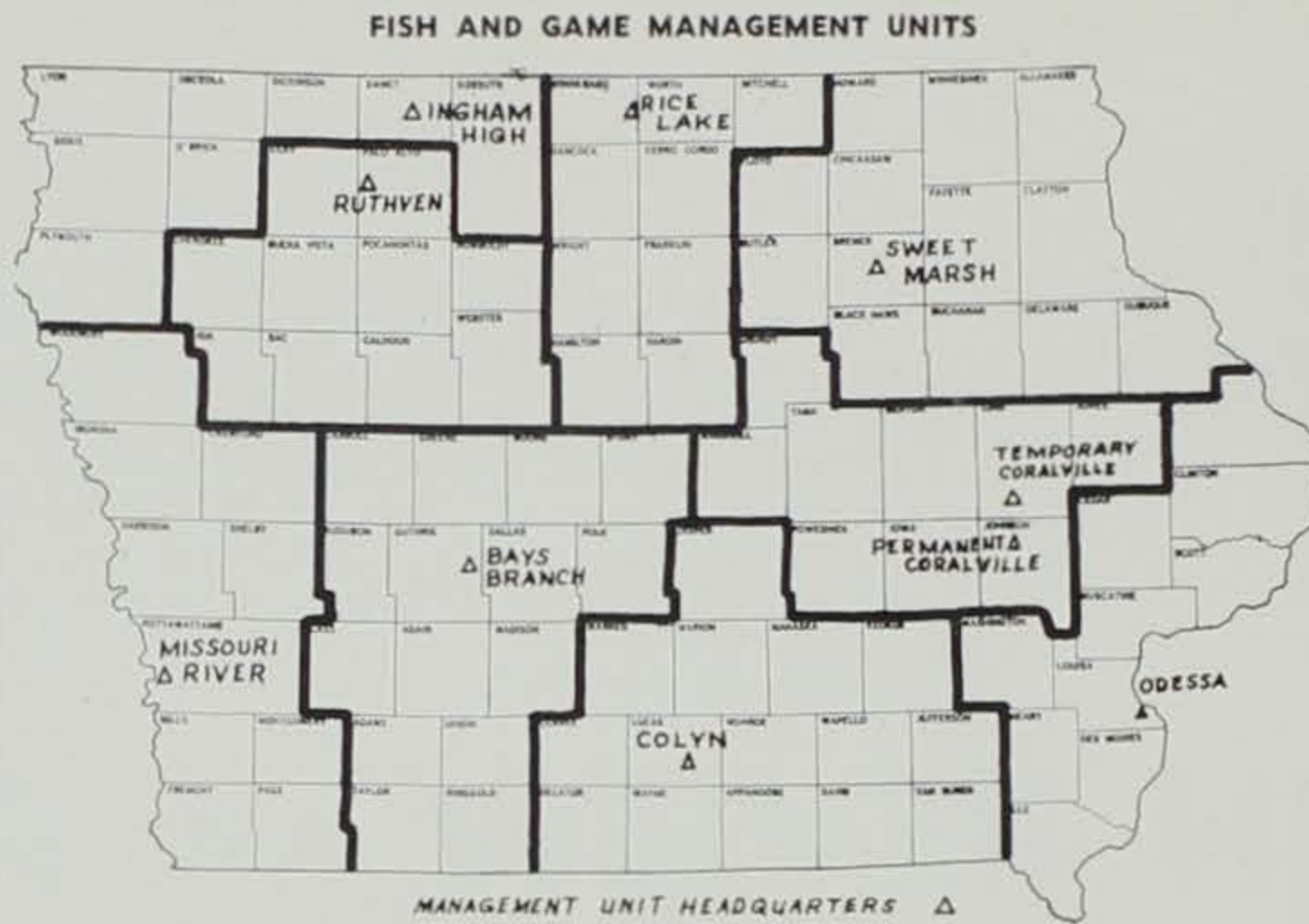
Jack McSweeney  
Assistant Superintendent

How would you like to manage 5,000 acres of wild swamp, ponds, sloughs, potholes or marsh land with only a little extra help during your busiest season? Your area would be scattered about over several counties and you would be expected to work long, hard hours in all kinds of weather. The mailman who braves snow and rain, wind and sleet would have nothing on you—in fact, you would have to have something on him because you would be expected to have academic training in wildlife management plus a farm background. We're talking about a Game Management Unit and its manager, the first in a series of articles dealing with the men in conservation and the nature of their work. The first Game Management Unit was established on Ingham High Area in November of 1949. The following spring, two more



Jim Sherman Photo.

A unit manager looks over one of the many scenes of his labors. These men, who must have a farm background and academic training in wildlife management, work long hours in swamps, sloughs and marshland, and they love it.



were added, and named the Rice Lake Unit, and Ruthven Unit. In the summer of 1950, the Sweet Marsh Unit was established. Since this time, the Colyn, Odessa, Bays Branch, Missouri River, and the Coralville Units have been organized.

These nine units were instituted with one purpose in mind—to provide intensive development and management of state-owned areas located within a radius of 50 to 100 miles from the unit headquarters. Plans to provide a residence, service building, and the necessary equipment to operate with a minimum of outside help are incorporated within each unit. By this fall, all but the two newest units, Coralville and Missouri River, will be furnished with equipment and buildings to provide the most efficient operation.

The duties of unit managers are probably as diversified as any group of people employed in Iowa. Their work ranges from some of the most pleasurable found anywhere, dealing with fish, wildlife, general conservation and land management—to such unimaginative occupations as weed control, and road and fence construction in hot, mosquito infested marshes and sloughs.

Basically the unit managers deal

with the development of public hunting, fishing, and refuge areas. They provide as many things as possible to improve recreation for Iowa's outdoor enthusiast, while allowing the greatest possible production, and permissible harvest of all existing species of fish and game in addition to providing habitat for non-game types of animals. They attempt to control the undesirable species of fish, animals and vegetation which interfere and detract from the best possible conditions for sportsmen. All units have their peculiar problems, and are in different stages of development, but all are being intensively improved.

The 40 hour week has not yet made itself known to the unit managers. As with most jobs titled "manager," long hours are an accepted condition. They drove an average of 2,000 miles a month, and operated their tractors 590 hours during the year. They employed an average of 2,650 hours extra labor on each unit and labored themselves 1 hour in 6 on records, reports, correspondence and general office work including five-year term management plans.

Other sections of their department carry out such projects as negotiating farming and pasture agreements, supervising the planting of crops necessary for nesting areas and food patches, and general farm management on the upland portions of their areas too large to handle with unit equipment.

### OUR NEW ACTING DIRECTOR



Glen G. Powers, 49, was appointed acting director of the State Conservation Commission July 23 to replace Bruce F. Stiles who died July 17. Powers was the superintendent of the engineering section from 1947 until the recent change of office; prior to holding the superintendent's position he had been the assistant chief engineer.

Now engaged in planning the future course of the commission, Glen asks that renewed vigor be applied to our common cause—conservation. "There is room and need for a helping hand from everyone concerned with conservation. Let's all cooperate and do what we can to promote the wise use of our natural resources and promote outdoor recreation in Iowa."

They planted trees and shrubs on their own and on private land leased for cover plantings, and planted small food and cover patches including aerial seedings on mud flats and marshes. They worked on vegetative control of all types including noxious weeds, poison ivy, and nettles. Many hours were spent on boundary and tree planting enclosures by fence, and they built about 620 rods of fence each during the last year.

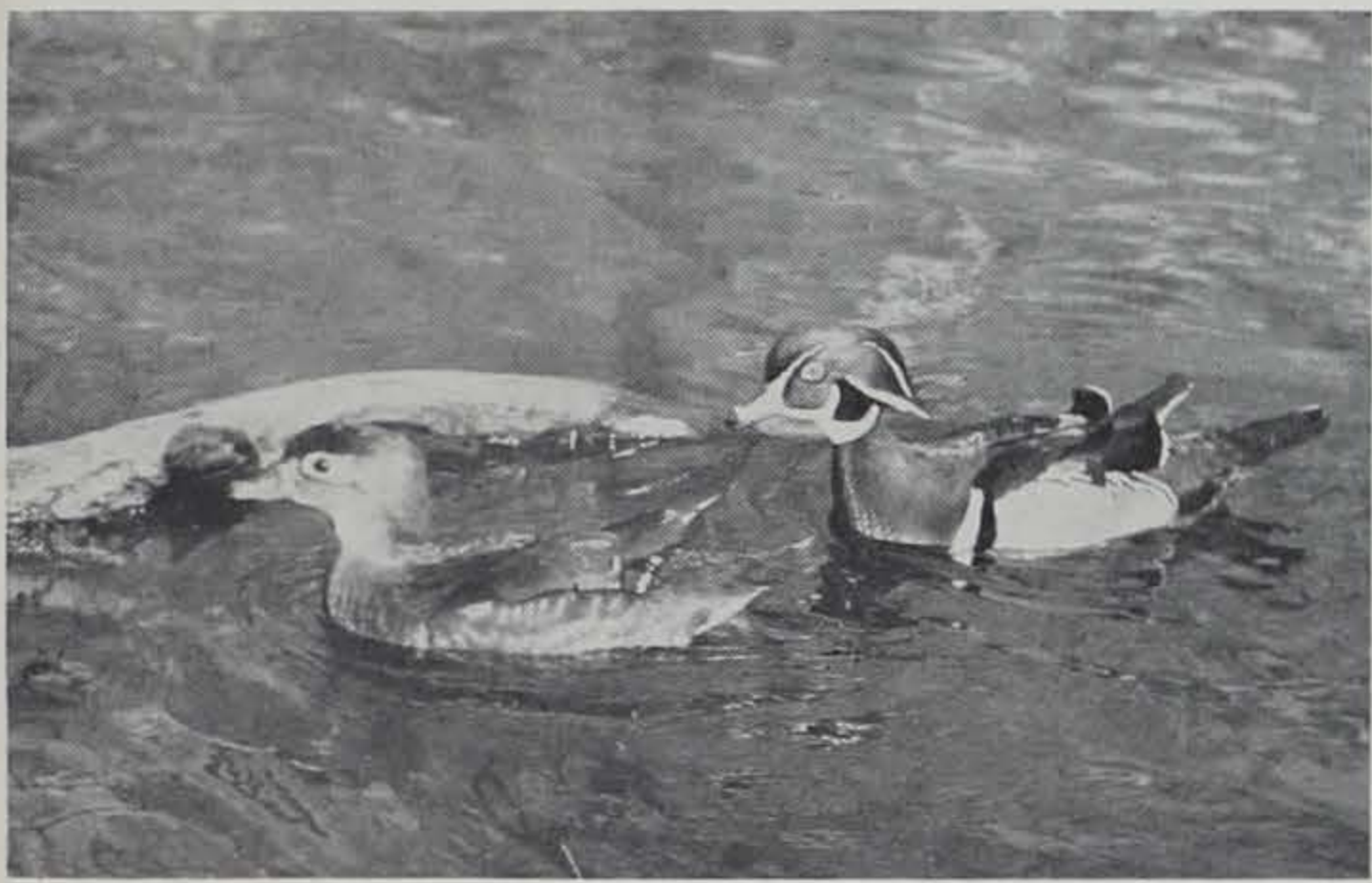
Marsh management, manipulat-

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Fish and Game Management Unit	Number of Counties in Unit	Number of Areas in Unit	Total Acres of Areas	Headquarters Location
Bays Branch	15	10	2,132	Panora—S.W. shore of Bays Branch Marsh—Guthrie County.
Colyn	15	10	3,471	Russell—West shore of Colyn Marsh—Lucas County.
Coralville	9	7	4,570	Coralville—On shore of Hawk-eye Marsh—Johnson County.
Ingham-High	8	27	9,221	Wallingford—North shore of Ingham Lake—Emmet County.
Missouri River	10	13	5,473	Council Bluffs—On Smith Area (temporary)—Pottawattamie County.
Odessa	10	17	12,036	Wapello—West shore of Lake Odessa—Louisa County.
Rice Lake	9	8	6,032	Lake Mills—North shore of Rice Lake—Winnebago County.
Ruthven	10	17	5,746	Ruthven—West side of Dewey's Pasture Area—Palo Alto County.
Sweet Marsh	11	11	6,097	Tripoli—North shore of Sweet Marsh—Bremer County.

## WOOD DUCKS: TWILIGHT TRAVELERS

Elwood M. Martin  
Iowa State University, Ames



Jim Sherman Photo.

Wood Ducks. They roost, rest, loaf and feed on quiet woodland ponds or lakes among plants like cattails, rushes and willows—except in the late summer or fall when . . .

The sun had just gone down. There was a light breeze, and the air was clear over the Mississippi River near Clinton on that mid-October evening. A flock of 18 wood ducks angled upstream crossing the river toward the Illinois side. Then, a small flock of geese, honking like an organized traffic jam, followed the aerial "freeway" downstream. Every few minutes small flocks of wood ducks flew over, following the route taken by that first group. One larger group of about 70 passed overhead. Then, at about 20 minutes after sunset, they came in droves. "Woodies" poured from the Iowa shore flying just over the treetops in a nearly continuous stream for several minutes. It was impossible to count them all, but partial counts and estimates indicated that nearly 800 wood ducks had flown over in four minutes! In all, over 1,000 wood ducks were seen in the flight that evening.

Where were they going? They were headed for a wood duck roost on the Illinois side of the river. At daybreak the next morning, they flew back to the Iowa side to feed and loaf in the extensive wooded backwaters of a large island. This performance continued day after day throughout most of the fall.

Nearly everyone knows that blackbirds and crows use roosts in the fall before migration, but few people are aware that wood ducks have this same habit. Wood ducks usually roost on quiet woodland ponds or lakes among plants like cattails, rushes and willows. Roosts aren't always in quiet isolated spots, however. In Louisa County, I saw as many as 300 wood ducks spend the night on a weedy pond within 200 yards of a highway bridge which crosses that pond in plain sight of the roost.

Wood duck roosting activity begins in late July when the young

are beginning to fly and continues through November. A roost may be used from a week to several months during this period. Both morning and evening flights occur nearer the hours of darkness and over shorter periods of time on the average as the season advances. The numbers of wood ducks using the roosts also increase as the season advances, and peak concentrations usually occur sometime in October in Iowa. Some roosts in Iowa apparently have concentrations of over 2,000 wood ducks during a brief period in the fall before the birds move south. Some of you may not have thought there were that many wood ducks in the whole state!

Wildlife conservationists are interested in these roosts, especially from the standpoint of counting and estimating numbers of wood ducks and studying changes in numbers from year to year. You may be familiar with counts of wood ducks made on streams in Iowa and other states by game management personnel. These counts are made from boats during early morning hours by observers floating down portions of a number of streams in the state. Such float counts have been used to learn whether wood duck populations have increased or decreased so that appropriate steps in management might be taken. Continued work has shown that float counts are influenced by many conditions other than actual changes in the numbers of wood ducks, and for that reason research workers are searching for better ways to check on numbers. There is reason to believe that counts of "woodies" at a number of roosts in the fall may provide more dependable information about the population, but the method needs further testing and investigation before it can be used more widely. Changes in water

levels and food supplies from year to year may influence movements of the birds, and thereby influence the accuracy of these counts and their usefulness as indices to changes in wood duck population size. This phase of the problem requires and will receive additional study.

Determining the distribution of breeding wood ducks and the locations of their fall concentration areas or roosts is another important phase of the problem. Early in this work questionnaires were sent to conservation officers and other state and federal game management personnel to get some of this information. The questionnaires were sent out in 1958 and again in 1959, and the replies provided data for 90 of Iowa's 99 counties. These replies indicate that most of Iowa's nesting wood ducks are found in the northeastern three-fifths of the state and in counties along the Missouri River. The largest populations are in the eastern one-fourth of the state. Reports from some counties indicate no breeding wood ducks at all, but if time permitted, a care-

ful search would probably show at least a few nesting in every county in Iowa. This duck, like the hooded merganser and goldeneye, uses hollow trees for nesting. Wood ducks prefer backwater ponds and marshes in wooded bottomlands, and comparatively few are found on the main channels of streams or on the open water of lakes. Because of these habitat preferences, even a large number of "woodies" may remain in an area unnoticed. Roosts are generally found in regions with fairly high wood duck breeding populations. A large portion of these roosts is found in counties along the Mississippi River. Roosts, also, can be easily overlooked if an observer isn't at the right place at the right time.

This study was just a beginning. Future work, together with information which may be contributed by helpful individuals throughout the state, will add still more to the knowledge of Iowa's wood duck populations and soon lead to specific practical applications of this information. Such data is

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Charlie Adamson Photo.

. . . they, like crows and blackbirds, use roosts in hollow trees where they live from a week to several months before migrating. Artificial wood duck nests are erected by various conservation groups for the purpose of providing a place where the "woodies" may be studied as well as to make up for a shortage of hollow trees.

**HUNTING REGULATIONS . . .**

(Continued from page 161)

possess one deer provided it is not removed from said land, whole or in part, unless tagged with the seal affixed to the animal.

Residents of Iowa who have an out-of-state mailing address must furnish certification of residence in Iowa with their application.

All hunters other than those exempted by law must possess a 1959 deer license and wear a red license number and the insignia provided while they are hunting deer. A hunt report postal card provided with each license must be mailed to the State Conservation Commission, Des Moines, Iowa, within three days after the close of the season, stating whether a deer is killed or not. Those who fail to return this card may be refused licenses for subsequent seasons.

An unlimited number of bow and arrow licenses will be issued. Applications for the shotgun season must be made not later than October 14, 1959. Applications are also required for bow and arrow licenses, but there is no deadline for such applications. Hunters who wish to obtain both a bow and arrow license must make separate applications.

**Rabbits**

Season opens September 12, 1959, and runs through February 21, 1960. Shooting hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with a bag limit of 10 per day and no possession limit for both cottontails and jackrabbits.

**Squirrels**

The commission has extended the squirrel season by two weeks because it feels that a greater harvest will have no serious effect on the population. Open season is from September 12, 1959, to December 15, 1959, with no specified shooting hours. Bag limit is six per day and the possession limit is 12 for both gray and fox squirrels over the entire state.

**Pheasant**

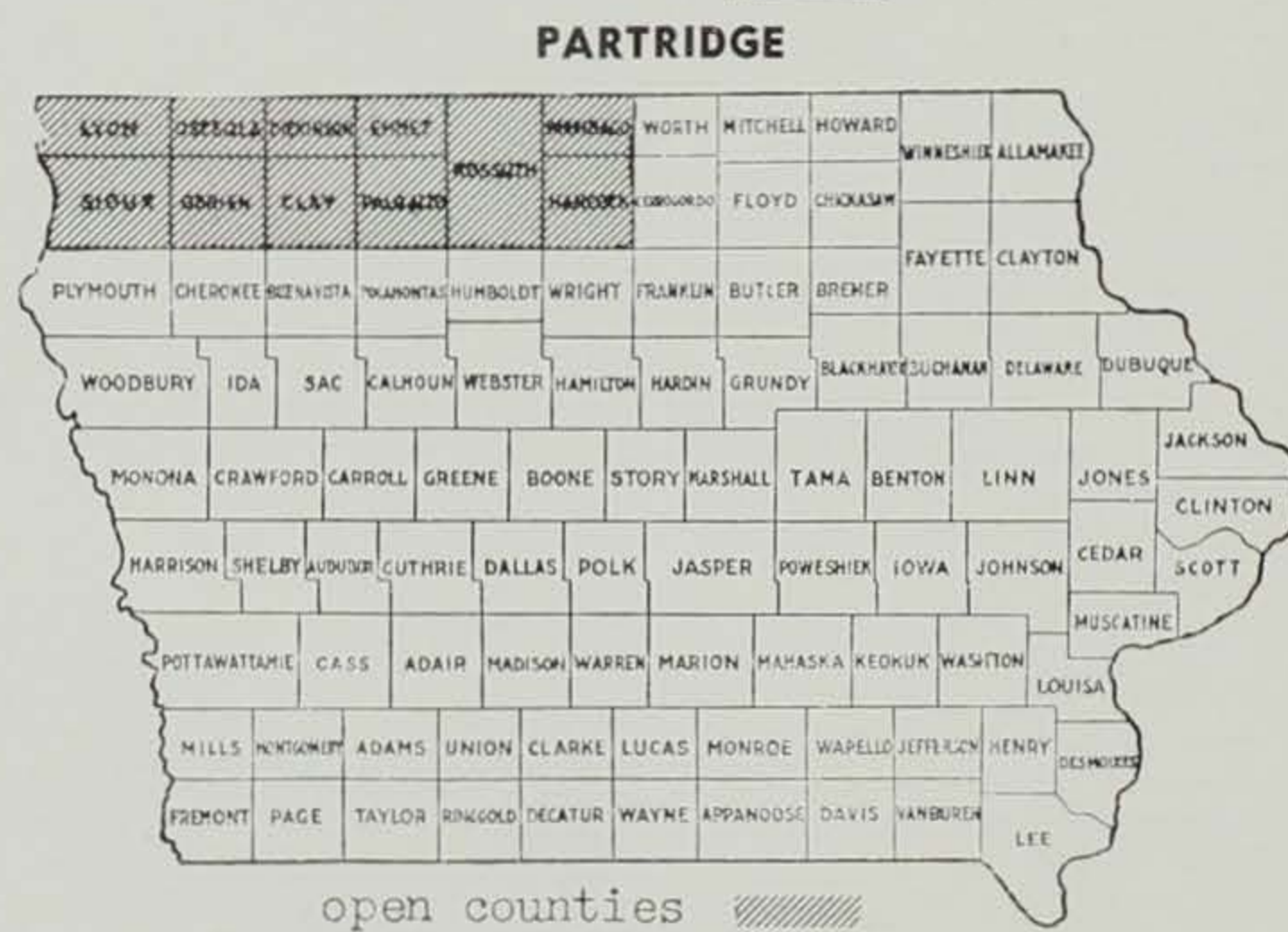
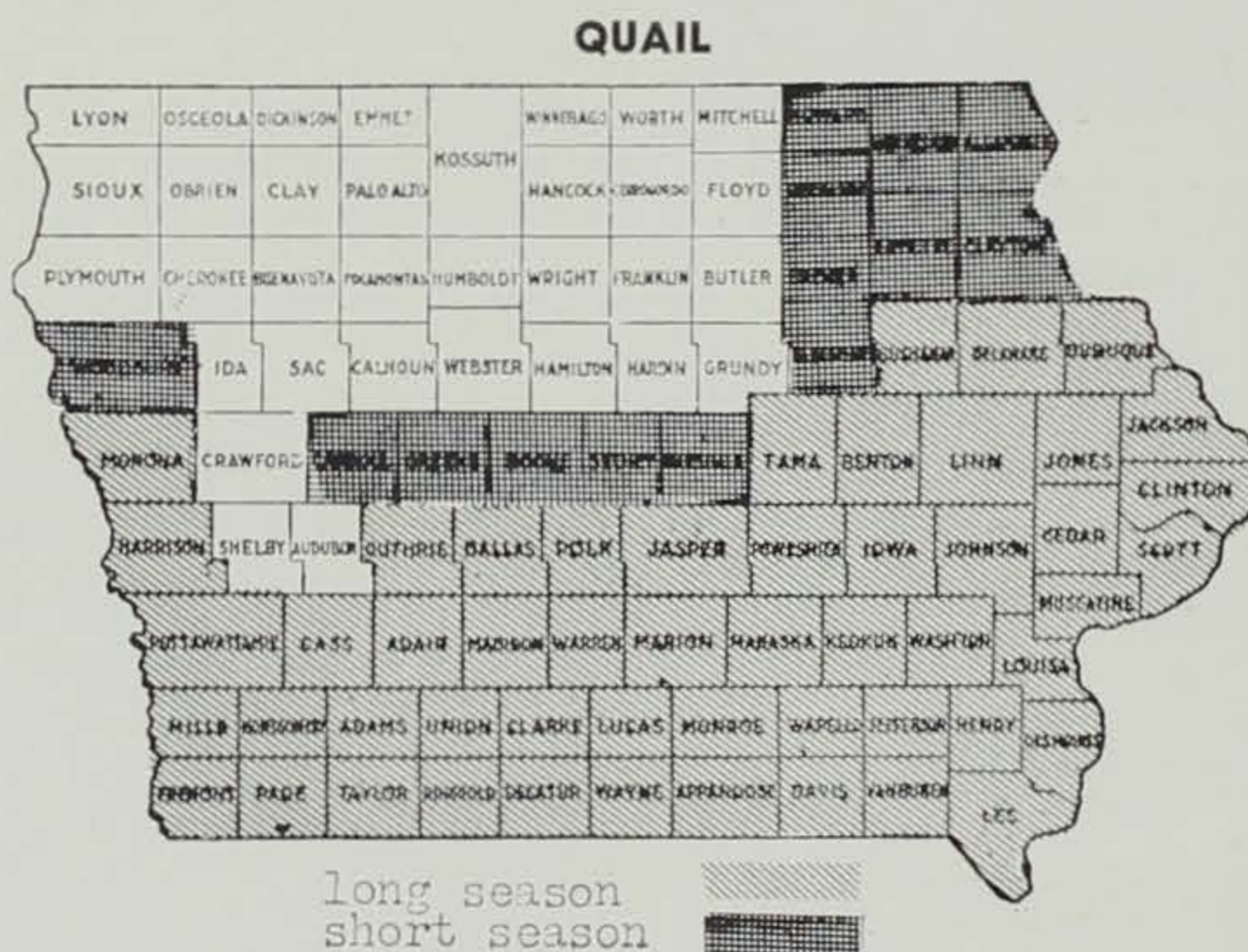
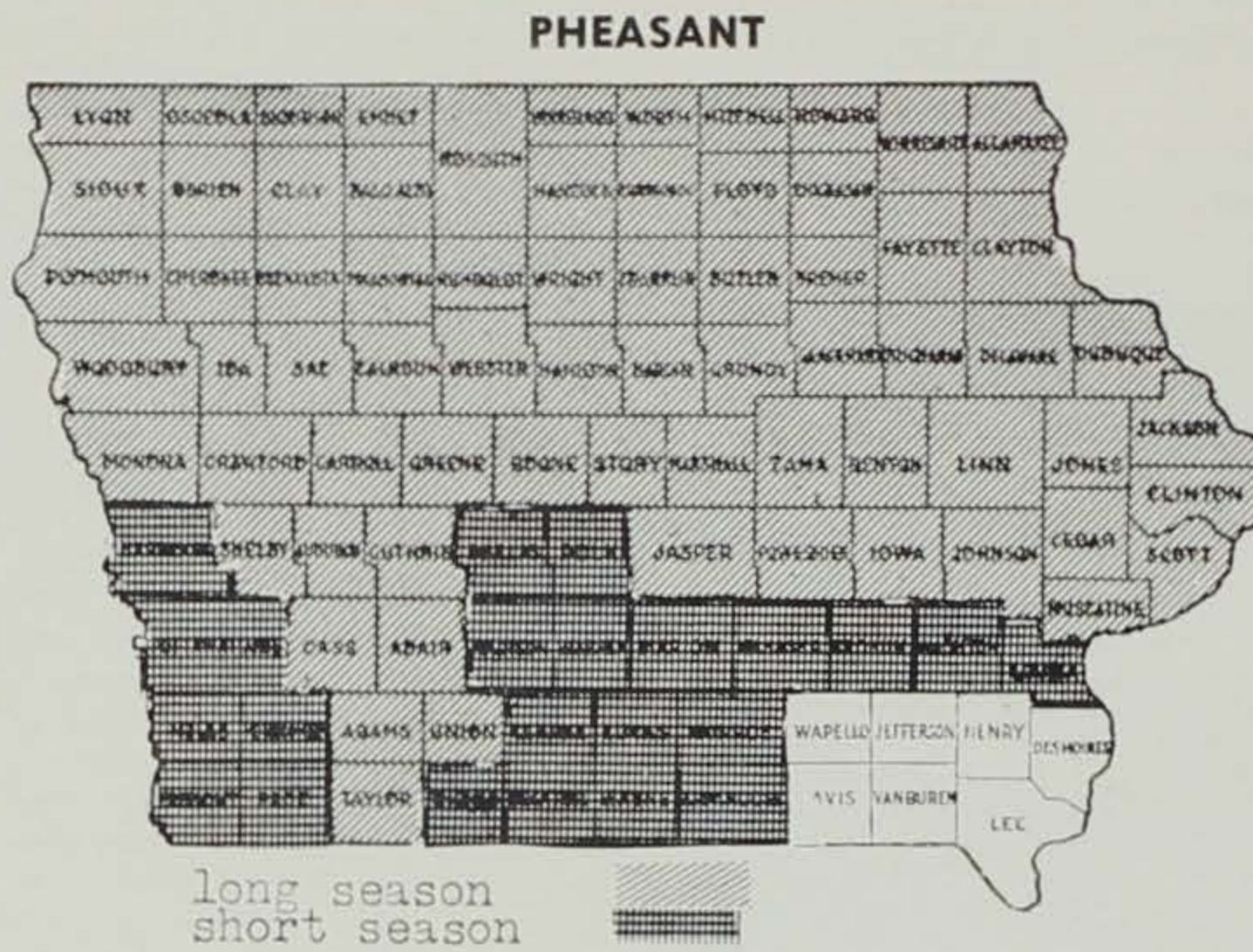
Open season, long zone, from November 6 through November 29, 1959. In the short zone, the season is from November 6 through November 21, 1959. Shooting hours in both zones start an hour earlier this season—from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., each open day. In all counties the daily bag limit for pheasants is three (3) and the possession limit is six (6) cock birds.

**Quail**

Open season in long zone counties from November 6 through December 20, 1959; and in short zone counties from November 6 through November 29, 1959. Bag limit in all counties, six (6), possession limit twelve (12). All other counties closed.

**Hungarian Partridge**

Open season for Hungarian partridge is from November 6 through November 29, 1959, in only 11 of Iowa's counties. Shooting hours



are from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., each open day. Bag limit two (2) birds, possession limit two (2) birds.

All other counties closed.

**Raccoon**

The open season on raccoon shall begin at 12:00 noon, October 24, 1959, and extend to midnight February 10, 1960. Raccoon are to be taken by hunting only. There is no limit on raccoon.

The mourning dove is an important game bird in Idaho. The number of hunters has increased by about 60 percent since 1953.

There is no evidence that hunting is having a detrimental effect upon mourning dove population.

The real substance of conservation lies not in the physical projects of government but in the mental processes of citizens.

**WOOD DUCKS . . .**

(Continued from page 163)

needed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and by the State Conservation Commission for better management of this duck. Such work will shed more light on the answers to such management problems as setting of shooting hours for the duck hunting season, whether or not to allow hunting of wood ducks, and whether or not to establish refuges at some roosting areas. In any case, information on this attractive and important duck will be further increased by additional study of its roosting behavior. This paper is based on a more intensive study of the wood duck by personnel at the Iowa Co-operative Wildlife Research Unit. The Unit is sponsored jointly by the Iowa Conservation Commission, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Iowa State University and the Wildlife Management Institute.

**MANAGEMENT UNITS . . .**

(Continued from page 162)

ing water levels to create the best vegetative patterns, water levels and chemical balance took time, as well as building construction and maintenance. They also attended departmental and outside meetings including field trips and talks, and in-service training schools. They inspected areas, made problem contacts and completed population and harvest inventories. Equipment inventories were made to keep up on maintenance and procurement needs. Stenciling, posting, painting and replacing damaged signs, dike maintenance, seeding, road construction and maintenance, fence removal, tree and shrub cultivation, thinning and clearing of timber and brush, wildlife stocking, land acquisition, and miscellaneous tasks including keeping the area clean and neat following public use, were all part of their duties.

At the present time, all unit managers are native Iowans, and most of them were educated here. Five of the nine have degrees from Iowa State University, and others have degrees from Upper Iowa, and Luther. Training in agronomy, forestry, wildlife and fisheries management, with enthusiastic interest in, and love of, their work best describes this group of unit managers, whose ages range from 25 through 38.

All the Unit managers are proud of their excellent assistants who range from skilled foremen to day laborers, and usually take as much interest in unit development and management as the managers themselves.

All the managers plan on making their life work the field of conserving our resources.

During the next several months, each unit manager will introduce and explain his unit to the public by means of this publication. They will be looking forward to meeting you.

DEER . . .

(Continued from page 161)

stockpiled for future generations as can coal, iron, and other resources which are not reproducing a new crop annually.

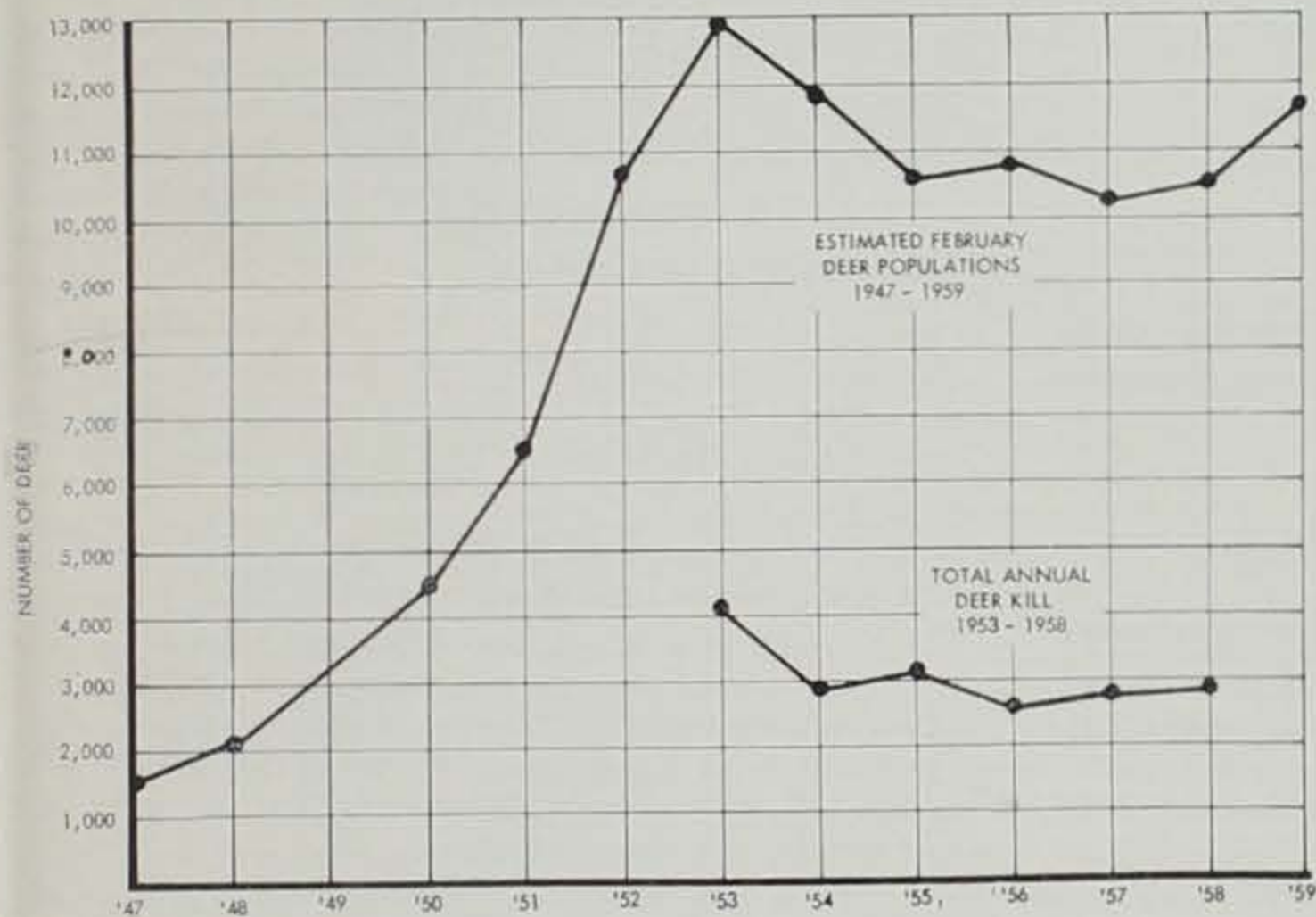
With the basic fact in mind that our deer are a renewable resource, the Conservation Commission recently announced the regulations which will govern the seventh consecutive Iowa deer season. They will be found elsewhere in this issue. Please read them carefully.

Deer hunters are also urged to obtain and read a copy of the 1959

ently has not decreased the population on a state-wide basis.

Were it not for the deer season, over 18,000 deer would probably have been wasted, for it is a simple truism that what the hunter does not harvest, Nature does. And Nature's weapons are not as pleasant as most laymen would surmise, with starvation and disease playing important roles in her scheme to maintain animal population at levels which are commensurate with the available food and habitat.

**Deer Population Estimates**  
Our February Conservation Of-



hunting and trapping laws before going into the field.

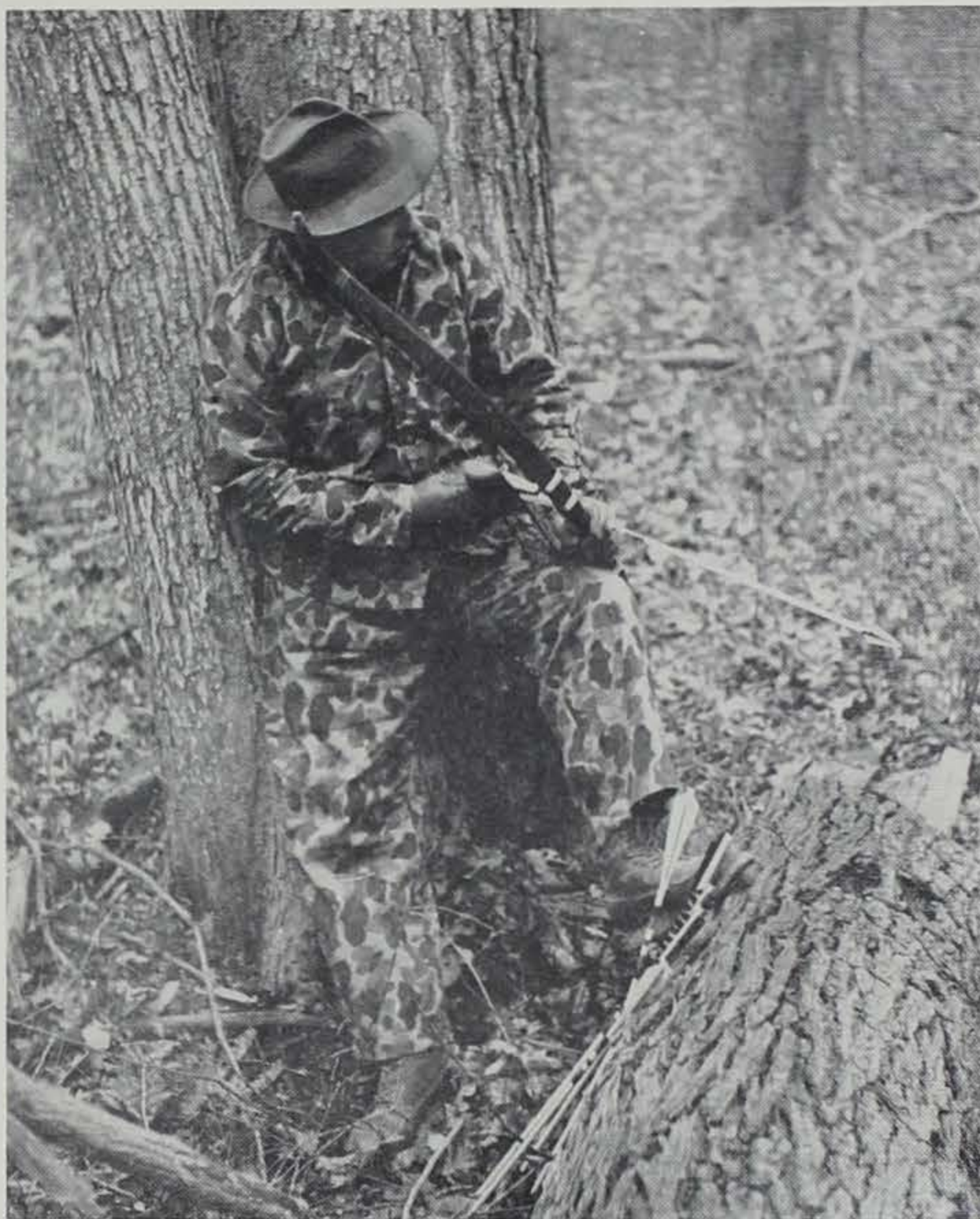
**Results of Past Deer Seasons**

Since the first open season on deer was declared in 1953 Iowa hunters have harvested a total of 18,436 deer. The graph depicts the annual kill for the years 1953-1958, and shows that the kill has averaged about 3,000 per year. That the total kill was held about constant for the past several years should be enough to convince the skeptics that Iowa's deer are here to stay, and that hunting appar-

icers' Deer Census for 1959 indicated a February deer population of 11,705 deer which is about 10 per cent above the 1958 estimate. Deer were reported in 98 of the 99 counties, with no deer reported from Grundy County. The deer population in 65 Iowa counties reportedly increased or held steady when the 1959 census results are compared with those of 1958.

**Prospects for the 1959 Deer Season**

Iowa hunters should have some fine shooting this year, if the



George Tovey Photo.

The archer, camouflaged and alert, awaits his prey with arrow notched and bow ready for that big moment when his skill and practice will be put to the test.

number of deer is any indication of excellent prospects. Our February population was the highest reported in four years, and it should be remembered that population estimates taken in February should show population numbers at about their lowest point of the year after hunting, accidental deaths, illegal kills, disease, and the other decimating factors have taken their respective "share" of the herd.

Check station data released by Paul Kline, Conservation Commission Biologist, indicated that in 1958 for every 100 adult deer 83 fawns were produced. Projection of these data on the February deer population would indicate that about 21,000 deer will be present when the season begins this fall.

This is probably the greatest fall population of deer since 1953, and in reality may be even greater than the fall, 1953 population due to better dispersal of deer with improved habitat conditions.

Thus, the hunting which the skeptics declared would destroy our deer has actually improved the herd by (1) thinning our localized concentrations, (2) dispersing the deer, and (3) reducing the herd annually at a time prior to the period when the deer must compete for available food and shelter.

Game managers have learned that you cannot stockpile game, and deer are no exception to this rule. Part of every progressive game management program should be the removal of a portion of the annual surplus. With this in mind, as well as that nice buckskin you envision taking, let's partake of some of Iowa's big game hunting this fall. Your chances of success are probably better than ever!

There is a lizard, which to avoid being swallowed by a snake, loops its body around a branch and grabs the end of its own tail in its mouth.



George Tovey Photo.

These shotgun deerslayers have their limit and are happily on their way to the deep freeze—or a venison steak feed for the gang.



Are you real sure you got us a couple old time guides?

## KIDS' FISHING DERBIES "AS THE TWIG IS BENT . . ."

A young father of a son, aged seven, spoke proudly one evening of the fact that each year his rod and gun club sponsored a kids' fishing derby. As though assured I would agree, he asked if I didn't think it was quite a worthwhile project for his club to undertake—teaching the youngsters a clean, outdoor sport.

I was disappointed because, from any way I looked at it, I had to tell him his club couldn't have thought of a worse way to teach a bunch of kids to play the game fairly and be real sports.

Of course, he was temporarily offended by my remarks. And so, perhaps will be several readers who have worked hard at one time or another to make a kids' fishing derby a success.

But let's consider the situation.

What real and tangible values had the father placed on outdoor recreation? What worthwhile traits could his son, for example, acquire from a fishing derby?

Standing elbow to elbow with

competition gaining advantage by an unsportsmanlike act, would be severely tempted.

None of the artificial conditions would compare to those of angling for wild fish in natural habitat. The father would have little opportunity to instill in his son the ideals of good sportsmanship and a love of the outdoors. There would be no chance to teach the youngsters, from surrounding examples, some of the simple inter-relationships of nature. Yet, isn't it true that this lad and the millions of young Americans like him are the future managers of our natural resources? From a fish derby they can learn only greed, wastefulness, and disregard of their fellow man. Why should the largest fish bring a monetary reward? A nice trout, fairly caught, is a prize in itself.

As the father of the seven-year-old boy and I talked, I felt he was beginning to see the issue from another light. His concluding remarks, however, left grave concern in my mind as to the depths to which the quality of outdoor recreation is apt to decline unless many American parents bestir themselves from their apathy and indolence.



Along the crowded banks at a fish derby the incentive to catch the most fish often causes flaring tempers and fights ensue when greed overrules sportsmanship.

the rest of the kids around the pond, the boy would soon be forced to disregard some of his neighbors' rights. Kids would get in each other's way. Lines would cross and snarl. Tempers would flare. Excitement would run high. And everyone would be working like mad, some by fair means and some by foul, to haul out the biggest fish and claim the prize money or other material reward.

Parents would be there to direct the youngsters, assuredly. But even with a parent by each young hopeful's side, all the participants, all the grown-ups, all the distractions would make it impossible to observe fully each child and give him effective instruction in the proper handling of rod and line, not to mention teaching him to live up to the rules of the game. The young fisherman, seeing his

I had suggested that we discuss the matter further the following week, since it was getting late and I had promised to take my young nephew on a fishing trip early next morning to a high mountain lake on the Swan Range.

"Say, what road do you take to get into that area?" he perked up, interested.

I told him the road ended at the edge of the alpine area, and that we would walk four miles by trail over the mountain and down to this beautiful lake, where I had previously seen some large trout rising.

"What," he breathed, incredulously. "You'd hike that far just to fish? Brother, you must like to walk! There oughta be a road."

I left him then, but not without disturbed thoughts about the fu-

(Continued on page 168)

## WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH



**CANADA GOLDENROD**  
*Solidago Canadensis*

**Common Name:** Canada Goldenrod.

**Other Varieties:**

Canada Goldenrod.

Sharp-toothed Goldenrod, Grass-leaved Goldenrod, Silverrod, Wreath Goldenrod, Noble Goldenrod and Zigzag Goldenrod. There are 75 species in America.

**Family:**

Goldenrod is a member of the family Compositae and are known botanically as Solidago.

**Description:**

The Goldenrods are truly American flowers. We find them in hordes in our fields and along roadsides. European gardeners however, plant and carefully raise them as ornamental flowers. There are many different kinds that differ so much in leaf character, general shape, size and height of the plant, that we shall make no attempt to distinguish between them. The one pictured here is a Canada Goldenrod that, with all the rest we see in Iowa, are late blossoming flowers, seen from late summer until the first killing frost of autumn.

Shunned by hayfever victims for years, scientists now agree that its pollen does NOT affect those subject to allergies. The ragweed, which blossoms about the same time, they say, is usually the culprit. The name, which suggests solid gold really comes from the Latin, meaning to heal or make whole.

**Where to Look:**

Goldenrod prefers open places and dry soil and may be found along roadsides, railroad right-of-ways, in open woods and fields—in fact, because of its many varieties, most any place.

(Descriptive material obtained from the *Mac-Millan Wild Flower Book* and from *Wild Flowers of Missouri*.)



Jim Sherman Photo.

Mr. Merrit recommends this type of fishing rather than Fish Derbies to teach our youngsters piscatorial pastime.

## HEADWATERS . . .

(Continued from page 161)

sight, for about a half-hour. There'd be no other disturbance. Taking just my rod, the fly replaced with a small hook, I walked quietly down about a hundred yards below the tail of the pool, well back in the woods, crossed the stream at a shallow riffle, and started back along the steep bank side. I kept out of sight of the water, moved very quietly, stopped just once to clip a grasshopper off a stalk and slip him, uninjured, in a small box. When I came opposite the sycamore that marked the location of the deepest hole and a huge submerged boulder, I dropped the rod and, on hands and knees, crept stealthily up to the bank. At the very edge, I parted the backbrush slowly, inched forward till I could see the water below.

Looking almost straight down, I could see into the shadowy water. And what I saw—well, a fair-sized squirrel could have popped into my mouth without touching a tooth. Bass—not one, but three—no, by golly, five!—hung suspended around the boulder, or drifted like torpedo shadows among a half-dozen or so smaller shapes which were goggle-eyes.

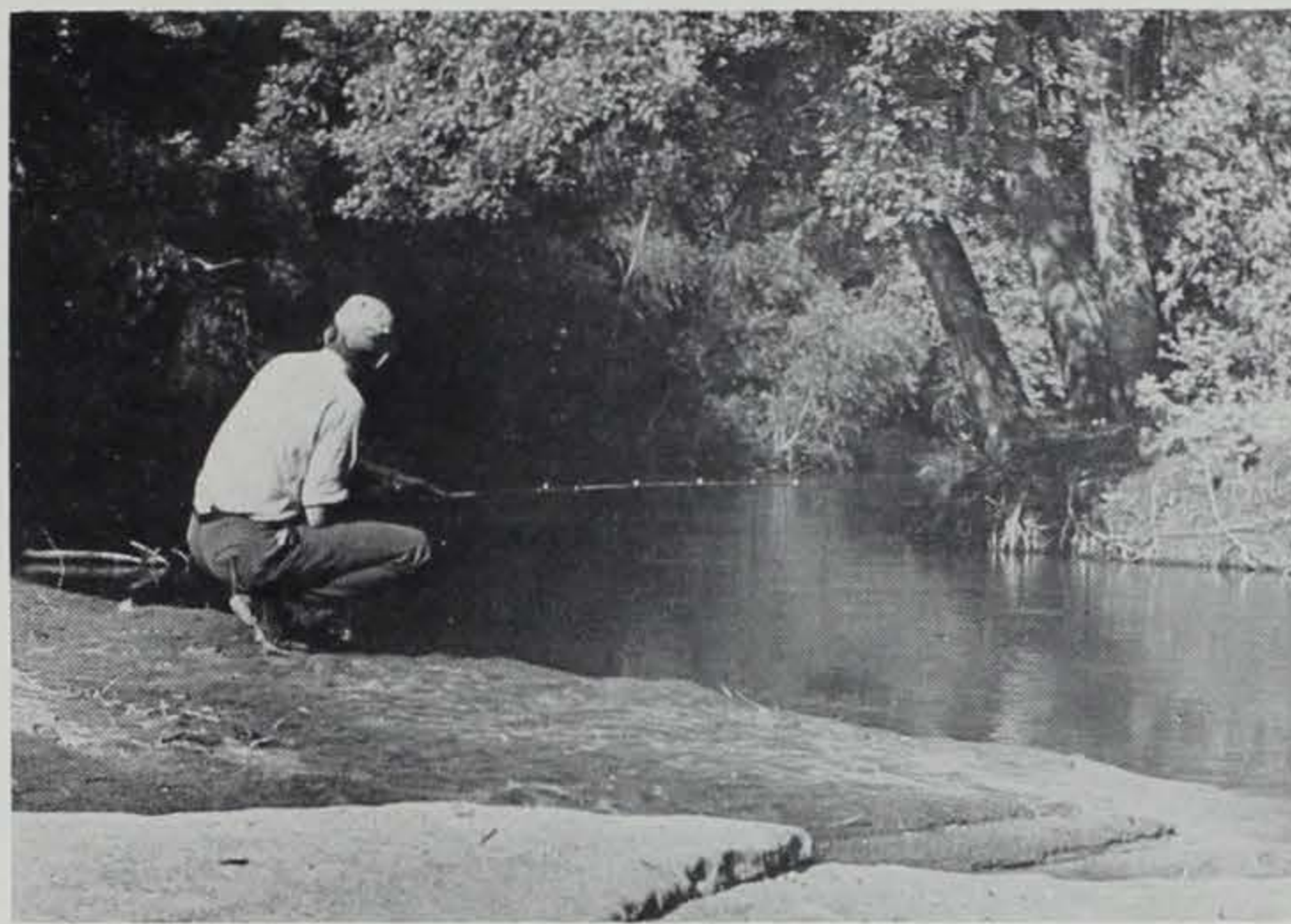
I watched, frozen in stillness, while they floated or paraded, sinking down out of sight, then rising up near the top, all seemingly without a fin-flick, and all without a ripple on the surface. Then, moving as slowly as cold sorghum, I worked the grasshopper into my palm and thumb—flicked the kicking insect into the pool. All the drifting shadows froze, while the hopper made about three kicks. Then, faster than thought, there was a dart, a small splash, and the hopper was gone.

What then? Why, then I inched back out of sight and got another grasshopper. I did the hands-and-knee return, and flipped this grasshopper out, too. Only this time he was on a hook. I was too far back to see what happened, but I heard the splash and saw the tightening line and felt the tug, and then I came out in the open to land my fish. Not the biggest of the drifting shadows, but a right nice bass.

When I had him safely on the stringer, I went back to the bank and peered over again. No torpedo shadows, this time—just the shadow of the cut-bank, and stillness and dark water. But I wasn't worried: there were other pools, and more grasshoppers.

That, with variations, is how I learned to fish the clear-water headwater pools. It's how I learned that though fishermen say (and believe) these tales about there being no fish here, or that the pools are fished out it isn't always so. In fact, if there's water enough to conceal fish, it is very seldom so.

I like lake fishing very much,



Jim Sherman Photo.

"A little pool stretched out its 50-yard length invitingly, between a wide gravel bar and a steep, tree-and-brush fringed bank." This description can be applied to many of Iowa's streams at their headwaters—little-fished spots where, if you use care you may have the best fishing ever.

and do a lot of it. But one extra nice feature about streams; they all have headwaters. That's not a very easy term to define in terms of size or depth or length of stream; the best definition of headwaters I've found is, the stretches of stream above the point where most fishermen go. Size is really no criterion. I've followed a narrow stream averaging 6 to 12 inches deep for a half-mile, then caught a whole mess of big, lusty green sunfish out of a crevice in the bedrock no bigger than a bathtub and about as deep. I've caught several strings of nice largemouths and channel cats out of tributaries to streams themselves considered too small to hold worthwhile fish. In fact, nothing attracts me to exploration so much as a stream that's so small and shallow it just can't hold fish, oftener than not, there's going to be a pool up around the bend, or down past the long riffle; and, oftener than not, that pool holds more than a few sunfish or bullheads—you'd be surprised at the nice bass and channel cat that stray into these headwater pockets.

Of course, the very nature of headwaters calls for some different fishing techniques. You can't walk right up to (or into) the small pools like you can the big waters: you approach them cautiously, and if possible fish from behind cover. It's doubly important, here, to wear clothes that blend quietly into the surroundings to step into the water only when you must, to free a hung-up lure or to keep from having to detour around a bluff, or to wade a



Is something wrong with the motor, Dear?

shallow place till you can reach a deep pocket with your bait or lure. Where there's no cover, stand back as far as possible and still reach the spot: often I've cast over more ground than water to keep from getting close enough to scare the fish.

Never walk the bank over a deep pool till you've fished it from a distance. Never pass up a deep pocket around a rock or a stump, even if the water all around the pocket is so shallow you can see all the bottom. The biggest small-mouth I ever saw lived for years in a pool in Indian Creek, in just such a set-up. I found that out by one of those sneak-up-and-look trips, and watched him cruise along in clear water that looked no more than knee-deep to sand bottom. There was a stump out about 20 feet, and the current had scooped out a hole here, not bigger than 3 by 10 feet, where I couldn't see bottom. Just the slightest move, and he'd be in that hole like a flash. Every time I saw him he had a pal with him, about a third shorter. I never fished for "old George" but a friend of mine did—at dusk, using the grasshopper-flip trick. He didn't get George, he got the small one. Small One was 19 inches long—so figure Old George's length from that!

Since then I've never passed up these occasional pockets in shallow areas, and I've been rewarded quite often.

Another thing about small waters: flyrod with flies or natural baits work much better for me here than the larger lures, or even spinning. When brush or trees are too thick to permit casting, I use the flyrod like a cane pole, generally using natural bait. These headwaters clear up before the lower reaches, generally, but even so you'll often find them murky or downright muddy especially in farmland country. Then I always use bait, and still-fish. The secret

here's to find a deep hole, and a comfortable place to sit, in sun or shade according to the day and your desires. It's a lovely, lazy way of fishing—a nice change from the hard, stumble-footed, brush-scratching, rod-tangling walking you do when waters are clear and there's always a better pool and a bigger fish just around the bend.

If you like variety in your fishing, enjoy your own company, and are willing to prospect through many failures for the sake of many nice "strikes," I suggest you try headwater fishing. There's lots of room, and it makes a very nice change.—*Missouri Conservationist.*

## MORE UP THAN DOWN

With the ever expanding tree farm program, our nation should no longer fear diminishing supplies of wood report forestry experts. By the end of this summer it is expected that 50 million acres will be covered under the system of tree farming; as of last June, there were 49,443,582 acres included. The 18 year old program is entirely voluntary, forest industries and private landowners have been publicly recognized for their sound management and foresight in conservation of our forests, which for a long time was a worrisome problem.

Nebraska was the last to join the movement, raising the total to 47 states. The southern states lead in both size and numbers of tree farms, Florida for instance, has roughly 4.7 million acres and Georgia and Alabama follow closely behind. In Iowa, where the land is extensively used for other crops, the acreage amounts to 4,515. Perhaps tree farming may prove to be at least a partial solution to the current farm production problem.



Jim Sherman Photo.

Just a baby—never destined to become a forest giant—this tiny evergreen will probably be a fence post—perhaps a telephone pole—or maybe a newspaper when it has matured and is ready to harvest after another tree has been planted to take its place.



Jim Sherman Photo.

You can "keep your head down" even while aiming at a squirrel high on a limb. Raising the head, with its consequence of shooting too high, has resulted in more crippled and lost game than perhaps any other shooting fault.

## KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, MR. NIMROD!

Ask any experienced gunner why he missed a certain shot and nine times out of ten he will reply, "I shot over the top of it."

"Shooting high is probably the commonest fault among gunners," according to Henry P. Davis, public relations manager, Remington Arms Company, Inc. "'Keep your head down' is one of the cardinal rules in good shooting," says Davis, "and its strict observance must be practiced if the charge of shot is to strike the object at which the shooter thinks he is pointing.

"Most gunners realize immediately upon touching off the trigger whether or not the gun was properly pointed. In trap shooting a few sketchy breaks will warn the shooter that he is not holding right and that he is 'scratching 'em down' with the edge of his pattern. The fellow who shoots with both eyes open is more apt to raise his head a bit and shoot high than the chap who closes one eye, for the latter is more inclined to 'sight' his shotgun rather than 'point' it.

"In some recent experimental shooting with my trap gun, which has a ventilated rib, I found that properly aligning the rear bead with the front bead, the point of aim was practically in the center of the pattern. By lining up the sights so that the front bead seemed to be sitting just on top

of the rear bead, the center of the pattern was about eight inches above the point of aim. By allowing about four inches of the front part of the rib to show, the center of the pattern jumped up about 12 inches above the point of aim. This shooting was done at 40 yards.

"This does not mean that you'll miss the target entirely every time you raise your head a bit," continued Davis, "and, frankly, I was surprised that the center of the pattern was not farther from the point of aim. But the degree of 'head raising' I was indulging in was slight, yet the variance was enough to prove that things are not always as they seem when raised.

"If the shooter will only remember to make sure that the gun butt is high enough on his shoulder so that his cheek can be placed against the stock and the head kept in a fairly erect position, he will find that his gun barrel is practically instinctively aligned properly. Bulky clothing becomes a handicap to the instant placing of the gun butt on the shoulder, and if the gun butt is low, the charge of shot is generally high.

"Raising the head, with its consequence of shooting too high, has resulted in more crippled and lost game than, perhaps, any other shooting fault. It is our most fre-

quent error, and the easiest to correct . . . if we will only remember to 'KEEP THAT HEAD DOWN.'"

## LITTERBAGS

(You CAN Take It With You!)

Until just a few years ago hardly anyone had ever heard of litterbags. Today a large percentage of the American public considers the portable trash container an essential piece of traveling equipment and wouldn't dream of taking off in the family car without one.

This would indicate that concern over the trash-tossing propensities of the motoring public is getting results. Many Americans are accepting an individual responsibility for maintaining the clean, attractive appearance of their highways and recreation areas, and regard the litterbag as a valuable aid to good outdoor housekeeping. Well and good. But unless *everyone* cooperates, highway cleanup costs will continue to be exorbitant—\$50,000,000 a year for primary highways alone—litter will continue to be a fire and safety hazard, and litterbugs will continue treating the countryside as a trash heap.

Between 750 and 1,000 people are killed and nearly 100,000 seriously injured each year as a result of cars striking or swerving to avoid objects thrown on the highways, and last year rubbish caused 11,500 fires in Chicago alone.

What is a litterbag? Well you might say it's a kind of travelling wastebasket whose purpose is to save the nation's highways and byways—to say nothing of your car upholstery—from becoming nothing more than a huge garbage can.

Like everyone else there must have been times when you've wondered what to do with sticky wrappers, used tissues, the remains of a picnic lunch, or the many other articles which accumulate during the course of normal automotive travel. After a slight but quickly subdued twinge of conscience, perhaps you've surreptitiously tossed the whole mess out the window. But why abuse the conveniences modern packaging brings you? From now on resolve to use a litterbag instead. There are many varieties, from simple home-made devices to patented commercial products, and although some leaders in anti-litter movement encourage regular use of a standard container, any kind of sturdy bag (including a plain grocery or shopping bag, box or basket) will do if nothing else is available.

But regardless of the type you use, when your litterbag is full dispose of the contents in your garbage can at home, or in "Travel-Trash" receptacles provided for the convenience of motorists at roadside rests, cooperating service

stations or other roadside business establishments along the way.

Supporters of the movement for a cleaner, safer, more attractive outdoor America are bringing litterbags to the attention of the public in many ingenious ways.

A number of them send out litterbags as Christmas and birthday cards, combining greetings with a friendly reminder to help Keep America Beautiful! Not wanting to contribute to the local litter problem—even indirectly—Dr. Frank Bennack of San Antonio, Texas, after extracting several teeth from a woman patient recently, gave her a litterbag for the disposal of her usual tissues on the way home. And so it goes.

The litter problem in America is a direct result of the daily thoughtlessness of millions of individuals. It will be eliminated only when these careless habits are changed, so why not resolve today to always carry a litterbag in your car? Spread the word around to your friends and neighbors—and let's get everyone in the act.—Keep America Beautiful, Inc.



Keep America Beautiful.

Stop at any roadside picnic area when your litterbag is full. There you'll find a trash can or barrel in which to empty it, or to discard it in case it is soiled. Litterbags cost little if anything, and its use may save you a ten to one hundred dollar fine.

## "TWIG IS BENT" . . .

(Continued from page 166)

ture of Montana's natural assets, including trout fishing.

Just what was his idea of quality outdoor recreation, I wondered. Were there many other fathers, like him, training their sons for a sport of dubious value? A synthetic type of recreation that, because of parental sloth and neglect, may be all that's left of tomorrow's outdoor heritage.—Clifton Merritt in *Montana Wildlife*.