

# IOWA CONSERVATIONIST

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## COON HUNTING-NOCTURNAL DELIGHT

Denny Rehder

### COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS

Carol Buckmann

In answer to the need for easing the pressure on recreational facilities, 2 of Iowa's 99 counties have locally financed county conservation boards. Iowa, the heartland, is now dotted with over 11,000 acres of county parks and recreational areas ranking the nation's finest.

In 1955, when the legislative assembly passed permitting counties to establish their own, locally financed county conservation boards, the parks have blossomed. In that year, 16 counties passed the law and organized conservation boards. By 1960, there were 52 boards in all and after the 1960 elections, there will probably be more.

Commission members urged passage of the bill because the state couldn't provide all the rural recreational areas the public demanded. This program is in no way meant to replace either the state park system; they are the gap between them.

Conservation boards are to "acquire, develop, maintain, improve, and administer county parks, preserves, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, and other conservation areas." In short, the law gives these boards authority to set up county conservation boards to acquire, develop and administer county recreational areas.

Hidden wooded areas with picnicking, and camping grounds, county board members are planning or already have under way. Golf and archery facilities; forests; playgrounds; fields for football and other sports; public access areas on rivers and streams for fishing and boating; hunting grounds, game preserves; and marsh lands; outdoor rooms open for all schools in county for their use in study-natural sciences.

In addition, ten counties have artificial lakes of ten



Jack Kirstein Photo.

Ole 'Coon finds himself in a tough spot and the hounds practically in the tree with him. In recent years 'coon hunting has become more and more popular. This is partly due to the great increase in the 'coon population and its subsequent state-wide distribution.

acres or more with some up to 150 acres. Several other have planned smaller ponds.

It's a program for local people with local interest established, planned, and financed by the taxpayers of a county. County areas to be used are directed to the in-

terest of the people living within the county.

Although this is not a new movement, Iowa is outstanding nationwide in its progress. There are 33 other states with provisions for some type of county park or

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The night is cold, black, moonless with the wind shuffling its way along the river bottom. A pickup bobs down the old river road, pulls into the trees and stops. Shadowy figures drop the tailgate and open the crate in back. The dogs crash into the woods, now and then giving with a short bark. A brief flare of a match illumines the faces of three men waiting. Cars can be heard on the highway, and up the road a shutter slaps against the side of a deserted house. Then the old hound starts baying and the young one chimes in. Cigarettes are snuffed and someone mutters: "They got a warm one right off the bat." The baying swings into high gear and becomes a series of sharp barks. "Gott'im treed," says one and away you go through the trees heading for the spot.

There seems to be general agreement among biologists and others concerned that the raccoon population has increased tremendously in recent years. With no actual figures available it is difficult to determine when this eruption in the 'coon population took place.

Until the middle '40's raccoons were scarce in north Iowa. There was even agitation by 'coon hunters in the '30's and early '40's for the Conservation Commission to stock 'coons in northern Iowa. The 'coon has done so well now, though, that we find ourselves with an over-population all over the state.

Market-wise a 'coon pelt usually brings around \$2-3. Last year over 45,000 'coon pelts averaged \$1.96. This hardly makes it worth skinning, and even when you count the food value of the carcass it can't account for the popularity of the 'coon hunt.

These men take their sport seriously, and will spend a lot of time and money on a good dog. One fellow this year took his vacation during opening week of the season so he could hunt every night.

The cold, excitement, and nocturnal atmosphere of a 'coon hunt followed by steaming coffee near a warm fire has drawn thousands of Iowans away from their TV sets and back to the outdoors.



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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE.....49,500

## COUNTY BOARDS—

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recreational agency but some with only one or two counties with such boards. Many states without an active program are writing in to find out Iowa's secret when actually the Iowa law is a combination of park board laws in other states.

Other states passed park board laws when the recreational demand was just a pipe dream and many people have forgotten it exists in their state. Now when the need is a reality, there is more publicity and Iowa has made her progress real and active. Our law was passed when people were conscious of the recreational need.

Counties interested in establishing a conservation board must submit a petition with at least 200 signatures to the Board of Supervisors before an election. Then it must be advertised in two papers with county-wide distribution. A board can be formed upon a majority vote of the electorate in a general or primary election.

If passed, within sixty days following the election, the county boards must be established. The county conservation board has five members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Those first appointed hold office for 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 years respectively with succeeding members appointed for 5 year terms. This means one new member comes on each year insuring continuity in planning and direction.

The board members serve without pay except for expenses but can hire a paid director and other personnel such as maintenance workers.

The state law provides that the Board of Supervisors may levee one-fourth to one mill tax on all real and personal property to be used as a conservation fund to finance this program.

With careful planning keynoting this program, the law requires that plans by the conservation boards be approved by the State Conservation Commission. The Com-

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## COMMISSION MINUTES

The Commission met with State Comptroller, Marvin Selden and received a report on personnel and the organizational setup of the Commission and also received recommendations concerning them.

A report was given by the Planning Coordinator concerning travel authorizations for the coming year.

Travel was approved to the Wing Bee Sessions at Poynette, Wisconsin, December 10 and Puxico, Missouri, January 8 for one person to each meeting.

Five people were authorized to attend the Midwest Fish and Game Conference at Lincoln, Nebraska, December 4-6.

Travel was authorized for one person to Springfield, Illinois, to observe the manufacture of navigation buoys.

Travel was authorized for one person to the Conference of State Resources Administrators at Columbus, Ohio, November 27-28.

One person was authorized to travel to the Regional Public Relations Meeting at Sand Creek, Wyoming, December 11-13.

Fisheries personnel were authorized to pick up trout eggs, November 15, at Wild Rose, Wisconsin.

Two people were given authorization to travel to the Tri-State Fisheries Program concerning the Mississippi River at Havana, Illinois, November 8.

## Fish and Game

Approval was given for the Conservation Commission to be the host for the Midwest Fish and Game Conference to be held in Iowa in 1962. Clarification of Commission action was approved concerning planning for a new structure at Ventura Marsh Outlet.

A new residence and headquarters was approved for the Wilson Island Area on the Missouri River.

A report was given by the Chief of Fish and Game concerning the Big Sioux River Flood Control Project of the Army Engineers and a resolution was passed opposing the canalization of the Big Sioux River.

A resolution passed requesting a new Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit at Iowa State University involving no funds.

A management agreement was approved for 700 acres of land in Jasper County near the Skunk River for the Highway Commission.

A gift of \$15.00 was accepted subject to the approval of the Executive Council.

The Commission approved a new policy regarding days off duty for Fish and Game Officers.

## Forestry

Approval was given for condemnation proceedings on the Hinchon Tract in the Yellow River Forest Area.

The Commission heard a report from Representative John Kyl con-

## THE "PROBLEM" OF HUNTER-FARMER RELATIONS

Jim Sherman

Do we have a serious hunter-farmer relations problem in Iowa? Some people when asked this question say we do not have a serious problem, some people answer there is a problem only in isolated instances, and people can be found who will take a vociferous stand on either side of the question. Obviously the correct answer is in the story of the blind men who attempted to describe an elephant after each had touched a different part of the animal.

In Iowa, hunters come almost equally from cities, farms, and towns and about one-fourth of them are teen-agers, so it is incorrect to assume this is a problem of farmers versus city people.

The State Conservation Commission conducted a random survey last fall of 1,159 farmers and less than five percent reported that they allowed no hunting on their farms. Many farmers reported "I want to know who's down there" or "if they just stop and ask me to be happy."

Nearly all the hunting area in Iowa is controlled by farmers. The advice, "ask the farmer first," is obviously the right answer for those who wish to enjoy their hunting. Some hunters even make a point of getting acquainted with the farmer in the area where they wish to hunt before the season opens to insure a good place to hunt with at least difficulty.

One farmer told me recently that he had posted his land with a sign reading "hunters welcome" and strangely very few hunters seemed to believe the signs. "Keep out" signs, of course, are common in some areas. The reasonable approach would seem to be the practice of posting with "hunting by permission only," which has been growing in popularity recently.

In comparison with the hunting and fishing restrictions and problems encountered in various other areas, Iowans can indeed be proud that they live in Iowa where such problems are confined to the ciferous few.

cerning the possibility of acquisition of Federal Forest Lands in Iowa.

## Parks

The Commission met with Julius Novak of Omaha concerning a request for a construction permit to build a canal on Lake Manawa. The Commission agreed to inspect the area in person.

The Commission received a report from the Superintendent of Engineering concerning a leak in the bed of Lake Darling in Washington County and approved remedial work based on an estimate of \$6,360 to seal the lake and authorize negotiation with three bidders on an emergency basis.

Cancellation of a concession contract at Palisades-Kepler State Park was approved.

A County Welfare Work Plan for Lake Manawa was approved subject to the approval of Workmans Compensation Release by the Attorney General.

A resolution from the city of Lakeside was read concerning the transfer of park land at Storm Lake and action conveying that land was reconfirmed.

A report was given by the Superintendent of Parks concerning a nature trail to be established in Margo Frankel Woods and a motion passed to sell a gift of Youngers Brothers Common Stock with the proceeds to be placed in a savings account available for use in building the nature trail.

## Waters

A proposed system for issuing dock permits on a Ten Year Basis was approved.

Approval was given for a request to construct a channel at Templar Park on Spirit Lake.

## County Conservation Activities

A management agreement approved with the Floyd County Board of Supervisors concerning the Idlewild Access Area on Cedar River in that County.

Franklin County received approval for the Acquisition of 100 acres for a multiple-use area on the Iowa River to be called Oakland Recreational Reserve at a cost of \$2,500.00.

Linn County received approval for acquisition of 100 acres of Wapsipinicon River adjoining Wapsipinicon Game Area at a cost of \$70.00 per acre.

Lee County received approval for a gift of eight acres near Cedar River for use as a Civil War Memorial Park.

Fayette County received approval for a management agreement with the Highway Commission for 6 1/2 acres on Highway No. 1 near West Union.

Franklin County received approval for a development plan for Zion-St. John Park as a public picnic area.

Grundy County received approval for the development plan for Roadman Park to be developed as a combination roadside park and local community recreation area.

Linn County received approval for a development plan for Lewis Access Area to include road, parking area, boat launch, and picnic area.

Fayette County received approval for a development plan for Bridges Park located at the confluence of the Volga and Volga Rivers primarily for fishing and fishing uses.

A development plan for the Overlook in Fayette County was approved for use as a roadside







## A MODERN DIANA PREPARES FOR THE HUNT



3. Hunting Coat.

Jim Sherman Photos.



4. Cold Weather Hunting Coat.

Jim Sherman Photos.

By Carol Buckmann

Whether you're a fellow in a stew over "the" gift to buy the woman in your life or if you're an outdoor-minded gal wondering what to buy with extra Christmas

money, read this article carefully.

Gals who like to hunt need not put on pop's longies, swim in his flannel shirt, or smother in cast-off hunting jackets. Then after fully preparing to venture into the

wilds, struggle to their feet only to stumble with pant legs trailing behind and feet lost somewhere twixt pant cuffs and belt.

Neither do they need to miss a shot trying to find their hands in pop's old coat.

Outdoor clothing is available for women as well as men. Clothing is now made to put the question of "be it a she or he" a thing of the past. Women's outdoor wear is attractive, durable and warm.

To begin with, there's a shooting sweater, picture 1, designed especially for women. It is a favorite for shooting because of its neat, trim appearance. Besides being attractive, the sweater has shell pockets with "inner belt suspension." This means the shells in the pockets won't pull on the shoulders or stretch the sweater out of shape. The extra swede trim protects points of wear on the elbows and pockets. The pockets are slanted for easier access.

Dress and sport combine to make the gloves, picture 2, strong enough to withstand shooting, golf, and fishing, and still they are thin and flexible, giving feel to the trigger, steering wheel or golf club. They are soft capeskin in a special super-thin 1 1/4 oz. weight sewed with nylon for added flexibility and strength.

The ladies Safari Suit, 2, another outfit designed with the gals in mind, adds to the feeling of high adventure in hunting, trap and skeet shooting, fishing, barbecuing, and hiking. Designed after

the coats white hunters wear in deepest Africa, it is made for style and comfort. The heavy jacket with deep-pleated action gives a trim-fitted appearance, allowing free movement without binding to arms and shoulders.

The tough, combed cotton in the Safari Suit is treated for water repellency. For the things you want to carry, there are pleated pockets with button down flaps. Tapered, matching slacks tailor for comfort and design, complete the outfit. Made from the same tough, combed cotton as the jacket, they are also water and wind repellent.

Designed for the woman who hunts, the hunting coat, 3, is the first word in fine woman's sportswear. This hunting coat is rugged, practical and attractive. The combed cotton Klondike cloth has corduroy around the collar and cuffs for comfort and durability. To prevent wear from shooting, carrying your gun, a wrinkled proof butt pad of cowhide is on each shoulder. To help carry what you need, two big bellow pockets with shell loops inside open wide while button-down flaps prevent loss of articles. A swing back for free movement has a concealed button under the belt where the game bag-dry seat can be attached. The web-belt inside the coat prevents bind on shoulders and allows easy movement while shooting.

To be warm in a duck blind, the field, in the stadium, ice fish-

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1. Shooting Sweater.



2. Gloves and Safari Suit.

Denny Bender Photos.





4. Two-way Zipper.

Jim Sherman Photo.

## EVERGREEN INVADERS OF WESTERN IOWA

H. G. Hertel

Nurseryman, State Forest Nursery

"What kind of trees could I plant that would give me some return on that odd piece of land?"

This is a question often asked of Conservation Officers, County Extension Directors, Soil Conservation Service technicians, and others associated with agriculture throughout the state.

Foresters called upon to help answer such questions are able to give good recommendations in most instances. Soil requirements for the various trees are known and with abundant moisture tree growth is assured.

Western Iowa, however, presents a different and somewhat more difficult planting problem. The soils are steep and contain a great amount of lime. The calcareous nature of the soils and a low rainfall, 26 to 28 inches annually, work against the establishment and growth of trees.

Recommendations for planting in this area must be qualified. In years of low rainfall, survival of any planted seedlings would be doubtful regardless of species. The lime in the soil limits the growth of certain conifers. There is little planting experience on these soils and very few old plantings which could yield clues as to the best adapted trees.

The State Forester recognized the need for more concrete information upon which to base tree planting recommendations for Western Iowa and in 1958 initiated a plan to establish trial plantings in some of the problem soils. Essentially, the plan was to establish a mixed evergreen planting on soils for which timber would be a good land use. The plantations would be located near a public road for easy access and observation. Arrangements would be made so the plantation would remain intact for at least ten years, thus affording growth comparisons in different growing seasons.

Planting sites were located through the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service and in one case through the cooperation of a county Conservation Board. Whenever possible sites within a Public Law 566 watershed were given preference. In any case the owner was practicing soil conservation on his farm.

Each of the plantings was made under the direction of a forester so species could be chosen with regard to the moisture conditions present. Ponderosa pine, Eastern white pine, Austrian pine, Scotch

trouser or slacks belt through the bottom holes.

All these outfits embody all the features found in the men's models but are styled especially for women. So check your check book and merry shopping.

pine, Norway spruce and European larch were the conifers used. The number of plants as well as the proportion of each species varied from area to area. The plantings ranged in size from one-half acre to two acres and have been planted at the rate of about 1,000 trees per acre.

Two areas were planted in 1958. One of these is in Crawford County and the other in Mills County. No new areas were planted in 1959 and 1960 since planting stock was limited.

In early 1961 arrangements for new areas resulted in the establishment of 16 new plantings. Four of these were located in Woodbury County, two each in Harrison and Union counties, and one each in Ida, Cherokee, Crawford, Audubon, Shelby, Fremont, Montgomery and Monona counties.

Results from the plantings are, of course, meager since they were established so recently. Foresters have, however, made some observations which will be useful in future work. One of these is the extreme soil variation within even the smallest plot, thus indicating the need for close scrutiny of any proposed planting site. Soil compaction and disturbance by heavy equipment just before planting lowered tree survival and also made the planting job much harder.

This kind of "common sense" information is known by the farmer experience with his particular soil, but often he cannot relate it to tree planting. The forester knows the requirements of trees but is often at a loss when working with Western Iowa soils.

The tree trial plots established through the excellent cooperation in the various counties are an effort to bring useful facts to all concerned in getting trees and forestry into the land use program of Iowa. It is the hope that from these beginnings lands now idle or eroding may again be returned to productivity and beauty.



Jim Sherman Photo.

From these beginnings, lands now idle or eroding may again be returned to beauty.

## MODERN DIANA—

(Continued from page 188)

enjoying winter sports, the weight cold weather hunting and sport coat, 4, with air cell insulation of pure virgin fleece wool, these polyester and acetate is answer. Air cells trap and body heat to keep a person warm. Should you get too warm perspire, the virgin wool absorbs and breathes away sweat so is never a chill from cold. This coat is good from 15 degrees below zero to 50 degrees zero.

combed cotton outer shell tough, rugged Appalachian made to take real punishment. The collar is faced with soft roy and each shoulder quilted like a wrinkle-proof butt pad. Two breast pockets and two big pockets let you carry all need while snap fasteners in against loss when ducking limbs and climbing over ferns. Inside the sleeves are knitted wristlets to keep out snow and wind. Cuffs, which usually wear first, are bound in real leather.

Two-way zipper opens from

the top down and from the bottom up. Zip it open at the bottom when you sit for comfort without loss of warmth. Behind the zipper is a weather strip to keep out cold winds.

Inside is a drawstring that seals out cold from underneath and helps carry the weight of the game around your waist. The easy-action by-swing back lets you use your gun fast with no binding around the shoulders. Under the half belt are concealed buttons for attaching game bag-dry seat. Under the collar are concealed studs for the detachable storm hood. Zelan treated for water repellency.

The game bag-dry seat is fully rubberized for easy cleaning after hunting. Three zipper openings allow quick and easy opening from both sides to put game in. Make a dry seat by opening the three zippers and dropping the game bag down. Snaps at the bottom match studs on the coat so the game bag doesn't swing free and interfere when you walk.

In shirt sleeve weather, it can be worn alone by threading your



## NAIL AND PAINTBRUSH—CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Denny Rehder

How would you like to take a regular 4-inch paintbrush and paint a stripe down the highway from Des Moines to Atlanta, Georgia? Out of the question? Granted it is, but the paint used on such a trip is about the same amount of paint to be used on buildings and facilities in our state parks and preserves. The money comes from the new paint-repair-replacement budget included in the capital improvements program appropriated by the 59th General Assembly.

This budget also lists a need for four carloads of shingles, seventy miles of wire fencing, and 22,500 tons of gravel, crushed rock, and sand, or the equivalent of a string of loaded gravel trucks bumper-to-bumper 21 miles long!

In response to the growing demand for more public recreation areas in Iowa and the needed improvement of existing areas the last legislature appropriated over 2½ million dollars in capital improvement funds.

Unique in this legislation was a sum of about \$640,000 to be devoted to the renovation of existing facilities. This budget, known as the paint-repair-replacement budget, is a big step toward up-dating many of our older parks. Improvements of this type used to be under the general maintenance budget which was inadequate to cover all the needs of Iowa's 89 state parks and preserves.

The other part of the appropriation amounted to two million dollars of capital improvements to be

used toward the acquisition and development of new areas and the expansion and improvement of existing areas.

These funds were needed for the replacement of worn-out or run-down facilities and to meet the increasing needs of Iowans for recreation facilities.

The nation-wide boom in camping has been felt in Iowa and it was found necessary to expand campsites, parking areas, and waterlines. Twenty-two camping areas will use \$190,000 of the appropriation. Ledges, Dolliver, Springbrook, and Lewis and Clark state parks will all have electrical hook-ups for campers by next season.

Hiking is becoming more popular and in order to provide trails for those interested, almost \$75,000 will be allocated to 26 areas. All but 14 miles of Iowa's 62 miles of trails will receive a face-lifting which includes clearing, surfacing, and marking.

Joining our existing areas will be three new areas now under development. Prairie Rose Lake in Shelby County, southeast of Harlan, will soon be completed, and plans are being made for the state's newest artificial lake near Anita in Cass County. This new lake will be around 150 acres in size. Sheeder Prairie in Guthrie County, five miles northwest of Guthrie Center, will join Kalsow Prairie in Pocahontas County and Cayler Prairie in Dickinson County as biologic monuments to the vast virgin prairies that once covered the middlewest.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND THE PAINT-REPLACEMENT-REPAIR BUDGET FOR STATE PARKS, STATE PRESERVES, AND FOREST PRESERVES

State Parks			
A. A. Call	\$ 14,747.47	Pikes Peak	39,126.32
Allerton (Bobwhite)	3,279.10	Pikes Point	4,538.05
Arnolds Park	5,000.00	Pilot Knob	17,196.62
Backbone	59,190.88	Pine Lake	37,822.28
Beed's Lake	29,130.82	Pioneer	1,063.04
Bellevue	7,536.26	Prairie Rose	27,612.19
Bixby	717.20	Preparation Canyon	3,475.00
Blackhawk	6,954.18	Red Haw	4,226.42
Brown's Lake	5,260.23	Rice Lake	2,144.48
Brush Creek	604.45	Rock Creek	23,643.50
Clear Lake	6,013.87	Rush Lake	108.08
Cold Spring	5,897.40	Sharon Bluffs	5,682.78
Dolliver	42,711.44	Silver Lake	599.02
Eagle Lake	188.93	Springbrook	38,916.38
Echo Valley	135.30	Spring Lake	2,007.06
Fort Defiance	24,136.47	Steamboat Rock	356.40
Gitchie Manitou	20,000.00	Stone	22,024.37
Goode	17,568.88	Storm Lake	3,945.33
Geo. Wyth	2,482.22	Swan Lake	20,000.00
Green Valley	7,204.73	Trappers Bay	2,365.75
Gull Point	33,774.79	Twin Lakes	204,613.48
Heery Woods	1,931.48	Union Grove	20,117.76
Inn Area	6,753.12	Viking	23,317.15
Lacey-Keosauqua	26,321.99	Wanata	4,086.50
Ahquabi	13,856.79	Wapsipinicon	4,619.59
Lake Darling	25,097.82	Waubensie	33,426.32
Lake Keomah	9,109.70	Wild Cat Den	37,510.47
Lake MacBride	29,002.92		
Lake Manawa	16,650.98		
Lake of Three Fires	8,155.77		
Lake Wapello	32,280.34		
Ledges	20,260.11		
Lewis and Clark	15,339.93		
Lost Island	978.51		
Margo Frankel Woods	1,896.05		
Maquoketa Caves	15,289.57		
McIntosh Woods	2,172.40		
Mill Creek	2,454.87		
Mini-Wakan	1,104.45		
Nine Eagles	1,891.89		
Oak Grove	5,120.78		
Oakland Mills	10,299.54		
Okamanpedan	1,210.47		
Palisades-Kepler	36,927.99		
Pammel	16,741.89		

State Preserves	
Woodthru	\$ 404.25
Barkley Memorial	319.00
Fish Farm Mounds	245.03
Fort Atkinson	2,806.56
Galland School	434.50
Gardner Sharp Cabin	396.00
Kalsow Prairie	462.00
Cayler Prairie	462.00
Plum Grove	545.38
Turkey River Mounds	750.20
Woodman Hollow	6,025.80

Forest Areas	
Yellow River	\$129,000.00
Shimek	40,000.00
Stephens	10,000.00
White Pine Hollow	18,500.00



## IOWA'S WATER WEASEL

Roger Flieger

When Ma Nature put the final O. K. on the mink's blueprint, she must have stepped back and given a smile of approval. She had created a hunter.

Long, trim and muscular, the mink combines these characteristics with speed and flashing daring.

The mink is a large land weasel, but, like the otter, loves to hunt and fish in and around water. His range is wide, covering all of the United States except for desert areas. From the brackish tidal flats of the Louisiana delta country to pine fringed alpine meadows his range is immense, covering all of the United States. He is taken in every county in Iowa in number proportional to the amount of water habitat. Large bodies of water, marshes, sloughs, draining ditches, and tile outlets are among his favorite haunts.

There were 524,576 mink reported trapped from 1931 to 1941 in the state of Iowa. These furs were valued at \$4,892,757.00.

The rich brown coat, almost black tail and glossy guard hairs make the fur a work of art in itself. The pelt is strong and the fur will stand wear—hence the popularity of mink through the years.

Mink vary greatly in size and color. The average female weighs close to a pound and a half while the male may exceed two pounds. A typical adult buck mink measures about twenty-four inches from tip of nose to tip of tail. Stretched on a drying board it will measure about 32 inches long. Large ones will hit 34 and even 36 inches.

One of the oddities of minks is the appearance of cotton mink minks that have a pale or white undercoating of fur. Whether this

All the work under these two budgets is allocated according to the needs of a particular area, the number of people using the area, and, in some cases, the possibilities of land acquisition for future development.

In addition to our state parks and preserves are the seven forest areas of the state. These areas are open to hunting and fishing. The majority of the funds for these forests is given to tree planting, fencing, development, and land acquisition with the possible exception of the Yellow River Forest in Allamakee County. This 5,558 acre area is under the co-operative management of the Forestry Section and the Fish and Game Division. The Yellow River Forest is a potential vacation paradise for Iowans with its trout fishing, future camp areas, and the beautiful northeast Iowa scenery. Three campsites, five or more picnic areas, bridle trails, public access roads, erosion control structures, parking areas, fire breaks, and Iowa's first fire lookout tower are included in the plans for this area.

The Prison Camp established in co-operation with the Board of Control, has been a great aid to the development of the area. The prisoners get a chance to work in the outdoors and at the same time help in developing this forest for public recreation. Now located in the Paint Creek Unit of the forest, the camp is due to be moved to a new campsite in the Luster Heights Unit. It is in this forest area that Iowa's first wild turkeys were stocked last year.

The continuing program of land acquisition and development on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers for public access will take \$100,000. This program includes camping areas, picnic areas, and boat ramps.

Under the improvement of natural lakes we find \$200,000 toward

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MINK—

(Continued from page 190)

result of heredity, sickness, or just a color phase of the fur, is determined. These furs bring a lower price than ordinary mink pelts.

Mink are never abundant even in unmolested areas. Often large streams may have only one or two resident mink per mile. In a small bushy stream with sloughs and pot holes along it may harbor a dozen or more. Mink, like all other creatures, thrive on food, shelter and protection. Crayfish, frogs, muskrats, fish, birds, and waterfowl are a few of the foods mink consume.

Mink are sometimes tracked in the fresh snow to their hiding places: muskrat dens, woodchuck hollow logs, or rock piles. They are poked, dug, or frightened out of these retreats and killed. Hunting in this manner is entirely illegal and only the poorest hunter or trapper would destroy valuable mink by this method. If the mink is taken it will without doubt leave the territory. This practice also discourages new mink from coming in and taking up residence in the area.

A trapper can trap several mink legally in the time it takes to take one illegally. Tracking a mink down, then setting a dry den bait set close to the area requires the highest skill a trapper can obtain.

The best advice to a beginner is to tramp near a natural mink den, debris pile, or under-cut bank. Mink has many enemies—horned owls, snapping turtles, parasites, farm dogs, and farm cats. Farm dogs often become minkers and since they hunt two months of the year they are second only to man as a mink

destroyer. Those interested in preserving the mink should keep their dogs from hunting promiscuously.

Mink trapping is an art that takes years of hard work and study to master. Traps should be set near marshes, streams, and tile drainages where mink frequent. In their travels mink explore all culverts, tiles, muskrat dens, and hollow logs; those are the places traps are set. Places where a stream narrows or a log or rock forces the animal to take a narrow path are excellent set locations. These types of sets are called blind sets.

Bait sets are made, using rabbit, muskrat, fish, etc. Traps are carefully concealed beside the hidden flesh. Bait sets are productive when used in marsh areas where mink are not limited by natural barriers as they are on small drainages.

When possible traps should be set in water one or two inches deep and staked or wired into deep water to assure drowning. Only the strongest traps in sizes 1½ and 2 should be used. Mink feet are muscular and tapered, and only a powerful trap will hold the animal.

Take the first mink you catch this fall and after it's dead, clamp your weaker traps on its feet. You will be surprised what little effort it takes for the leg to slip through the jaws onto the toes.

Dry land sets are sometimes made in holes or dens that mink explore. The trap should be bedded down in completely dry material or it will freeze to the ground. Use care and avoid tracking up the bank or you will tell the mink where your steel pretzel is located.

Different types of mink scent are used at sets. These lures are mostly mixtures of fish oils and



Jack Kirstein Photo.

A tile outlet in a small pasture creek is a favorite with mink trappers. Note the use of long gloves and the trapper's position in the water—every effort is being made to avoid leaving any indication that he was in the vicinity. With care he'll get his mink.

mink musk. Some trappers swear by these lures and others swear at them.

Mink are fairly easy to take early in the season and are often caught in traps set for muskrats. Later, after snow and freezing weather come, they are extremely hard to catch. Tracks and signs practically disappear from a vicinity because they have holed up for a week or they are hunting

under the ice. A fresh snow will usually cause mink to be active again.

Iowa's most valuable fur bearer, the mink, is still holding his own despite years of trapping, drainage of habitat, and natural enemies. With the present protective laws and management the mink will continue to be a rewarding sight to those who wander Iowa's waterways.

## NAIL AND PAINTBRUSH—

(Continued from page 190)

renovation of marginal marsh and lake areas, improvement of existing natural lakes by rip-rapping and local erosion control measures on state-owned property, and, of course, dredging in certain lakes such as Storm Lake and North Twin Lake.

The \$80,000 allocated toward erosion control and watershed protection on artificial lakes will mainly be used for siltation control structures on both state and private property.

The problem of sewage in the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary District will be met with half-a-million dollars to provide a means of sewage control around that part of West Okoboji not now being served by sewer lines. Appropriated by the legislature to be administered by the Commission, the money will be used for a new system of lift stations and sewer lines as an addition to the present facilities. The existing sewage treatment plant is adequate to handle the larger system.

Briefly this is the outline of how the State Conservation Commission is planning to use the funds

## THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

By appearance, the gnu is part donkey, part buffalo, part horse, and part antelope. Apparently, there is nothing new about a gnu.

\* \* \*

A bird which has wings and yet can't fly is the penguin.

\* \* \*

Bats are the only mammals which possess the power of true flight. Other so-called "flying" animals, such as flying squirrels, only GLIDE.

\* \* \*

It is safe to hold a queen bee in your hand, as the queen bees use their stingers only on other queen bees. And papa bee, the drone, has no stinger at all.

\* \* \*

Of the three thousand kinds of lizards that are to be found in the world, only two are known to have poisonous glands. Both are residents of the North American continent.

appropriated by the legislature. These funds insure the continuing development of more state-owned areas for your recreation.



1. Kill mink, remove all mud, blood, etc. from mink and hang up to dry. Make cut from heel to heel. 2. Bone is removed between thumb and forefinger. 3. Pelt is pulled down off carcass. 4. Pelt on fleshing beam—flesh is removed with dull butcher knife or draw shave. 5. Drying stretcher—three-pieced for easy removal of dried pelt. 6. Drying mink one week in cool, shaded building. 7. The finished product—prepared properly.



## HISTORICALLY SPEAKING PUBLIC RELATIONS 76 YEARS AGO

By Stan Widney

"The encouragement of watering places or summer resorts within its borders has been a part of the policy of every thrifty state government in the union. They are a source of revenue to the people, they attract population, and give the state a pleasant and enviable reputation abroad."

So wrote A. W. Aldrich, Esq., to Governor Buren R. Sherman in 1885. Aldrich was the State Fish Commissioner whose greatest interest at the time was the eradication of fish poachers and the replenishment of fish in depleted Iowa waters; a far-sighted individual who knew what the vacationing public desired most, cabins or cottages in which to rest with plenty of fishing nearby.

"The State government should preserve the supply of fish in order to foster the growth of these summering places which are so beneficial to the public interest," Aldrich declared.

He was actually fighting an almost one-man-war against the depredations of poachers posing as commercial fishermen who were attacking Iowa's lakes and streams with guns, traps, pitchforks, spears, nets, dynamite and even quicklime to take fish which they sold on the streets of cities and towns for anything they could get.

Enforcement of the few laws governing such activities was largely in the hands of volunteers from sportsman groups. Mr. Aldrich was of the opinion that one way to get better enforcement and some laws that would curtail most of such slaughter, was to inform the public of the threat to their favorite vacation spots, thus arousing them to take action in demands for legislation.

"The State of Minnesota," he wrote, "is lavishing money upon fish culture and law enforcement to add to the charm of their lakes, in the belief that Iowa cannot compete with her in this matter. Minnesota is not solitary in this ambition. Wisconsin, Michigan, and every state that has a beautiful and lucid lake, is putting forth its strength of money and legislation to draw the wealthy and learned, the sick and weary to its waters."

Governor Sherman heeded and, with the aid of newspapers, began to publicize the lake resorts of Iowa, at the same time warning the public that law enforcement and stricter legislation would be required if Iowa was to compete with other states. This produced results and the next session of the legislature cracked down on the greedy. Aldrich then wrote to the Governor:

"A cry has been raised by the men engaged in this monstrous

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### PREDATOR CONTROL—

(Continued from page 187)

otic potentials should not be overlooked. Settlers in Australia thought it would be fine if they could introduce rabbits into the country. The introductions were a huge success, if a large rabbit population is the criterion of success, but at the present time the Australian government (1) poisons rabbits, (2) hires bounty hunters,

robbery of the waters, that the efforts to stop it are in line with the legislation enacted by the aristocratic tyranny in Europe. It is the delusive shriek of the hypocrite! The citizens of Iowa who live wholly or in part by fishing should give the state the warmest commendation and the sincerest co-operation, for the honest enforcement of these laws is meant to increase their harvest in the future.

"Iowa has benefited in many ways through legislative efforts in behalf of fish culture. The chain of lakes in the northwest have become internationally famous and are frequented by residents of every state in the Union and many foreign countries. Increased revenue has enabled the stocking of thousands of German carp in these waters, the most popular fish for both sport and table at the resorts. The State of Iowa may well be proud of its beautiful waters, as fine as any on the globe. She should never for one moment neglect them."

and (3) has attempted to put up rabbit-proof fences across the continent to prevent rabbits from spreading into as yet unpopulated areas.

What fostered the eruptions? The lack of natural enemies or predators of the rabbit, along with a favorable environment with no competition was largely responsible.

Literally the same story can be told of deer in New Zealand where again the introduced species succeeded because there were no natural enemies, to the point where they became an unwelcome pest and a national liability.

Our Iowa deer were following much the same pattern in certain areas prior to the setting up of deer seasons. Before hunting was allowed, deer were doing a great amount of damage to agricultural crops in areas where they were becoming too abundant. Legislation was brought out which allowed the State Conservation Commission to permit a form of predation—hunting. Since then we have had few complaints from farmers concerning crop depredations by deer and, in addition, have made many people happy because they could hunt deer in their home state at a nominal cost.

In a state where we normally underharvest our game, little can be said against predators. They, along with starvation and disease, are the tools by which Nature controls populations of game animals

### COUNTY BOARDS—

(Continued from page 186)

mission must approve all the land acquired as well as development plans for areas before a county board can acquire or initiate construction or development work.

This is where the Coordinator of County Conservation Activities Office enters the picture. In the office, created by the Commission in 1960, two coordinators of county conservation boards plan and procedural work. The coordinators act as advisers and consultants to aid the boards in solving problems and in seeing that the activities are carried out as prescribed by law.

When a new program is presented to the Commission, the coordinators make investigations and inspect all areas proposed by county conservation boards. After the inspection, they write a report to the Commission explaining the project. The Commission then provides the board with recommendations and gives the go-ahead carrying out the program.

Since Iowa's Grade A land provides 25 percent of the total net of the nation, it is difficult to land set aside for recreation. The rapidly growing movement shows that Iowa is doing its share solving the crisis faced in providing outdoor recreational space for outdoor-loving Iowans.

at levels which are commensurate with their food supply and other essentials of their environment.