



Iowa CONSERVATIONIST



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THE SPORT OF TRAPPING



There's no shortage of muskrats in Iowa; trappers are encouraged to help in their harvest.

Jack Kirateln Photo.

An Old and New Pastime

Denny Rehder

In the early days of our land, when the Mississippi River was deep wilderness to the west, it was the trapper and the demand for that brought civilization to Iowa and surrounding states. The demand for beaver pelts by the gentlemen here and abroad to use in the fur hat offered great rewards for the trapper willing to brave the wilderness.

The Mississippi River became the great inland route to the rich trapping country of the north. As the trapper moved, so also did the farmer, the businessman, and the vestiges of our early American civilization. Towns grew up and the Union advanced ever westward. Always it was the trapper breaking the new ground for those who would follow.

As time passed other economies took the spotlight from the trapping profession. The agricultural complex of the middlewest supplied the nation with its foodstuffs. But farm boys continued to ply the ancient trade. In daily contact with the outdoors, they made a little money trapping the abundant furbearers around their neighborhood.

Today, trapping for a living has declined, but most of us raised on a farm trapped gophers for a nickel from Dad and the neighbors and

took what bounty money we could get. Muskrat trapping was the next step, with mink and fox to follow.

How many of us used to lie awake at night, anticipating the fabulous catches that would be waiting in our traps come morning? Those fabulous catches never quite met our expectations, but the anticipation was worth the trouble.

Certainly in these times, the sport of trapping is based on the preparation and anticipation rather than the amount of money to be made. Granted a fellow can make some money trapping, but when the cost involved and the money gained are compared, trapping is not going to make you rich.

Mink trapping is still highly profitable even though the commercial mink farm has made inroads into the market. The mink is, however, the toughest Iowa furbearer to trap with good success. The good mink trapper will know just where the mink is likely to go and what attracts his curiosity. He will know the habits of his quarry and the practices of concealing, hiding, deceiving, and camouflaging his set to outwit the mink.

Most other Iowa furbearers do not offer enough money to be the sole reason for trapping them. The fox and coyote are next to the mink as far as difficulty in trapping is concerned. However, after the

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 54,000

COMMISSION MINUTES

Des Moines

November 7, 1962

GENERAL

A report on Conservation Commission planning program was given by Lester Faber.

A resolution honoring the late Paul Errington of Ames was passed.

One person was authorized to travel to Poynette, Wisconsin, December 9-16, and two people to Puxico, Missouri, January 6-13, for the purpose of helping in the Biology Wing-Bee Sessions.

One person was authorized to travel to Lincoln, Nebraska, November 26-28, to cooperate in AACI planning meeting.

One person was authorized to travel to Dallas, Texas, January 13-16, to a shooting preserve operators' meeting.

Three people are authorized to travel to Philo, Illinois, to meet with the Illinois Conservation Commission personnel.

Approval was given the design and placement of a plaque honoring the former director, Bruce Stiles.

Mrs. Katherine M. Falvey of Albia met with the Commission to discuss small lakes program.

The present Fish and Game Conservation Officers' eligibility list was canceled.

Approval was given to start the training of two new Conservation Officers.

FISH AND GAME

An option was approved for purchase of ten acres at \$1,600 for a fishing access near Rubio in Washington County.

An option was approved for purchase of shore line on Silver Lake in Dickinson County, consisting of 35 acres at \$10,500.

Approval was given for an option for the purchase of 190 acres at \$33,000 near Swan Lake in Dickinson County.

A report was given by Earl Rose on the status of the small lake development program.

Commission policies governing the re-employment of Conservation Officers were modified.

The resignation of Lester Faber was submitted and accepted by the

Conservation Commission with regrets.

LANDS AND WATERS

Approval was given for an option to Stockham in the Lake Anita area for 60 acres including a trade of 7.5 acres at a cost of \$13,500.

No action was taken on a request from the Highway Commission for the transfer of 2.7 acres at the entrance of the Ames State Forest Nursery.

Approval was given for the use of styrofoam docks on artificial lakes similar to the types constructed by the Conservation Commission.

A proposed five-year state parks road program for the Highway Commission was approved.

A counter-offer to Herman Lott of Dubuque was authorized concerning the conveyance of eight acres of land adjacent to the Julien Dubuque gravesite.

Approval was given to an option for purchase of 36.5 acres of land at \$10,500 from Pearson near the entrance to Viking Lake.

Approval was given the American Legion of Gladbrook for permission to construct a short access road in Union Grove state park.

A temporary bridge crossing requested by the Highway Commission in Boone County during construction work was approved.

A temporary bridge crossing requested by the Highway Commission in Polk County for use during freeway construction was approved.

Approval was given a request by the Highway Commission for a Big Sioux bridge crossing in Woodbury County.

COUNTY CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

Clayton County received approval for the acquisition of 59.5 acres of land at a cost of \$5,500 located on the Volga River for use as an outdoor classroom and a general park.

Marshall County received approval for the acquisition of 80 acres of land called the Holland Access area located on the Iowa River at a cost of \$2,900 for use as a fishing access and picnicking area.

Polk County received approval for acquisition of 157.4 acres of land in the Yeader Creek Lake area at a total cost of \$42,960 for use as part of the artificial lake park.

Bremer County received approval of a development plan for construction of the Central Headquarters area located near the south edge of Tripoli.

Buena Vista County received approval of a development plan for Linn Grove Park adjacent to the town of Linn Grove along the Little Sioux River.

Clayton County received approval of a development plan for Reimer Park located south of Elkader on the Turkey River for use

PRECIOUS SILENCE

Perhaps one of the dearest gifts bestowed upon the forest visitor, the camper, fisherman, hunter, naturalist, and just plain woods wanderer is the soothing nectar of silence, the velvet hush of a starlit evening in the woods that permits human inspiration to roam in undisturbed tranquility, and crystalizes the vague ideas of the harried workday mind.

There is little enough silence in the atom shattering realm of today. The hollow voices of political and economic prophets mingle with the harsh sounds of the machinery of "progress" and the showy half truths of advertising to assault ears, eyes and credulity in massive doses from dawn to bed-time. Roused by a ringing alarm, each man rushes out daily to his own pet sound-filled prison. Even the farmer has traded the soft lowing of cattle for the whirr of machinery and the milking machine precludes the soliloquy inspired by the warm flank of full udder and soft teats of the historic family cow.

It is only natural that man is becoming inured to sounds; a conditioned deafness is a prerequisite for sanity in many fields of commerce. Radio, telephone, and television have allowed tentacles of the outer world to invade the home. Casual conversation is invariably punctuated by entreaties to speak more loudly or clearly. To grunt "huh?", "how's that?", "whad'ja say?" or some equivalent query is almost automatic. Timid persons speak softly and remain unheard; aggressive speakers shout, rant, and abuse their elocution with over-emphasis. The art of sincere conversation has almost ceased to exist in most densely populated areas.

Relief from the din of a world, apparently dedicated to a contest of bigger and bigger "bangs," may be discovered in natural wilderness settings. That such relief is sought is evidenced by hordes of people who leave commerce behind on holidays and weekends to seek a favorite sylvan haven. However, escape is difficult to achieve unless the family automobile and the outboard motor are relinquished en route.

Few people today are familiar with silence and those who encounter it are often frightened by it. A constant rumble of sound has become familiar accompaniment to daily routine and the city dweller in particular feels naked and unprotected without it. Lost in the raucous mixture of the sounds of human society are the pure undiluted individual messages which can only be heard in absolute or almost total silence; the flit of bird wings comes to the woods migrant; the clear call of a loon reaches across the water to the boatman resting his oars; the rustle of northern lights heralds a cold winter night; cicadas induce torpor on a warm autumn afternoon; a dead tree bent to the wind and imparts a creaking groan to the listener; the drumming message of the grouse comes clearly to the tented sleeper as he rests his head near the ground.

Assuredly the golden silence of nature is reserved for the man on foot. Only he can leave the dirt strewn path of his fellows and walk the soft moss of nature's inviting carpet. Only he will notice the sounds of the highway recede until distance shuts them out. Only then will he enter the silent world where the smallest sound has a meaning.

There is something eerie and charming about entering a silent realm that triggers the senses. Ears, eyes, nose, and innate perception gain new awareness. The fibers of the body seem to be at once animated and relaxed. Petty annoyances created by crowded living fade to insignificance in the sharp focus of an uncluttered environment, and true objectives acquire prominence. The narcotic effect of silence closes intruder and surroundings alike and this very unity sets the stage for calm contemplation, like a clean white sheet of paper or an uncluttered drawing board, waiting for the pencil of the designer. Silence far from being empty, as supposed by the unimaginative, is truly a state to be cherished. To seek it is to seek peace and the hidden sounds that speak truthfully of the world's beginnings. "Take a walk in the woods and listen."—Reprinted from *Land-Forest-Wildlife*, Albert

as a roadside park and overnight camping area.

Fayette County received approval of a development plan for Gouldsburg Park located five miles north of Hawkeye for picnicking and camping use.

Winnebago County received approval of a development plan for the Hogsback recreation area which will be used for hunting, picnicking and camping.

Hamilton County Conservation Board was authorized to raise the level of Little Wall Lake 12 inches after meeting three conditions which were specified.

Worth County was given permission to raise the level of Silver Lake by two feet contingent their meeting three provisions which were specified.

Eighty-seven inches of snow fell in 27 hours at Silver Lake, Colorado.

Snow flakes many times more to form large aggregates, so times called "giant snowflakes." Some aggregates have measured fifteen inches in width and eight inches thick.



The White-tailed Deer.

Jim Sherman Photo.

IOWA MAMMALS

Eldie Mustard
Game Biologist

White-tailed Deer

Odocoileus virginianus

Identification—The large 7-11 inch tail with a white underside is best to identify this animal. Adult males average about 185 pounds although much larger ones weighing over 400 pounds have been taken. Males are antlered and stand about 3.0-3.5 feet at the shoulder. Females are considerably smaller, with the average weight for adults about 145 pounds. Deer are reddish in summer with a grayish-brown coat in winter. Fawns are spotted until months old.

Range—Throughout Iowa.

Habitat—Primarily found along wooded stream bottoms and timbered areas.

Reproduction—The rut (breeding season) extends from September to December in Iowa, with November being the peak month. Bucks are polygamous and mate with all does they can. About 75 percent of the female fawns are born in Iowa; this early breeding is generally not found in most states. Gestation period is about 6.5 months with does usually having one fawn the first year and two thereafter. Triplets are not uncommon.

Habits—Deer are secretive and possess keen powers of hearing

and smell. They tend to be crepuscular and are most frequently seen during the periods before and shortly after sunrise and sunset. Iowa deer eat browse (twigs from bushes and trees), acorns, wild grapes, corn, alfalfa, locust pods and seeds, clovers, grasses, and mushrooms. They are swift and agile and can clear an eight-foot fence with ease. Bucks grow a new set of antlers each year and "drop" their old set about January-February following cessation of breeding activities. The doe usually keeps her fawns in separate locations during the early weeks of their lives; this is probably a survival factor and reduces the chances of one predator killing all her young.

Status—The white-tailed deer is Iowa's only remaining big game animal and as such provides sport for the hunter and esthetic thrills for the nature lover who chances to observe them. One purpose of our annual hunting season is to control the number of deer so they are compatible with Iowa's agricultural interests. The only predator of any consequence to deer in Iowa are dogs; especially during periods of deep crusted snow when deer cannot successfully elude dogs because they break through the crust.

A limited number of gun hunters are allowed to hunt deer each year. Bowhunting is also an increasingly popular form of recreational utilization of this species in Iowa.

At one time deer were essentially extirpated from Iowa, but game

Creating a Lewis and Clark Trail

Action was taken in Omaha last month to implement planning for a Lewis and Clark Trail commemorating the route taken by the early explorers. The J. N. (Ding) Darling Foundation, Inc., called to the meeting 67 representatives of conservation organizations, state and federal agencies, historical societies, and others interested in the proposal first advanced by the late Ding Darling, long-time conservation leader.

Chairman of the meeting was Sherry Fisher, Iowa Conservation Commissioner from Des Moines and a trustee of the Ding Darling Foundation. Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, South Dakota, and North Dakota were represented among the states.

The resolutions passed called for three preliminary steps necessary to turn Darling's dream into reality. The first step was to request the secretary of the interior in cooperation with the secretary of agriculture, the secretary of the army, and the ten states included to study the proposal and draw up an over-all plan for the Lewis and Clark Trail.

The second step asked Congress to provide the funds necessary for such a study by the Department of the Interior.

The third step requested the ten states involved to take inventory of historical sites, wildlife refuges, recreation facilities, and highway

(Continued on page 94)

management and an understanding public brought this species back.

Mule Deer

Odocoileus hemionus

Identification—The mule deer is best differentiated from the white-tailed deer by its narrow rounded white, black-tipped tail. It also has a large whitish rump patch. Bucks weigh 100-300 pounds or more and are larger than does. Males only are antlered.

Range—It is typically a western deer, but several have been found in an area encompassing the western half of Iowa.

Habitat—Similar to white-tailed deer in Iowa.

Reproduction—Breed in fall of year and bucks may gather a harem. Fawns are born in June-July after gestation period of 6.5-7.0 months.

Habits—The mule deer has a jumping, bounding gait which is quite different from the graceful whitetail. Its primary foods in Iowa are probably similar to the white-tailed deer.

Status—Relatively rare in Iowa. Collected specimens may be stragglers. Hunted during open deer seasons the same as the white-tailed deer.

THE MUZZLE-LOADER AND THE SPACE AGE

Jack Kirstein

Countdown—waiting for the powder to burn in the pan.

Blast off—remove the primer.

Re-entry—he's using the ramrod again!

High orbit—the string's too short on your powder horn.

Escape velocity—the deer got away before I could load up.

Lift off—action of hunter's toes upon firing heavy load.

Spy in the sky—I don't care if the game warden is using an airplane, I'm legal!

Nose cone—cloth patch stuck in the barrel.

Payload—did you say six ounces of shot?

Sputnik—the way gunpowder burns when it gets a little wet.

Tracking station—the fellow on your left who can see around the smoke.

Friendship 7—you and six hunters you can trust not to laugh.

Mercury control—keeping your temperature down after missing an easy shot.

Explorer I—which pocket did I put the spare caps in?

Discoverer I—here they are!

Echo I—what do you mean, there's a skunk?

All systems "go"—I'm getting so I can hear again after shooting.

Destruct button—endearing name given to smooth working trigger.

Rocket fuel—modern fast-burning smokeless powder.

Capsule—flask of No. 8 shot, also nasty name for modern cartridges.

Booster—loading one barrel twice.

Technical assistance—your buddy's wisecracks when the darn thing won't go off.

Recovery—digging spent balls out behind the paper targets.

Block house—place where block-head hunters and shooters live.

A-ok—I'm all right now, it was just that I used too much powder.

Weightlessness—laying gun on lap after climbing steep hill.

Space suit—you need lots of pockets for accessories.

Pick-up area—self explanatory; don't litter!

Heat shield—tree used for refuge from other hunter's stray shots.

Staging—use of coonskin cap and fringed jacket while hunting.

Drag chute—when a target contest takes too long.

Orbital velocity—what you get when you use too large a powder measure.

Cape Canaveral—what it seems like to get caught in the middle of a circle hunt.

Moon shot—why didn't you pull down on the target?

Range Safety Officer—the sheriff says we got to quit shooting in his pasture.

Radiation counter—timid fellow keeping track of ricochets in the woods.

FUN-FILLED WINTER WONDERLAND



George Tovey Photos. Skiing, sledding, tobogganing, and ice skating are popular sports at state parks.



Shelters are open and firewood available for a winter picnic. Many young people advantage of the warm fireplaces when on winter sledding parties.

Snowflake Recreation

Carol Buckmann

State parks are open all year 'round and winter offers a refreshing venture in outdoor recreation. After the first frost, you can enjoy a picnic without bug, fly and mosquito competition for food or people competition for picnic tables and camping spots. You have the pick of the park.

Wintertime to many of nature's creatures means storing summer's fruits and preparing for a long nap in a cave or other cover till spring. This season suggests the same to many people, and picnic baskets, camping equipment and other recreation equipment is stored in the attic as folks prepare for a long winter in front of the TV.

But to take advantage of winter recreation and get in on real fun and relaxation all year, only a few replacements in equipment and a reverse to warm clothing are necessary. Sleds, toboggans, ice skates and skis take the place of swim equipment and speedboats.

Ice-boating

You can even go boating. Although sailing the briny blue and cruising down the river in canoe,

row and speedboats are strictly for open water, ice sailing is a thrilling replacement. No more than wooden skeletons balanced on three runners, they speed down the lake full speed, things of beauty with nylon sails flapping and wind whistling through the rigging.

When the lake has a thin coat of snow, the speed is slowed considerably and 25 miles per hour is a high speed. There is no water force to break momentum such as in summer sailing and on bare, smooth ice these boats have been clocked at 100 mph. Black Hawk, Spirit, Storm and Clear Lakes are popular but any park with a lake permits ice boating.

Sledding

Another winter thrill is coasting or tobogganing down steep hills in state parks. The fire places, tables and shelters are available through the winter. What would be more fun than to come to a roaring fire for a winter weiner roast or Mulligan stew after tobogganing, sledding or skating? Topped with hot coffee or hot chocolate and popcorn, this is a real wintertime treat.

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Ice-boating is another popular form of winter recreation on many of our state-lakes. These ice-boats speed across the lake faster than last summer's counter-

Commission's Senior Employee To Retire

Denny Rehder

George Kaufman, conservation officer for Allamakee County, will retire January 1, 1963. Kaufman has the longest term of service of any Commission employee. He started with the old Fish and Game Department back in June, 1919.

With nearly 42 years in the field of conservation, George has seen a lot of changes. He started with the fisheries crew on the Mississippi River in fish rescue and disinfection. In those days the fish were distributed by rail, and George used to take 40 ten-gallon cans of fish on the baggage stock waters over the state. Fish rescue was a big program on the Mississippi. The winter when some of the sloughs and waters destroyed vast numbers of fish. Attempts to combat low oxygen count—the cause of the freeze-out—always failed. At the time it was thought that aeration was the answer. Aeration while very popular, always failed. "It was one of those things believed in, but were proven wrong time and again," George re-

The Hawkeyes

Many people have heard of the Hawkeye I and Hawkeye II. George worked on Hawkeye II. "It was plush," he said. "We each had our own pull-bunks. Our work was pretty good and we always had the honor and other dignitaries in the car. My boss, W. E. Allen, always insisted that the men on the car sleep in their own bunks and give them up to no dignitary."

When the Fish and Game Department and the Board of Conservation merged in 1935 to become the State Conservation Commis-

sion, George became a conservation officer in his home territory of northeast Iowa.

When George first became a game warden, wardens were held in low esteem. The public felt the warden was intruding into their own affairs and they didn't accept the necessity of governing the take of game.

Prohibition

This was in the time of prohibition, and for George this experiment in abstention created enforcement problems. "You were always running into someone's still when on patrol," George recalls, "and although most of them were local people, we did have one on the Upper Iowa River run by a syndicate in Chicago."

Here in northeast Iowa, George saw the return of the deer, otter, and beaver. Many people assume there were always deer in this part of the state, but in truth they were exterminated. Deer became so plentiful that some control was needed. The first deer season met with general approval and although control was established, the deer herd has continued to prosper. Beaver are now common and the otter, while still scarce, can be found.

Tourism

When the dams along the Mississippi were raised, everyone said stabilizing the river would ruin the fishing. "We have had better fishing since the dams came into being, but we did lose some fine backwater areas," George said, "and don't let anybody talk to you about stabilization—she has never been stabilized!"

When questioned about the growth of northeast Iowa as a tourist attraction, George had this to say:

"It's been growing steadily over the years, and this summer certainly showed it. The sandbars were full of campers, boaters and fishermen crowded the docks, and inland, we had one of our finest trout seasons."

"Our trout program up here is certainly of state-wide importance. The local people don't fish for trout as much as the outsider. And when I say outsider I'm not just talking about Iowans. If it weren't for the fishermen from Wisconsin and Minnesota, the trout in Allamakee County would die of old age."

When asked to look back over the years as a game warden and comment on the philosophy he had toward his work, George had these concluding words:

"Enforcement of the laws is necessary, yes, but remember, no court case ever put one piece of game back into the field. I do not want my people to think of me as a lawman. I have tried to show them I am a friend who is concerned with preserving their fish and game for the future."



Jack Kirstein Photo.

TRY THIS FOR SIZE!

This cottonwood along the Big Sioux River in northeast Iowa measured in at 23 feet, 8 inches around. Another near it measured just over 20 feet. Giants like these are seen along the bottom lands of western Iowa. Has anyone around the state a bigger one? This is the largest one still standing that we know of.

WINTER WONDERLAND—

(Continued from page 92)

Mulligan stew is easy to fix. Bring a kettle, start a fire, put in water (clean snow will do), add meat, vegetables, potatoes, etc., seasoning and let boil. Wood is available from the park officer.

Although there aren't any toboggan runs as such, tobogganing and coasting are enjoyed in any parks with hills. Examples are Wapello State Park for skating, coasting, ice fishing; Palisades Kepler for skiing, coasting; Backbone for coasting, ice fishing, skating; Clear Lake and Cold Springs for ice fishing, skating; Dolliver Memorial for coasting. These parks also have year around picnicking and camping except Cold Springs which has no camping.

Pilot Knob has a cleared area for skating, warming house and electric lights for night skating. Usually if the ice is safe enough for large equipment, the park officer will clear an area for skating.

Camping

The roads into parks are kept open by the Highway Commission and they are always open to camping. Snowflake camping opens a new world of pleasure as your favorite spot takes a new wonder not seen in the summer. Although water is shut off in shower houses, it is available from the park officer.

Ledges, Springbrook, Lewis and Clark, Geode, Gull Point, Fort Defiance, Pine Lake, Union Grove and Dolliver have electrical hook-ups switched on when campers register. Equipment should include a transistor radio to check weather forecasts, and salty, non-freezing meats such as pork and bacon.

Nature Study

A must for winter excursions is a pair of comfortable walking shoes for this is the time of year for hiking. A camera should be a close companion. In winter, with the leaves fallen and ground cov-

ered with snow, aspects unseen in summer unveil themselves creating an entirely different mood and appearance.

The air is brisk and you can hike, undisturbed, to your heart's content without heat fatigue.

In the quiet of winter, without the summer people supply, animals venture from hiding and scamper along the trail. With the disappearance of heavy summer visiting, parks become a bird watcher's delight as birds become bolder and easier to see—reason enough to bring binoculars.

You might come across a lake or pond with wintering ducks swimming to keep the water open. They stay often until around January 1. Duck watching is best from noon to 3 p.m. as they feed in the fields morning and evening.

After a fresh snow, identifying animal tracks and seeing the patterns, is a fascinating winter sport. Come back in a couple of days and rabbit tracks are almost everywhere. Squirrel tracks come to an abrupt halt as they jump to trees. It's not hard to find where a deer bedded for the night or see its tracks near a stream. Water animals such as mink and muskrat can be seen and their tracks found.

Fishing is often best in the winter especially for walleyes and king-size perch. Any park with a lake offers ice fishing which is particularly good from the time the ice freezes until around New Year's Day. An ice house requires a permit available from the park officer. A separate permit is necessary for each lake. It's a good idea to mark the fishing hole as a warning to skaters when you leave.

You don't need to sadly put summer fun in moth balls and look forward to the drudgery of a long, grueling winter. Enjoy your state parks this winter and take advantage of the relaxing, refreshing activities they offer the year 'round.



Jim Sherman Photo.

Conservation Officer George Kaufman, re-retires after 42 years of service.

SHOOT TO KILL

Quick Clean Kills Are The Mark Of A True Sportsman

Eddie W. Mustard
Game Biologist

Crippled game, to the true hunter and sportsman, is one aspect of hunting which is decidedly unpleasant. No sportsman wants to wound game and then not recover it. A certain amount of crippling is going to occur in any type of hunting; however, losses can be greatly reduced if hunters will follow a few basic rules.

Most of the following is primarily applicable to deer hunting; however, much of it will also apply to any kind of hunting.

Know Your Weapon

Time spent getting some shooting practice on the firing range before going after your deer is time well spent. Here you can ascertain if your shotgun is functioning properly, if it is shooting where you aim, and also you can get some idea of judging distances so you can use a little "Kentucky windage" in the field if necessary.

I know shotgun slugs are expensive, but why spoil your year's deer hunt because you scrimped in the wrong place? Better to spend a few bucks on some shells for practice than on a jug of "Old Busthead" (if you're looking for a place to economize).

For maximum accuracy, shotguns used to fire slugs should have as open a bore as you can obtain. This is because barrels which are "choked down" cause the slug to be deformed and impair accuracy. Double-barrel shotguns should be avoided when using slugs because they tend to crossfire (right barrel shoots to the left and the left barrel shoots to the right) and do not generally give good accuracy.

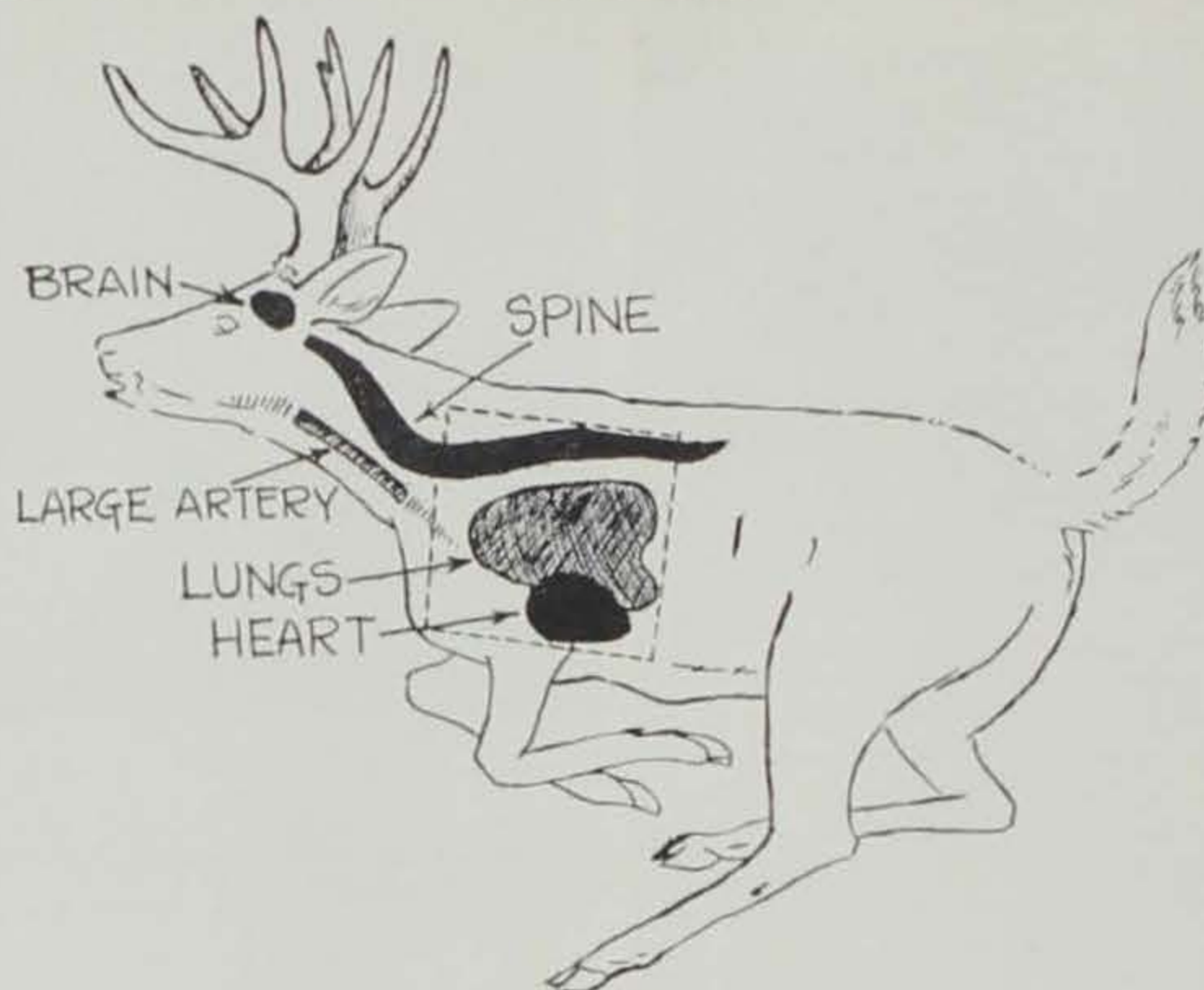
Sights are another matter which should be considered by the serious deer hunter who uses a shotgun and slugs. The shotgun, when used to shoot shot shells, is pointed, however, when using slugs it must be aimed just like a rifle. Your sporting goods dealer has iron sights which can be put on shotguns and you can also use low-power scopes (1X or 2.5X) to good advantage. Shotguns without adequate sighting apparatus are very inefficient deer-killers and can lead to excessive and unnecessary crippling losses.

Know Where to Aim

After your weapon is properly sighted in and you can send a slug where you want it to go, the next question is obvious—where is the best place to hit a deer?

Head and neck shots are quick and certain, but the hunter had better know his weapon, know his capabilities, and have some knowledge about the anatomy of the deer before attempting to place his shot here.

The head offers a relatively small target and, while a head shot



The vital areas of a deer. Most hunters try to shoot for the chest cavity, here enclosed by a dotted line, since most of the vital organs are located here.

is very effective, most hunters should not attempt it. Neck shots are also effective and the intent of this shot is to sever the spinal column—this gives instantaneous kills. When attempting to make a neck shot, it is well to remember that the spinal column is located in the lower portion of the neck and shots should be placed here. If you shoot a bit too low and miss the spinal column, chances are very good that the windpipe or major blood vessels will be severed. If you shoot too high, and thus over the spinal column, you may notice the animal's head drop, but chances are that you have only severed a ligament, *ligamentum nuchae*, which helps to hold the neck and head erect. This will not kill the deer.

Probably most hunters should attempt to place their slug in the chest cavity of their quarry. Some meat is destroyed, but the chances of hitting vital organs are very good, for it is in this area that the heart, lungs, liver, and major blood vessels are located.

Another reason for placing shots in the chest cavity area is the good possibility that one or even both shoulders or legs will be broken. This will bring the deer down quickly and for keeps. It is well to remember that an average deer is only three or three and one-half feet above the ground at the shoulder. This means that most of the vital organs are only about table-high above the ground.

Paunch or stomach shots should be avoided because such shots do not give clean kills and often lead to long, exhaustive, and unfruitful attempts to recover a fatally wounded deer. A true sportsman would prefer a clean miss or no shot at all to a "gut shot" because these are almost certain to kill the animal eventually—after it has lingered for several days. Shots

which break the spinal column near the rear of the animal and paralyze the rear legs are not the best shots either because a deer can make a getaway using only the front legs.

Last winter the Conservation Officers and Biologists covered some of the areas where hunting had been quite heavy, looking for dead deer which had died from the results of wounds during the hunting season. Happily, very few were found and I feel that our Iowa hunters don't leave too many cripples in the field.

After the Deer is Hit

Assuming you have seen your deer drop after you shoot, don't waste any time getting to the spot, for often a downed animal will be only momentarily stunned. Recovery can be quick and the chase long if you don't get there in a hurry. If the deer is on the ground, don't lean your shotgun against a tree and take out your hunting knife. Instead, approach the animal from the backside with your gun in a ready position. Give the deer the old "reflex test," that is, touch the eye with the barrel of your weapon—if the eye twitches, dispatch the animal quickly with another shot, *not* your knife.

Remember, approach the deer from the back because if it is still alive those flailing sharp front hooves can inflict painful and serious injury to the unsuspecting hunter.

If your deer is only wounded, chances are it may not be at the spot where it went down. Look around for signs of blood or hair to ascertain that you did hit the animal, and if you did hit it, sit down and have a smoke and collect your wits. This will allow the wounded deer a chance to lie down, bleed, and stiffen up.

Follow the trail and be especially alert around patches of dense cover

TRAIL—

(Continued from page 91)

installations that could be incorporated into the Trail.

As viewed by Darling, the Trail would include the acquisition of certain shoreline areas along the Missouri River and other streams along which Lewis and Clark traveled in 1803-06.

The Trail would include historical sites, wildlife refuges, forest preserves, and public-use areas for hunting, fishing, camping, boating, hiking, nature study and a variety of outdoor activities.

Many states have plans and development that could tie-in easily with the proposed Trail. Glen Powers, Director of the State Conservation Commission, told the group that studies and surveys have been made along the Missouri River. Iowans have four state parks on or near the proposed Trail including Lewis and Clark State Park.

The Army Engineers at Omaha expressed their interest in the Lewis and Clark Trail, honoring the two former army captains who made the historic journey.

Dr. Edward Crafts of Washington, D. C., the director of the new Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, said the plan would succeed because it has the magnitude to stir the imagination. House Representative John Kyle of Iowa, a member of the House Interior Committee in the last Congress, said the Trail could become a reality in the next five years.

because these are the spots where wounded deer often head off. Usually we have some snow cover during our deer seasons which helps immeasurably in trailing wounded animals. This is one reason why the seasons are so late, along with certain other considerations. I am sure the snow cover during a deer season greatly reduces the crippling loss.

Don't give up looking for a wounded animal too soon. I realize that it is often difficult to make a thorough search, but your mind should be disciplined to the fact that it must be done. The hunter owes it to himself, other hunters and most important to the wounded animal to make every effort to locate it and dispatch with alacrity. Half-hearted searches are a sure sign that a hunter is not qualified to hunt the magnificent deer which are one of the finest and most intelligent of game species.

To avoid these exhaustive trailing searches for wounded deer remember: get in some pre-season practice on the rifle range, have adequate sights placed on your shotgun, and know where to place your shots for quick, clean kills.

No sportsman wants to cripple and will do everything he can to avoid it. In the event an animal is crippled, a sportsman will exert every effort to recover it. It becomes his obligation.



Jack Kirstein Photo.

KENTUCKY'S IN IOWA

Jack Kirstein

Kentucky's in Iowa may well be classed as a sport within a sport.

In this case, the Kentucky in question is not the sovereign state by that name, but the rifle, introduced in Europe, adapted and improved in the state of Pennsylvania, and named after the territory of the "... dark and bloody ground."

What started as a collector's hobby is now becoming a dedication to the lure of history plus the inherent qualities of the gun itself, and a love for the romance of injuries in the shooter's mind. More and more shooters are added each year to the swelling ranks of the muzzle-loading society. Equally as ardent as the collectors and admirers of antiques of every other type, the muzzle-loader also have the thrill of actually dealing with their prized and treasured guns.

For the layman, uninitiated, the use of an ancient weapon may seem somewhat of a handicap in the pursuit of upland birds or the animals of the woods. With a little research into the actual use of these old-time powder-burners, however, you begin to appreciate the very real reason for their use in hunting. Here, in a state that should be outmoded by technological advances of modern science, is a heft and feel unknown to modern firearms, and an air of mystery that seems at times unique for a vintage weapon.

How many of the vaunted .22 caliber modern arms can boast a barrel of two inches or less at a hundred yards? What arms manufacturer today can turn out a rifle with a barrel three to four inches longer than its own buttstock which will balance in your hands as though customized only for you?

With most sports, muzzle-loading has its clubs. Gathering to pursue their hobby comes an attachment of Iowans who totally as great an assortment of rifles. Some preferring rifles, some shotguns, others with handguns, they join to share the fun of pouring in the powder and shot, ramming home the wads and firing. Then after the experi-

ence of the target shoots they take to the field each fall to prove their worth on the hunt, many side by side with their brother shooters carrying modern auto-loaders or pump guns.

This takes some degree of good-naturedness on the part of the muzzle-loader fan. Many jibes are taken at his love for the flintlock or cap-and-ball he carries. Many jokes find him as their target. But, when the hunt is over, you can be sure that the muzzle-loader will account for his share of the bag.

Many of the guns carried are of true ancient manufacture. Also, many of the guns coming on the scene are of modern production. Several companies are now making copies of the traditional early guns. Using more modern methods of mass production, they are making guns at a price to entice the novice and of a quality to satisfy the perfectionist.

Another source of prime weapons is the practice of re-manufacture of old guns. In this method, old guns are gathered, mainly in Europe, and are put in good shooting condition through the manufacture of new parts where needed.

Shipped into the United States and distributed over the retail counters, these old guns are now being used by hunters, as they are not original in condition and therefore of no interest to the purist collector.

Muzzle-loader shooting is not for the man with little time to devote to the sport. Most fans mould their own balls, melting lead and using individual hand moulds for this purpose.

Slow in loading as they are, the front-loaders take their toll in game and produce their share of fun. It isn't necessary to wear a coonskin cap to feel like a present-day Daniel Boone when you hold high a squirrel taken with one of these old guns. You can be proud of this trophy that shows you have not only qualified in the fraternity of the hunter, but have mastered the skills of your forefathers in pouring from a powder horn, measuring from a shot flask, and putting just the right amount of elbow grease into the ramrod. And each

TRAPPING—

(Continued from page 89)

trapper learns the basics on types of sets, fox habits, and use of scent he usually operates with good success.

In addition to the above-named furbearers, there are several other species trapped in Iowa. Muskrat trapping supplies the largest take of a single species. Raccoon is next with mink and fox following. Then down the scale we find beaver, skunk, opossum, civet, weasel, badger, gray fox, and coyote.

As far as populations are concerned, we always have an abundance of fox, muskrat, beaver, badger, skunk, opossum, civet and raccoon. Mink trapping is closely regulated since populations are never enormous.

Open seasons are set for all the furbearers named above, with the exception of weasel, red fox, gray fox, ground hog, and coyote which have a continuous open season. The otter has a continuous closed season over the state.

The thing to remember about trapping is that the money takes second place to the sport. Matching your skill and knowledge against the ability of these creatures to see through your attempts at deception will engender a hearty respect for your quarry as well as an increased appreciation for the outdoors. It has been said that, by necessity, the good trapper is a good naturalist. In view of this fact, we do not find it unusual that many of the top naturalists of our day got their start as youthful trappers.

BAIT AND TACKLE ON THE ICE

Recent years have shown a remarkable increase in the numbers of fishermen who hit the ice-covered lakes and rivers. Winter fishing is one of our fastest growing winter sports.

Due to this interest year after year, it might be wise to note a few points concerning this popular pastime.

Early season ice-fishing is the best of the season. As soon as the ice is safe to traverse, the smart fisherman is out there catching fish. It is not because the fishing picks up right after the freeze-up, it's merely a continuation of the fine fall fishing we have come to expect. After the freeze-up there is a gradual decline in the fishing success. This may take the greater part of the winter, but it still follows that the time to go is early.

You're probably going to catch more fish at this time of the year, so it follows that you will bring more big ones home.

Now, no one is going to tell you just where to spud your hole and start fishing. That's part of the sport. Fish generally school in the winter and you'll have to be prepared to make a number of holes until you find where they are. Once you find them, you can expect to pull in your limit in a short time.

One bait is as good as another in winter although your walleyes and perch seem to go as well or better on artificial lures. Bluegills and crappies tend to do best on natural baits—corn borer grubs, goldenrod galls, mousies, etc.

The favorite haunts of the ice hunt brings new thrills—the barking of the first squirrel, taking the first bird in flight, achieving success at greater distances, and many more.

The old frontier that in its day was a new frontier is a new frontier once again.

fisherman are the natural lakes, the Mississippi and its backwaters, and the Missouri. The artificial lakes are certainly good spots, but with so few people fishing them, it will take a lot of work to find the fish. Farm ponds, too, should provide good fishing, but you'd better be prepared to chop a lot of holes in the ice.

The biggest point to be made about early season ice-fishing is BE CAREFUL!! The early ice may be uneven and unsafe; test the ice carefully and take every precaution. You can have good winter fishing, but only by taking care of yourself can you be assured of enjoying it.



Jim Sherman Photo.

Early season ice fishing will offer the best sport, but the ice can be treacherous.

FISHING AT SPIRIT LAKE 1914

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We print below a favorite story by the late Stan Widney. Stan, who was well-known by readers of the CONSERVATIONIST for his humorous stories, and by many fans throughout the state during his radio days, passed away October 23 at the age of 61. This story was written a year ago and was often referred to as Stan's favorite.)

Stan Widney
Contributing Editor

The first time I ever saw Spirit Lake was in September, 1914. My Uncle John was making a trip there to buy horses to sell to the cavalry when Villa was going hog-wild in Mexico, and he took me along for company because I had never seen a body of water any larger than the Yorktown Iowa Reservoir.

We took the train as far as the town of Spirit Lake and when I first saw all that water I almost climbed out of the caboose we were riding in.

We got off at Orleans, the town on the isthmus between Spirit Lake and East Okoboji, and ten minutes later I was sitting on a dock fishing. Uncle John had already arranged for me to stay with a friend of his named Miller who ran the stockyards in Orleans where we would load the horses he bought at the farms around there.

Mr. Miller came down to the dock to call me to supper just as I hooked onto my first northern. Mr. Miller helped me land it and it weighed eight pounds. What a thrill for a kid who had never hooked onto anything larger than a two-pound carp! I stood there admiring it between glances out across the choppy waters. I couldn't see the western shore because of the sunset and I was imagining I stood on the deck of a whaler and had caught Moby Dick himself.

"You get a good night's sleep tonight," Mr. Miller told me after supper, "and tomorrow morning at three o'clock we'll be up a-headin' for the northeast side of the lake. We'll take a couple of days and camp out and bring back enough fish to feed the whole town."

Dawn next morning found us a good five miles from Orleans, about where Hales Slough is now. What a dawn! A gentle breeze barely wrinkled the lake and the temperature must have been in the high fifties.

There were four of us, all on good horses. Mine was a little sorrel mare Mr. Miller called Fanny for his first wife because, he said, she was so skittish. She was, too—the mare, I mean. As she pranced along I imagined I was Cortez riding an Indian pony across the Isthmus of Panama and having my first look at the Pacific Ocean.

Christmas can be more than just a once a year affair!



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Besides Mr. Miller and me, there was a Mr. Petersen who hoped to sell Uncle John some horses, and an old, old guide called the Parson, who walked on his knees because he had frozen his feet off during the Civil War. He wore big leather knee pads and could even run on them. His saddle had leather loops instead of stirrups and in his Civil War campaign hat and blue denim jacket it was easy to dream up General Sherman riding at the head of his troops through Georgia. But what a fisherman! Mr. Miller told me confidentially that The Parson charged the "dudes" ten dollars a day to guide them on fishing trips around the lake. He also had horses for sale to Uncle John.

Mr. Miller owned a boat around at what is now Angler's Bay and we were in it and out on the lake by seven. I rode in the bow and The Parson gave me a spear to harpoon buffalo. The lake was like glass and after a couple of misses I socked that wicked weapon in the back of the biggest fish I ever saw before or since. Talk about Moby Dick! It took all of us to land it after it had pulled the boat a good half mile by the rope that held my spear. It weighed 68 pounds on Mr. Miller's scales at the stock yards. The biggest large-mouth buffalo ever caught in Spirit weighed 80 pounds.

We came in at noon with a boat load of buffalo and I thought I had never enjoyed a half-day so much. That afternoon found the lake choppy from a southwest breeze and we went out for perch

and northern pike, which they called pickerel at that time.

They gave me a long cane pole with a chalk line and a big hook. Using small minnows for bait, we caught a lot of perch, some of them weighing up to a pound and a half—the best eating I ever had, the way the Parson fried them at camp that night. Then, after rowing clear over to the west side of the lake, we went after northern. They baited my hook with an eight inch perch and I sat there and sat there while my companions brought in the big snake-like pickerel by the dozen. Finally, after the Parson said we'd better start back, I felt something hit my line. "Got one," I cried.

"Probably got his line caught in the anchor chain again," said Mr.

Miller. That had happened seven times but I knew different this time. I braced my feet and held on for dear life. "I got a whale," I cried. "Help me, son body. Quick!"

The Parson took the pole from my straining grasp and almost out of the boat. "He ain't a-joshin' he yelled, as nearly excited as ever saw him.

After what seemed like an hour we got the fish close enough to boat for Mr. Petersen to stick the butt end of his pole through gills and we lifted it into the boat. It was not as big as my buffalo but was the largest pickerel Mr. Miller had ever seen. On his scales it weighed 28 pounds and was under a yard long.

"Talk about beginner's luck

The grading system for the force of the wind is known as Beaufort Wind Scale. It is used by the U. S. Weather Bureau.

Number	Title and Description	Mph
0	calm—smoke rises vertically.....	less than 1
1	light air—smoke drifts.....	1-3
2	slight breeze—leaves rustle.....	4-7
3	gentle breeze—leaves and twigs in motion....	8-12
4	moderate breeze—small branches moved— dust and light paper lifted..	13-18
5	fresh breeze—small trees sway; wavelets form on inland lakes.....	19-24
6	strong breeze—wind whistles in telegraph wires; large branches move.....	25-31
7	high wind—whole trees in motion; walking difficult.....	32-38
8	gale—twigs broken off trees; traffic slowed....	39-46
9	strong gale—chimneys down; roofs damaged..	47-54
10	whole gale—trees uprooted; damage con- siderable.....	55-63
11	storm—damage widespread.....	64-75
12	hurricane.....	above 75