

IOWA STATE TRAVELING LIBRARY
JUN 14



Volume 24

June, 1965

Number 6

PLAY IT PRIMITIVE

Jack Higgins

Take all the outdoor stories you've ever read, stir in your memories of by-gone trips, add a pinch of romance from tales told by pioneers, sprinkle liberally with scenic wonders, and blend together until you no longer can withstand the urge to back-pack across the bluffs and valleys of the Yellow River Forest.

Sound improbable? Well, it's not. It's the stuff that dreams are made of; and 5,256.25 acres are waiting for those who have the ambition to follow a dream to reality.

The perfect place to start such a trek is the Trail Ride Concession Headquarters at the eastern edge of the Paint Creek Unit of the forest. Here, near the loading docks, is a large graveled parking lot. All that is required is to park the car far enough from the docks so that persons using them will encounter no difficulty during our absence.

After leaving the lot we'll have lost the last easy chance to add to our needed supplies, so now's the time to make a quick check. Plenty of water? Enough food, salt, matches? Okay, let's go.

Ignoring the road we came in on, we'll head for the banks of Big Paint Creek, then hike up stream to where it branches. Our first night will be spent far up the valley of the Little Paint, so we take the right fork.

In no time we're under the county road bridge and pausing in its shade for a breather. The part of the valley just crossed is stingy with shade; more like an Alpine meadow than a forest. We've seen the thousands of young seedlings, many of them walnuts. In a few short years, shade will be abundant.

Perhaps Little Paint is the first real trout stream we've ever seen. Even if it isn't, we can't resist the temptation to cool our wrists in its splashing water. There! That sudden flash—a rainbow darting out of its favorite retreat to grab a succulent insect.

Ahead, Little Paint clings closely to the water sculptured rock bluff that lines the west side of the valley. The textured stones are softened by the draping limbs of American yew. A short walk brings us within its protective shadow.

For about a mile we walk up the broad lower end of the valley, passing through several spacious camp and picnic grounds. After fording Little Paint for the second time, we'll be within a five minute hike of a wooden barrier that marks the end of the line for vehicular traffic. Pity those people who are tied to fancy camping rigs and can go no further!

What a difference! The grass is shabbier, less trampled; Little Paint is narrowing, the valley walls are drawing together. Up here, near the northern boundary fence is the place to look for the perfect camp spot. How about those two towering walnuts for stringing our lean-to lines?

We're woodsmen now, so as we go about setting up camp we take extra precautions. When we leave we'll want no one to know that we've been here. Carefully the firepit is dug. The sod is set to one side so it won't be damaged. Enough, and no more, wood is gathered from the forest floor; and when these and other camp chores are finished, we're ready to catch trout for supper.

With the fading of day it's time to retire. As the hustle and bustle of camp activity comes to an abrupt halt, an almost frightening silence falls; then the nocturnal woodland creatures overcome their fears and begin moving about, stealthily at first, 'till with sudden abandon they break into full activity.

Across the creek a raccoon family bursts out of the protection of their den tree; their sharp claws clacking loudly as they slip noisily down the trunk. A doe brings her fawn to the edge of the clearing, just up wind from camp. She pauses, testing the air, before nudging her young one to the edge of the creek. A soft slurping sound carries

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Max Schnepf Photo.

The Yellow River Forest's 5,300 acres of timber and limestone bluffs offer a never-to-be-forgotten back-pack challenge.

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 52,000

COMMISSION MINUTES

May 4, 1965

Lands and Waters

Departmental rules concerning speed and distance zones at Lake Odessa were clarified.

Approval was given for a construction permit to Touristville Boat Company at Clear Lake for the construction of a sea-wall on the applicant's property adjoining state land with various stipulations.

Approval was given for a new concession contract at Lake Wapello with John Augspurger for three years.

A concession contract was granted for a five-year term to James Foster for the Lower Pine Lake Concession.

Fish and Game

Approval was given for an experimental teal season September 11 through 19 for the entire state.

Two options for access to Badger Lake in Monona County were held for future consideration.

Approval was given to exercise an option for 28.5 acres of land in the Hendrickson Area in Story County at a total cost of \$7,987.

The Commission approved Robert Barratt as Superintendent of the Game Section.

The Commission accepted the low bid of \$13,918.70 by J. H. McKlveen and Company of Prairie City, Iowa, for fencing materials for use on game management areas.

Approval was given for a construction permit to the Guthrie County Board of Supervisors to widen a county road located adjacent to Lakin Slough.

Approval was given to exercise an option on 263 acres of land at a total cost of \$54,100 adjacent to Princeton Slough in Scott County.

Approval was given to a low bid of \$15,385 to All-Wheel Drive of Des Moines for a drag line for the Fisheries Section.

The Iowa-Nebraska reciprocal fishing agreement was approved with a provision that fishermen

will be covered by the laws of the state in which they are fishing rather than by the laws of the state in which they were licensed as was previously agreed upon.

County Conservation Board Projects

Black Hawk County received approval for an addition of 19.00 acres of land at a total cost of \$950 to the Black Hawk Green Belt Area to be used as a wildlife habitat.

Lyon County received approval for the acquisition of 5.3 acres of land at a total cost of \$1,000 to be used as a highway safety rest area, fishing access and picnicking, located on U. S. Highway 75 six miles south of Rock Rapids on the Rock River.

O'Brien County received approval for the acquisition of the Bruegmann Gravel Pit, consisting of 10.49 acres from the County Board of Supervisors and 9.29 acres as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Bruegmann, to be used for swimming, fishing, picnicking and camping.

O'Brien County received approval for the acquisition as a gift of .8 acre of land to be called the Porter Wildlife Area.

Polk County received approval for the acquisition of 21.5 acres of land at a total cost of \$5,375 from the Iowa State Highway Commission to be called Beaver Creek Access to be used for fishing access, and boat launching. Located adjacent to Interstate Highways 35 and 80 and the Des Moines River.

Worth County received approval for the acquisition of 7 acres of land at a total cost of \$700 called the Brunsvold Forest and Wildlife Area for the purpose of preserving an established timber area and also the utilization of this land as wildlife habitat.

Worth County received approval for the acquisition of 19.00 acres of land at a total cost of \$1,995 for the purpose of preserving an existing marsh and installing additional planting to improve this area as a wildlife habitat area. Also the acquisition of 6.25 acres of land at a total cost of \$656.25 which is part of this marsh. To be called the Christianson-Taylor Wildlife Area.

Worth County received approval for the acquisition by lease of five acres of land by a 20-year lease for the cost of \$25 for the purpose of preserving a wildlife habitat area adjacent to the Shell Rock River near Northwood.

Buchanan County received approval for a development plan for the Lime Creek Park for fishing access, picnicking and camping.

Cherokee County received approval for a development plan for the Pearse-Little Sioux River Access Area for fishing access and picnicking.

Hancock County received approval for a 25-year management agreement for Eagle Lake State

THE CONSERVATION FORUM

Beginning in the August, 1965, issue of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST, a letters to the editor column—The Conservation Forum—will appear on this page. Readers are invited to inquire about, or express their opinions on conservation matters in Iowa. Space will dictate which and how many letters are used each month, and the CONSERVATIONIST staff reserves the right to make editorial revisions and comment on any subject discussed.

Park which will be subject to State Executive Council approval.

General

Travel was approved to the Midwest State Park Association at Manhattan, Kansas; the Office of the Corps of Engineers at Kansas City, Missouri; the Association of Midwest Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers at St. Louis, Missouri; the American Association for Conservation Information at Sun Valley, Idaho; the National Izaak Walton League Convention at Cody, Wyoming; the Outdoor Writers Association Annual Meeting at Glenwood Springs, Colorado; and the White House Conference on Outdoor Beauty at Washington, D. C.

Informational Items

Report on plans to reprint the **Iowa Fish and Fishing** book; plans for a new outlet structure for Eagle Lake in Hancock County; the repair of the outlet structure for Colyn Slough in Lucas County; emergency construction work on the Klum Lake Levee in Louisa County as a flood protection measure; and a report on the first meeting of the Iowa-Nebraska Boundary Legislative Committee.

REVOLUTIONARY SHOTGUN SHELL

The following item appeared in the Rockford Iowa Register in 1893.

S. W. Crowell gives this interesting event of pioneer days in Ulster Township (Floyd County). He had been hunting one day and returning home with his bag full of prairie chickens, his shot was all gone. In a little pond he saw a flock of mallard ducks—what to do for shot he did not know.

Finally a bright idea struck him and going to a choke cherry tree near by, he took a handful of the cherries and rubbed them between his hands until he had freed the pits. He then rammed down a handful of the pits on to a good charge of powder and crawled upon the ducks getting within 30 feet of them before he fired bagging five ducks.

This is a true story and not to be mixed up with the Washington cherry tree yarn.

MR. BAGLESS OF TRASHBASKET

Amos Q. Bagless of Trashbasket, Iowa, has been presented the "Outstanding Litterer of the Year" award by officials of the State Conservation Commission.

Bagless achieved a new high in littering to become the state's first Four Litter Man. He has developed a new technique for missing trash bags along the state's highways. His five-year-old son in the back of his station wagon and throws a wetbottomed sack full of watermelon rinds at a trash bag can as the car speeds by at 70 miles per hour. The closer the can, the lower the score.

Picnic areas are another of Bagless' specialties. Using his masterful technique, he leaves wet trash bags on the tables, along with a trail of paper on his way to the incinerator. He manages to throw just enough paper in the incinerator to start a good, smoky fire, and then leaves it to smolder by itself.

Another expert litterbug tactic perfected by Bagless after exhaustive research is known as the "message in the bottle" routine. If that water skier hits the empty beer bottle which Bagless tossed casually over the side of his boat, the skier really gets the message!

The crowning achievement which won Bagless the award, however, took place when he developed a new method for damming a stream in the Yellow River Forest. During one weekend camping trip he dumped enough beer cans and garbage into this little trout stream dam up the creek and pollute water for nearly a mile downstream. This not only finished the stream for scenic purposes but it also killed the fish.

Game Warden I. M. Dauntless noticed the dead fish and invited Bagless to explain his refinements to the nearest Just of the Peace. Bagless stated that as a professional he really felt that he didn't deserve any special attention. However, the JP insisted that credit was due and presented Bagless with an award of ten days in the county jail, along with a bill for the award which came to \$1 and court costs.

The moral to this little episode is this:

Mr. Bagless did not win the award being given this year to Iowa game wardens for litterbugging. Too much of our fine scenery and beautiful waters are being ruined by just such stupidity, carelessness and thoughtlessness.

Should you want to qualify for such an award, it can be arranged along with accompanying "honorary" if you are proud of such activities from New Mexico Wildlife

LUNKER BASS ONLY

Ron Schara

depth again by using the plug sounding method.

Big Plugs—Big Fish

Big plugs—big fish—may not be true for all species, but the large-mouth is a glutton and would tackle a blue whale if given the chance. Waldo gives them the chance. He uses large plugs of various designs and actions. He switches plugs often until he finds a plug that bass will hit on a particular day. His reason? "If bass are eating ice cream and you're offering cake; you'd better switch to ice cream too."

Because Waldo fishes bass with artificials and because lunkers are often found in log and stump-filled water, Waldo uses a plug saving device he calls a "plug knocker." It is a device whereby plugs can be unsnagged from the lake bottom. Plug savers are available commercially or they can be home-made. Waldo made one with a plumb bob, a stationer's ring and a long piece of cord string. He attached the ring to the plumb bob and tied one end of the string to the stationer's ring.

When a plug becomes snagged, he moves the boat until he is directly over the snagged plug. He opens the ring binder and closes it around the fishing line. Then, holding on to the fishing line and the string, he lowers the plumb bob until it reaches the plug. With one hand, he holds the fishing line taut. With the other hand, he raises and lowers the string which bounces the plumb bob against the snagged plug. He continues this procedure until the plumb bob dislodges the plug. With this method, he saves many plugs that would ordinarily be lost to the lake bottom.

Fishes Deep Water

Generally, Waldo likes to fish in deep water (10 to 14 feet). However, he varies this depending on where he finds the bass. Part of the reason he fishes deep water is because of the time he prefers to fish. His favorite fishing hours are 10 to 4 in the afternoon. During these daylight hours lunker bass frequent the deeper water. So, as part of his fish where the fish are theory, he fishes the deep water.

Perhaps you can see by now, that Waldo just uses common sense in most of his techniques plus a few "tricks" that help him find and land the big ones that he knew were there. And, lastly, Waldo fishes just for the lunkers... nothing else. "It's sad," Waldo said, "but fishing strictly for lunkers spoils you for normal bass fishing." "I know we could catch some smaller bass over there (he pointed toward the shore), but I can't make myself fish for them," he said. Just then he hooked but lost a bass when it broke the surface. He estimated its weight around six pounds. Waldo just grinned. "I'll lose some and I'll catch some," he said, there'll be another day."

PLAY IT PRIMITIVE—

(Continued from page 41)

above the babble of the stream. A tell-tale clicking of hooves brushing against the rocks signals their use of the invisible trail across the creek and up the opposite slope. And as silver shafts of moonlight thread through the leafy canopy, night birds start to call. Is it any wonder we dream dreams this night?

With first light a blizzard of sound is unleashed. Birds of all types and sizes greet the new day so loudly that further dallying in the warmth of downy sleeping bags is impossible. Besides, that sound of feeding trout coming from Little Paint is impossible to resist. Grab that fly rod and have at it, man, breakfast depends on your skill!

After devouring all the fresh-caught trout, bacon and steaming coffee in sight, it's time to break camp. The fire's doused, the sod is replaced and any other traces of the camp carefully removed. Even by the time packing frames are strapped in place, the grass, so recently crushed by sleeping bags, is starting to reach upward to the sky.

The next stop isn't much more than a half to three-quarters of a mile away as the crow flies; but not being crows means that we'll have to pack it if we're ever to see the other side of the hill. A little backtracking is necessary to get the new trail. Just after crossing the first ford, we turn right, walking around an old iron gate blocking a long forgotten road.

Walk softly here, for surely this must be a preview of heaven. The trees are primordial in appearance—almost completely covered with heavy, ancient moss. Massive pipe stem rocks poke up on both sides of the trail. They, too, are moss covered. Ferns and woodland plants of all kinds crowd the floor and sides of the ravine. It's a gentle walk, and it ends too soon.

A short, yet demanding trek is dead ahead as we turn onto the county road at the head of the trail. Go ahead and groan at that hill stretching upward to the left. It's steep, all right, but the climb will be worthwhile. Just a little way beyond are some breathtaking overlooks. We cache the packs near the direction signs and walk on out. These cliffs, high above the valley of the Big Paint, are for the very brave, and the very cautious, as the fall is nearly perpendicular all the way to the stream bed far below.

We could take a path down the face of the bluff. It's located near the middle of the three overlooks, but instead we decide in favor of the longer route that follows the county road. So, it's back to the cache and up the road that leads past a well established stand of pines. It proves to be a good decision for we spot a pair of ruffed grouse perched on a low branch of a tree.

When we reach the valley floor we turn right and follow the main county road for a short way. We'll eventually desert the road in favor of the railroad tracks that parallel the road at this point, but not until we've taken a close look at a big colony of bank swallows. These darting birds inhabit a sandstone bluff to the right of us.

Leaving the road at this point, we cross over to the railroad right of way. Trains seldom use the tracks, so there is little danger. And even if a train does approach, it's easy to get off the flat right-of-way. The number of song birds that call this stretch of tracks home is astounding. Years of "neglect" have allowed dense thickets of food producing shrubs to grow here. Like all good home owners, the birds noisily scold us for intruding. Quiet actions reassure them, however, and they quickly go back about their business.

It's a hot trip across the bottoms, and the appearance of a way-side up ahead near the bridge over Big Paint speeds our feet. Talk about an inviting spot; this is it! High above the Big Paint, turkey vultures are riding invisible air currents, their sharp eyes scanning every nook and cranny that might contain carrion scraps left over from a kill made by br'er fox. Hold still! Here comes one to investigate our condition. Whoops, must have spotted a movement, for off he goes.

It's about time for us to get underway, too. Another mile or so will get us up beyond the regular camp grounds on Big Paint. There we can cache our packs and cool our feet for awhile, maybe even catch a trout or two for lunch. No sense going for more than that; there'll be plenty of them wanting to be caught around supper time.

In the meantime, let's hike off to the southwest corner of the forest and see what these foresters mean when they talk about "forest management." Without the packs it doesn't take long to go down stream and pick up the trail just west of the Custodian's Quarters. It leads up through a plantation of pines to the top of the bluff. Hey! These guys must have heard that we're pretty poor at identifying trees. Those signs sure help, don't they?

Talk about a bird watcher's paradise; this must be it. Look at the size of that woodpecker, it's as big as a crow! What's the bird guide call it? Pileated Woodpecker? So what if we can't pronounce it? We've seen a spectacular bird before heading back to camp.

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GETTING TO KNOW THE CHANNEL CATFISH

Harry Harrison
Superintendent of Biology

From the standpoint of the Iowa Conservation Commission's fisheries program, the channel catfish has important qualifications that point to our good fortune in having the channel catfish as a resident in our Iowa streams.

The channel cat is a species with a wide tolerance for conditions that normally result in the demise of many other fish species. He lives well under conditions of clear or salty waters; he uses a wide variety of foods which is naturally insurance against specific food shortages; he thrives during floods as well as under conditions of minimum flows; and he is even quite tolerant of pollution. These conditions are the fruits of civilization—they will be with us from now on. It follows, then, that while other species—walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass—continue to diminish or remain in small numbers, the channel catfish will be called upon more and more to meet the needs and desires of an expanding number of stream fishermen.

To meet these needs, channel catfish studies by the Iowa Conservation Commission have been stepped up in the past year with the intention that our efforts will lead ever deeper into their life histories. Currently, catfish are being studied intensively on six Iowa streams, and it is anticipated that a seventh stream will be included during the summer. Information resulting from these investigations will be analyzed to discover which Iowa streams are producing the best populations of catfish. The next step is to determine the "whys." For instance, why do certain streams or areas produce more catfish than others? Why do catfish living in a certain area grow faster than they do in another? What conditions are present in these streams that are absent in others? Can the conditions that promote the well-being of catfish in good areas be duplicated in streams with low populations of catfish?

A part of our current work involves a tagging study. This is a study where you, the catfisherman, can help by making sure that tags from marked catfish get into the hands of Conservation Commission employees.

In our tagging work with the channel catfish, we use a rather unique method of tagging. Whereas most fish tagging studies use markers attached to the exterior of the fish—the jaws, gills, fins, etc.—we employ an internal tag. Our technique involves making a small incision in the fish's belly wall through which a small serial-numbered metal tag is inserted.

The tag floats freely in the cavity containing the intestinal system. To identify tagged fish, we remove the small fatty fin located on its back just ahead of the tail. This appendage, called the adipose fin, is non-functional and will not grow back. It does not harm the fish when removed.

Perhaps you are curious why we use an internal tag—a tag not visible—rather than a tag affixed to the outside of the fish in plain sight. Previous studies show that external markers have a considerable effect upon the normal behavior of the fish carrying them. The internal tags, on the other hand, do not affect the fish in any way.

If you should happen to catch a catfish without an adipose fin, it will contain a tag. We would like you to open the fish and recover the tag. It will be found among the intestines. Along with the number on the tag, we need to know the date the fish was taken, its exact length from the tip of its nose to the tip of the tail, and, as precisely as possible, where it was caught.

What can be learned by these tagging studies? Many important things, such as whether or not catfish migrate; and, if so, whether they migrate upstream or downstream. Tagging studies give information about required seasonal ranges. They tell the story of growth rate—how fast and at what time of the year most growth occurs. They provide figures indicating the size of the population. They indicate how high a population must be to furnish good fishing; and they provide figures on how many fish are caught.

To date, we have tagged over 22,000 catfish. They are in the Little Sioux, Missouri, Des Moines and Lower Skunk Rivers and the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Burlington. We hope to tag an additional 30,000 catfish this summer.

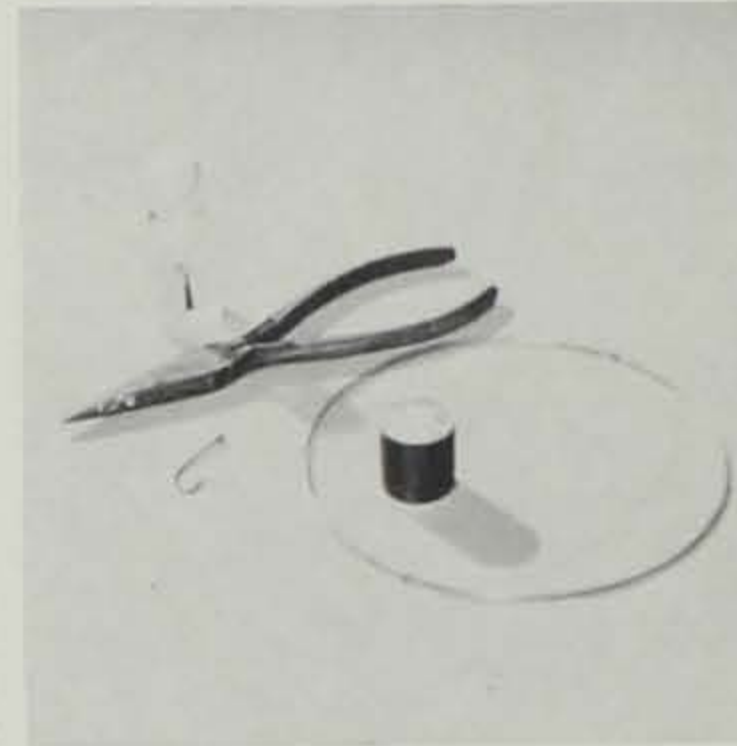
Studies probing deep into the personal life of the channel catfish have been going forward for more than 20 years. Many things have been learned about this versatile species. Fisheries scientists have, in a general way, learned what the catfish eats; how abundant they are in various habitats; where, when and under what conditions they spawn; how fast they grow; how to culture them under artificial conditions and a myriad of other things.

Knowledge derived from the work accomplished to this point shows conclusively that providing more and better catfish fishing in Iowa streams can only come through proper management. To better manage the channel catfish, we must know more precisely what requirements must be met to furnish the catfish the environment best suited to his particular needs. Tagging studies will provide much of this needed information.

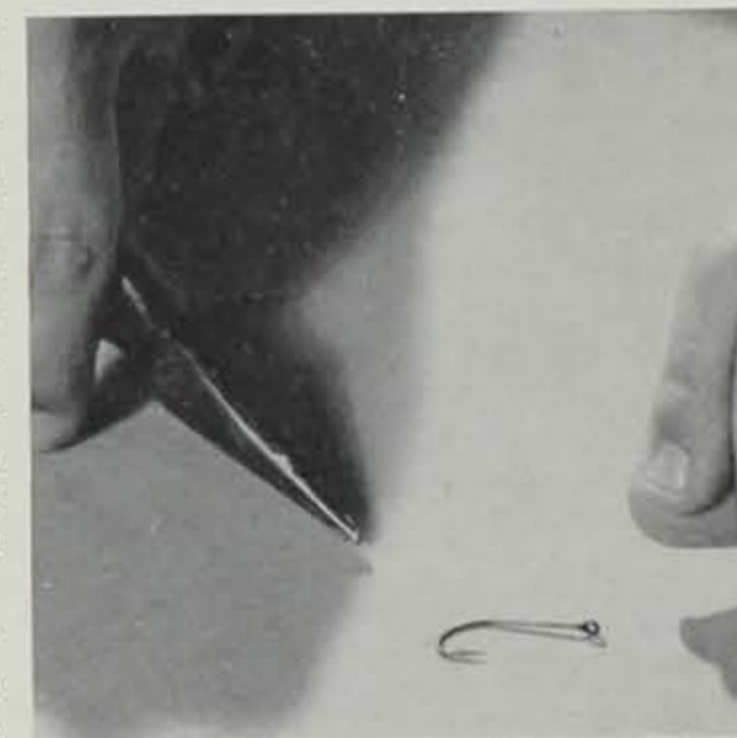
BUILD YOUR OWN WEEDLESS HOOKS

Max Schnepf

Fishermen have produced home-made flies, poppers, plugs, rods and an unbelievable assortment of other fishing tackle and accessories. With the right materials and a little spare time, weedless hooks can be added to this list.



Materials include: a long-nose pliers, hooks (size will depend on type of fishing), very light piano wire, nylon fly tying thread and fly tying cement or a suitable substitute, such as glue, shellac or fingernail polish.



Jim Sherman Photo.

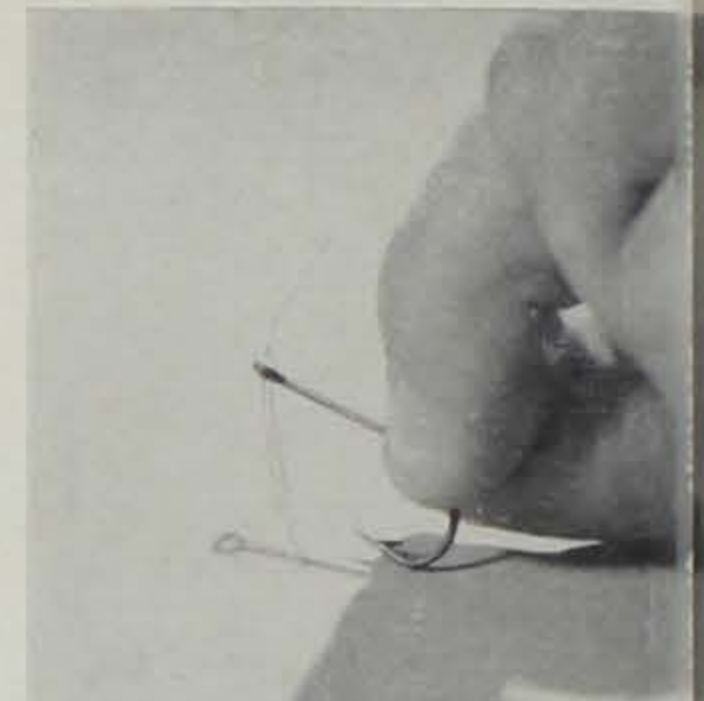
Cut a length of wire approximately four times as long as the hook's shank. Bend the wire at its center point until it is nearly bent double. Gripping the wire with the pliers at the point of bend, make a slight crook about an eighth of an inch from the point of bend.

"CHUMMING"

Chumming a fishing spot isn't anything new to an old time carp fisherman, but for the angler about to start it's a good trick that almost insures early success.

To chum a favorite carp fishing hole, means to throw scraps of your fishing bait into the area a day or two before you come back for the "kill." The increase in food supply caused by your tasty addition to the water attracts carp to the area. Then, when you're ready for business, simply use enough of the same bait to cover a No. 4 or 6 treble hook; plunk it into the water and hold on!

Most carp fishermen use a dough-ball material for chumming and



Run the two free ends of the wire through the hook eye from bottom. Holding the point of bend on the inside of the hook tip, make a gradual curvature in the wire from the tip of the hook to the hook eye. The curvature of wire should be great enough so the outer most point of the curve is below the tip of the hook.



When the correct curvature has been determined, bend the free ends of the wire down along the shank of the hook. Wrap ends to the shank with the fly tying thread, and clip away any excessive wire. Tie the wrapping the shank, then place a drop of cement on the wrapping.

With the wire at its point bend placed on the inside of hook's tip, the hook will easily slide over weeds. When setting the hook following a strike, light wire will be forced up against the hook's shank where it cannot interfere with the hook process.

bait. Here are two reliable dough ball recipes.

1. Combine same quantities (as much as you think you need) of cornmeal and flour. Mix thoroughly and add a few drops of water until the dough is firm. If it crumbles, keep adding water. Roll the dough and cut into lumps large enough to cover hook. If dough will not stay on hook, work one or two wisps of cotton into the dough.
2. Knead one pound of cornmeal, one pound of ground beef, one pound of horse meat and one pound of flour until it combines into a firm dough. Add a few wisps of cotton, cut into small pellets and you're ready to go. Good Luck!

LAZY MAN—LAZY DOG—LAZY HUNT

Ron Schara

Last year, about three hours after the opening of pheasant or quail season, chances are there were a number of disgusted and perplexed dog owners. For weeks they had waited to head for the sloughs only to find that after a few hours hunting their highly-prized pointers and retrievers were lagging behind, tongues hanging out and lungs gasping for air.

If this sounds like your experience last fall, don't give up on the dog. After all, wasn't it you who let the dog loaf and lie around all summer? How could he be expected to give a top-notch performance? Allowing your dog to get rusty on his hunting skills during the summer is not only unfair to the dog (and yourself) but it isn't necessary. Summer and early fall are ideal times to condition your canine for the working months ahead. Doing this gives you a three-fold advantage. The dog acquires new skills; he becomes sharper on the old skills; and, at the same time, his physical condition is improved.

The training methods you use will, of course, be different depending on whether you are a "pointer or retriever man," however, the procedure will be the same. Good training methods are based on repetition and memory. You must keep repeating the thing you want him to do until he associates the action with a particular command. That is the trick to training any dog.

It is never too late to start training. Any dog of any age can learn if he's willing to.

Pointer Tips

As any pointer man knows, his dog must do tremendous amounts of running to hunt effectively. Obviously, a pointer that has lain around all summer will be short on wind, about 10 pounds overweight and cannot be expected to perform all day.

At least once a week during the summer your pointer should be exercised. Beginning in September, exercising sessions should be increased to twice weekly. If your dog is a hunting veteran, most daily exercise and conditioning will be all he'll need in preparation for the hunting season. That's assuming he has not forgotten his field manners, which, of course, can be easily checked during these sessions. It is much better to find these "embarrassing" faults now instead of on the first covey of quail.

If the dog "flash points," tie him to the 50-foot check cord again. A pointer that has learned to hold point before will need but a few lessons to remember it again, especially after he's been snapped back the rope a few times. If you use wild game birds, this type of training must wait. According to Iowa law: "It shall be unlawful to train a bird dog on game in the wild from March 15 to July 15 each year."

If you have only recently joined the ranks of pointer men via a new puppy that was whelped in January or February, he should be old enough to hunt somewhat respectably this fall, but that means some effort on your part this summer. The "how-to" of training a pointer is too detailed to be covered in this story. Obtain a good book on the subject and consult a fellow pointer man for advice. A new book on the market that has received widespread approval is one entitled: **Pointing and Shot** by Robert G. Wehle. It is published by Country Press, Inc., P.O. Box 100, B, Scottsville, New York. Other listings of training books can be obtained by writing: American Field Publishing Company, 222 W. Adams Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Although there are many accepted means of training a pointer, there are some things that must not be done regardless of the training method used. The biggest mistake beginning trainers make is overworking a young dog. Exercise and training sessions are good for a three to four month old pup; but, by all means, do not overdo them. These sessions should be play not work. Five to ten minute sessions are more than enough at first. Anytime your pup shows signs of boredom or stops paying attention to you, stop immediately. In fact, it is preferred that this point is never reached. It is much better to stop while the dog is still eager for more; and, in time, he'll indicate how much serious training he can take during one outing.

This matter of overdoing a dog's training is very important. Your judgment of this may determine whether the dog keeps his desire and aggressiveness. These are the assets you most want to keep in your pointer.

Retriever Tips

A retriever owner has a variety of "things to do" with his dog. New and more difficult types of retrieves can be taught throughout the three to four years of a retriever's life. However, if your retriever has hunting experience of a year or more and you do not wish to add such things as double retrieves, triple retrieves, blind retrieves, and signals, etc., the off-season is still a time to iron out disciplinary retrieving problems encountered last fall. Also, these training sessions will help condition him for hunting this fall.

If you wish to add to his retrieving skills or if the dog has bad habits which you cannot break, a good book or advice from other dog trainers will start you on the right track. A popular book is: **Training Your Retriever** by James Lamb Free. It is published by Coward-McCann Inc., 200 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York.

A puppy that will be 10 to 12 months old by the hunting season should be ready to hunt this fall. If your pup is three to six months old now, you are limited to obedience training. By the time the dog is seven to nine months old, he can be started on short, single retrieves. When to actually start retrieves is a subject of much controversy; and for the most part, you must decide for yourself. Most trainers agree that if you can wait, you'll be money ahead. A dog that is almost a year old is usually eager and ready to learn, which makes the job of training much easier.

Regardless of your desires to quickly teach your pup new lessons, by all means, do not rush him. A ten minute session a day is plenty and you'll find that short sessions will accomplish more than if you work him only once a week for a half hour period. The dog's qualities that you chance to lose by rushing his training are not worth what little is gained. Like pointers, a retriever's desire and aggressiveness are his most valuable assets.

Field Trials

The words "field trial" probably makes you shudder. It shouldn't. The man who has braved entering a trial not only finds it is clean fun but, more important, he receives eight to nine months of enjoyment from his dog rather than just the two month hunting season. And there's nothing like a "bull session" with other trialers to pick up the latest tips and solutions for particular training problems you might have.

Throughout the state there are numerous pointer and retriever clubs that hold their own field trials, so it is not hard to find one to enter. In these trials, there is usually a stake or class for which your dog, by ability and age, will be suited. Don't shy away just because you think your dog will not win. Win or lose, both you and the dog are gaining good experience.

There are entry fees to pay, but they are quite reasonable, and the money is used to finance future trials.

If you don't understand how a trial is run, what stakes there are or what is required of the dog in each stake, attend a trial as a spectator. After watching and talking to the trialers, you'll soon understand the operation.

Working the dog trials is the pinnacle of dog training. And, once you've entered your first trial, you'll be "hooked" from then on.

\$7 RECREATION/CONSERVATION STICKER

Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall recently announced that the new Recreation/Conservation sticker will be sold for \$7. The sticker entitles the driver of a private noncommercial automobile and all his passengers to admission to federal recreation areas for one year beginning April 1. It should mean a considerable saving in admission fees for large families and persons who use federal recreation areas frequently.

The Department of the Interior expects to sell five million stickers this year. The revenue will be set aside in the Land and Water Conservation Fund which was established by Congressional legislation earlier this year. Appropriations from the Fund will be made annually by Congress for federal, state and local recreation needs.

Recreation/Conservation stickers are on sale at federal recreation areas, offices of many federal agencies that manage public recreation areas and Bureau of Outdoor Recreation offices. Single entry or weekly fees may be paid by persons who do not wish to purchase the annual sticker.

The \$7 sticker does not cover fees other than admission charges

Outdoor Recreation



for America

United States Government Federal Recreation Area Annual Permit No. 000,000

for the use of sites, equipment and other facilities, such as camp and trailer sites, picnic sites, boat launching sites, rowboats, motor boats, etc.

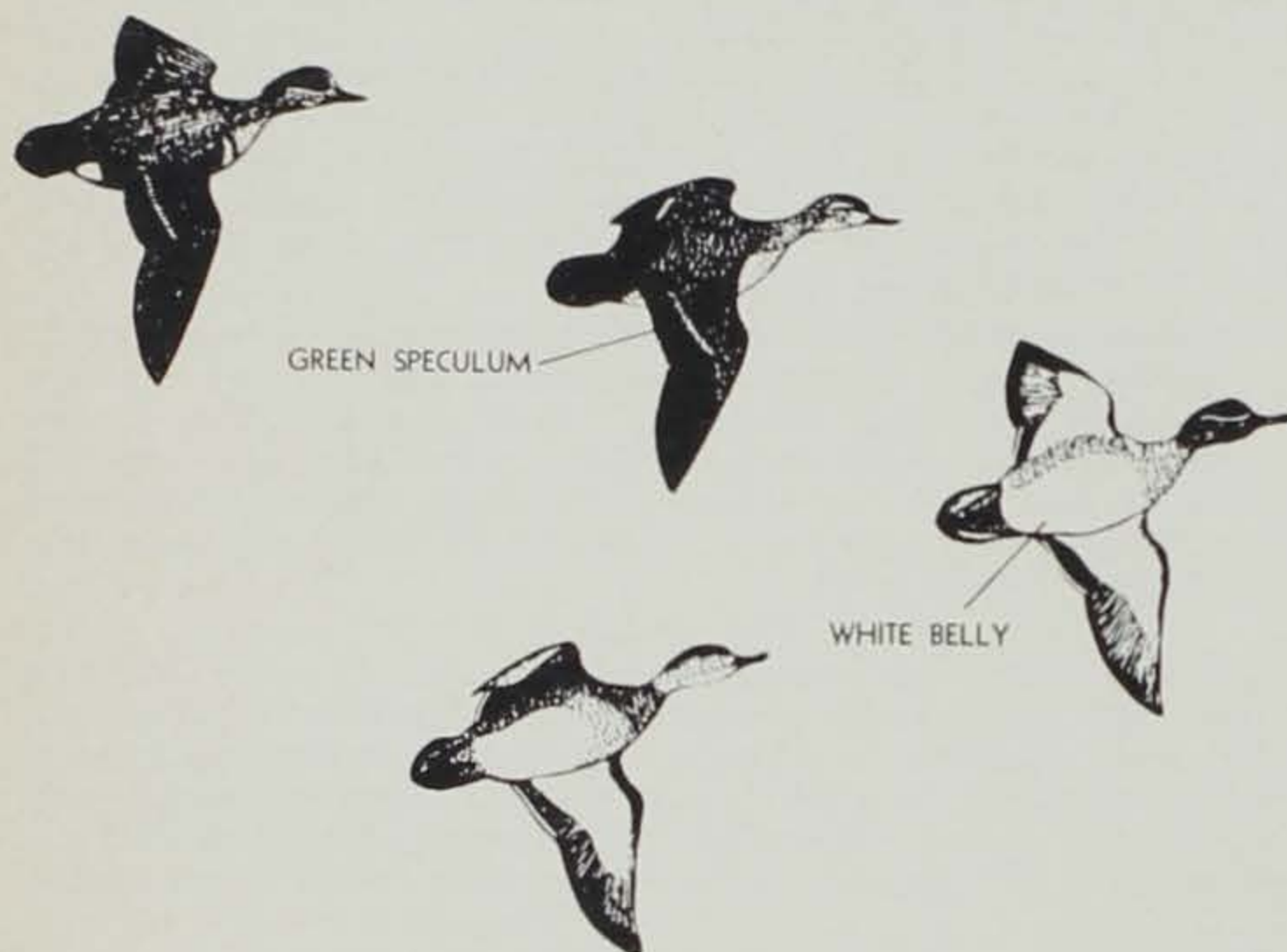
On a canoeing trip, always carry a spare paddle.

When camping, take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints.

Musts for a camping pack are: a pocketknife, water-proofed matches, compass and a first-aid kit.

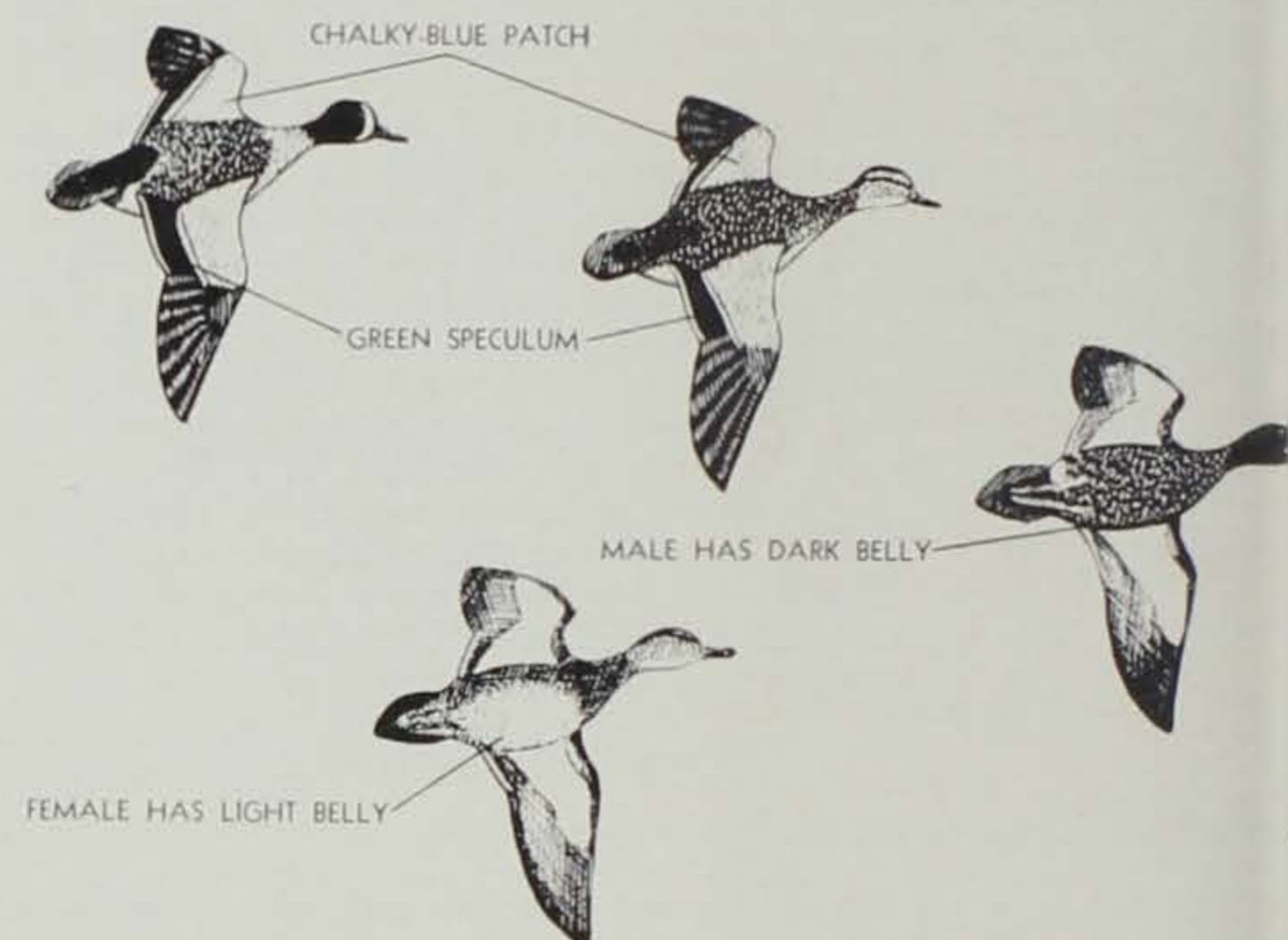
GREEN-WINGED TEAL

(Anas carolinensis)



BLUE-WINGED TEAL

(Anas discors)



DUCK HUNTER'S BONUS

Bob Barratt

Superintendent of Game

For the first time since the war years in the early 1940's, Iowa waterfowl hunters will have an opportunity to hunt ducks this year during the month of September. Does this mean that waterfowl populations have suddenly recovered from the lows of the last few years? The answer to this question is an emphatic "NO." Mallards and other popular species are still in short supply.

In an attempt to provide duck hunting recreation without further endangering species in short supply, waterfowl managers have taken a long look at our over-all duck populations. Research by biologists and game managers in the Mississippi and Central Flyways has shown that most blue-winged teal pass through the flyways before regular duck seasons are held. These small ducks have been subjected to very little hunting pressure. As a result, waterfowl managers proposed that an experimental teal season be held in an effort to determine whether we can provide additional duck hunting without further decimating the numbers of mallards and other endangered species.

Blue-Wings Not Hunted

The gamey blue-winged teal is the most abundant nesting duck in Iowa. During the early fall season it makes up the majority of the waterfowl populations in this state. It is a highly desirable species that is rarely harvested by our hunters because of its early migration habits.

During the years when the duck season opened in mid-October, blue-winged teal made up less than 2 percent of the ducks in the

hunter's bag in an average year. In 1963, Iowa had a split waterfowl season with the first part of the season opening in early October. That season, blue-wings made up approximately 30 percent of the entire "take." In 1964, they comprised about 20 percent of the hunters' bag during the first half of the split season. This indicates that an early season could substantially increase the harvest of this species. In 1963 and 1964, however, we had unusually warm falls; and September frosts had not driven out the blue-wings. Normally our first frosts occur in late September, and the blue-wings leave for warmer climates. Records show that peak populations of blue-winged teal in this state occur between September 15 and September 20.

Since we do not harvest the blue-wings in northern states, it might be assumed that they are taken by hunters in the southern part of the flyway. This is not the case. In the southern states, as in the northern part of the flyway, hunting seasons are largely geared to the mallard migrations. By the time hunters take to the field in Louisiana, the teal are in Central and South America.

Banding Studies

Many thousands of blue-winged teal have been banded over the years in an effort to learn more about the life habits of this bird. Band recoveries for this species are much lower than for most common ducks. There are two possible reasons for this low recovery rate. Either hunters do not report the bands taken from blue-winged teal at the same rate as they do for other species, or they are not shooting blue-wings at the

same rate as they are harvesting other species. Though hunters might report blue-wing bands at a slightly lower rate than those from other ducks, we believe that the difference is largely due to the low kill on this particular species.

A great deal of information can be determined from banding data. Not only does the data tell us the migration patterns of the birds, but it gives us natural mortality rates, hunting mortality rates, distribution patterns, and many other factors which are important to waterfowl management. Blue-winged teal data indicates that a combination of factors is causing a high natural mortality rate for this species. Waterfowl experts believe that mortality from hunting could be substituted to a certain degree for the high natural mortality. In other words, it is believed that the number of birds taken by hunters would have little or no effect on the over-all population for this species. This is the reason for holding this experimental teal season.

Identification a Problem

To evaluate a season of this type, many factors must be considered. Basic consideration, of course, must be given to the effect of hunting upon the teal population; but we must also consider the possible kill of other species due to the hunter's inability to properly identify ducks on the wing. Populations of wood ducks, in particular, will be high at this time of the year; but other species, such as mallards, pintails, wiggeons, redheads and shovellers, will also be found in our marshes and sloughs. Killing these species will seriously jeopardize the experiment.

We must also determine the effects, if any, that experimental hunting of teal would have on pop-

ulations of other ducks normal present during the regular duck hunting season. Perhaps this early hunting will create a disturbance and make poor hunting during the regular season.

We must also determine if waterfowl hunters in Iowa are interested in a special season of this type.

In order to find the solution to the many problems involved, waterfowl technicians will evaluate this experiment carefully. Banding and subsequent recovery bands will provide us with much useful information. Questionnaires; wing collections; field observations; censuses of birds before, during and after the season and other means of collecting data will be employed. All of this information will be carefully studied to determine the success or failure of the experiment.

Season Regulations

To simplify identification of species in the field, all teal will be legal during this experimental season; although it was designed primarily to provide an additional harvest of blue-wings. Green-winged teal normally migrate late in the year. Cinnamon teal, the most indistinguishable from the blue-winged cousins, are rarely seen in Iowa. Since this experimental season is also being conducted in the Central as well as the Mississippi Flyway, the latter species is included.

The State Conservation Commission has approved the following regulations for 1965's experimental teal season:

1. Dates—September 11 through September 19, 1965, both dates inclusive.
2. Shooting hours—sunrise until sunset each day.
3. Daily Bag Limit—four (4) blue-winged teal.

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THE RUFFED GROUSE IN IOWA

Max Schnepf

When willows begin to leaf, the thrill of love touches ruffed grouse like it does all of nature's creatures. Males, with tails fanned and neck ruffs bared, strut atop their drumming logs and woo members of the opposite sex. A quick down-beat of cupped wings produces a resounding "thump" . . . the tempo increases . . . faster and faster the courting male beats his wings against the air until the sound resembles a muffled drum roll. Then it fades and stops.

A hundred and fifty years ago these love-minded bantam drummers proclaimed spring to nearly all of Iowa. They pretty much had the run of things in the Hawkeye State along with the since departed prairie chickens. Then settlers come. Berry-rich hardwood stands that provided food and nesting cover fell before the axe. Livestock nibbled away the protective undergrowth, and the little upland game birds were forced to eat a quick retreat, first eastward then northward.

Today, few people list ruffed grouse among the state's upland game birds; but each spring, mountain pheasants or fool hens, as the old-timers call them, announce nature's annual reawakening from their last stronghold in the picturesque river bluffs and wooded hills of northeast Iowa. Just how many still exist in this woodland domain has been the object of five years of continuing surveys by State Conservation Commission personnel.

In 1960, the Commission's Fish and Game Division outlined its first ruffed grouse study. It had three objectives: 1. Determine the range and population densities of ruffed grouse in Iowa. 2. Re-establish ruffed grouse in areas of the state where habitat exists. 3.

Evaluate the hunting potential of existing ruffed grouse populations.

RANGE AND POPULATION

Since it is impossible to count every individual of a small game population, survey techniques have been developed which measure relative populations. The spring drumming count technique, which capitalizes on the audible love-making displays of ruffed grouse, has been widely used to determine grouse population trends. It was chosen by Conservation Commission personnel to complete the study's first objective.

By systematically counting the number of drumming grouse heard along a pre-determined drumming count route, a population index is obtained which indicates year to year population fluctuations. A drumming count route consists of 15 "stops" approximately one mile apart. At each stop, the person making the count stands outside his car and counts all audible drummings within a four minute period. Routes are run on clear, calm mornings usually in late April and begin 30 minutes before sunrise so peak drumming activity is sure to be encountered. Although the bantam drummers perform periodically throughout the day, they lose much of their ambition within an hour or two after sunrise.

Following preliminary survey work in 1960, seven permanent drumming count routes—four in Allamakee County, two in Winneshiek County and one in Clayton County—were established and run for the first time in 1961. Counts were made over the same seven routes in 1962. Two additional routes, one each in Winneshiek and Clayton Counties, were mapped in 1963 and have been included in the surveys the last three years.

This spring, after five years of drumming count surveys, Conservation Commission personnel feel they have defined the ruffed grouse's range in Iowa and have an idea as to the population den-

sities of these birds. Here are the results.

In 1961, an average of 1.5 drums per stop were recorded over the seven drumming count routes. Nearly the same average has been obtained each year since—1.8 in 1962, 1.7 in 1963, 1.5 in 1964, and 1.7 in 1965. The similarity of the per stop averages indicates a relatively stable grouse population, which is somewhat unusual because grouse populations fluctuate widely in many states.

The most and best grouse habitat in Iowa is in Allamakee, Clayton and Winneshiek Counties. Dubuque, Delaware, Fayette and the northeast corner of Howard County are considered marginal grouse range and constitute the southern and western limits of the little upland game bird's range. There are known to be sizeable populations of these bantam drummers in isolated areas of the marginal counties, however; but a lack of roads near the populated areas prohibits drumming count surveys.

Due to the lack of roads and discontinuous habitat throughout Iowa's grouse range, there is wide variation in the results of counts made. For instance, the highest individual route drumming count to date was recorded on the Yellow River Forest route in 1962—52 drums or an average of 3.5 drums per stop. The same year, Allamakee County's four routes had a composite average of 2.4 drums per stop. In contrast, the two routes in Winneshiek County tallied 1.0 drum per stop; and Clayton County's lone route produced only 0.6 drum per stop. A drum per stop average of 1.5 to 2.0 indicates a good ruffed grouse population.

Despite these wide variations, Iowa's composite drumming count indices compare favorably with drumming count results in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan—states which permit an annual harvest of ruffed grouse. The most important point to remem-

ber when making a comparison, however, is the fact that even though Iowa's counts compare favorably with these better than average grouse states, the total ruffed grouse population in Iowa is relatively low because of limited habitat and range.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT

Grouse are timber dwellers; but they shun dense, mature timber in favor of less dense stands with interspersed clearings. Since much of Iowa was once prime grouse habitat, Commission personnel feel certain these upland game birds can be re-established in the 6,965 acre Shimek Forest and 4,989 acre Stephens Forest, both located in southern Iowa.

Later this summer, a bait trapping program will be conducted in the Yellow River Forest. Hopefully, 50 grouse can be captured, transported and released on the Shimek area in Lee and Van Buren Counties. If the birds "take," a similar release will be made in the future in Stephens Forest located in Lucas and Monroe Counties.

HUNTING POTENTIAL

Although a successful re-establishment program could enhance the hunting potential of ruffed grouse populations, Commission personnel, at this time, are concerned with the potential of existing populations.

Grouse are gallinaceous birds like pheasants and quail. A large population turn-over characteristically occurs each year among gallinaceous species. As high as two-thirds or three-fourths of fall populations are "young of the year." By spring a high percentage of these birds fall victim to predators or the weather because of the lack of cover; consequently, the hunter is used as a management tool to displace natural mortality. In other words, he harvests the annual surplus.

Despite limited cover and rela-

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JACK HUNTER'S BONUS—

(Continued from page 43)

winged, green-winged and cinnamon teal, singly or in the aggregate of these species.

Possession Limit—eight (8) blue-winged, green-winged, and cinnamon teal, singly or in the aggregate of these species.

Permits—Each hunter must have on his person while hunting a valid special teal hunting permit. (In addition to the regular hunting license and waterfowl stamp as required.) There will be no charge for permits.

Applications—Each person desiring to obtain a special teal hunting permit must make application to the State Conservation Commission, East 7th & Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, on forms furnished by the Commission. Such applications

shall be postmarked not later than midnight, C.D.T., July 31, 1965, or delivered to the offices of the Commission not later than 4:30 p.m., C.D.T., July 30, 1965.

7. Area—Entire State.

Application forms will be available at most places where hunting licenses are sold. They can also be obtained from the Des Moines Office of the State Conservation Commission.

The primary purpose of the special teal hunting permit is to provide waterfowl managers with the names and addresses of those participating in the experiment. Permit holders can then be contacted to provide the necessary data to evaluate the season. Some will receive a special questionnaire; others may receive wing collection envelopes and will be asked to put one wing of each bird they will kill into the envelope and drop it

in the mail. Still others will be interviewed to determine their reactions to the special season.

A season of this type could provide Iowa waterfowlers with much needed additional recreation. The success or failure of the experiment depends largely on the reaction of hunters in the field. If the season is to become an annual affair, it will be necessary for hunters to learn to identify the different kinds of ducks. Those who cannot identify the various species should refrain from hunting during this season. If hunters show they can identify teal correctly and harvest only this species, there is a good possibility that other experiments of this nature may be attempted in the future. If they cannot distinguish between the various species and kill other kinds of ducks, species management experiments, such as this, are probably doomed.

Hunters will be watched closely in the field by both State and Federal personnel. Persons taking ducks other than teal, will be prosecuted, if apprehended. Remember, the success of this experiment depends upon the duck hunter.

Lest it be confusing to the average duck hunter, it should be pointed out that this experimental teal season will not have a bearing on our regular duck season. This is a separate season entirely and is not a split part of the regular duck season. This experimental season is a bonus for those hunters who are cooperative and can properly identify the various species.

If we are to continue the tradition of waterfowling, we must be able to manage the individual species. Gone are the days when it was sufficient to identify ducks as big ducks or little ducks. Now, we must be able to tell the exact kind.

RUFFED GROUSE IN IOWA—

(Continued from page 47)

tively low, numerical grouse populations in Iowa, a harvestable surplus may exist. Furthermore, limited hunting could create a healthy situation by forcing the bantam drummers into fringe areas. This has occurred in the case of both deer and Hungarian partridge in Iowa.

Later this fall, Commission personnel will begin the task of evaluating the hunting potential of existing grouse populations.

PLAY IT PRIMITIVE—

(Continued from page 46)

The trail to the third and final camp spot takes us through the southeastern portion of the unit. We pick up the trail behind the sawmill by turning left and following the old county road. Since cars and trucks still use this narrow old road, we stay alert for cars coming from either direction. The route eventually brings us to the fire tower area where we can rest for awhile.

Ahead is a walking path that leads through a short stretch of hardwood. It was in this area that wild turkeys were released a few years back, and this remains one of their favorite haunts. If our approach was quiet enough, we may catch a fleeting glimpse of some of them as they walk sedately across the path. We'd better be prepared to take pictures of them; we'll get no second chance.

Reaching the clearing at the end of this hardwood timber, we shuck our packs and cache them near the trail. There's an interesting walking path off to our right. It leads through experimental pine plantations and down to one of the 22 ponds that have been constructed in Yellow River.

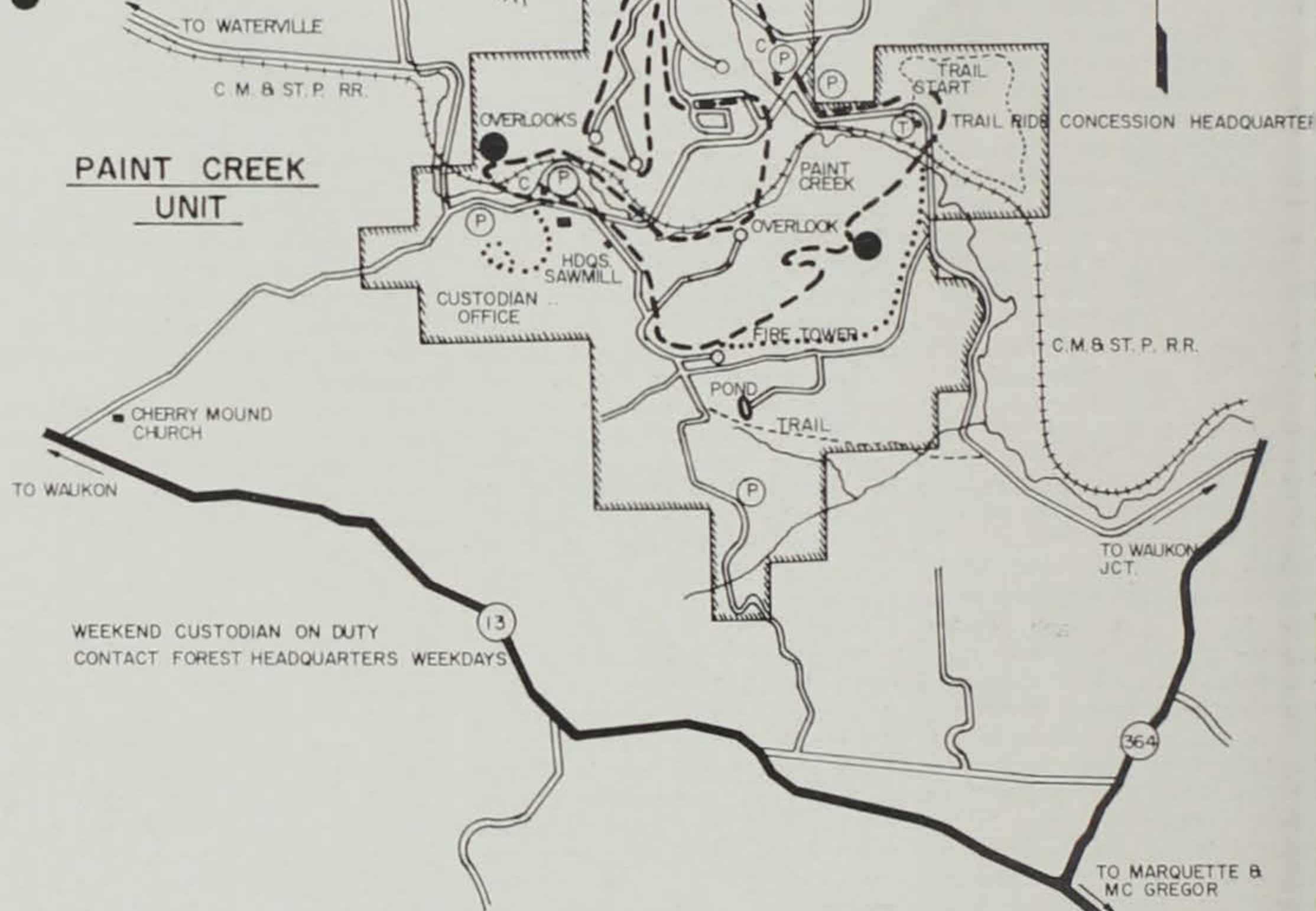
The ponds serve two purposes. First, they have helped end erosion problems, and second, they store water at the top of the hills thereby making them more attractive to wildlife. They contain no fish, so we leave our tackle with the packs.

The edges of the ponds are rich with tracks and offer a good chance at practicing identification. Near this particular pond is an old wooden structure that served as a feeding station for the turkeys when they were first released. The platform is a good seven foot off the ground. You figure out how they used it!

After picking up our packs, we head out across the grass clearing, veering left up and over the knob of a slight rise. To the right is a newer pond centered between two long stretches of erosion control work creating a huge "V". Our trail leads along the left embankment and beyond to where the ridge narrows once more. It's been years since this portion has been used by wheeled traffic, so the marks are faint.

LEGEND

- ⑬ STATE ROAD
- ROCK SURFACED ROAD
- ▨ STATE LAND
- - - TRAILS
- RAILROAD
- (P) PICNIC AREAS
- (C) CAMPING AREAS
- (T) UNLOADING DOCK-TRAIL RIDERS
- - - FOOT TRAIL
- - - FOOT TRAIL (ALTERNATE)
- LATRINE
- BACKPACK STOP



The heavy dotted line labeled "foot trail" indicates the author's path during his three-day journey. This trail is not marked. Many other trails, some of which are marked, can be used by campers and hikers in the Yellow River Forest.

Eventually we will be confronted with an old wooden gate. The fence has been removed, however, so an easy jog to the left brings us back to the trail. The path follows the ridge and is flat and comfortable.

At the tip of the bluff is a chimney rock around which the old lumber trail makes a hair pin curve, the first of several that eventually leads us back down to the meadowed valley of the Big Paint. We'd better enjoy our final camping spot. On the morrow we'll have to ford the stream and hike the final mile to our car.

Your Equipment

What do you need to make this dream trip come true? In addition to the pack and frame you'll need a lightweight tent or plastic tarp for ground and overhead cover, sleeping bag, air mattress, cooking utensils, lightweight dishes, food: 1½ pounds per person per day, an extra pair of jeans, two long sleeved cotton shirts, a sweat shirt, two changes of wool socks, underwear, camp shoes and socks, rain gear, handkerchiefs, flashlight (extra batteries and bulbs), first aid kit (make your

own and includes a snake bite kit), bug dope, map (wrap it in plastic), suntan lotion, dark glasses, nylon rope (50 foot per person), toilet tissue, trowel, knife, hatchet, small pliers, matches (dip them in paraffin), soap, towel, needle and thread, safety pins and canteens.

It sounds like a tremendous amount to carry, but it really isn't. Just make sure that each item is the lightest made and that it contains no excess weight. For instance, some say to cut excess inches off toothbrushes to save weight, or never leave food wrapped in cardboard (re-wrap it in plastic) to save extra ounces.

Then, if you're a family going out on a back-pack trip, you can distribute the weight among campers. Women can carry 30 to 35 pounds, whereas a man can carry 40 to 50 pounds. Kids are usually in much better condition than adults, so they can easily heft 20 to 30 pounds (from nine years on up). When you figure weight distribution be sure that you count all items, including the things you'll hang from your belt, around your neck, or carry in your hands.

Even though the Paint Creek

Unit has been kept as primitive as possible, you shouldn't encounter too many difficulties. As far as the trip outlined above is concerned there is little danger of getting lost, especially if you keep close to the outline until you've got your bearings. The major problem will be water. There is only one source of safe drinking water, and that's at the sawmill. You'll want to pack two small canteens per person; and even then it will be necessary to go on rations times. If you run out of water and you're too far from a pure source, take standard purification procedures (boiling or purification tablets) before using water obtained from open sources.

Back-packing is a free lance operation. The forest contains many markers indicating where packers may go. This makes it a sport that is not only imaginative, but full of freedom for the individual. After becoming trail hardened your packing experiences will be limited only by your imagination. And believe me, once you've started to unearth Yellow River's hidden secrets, you'll search out many more.