



Volume 25

February, 1966

Number 2

PHEASANTS DON'T MIGRATE

That's Why They Need Winter Cover...

Richard Nomsen
Game Biologist

How often have you heard and read about "Habitat Improvement," "Habitat Restoration," "Game Habitat," etc., during the past year? What did you think about—or more important, what did **you** do? Game habitat includes all types of cover such as escape cover, cover for food, and cover to rear young. But, as the title indicates, this article is concerned with **winter cover for pheasants.**

In much of Iowa's primary pheasant range, the pheasants' existence depends upon the farmstead windbreaks during the blustery winter months. When blizzards occur, windbreaks will often mean the difference between survival and death of pheasants on the farm.

Pheasants are hardy game birds and can easily withstand the rugged Iowa winters **if proper cover is available.** Ring-necks **did** survive the severe March storm of 1965 **if** they were fortunate enough to be in safe winter cover. Unfortunately the number and quality of farmstead windbreaks are being reduced each year. This is our problem—NOW—**what can we do about it?**

The new G-1(A) practice administered by the A.S.C.S. is designed to provide safe winter habitat for pheasants and other wildlife. This program allows the planting of shrubs around existing windbreaks. Two or three rows of honeysuckle around a windbreak puts cover where it is needed—close to the ground. Sub-zero winds and blowing snow are stopped, providing a safe shelter for next year's nesting birds. Federal cost sharing includes 80 percent (up to \$200) of the cost of shrubs, seedbed preparation and planting costs. We now have the financing needed for this job.

However—we still need you!

If we are to succeed, your help is a must—to advertise, inform, create interest and to help with the actual planting. This conservation project offers unlimited opportunity for the many Sportsmen Clubs, Service Organizations, 4-H Clubs, F.F.A. Groups, Boy Scouts and interested individuals. Offer your help wherever it is needed.

Habitat improvement is a long term investment—results will not be apparent for several years. But the importance of adequate winter cover is evident, and with fewer farms and more intensive agriculture in the future, the value of farm windbreaks as wildlife shelter will increase.



These pheasants had good cover in this grader ditch until it started filling with snow. With about half the ditch already filled, their chances for survival have been greatly reduced.

Remember—It's much too late for action once the blizzard starts—make plans now for planting shrubs next Spring.

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 54,562

COMMISSION MINUTES

January 4 and 5, 1966

Des Moines, Iowa

The Commission met with representatives of the Corps of Engineers Office to review the proposed Davids Creek reservoir near Exira and agreed to write a letter stating the Commission's intent to participate in the recreational development of that area.

Mr. Tory Nodland of Spirit Lake met with the Commission to discuss a possible lagoon and housing development to be located on East Okoboji and a possible lagoon and housing development to be located on West Okoboji Lake.

A group of people from the Monticello area presented a proposal for a lake development on the Wapsipinicon River in Jones County to be called the Indian Bluffs area. The Commission instructed the superintendent of engineering to investigate the possibility of the plan.

FISH AND GAME

The Commission directed the staff to investigate a site for a small fishing lake in Tama County.

Approval was given for the construction of a service building at the Boone research and exhibit station at a total cost of \$5,600.00.

Construction of a new water intake in the bed of Clear Lake for the Clear Lake Fish Hatchery was approved.

A statement opposing the straightening of Perry Creek in Plymouth County as a flood control project was approved for presentation at a Corps of Engineers hearing.

A change in the proposed use of land involved in the Dudgeon Lake trade with the Izaak Walton League in Benton County was approved.

The staff was instructed to try further negotiations for the acquisition of a 103 acre tract of land in the Hendrickson Marsh Area.

Earl Rose, chief of fish and game received commendation from the Commission for his outstanding efforts in preserving the wildlife assets of the big Sioux River area.

LANDS AND WATERS

The staff was asked to study a proposal by the Highway Commission to dam Wolf Creek where Interstate No. 35 crosses it, north of Ames, instead of bridging it.

Approval was given to exercise an option for purchase of 164 acres of land adjacent to Lake of Three Fires State Park at a total cost of \$23,000.00. Approval was also given to another option for 90 acres of land adjacent to Lake of Three Fires at a total cost of \$16,000.00. Authorization was given for an exchange of 20 acres of property owned by Vernon Cox for a similar amount of property which will be bought under the preceding two options.

Approval was given for a construction permit with certain stipulations concerning oil spillage to Tuloma Gas Products Company to build a dock along the Mississippi River at Mile 399.4 just below Burlington for the purpose of unloading liquids.

Approval was given for a dredging permit in the Mississippi River to the Dubuque County Conservation Board after agreement with the staff on certain specifications.

Director Everett Speaker gave a progress report concerning work to be done on the road around Lake Manawa.

Authorization was given for the Waters Section to regulate removal of boats from natural lakes.

COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD PROJECTS

Carroll County received approval for a development plan at Swan Lake Park which would provide a new concession building and remodeling of an existing building for a shower and latrine.

Pocahontas County received approval for the acquisition of 2.33 acres of land as a gift for the purpose of developing a wildlife habitat area near the town of Rolfe.

Polk County received approval for the acquisition of 60.76 acres of additional land at the proposed Camp Creek Park, 16 miles northeast of downtown Des Moines at a total cost of \$21,586.93.

Sac County received approval for the addition of 40 acres to the Reiff Highway Safety Rest and Wildlife Area at a total cost of \$8,250.00.

Wright County received approval for development plan which calls for planting on three farm-game habitat areas which are now under lease.

The County Conservation Activities Director gave a report on the Oakland Mills Dam hearing.

GENERAL

Travel was approved for a special meeting of the Mississippi Flyway Council at St. Louis; production and distribution of Federal and State Fish Hatchery Meeting at Yankton, South Dakota; Shooting Preserve Meeting at Milwaukee; to pick up wild Turkeys in Nebraska; to consult with the

Conservation Forum

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is \$1.00 for a 24 month subscription to the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST.

If you could send the brochures as heavily perfumed as the subscription blank I think you could talk me into purchasing about a dozen subscriptions. The perfume certainly beats the odors of the rice paddies and what not here in Viet Nam.

D. L. J., YN2, USN

FPO San Francisco, California

We checked this one out, and the best answer we can find is that the gal who stuffed the material into the Yeoman's envelope had just put some hand cream on. We're glad to have had some opportunity to brighten this fighting man's days.—Editor.

Gentlemen:

I hope that you will give every consideration to removing the open season on fox hunting in the counties such as ours that have a lot of open country. We use to have a fox or two in many sections of land around here, but they are getting very scarce. I sincerely believe that with the decline of the laying flocks in Iowa, along with the fact that remaining flocks are usually confined, that the fox does immense good in keeping small rodents such as ground squirrels, muskats that leave the creek areas, mice, etc. in check and balance with nature. It would appear that the high powered rifle and field glasses have replaced the greyhound and that the fox is in danger of extinction in the open country.

L. J. H.

Halbur, Iowa

(Continued on page 14)

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Twenty-five years ago this month, Volume I, Number I of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST came off the press. To some, this reminder of the passage of time may strike a strong spark of nostalgia. To those of us who work on each monthly issue, it merely serves notice that the task of informing the public is timeless.

The first issue carried an announcement of purpose which read in part: "... the purpose of this bulletin [is] to aid the field force sell conservation cooperation to the people of Iowa by familiarizing them with the program and techniques of the State Conservation Commission, thereby strengthening the program of wise use in this state."

The statement concluded with a "... hope you will find it [the magazine] of sufficient interest and value to warrant its continued publication."

Time is the yardstick by which all mankind's endeavors are measured. In looking back over the years of growth and development of the magazine, we feel a sense of pride in not only maintaining the goals set forth by the original CONSERVATIONIST staff, but in perhaps strengthening them.

As the magazine enters its 25th year, we respectfully rededicate ourselves to the ideals of our predecessors.

—JH

Federal Department of Labor concerning neighboring Youth Corps at Kansas City.

The Director gave a report concerning progress of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Plan. A report was given concerning the proposed neighborhood Youth Corps Program by the State Forester.

The Commission asked the Staff to present a report on lands available for game cover and food planting along the Missouri River at a future meeting. The Director was authorized to enter into a contract with Larry Hart for professional services.

The eyes of most birds have very limited mobility. In the case of the owl, the eyes are immovable, being permanently fixed in the socket.

The oldest known fossil of a bird skeleton is estimated to be 130,000,000 years old. It was found in Bavaria in 1861.

There are more than one million licensed women hunters in the United States.

Bobwhite quail have an annual mortality rate of about 80 percent whether they are hunted or not.



Jim Sherman Photo.

The snow stopping qualities of shrubs is appreciated by all who live on a farmstead—be it a bunny, pheasant, livestock herds or the farmer who finds he has less snow removal work to do.

The "Hows" of Successful Plantings

Gene Hertel

Assistant State Forester

Pheasants need winter cover!

We have heard this statement often, and seldom, if ever, a contrary view. It is also said that northern Iowa, the prime pheasant range in the state, is most lacking in this essential part of the pheasant's home-life.

The farm owner is in the best possible position to help the situation by providing winter cover for the birds. Practically all of the pheasant's range is in private ownership and any extensive program, to be successful, must be placed on these lands. Whether this is done in farmstead windbreaks, as discussed in another article in this issue, or at any other location on the farm, there are several things which can be done to insure a successful planting.

Some thought should first be given to the area to be planted. Such things as soil type, drainage, fertility and soil depth should be considered, as these factors have a bearing upon the choice of plants you will use. The assistance of the Soil Conservation Service, Extension Service, or Conservation Officers of the Conservation Commission may be sought in this study.

The choice of shrubs is the next logical step. In general, any plant will do better on fertile, well drained soil. If your site proves to be either wet or extremely dry, special care must be used in selecting the species to plant. For example, you may wish to plant Russian Olive on dry sites and some form of willow on very wet sites.

The preparation of the ground prior to planting is the next important step. Fall plowing is usually the best method to use. Successful planting preparations can be carried out in the spring, however. At any rate, plowing is essential if a good seedbed is to be obtained. The absence of clods makes it easier to plant, and insures essential root-soil contact. Of course, the primary purpose of ground preparation is to eliminate competition from weeds and grass. Weed plants will rob the shrubs of needed water and soil nutrients and eventually make a carefully planted area a dismal failure.

Spacing of rows is another important consideration. Tall growing shrubs should not be planted close to low growing ones, especially where the larger ones will eventually shade the smaller. Plants should be given enough space to develop more or less naturally. If they are crowded, only part of the plants will survive, and those which do will be somewhat stunted. Wherever practical, spacing should be determined by the equipment which is available for care after planting. This may mean spacing the plants so that it is possible to mow between the rows, or spacing to permit cultivation.

Fertilization would be a considerable help to wildlife shrubs in the early years. Either apply a complete fertilizer to the area at the time of preparation, or plan on top dressing in subsequent years. It is also best to apply a rate of fertilizer as determined by soil tests or by experience locally with the soils in question.

All too often, the steps outlined here are followed at planting time and then forgotten. When this happens, the plantings often fail. If



Jack Kirstein Photo.

Cultivation and pruning help insure a pleasant return on an investment in shrub rows.

the effort put into the planting is to pay off, you must plan to watch their development carefully.

Protection from livestock is essential, and a plan for fencing the area should be part of the project. Not only do the animals eat the foliage, but they compact the ground and trample the seedlings.

To reserve the growth elements of the site for the shrubs, grass and weeds must be kept from the area. Cultivation may be the easiest answer, as this type of equipment is usually available to landowners. Mowing is another possibility. However, mowing does leave competing weeds and grasses around the shrubs, whereas cultivation will nearly eliminate them. Chemical weed control is another possibility; they must be chosen with care, however. Chemicals are especially effective during wet periods when it is impossible to use other methods.

Irrigation at the time of planting or during the growing season is not usually necessary with this type of planting. It stands to reason, though, that in periods of extreme drought, watering could save the plants. With deciduous shrubs this is usually unnecessary because they have the ability to wilt and drop leaves early and still recover with subsequent rainfall.

Wildlife cover plantings which can mean life or death to pheasants and other game during severe winter storms can be started cheaply. Wherever the planting is made on the farm, it will be a source of beauty and satisfaction to those who plant. In so managing the land we can make Iowa a more beautiful and pleasant state in which to live.

IOWA BIG FISH RECORDS

Jack Higgins

How do you evaluate a fishing year that saw fewer all time record entries, but more entries of really big fish? This was the problem that loomed high on the horizon as the deadline date for entries in the Iowa Big Fish Records approached and passed. The consensus remains the same: 1965 was a most unusual fishing year.

Forty-four anglers submitted proof of their skills, yet only four of them shattered standing records. Of the four, three were women. And of the three women, two shared honors on the same fish!

To save the male ego, we can report that a man landed the largest fish ever entered in the records books. He is Roger Fairchild of Coralville who on July 12 landed a 62 pound flathead cat after a 2 hour, 10 minute battle. Fairchild's challenging fight took place south of the Power Plant on the Iowa River in Coralville. This record sized cat scuttles the tales that the really big fish can be found only in the border rivers.

Grace Holtzman and Ann Racobs of Council Bluffs were within 3 pounds, 3 ounces of matching Fairchild's lunker. The two women brought in a 58 pound, 13 ounce paddlefish from beneath the Ak-Sar-Ben Bridge in Council Bluffs on October 9. Although the fish took the baited hook on Grace's line, we are entering both women on a shared honors basis because of the unusual circumstances surrounding the landing of the fish.

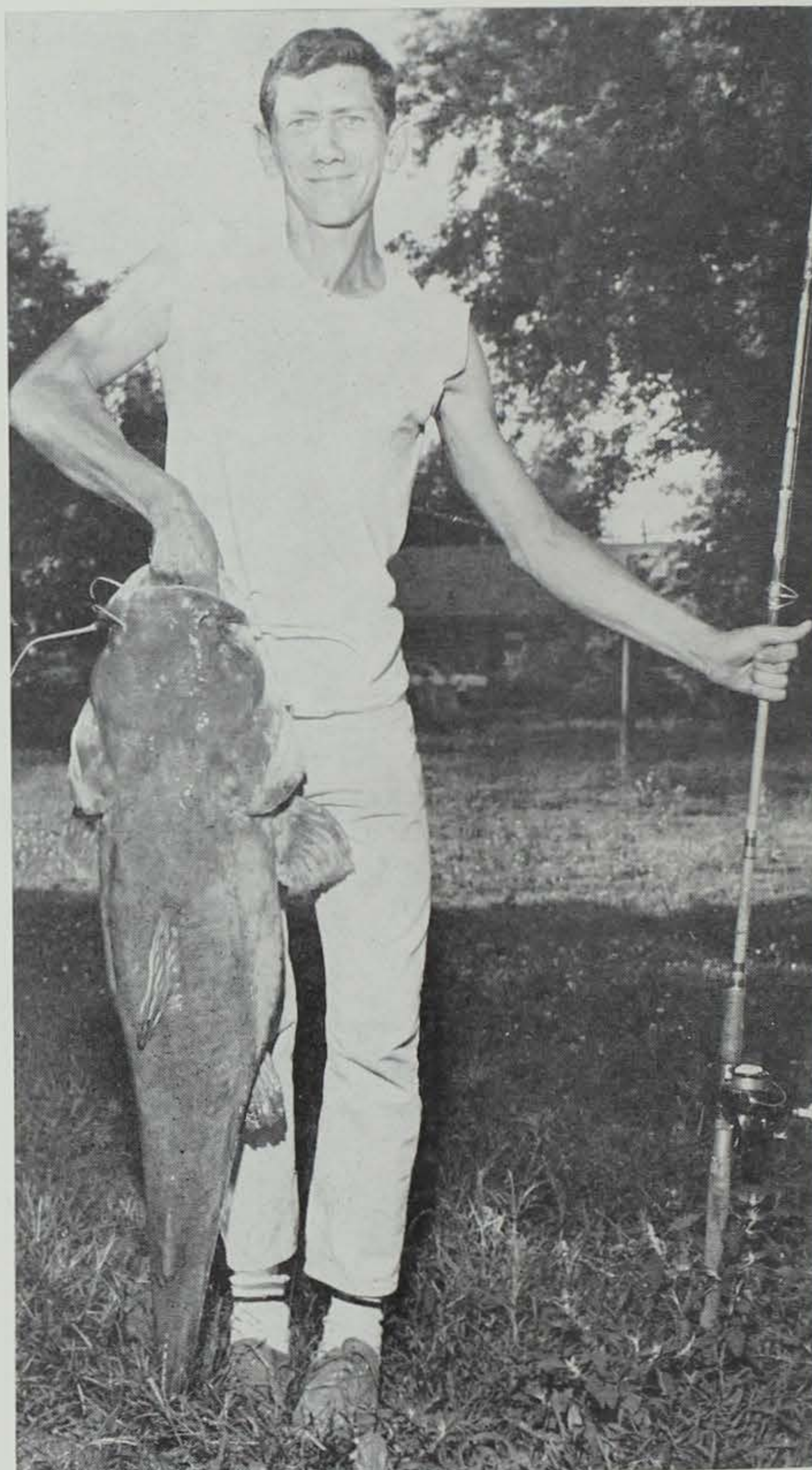
According to published accounts, the angered fish pulled Grace into the Missouri River shortly after she set the hook. Grace's friend, Ann Racobs, followed her into the Mighty Mo and helped subdue the fish in a fight that lasted thirty minutes.

The other woman who captured all time record honors in 1965 was Mrs. Mary E. Jones of Des Moines. Mary's name entered the record

(Continued on page 14)



John Meyer's Brown Trout



Courtesy of Iowa City Press Citizen.

Roger Fairchild's Flathead Cat



Mary Jones' Northern



Courtesy of Herald-Observer, Logan.
John Scott's Bullhead



Grace Holtzman's and Ann Racobs' Paddlefish

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LeRoy Morton's Walleye



Roger Irving's Bluegill



Paul Hanrahan's Largemouth Bass

1965 RECORD FISH

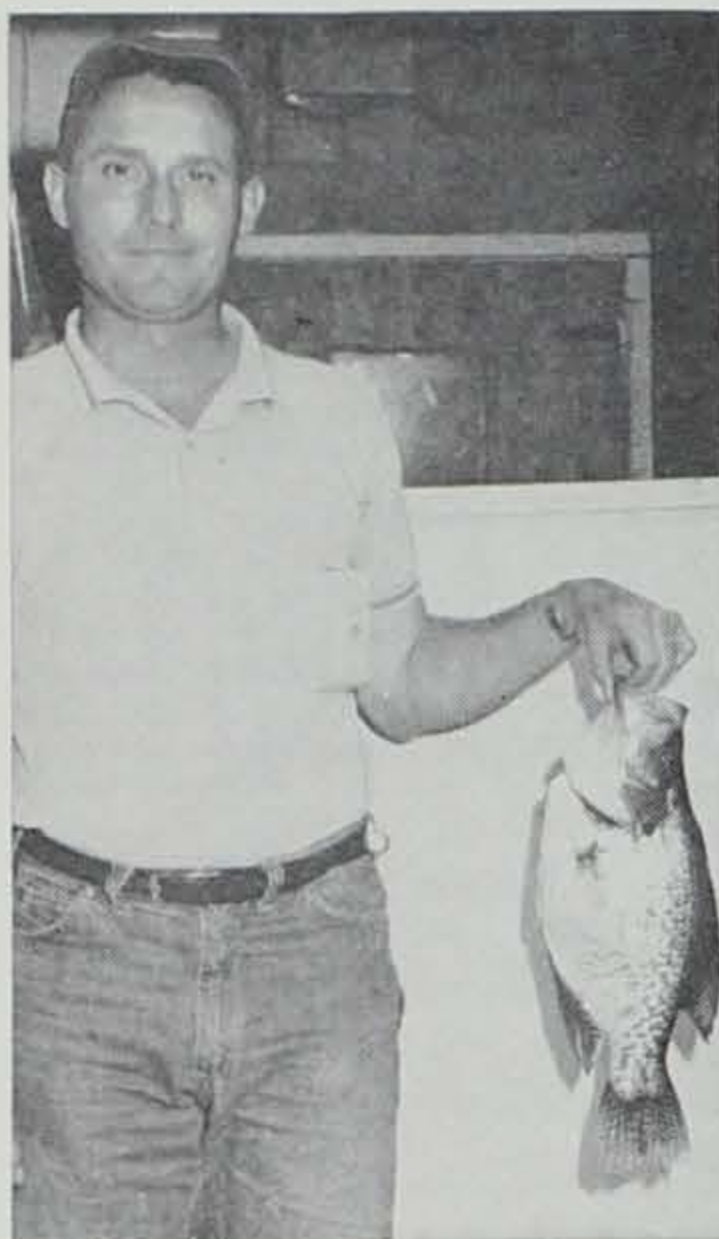
Species	Weight	Length	Where caught County	Date	Angler
Bass (Largemouth)	7 lb. 10 oz.	23 1/2"	Geode Lake Des Moines	June 5	Paul J. Hanrahan Burlington
	7 lb. 4 1/2 oz.	25 "	Lacey-Keosauqua Van Buren	May 6	J. Don Brown Fairfield
	7 lb. 0 oz.	23 "	Coon Valley Gravel Pits Polk	December 6	M. W. Dwyer Des Moines
	7 lb. 0 oz.	22 "	Clear Lake Dickinson	May 19	Frank Martin Marshalltown
Bass (Smallmouth)	5 lb. 3 oz.	21 1/4"	West Okoboji Dickinson	February 6	Walter Thompson Spirit Lake
	4 lb. 11 oz.	21 "	West Okoboji Dickinson	October 23	E. J. Ketchen Laurens
Bluegill	1 lb. 2 oz.	10 "	Farm Pond Lucas	July 3	Roger Irving Chariton
Brown Trout	7 lb. 3 oz.	25 "	Spring Creek Mitchell	October 3	John Meyers Charles City
	3 lb. 1 1/2 oz.	19 1/2"	Waterloo Creek Allamakee	July 22	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
Bullhead	3 lb. 5 oz.	17 "	Sawmill Hollow Harrison	July 13	John Scott Magnolia
	2 lb. 11 oz.	17 1/4"	Farm Pond Montgomery	May 20	Dick Johnson Red Oak
Carp	25 lb. 0 oz.	34 "	Cedar Lake Linn	November 19	George A. Jirouch Cedar Rapids
Channel Cat	20 lb. 4 oz.	33 "	Farm Pond Taylor	June 20	Howard R. Clark Bedford
	19 lb. 14 oz.	32 "	Lake MacBride Johnson	July 9	Harry Kral Solon
Crappie	3 lb. 8 oz.	17 1/4"	Lime Lake Benton	June 2	Kessler Clark Brandon
	2 lb. 9 oz.	16 1/4"	Des Moines River Pond Boone	November 12	Dick Houser Boone
	2 lb. 1 oz.	16 "	Gravel Pit Polk	April 11	Gerald R. Kuper Des Moines
	2 lb. 0 oz.	15 1/2"	Colyn Lucas	October 2	Hersel W. Smith
Flathead Cat	*62 lb.		Iowa River Johnson	July 12	Roger Fairchild Coralville
Northern	*20 lb. 0 oz.	47 "	Spirit Lake Dickinson	June 15	Mary E. Jones Des Moines
	16 lb. 12 oz.	40 "	West Okoboji Dickinson	February 5	Harry Schnell Terrell
	16 lb. 4 oz.	41 "	West Okoboji Dickinson	February 5	Jack Platter Estherville
	14 lb. 0 oz.	39 "	Twin Lakes Calhoun	September 25	Thomas Arthur Eagle Grove
	13 lb. 4 oz.	36 "	Clear Lake Cerro Gordo	January 23	Lavern Ruiter Thornton
	12 lb. 0 oz.	37 1/2"	Clear Lake Cerro Gordo	October 13	Mrs. Bertha Pinta Manly
	12 lb. 0 oz.	36 "	Cedar River Bremer	September 12	Fred Stifter Waverly
	11 1/2 lb. 0 oz.	34 "	Lake MacBride Johnson	February 16	Richard Miller Mechanicsville
	10 lb. 8 oz.	36 "	Center Lake Dickinson	July 21	Diane Kilgore Ida Grove
	8 lb. 2 oz.	37 "	Havelock Sand Pit Pocahontas	October 27	V. A. Votteler Laurens
Paddlefish	58 lb. 13 oz.		Missouri River Pottawattamie	October 9	Grace Holtmann —Ann Racobs Council Bluffs
	34 lb. 8 oz.	42 "	De Soto Bend Harrison	May 7	H. W. Lanouette Blair, Neb.
Perch	(no entries in 1965)				
Rainbow Trout	6 lb. 13 oz.	28 "	Bloody Run Creek Clayton	February 16	Guy Waalk McGregor
	6 lb. 7 oz.	26 "	French Creek Allamakee	January 22	Dean M. Bernhard Lauana
	5 lb. 15 oz.	27 "	French Creek Allamakee	February 20	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
	5 lb. 0 oz.	24 "	Upper French Creek Allamakee	February 27	Wally Johnson Waukon
Sauger	4 lb. 0 oz.	22 "	Elk Creek Delaware	February 14	Craig Kohl Cedar Rapids
	5 lb. 0 oz.	24 "	De Soto Bend Pottawattamie	May 1	Walter Tuttle Omaha, Neb.
Sheepshead	4 lb. 8 oz.	23 "	De Soto Bend Pottawattamie	May 1	George E. Tuttle Omaha, Neb.
	(no entries in 1965)				
Walleye	11 lb. 4 1/2 oz.	32 1/4"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	December 17	LeRoy Morton Milford
	11 lb. 1 oz.	29 3/4"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	December 2	Elmer McKinney Spirit Lake
Yellow Perch	8 lb. 8 oz.	27 "	Storm Lake Buena Vista	October 16	Clyde E. Bundy Storm Lake
	8 lb. 1 oz.	28 3/4"	Wapsipinicon River Buchanan	August 22	Charles Burd Troy Mills

*New Iowa Record

Some owls are said to be able to rotate their heads through a large or hard insects upon a 270 degree arc. Insect-eating birds often batter a branch before eating them.

STATE RECORD FISH

Species	Weight	Length	Where caught County	Date	Angler
Bluegill	1 lb. 12 oz.	11 "	Lineville Gun Club Wayne	September 1962	Mrs. Grant Dillon Lineville
Brown Trout	9 lb. 8 oz.	28 "	Hickory Creek Allamakee	September 1963	Roger Jones Ottumwa
Bullhead	3 lb. 9 oz.	17 3/4"	Farm Pond Harrison	July 1963	Larry Kocour Missouri Valley
Carp	40 lb. 0 oz.	40 "	Mississippi River Clayton	April 1963	Peter Hach Cedar Rapids
Channel Cat	25 lb. 3 oz.	35 "	Rock Creek Jasper	June 1964	Lawrence Carpe Des Moines
Crappie	4 lb. 0 oz.	19 "	Lake Darling Washington	May 1964	Harold Conrad Keota
Flathead Cat	62 lb. 0 oz.		Iowa River Johnson	July 12, 1965	Roger Fairchild Coralville
Largemouth Bass	9 lb. 8 oz.	25 "	Diamond Lake Poweshiek	May 1964	Harley Bryan Montezuma
Northern	20 lb. 0 oz.		Spirit Lake Dickinson	June 15, 1965	Mary E. Jones Des Moines
Paddlefish	58 lb. 13 oz.		Missouri River Pottawattamie	October 1965	Grace Holtmann —Ann Racobs Council Bluffs
Rainbow Trout	9 lb. 6 oz.	27 "	French Creek Allamakee	December 1964	Fred Daugs Robbinsdale, Minn.
Sauger	5 lb. 2 oz.	22 1/2"	Mississippi River Dubuque	November 1963	Art Hurlburt Dubuque
Sheepshead	46 lb. 0 oz.	38 1/2"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	October 1962	R. L. Farran Clarion
Smallmouth Bass	5 lb. 10 oz.	21 1/2"	Spirit Lake Dickinson	October 1963	Fred Schuneman Milford
Walleye	13 lb. 8 oz.	36 1/2"	Cedar River Bremer	May 1963	Fred Stifter Waverly
Yellow Perch	1 lb. 13 oz.	14 3/4"	Mississippi River Allamakee	September 1963	Neal Palmer Maynard



Kessler Clarke's Crappie



Walter Tuttle's Sauger



Howard Clark's Channel Cat

Courtesy of Spirit Lake Beacon.
George Jirouch's Carp

Walter Thompson's Smallmouth Bass

IOWA BIG FISH RECORDS

(Continued from page 12)

books on June 15 when she landed a whopping 20 pound, 47 inch northern at Spirit Lake. This exceeded the old record by one pound, 12 ounces. It had been set in 1963.

Thus, four women now own a share of glory in the All Time State Records. Their entries tie down three of the 16 divisions. Two of them are in the ever popular bluegill and northern categories.

The "big ones" were willing to take bait seven months out of the 12. Four were caught in June, three in July, three in October, two in February and a single during May, November and December. This is quite a contrast to 1964 when four of the seven record breakers were caught in May. This probably reflects the high water and floods experienced across much of Iowa last spring.

Natural lakes produced fourteen entries. This is an increase of 12 over last year. Seven entries were in the trout lists, so this gives two "centers" of fishing activity. The balance, or 25, were reported from all over the state.

Records were reported from one artificial lake, four natural lakes, two from farm ponds, one inland river, two trout streams, one ox bow lake and one from the Missouri River. Surprisingly, no fish of record size was reported caught in the Mississippi River. This might reflect the upset of fish and fishing habits caused by the record floods last year.

Thirty-five of the entrants specified the type of bait they use. Tabulations showed live baits led in preference, but barely. Thirteen anglers used live bait; eleven used artificial lures; eight found commercially prepared baits best; three used combinations, and seven failed to state their habits. It appears that live bait was a bit more popular only because more big fish that prefer that type bait were reported this year.

THE 1966 CONTEST

Entries for the 1966 Official Big Fish Records are now being accepted by the State Conservation Commission. Any species of fish commonly taken by hook and line and caught in state or boundary waters is eligible. There are, however, minimum weight limits on certain species: crappies must be over two pounds; channel catfish over 18 pounds; carp over 20 pounds; northerns over 10 pounds; smallmouth bass over four pounds; largemouth bass over seven pounds; walleyes over 10 pounds and flathead catfish over 20 pounds.

Any potential 1966 or state record fish must be weighed to the nearest ounce on scales legal for trade. The weighing must be witnessed by two persons. The fish's total length should also be recorded.

The angler must fill out an official entry blank or a facsimile and send it and a glossy black and white photo of himself and the fish to the State Conservation Commission, East 7th and Court, Des Moines, Iowa. The entry blank includes the angler's name and address, the species of fish being entered, date caught, where caught, county, total length, weight, method of catch and the witnesses' signatures and addresses.

Any fish that surpasses the state record will be publicized through the Commission's weekly news release. All state records and the 1966 record fish will be published in composite form in the February, 1967, issue of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST and in the news release.

CONSERVATION FORUM

(Continued from page 10)

Asst. Supt. of Game, Paul Kline, has this to say about the above:
... We have been aware for several years that fox hunting is a growing sport in Iowa. During the 1964-65 season for instance, 89,605 foxes were killed by Iowans during 1,232,374 hours of hunting. They are exceeded in importance for hunting only by pheasants, cottontails and

It is quite possible that some day the season for hunting foxes may be restricted as it is now on rabbits, pheasants, etc. Conservationists have been preaching for years that foxes do more good than harm—as a rule. Individual foxes provide exception. When public sentiment and reaction to foxes permits, we may be able to change our laws which pertain to them. The fact that a number of counties pay bounties indicates we are not yet ready for this.

Dear Sir:

Can a minor possess a pistol or revolver in Iowa?

D. H.
Clarinda

Section 695.26 of the Iowa code states that no person shall knowingly sell, present or give any pistol or revolver to any minor.—Editor.

The vocal sounds made by birds are classified as songs and call notes, depending on length and function.

Migratory birds have smaller bills, feet and tails than non-migratory birds. Their wings are generally longer, however.

Bird banding has demonstrated that many birds regularly return to the nearly exact nesting spot each year.

Hummingbirds and other birds are often attracted to sap and insects at holes made in trees by woodpeckers.

WOODMAN'S PRIDE

Richard F. Camp

Are you one of the many people who own an axe? Have you ever looked at the shape of the head and handle and wondered how it got that way?

The axe is one of the oldest tools known to man. Yet it has been only in the last 150 years that the axe has undergone any dramatic changes.

Until the 19th century axes were quite crude. They had large cutting edges, small, light polls and short, straight handles.

In colonial days when a man wanted an axe, he went to his blacksmith and put in his order. The size, weight and shape were left to the discretion of the smithy. Consequently, the patterns of axes were limitless.

In the evolution of the axe, the American blacksmith cut down the width of the cutting edge, added weight and size to the poll and finally lengthened the handle and put curves in it. The result was a well-balanced and efficient woods working tool.

Today about 100 axe patterns are on the market. The smaller patterns are more popular where timber tends to be smaller and more limbing rather than felling is done.

The single bit, or poll axe, is used quite often on the farm where occasional pounding is necessary with the poll end of the axe.



Jack Kirshtein Photo.

A slow moving wet stone gives an axe a smooth, sharp edge and never causes the metal to lose temper.

The skilled logger prefers the double bit, mainly because of its excellent balance and ease of handling. He keeps one edge razor-sharp for chopping while the other can be kept more rounded for limbing near the ground.

Selection of an axe is largely a matter of individual preference. Most chopping tasks can be easily accomplished by various patterns.

Before the era of power saws, a well-balanced, sharp axe was a thing of beauty and a symbol of pride for a woodsman. To take a man's axe without permission was an unforgiveable sin in most logging camps. With the advent of the high-speed chain saw, the axe lost its major role in wood-cutting. Often it is now used to drive wedges for pinched chain saws—quite a fall from its once-high pedestal.

Here are some *do's* and *don'ts* that may be helpful to you who use an axe occasionally at your cottage or on the farm:

1. Never sharpen an axe on a high-speed emery wheel—this will usually heat up the blade to such an extent that it will lose temper. Use a sharp mill file, then finish the job with a smooth, hard, whetstone. Better still, use a slow-moving wet stone to get the smoothest job.

2. Don't sharpen an axe so it has a concave or "hollow ground" cross section. This type of edge will stick in the cut and be difficult to remove. Also, the edge is thin and will break easily in frozen wood or

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Game and Habitat Analysis

John Madson and Ed Kozicky

Large-scale habitat improvement is the most effective way to increase an annual game crop.

It's also the most expensive, and no state conservation department can possibly pay for the habitat improvement known to be needed by a game species on a state-wide basis. With their limited funds, state game managers can do little more than improve habitat on a demonstration basis—either on private lands or state game areas—and try to convince sportsmen and landowners of the vital role of habitat improvement in effective game management.

But if it is not feasible to improve a habitat for game, it may be possible to find game that can succeed in the habitat as it exists. This may be done by introducing an entirely new game species, or by developing a different strain of resident game.

This new game management tool might be described as a **game and habitat analysis** technique—a study of the game species and its requirements, combined with experimental releases of that game on test areas. This approach is far different from the old technique of mass-releasing a new game species with little, if any, biological evaluation of species and habitat.

Introducing a new game species entails trapping and transplanting. This is not "stocking" in the usual sense, for it is not a replenishment of resident game but an actual establishment of a new species that exists in a similar habitat elsewhere. "Elsewhere" may be an adjoining state, or a mountain on the other side of the world.

This game introduction can involve native or foreign game. It is often useless to introduce a native American game species that has never existed in the area of release—for instance, releasing pronghorn antelope in northern Maine. It is often possible, however, to re-introduce a game species successfully into an area where it once existed, even though that may have been before modern memory. For example, wild turkeys have been successfully re-introduced into South Dakota after an absence of many years.

It may also be possible to introduce well-established foreign game birds. Some state conservation departments have set up special stations in an effort to develop strains of game birds that can survive in areas where those birds have never before succeeded.

For example, the Missouri Conservation Commission is working with two strains of black-necked pheasants and a strain of ring-necked pheasants in an effort to develop a bird for a more southern climate and poorer soil. Crosses of these strains are being test-released in the northern part of the state.

This program was prefaced by a detailed study of the various pheasant strains to find subspecies that have the greatest chance of success. Similar studies are being made of the bamboo partridge and the Reeves' pheasant for other regions within the "Show-Me-State."

The most spectacular type of game introduction occurs when a foreign species is immensely successful and partly or wholly fills vacancies caused by the disappearance of native game.

The dramatic success of the ring-necked pheasant in the upper Midwest is a classic example. As the virgin prairie was put to corn, oats and wheat, the native pinnated grouse or "prairie chicken" faded. A new habitat had been created, and it was unfilled by any large upland game bird.

With the introduction of the ring-necked pheasant in the 1920's, this new habitat was swiftly filled by an amazingly rugged, sporty and colorful game bird that was hailed by sportsmen and game managers alike. Concurrent with the success of the ringneck were the introductions of the chukar and Hungarian partridges. These three exotic game birds have at least reinforced native bird populations, and in some cases have entirely replaced certain native game birds which found the changing habitat intolerable.

There was no biological investigation to determine the ringneck's fitness for North American tenancy. The bird was simply introduced.

Flushed with success, many American sportsmen and some game managers hopefully began to release other game birds: African guineas, francolins, capercaillies, coturnix quail, sand grouse, and golden, Reeves' and Lady Amherst pheasants. None of these became well established, and the ringneck's phenomenal success story has not been repeated.

Most of these foreign game birds simply vanished soon after their release, for they were placed in habitats that were inadequate or even hostile. However, the possibilities for these and other species have not been exhausted, even though many game introductions have been disappointing.

Habitat improvement is still the best answer to game scarcity, but broad habitat improvement programs are usually too costly to be practical. An alternative is to find or develop game that can thrive in the habitat as it exists. This game and habitat analysis technique won't fill our game bags overnight, but it deserves consideration and support.—From *Principles of Game Management, Part Six, conclusion.*

WOODMAN'S PRIDE—

(Continued from page 15)

on hard knots. Grind an axe so it has a slightly convex shape. This is especially desirable when cutting hardwoods.

3. Using an axe to drive steel wedges is questionable practice. This usually results in spreading the "eye" of an axe and subsequently loosening the head.

4. Never strike sideways with a double bit—such as in pounding a wedge. This is almost certain to rupture the eye of the axe. It is also dangerous, as the axe tends to glance sideways.

5. Don't tighten a loose head by soaking it in a pail of water. This condition usually indicates need to rewedge the axe. In selecting a new wedge, get one made of dense wood such as maple. Steel wedges are not considered as good because they crush the wood in the eye of the axe and have no springback.

6. When selecting new handles, refrain from buying painted ones. Sometimes a handle is painted to conceal poor quality. Hickory and ash make excellent axe handles. They should be straight grained and free from defects.

7. Do not carry an axe on your shoulder. Carry a double bit axe in one hand approximately 4 inches below the head of the axe and down at your side. Then, if you trip, it can easily be tossed to one side. Better still, fashion a simple sheath from leather for maximum protection.

8. Toe guards are available which protect the shoes and feet. These guards are especially essential for the beginner until he develops control.

Prior to chopping, the adjacent area should be cleared of branches or saplings that might get in the way of the axe swing.

Most people prefer a wide stance in chopping. The axe should not be driven deep into the wood, jarring the wrists, arms and shoulders. Arm muscles should be relaxed so that the axe swing is free and smooth. After steady chopping for several hours, one quickly learns that accuracy is much more important than physical force.

A corner of the axe should always be free of wood; then a slight twist of the wrist will free the blade from the cut.

It is also important that one learns to chop both left- and right-handed. This saves a lot of moving around when limbing a downed tree.

A skilled man with an axe is truly poetry in motion. However, the sharp ring of the axe and flying chips of wood are fast disappearing from the American scene. Let us hope that we have retained the respect for the axe which was possessed by the skilled woodsman of Paul Bunyan's day.—*Wisconsin Conservation Bulletin*.

Where Did the Wilderness Go?

Ernest Swift

The American people have become slaves to the combustion engine, and the combustion engine is progressively destroying outdoor recreation, fouling the air, killing flora in metropolitan areas and contributing very substantially to water pollution.

Some scientists maintain that eventually air pollution will be a greater menace to the health of mankind than filthy water. In the light of damage already done to our water resources, this is hard to believe.

Even those who have little feeling for the wilderness or primitive areas are beginning to look askance at the combustion engine and what it is doing to even the less rugged forms of recreation. Conservationists being people, it seems strange that they do not realize that their penchants for ease and comforts are just as damaging as are those who give no thought to aesthetics, and care less.

The reason for all this is that mankind has given too little thought to controlling the awesome powers of his genius. Today, the automobile and/or airplane are indispensable adjuncts of a hunting or fishing trip, whether it is a few miles from home, in Alaska, Hudson's Bay or Africa. In some states and nations it is legal to run down game with a jeep and shoot it, and, in the Arctic, polar bears have little chance when hunted from a plane. And hunters brag of their exploits instead of hanging their heads in shame. Add to this the motor bike which can now invade abandoned roads and hiking trails. What can generate a greater fury than to hear one of these contraptions jarring the peace and quiet of a woods trail.

But the hunter or fisherman being transported a dozen or a thousand miles by combustion engine is not enough. They are further mechanized with walkie-talkies, in the woods, in the goose blind and on the lakes. It is argued as ethical to hunt the wicked predators, from coyotes to eagles, with planes, and at the same time, the automobile has long been standard equipment for the nefarious hunting of deer by



Jack Kirstein Photo.

Pressurized "gun oil" sprays may be superior to whale sperm, but some will dispute it.

LUBE NOTES

The darling of yesteryear's rifleman was sperm oil, or "sparm." Extracted from reluctant whales, it was an excellent lubricant. Some old shooters still swear by it.

But it can't match today's superb lubes that are called "fingerprint oils" by the petroleum people, and "gun oil" by the rest of us. These highly-refined oils help neutralize acids left by human hands on polished steel, and also tend to pick up moisture left by handling.

Any oil may gum with time. This is mostly true of animal and vegetable oils, but even mineral oils may "varnish." However, graphite will not gum. In the greatest extremes of heat, cold and dust, it's an excellent lubricant. It is especially useful on the camming surfaces of rifle and shotgun bolts.

But graphite gives no protection against moisture. That's work for good gun grease. For long, wet hunts, it's wise to lightly wipe all steel surfaces of the gun with such grease. It never hurts to grease steel surfaces that are buried in the stock where you can't see them. A friend of ours even enlarged the barrel channel of target stock and bedded the rifle in heavy waterpump grease. Worked O.K., too.

Use gun lubes sparingly, and use the best that you can buy. At that, they're cheaper than new parts or special "blue jobs."—*News from Nilo*.

jacklighting. The outboard motor is used to rally waterfowl. These practices exist despite man's lip-service to conservation.

Most lakes, except in remote parts of Canada or the mountain country which are accessible with planes, must now have parking lots and boat launching areas. Litter is always a part of such improvements and adds an aesthetic touch. And the present generation no longer knows what the term "feathering an oar" means. Cottages continue to increase, each with a road, with erosion and pollution. Some of my friends are beginning to complain of too many roads into the back country, too much civilization, but none make an effort to resist community thinking that all such innovations are progress. So they complain and fail to demand zoning.

Now comes the snowmobile to sputter and snort through the winter solitude and destroy the last vestige of isolation. Little of nature can be appreciated from one of these gadgets bounding through the woods and over the meadows or lakes. All wildlife flees before their fuss and fumes, and the very essence of nature is diluted. What they add to the winter wonderland is beyond understanding. What charm does winter hold when its solitude and isolation has been shattered?

As the combustion engines become more numerous, powerful and efficient, the human waistline grows larger, the muscles grow softer and coronaries increase. All the old skills of hunting and boating, all the crafts which make them a primitive pleasure, are abandoned and aborted.

Children become progressively ignorant of the most simple elements of the out-of-doors as they are transformed into hot rodders. Combustion engine camping is no different from city living; life becomes increasingly artificial.

The combustion engine may get a lot of people to work and to football games, but it is defeating its own value simply because man has not learned to live with his inventions and, at the same time, reduce their destructiveness.—*Conservation News, National Wildlife Federation*.