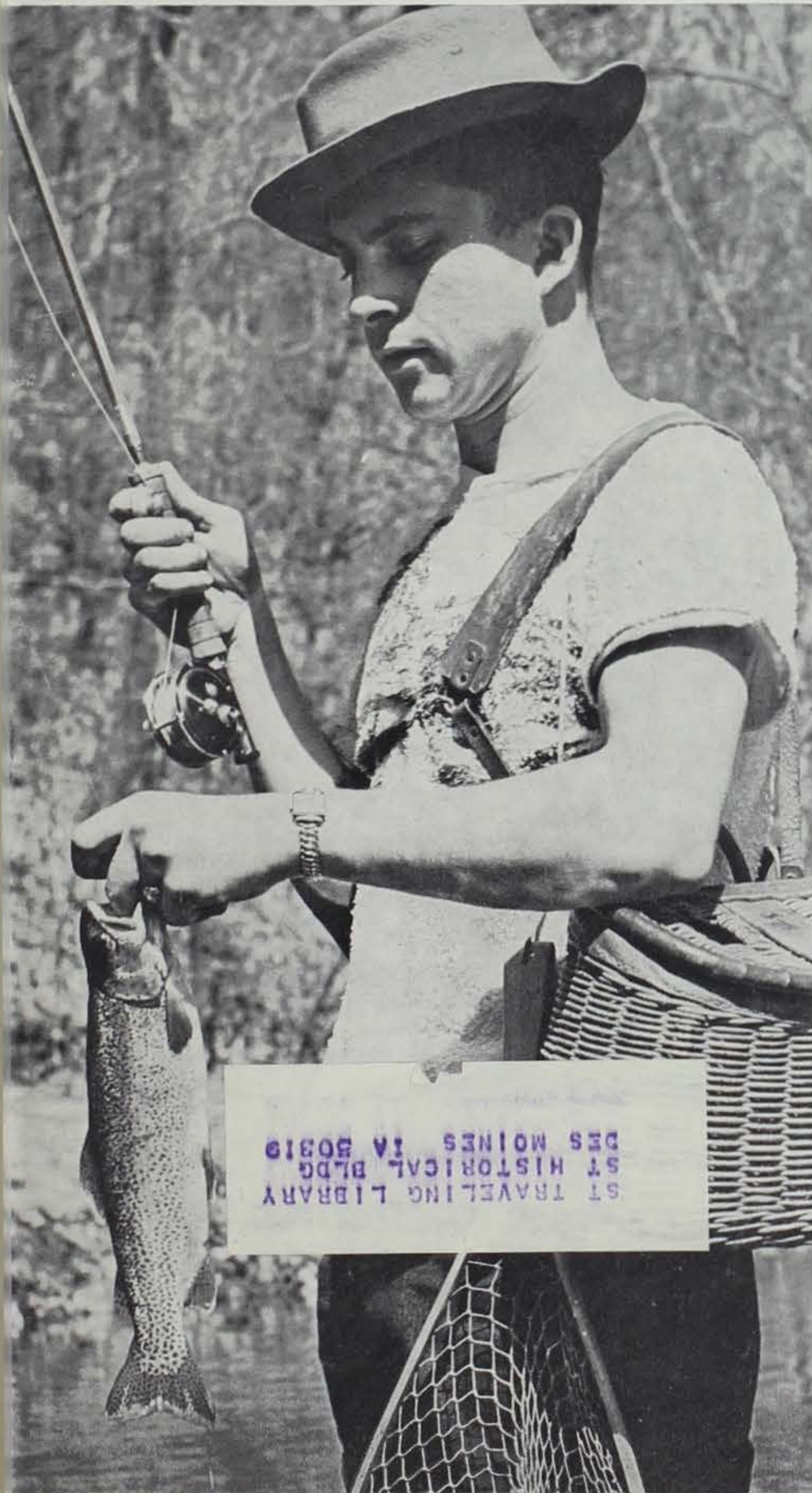


April, 1968

Volume 27

Number 4

Angling '68: The Outlook



Lunker trout abound in northeast Iowa streams.

Trout Streams

The outlook for those northeastern Iowa trout fishermen is, once again, tops. Jim Mayhew, an Asst. Supt. of Biology for the State Conservation Commission, thinks Iowa's trout fishing is "as good as can be found in the country."

That's partly because fish population carry over surveys indicate that many trout streams have winter carrying capacities of up to 600 average to lunker-sized trout per mile. This adds up to an early spring attraction for some of the approximately 13,500 trout anglers enjoying Iowa troutland each season.

When trout fishermen arrive in northeast Iowa again this year, they'll be testing such representative streams as North and South Bear Creeks in Winneshiek County; Waterloo, Trench and Village Creeks in Allamakee County; Bloody Run and Klienlein Creeks in Clayton County; Spring Branch Creek in Backbone State Park and other fine trout streams.

Ken Madden, the Commission's Fisheries Supt., stresses that trout anglers should know the diets of trout for different seasons. Trout can be taken on artificial flies, or on baits such as worms, insect larvae, grasshoppers, beetles, salmon eggs, cheese concoctions and marshmallows. Natural baits usually produce the best early season results, Madden says.

But, he adds, trophy trout call for different fishing techniques such as the use of minnows or sucker sides cut to imitate minnows.

"When a trout approaches 15 inches in length," Madden says, "his food choice enlarges to include minnows, crayfish and even frogs. By the time he reaches two or three pounds, he's a genuine meat eater."

So, when you look over your favorite trout stream, check the minnow population in the holes. A zero-to-few minnow population could mean some trophy trout nearby.

The trout are there — early April-stocked fish plus an abundance of "old guard" bigger trout—and trout anglers won't be long in getting there also.

(continued on page 28)

Iowa Conservationist

Vol. 27 April, 1968 No. 4

Published monthly by the State Conservation Commission, State Office Building, 300 4th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. Address all mail (subscriptions, change of address, Form 3579, manuscripts, mail items) to the above address.

Subscription price: two years at \$1.00. Second class postage paid at Des Moines, Iowa.
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COMMISSION MINUTES

State Conservation Commission Meeting
Held in Eldora, Iowa, February 6 and 7,
1968

The request of the State Mining Board for a Management Agreement on the Hull Game Unit in Mahaska County was approved.

J. Rex Weddle, Director of Personnel, was appointed as personnel representative of the State Conservation Commission, to act as a liaison officer between the Commission and the Iowa Merit Employment Department.

The Commission supported the need for zoning of Webster County in relation to the Brushy Creek Lake Development.

Authorized the purchase of a boat for the Storm Lake Dredge.

B.O.R. Projects

Project proposals approved for submission to the B.O.R. for Federal assistance were as follows:

The Muscatine County Conservation Board proposes to acquire 74.6 acres of land located on the Cedar River approximately ten miles northwest of Muscatine for the purpose of providing river access and facilities for camping, picnicking, field sports and nature study.

The City of Coralville proposes to develop a 28-acre area to provide an intensely developed urban outdoor recreation area.

The City of Boone proposes to redevelop an existing 3.3 acre city park located approximately two blocks west of the central business district. Proposed development under this project will include construction of a large water area for children's sailboats, ice skating and aesthetic purposes, plumbing extensions to include water service, drinking fountain, sewer line and necessary water supply and return lines in pool area and underground electrical installation.

The Hamilton County Conservation Board proposes to further develop its Little Wall Lake Park located on Highway 69 approximately two miles south

Our Readers Write . . .

Dear Sir:

In your December or January issue there was a humorous but true to life story about duck hunting by an Arizona writer. I was going to show it to my waterfowl hunting friends but somehow mislaid the copy. Could you send me another one?

The past duck hunting season was the best ever in recent years for the half dozen of us that hunt together on a couple of swampy ponds along Cedar Creek near Batavia. Usually it seems that most of the ducks any more stay along the Mississippi River, but last fall's wet weather (or something) gave us a much better chance of at least seeing some migrating waterfowl about every day. On a couple of occasions an adjacent pothole was covered with five hundred or more mallards. Naturally it was just out of range and we had little luck either sneaking up on them or decoying them over our blinds.

We would also like to commend the local conservation officer, Steve Messinger, who made it a point to check our licenses but stayed in the background to a degree that we could enjoy the sport. Possibly he knew we were going pretty much by the book, or maybe as in the past when the flights were few and far between, he had a little sympathy for our kind of nut that wades out in the dark and cold with less than even odds against the raw challenge of nature and her ducks. To enjoy the early morning solitude found in duck hunting is a greater thrill and recollection than any other sport as far as I'm concerned, even if the game escapes our sights. Keep them coming across Iowa, not around our state.

Sincerely,
Harold F. Shipler

of the town of Jewell by constructing two concrete block double vault latrines and one concrete block bathhouse with toilet facilities.

Lands and Waters

The contract for the purchase of two combination inboard-outboard boats and one inboard boat for the Lake Patrol was awarded to Touristville Boats, Clear Lake.

The contract for the construction of the residence and service building at Wild Cat Den State Park was awarded to Donald Ellison of Montpelier in the amount of \$33,850.

The contract for grouting work at Lake Geode was awarded to W. G. Jacques, Inc. of Des Moines subject to the approval of the Attorney General's Office.

The contract for the replacement of the sewer line at Backbone State Park was awarded to the Buchan Construction Company of Perry in the amount of \$3,780 with an open end provision for a total sum not to exceed \$10,000.

The contract for the construction of a shower and toilet building at Springbrook State Park was awarded to the Wetzel Construction Company of Audubon in the amount of \$12,797.

The concession agreement with Mr. Robert A. Bown for operation of the concession at Springbrook State Park was extended for a five-year period.

The Commission moved to permit snowmobiles to operate on the roads in Pilot Knob and Rock Creek State Parks, in accordance with the recommendations of the Staff of the Lands and Waters Division.

The application for permit to construct an entrance road from state park land

to primary road #118 at Pine Lake State Park was approved subject to the approval of the State Highway Commission.

A member of the Hardin County Conservation Board offered to supply a series of steps taken from a fire escape of a school house which is being razed in Hardin County for use at Stemboat Rock Park. The steps would be installed near the shelter house and would provide fishing access to the Iowa River. The Commission accepted the gift.

An erosion control agreement with James L. Paul on the watershed of Rock Creek Lake was approved.

COUNTY CONSERVATION

The request of the Floyd County Conservation Board for approval of the development plan and report prepared for their U. S. Highway Safety Rest Area located adjacent to the south right-of-way of new U. S. Highway 18 at the northeast edge of the town of Rudd was approved.

The request of the Hamilton County Conservation Board to revise its approved development plan by adding a new vault type latrine in their recreational area located approximately 2 miles south of Jewell was approved.

The request of the Page County Conservation Board to revise its development plan covering their water supply and sanitary facilities for the camping area in their recreational area located 9 miles west of Clarinda and adjacent to the north right-of-way of State Highway No. 2 was approved.

Approved a request from the Woodbury County Conservation Board for the general development plan and report prepared for their Smithland Forest Area.

Starr Honored At Banquet In Storm Lake

Conservation Officer Frank Starr was honored at a special appreciation dinner at Storm Lake February 14.

Over 400 friends attended the event honoring Starr for his many years of devoted service to the State Conservation Commission.

Starr said that the testimonial dinner by his friends was "the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me and Helen (Mrs. Starr)." He thanked the committee and others for the dinner and program and for their cooperation since he joined the Conservation Commission.

J. R. Hamilton, Storm Lake attorney and member of the Iowa Conservation Commission, was master of ceremonies. The committee in charge of the event included Clyde Bundy, Storm Lake, chairman; William B. Perry and Dr. T. E. Shea, Storm Lake; and Gene Dorr, Lesicklider and James E. Bleakley, Cherokee.

The committee presented Starr with a beautiful plaque inscribed with the following:

"To Frank Starr—Iowa Conservation Officer—We present this as an emblem of our high regard for you because of your unusual dedication to your work, your excellence as an officer and gentleman, your fine example to young and old alike, and for your ability to create good will for law and conservation through your warm friendship and sense of fair play in lake or stream, in the field or where-

ever sportsmen meet. Your friends in Buena Vista and Cherokee Counties." Mrs. Starr was presented with a bouquet.

Justin Rogers, Spirit Lake, national president of the Izaak Walton League of America, presented another plaque on behalf of the National Division of Ikes acknowledging Starr's service. Lewis B. Julius, president of the Storm Lake Chamber of Commerce, presented Starr with a projection screen "in remembrance of the many things accomplished through the years, particularly concerning the lake which has meant so much to the people of our community."

Congratulatory communications were received from Governor Harold Hughes, who was with the Iowa Trade group in Mexico; Robert C. Russell, Iowa City, executive secretary of the Iowa Division of the IWLA and Olive Freney, Storm Lake, Buena Vista County recorder, who could not be present.

Ries Tuttle, outdoor writer for the Des Moines Register and Tribune, also complimented Starr.



State Conservation Commissioner J. R. Hamilton (left) and Officer Frank Starr examine a plaque presented to Starr at an appreciation dinner in Storm Lake. Looking on are Commissioner Keith McNurlen, Ames (second from left), and Director E. B. Speaker.

Tributes were paid to Starr by his colleagues in the State Conservation Commission by Commissioners Hamilton and Dr. Keith McNurlen, Ames; Director E. B. Speaker; Earl Rose, chief, Division of Fish and Game; Ken Kakac, superintendent, Fish and Game Conservation Officers; and Mike Hill, superintendent, Construction and Maintenance Section.

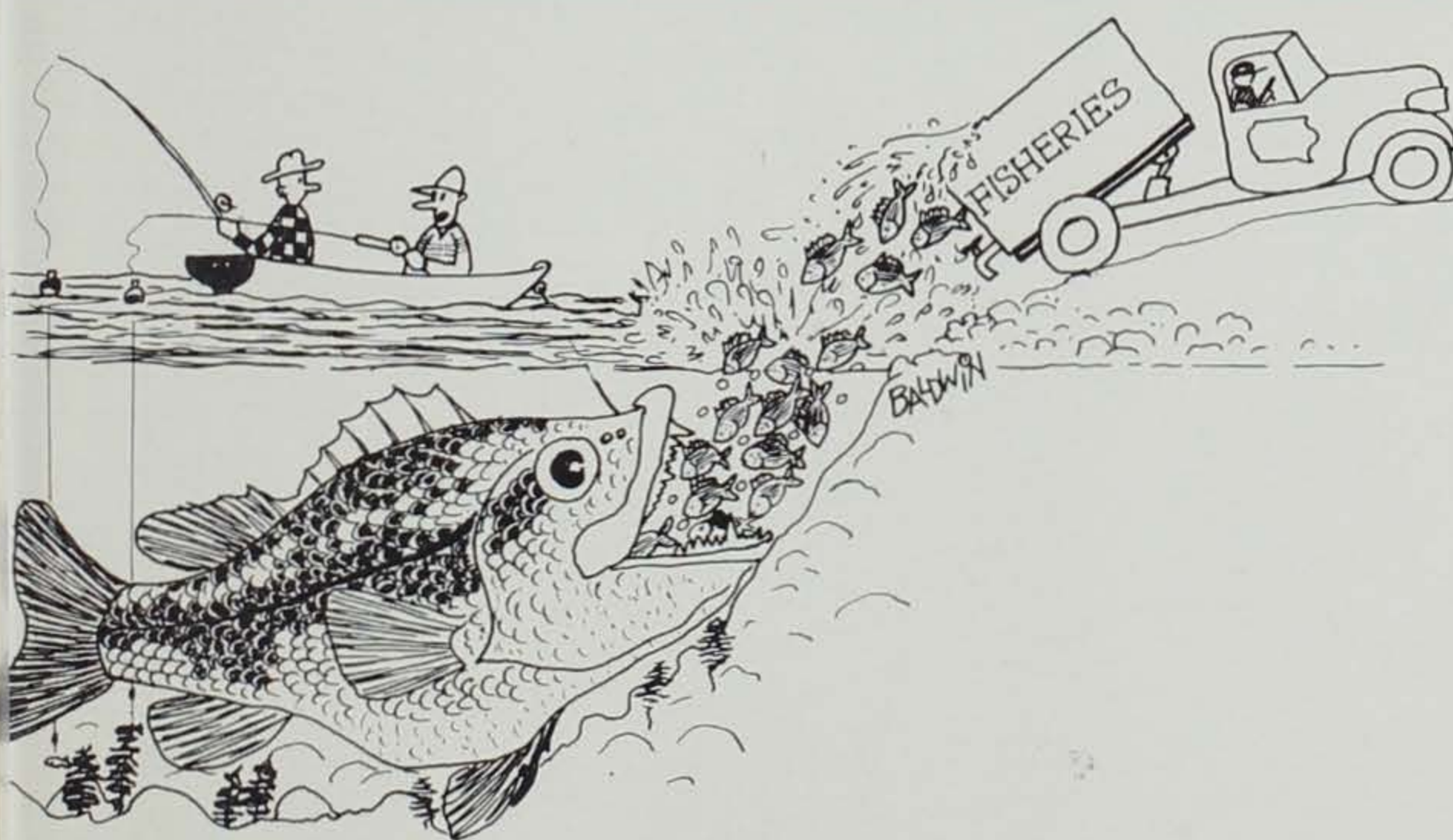
The principal speaker for the evening was Sherry R. Fisher, Des Moines, chairman of the Lewis and Clark Trail Commission and former member of the State Conservation Commission. He paid tribute to Starr and told the story of the Lewis and Clark Trail and showed slides taken along the route.

Starr became a conservation officer in 1938 and was stationed at Lake Manawa and later at Lake Okoboji. He came to Storm Lake in 1942.

IOWA FISH QUIZ

1. It is impossible to catch a walleye on a surface lure (true or false).
2. The black nymph is fished on the surface when fly fishing (true or false).
3. Water temperatures influence where fish are located and whether they will bite (true or false).
4. A certain species of fish is often located by watching for churned up water caused by the school chasing minnows. What is this species?
5. The grennel, or dogfish, is better known by what name?
6. The northern pike is fully scaled on both cheek and gill cover (true or false).
7. What species of fish are most commonly stocked in farm ponds?
8. How can you tell a largemouth bass from a smallmouth bass?
9. Name one primitive fish found in Iowa.
10. What is the primary difference between a predator fish and a forage fish?

(answers on page 30)



"They've been stocking this lake for years, but it never seems to help."

Angling Outlook

(from page 25)

Missouri River

Missouri River fishermen should be in for a great season, with crappies, catfish, white bass, walleyes and saugers in abundance, along with a lesser number of northern pike. Good fishing will often be found at the mouths of some of the Missouri's tributaries. Particular hot spots, say Commission personnel, are the oxbow and cutoff lakes.

"The crappie fishing in the oxbows should be great, but I don't think many people know about it," Mayhew said recently. "They'll have to hit the crappies before June, though. That's when the gizzard shad hatch, giving crappies more than enough food."

Brown's Lake, an oxbow just west of Salix, is noted for its largemouth bass. Fishing there should be best for bass, crappie and northern pike, with spoons and daredevils reputedly being good baits.

Another oxbow, Blue Lake near Onawa, has an outlook similar to that of Brown's Lake, with one exception—a big bunch of two to four-pound walleyes.

Lake Manawa, an oxbow near Council Bluffs, should be a consistent largemouth bass source, especially for anglers working the tree snags and vegetated areas. The presence of fat catfish and annually-stocked bullheads ought to entice many an angler to Manawa.

The largest cutoff lake, DeSoto Bend near Missouri Valley, is slated to be one of "the" crappie hot spots in Iowa. Seven to 10 inch crappies roam the lake in large numbers and will be taken most often near old pilings, snags and brush piles.

When July and August dog days come around, attention will turn to catching DeSoto's many channel catfish.

Mississippi River

Angling on the Mississippi River is best when spring sunshine melts the river ice and fish begin their run from deep water to the shallow reaches of the backwaters and sloughs. Bluegills, suckers, largemouth bass, northern pike and crappies are the early migrators, abandoning the river channel and moving to the grassy areas and shallow lakes.

During this migration, the best northern pike fishing should be found on a stretch from Sabula to the Iowa-Minnesota boundary. Artificial baits and minnows are the big fish-getters.

For bass, crappies and bluegills, the would-be successful fishermen will probably do best with worms and small minnows fished about a foot deep.

One good tip for Mississippi anglers—

fine catches of walleyes are possible below the navigation locks and dams at certain river level stages known to local fishing experts. It pays to consult the local conservation officers or boat livery operators.

Artificial Lakes

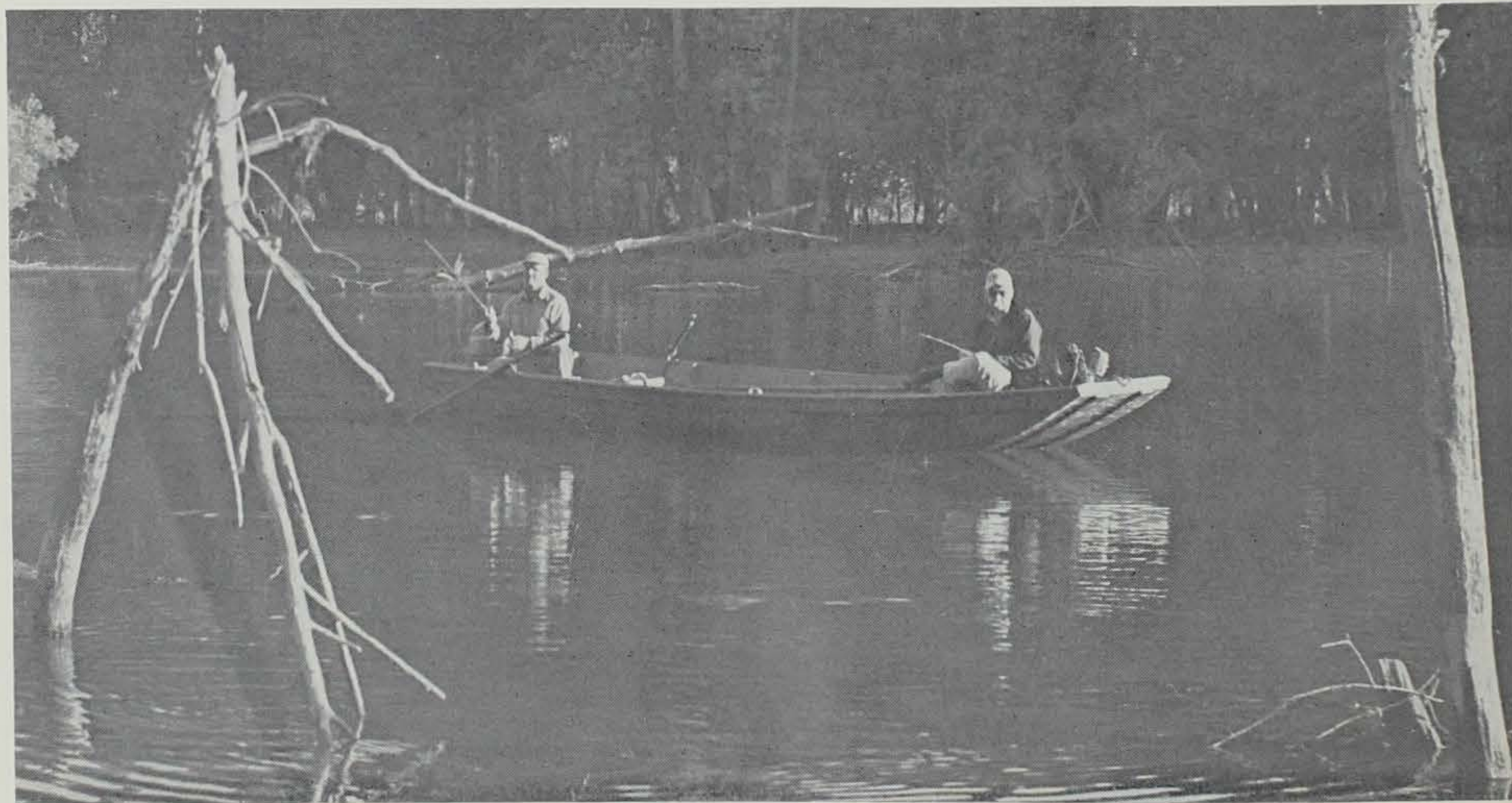
The forecast for artificial lake fishing in Iowa is a pat "good, as always." Largemouth bass begin to roam in search of food, along with plenty of crappies, bluegills, bullheads, and a comparative newcomer, channel catfish. Natural food is rare early in the season, so worms, minnows, crayfish and slow, deep running plugs are best.

As the lake waters warm, surface fishing comes front and center near the shorelines.

One artificial lake, Green Valley Lake near Creston, may turn into a mecca for southern Iowa walleye fishermen. According to Mayhew, the Conservation Commission's attempt to develop a walleye strain tolerant to southern Iowa conditions is succeeding, and a large population of walleyes can be found in the lake.

Of course, there'll be other artificial lake bright spots too, among them Lakes Geode, Nine Eagles, Wapello, Red Haw Hill, Macbride, Keomah, Three Fires, Ahquabi, Prairie Rose, Miami, Viking, Meadow and the Coralville Reservoir for bass, crappies and bluegills. Probable bullhead hot spots will be Lakes Darling, Union Grove, and Rock Creek. Many other artificial lakes will also provide good angling.

Though early season fishing should be topnotch all around the state, farm ponds



A "bassy" spot near Harper's Ferry on the Mississippi.

in particular perennially yield big fish and fish stories alike. Since water in ponds warms first, fish appetites develop quickly there also. During early spring, though, fish are still in deeper water and are a bit sluggish. This calls for still fishing or a very slowly moved bait. A worm or crawler, sometimes with a spinner added, is a killer for big bass.

Natural Lakes

Fishing in Iowa's natural lakes, Commission officials say, should be good again this year.

"The winter hasn't been too severe, so we've had no big fish losses in the better natural lakes," Mayhew said. He added that bullheading should be a top attraction as usual, dominating the anglers' catch.

The natural lake angler can also look especially to crappies and yellow bass for spring action. Crappie fishing, good from May through June, is best near canals, brush piles, vegetation and other sheltered spots. The simplest tackle works best for crappies.

Although yellow bass fishing isn't nearly as widespread as that for crappies, the small, tasty yellow fish are plentiful in Clear Lake and several other lakes. Simple gear and simple baits (worms, minnows, flies) are the rule.

The Commission's predicted natural lake bright spots are Spirit, the Okoboji chain of lakes, Lost Island, Clear, Storm and Blackhawk Lakes, along with a number of smaller bullhead lakes.

Inland Streams

Iowa's inland stream fishing will be at its best below dams. Fish looking for food are stopped by the dams and congregate below them.

Sportsmen should fish below dams along the Wapsie, Cedar, Iowa, Skunk and Des Moines Rivers for the main stream-sought fish, the channel catfish, and for an occasional walleye, crappie or northern pike. Other hot spots are often found along the small feeder streams.

Top baits for this type of fishing are minnows, jigs, spinners, nightcrawlers and prepared catfish bait.

That's it—that's the early season Iowa fishing outlook. So whether you'd rather fish for catfish or crappies, for bass or bullheads, whether you're a trout fisherman or a "go after anything that's biting" angler, chances are you'll have pretty fair success in Iowa waters this season.

321259



The best stream fishing is often below dams.

Ruffed Grouse 'Drumming': Curious Calling Card

by

Wayne R. Porath and Paul A. Vohs, Jr.

Standing quietly alert on a log in the Little Paint Creek Study Area of the Yellow River Forest, a male ruffed grouse surveys the surroundings. Suddenly, but with almost mechanical precision, the bird begins his courtship drumming, or beating of wings, that lets other grouse and the world know he and spring are here.

The spirited movement produces a sound which moves vibrantly through the forest. To the ears of a human, direction and distance are vague, but other male grouse are aware of the proclaimed domain of the drummer while a female grouse may begin to move toward the sound with irresistible urge to mate.

Peering through the opening in a camouflaged blind, a biologist makes careful notes on how frequently he drums, where he stands, how much time he spends on the log and other characteristics.

This spring grouse study is emphasized because the male is limited in his movement, he makes an audible noise and he can be captured for identification and marking. The noise or drum of the male is utilized by many states, including Iowa, as the best method available to determine an index for comparing population levels of grouse from one year to the next.

Recent studies in Minnesota have shown that drumming activity varies greatly from bird to bird, day to day and from one season to the next. To make accurate interpretation of the counts over a wide area, it's important to know why individual birds alter their drumming habits.

Drumming by males on the Little Paint Creek Study Area in 1967 began about March 15 and was best described as

sporadic at that time. On April 11, near the peak in intensity of drumming for the season, one male was observed to drum at two-minute intervals from one-half hour before sunrise until two hours after sunrise. The bird took only one 15 minute break during the entire period. Following April 15, drumming activity gradually decreased until June 1 when no more drums were heard until fall.

Activity Centers

During March through May, the area of movement of the male grouse is restricted by his own habits. This area, including all of the logs that the bird uses for drumming, is defined as an "activity center." To outline activity centers it's necessary to locate and describe all drumming logs on the study area. Certain logs were located by simply tracing the sound of a drumming bird to his log. Other drumming logs were identified by searching the area for evidence of use such as fecal droppings on or near the logs. Feathers lost during the natural process of molt were often located near logs and provided clues to favored logs.

Once drumming logs were located and positively identified, the next step was to determine which log or logs were used by individual males. Mirror traps were placed on active logs, and the antagonistic attitude of a male toward the "intruder" he saw in the mirror assisted in his capture. After being captured and marked, the bird became an individual in the record book and it was possible to make daily observations of his drumming activity and log use.

Twenty activity centers were recorded on the study area following the initial two years of investigation. (See map.) Circles made with broken lines represent

(continued on page 31)

The Historical Holiday That Accents The Future

Most holidays remind us of past events, but Arbor Day, set aside for the planting of trees, looks toward the future.

The idea of Arbor Day started on January 4, 1872, when J. Sterling Morton, a member of the Nebraska Board of Agriculture, introduced a resolution that "Wednesday, April 10, 1872, be set apart and consecrated for the planting of trees in Nebraska; and that the State Board of Agriculture name it Arbor Day; and to urge upon the people the vital importance of tree planting . . ."

Arbor Day gave impetus to the swing of public opinion from toleration of forest destruction toward forest conservation. At first it was observed only by agricultural organizations and towns. They encouraged the planting of shade and forest trees, shrubs and vines along highways, and about homes and public property.

Gained National Acceptance

Arbor Day is now observed in every state, the date varying with the region. About half the states have enacted laws fixing the date; in others it is set by special proclamation of the governor.

In Iowa, Arbor Day is the last Friday in April, and the week in which it falls is observed as Arbor Week. By gubernatorial proclamation, schools and civic groups, as well as individuals, are urged

to participate in the event.

According to State Forester John Stokes, the State Conservation Commission participates by assisting schools and other groups in their observances of Arbor Day. The Commission also aids with plantings on the Statehouse grounds which take place to commemorate the holiday. The Commission's total tree planting activities, however, take in much more than this. In cooperation with the federal Agricultural Conservation Practices Program, Commission foresters aid landowners participating in the program, under which trees and shrubs can be bought at nominal prices for wildlife habitat purposes.

Tree planting usually takes place after April 4, although preparations in the nurseries begin in late March. Each year the Commission plans for about 2,200 orders. By the first week in April, all new trees must be shipped and out to the individual areas. These usually consist of about two million trees and shrubs, according to Stokes. By May 10 these projects are completed.

Although major tree planting projects are initiated by the government, people also must recognize the importance of these trees, not only of the beauty they will add to the state, but of the part they ultimately play in the conservation of the land and its future.



Governor Harold Hughes signs the proclamation for National Wildlife Week in Iowa. Members of the State Conservation Commission and Clarence Christensen, Stuart, State Chairman of National Wildlife Week, were present for the occasion. They are (left to right): Mr. Christensen; Commissioners Ed Weinheimer, Greenfield; Rev. Laurence Nelson, Bellevue; Dr. Keith McNurlen, Ames; Earl Jarvis, Wilton Junction; Chairman Mike Zack, Mason City; and James R. Hamilton, Storm Lake; E. B. Speaker, Commission Director. National Wildlife Week was March 17-23.

FISH QUIZ ANSWERS

1. False. 2. False. 3. True. 4. The white bass. 5. Bowfin. 6. False. 7. Bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish.
8. The largemouth bass has a dark band along its side, and its upper jaw extends beyond the eye when its mouth is closed.
9. Dogfish, lake and shovelnose sturgeons, American eel, long and short nosed gar, and paddlefish.
10. Forage fish provide food for predator fish.

Fires Destroy 900 Iowa Acres

Fires at an average rate of five per day since Feb. 15 have blazed through nearly 900 acres of Iowa land.

The rash of late winter wild grass, marsh and timber fires has followed an unusually dry fall and winter, with snowfall being generally light over the state. Primary causes of the fires continue to be careless burning of debris and "fire balls" from diesel railroad engines.

Strong winds fanned the blazes, with south central and southeast Iowa suffering the most damage. Several fire departments fighting one fire have become a commonplace sight in those areas.

According to State Forester John Stokes, the fires have blackened an average of 23 acres each. This compares with a 31 acre average for all of 1967. Fires in 1967 totaled 327, and 10,343 acres were burned.

"1967 was an extreme year," Stokes said, "but indications are that unless we can all do something about it, March and April of this year could be just as disastrous."

Stokes emphasized that railroad-caused fires have become an "alarming problem" statewide. The problem of diesel engines' throwing out carbon fire balls, he said, accounted for 38 fires in the last two weeks of February and the first five days of March. Stokes said that local fire departments have been overburdened by the drastic increase in railroad fires throughout Iowa.

In order to be better able to combat fires, Conservation Commission foresters attended fire training sessions conducted by personnel from the United States Forest Service. A fire simulator was used as a training aid, giving the foresters fire situation experience while in the classroom.

Commission officials, however, would much rather that the foresters not need to use fire fighting techniques of any kind. They'd prefer instead that campers, picnickers, landowners, and others enjoying Iowa's forests, grasslands and marsh lands work harder than ever before to preserve these areas. It takes minutes to burn them, but many years to replace them.

Ruffed Grouse 'Drumming'

(from page 29)

activity centers that were occupied at times in the past but were not used in 1967. Circles made with solid lines indicate the thirteen centers occupied at the beginning of the 1967 drumming season. The bars within the circles represent the drumming logs associated with each center.

Valleys Poor Habitat

A glance at the map will show that drumming logs and associated activity centers are located on only a portion of the study area. None are found in the valleys and cultivated fields. The valley floors provide little desirable habitat for the grouse because they are carpeted with bluegrass and shrubs are few. Cultivated fields and uncultivated grasslands are rarely selected by the grouse because no trees, logs or woody cover are found there. No drumming logs or activity centers have been located on the steep slopes that rise at sharp angles between 20 and 40 degrees from the valley floor. The 40 drumming logs are all located on gently sloping uplands that lie between the bluffs and the cultivated fields.

Even within the uplands, the distribution of drumming logs is not uniform. The southwest corner of the study area is covered with a stand of mature timber that is apparently avoided by the birds. Logs that appear suitable for drumming are located in that area but have remained unused.

All of the activity centers on the 500 acres are located on approximately 27 percent of the total. The grouse, as judged by their selection of activity centers, seem to prefer and may require second growth stands over mature timber stands. The mature stands on the area have a high, relatively closed canopy which suppresses ground cover essential to the birds. Second-growth stands permit light to penetrate to the forest floor, and a lush layer of shrubs and herbs grow and provide food and cover.

All of the thirteen males occupying activity centers on the study area at the beginning of the 1967 drumming season were not present June 1 when the courtship period ended. Two birds simply left the study area, one was removed by a hawk or owl, and one died while being

those of you who prefer to bring home the big catch for tastebud teasing later on, we hope to include some special recipes for more formal dining.

But whichever style you prefer, we're sure you'll have as much fun trying them as we did in testing them. Of course, tasting them is even better!

banded. Mortality and movement of this type are to be expected.

Adjustment Important

Each activity center and each male grouse are different. Some combinations may result in excellent adjustment between the grouse and his surroundings, while others may result in the bird's being insecure and subject to predation or other forms of harassment. Only the intensive study of the birds, their selection of activity centers, the length of their occupancy of a chosen center, and the reason for the center becoming vacant can provide insight into the dynamics of the population.

The occupied activity centers may be



LITTLE PAINT CREEK STUDY AREA

used to provide information about populations on the study area. The number of grouse per 100 acres on the study area compares favorably with the number of birds on grouse range in the states of Minnesota and New York, well within the heart of the grouse range across the northern United States.

At the end of the drumming season in late May and early June, the males become secretive and are difficult to locate. Then the efforts of the research project are directed toward another portion of the population. Females with broods are now evident in the forest and become the main object for investigation.

Editor's Note: This article is a contribution of the Department of Zoology and Entomology, Project 1565, Agricultural and Home Economics Experiment Station, Iowa State University and Iowa State Conservation Commission. Wayne R. Porath is a graduate assistant, Department of Zoology and Entomology; and Paul A. Vohs, Jr., is an assistant professor of wildlife biology.



'Tis the season to begin preparations for your summer of camping, whether the job is patching the tent or cleaning the camper. And as long as you're stuck with the job, you may as well day-dream about the places you'll go and the things you'll see, not to mention the fish you'll catch.

What's that? Hmmm—a five pound trout! Well, the three-pounder was great baked, and the two four-pounders were even better pan-fried. But why not try your five-pounder boiled?

It's easy, has a slightly foreign accent, and is sure to please the proud fisherman. Here's what you do.

BOILED TROUT

Clean the fish well, but leave the skin, head, and tail intact. Salt the water and bring to a boil; then add the trout and return to a boil.

Cook for 10-20 minutes depending on the size of the fish. (A five pound trout may take longer!)

Serve with melted butter or tartar sauce.

It couldn't be easier, could it? We've tried it and know it's good, too.

Still sorting and cleaning? Dad's net . . . son's pole and tackle box . . . Stop! Don't throw that old pot away. Sure, you've been meaning to get rid of it for years, but it's the perfect size for SON-OF-A-GUN SOUP. (Especially if a few bad memories slip into your day dreams and you remember the "big one that got away").

SON-OF-A-GUN SOUP

1 package of macaroni
2-4 beef bouillon cubes
1 can tomato paste
Ketchup
1 can whole tomatoes
Spices

Boil the macaroni and drain well; add just enough cold water to barely cover and add the bouillon cubes. Place back on the heat and gradually add the tomato paste.

When it's fully dissolved add the whole drained tomatoes.

If your sweet tooth is acting up, add ketchup to taste. Add spices. Cook for about a half hour.

Both of these Campfire Cookery hints might be just the answer for that weekend camping trip, the fishing party, or the summer vacation-get-away you're planning.

The CONSERVATIONIST plans to offer these Campfire Cookeries for those of you who anticipate campsite cooking. And for

the very beginning

... a recollection of a boy's first fishing trip, and its importance in learning proper angling know-how.



I remember that day as if it were yesterday, and this morning I realized that that day was thirty years ago. I had just celebrated my seventh birthday, like my son today.

That clear morning shivered with the customary chill of early April, but I was ready and waiting to go. I had practiced and planned and pleaded for weeks but my father had set the day, April 10, and there it stayed. It was my first fishing trip.

I remember so vividly all that he ever said. "Even though you're young, it's best to start with simple but decent equipment—that way you'll learn to take care of it and use it well."

And that's what I did. Dad had given me a light pole and all the right tackle to go with it. I remember practicing in the backyard — pretending I was the greatest fisherman in the world. Dad would demonstrate and I would attempt a clumsy instant replay of all his actions. They seldom were even close, but he insisted that I was learning and doing better on each try.

After what seemed two years instead of two weeks, the plans were set. We were going to a farm pond about thirty miles from our home. Dad reminded me that we must ask permission because it was private land.

And that's another thing I remember about my dad. Before the trip, he read the rules and laws of fishing to me, interpreting them all so I could understand. I remember he never told me a law or rule that he himself didn't follow. He always explained the 'why' behind it.

"When you're older, you'll remember these, and know how important it is to learn the right way, from the very beginning," he told me.

As we traveled nearer to the pond, my excitement could hardly be contained. My jeans were uncomfortable, my hair kept falling in my eyes, and my skin felt

as if bugs were all over me, as I squirmed and twisted in the front seat.

My boyish energy was not overlooked by my father. He told me that when we were fishing I should try not to make sudden moves or stomp along the bank.

"You see," he said, "fish have homes too, and usually they're near cover or brush along the bank of the pond or lake. If you jump too much or move too quickly, the fish will feel or see you and be scared away."

And this I tried to remember too, although my seven-year-old spirit sometimes got the better of me.

Finally we were there. The farm owner was glad to have us and suggested an area that was usually active. I often wondered why dad took a weekend from trout fishing to go with me to this quiet, secluded area, but now I know that he wanted me to do more than watch. He wanted me to see some action and learn basic techniques on kid-size fish.

Assembling our gear, he helped me bait my hook, showing me how to cover it completely. I learned the very first day that the fish must be allowed to completely take the bait; that I must determine whether or not to pull the fish directly in or play it, depending on its size.

Most of all I remember my first catch. It wasn't more than six inches long, but I was so proud. I can remember shouting to Dad, "Look, it's mine—it's my very own fish!" And he was pretty proud too.

He showed me how to take out the hook without harming the fish. My hands were a little small then to manage both the hook and the fish, so dad patiently helped me. Looking back, perhaps that is what I appreciate most of all—his understanding. He didn't expect me to land a four-pounder and take care of it all by myself. He didn't even expect me to bait my hook without a good lesson first.

I remember that first day, and the days and trips that followed. I remem-

ber how good it felt to know that what I was doing was the right thing, that the rules I knew I had to follow were the right rules.

I remember that first day as if it were yesterday, and I hope that my son will remember these same things tomorrow, after I teach him today.

'Thank You For Showing Us The Animals . . .'

There's no humor like kids' humor—that's the viewpoint of Bob Oden, Wapello County conservation officer.

Children in a third grade class at Otumwa's Agassiz School recently benefited from Oden's informative comments as they viewed the Conservation Commission's traveling wildlife exhibit. Oden later received thank you notes from the class, with some interesting results.

One youngster had a very specific request. "Could you tell me where to find a constrictor," he wrote, and then added in parentheses "(boa)."

An unusual comparison came from a young miss who wrote "And I like the red fox because it stinks more than the skunk stinks."

The animal drawing the most attention seemed to be the raccoon. Although one eight-year-old boy claimed the animal "looked like a bad guy," a more unusual response came from another young lad, apparently a self-styled comedian.

"Thank you for showing us the animals," he began. "I know very little about the raccoon. A raccoon seeks his food. If he sees any animals smaller than himself, he gulps it down. But—if it is an elephant, he runs. Boy oh boy he runs!"