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*The Early Worm Catches the Fish—*

# Wake-up Fishermen!



By  
Roger Sparks

Close to 400,000 Iowans were licensed to fish in the state last year, but over half didn't purchase their license until after May 1. This means that the majority of anglers in Iowa are missing some of the best fishing of the year!

True, the weather may be chilly or wet, and streams may sometimes be muddy and high, but for most species of fish, spring marks the end of a relatively dormant season for them. Most of Iowa's game fish spawn during spring to early

summer, at which time feeding tails off sharply. However, for several weeks before, these fish really "tie-on the feed bag," and the wise fisherman gets down to business. Typical of the sport throughout the year, spring fishing can have it's ups and downs but the persistent angler will hit the hotspot and bring home a stringer that'll silence any skeptics.

But spring fishing provides fun for more than the die hards. Pick a pleasant spring day and pack the family, fishing gear, and picnic box off to the nearest lake, pond, or stream. Here along

grassy banks, schools of crappies, or some hungry bullheads will keep dad from his nap and mom from her novel, while bug-eyed kids do most of the "reeling-in". And if the fried chicken lunch wasn't too much for everyone, a supper of fresh, fried, bullheads or crappie filets will polish off a superb day.

## INLAND RIVERS

Sometime during April, catfish usually go on an early feeding spree in Iowa's inland rivers and feeder streams. The streams in the southern two-thirds of the

(Continued on page 8)



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CIRCULATION .....70,000

## COMMISSION MINUTES For Meeting Held February 3, 1970

The following projects were approved for submission to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation: Carlisle, Community Park, acquisition of 15 acres for development. Floyd County Conservation Board, Ackley Creek County Park, acquisition of 40 acres. Buchanan County Conservation Board, Jakway Forest, acquisition of 103 acres.

Accepted the following land acquisition offers: Volga River Lake Project, Fayette County, 2.2 acres. Big Rock Access Area, Fayette County, 2 acres. Walters Creek Watershed, Adams County, 99.1 acres, Tract 18, 60 acres, Tract 2, 15.7 acres, Tract 14.

Approved proposal for immediate work at Union Grove Lake. This included draining the lake to provide for construction of fishing jetties, work on the beach area, clean out rough fish to improve future fish population, and an inspection of the dam to determine the extent of the leak and prepare cost estimates for repair.

The following County Conservation Board Land acquisition projects were approved: Black Hawk County Conservation Board, Hickory Hills Park Addition, 3 acres. Crawford County Conservation Board, Dow House, (Historical Area) 3.5 acres. Des Moines County Conservation Board, Franklin Township Lake Park Addition, 10 acres. Jones County Conservation, Mon-Maq Dam and Recreational Area, 63 acres.

Approved the maintenance and management agreements between the Conservation Commission and the Henry County Board of Supervisors for 84.55 acres known as Oakland Mills State Park.

Issued a construction permit to the State Highway Commission for the use of one half acre of land for the purpose of widening State Highway No. 9 near



## HUNTER SAFETY AWARD

Le Roy Fleming, national director of the Izaak Walton League (left), is shown receiving a certificate of achievement from Fred A. Priewert (middle), director of the Iowa Conservation Commission, and Charles "Butch" Olofson, hunter safety officer.

Mr. Fleming, 1118 Oak Park Avenue, Des Moines, received the award for having taught hunter safety to over 1,500 children.

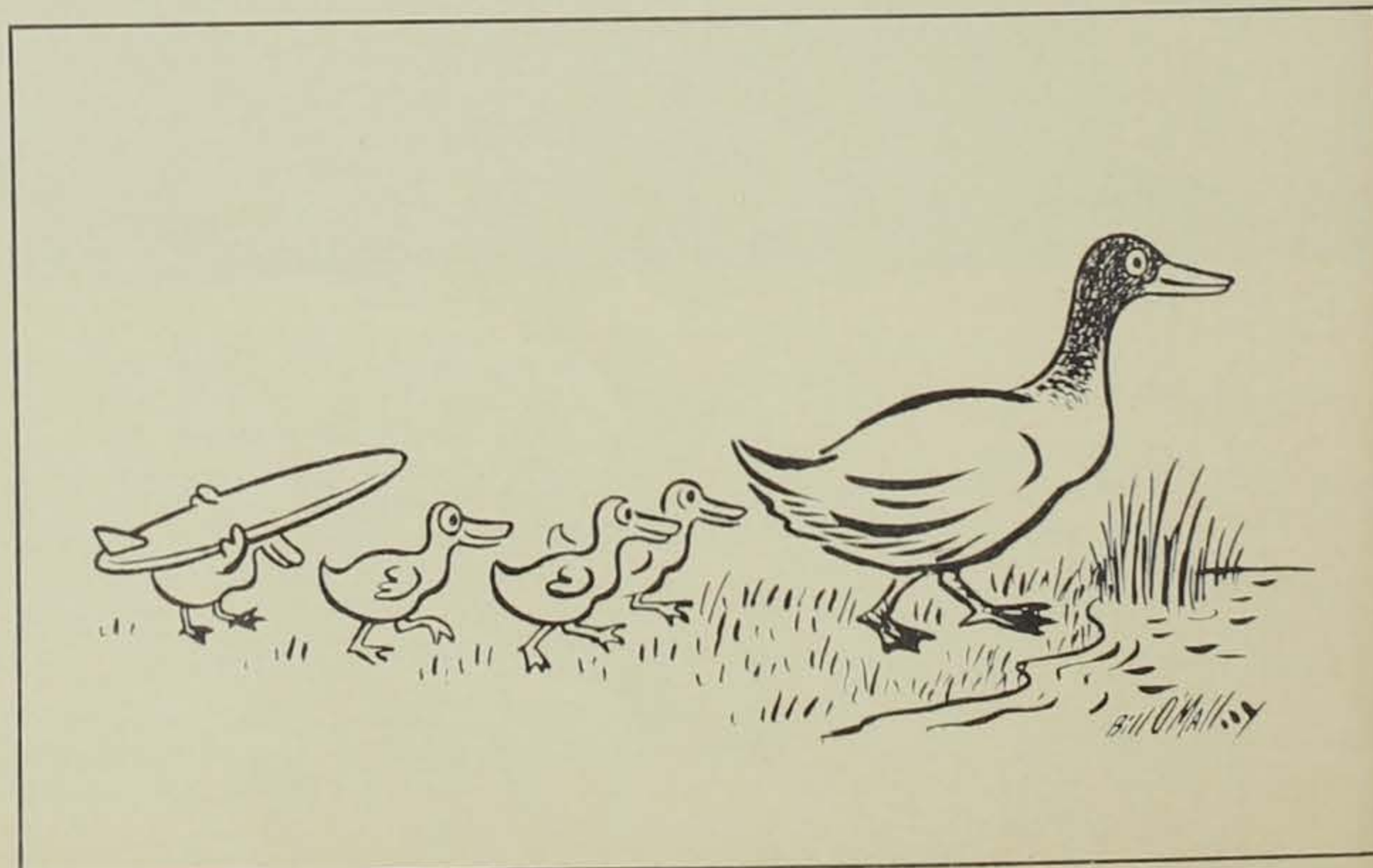
Employed by the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company as an engineer for the past 40 years, Mr. Fleming has also served as president of both the Polk County Chapter and the State Division of the Izaak Walton League before being elected a national director.

Silver Lake in Dickinson County.

The following contracts were awarded after bid tabulations: Storm Lake, Buena Vista County, West Dredge Fill Area, P&M Stone Company. Winnebago Bend, Missouri River, Woodbury County, Water's Station Residence, Hilton Homes,

Guttenberg.

Accepted the offer of Dr. Purdy to give his home (a remodeled farmhouse) on Corps of Engineers' land in the Big Creek Lake Area to the State for use as a custodian's residence, pending approval of the State Executive Council.







## Keep Wildlife "Wild"

by Roger Sparks

The long, cold hush is over. Warm, fresh smelling breezes bring back the forgotten pleasures of spring. Woods become lush as young green shoots like tiny periscopes, seem to perk up, look around, and take a quick inventory of their new environment.

Wild animals, though ignorant of weathermen and calendars, seem to realize this is the season of rebirth. Wild geese have honked their way back north to the nesting grounds; pheasants and quail are scratching out nests; and baby rabbits are already venturing from their dens.

Unfortunately, many people every year decide to help mother nature by "saving" wildlife babies from the "wild". Actually, they are "stealing" young animals from their homes, their mothers, and their natural environment; thus greatly reducing their chance for survival. Man ultimately destroys wildlife when he attempts to domesticate birds and animals born in the wild to live in the wild. Man teaches wildlife youngsters "soft" living, and allows them to mingle with domestic pets they learn to trust. When the day comes for them to be released again to the wild, they have missed a vital part of their "outdoors education", and fall easy prey to enemies they have never been taught to distrust.

From a legal standpoint there are two big reasons why wildlife should be left in the wild:

1) It is illegal to possess any animal, dead or alive, on which there is a continuous closed season. Other species may be taken only during their respective open season dates.

2) The doctrine of strict liability applies to wild animals. In essence this means that if a possessed wild animal injures someone, the possessor is liable without regard to his negligence.

Most people probably pick up wildlife babies out of ignorance thinking them to be stranded or deserted. One common rationalization is that "the first cat or dog that comes along will eat the poor deserted creature." Wildlife mothers are usually only several steps away, perhaps gathering food for their young. Wildlife mothers exhibit a strong urge for preservation of their young, and offer protection in the ways nature allows.

The point about cruel desertion of mothers is most often attributed to deer. When fawns are discovered they are usually alone, in concealment and seemingly unattended. The does may not be anywhere in sight. It may seem as though the doe has "deserted" her family. But it's not so. The doe conceals her fawn or fawns before leaving them early in the morning. She depends upon camouflage and the ability to lie quietly and motionless to protect her young. She will, of course, return. If they have been moved in the meantime, she may not find them; or, if human scent is heavy near the lair, she may desert her family entirely.

Another reason for stealing wildlife youngsters is that people are tempted because they're "so cute and cuddly." Sure they're cute, but the young of most everything is. By taking them home for "pets" all you can do is hurt them.

Let's not kid ourselves. Certainly predators, disease, accidents, insufficient food, even the weather, all take their share of wildlife at all ages. The young of many species constitute vital links in an important food chain. Even so, their chances for survival are greater in their natural environment—an environment to which, through thousands of years of evolution, they are best suited. The alert beauty of wild animals is no coincidence. Don't deprive them of their home. Observe and photograph wildlife, but leave them where they want and need to be.

R. S.



### SALTY FRIED CAKES

Most campers, whether in a tent or on wheels don't like to bother with hard-to-prepare dishes. After all, camping is for vacationing, not heavy culinary chores!

This time when packing groceries, take along a package of biscuit mix, and to save cooler or icebox space (if you're taking one), include a small box of powdered milk. These two items are all that is necessary to supplement a main course of freshly caught fish or other main dishes. No refrigeration is necessary.

Just mix milk with 2/3 cup water. Add this to two cups biscuit mix. Simply flatten this dough into patties, about 1/2 inch thick, and fry to a golden brown. The process takes about five minutes.

When hot, these flat little biscuits or cakes are delicious buttered and salted as a snack, or buttered for a dinner roll, or maybe best of all, topped with jam for breakfast.

WARNING—don't start serving them before the main dish unless you like main dish left-overs.

### ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ RECIPE FOR THOUGHT

Pollution is a serious threat to our environment. If we continue to pollute our water, soil and air at the present rate, it is possible that we can not survive on this planet. Smog concentrations in some of our major cities have made it impossible to let children out to play at recess. The polluting of our air has been a major cause of bronchitis, and other respiratory ills.

Lake Erie has been seriously abused by industrial wastes. The amounts of DDT in food chains has already reached dangerous proportions. Contaminated pork, chicken, fish and fruit have been detected and destroyed. Pollution in some cases is odorless, tasteless and colorless. Pollution is taken in small doses, and paid for with our well being. We all must become aware. Support the movements to clean up our environment. We submit the following recipe for your consideration:

One large serving of clean air.

Add many gallons of fresh, clean water.

Mix in all of the pure soil of the earth.

Add a pinch of intelligence, spirit, and common sense.

Place in one large planet and spin for many years. We should end up with healthy, happy humans. Let's remove the sourness from this batch. If we don't and we ruin it, we may not be able to try again.

2 years

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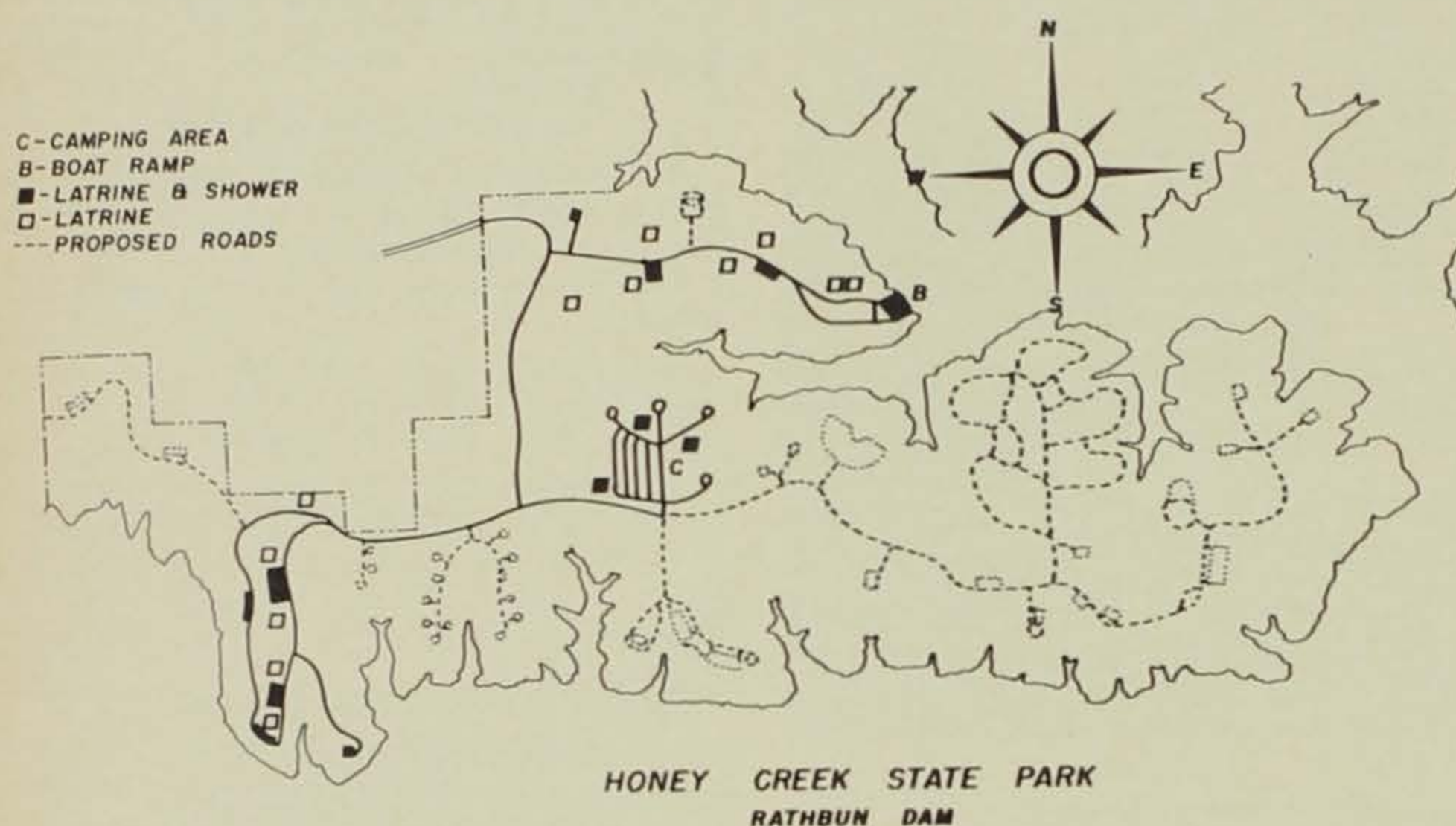
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Now Being Developed —

# HONEY CREEK: big, new



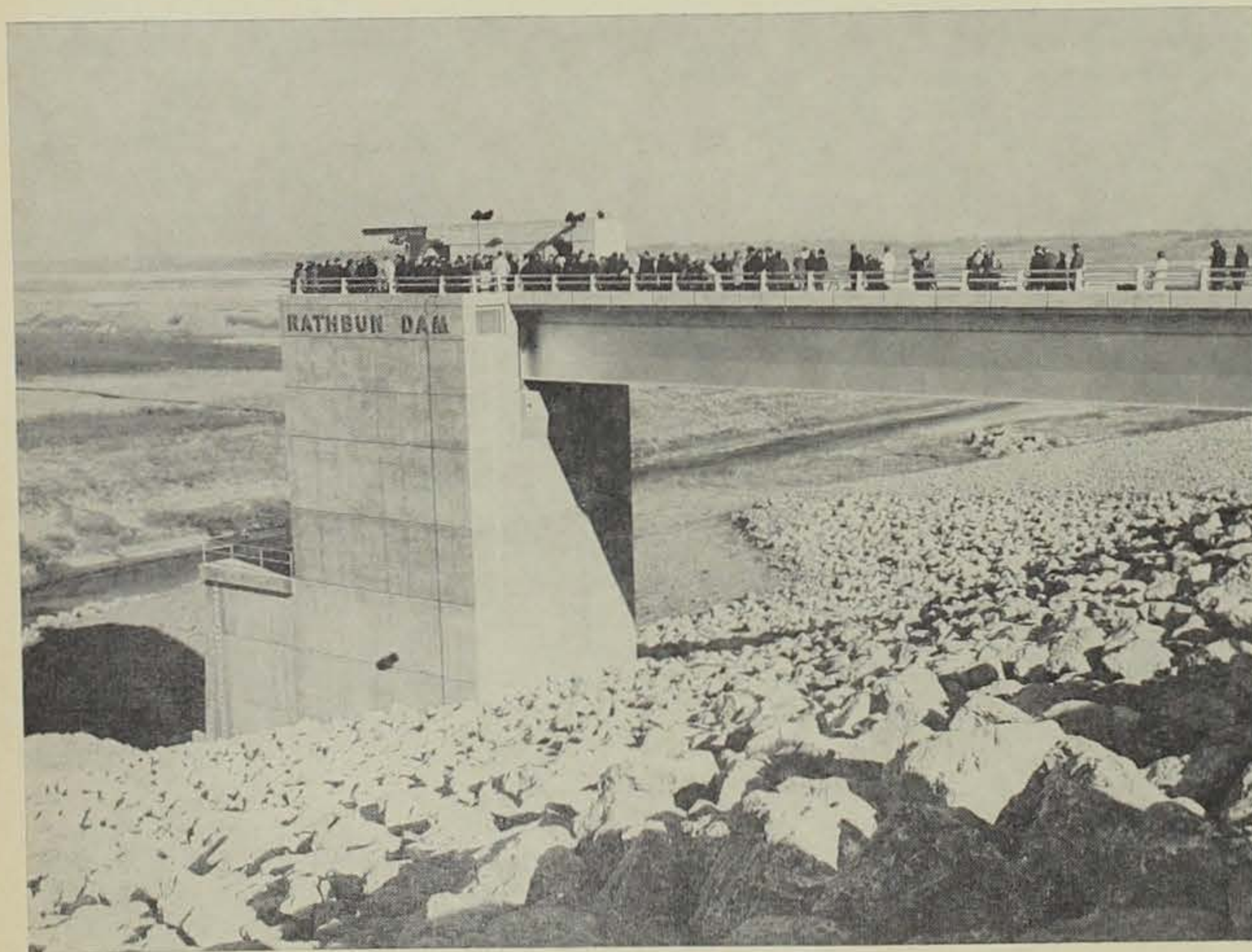
By Julius "Sonny" Satre

Did you know that Iowa will soon have a new state recreation area located on the largest body of water between our neighboring states of Missouri and Minnesota?

Well its true. Construction will begin this year on what will be one of the finest state parks and recreation areas in Iowa. The 800-acre development will be called Honey Creek State Park. Honey Creek will be situated on a scenic area overlooking Iowa's newest federal impoundment—Rathbun Reservoir. The

new park will be quite picturesque with beautiful stands of hardwoods and cedar. Honey Creek will be bordered on three sides by the eventual sparkling waters of the reservoir itself. Within approximately two years it is anticipated that the reservoir will reach its normal pool of 11,000 acres of water.

Honey Creek State Park will be located on the north shore of the reservoir, seven miles west and two miles south of Moravia in Appanoose County. This area is three miles upstream from the Rathbun dam site on the Chariton River.



Rathbun Reservoir: 11,000 acres of water by 1972

A wide range of recreational uses will be developed. A brief description of the architects master plan will better acquaint you with the proposed development of Honey Creek State Park.

Honey Creek will have four extensive camping areas for outdoor enthusiasts—tent, trailer, group and primitive type camping.

The modern camping sites will have convenient facilities such as water and sewage systems, properly spaced latrine and shower buildings throughout the area and electrical outlets. All electric power lines will be installed underground which will help preserve the beauty of the area.

All camping areas will be equipped with basic items such as picnic tables, stoves and tent or trailer pads.

Three general or multi-use areas will offer a variety of recreational opportunities. These areas will be on the north, west and east portions of the park. Types of recreation that will be provided are fishing, boating, picnicking, sight seeing, hiking, bird watching and numerous other outdoor activities. Structures which will be available in these areas include latrine facilities, picnic shelters, tables and boat docks. For the outdoorsmen who are interested in Iowa's history, authentic Indian mounds may be viewed while following designated looping trails in the east use area.

Excellent boating and swimming facilities are planned for the water orientated. Boaters will have launching ramps and docks. Swimmers will enjoy a sand beach which will accommodate approximately 1600 users.

The northwest section of Honey Creek has been earmarked for a winter playground area. Among the winter sports which will take place here include sledding, snowmobiling, tobogganing and ice skating.

This briefly outlines some of the highlights of the planned development. More information on this project will be released as the development progresses.

The total development cost of Honey Creek will be over \$3,000,000, and because of limited funds available, the development of the recreation area will be phased over an estimated 10 year period.

In order for the recreation area to operate this year, basic need and requirement developments will begin almost immediately. The first contracts for variable projects will be let within the next two months.

Phase I development will be concentrated in the central core area of the park. Necessity projects such as limited



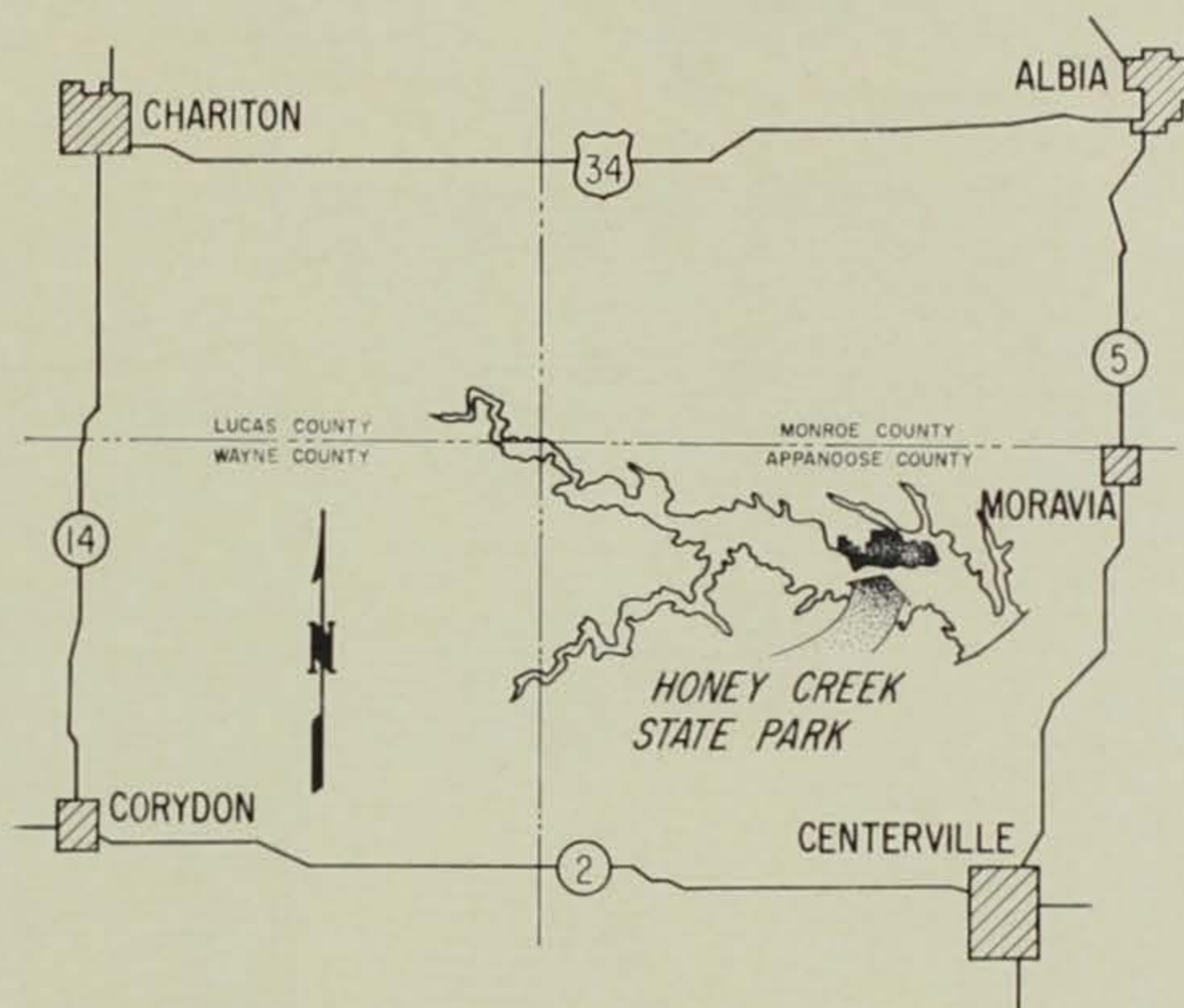
# addition to Iowa's state parks . . .

development of roads, parking lots, water and sewage systems and construction of latrine and shower buildings will occur this year. Other projects slated for 1970 include the development of camping and picnic facilities, a park officers residence and service building.

A state water safety control station and residence will be an immediate necessity. This complex will be constructed in a southwest sector of the park. The primary objective of the water station is to provide and enforce water safety regulations on the reservoir and to assist in emergencies.

Expectations are to accommodate a limited amount of campers and picnickers by this summer.

Honey Creek will be a valuable addition to Iowa's state park system. It has all of the ingredients to become instantly popular . . . its outstanding scenic qualities, historical background and excellently planned recreational facilities.



## . . . but much more is needed

By David Evans

Iowa's state parks and recreation areas continue to grow in popularity—but with this growth comes problems.

Last year's attendance at these areas reached an all time high of 10,712,999 visitors—an increase of about 3½ percent over the previous year. And we can probably expect even more people to visit state parks and recreation areas this summer. The demand for outdoor recreation opportunities is growing as people

have more leisure time, more money and better transportation. At sport shows, the public is not only interested in the traditional activities such as hunting and fishing, but they are also seeking information on boating, camping, hiking, places to picnic and historical areas to visit.

As a result of all this, there has been over crowding at some parks and greater demand on present facilities. Over crowding results in over use and the destruction of other important features

of the park. Parks are especially crowded during weekends when there appears to be a mass exodus from cities. Actually, the facilities needed at parks such as water sewage and even law enforcement exceed that of many small towns. Providing proper service in parks is a big job and a costly one in terms of money.

For instance, just hauling away garbage is expensive and time consuming. An estimated 25,000 cubic yards of garbage were hauled out of state parks last year. This is equivalent of about 200,000 full garbage cans.

There is a fantastic amount of basic repair work and alterations that must be carried out to meet minimum demands placed upon parks. This includes work on such things as cabins, bridges, trails, fences, latrines, boat docks, shelters, park areas, water systems and beach facilities.

Since there is no indication of a letup in the interest and demand for outdoor recreation at state areas, it is necessary to plan for the increase and use of facilities. It may be possible to direct the public to parks that are not crowded or to other recreation areas. It may be possible to acquire and develop new areas. However, at the same time we cannot neglect our existing parks where development must keep pace with demands. Funds must be made available to provide adequate areas and facilities for Iowa's outdoor-loving public.



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## Spring Fox Tagging Begins —

# Tally Ho!



## The Fox!

By RON ANDREWS  
Furbearer Biologist

"Tally Ho!" will be the cry of Iowa Conservation Commission personnel as they take to the fields this spring to tag fox pups. Initiated in 1966, the commission's fox tagging program has now tallied over 1,000 fox pups and this spring will mark the fifth and final year of this movement-mortality study.

The fox can stir imagination and feeling in any direction. If you hunt game, if you raise poultry, if you trap, if you hunt foxes, or if you just love nature, you probably have some feeling about the animal and perhaps some idea of what should be done. These diverse interests are why the Iowa Conservation Commission began the fox tagging program. Hopefully when the study is complete we will be able to manage the animal properly as a predator, a furbearer, and game species.

Nature's con man, the red fox, thrives despite man's continual encroachment of

wildlife habitat. He is slandered by many as a culprit, a villain, a chicken thief, and a pheasant murderer. He is also under indictment for defacing property. Ol' Red is one of the first villains we encounter. From childhood nursery stories we are instilled with the idea that the fox is always the sly and crafty "bad guy."

Fortunately even for the worst "villains" there are sympathizers and people are beginning to paint the fox in a new light. The gardener or fruit farmer, for instance, welcomes the fox to his place when cottontails are chewing his lettuce or girdling his trees. One or two dollar bounties have been removed in most counties. If the favorable attitude toward the fox continues to increase, it is likely that a closed season will be placed on Ol' Red during the spring and summer months. This will help reduce the indiscriminate killing of fox pups that takes

place during this vulnerable period of the year.

The tagging operation takes place in north central and northeast Iowa, where the highest numbers of foxes reside. Our operation begins in Mid-April when the pups are actively playing outside their dwellings. By mid-June they are roaming over a much bigger area and consequently capturing them is more difficult and the tagging ends.

The first problem we encounter is locating active lairs. Through interested sportsmen we locate the majority of these dens. Occasionally in our travels, dens are located by scanning the green hillsides for these red, furry little pups playing in the afternoon sun. Once located, a three or four man crew begin their trek to the site with the appropriate gear in hand. Curious as they are, these little creatures maintain a constant vigil as we approach. Within a hundred yards or so of the den, the pups dart down into the hole.

Quickly and quietly the mechanical wire "ferret" is unwound and snaked down into the entrance. As the cable is twisted down into the hole, the end bangs against the inside walls of the den and the little fox pups, spooked, tear out another opening where two men stand ready with long handled dip nets to snare any pups as they dart out the openings. But like comets, the pups "explode" from their dens with the not-so-young crew in hot pursuit.

Dens vary considerably in the amount of runways present. In some instances the entire 50 foot ferret has been cranked into the ground to no avail. On occasion we don't score a pup, yet at other times we've netted 9 or 10. Normally we get 3 to 5 pups at one location. (Incidentally, public use of a mechanical wire ferret is illegal.)

Once a den has been worked satisfactorily, the ear tagging begins. This involves punching a small hole in the ear and attaching snap-on ear buttons. Each tag is marked with identifying serial numbers bearing the address of the Commission to which hunters, trappers, or others who recover these tagged animals should send the bands or information.

The purpose of the ear tagging is threefold: (1) to determine how far foxes roam from their birth place prior to and during the "fall shuffle," (2) what types of mortality occur in red fox populations, and (3) to promote and create good publicity for Ol' Red to contradict the bad press he has received in the past.

It's obvious that foxes move. Foxes are omnivores or "everything eaters"; however, they show preference for meat and consequently they have to move greater distances than their vegetable eating associates. The actual distances foxes move and the amount of country they live in is of considerable interest, but at the same time is it very puzzling.

There are two categories of animal movement. First there is a movement within their home territory called the



animal's home range. The second is the dispersal, the distance animals travel when pups leave Ma and Pa fox and go out in the cold cruel world on their own.

Young foxes apparently cut their apron strings in late summer or early fall. Preliminary data from returned ear tags show September to be the month that dispersal begins. The male foxes have dispersed an average of 25 to 30 miles while the young lady foxes average about one-third that distance. As in all populations there are always the extraordinary individuals. The furthest traveling young male moved 90 miles from Belmond, Iowa, to Loon Lake, Minnesota, about ten miles north of Spirit Lake, Iowa. Quite a few of his counterparts have moved 40, 50, and 60 miles. A smaller number of females have also moved exceptional distances. An adult female, who apparently couldn't find a satisfactory mate was tagged near Boone where she met death under the wheels of an automobile near Tripoli, Iowa, some 115 miles away. A wealth of information is gained by each tag return, so we encourage Iowa sportsmen who have taken tagged foxes since 1966 and not yet sent in the information to do so as soon as possible.

All indications are that Ol' Red has a short life span. To date we have received very few three-year old tag returns. As in many wildlife species, the red fox also shows a high annual population turnover.

There are four important types of mortality in red fox populations. (1) the hunter (2) the trapper (3) the automobile (4) unknown mortality, which includes pups killed during the summer.

It is during the fall shuffle that the trapper and hunter take their toll. Highways take their toll when pups begin to explore further from their dens in mid-summer; however, an occasional unwary adult may also succumb to the wheels of an automobile. Unfortunately an un-

known number of fox pups are killed for one reason or another at dens by the hands of man or other animals such as badgers or dogs. The indiscriminate killing of pups by man is one of the things we would like to curtail. Placing a protective season on these creatures during the spring and summer could be the answer. The landowner should retain the right to eliminate nuisance animals on his property; however, we encourage property owners to be as tolerant of Ol' Red as he possibly can. This brings us to the third implication of our fox tagging adventure and that is to create good publicity for him.

Modern poultry farming has changed to the point that foxes seldom bother these people. The charge of pheasant murder is generally unwarranted. Although Mr. Fox will take a pheasant when the opportunity permits, intensive studies indicate that when foxes are removed from an area, cottontails and rodents, such as ground squirrels and mice increased considerably while pheasant numbers remained about the same. Many times the pheasants taken by the fox are the sick, crippled, and weak individuals, and with these eliminated often the over-all pheasant population is healthier. This is an important phase of the predatory role of the Iowa red fox.

As far as the indictment charge for defacing property, again Ol' Red is under false arrest. Mr. Badger is the culprit. The fox being the opportunist that he is generally takes over abandoned badger diggings.

And so slowly a new picture is being etched of the red fox. People are just now beginning to recognize the recreational potential of the magnificent animals. They are important as a fur resource and a predator and, possibly the most important thing in this modern rat-race world, for the aesthetic value of having these animals and all wildlife species present.

## Editorially Speaking ON WISE USE

John W. Taylor  
Maryland Conservationist

There is an oft-repeated maxim, used by many professional conservationists, that "conservation means wise use." This statement is general enough to hold some truth and, as a slogan, has surely done a lot for our cause. However, it is open to very wide, and often very false interpretations, and has even been used as a catch-phrase by those opposed to sincere conservation efforts.

Perhaps this is due mainly to the interpretation that "wise use" means "wise economic use." Indeed, most of the multiple uses talked about are nothing other than various economics uses, and resources which don't produce revenue are generally declared "useless." The outstanding example of this attitude is found in the opponents of wilderness areas who believe that virgin timber is wasted timber and roadless areas are useless areas.

We think, therefore, that the term "wise use" should be employed carefully, and with more regard for uses not purely economic. Otherwise we may lose sight of the ideal that the highest use of land and waters is as a source of spiritual refreshment and enlightenment, not as means to further financial and industrial growth. The goal of an advanced and cultured civilization, one that has passed the barbarian stage, is not merely to keep alive, nor to surround itself with physical comfort, but to grow in its appreciation of spiritual values. And to do this is to insure the happiness of its people.

It is this latter perspective that should govern conservation policies and practices. When viewed from this point, it is realized that hawks should be protected, not only because they are economically beneficial to the farmer, but chiefly because there is intrinsic worth in the sight of a peregrine on a lonely sea-coast, or in the wild cry of a red-tail over a mountainside.

Similarly, the bounty system is ridiculous, not only because it wastes millions of ill-directed dollars, but largely because a mountain with bobcats is immeasurably better than one without them.

Likewise, our water resources should be kept free from pollution, not only because it means better fishing or more swimming and boating areas, but principally because there is something about a clear mountain stream that fulfills a definite need in a world already too crowded with thousands of square miles of steel and cement.

The fulfillment of that need is the wisest use possible.





# *willow stick or fly rod . . . stop wishin' — go fishin'*

## SPRING FISHING

(Continued from page 1)

state are particularly productive depending, of course, on water stages subject to spring rains. The best spring river fishing is usually below dams on all inland streams, and is occasionally red hot not only for catfish, carp and bullheads, but for northern pike and walleyes as well. The last two usually provide "steak or starvation" fishing but if you hit'em, you really hit'em, at least for a short time.

Iowa presently has two large flood-control dams which will produce a wide variety of catches again this summer. Coralville reservoir, on the Iowa River north of Iowa City, and Red Rock reservoir on the Des Moines river southeast of Des Moines will provide big lake fishing this summer for bass, panfish, cats, carp, bullheads, walleyes and northerns. Generally, May to June offers the best all-around spring fishing in the lakes. The best bet for April though, will probably be in the tailwaters below. Before these constructions, the Des Moines and Iowa Rivers were usually high and roily, often flooding during spring. Now because of the improved water conditions downstream, and more stable levels resulting from these flood control projects, good, consistent fishing below the dams for channel cats should be well underway by this time, with walleyes and crappies providing a bonus.

## MISSISSIPPI AND MISSOURI RIVERS

April seems early to some, but not to the regular Mississippi walleye fishermen. Walleyes and sauger are the main attraction below the locks and wingdams, and although they're caught throughout the year, winter through early spring marks the peak of spawning concentrations. Large northern pike prowl the back waters of the Mississippi and occasionally provide great sport for those who find them.

On the western front, the Missouri River also yields some fine sauger and walleye fishing in April and the often forgotten "oxbow lakes" are spring hotspots for crappies and bass.

## NATURAL LAKES

Spring, in Iowa's natural lakes region (north-central and northwestern part of the state) is usually two to three weeks behind the southern counties. Bullheads begin biting soon after ice-out and an early spring sometimes brings a peak about mid-April. Also, depending on the weather, these lakes may offer some good perch and crappie fishing towards the end of the month.

In Iowa's natural lakes, the opening of walleye and northern pike season (May 2, 1970, to February 15, 1971) is always

popular, with Big Spirit, the Okobojis, and Clear Lake the favorites. (On all other bodies of water including border streams, there is a continuous open season for these species.) Most of these walleyes are nice eating-sized fish, but they can run big, some topping five pounds. Northerns are also plentiful mostly in the two to six pound category, although trophy fish of over 15 pounds are recorded every spring.

Muskies have been stocked in limited quantities in Clear Lake and West Okoboji. During the open season from May 15 to November 30, a daily-catch limit and possession limit of one muskellunge will be allowed, providing the fish measures 30 inches or more in length. (Note: since muskies and northern pike have different seasons and limits fishermen must learn to identify these fish.)

## STATE-OWNED ARTIFICIAL LAKES

Perhaps the best, but least publicized spring fishing in Iowa occurs in the artificial lakes, particularly in the southern half of the state. Though not large in size (some are less than 100 acres), these lakes yield some king-sized largemouth bass. The entire months of April and May produce some excellent catches of big bass, many in the five pound plus range. As the sun warms the shallows in early April, these fish move in-shore to feed and later to spawn. Chances of catching a lunker mossback are probably highest right now.

Pre-spawning concentrations of crappies and bluegills can be found near the

shores of these lakes, particularly in the bays, and bullhead fishing is at it's best.

## OTHER IMPOUNDMENTS

Like the state-owned lakes, great fishing can also be found in many county conservation board lakes, city reservoirs and various gravel pits. Although generally small, these areas are well represented in the Iowa Conservation Commission "big fish" contest. Bass, bluegills, catfish, crappies, and bullheads offer the most action in the spring providing size, quantity, and variety.

You don't have to travel far to find good fishing in Iowa. Always a good bet, over 20,000 farm ponds around the state produce great catches of bass, bluegills and catfish in the spring. Be courteous and ask the farmer first.

## TROUT STREAMS

Trout fishing in Iowa is limited to the cold, spring-fed streams of the hill country of the nine northeast counties of the state. About 45 timberlined, clear water streams offer eating-sized rainbows and browns in this area sometimes referred to as Iowa's "little Switzerland".

Stocking usually gets underway in April, but the season never closes, and some anglers prefer the challenge of tempting the big, wise, "carry-over" trout before the initial stockings.

How about variety? Besides trout fishing, this inland area offers smallmouth bass fishing, and walleyes and northerns in the near-by Mississippi.

In April, whenever the fishing urge beckons, you can't go far wrong with a pail of minnows or a dozen nightcrawlers. Worms are especially effective during early spring for most game species.

But whether you use artificial lures or live bait, casting, spinning, flyrod or cane pole, don't wait for someone else to discover the spring hotspots. Seek now and ye shall find!

