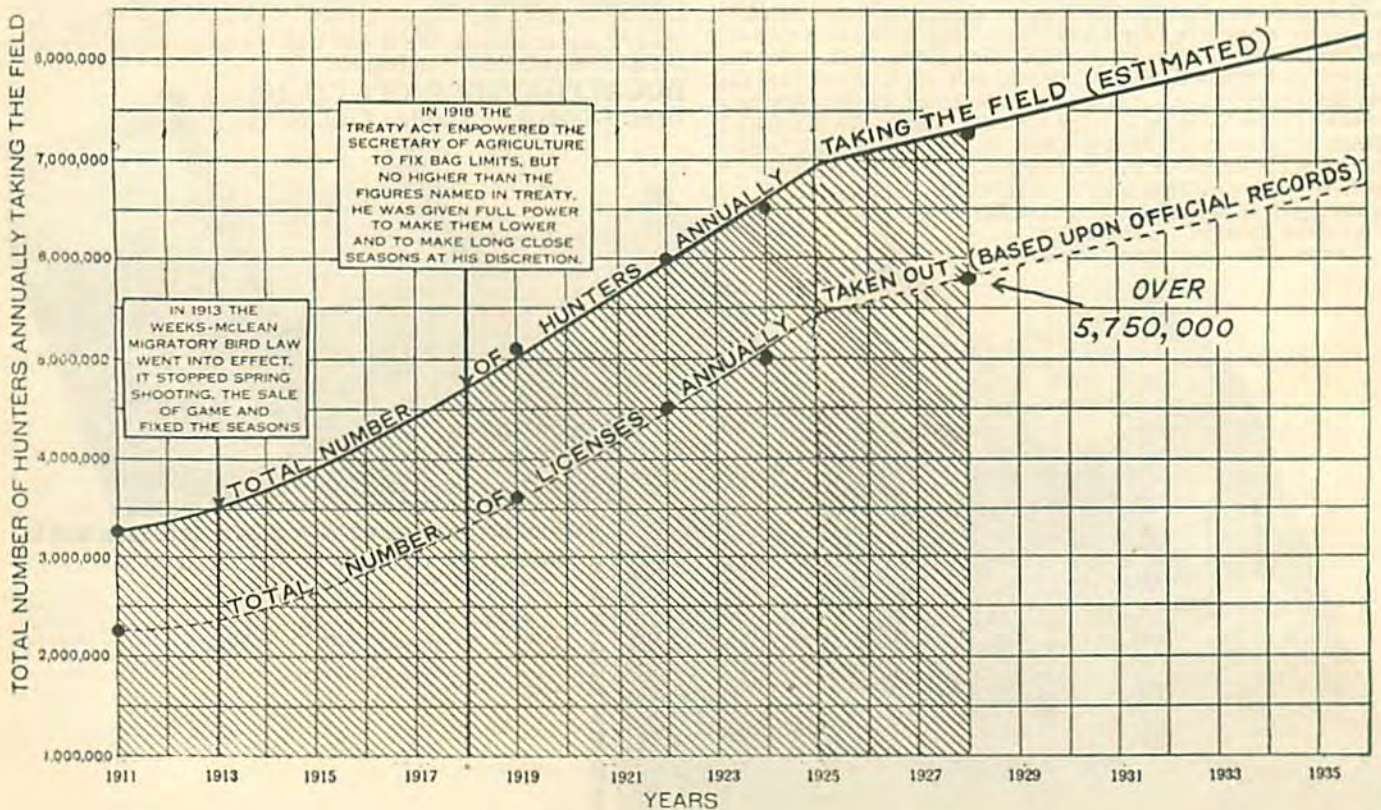


## The Evolution of the Shooter and the Denouement of the Duck in America







# Outdoor Life

OUTDOOR RECREATION



Thirty-First Year

DECEMBER, 1928

Vol. LXII, No. 6

## An Open Letter

To Paul G. Redington, Chief of the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey

**I**N VIEW of your failure to recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture a reduction in the federal daily bag limit on ducks, we think you owe it to the sportsmen of the country to answer the following questions:

1. Twenty-seven of the 48 states of the Union have already found it necessary to reduce their limit far below what your federal regulations allow. WHY?

2. The convention of State Game Wardens and Commissioners recently held at Seattle, and attended by delegates from all the chief conservation societies, asked for reduced bag limits. To quote the Izaak Walton League's official organ: "The duck limit resolution, as might be expected, incited considerable debate on both sides of the question but was finally passed by a wide margin." WHY?

3. Replies to questionnaires recently sent to several thousand of this magazine's readers show that 96½ per cent of the sportsmen answering desire a federal bag limit below the present daily limit of 25. This is the second impartial vote OUTDOOR LIFE has sponsored on this question; and the first, conducted in 1925, showed the same preponderance of popular opinion in favor of a reduction. You, Mr. Redington, as far as one can judge from your inertia on the question, attach no importance to such clearly-expressed demands of the sportsmen. WHY?

4. The shooting sportsmen of the country would be the last class to raise the alarm and cry Wolf! Wolf! if ducks were even reasonably plentiful. Average sportsmen usually do not have to beg to have their bag limits reduced. Necessity is their law—and yet here is the strange picture of the shooters pleading with you for a reasonable curtailment of their own shooting. WHY?

5. Dr. E. W. Nelson, your predecessor as head of the Biological Survey, after years of study on the subject, gave up his opposition to bag limit reduction, and announced shortly before he retired from office that he was in favor of "both reductions in bag limits and shortening of seasons." Through the press he prepared the sportsmen for the forthcoming reduction, and asked their cooperation in this last fearless act before his retirement. But suddenly something happened behind the scenes. The Department of Agriculture announced that after all no changes in duck bag limit would be made at that time (April 5, 1927). Dr. Nelson retired on May 6, and you were appointed to succeed him. Since your appointment you have done nothing to put into effect the conclusion that Dr. Nelson arrived at after years of investigation. You have nullified what was to have been his last official act. The sportsmen are wondering... WHY?

6. The Advisory Board to the Department of Agriculture voted on Dec. 12, 1926, in favor of a lower bag limit of 15. This by a vote of 18 to 2. After Dr. Nelson's retirement it was up to you to carry this recommendation into effect. Instead you have ignored it. WHY?

7. For years the decline in the number of ducks annually migrating in this country has been a settled fact. Dr. Nelson put the situation graphically before the National Game Conference on Dec. 7, 1926, when he predicted ducks would be extinct west of the 100th meridian in five years unless stringent measures to curtail their mortality were resorted to. A month later at a public hearing he displayed a map showing that ducks were dangerously scarce over four-fifths of the whole country. Dr. Nelson had given the best years of his life to knowing the facts on this question. His final conclusion was authoritative, and bore out the evidence of millions of sportsmen to the effect that one sure and quick way of helping to save the ducks was to reduce the federal bag limit on them. Now you have ignored all this evidence. You have instituted a "duck census," which will take several years, and which looks to many sportsmen like a stall to keep the limit at 25. WHY?

8. Shortly after your appointment to succeed Dr. Nelson you signed a statement in the office of this magazine to the effect that "a daily limit of 15 ducks and 5 geese is sufficient to satisfy the most ardent sportsmen." Ardent sportsmen are only asking you to put that conclusion into effect. But you have advanced in the art of procrastination since then. You counter with a Counting-the-Ducks campaign instead of giving us a straightforward, sportsmanlike limit. WHY?

9. Standards of sportsmanship, in this as in any other sport, depend upon the average conscience of those engaged in the sport. Thousands of shooters are at present trying by their own example to instil into their fellow sportsmen the necessity for shooting less than 25 ducks a day. The national government would be expected to be the first to assist such a laudable movement. But it retards it. By holding up the Duck-hog limit of 25 as a lawful and sportsmanlike standard, it stands by the Duck-hog and hinders the promulgation of decent and gentlemanly conservation principles among the shooters. WHY?

10. The question as to whether the Biological Survey has become subject to a wealthy and politically-influential Duck-hog clique is being asked oftener and oftener. By your actions you have not destroyed this growing opinion. WHY?

11. No sportsman these days has the courage to say publicly that he must have 25 ducks a day. WHY?

12. But the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey, designated by the Migratory Bird Treaty as the protector and saviour of migratory wildfowl, alone raises its official voice stubbornly to support a regulation which will prove the death-knell of the ducks. WHY?





"While these two decoys are asleep I might as well make use of them"

# The Eastern Break-Down In Game Conservation

**T**HE Atlantic coast strip from Boston to the northern boundary of Florida (but omitting Pennsylvania) is well stocked with exploiters of game, influence and money. They know just what they want, when they want it, and, to a certain extent, how to get it. For ten years they have maintained an ironclad grip on the sources of federal power over migratory game. They have held the federal game-bird situation in a vice-like grasp. If the sportsmen and conservers of the other portions of our country doubt this, just let them try once to get, either thru Congress or thru the Biological Survey, a game-saving measure that the Big Combine does not approve. The unorganized eastern combine determined on December 12, 1923, that the big federal bag-limits and long killing seasons should not be reduced. It determined to defend them; and thus far it has successfully blocked our bag-limit bill, calling upon Congress to do some of the many things that the Department of Agriculture positively will not do.

At the same time, the combine undertook to increase the killing of migratory game, and also to produce a huge annual fund for the Biological Survey to handle. I refer to the late lamented "Marshlands Conservation Act"—if you can guess what that name really means. It was thru that old and offensive measure that the combine, to protect big bag limits, finally met its Waterloo, on April 18, 1928. Never was the defeat of any bad game measure more thoro or complete. Now, does any sane man imagine that the U. S. Senate is going to reverse itself, and actually pass the old Anthony bill?

## THE FAMOUS NATURALIST'S OWN STORY OF HIS FIGHT FOR GAME PRESERVATION By Dr. William T. Hornaday

of the Permanent Fund and National Committee of One Hundred

### CONCLUSION

may not after all avail to save the ducks and geese of North America. It is my deliberate belief that nothing actually will avail to change this evil eastern situation *in time to save the game!* The situation looks mighty gloomy, for the salvage forces are entirely too few and too weak.

**I**N MY opinion the greatest laggards today in the protection of the migratory game of North America are the United States Department of Agriculture, plus the men who surround it, and openly defend the game-hogs who are destroying American game. Let me offer a few specifications and particulars.

Item 1.—In 1918 Congress invested the Secretary of Agriculture with vast discretionary power over all the migratory game of the nation. At that time most of us approved that action, as being wise and necessary. In 1926 I traveled clear out to Spokane to try to smooth out a lot of north-western irritation that had arisen against "bureaucratic control" of game, forests and the public domain. My mission was quite successful.

Item 2.—In 1918 the U. S. Biological Survey and Charles Sheldon (now Secretary of the new "American Wild Fowlers" of Washington) sponsored and backed up the Sulzer bill, to sell Alaskan moose, sheep and caribou meat all the year round in Alaska. The reasons for this were declared to be "to help win the war," and "to beat the beef



trust" that was charging the whole of 50 cents per pound (the New York price), for good fresh beef delivered in the interior of Alaska! (Before the House Committee on Territories that vicious bill was killed by just thirty minutes of opposition.)

Item 3.—In 1921 the Biological Survey drew and launched the ill-starred and over-praised public-shooting-grounds game-refuge bill, which was joyously counted upon to make "more game for us all," and put about \$400,000 a year into the hands of the Survey to spend on a rather free and easy basis. The Survey and its allies determinedly pushed that bill from 1922 until April, 1928, when it was utterly destroyed by the U. S. Senate.

Item 4.—About 1921, for reasons unknown, the Survey raised the bag limit on the poor little sora rail from twenty-five per day to fifty per day! Comments are unnecessary.

Item 5.—On December 12, 1923, Dr. E. W. Nelson, Chief of the Survey, firmly and vigorously opposed the reduction of the federal bag limits on ducks below 25 per day, on the curious ground that "if duck killing should be reduced the ducks would increase to such numbers that the food supply for them would be insufficient, and many would die of actual starvation." C. B. Odell, of Minnesota, announced that on account of this representation he must "throw up his hands," and vote against our resolution recommending reductions; and he did so.

Item 6.—On December 12, 1923, at a show-down in the annual meeting of the Advisory Board to the Department of Agriculture on the Migratory Bird-killing regulations, as if by a predetermined agreement (which I really believe was made), 17 of the 19 members of that Board in attendance savagely voted down the writer's resolution calling upon the Department of Agriculture for a 50 per cent reduction in bag limits on migratory game.

The attack on the proposed reform was led by John B. Burnham, chairman of that Advisory Board, in a carefully-prepared paper. No one said one word in favor of the resolution save myself; no one proposed a compromise or an amendment, and E. H. Forbush, of Boston, was the only man who joined the introducer in voting for the resolution.

Item 7.—It is with sorrow that we here record the fact that then and there a great fight began between the defenders of game-hog bag limits and those who oppose them, and who also oppose federal public-shooting-grounds.



This is a legal kill of ducks in California under the "bag limit" as fixed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and twenty-one states

The first group then contained the following elements:

The U. S. Biological Survey, the Advisory Board, the National Association of Audubon Societies, the American Game Protective Association, and all the officers and directors of those organizations. The bag-limit-defending group now includes the Izaak Walton League, the American Wild Fowlers, and probably all the "rich-men's ducking clubs" of the Dark and Bloody Grounds.

That war has lasted five full years; and it easily may last as long as any unkillable migratory game remains. The fighters against constructive conservation, and for the defense of game-hogs, have successfully blocked all worthwhile federal reductions of bag limits. But, while they have been doing this, we have helped to completely destroy the odious public-shooting-grounds bill, which certainly should check increases in killings.

Item 8.—Meanwhile, utterly despairing of action by the Biological Survey, twenty-nine states of our nation have voluntarily reduced their bag limits on ducks and geese, most of them to fifteen and four per day. That Colorado became disgusted and angry at Washington, and went back from ten to twenty-five ducks per day is deplorable, but not very surprising.

Item 9.—In 1924 the writer met with a deplorable accident in his relations with Dr. E. W. Nelson and the Biological Survey. The facts and occurrences were as follows:

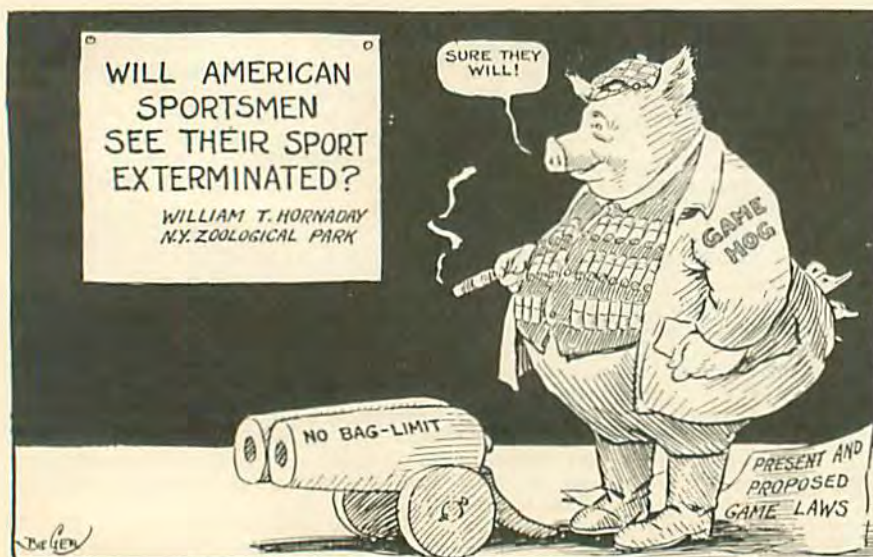
**D**ESPAIRING of action by the Secretary of Agriculture, in December, 1924, the writer made ready to introduce in Congress a mandatory bill to reduce the federal bag limits on migratory game, by approximately 40 per cent from the existing figures. This meant cutting every bag limit of twenty-five per day down to fifteen. Just as that plan was about to be carried out, Dr. Nelson requested Dr. Hornaday to meet him at a luncheon conference in a New York hotel. In the hope of reaching a working agreement that invitation was accepted; and the conference occurred on December 7, 1924. At the end of three hours of friendly talk, Dr. Nelson said, in his most frank and engaging manner:

"Now, the fact is, I believe that the bag limits on migratory game should be reduced. John Burnham thinks so, too."

"I am most pleased to hear you say that. I never heard either of those facts before this moment."

"Yes, it is true. But about one thing I am troubled. I am not able to make up my mind what the figures should be. But there is a way to remedy that. We will make an immediate inquiry into the waterfowl situation, by means of a questionnaire, and obtain a lot of definite in-

(Continued on page 82)



R. J. Bieger in the St. Louis Times-Week Globes Democrat Says the hog



and started in pursuit of him—Old Watch leading the way. But, after we started, we never heard brother call again. He had given up and had wandered away in the storm. We went against the storm, in the direction from which we had heard my brother's screams; but we could not find him. We, too, called aloud time and again; but the storm was so terrible that the range of the human voice was limited, and he did not hear us.

Finally we, too, became lost, and but for the presence of mind and loyalty of Old Watch we would have been out all night in the storm—perhaps never to return. He would go ahead a few yards, sniff the trail, and then bark for us to follow. Once or twice he came back, nipped our clothes, and then barked, as much as to say: "Follow me." We did follow him, and he finally led us back home.

Poor brother! He knocked around a good share of the dark night in the cold, violent storm, and toward morning he accidentally staggered against a deserted claim shack which belonged to a man in New York, named French. Brother crept into this and saved himself until the storm broke the following day, and then meandered home. What a burden it took from mother's heart when she finally saw him coming!

Unlike dogs nowadays, Old Watch would not ride. If we put him in the wagon, he promptly got out. If we coaxed him onto the flat-bottomed stoneboat, as soon as the oxen started, he immediately got off. He couldn't catch the idea that dogs were made to ride. How different the modern dog riding on an auto fender or sitting in the car beside his master.

He liked to go hunting with us, and he was an excellent retriever. If we shot a prairie chicken, no matter where it dropped, Old Watch would invariably find it and bring it to the wagon or to the stoneboat. If we shot a duck, and it fell in the lake, he took supreme delight in swimming in and bringing it back; and he was a good swimmer too. I have seen him stay in the water where it was deep for an hour at a time.

ONE time, during the dog days, Old Watch got sick. His eyes turned red and watered; his appetite failed, his ambition was gone. We feared he might lose him. What could be done? Finally it was suggested that we send for the country doctor. A doctor who could cure ills of people ought to be able to do something for a dog that seemed so nearly human. And so the doctor came. He looked the dog over and then said to my father: "I think all that ails him is the distemper. If you will rope him and hold him, I'll give him a hypodermic injection that I think will help him."

So father tied the dog in all directions with pieces of rope, lines off of the harness, etc. Then he put on a heavy buckskin mitten, reached into the dog's mouth and took a death-like grip onto the animal's lower jaw. "Go ahead, Doc," he said.

The doctor inserted a big curved hypodermic needle into the dog's left front leg, just above his ankle, and pushed it away up under the skin, while we children stood looking on with glaring eyes and panting breaths. Then the doctor squeezed the plunger and gave the dog a shot of something (I never learned what it was) that cleared up his eyes in about a day and no doubt helped to restore him to health again.

How proud we children were of him when the doctor inserted the needle into his leg, for he never moved a muscle or offered any resistance whatsoever. Rather, he just held perfectly still and seemed to say with his eyes: "Perhaps this is all for the best; I'm willing to try it."

He lived to be nine years old. As old age came on, he grew rheumatic; and finally he began to get cross—so much so

that he would snap at us when we fed him. We feared he might go entirely mad and do someone terrible harm; and so, during the last few months of his eventful life, we kept him chained up most of the time.

Father loved him as much as did the rest of us. One day he said: "I guess you better kill Old Watch, but do it when I am away and don't tell me about it as long afterward as you can keep from it."

The dog was taking on terribly one morning and acted as tho he were on the verge of rabies. It took all the courage I possessed to raise to my shoulder the gun that ended his suffering. Brother and I laid him gently away near a big slough where the prairie winds could sing sad requiems above his nameless dust.

Such was pioneer life—even for a dog.

## The Eastern Breakdown in Game Conservation

(Continued from page 39)

formation. With a mass of new facts before us, we can easily decide what the reduction figures should be."

I asked: "Can you do this in time to get the reductions into the next issue of your Annual Hunting Regulations?"

"Oh, yes. We can. There will be ample time for that."

That "nation-wide investigation" was made. That questionnaire was sent out to 3,400 persons, early in 1925 "to State Game Commissioners, sportsmen, conservation societies, and many of the Department field representatives, and others, and also published in sportsmen's magazines and periodicals" (W. N. J.). Quite a serious undertaking, was it not? Now mark the result.

Promptly the replies came in. They were stacked up in Dr. Nelson's office, and from that day to this no report whatsoever of the results of that "investigation" ever has appeared! It seems that the one and only published reference to it is contained in a letter dated April 29, 1925, from Secretary William N. Jardine to John B. Burnham, very guardedly alleging a "very marked and gratifying increase in ducks and geese since they have been afforded federal protection." All of which was known before, to everybody! (See "Wasting America's Game Birds," page 54, 1926.) That very brief statement consisted of nothing but glittering generalities. Other than that one reference, the results of that investigation have from July, 1925, down to this date been absolutely concealed by the Department of Agriculture. Not one word of Dr. Nelson's promise to me regarding bag-limit reductions, on ducks and geese, has been kept! Did the results fail to reveal the evidence that some one wished them to reveal?

THE Department of Agriculture elected to stall on its job, and protect the big bag-limits on ducks and geese of the game hogs of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, California, Oregon and Utah, by making no changes in waterfowl bag-limits from 1923 down to date; and I lost a whole year with my bag-limit bill! Can it be possible that Secretary Jardine never has realized the ugly aspect of that whole incident?

Item 10.—On March 20, 1925, the Department of Agriculture definitely passed the bag-limit buck to the states, saying that they might do as they pleased about it—as if the states would mend their evil ways voluntarily. Away back in 1912 and 1914 some of those same states would not stop the sale of game, nor spring shooting, nor enact bag-limits, until compelled to do so by the McLean Federal Migratory Bird Law.

Much later on Dr. Nelson conceded some long close seasons and reduced bag limits

on the two yellow legs, the two plovers, snipe and woodcock—when those species were down to a very low point.

Item 11.—In March, 1925, so the records show, it seems that Dr. E. W. Nelson, then about to retire from the government service, because of having reached the age limit, deliberately resolved and planned that his last official act should be to give the ducks of America a square deal on bag limits. Read these records, and judge:

On March 17 the Department, which is the sole federal arbiter of the fate of our migratory game birds, published a fine press bulletin announcing that "to safeguard the future supply of ducks, geese and other migratory wild fowl of the western states requires that increased restrictions be placed on hunting privileges"; and "Sportsmen are Asked to Cooperate in Upholding Shooting Restrictions in Western States." To secure that end, "Dr. Nelson calls upon all sportsmen to cooperate with the Department in any action that it may take in restricting the annual number of wild ducks and other migratory game that may be taken by hunters."

On March 20, at a public hearing on bag limits held at the National Museum, Dr. Nelson's map and declarations sent some of his hearers away rejoicing in the assurance that at last the Department of Agriculture had resolved to give the persecuted waterfowl a square deal, and also perpetuate reasonable duck-hunting sport.

But straightaway somebody got busy, and something happened in the Department which upset all that completely.

On April 5—only three weeks later—the same Department and the same Dr. Nelson came out with another press bulletin announcing the new Regulations for Hunting in 1927-1928, and saying, "No changes are made in existing regulations affecting the length of seasons or size of bag limits on ducks and geese."

AND there you are again for the fourth time! And this, after the editor of *Forest and Stream* in his March issue had said in large type that "Dr. Nelson is to be congratulated upon the fact that he has undergone an enlargement of vision on the wildfowl question." And at that time, *Field and Stream* came out openly and strongly for bag limit reform.

Now we ask—what happened in the Biological Survey? Who was it, either higher up or lower down, who secretly but forcefully put his foot down and FORCED E. W. Nelson to reverse himself, and endure the humiliation of it in the last days of his official life? And why was it done?

Let the House Committee on Agriculture find the answer, and tell us.

Item 12.—Thus does history reveal that thruout the years of 1925 and 1926 the Biological Survey absolutely stalled on all bag-limit reductions on waterfowl, while earnestly but vainly trying to jam an odious public-shooting-grounds bill thru Congress.

Item 13.—In the spring of 1927, new Chief Paul G. Redington devised another "investigation" scheme which bids fair to surpass Scheme No. 1 as a stalling operation. It is long continued counting of the ducks and geese of North America, "that may occupy several years"! In practical effect it already has protected the game-hog bag limits on waterfowl thruout the killing seasons of 1927 and 1928, and Mr. Redington has frankly announced that "no changes will be made in waterfowl bag-limits until the situation has been thoroughly studied" in the light of the returns from this "bird census," which may take "some years" to complete.

If this does not foreshadow a total continuance of existing game-hog limits for





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from five to ten years, then English words have lost their meaning.

Item 14.—Because of the duck "census" scheme the Department of Agriculture has officially objected to a favorable report by Senator McNary and the Senate Committee on Agriculture on our Copeland bag-limit reduction bill.

Item 15.—Senator McNary announced that because of that game census the bag limit bill "would not be acted upon" at the past session; and it was not. This alone should prove to the men of the Middle West that the strangle hold of the defenders of game-hog bag-limits is firm and permanent on the Senate Committee on Agriculture. And what can anybody do about it? And where do the rights of the game and the people-at-large come in? Does it now look as if American migratory game birds can be "saved"?

### The New Norbeck Bill

Item 16.—The same old parties that thru-out six years of steady efforts have failed to drive their oft-defeated bill thru Congress are now lining up to "amend or kill the new Norbeck bill." Do you ask me "why?" Ask them, and see if all of them together can give you a satisfactory answer. I invite you to study the minds and lobbying habits of the officers of the Biological Survey, the Audubon Society, the American Game Protective Association, and the new American Wild Fowlers.

CONCERNING the Wild Fowlers, the readers of **OUTDOOR LIFE** already know that its second and third aims are openly declared to be the backing-up, and defense thru thick and thin, of the policies of the Biological Survey. It therefore must embrace stalling on constructive protection, the defense of big bag limits, duck counting for "years to come," and the noble and fruitful industry of bird banding to determine where birds go to be slaughtered.

The conclusion of this recital of facts and history is quite plain. *The new Norbeck bill is right, and it is the only federal game sanctuary bill that the Senate of the 70th Congress ever will pass!* Let there be no mistake about that. It was just forty years ago that I began my job as a successful Congressional lobbyist in behalf of wild-animal measures; and that was about the time some of my present enemies were born. I assert that the Norbeck bill can not be improved any by "amendments" made to satisfy its beaten enemies. No friend of migratory game should consent to any compromises whatsoever.

We stand, first, middle and last, for the Norbeck bill as it is. If we permit ourselves to become enmeshed in the tangled skein of the dead Anthony bill, as the president of the American Game Protective Association now invites us to do, we will be fools; and we will deserve the fall we will get. Let us work for our two bills (Norbeck and bag-limits) and let others patch up the Anthony bill, and seriously ask the present Senate to pass it.

The Copeland bag-limit bill is absolutely sound, reasonable, right and necessary. The men of the Middle West could (if they would take the time) easily put enough home pressure behind it to put it thru Congress next winter; but I fear they will not bother to do it. Anyhow, its fate is now absolutely out of our eastern hands! We have done all that we can do to secure for all United States ducks their place in the sun. At present certain parties hold our bill by the throat, and are choking the life out of it. But no wonder. But for federal inertness the bill never would have become necessary!

And so, it looks as if our migratory game is booked for Oblivion.



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**JACK MINER**, author "Jack Miner and the Birds" and other works, conservationist and wild fowl protector.  
**JOSEPH D. PENDER**, organizer, conservationist, sportsman.  
**DR. R. FRED PETTIT**, author, scientific collector, organizer.  
**EDMUND SEYMOUR**, President American Bison Society, conservationist, sportsman.

### Our Platform

A maximum 15-bird nation-wide duck limit.  
 More state game refuges.  
 Save the last of our grizzly bears—our antelope—our sage grouse.  
 Better protection for all bears.  
 Stop needless pollution of fishing waters.  
 More of state game funds used to rear feathered game.  
 Stop diversion of state moneys from game fund to general fund.  
 Congressional cooperation to provide for Federal game refuges.  
 Stop wanton drainage of wildfowl areas.  
 More fish fry, and more state and Federal nursery ponds in which it can attain proper growth.  
 Safeguard our forests by widespread reforestation.  
 Limited open season on all birds and animals, up to danger limit of their extinction, in preference to protracted closed seasons

## Our Readers Express Themselves on Duck Bag Limits

### Knows—and Approves

Editor Outdoor Life:—I was very much interested in your editorial "Sister, Count the Ducks." I have known Paul Redington for the past twelve or thirteen years and while I believe he is ambitious and approve of it, I do not believe that he would deliberately double-cross the western sportsman. This is merely a matter of difference of opinion, however, and I do not intend to enter into any controversy over that.

The main thing I am writing you for is to commend you and your publication for the stand they are taking on migratory bird bag limits. Do you suppose by your efforts the western states could be prevailed upon to adopt a fifteen bag limit?

I am of the opinion that very few of our western ducks get into the eastern states, and if such a thing could be done I believe it would help our shooting a great deal. . . . K. J. BALDRIDGE.  
 N. M.

### Canadian Encourages

Editor Outdoor Life:—I am following with great interest and sympathy your campaign to reduce the bag limit. Fifteen ducks per day and five geese is enough for any man, and we sportsmen outside the duck clubs fences would be mighty well satisfied if we ever got this bag in a week. . . . Yours for fair play and better sportsmanship.  
 Can. CHARLES D. LA NAUZE.

### Agrees

Editor Outdoor Life:—Shake. Your editorial anent rich duck-hogs, shooting-club hogs and double-crossing politicians is very timely and to the point. While the proposed reduction is in the right direction, it is not great enough to insure against the practical extinction of the game.

Let us look briefly at what the game-hogs have done even in the span of years you can recollect, and you are a much younger man than I am.

They, the game-hogs, under guise of protection and conservation of game have, in ways and by means best-known to themselves, including a liberal use of

money, managed to have the open season arranged to suit their own convenience.

They have thru shooting clubs bought or leased the natural resting places of migratory game, jealously herding off the ordinary citizen by means of posting and employment of pseudo peace officers (thus bringing into contempt the name peace officer), then by use of the highly-specialized guns and ammunition available massacred (that is the word) the ducks tolled in by use of feed.

By inviting in two to four friends who do not shoot, our butcher kills the limit for all. Oh, I know, I've seen it done. Seeing all this, it is not strange that the ordinary every-day sportsman reasons "The hogs have the laws stacked for their own benefit, and I will get mine too." Thus more birds are killed than would otherwise be the case, with the result that birds are becoming more and more scarce each year. "Sister, Count the Ducks," to the contrary notwithstanding. . . . A drastic remedy is necessary to relieve an intolerable situation.

Ten ducks or other water birds in the aggregate per day, except brant and geese, and of these, three of either or aggregate, not each. Yes, the hogs will squeal, loud and long. . . . For the last ten years I have placed a bag limit of five ducks on my own shooting, except when I shoot with the camera. Mr. McGuire, we must find ways to "protect" that protect. . . . CHASE COLE.  
 Colo.

### Contemns

Editor Outdoor Life:—You need not send me OUTDOOR LIFE any more. After reading the editorial in the October number of this year on ducks I do not care to read your paper any more.

I am not a duck hunter, not having shot ducks for over forty years and I am not interested in ducks, but I am distinctly interested in trying to suppress ignorant and unfair propaganda such as your editorial obviously is. You should join the Anti-Saloon League and act with those unreasonable bigots, because that is where you belong. . . .  
 N. Y. RICHARD C. STOREY.

### Not Proud

Editor Outdoor Life:—Referring to your editorial in the October number of OUTDOOR LIFE. . . . Your remarks about the sport who belongs to no club and has to shoot at large are incorrect and I see plainly that you are misinformed for if you ever had been out on a public shooting ground on a shooting day you would never want to go again.

Have you ever tried to stretch your imagination in order to comprehend the Federal Government's viewpoint of these questions? If so, you will know that it is far broader than that of any one individual. I believe you will carry your point, of reducing the bag limit, much quicker by avoiding personalities and confining your remarks to the questions of Game Preservation. Such remarks as yours do not make me feel proud that I am a subscriber of your paper.  
 Calif. ALLEN R. POWERS, M. D.

### Nasty

Editor Outdoor Life:—I think that was a mighty nasty cartoon that you had in the last issue assailing the Biological Survey.

I wish you would take my name off your Advisory Committee. Game conservation will not get very far as long as those who shoot—I won't say sportsmen—are continually slinging mud and quarreling.  
 Wm. B. MERSHORN.  
 Mich.

### Enthuses

Editor Outdoor Life:—Your editorial, "Sister, Count the Ducks," is a yard wide and all wool but the buttons. I know of no sport where the violations have been as great as in duck shooting.

This sport has always been confined to the more wealthy class of so-called sportsmen, as it is too expensive for the poor man to indulge in; his chances are to walk the marshes, with a thousand to one shot that he will never get the bag limit.

The law to little Algonon, is like the good cow that gives a big bucket of milk, and then kicks it over.  
 Little sister would have to work long



after the midnight hours to count the ducks that are killed by little Algernon in one day on the Susquehanna flats. Every man on the boat, as well as the boy that picks the ducks, has a license, and the limit for each one is assigned to little Algernon, so that he may advertise his powers.

Fifteen ducks are enough for any man in a day.

... Sentiment and fine stories won't bring back the ducks; even if we do know how many we have, reduce the bag limit and let posterity have a shot.

As President of the Pennsylvania State Division of the I. W. L. A. I will endeavor to teach every Waltonian that fifteen should be the bag limit.

WM. H. MOORE, Pres.

Pennsylvania State Division I. W. L. A.

### Enjoyed

Editor Outdoor Life:—Mr. McGuire's editorial is so clever, so well worded and has so much force to it that I could read it over a hundred times and still enjoy it. . . .

EDMUND SEYMOUR.

N. Y.

### Commends

Editor Outdoor Life:—Having read your editorial in the October issue of OUTDOOR LIFE entitled "Sister, Count the Ducks," I am still firmer in my belief that fifteen ducks should be the limit. And I must commend you on your arraignment of Redington—only you should have laid it on heavier if possible. . . .

W. A. SPICKLER.

### Congratulates

Editor Outdoor Life:—I just finished reading your editorial in the November issue and believe me it hits the nail on the head. I for one have grown very tired of promises and sentimentalism in game affairs. The time is late for action but it is not too late yet. What we need is real hard-headed conservation with able-bodied and brained sportsmen enforcing it. . . .

Fifteen ducks are too many; ten are a great plenty. What family can eat fifteen ducks or even ten? Let's be reasonable and have a little decency toward ourselves and brother and sister sportsmen and the ones in generations to come.

So, I say, all power to you in your fight for a respectable bag limit. . . . Believe me, my congressmen and senators will surely hear from me.

Wash. CARL F. MOHR.

### Demurs

Editor Outdoor Life:—... I have been a duck hunting enthusiast ever since I was able to place a gun to my shoulder, and I feel that I know what I am talking about when I speak of conditions in my locality. There are more birds in my vicinity now than there have been for twenty years and last year there wasn't sufficient food to feed them. This has occurred in face of the fact that there are at least three times the number of hunters today in comparison with twenty years ago. There were very few days last season that I was fortunate enough to bag the limit; this I believe was caused by the now many restrictions existing in the Migratory Bird Act. I personally feel that the law is becoming so strict that it is everything but a pleasure for a man to enjoy himself by taking a day off for the purpose of hunting. Why make it worse? . . .

Va. GEO. F. DOWNHAM.

### Says Keep It Up

Editor Outdoor Life:—The limit on ducks should be not over ten for one day

and not over fifty for the season. I would be perfectly satisfied with half that many. Either that with strict enforcement as nearly as it can be done or goodbye duck in a short time. They may talk till they are black in the face about ducks holding their own, to say nothing about being on the increase, but I don't believe there's a word of truth in it. Where years ago during flight time the air used to be full of them, there are scarcely any seen now in these parts. And the same sad story comes from truthful men as to conditions in other parts of this section. I can't understand what in the blue blazes any man wants with more than that number anyhow, unless he wants to subsist his family and all his friends on duck meat during season and for weeks or months afterward from cold-storage. This cold-storage business together with baited shooting waters is what is raising red with the duck species and if anything could be done in time to check it before the birds are gone, it should be done.

OUTDOOR LIFE is doing a fine service for us shooters in this respect and I for one hope that Congress will take hold of the thing and handle it. I remember that you and I had some correspondence on this subject about twenty-five years ago. It was then that I first began seeing copies of OUTDOOR LIFE. I thought then that it was a national rather than a state question and I have been growing more convinced along that line ever since. Keep up the good work and maybe after a while they will act down at Washington.

Iowa. A. J. WALSMITH.

### What's the Use?

Editor Outdoor Life:—Noticed the editorial, "Sister, Count the Ducks." It's all right, but what's the use or good of it when the **game hogs have control of the laws and the marshes, etc?** So long as the "peepul" are as wise and as smart as the poor deluded law-obeying "peepul" are in the majority of instances, when you only need to slap 'em on the back and salve 'em a little and they forget they ever had anything to kick about at all.

Duck clubs are a business, as you know, and if the business doesn't pay it goes flooey. How is it the dues are from \$100 up—yeh, way up too—for membership in a duck club per year? Well, I'll tell you how it is. I, say, am in the draying and cartage business. Well, I have to please my clients and what could be better than if I give them some ducks in the fall? I belong to a good duck club, say, and go out a couple of days or a week and have ducks for all the shipping clerks and shippers on my books. Whee, ain't we got fun? Twenty-five ducks a day is like 20 miles per hour—it doesn't mean anything.

... Oh, it's a great system—and the system doesn't like to be held to account for anything, and least of all, the migratory birds. If birds will bring dollars—and look, we don't have a darn thing to do with raising the birds or feeding them, or even getting them for that matter—why, give the boys a little fun. Oh, my gosh, what a pain. Conservation, bah. For the working man, sure. But for us plutes—"never heard of it."

I say six ducks, not over twenty per season; one goose, not more than five per season, is enough. But what's the use?

Ill. D. F. BOCK.

*NOTE: The letters here printed are a few of the many commending OUTDOOR LIFE'S campaign for lower duck bag limits. All of those opposing our stand, received up to publication time, have been printed above.*

## California's Activities

JUDGING by recent progress in California, the state of Pennsylvania will have to look to her laurels, or the conservation crown for first-place honors, worn by the Keystone State for so many years, may be wrested from her.

The Pacific Coast state, thru that wonderful organization, the Associated Sportsmen of California, as well as other sportsmen and agencies, is showing a spurt of late that challenges admiration. Among things in contemplation or actually doing at present in California, we may mention the following:

1. The recent decision by the above organization to issue its own official organ, a beautifully printed 20-page journal espousing in its entirety the cause of game and fish protection in that state.

2. More aggressive action toward reducing duck bag limits.

3. A coordination of effort all over the state to put thru a bill that will forever and adequately protect the black bear. OUTDOOR LIFE is cooperating toward this plan to the fullest.

4. The creation of more state game refuges. This plan includes refuges for upland bird and wildfowl, and probably is the most important step in game conservation that any state can take.

5. Committees have been appointed to look after every phase, feature and factor in any way associated with game and fish preservation, to the end that no stone may be left unturned to make of California as great a game hunting and fly fishing state as she already is a health, scenic and travel state.

## New Western Association

EDITOR Outdoor Life:—We formed the Western Fish and Game Protective Association at Medford, Oregon, at our meeting on Sept. 18 and 19, with representatives of Washington, Oregon and California attending. P. Paul Paige, president of the Associated Sportsmen of California, was chosen president of the new organization; Bert Anderson of Medford, Oregon, was chosen first vice president; T. C. Miller of Seattle, Wash., as second vice president and H. L. Betten of Alameda, Calif., as secretary.

While British Columbia was not represented, it signified its intention of joining. The plan of the new organization is to bring in the eleven western states. We will work to bring about better protection of the great steelhead trout, the Pacific salmon and migratory birds in the West, and to help the individual states in their own local problems. J. P. CUENIN.

Calif.

## Compliments Hornaday and Pushes Norbeck Bill

THE following editorial from the New York Herald-Tribune of Sept. 3, 1928, is an indication of the nation-wide sentiment in favor of the Norbeck Bill for the establishment of inviolate wild life game refuges, which passed the Senate last session and will be presented to the House this winter. The editorial is headed "Wild Life Refuges":

"Dr. William T. Hornaday, president of the Permanent Wild Life Fund, is against any compromising or rehashing of the plan for migratory bird refuges which the Senate approved. He is naturally un-receptive to invitations for 'teamwork' from those who still hanker for shooting grounds in connection with the bird sanctuaries.

"The Senate's passage of the Norbeck