

Conservation

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Our Platform

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.

Stop wanton drainage of wild fowl 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.

More funds, both state and federal, for game law enforcement.

Some of Our Game Problems

By Talbot Denmead

Formerly of the Bureau of Biological Survey

IT IS intended in this article to discuss briefly some of the problems that today confront those who are interested in the future welfare of our game and desire to see the sport of hunting and fishing in the United States continued for generations to come. In so brief an article the surface is but scratched, but it is hoped the readers will not only ponder over the problems presented but be interested enough to assist in solving them properly.

Enforcement

IT IS impossible to enforce the game and fish laws of the Federal and State Governments against the constantly increasing aggressions of a new type of lawless, defiant, and sometimes desperate criminal element, without a large force of well-trained, intelligent, and fearless game protectors. It is common knowledge at present among duck bootleggers and other chronic game-law violators that the Federal Government has but a mere semblance of an enforcement organization, incapable of dealing adequately with the situation. Many of the State game protector forces are larger and have more funds than the Federal force. Nevertheless, there are a few isolated places where the lawless element openly flouts both State and Federal game laws.

Even with an adequate force of game protectors, it would still be impossible to properly enforce the game and fish laws unless such laws have the backing of the public and of the courts. There is nothing more discouraging to a conscientious game protector than to lose a "good case." After he has worked and devoted considerable time and money in the apprehension of a well-known violator, he expects and is entitled to the backing of the sportsmen whose interests he represents; if their indifference results in an acquittal, they have but themselves to blame. Those interested should make it a point to back the game protector in prosecutions, and representatives of conservation associations should appear at trials and lend their moral support. Otherwise the case may be "thrown



Talbot Denmead has served the Biological Survey for ten years as deputy chief and acting chief U. S. game warden and, more lately, as assistant game conservation officer. Last March he was transferred to the Bureau of Fisheries where he is now law-enforcement officer directing the regulation of the interstate transportation of bass

out" for various reasons. The protector should not be compelled to play a lone hand in prosecutions.

The number of game and fish laws and regulations has greatly increased in recent years, yet there has not been a proportionate increase and strengthening in the enforcement arm of the law. Nevertheless noticeable beneficial results have been obtained; violations of the game and fish laws are now committed only under cover—not openly, as in the past, with the full knowledge of the game protector. Only in certain inaccessible places are the laws now broken with impunity; the market

hunter now carries on his nefarious trade literally in the dark, and he is most difficult to apprehend. Sales of ducks are not made openly but over the telephone, or the birds are delivered at one time and payment made at a later date.

The night hunter, who is hard to catch because he always picks the time and place of his operations when no one is around, now generally operates with fear of arrest and punishment in his heart. Only recently a Federal protector who had been watching a night hunter as he came ashore, saw him shoot at a black tree stump which jumpy nerves caused him to believe was a game protector.

We have no reason to anticipate that such a lawless element will cease operations unless compelled to do so by the force of law. There must be an increase in the force of game and fish protectors and sound public sentiment in favor of the laws and their enforcement.

Production

ONE of the most important things that can be done to increase our game and fish supply is to encourage propagation. Birds raised in captivity and released are just so much gain. One prominent wild-fowler has this year (1930) raised for liberation about 4,000 mallards; next year with the cooperation of three neighboring sportsmen he hopes to raise 20,000. This is probably far in excess of the number of birds that will be killed, of all species, at these four places.

Production can also be increased by a more rigid enforcement of the laws prohibiting shooting late in winter and spring, thus insuring the birds against disturbance on the way to and on their breeding grounds. Many more ducks now breed within the United States than did before spring shooting was abolished; still more will raise their broods in this country if the illegal shooting, trapping, and duck-nest robbing in spring are further restricted. Production can be increased further by refuges and the control of natural enemies in nesting areas.

Natural Enemies

WE HAVE heard much about so-called "vermin" in recent years and just what should be included under that term is difficult to decide. In general it may be said that no concerted effort should be made to exterminate any species of bird or animal, or reduce the numbers to or near the danger point. Organized drives against natural enemies of game are not to be encouraged for various reasons, but there should be proper control of those species in places where it is obvious that they are a menace to more valuable birds or animals. It may be that only certain individuals of a species generally beneficial have become injurious—gone wrong as it were. In such a case the erring individual should be eliminated.

"Vermin" might be defined along the lines suggested by a professor of Johns Hopkins Medical School, Baltimore, who thus described dirt: "Dirt is matter out of place; for example, if a little green paint fell into a plate of ice cream the paint would be 'dirt'; but if a child transferred some of his ice cream via sticky fingers to a valuable oil painting, then the ice cream would be 'dirt.'" Along the same line of reasoning we may say that "vermin" includes any animal or bird that is not in the right place. For example, where large numbers of birds congregate, as on game refuges or bird sanctuaries, they attract excessive numbers of those enemies that generally prey upon them; in such places it becomes absolutely necessary to eliminate at least a portion of such enemies. This explains, in part, what is vermin control, one of our major game problems.

Devices

UNDER this heading may be mentioned some of the devices used in taking waterfowl, such as power boats, live decoys, sinkboxes, floating blinds, automatic and pump guns, stationary blinds, guns larger than 10 gauge, and airplanes. Each presents a many-sided problem difficult to solve to the satisfaction of all, at the same time giving due consideration to the necessity of perpetuating the various species. Any device can be used in a way that will result in an abuse of the privileges allowed by law. The use of all the devices mentioned is restricted by other laws such as those regulating the number of birds that may be killed in a day, week, or season; by rest days and hunting license laws. It is quite possible for a man under favorable conditions to kill too many ducks or geese with a single-barreled muzzle loader; at the same time an automatic shotgun, limited by the bag limit or by adverse weather conditions, could be used without in any way resulting detrimentally to the water fowl. A device might be an abuse in one place and legitimate, ethically, in another section. A local abuse of a device does not justify its entire abolishment.

The use of sinkboxes, or batteries, is undoubtedly injurious in certain small water areas, and it also ruins the hunting of those using other devices in that neighborhood. This is acknowledged by the Federal



Market hunters guns confiscated by U. S. game protectors

Government in prohibiting the use of such devices in inland waters; weather conditions—high winds and ice—rest days, bag limits, all tend to restrict their use in localities where they are legal.

Decoys

THE use of wooden and live decoys is not only an aid to duck hunting, but some form of duck or goose imitation is absolutely essential to secure ducks and geese (except by accident) in nearly every section of the country. To abolish the use of all forms of decoys would be paramount to closing the season; no state legislature has yet passed a law prohibiting the use of live or artificial decoys.

The successful use of live decoys is almost entirely limited to hunting wild geese, brant, and the shallow water ducks such as the mallard, pintail, and black duck. Their use in taking the canvasback, redhead, and scaup is practically nil. Quacking live decoys will cause flocks of these ducks to flare off; the use of live ducks in taking the last three mentioned does not increase the number killed. The

efficiency of wooden decoys in taking the deep water ducks decreases as the open season progresses. In many places the use of live decoys is absolutely necessary to secure even a small number of geese or black ducks or mallards. To entirely eliminate their use would bar many real sportsmen from obtaining a few ducks for personal use.

It may become necessary to restrict the use of live decoys, or limit the number of wooden decoys if no other method of curbing the abuses to which decoys are put can be found, but certainly the problem should be carefully studied before laws are passed.

Inequalities in Hunting Licenses

HUNTING licenses serve two purposes: as a means of identification, and for raising revenue for the use of the game authorities in caring for game and fish. States should consider giving something like value received. Why should a game commission be expected to accomplish more today on money derived from the same old \$1 resident license that was in effect "before the war"? Why should a large state and one adjoining with only three counties both charge the nonresident \$15 to hunt within their respective borders? They don't give the same for the money; one is a big state with various species of game, the other has only three counties, and the hunting is confined principally to ducks.

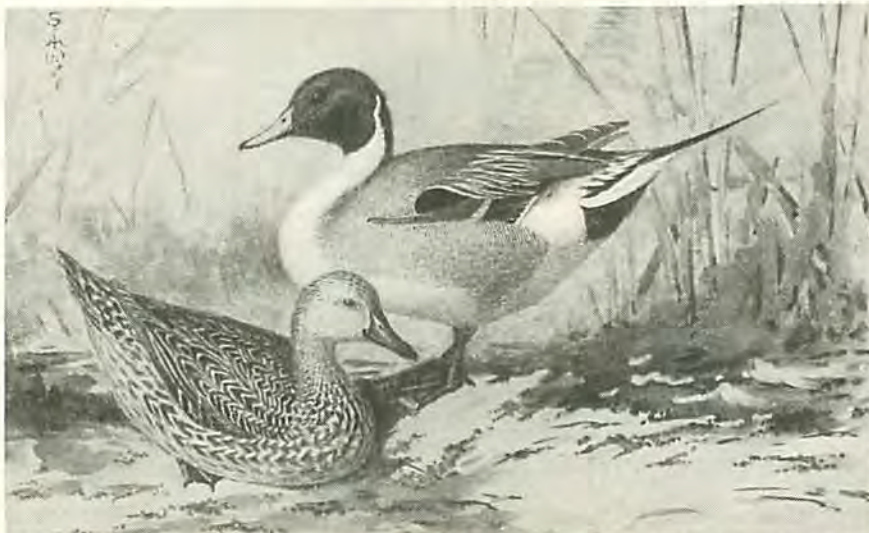
One of our southern states has just increased the nonresident fishing license from \$3.25 to \$10.50. Does it give a nonresident who fishes but two or three days value received?

A study of hunting licenses by the various states might lead to an improvement in their finances and perhaps reduce deliberate violations of the hunting license laws.

There are many other problems that confront the sportsman-conservationist. Among them may be mentioned disease, over-production, closed seasons for a period of years, pollution, over-stocking, private ownership, and refuges. Enough has been said and published recently about refuges, and the Congress of the United States has committed our country to this form of conserving our wild birds and animals by the passage of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act. The States are all sold on refuges.

Too many game birds perish from disease in the wild and in captivity. A scientific study of diseases with a view of decreasing the losses from this cause would increase our supply of game. The

further study of tularemia, pneumonia, alkali poison, and overcrowding offers a fertile field. Over-production means a loss in the end. We need but mention the Kaibab deer which increased to the point where the weak and the young starved; Pennsylvania with its serious problem of too many does, refuges crowded beyond the point where it was safe; this is the situation on the National Bison Range in Montana where a maximum herd of about 300 buffalo are maintained. To



A pair of pintails, sprigtails, or more colloquially, "sprigs"

enlarge the herd would mean over-grazing and a probable loss of the whole herd.

Oil pollution has resulted in the destruction of thousands of migratory game and nongame birds annually; it is too big a subject for a paragraph and should be treated in a separate article. Suffice to say the problem is being considered.

Think over these problems unselfishly, and with a view to helping those who have dedicated their lives to conservation. They are problems of utmost importance and big enough to attract the biggest brains of the nation. They are not only problems that are of interest to the sportsmen but to every man, woman, and child of our nation.

New Wild Fowl Regulations

THE following changes in the regulations under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act have been announced by the Bureau of Biological Survey:

1. *Hour of opening, first day of season.*—The hour for the commencement of hunting on the opening day of the season will be 12 o'clock noon.

2. *Waterfowl seasons.*—The open seasons for waterfowl (except snow geese in States bordering on the Atlantic Ocean, Ross's geese, cackling geese, wood duck, eider ducks, and swans), and for coot and Wilson's snipe or jacksnipe will be as follows:

In Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York (except Long Island), Penn-

sylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Washington the open season will be from October 1 to December 31;

In that portion of New York known as Long Island, and in New Jersey, Delaware, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and in that portion of Texas lying west and north of the line described in existing regulations the open season will be from October 16 to January 15;

In that portion of Texas lying south and east of the line described in existing regulations the open season will be from November 1 to January 15;

In Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana the open season will be from November 1 to January 15;

In Florida the open season will be from November 20 to January 15; and

In Alaska the open season will be from September 1 to December 15.

3. *Close seasons on certain geese.*—The season has been closed on snow geese in all States bordering on the Atlantic Ocean, and on Ross's geese and cackling geese throughout their range in this country.

4. *Brant included with geese.*—Brant have been included in the bag limit for geese, and only 4 geese and brant in the

aggregate of all kinds may be taken in any one day, and no person may possess at any one time more than 8 geese (including brant) in the aggregate of all kinds.

5. *Decoys for geese.*—In the hunting of wild geese not more than ten (10) live goose decoys may be used or shot over at any one gunning stand, blind, or floating device.

6. *Baiting for mourning doves.*—The hunting, killing, or taking of mourning doves is not permitted on or over, at, or near any area that has been baited with salt, with corn, wheat, or other grain, or with other foods placed or scattered thereon.

7. *Dove seasons in Florida.*—The open season for mourning doves in the State of Florida will be from November 20 to January 31, except in the counties of Dade, Monroe, and Broward, where the season will remain unchanged—September 16 to November 15.

8. *Rail and gallinule seasons, New York and Washington.*—In the States of New York and Washington the open season for rails and gallinules (except coot) will be from October 1 to November 30.

9. *Woodcock seasons in New York.*—The open season for the hunting of woodcock in that portion of New York lying south of the tracks of the main line of the New York Central Railroad extending from Buffalo to Albany and south of the tracks of the main line of the Boston & Albany Railroad extending from Albany to the Massachusetts State line, including Long Island, will be from October 15 to November 14. In that portion of New York lying north of the line above described, the season will be limited to the month of October.

Editorial Note:—The foregoing changes in the Migratory Bird Regulations constitute another victory for Dr. Wm. T. Hornaday, who has been heading the fight for a reduced season on ducks. He has been pointing out the mistake of allowing a bag limit of brant, separate from that of geese, and the new rule is a tacit confession of previous error in failing to include brant as geese. The Biological Survey, however, has only compromised with those who have been demanding an eight weeks' season on ducks and, except in the case of doves, it has paid no attention to protests against the practice of baiting.

20,000 Cottontails for New Jersey

IMPROVED shipping methods and an open winter have aided New Jersey game wardens in completing the largest and most successful distribution of western rabbits yet made in that state. A total of 20,000 cottontails were brought in and have been apportioned and released in each county with less than 4 per cent loss in transit.

Protector James M. Stratton, under whose direction the distribution has been made, says the rabbits received this year were in excellent condition. Handled by fast freight, in new types of carriers, some of the shipments were only two days on the road. Absence of snow, except in a few northern localities, while the restocking was done, proved an advantage in allowing the rabbits to become acclimated and to locate natural food sources, in their new environment.

The rabbit provides New Jersey gunners their chief sport and the Fish and Game Commission has found the annual importation of this new stock has been an important and necessary factor in keeping up the game supply. By the opening of the hunting season next fall, wardens predict the newcomers will have made an impressive addition to the cottontail population of the Garden State.—*N. J. Fish and Game Commission.*



Help Wanted—Male

The Biological Survey, with only twenty-five Federal Game Protectors, deserves the backing of all sportsmen in its efforts to secure from Congress a larger enforcement staff

Button Idea Winning

THE button or tag plan of identifying fishermen and hunters is steadily gaining headway, and today ten of the states as well as the Province of New Brunswick are using buttons to identify their anglers.

The states now using the button for fishermen are Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Michigan, Wisconsin and New Mexico. There may be others of which we do not have record.



In some states the same button is used for both fishermen and hunters, but Pennsylvania, Maryland, and several others furnish a special tag about 3 inches by 4 inches, with numerals at least an inch high, to be placed on the back of all licensed hunters.

We reproduce New Mexico's "Sportsman's License" button, which is considered an excellent sample because the copy on it is limited to bare essentials.

The tag or button idea is good, and more states are expected to adopt it soon. We know the plan is sound, and that it more than pays for itself.—*American Game Protective Association.*

New Alaskan Regulations

ON PAGE 13 of our February, 1931, issue, appeared a map of Alaska showing the five areas closed to hunting at that time and certain other territories recommended by prominent conservationists as additional sanctuaries for the brown and grizzly bear. In his article in that issue on "Staking Out the Sportsman's Claims in Alaska," Harry McGuire discussed the respective merits of these projected closed areas, including Kodiak Island, excepting the section adjoining the town of Kodiak, and the brown bear territory on the west side of Cook Inlet, across from Kenai Peninsula.

The new regulations announced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture on April 8, provide two additional areas in which definite seasons on the brown and grizzly bear are prescribed. One of these is a comparatively small section of Kodiak Island, on the north side and including the drainage into Shelikof Straits between Cape Ugat and Cape Ikolik. The other new area is the westerly drainage of Kenai Peninsula, from the Kenai Mountains to Cook Inlet, South of Kenai River and Skilak Lake. While the territory on the other side of Cook Inlet, recommended in our February issue, is marked by no towns of consequence, the city of Seward, on Kenai Peninsula, is a veritable hotbed of anti-bear sentiment, thanks to a little newspaper known as the *Seward Gateway*. That paper has for years been yapping at the heels of the brown bear and, if the frequent dispatches emanating from Seward are to be believed, Kenai bears breakfast by killing and eating a human being. Well may the bear say to the Biological Survey, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies—and I'm

mighty suspicious of lead-poisoning."

In the seven restricted areas, the hunting of large brown and grizzly bears by residents and non-residents is limited to the period between September 1 and June 20, *except that residents may kill bears at any time when in their judgment the animals are about to attack or molest persons or property.*

At any rate there is encouragement in the fact that the Biological Survey and the Alaska Game Commission have to some extent yielded to sportsman-pressure, though their compromise, in area and in quality, is disappointing. Details of the new regulations and other recent restrictions may be secured by addressing the Alaska Game Commission, Juneau, Alaska.

Quail Imported

THE average sportsman knows that bobwhite quail have been imported from old Mexico during the past fifteen years, but comparatively few have any idea of the extent of these importations.

Beginning with 1916 and up to the end of the fiscal year 1930 (last July 1) the records of the U. S. Biological Survey show a total of more than 600,000 of these birds brought into the United States. And during the season which closed recently there were no doubt another 100,000 brought in duty free under the new law—three quarters of a million live birds for propagating purposes.

In 1916 the figure was but 8,000, then it jumped to 32,800 in 1917, then down to 5,200 in 1918 and 4,300 in 1919, but in 1920 it again jumped to 23,000 and ran above 22,000 every year since except in 1923, when only 9,000 came in. In recent years these importations have averaged from 85,000 to 90,000.

Beginning with 1924, the importations of Hungarian partridges ran from 3,000 up to 28,500 per year, with a total of over

71,000 during the period. It is estimated that upwards of 8,000 came in this winter.

Spring importations of quail planted in suitable cover seem to have done quite well, and no doubt many sections which today have quail hunting would not enjoy this grand sport had it not been for these importations.—*American Game Protective Ass'n.*

Crisis Threatens Game

THE drought of 1930 affected more than human beings and their domestic stock. As previously reported, advices reaching us from Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, and other neighboring states, were to the effect that the game crop last year was far below normal. To make matters worse archaic laws tied the hands of game officials who would otherwise have closed the hunting season to save the seed stock.

That in itself was bad enough. But to top it off the stricken people of that region during the past winter were compelled to kill off every edible bird, animal and fish within their reach to eke out an existence.

Even the lowly rabbit almost suffered annihilation in certain areas. Ordinarily this lively little fellow, "the bread of the forest" for the winged and four-footed enemies of our beneficial wild life, is not considered worthy of pursuit by white men in certain southern and western states. This time he filled an important role in saving human lives.

A final evaluation of the situation will not be possible until the breeding season is well advanced this coming spring, but it is a foregone conclusion that much of the conservation work of years has been all for naught.—*American Game Protective Ass'n.*

The HERO'S corner

Tulsans Set Hunting Record



Speaking of hunting and wild mammals, 24 turkeys and 18 deer headed during a hunting trip into Mexico by four Tulsa men, should be a record whether it is or not, but the hunters insist that it is a record until a similar kill is shown.

The Tulsans pictured above, left to right, are Charles A. Stoffer, R. E. Stephens, Lee Patsent and Frank Bouvy. They left Tulsa November 4 by motor for El Paso and went from there to Pearson and Garcia, Mexico, by airplane. Twenty-five miles from Garcia, Chihuahua, was located the hunting grounds. Each deer killed by members of the party averaged 200 pounds in weight while the turkeys averaged 22 pounds. Stephens killed a deer with a .22 caliber rifle, considered in itself quite a feat. Traps were set for lions and bears, but due to the heavy snow and extreme cold the traps would not function, the hunters reported.

The above clipping from the Tulsa, Okla., *Daily World*, is a sample of the marauding expeditions which resulted in the withdrawing, by the Mexican government, of non-resident hunting privileges, in the northern part of Mexico. We have been informed by Mexican authorities, that they find no record of issuing hunting licenses to that noble quartette. As usual, American sportsmen must pay—in the cancellation of their privileges as non-resident hunters in Mexico—for the twenty-four turkeys and nineteen deer desired by these record-breaking Heroes. What a pity that these .22-caliber deer hunters could not get their traps working on bear and lion!