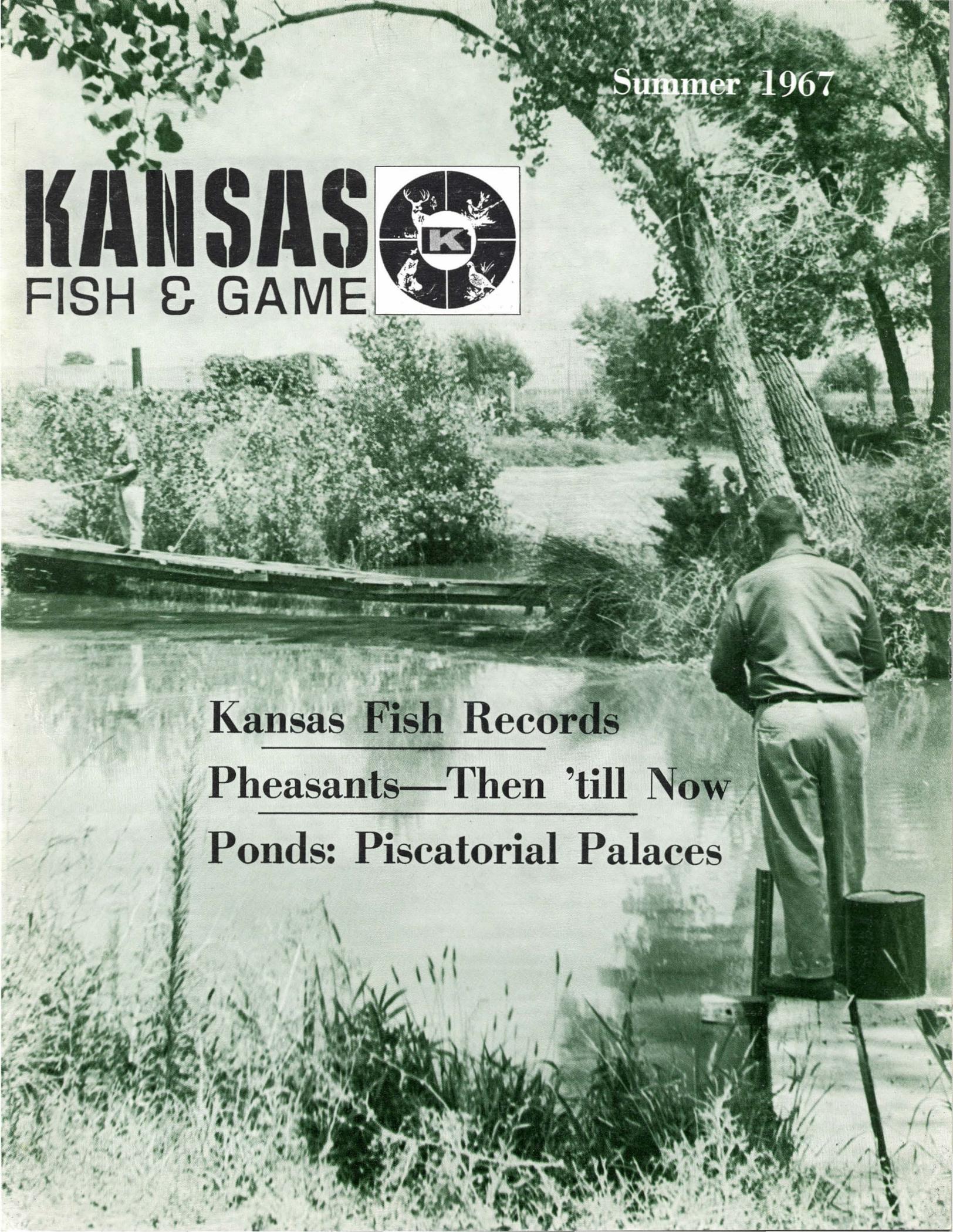


Summer 1967

KANSAS FISH & GAME



Kansas Fish Records
Pheasants—Then 'till Now
Ponds: Piscatorial Palaces



Kansas Fish and Game

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Cover Photo

Big, new lakes and streams seem to hold the spotlight on Kansas fishing, but when it comes to everyday fishing success, thousands of anglers each year turn to the old reliable farm pond.

Ponds, of course, abound in Kansas. There are now more than 70,000 of them, and several hundred more are constructed each year.

The Fish and Game Commission has long been interested in Kansas farm ponds, too. In fact, their management, stocking with fish, construction as waterfowl attractions, etc., were a reality years before the coming of the first big lakes in the state. The Commission, of course, for many years has provided farmers and private pond owners with fish for stocking of the impoundments—a program that also has grown with the years and now a big part of the agency's statewide service.



This edition of Kansas Fish and Game features pond fishing, and its cover picture shows Paul Garst, Sr. (left), and his son, Paul, Jr., both of Pratt, at their favorite pasttime—fishing their pond. (Photo by Thayne Smith.)

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Crappie Run

Speckled Splendor

. . . *In Springtime*

By THAYNE SMITH

BURLINGTON—We rounded a smooth bend in the winding, beautiful stream, and marveled as rays of the bright sun played hop-scotch on our faces through the newborn leaves and limbs overhead.

To our right and left along the bank, the beginnings of weeds and wild flowers were bursting forth with new life—green plants seeming to grow as we watched them—and reaching for the sky.

A few fallen logs and small limbs, protruded from the smooth surface and telling us that this was a likely

place for fish, mingled with standing dead trees along the water's edge.

Along one high, earthen bank a squirrel played, romping with a fervor that only Springtime can breed into a wild animal—pouncing, jumping, chattering and searching with boundless energy.

Overhead, among the many branches, birds were chirping, singing, and were busy, very busy, building nests and making ready for the fruits of earlier loves.

The scene was not unfamiliar to the four of us in the boat, and its helmsman—B. D. Ehler, a Topeka drug-

gist—is an old hand at both boat-handling and fishing. The scene was on unmatched Eagle Creek, upstream from John Redmond Reservoir, and we were on hand for a purpose.

The crappie were running—nice, big, full-of-fight Spring crappie—and we were out to get our share.

Two other veteran Kansas anglers, long-time fishing partners, were with us—Carl Seal, a fire captain, and Carl Coppeans, a drug salesman, both also of Topeka.

Ehler eased his big, flat-bottomed barge-like rig up to the log pile, and before he could cut the motor, our baits were in the water and we were “trying our luck.”

Action wasn't far away.

While we chose Eagle Creek, a favorite spot, on this particular day in early spring, hundreds of other anglers throughout the state were joining us.

Indeed, there were several other boats—many with faces familiar to us—on Eagle Creek that day. Similar scenes were occurring at Tuttle Creek, Pomona, on other creeks of John Redmond, Toronto, Fall River and several other impoundments across Kansas.

All this fishing interest, like ours, stemmed from two things. The winter had been too long, and “fishin' fever” among Kansas anglers was at an all-time high, ready to burst forth with the first nice Spring day. Secondly, Mother Nature had cooperated with a warm weekend and it had put the much-sought crappie on the prowl in all these places.

There has been fishing and fishermen for decades, of course, and no doubt they'll both be with us for years to come. Never, repeat never, will fishing be at a higher pitch in Kansas, however, than when the crappie run.



A BIG STRING OF CRAPPIE—like these “jumbos” from Eagle Creek, near Burlington, adorning the bottom of a boat, is a pretty sight to any angler. Note a nice-sized bass at the right, one of the bonus awards often found in crappie fishing, as bass often feed in the same spots. (Photos by Thayne Smith.)

When they start hitting, dyed-in-the-wool crappie fans drop everything else. They make all kinds of excuses to leave their work behind, and head for their favorite crappie bed. They quit building that house addition, cabin, or let a few customers go until next week's round, or find a non-fishing pharmacist to fill in for them at the pill-filling station, just to be there when the crappie run.

Crappie run! It has become a magic time in Kansas in recent years, born on the heels of the big, man-made reservoirs. It comes, generally, in late March, and (thank goodness) with good weather lasts until mid-June, sometimes. Occasionally, too, there will be another "run" in the fall, but for some reason it's never quite as fervent, quite as exciting as the crappie run of Springtime.

There's a question, and it's one that's debated often, of why the crappie is such a popular fish. Really, he's not a great fighter. One small bass, weighing half as much as the biggest crappie common to Kansas lakes, will give an angler more fight than a boat full of crappie.

They don't really get big, either. A two-pound crappie is a large one, and you won't consistently catch



TOOLS OF THE TRADE when the crappie are running include an ultra-light spinning outfit, with jigs of various sizes and makes, clippers for quickly changing and cutting line, and sometimes a bobber or float to fish at a prescribed depth where crappie are feeding.

stringers of two-pounders, even in Kansas where the crappie grow big.

They do have a couple of things in their favor, however. They're about the best eating this side of ambrosia—a slab of crappie side, fileted with no bones in it and deep-fried over a low fire is pure heaven—a gourmet's delight.

When he's "running," there's a kind

of thrill, or skill, or some such involved, too, in seeing how many you can catch in a short period of time. If you by chance get near the 30-pound limit, it's a simple matter to catch more and turn them loose.

Crappie come in many sizes and shapes, of course, but most involved in the Spring "runs" will average about three-quarters of a pound. Generally, because they're nearing their spawning times and are in shallow waters, they'll be black in color—regardless of whether they are of the black or white crappie species.

Most times, it's not a real test of skill to catch a batch of them, either, if you have the so-called "tools of the trade."

For one type of fisherman, this means live bait—small, shiny minnows to be placed on a small, preferably gold-colored hook, below a split shot or light sinker. All this, of course, is generally dangled from a foot to five feet deep with a cork or plastic float or bobber.

The guy who isn't a bait dunker has only one method of catching crappie—the one that I always use—and that is artificial lures called "jigs" which came into prominence in the Midwest about 10 years ago.

There has never been a crappie-taker like the "jig"—a hook with a



TWO AT ONE TIME—That's the way they're caught when the "crappie run" is on. Virgil Ward, (left) Amsterdam, Mo., owner of the Bass Buster Tackle Company, and Lowell Jack, manager of Manhattan's KMAN radio station, are doing the catching during Tuttle Creek "run" last year.

ball of lead molded around it at the eyelet end, and a batch of maribou feathers, coyote or deer tail, or some such wrapped around the shank of the hook and protruding an inch or two beyond the hook's bend.

Jigs are made and sold by the jillions, and come in every kind, size and shape imaginable. The most popular are basic colors mixed—white with red thread used to tie the body; yellow with black thread and so forth. Sometimes crappie are finicky, and will hit only a given color, and you have to spend a lot of time dipping a jig and searching, and experimenting, to find just what he prefers at the time.

When the big "runs" are on, however, they'll generally hit any color, and sometimes even different weights. The most popular jig, by far, is the one-sixteenth ounce, but sometimes the small, one-thirty-second ounce is the only thing a self-respecting crappie—even big ones—will touch, and at others they turn gluttonous and demand the bigger, one-eighth ounce size.

In jigging for crappie, like bait dunking, a bobber or float can often be employed to advantage. Generally, crappie will feed for several hours at one particular level in a stream or lake, and if you find them at a given spot—say two feet deep—you can use a jig, set two feet below a bobber, to great advantage, and proceed to fill your boat with fish.

Most of the anglers in our fishing "gang," visiting Eagle Creek during this particular day, are dedicated jig fishermen. In fact, two of them are jig makers, and do a fine job of it. Seal has been molding and making his own jigs for years, and has even marketed a few in the Topeka area under the "Sealure" name.

The other tools of the crappie jigger's trade are, an ultra-light fishing outfit and a pair of clippers to cut line and speed the changing of jigs.

Most popular among Kansans is the Garcia 308 or 408 reel, weighing only seven ounces, and the Model 2500, 5½-foot Garcia rod. This outfit is equipped with equally light line, generally four or six-pound test.

The light outfit, of course, makes



HAPPY ANGLER B. D. Ehler, Topeka druggist, proudly displays two excellent crappie taken on jigs from the clear and beautiful waters of Eagle Creek on John Redmond Reservoir near Burlington. He's an ardent crappie fisherman and jig maker.

the fishing easier than with a big, spin-cast or heavy casting outfit. The light tackle, and a rod with a good bend, gives the angler immediate "feel" when a crappie starts messing around with the jig being dangled at the end of the line.

In a matter of minutes, as we lowered jigs around the brushpile, we were in business. First one man, then another, would hook, boat, or hook and lose a nice crappie. Sometimes we'd get one of those 1½ or two-pounders, which we long ago dubbed "jumbos." Many times, too, we'd set the hook on a little rascal, and take the jibes of our companions as we removed him gingerly from the jig and tossed him back to grow a little.

When the crappie are running,

there are thrills galore, accompanied by jokes, cursing at those you lose, testing of lures and lines, arguments about who is the best fisherman, and always that unexplainable something which comes with catching a sack full, or a half dozen.

And what if they aren't running? Well, then it's fun trying to figure out why they chose not to be hungry, or whether you're using the wrong lures, or wrong-sized lure, or whether they are hitting so light you're not "feeling" them, or whether the spot, or stream, or lake is "fished out," or whether you're not giving the jig the right action, or something else.

You don't always have to catch fish to enjoy fishing, but with crappie, it's a new and usual thrill for any angler when he catches them on the "run."

Just Call It Catfish

The catfish has swum into the affluent society. It is making a big splash in better restaurants in Little Rock, St. Louis, Kansas City, New Orleans, Dallas, and other cities in the South-Central States. To its admirers, particularly those who remember fishing for it as boys, this is justice long delayed; to its detractors, those who have always held its cat's whiskers against it, this development is pure upstartism. However viewed, the catfish has moved a long way from Catfish Row.

The restaurants call it catfish, though sometimes they embellish its name: Rocky Mountain Dressed Catfish, Mississippi River Channel Catfish, Farm-Raised Catfish. Occasionally, it is called Barbed Trout. The catfish has been traditionally accepted in the South-Central States, and the channel catfish is the most popular member of the family.

Today, probably more catfish are raised annually in the United States than any other fresh-water fish—35 million pounds. Fish farmers are devoting more than 20,000 acres to raising catfish; about one-third of the acreage is in the South-Central States. Arkansas leads, followed by Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and some states outside this area. In addition to these acres where catfish are raised intensively, there are thousands more where raising catfish is part of a system of crop rotation: Catfish one year, rice the next. After one year's growth, the catfish sells for about 50 cents, whole, at the fish farms or, after dressing and packaging, 90 cents a pound, retail.

Economic researchers of the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Commercial Fisheries say the commercial production of catfish in the United States can reach 60 million pounds a year.

Men who have gone on to eating bouillabaisse and lobster homard à l'Armoricaïne remember the catfish of their youth with affection. With a group of friends, a pole, a line, and a baited hook, they fished the ponds,

fore dark. The barefoot boys who stepped on the spine of a reposing catfish never forgot the experience. The catfish was not the kind of fish to frustrate young anglers—and so they lakes, streams, and small rivers be-



HAPPY BOY with a big catch is Chuck Warders, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Warders, Pratt. His 14-pound whopper channel was taken from the Ninnescah River just east of the Fish and Game headquarters. Chuck's dad is assistant director of the Fish and Game Commission.

often caught a basketful. They certainly caught enough to make a stew and to leave some to fry at home. The stew was made on the bank, with potatoes, bacon, salt, pepper, butter, and onions added to the catfish. The chefs rarely missed: The stew was tasty and there were few bones.

The Tom Sawyers of America did not have conflicting feelings about the object of their affection: It was ugly, but it was good eating. They rarely sold catfish. Some men who have not eaten catfish since their youth say unequivocally: "It's the best-tasting fresh-water fish."

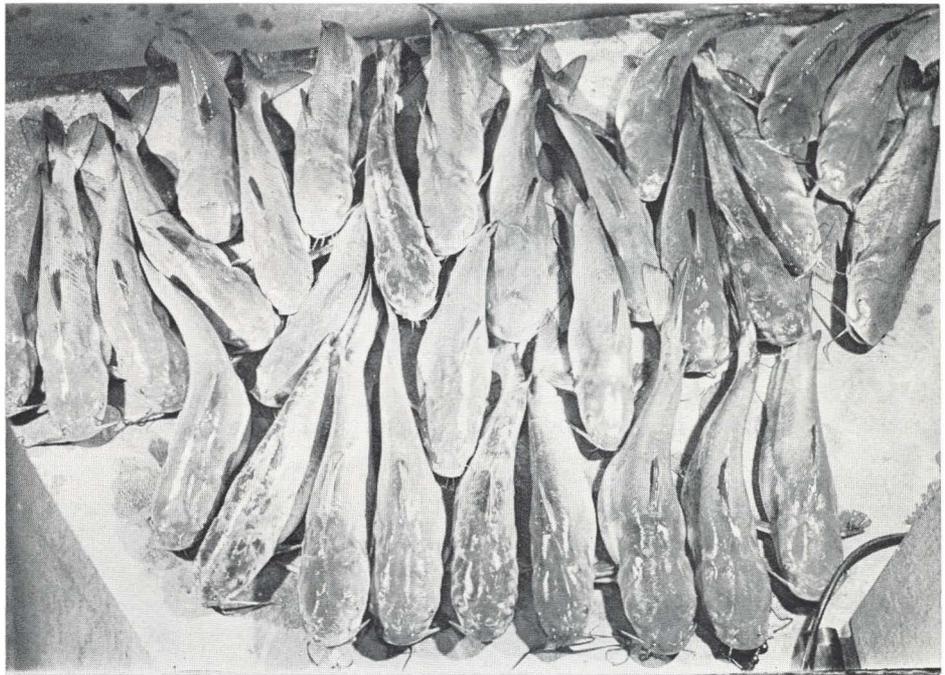
The catfish these men can order in restaurants today were raised in farm ponds.

The fish pond ranges in size from less than one acre to four or five acres. To build a pond, the farmer builds a levee. A rectangular pond with a smooth bottom is favored because it permits the easiest use of a net to collect the fish. To get every last one, the pond is drained. Later, it may be planted with crops. It costs \$200-\$300 an acre to build a pond. The standard rental is \$50 an acre, with ponds and water supply provided. Water is obtained from wells 75-175 feet deep. In the Mississippi Delta, the supply of groundwater is unlimited because it is fed by the river and its tributaries.

The most important fish raised in these ponds is the channel catfish, but farmers also produce bait minnows—fathead, golden shiners, goldfish—and buffalofish, crappies, bass and frogs.

Nearly all farmers feed their pond-raised fish with pellets prepared to meet the nutritional requirements of the fingerlings. About 1.8 pounds of feed produce about one pound of weight gain in one year. The fish then weigh 1¼-1½ pounds and, after they are cleaned to be sold as food, weigh a pound or less. The farmers also fertilize the water to grow plants for the fish to eat. Production per acre per year is 750 to 1,000 pounds.

There are several alternatives for marketing the catfish. Some farmers provide spawning facilities and raise the fish to fingerlings, which they can sell to other farmers at a nickel apiece



CHANNELS GALORE—30 of them weighing more than 125 pounds—were taken in a farm pond south of Pratt recently by three area fishermen. These were stocked four years ago, and weighed between 3½ and six pounds each.

—or continue to raise the fingerlings to market size. Grown fish can be sold to stock ponds for fee fishing—or to restaurants or retailers as whole or dressed fish. Nearly all sales of catfish as food products are within 300-500 miles of the fish farms.

The main problem for the fish farmer to overcome is the expense of processing. It costs him 25 cents a pound to raise a fish and 10 cents to process it, during which 45 percent of the weight is lost. The farmer invests 52-53 cents a pound before he can sell the dressed fish for 90 cents. That's why most fish producers prefer to sell their fish live for about 50 cents a pound. Of necessity, fish farmers are trying to merchandise the catfish on its own identity: It is not a catfish caught just anywhere—but one raised under ideal conditions in a farm pond.

The Bureau of Commercial Fisheries sees a bright future for the fish farmer. The possibility of expanding the industry is very good because production per acre is high and water supply is more than adequate. The Bureau is developing and demon-

strating the use of gear best suited to the industry and gathering information on market conditions. However, Bureau economic researchers warn against a distant cloud in an otherwise blue sky. If production is greatly expanded, they say, the market potential will change considerably. A significant increase in production will saturate present markets and other less profitable outlets will have to be sought. So, the Bureau advises, not everyone should start raising catfish.

A snake's teeth are pointed backward to prevent escape of animals captured for food.

Sea lilies are really animals but they look like the plant for which they are named.

The mistletoe bird of Australia feeds its young while hanging upside down.

The butterfly was originally called the flutterby.

The skeleton of an insect is on the outside of the body.

Kansas Pheasant Hunting—Then 'till Now

Something to Crow About

By **BOB WOOD**
Game Biologist

The second Saturday in November is a red-letter day each year to nearly 150,000 Kansas hunters. On that day, there is a mass exodus to the high plains country. Hunters from all walks of life are found pursuing one of the state's top game birds, the ring-necked pheasant. Have you ever wondered how this mania started? And, how the pheasant season has progressed through the years? Let's go back several decades to see what has happened.

It all started in 1905 when the first pheasants were brought to Kansas. During the two-year period 1905-1906, 1500 pairs of Chinese and Mongolian rinknecks were released in 84 counties. There was little study of the bird's habitat needs prior to these early releases, subsequently, they were liberated in all parts of the state.

Continued stockings through the early 1900's made it apparent pheasants would have to be included in the laws governing hunting or there would be little chance of having the small population of birds survive. Under laws current at the time, pheasants were completely unprotected and subject to hunting year around.

In consideration of the ringneck's unprotected status, during the 1917 legislative session, the "English" and "Mongolian or Hungarian pheasant" were included in the law protecting game birds. That law provided that game birds could not be taken or killed in the state of Kansas except except from December 1 to 15. Thus, the first formal pheasant hunting season came to be, a result of "protective custody" rather than planned harvest. No provisions were made for restricting the area open for hunting or bag limits. During the first half of December, pheasants were legal game statewide with no bag limit.

Two years later, in 1919, the hunting dates were restricted to December 1 to 10, but the only other restriction enacted was that no bird could be killed or shot except while on the

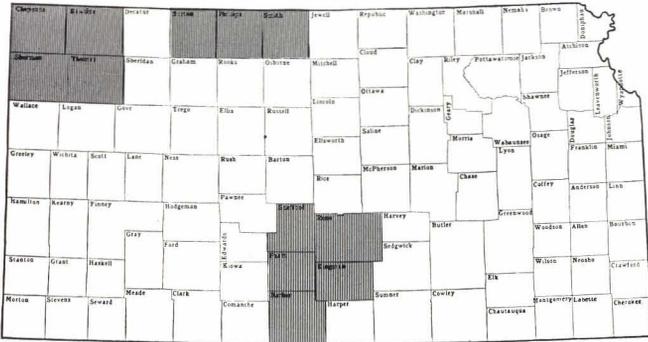
was placed on the "protected" list. Added interest during this period paved the way for increased attempts to really establish the ringneck as an important game bird in Kansas. wing. Finally, in 1920, the pheasant



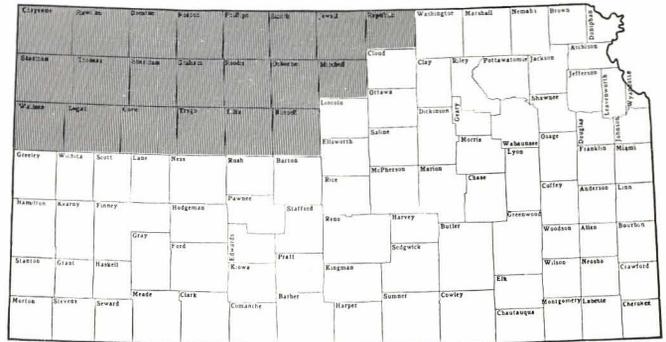
A FINE BAG of pheasants in an autumn setting—one of Kansas' top seasons.

YEARS OF GROWTH IN THE AREA OPEN TO PHEASANT HUNTING IN KANSAS

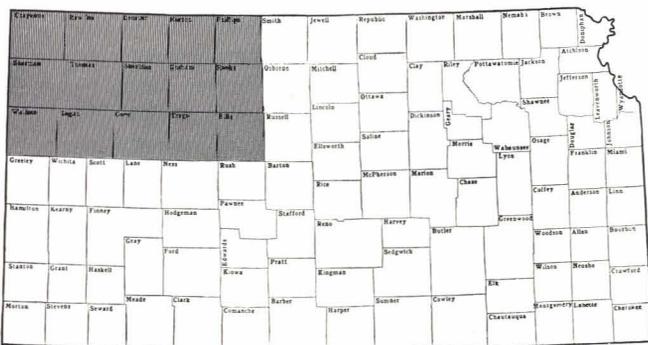
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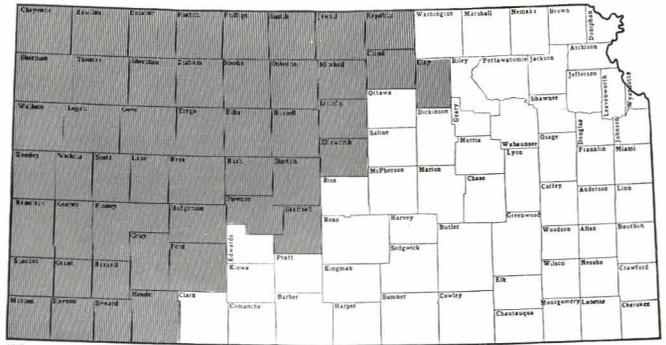
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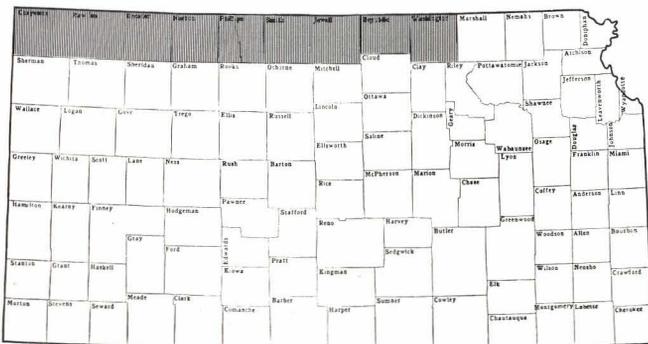
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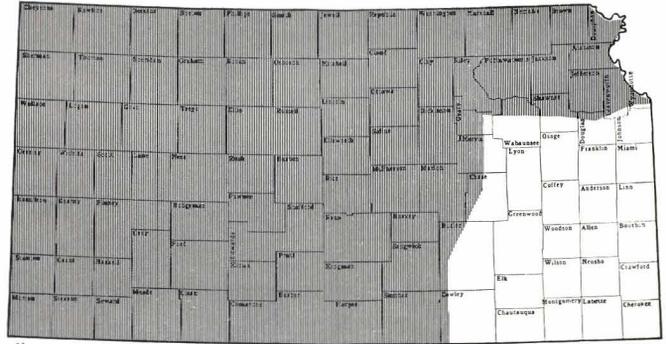
1946



1937



1965



Back in '17, all game was "fair game" anytime between one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. The hours were changed to one-half hour before sunrise to sunset in 1921. Noon to sunset shooting was first tried in 1942 and persisted until 1948 when the starting time was moved back to 9:00 a. m. The noon to sunset hours were reinstated for the opening day of the 1952 season and for every day of the 1953 season. Due to the near impossibility of enforcing such arbitrary

hours, the standard shooting time of one-half hour before sunrise to sunset was reestablished in 1953. There have been no further changes to date.

The ringneck has probably reached its current potential for expansion of its range in Kansas. For some reason, or unknown combination of reasons, all attempts to establish pheasants in the southeast part of the state have failed.

If a person wants to know where

pheasants are found today, he has only to look at the current state map of the area open for hunting. Kansans are fortunate in being able to hunt in the bird's entire occupied range. The pheasant's reproductive capabilities permit us to have a substantial hunting season, even in the marginal range of eastern Kansas. With the conservative cocks-only seasons now being held in Kansas, the reliable "law of diminishing re-

(Continued on next page)

turns" insures that breeding stock will remain after the close of the season.

Of all the laws controlling game hunting, the law of diminishing returns is the only one that will never change. The more hunting pressure exerted, the more game becomes elusive and difficult to find. The harder game is to find, the fewer hunters that will take to the field. Briefly, the less the return received, the less the effort that will be put forth. Due to this undeniable, un-repealable law, there need be no worry about the hunting seasons of the next 50 years having any more effect on Kansas' pheasant population than did those of the past 50 years.

Since the interest in pheasants was high, a program of cooperator-farmer stocking was initiated. During the biennium of 1924-1926, nearly 12,000 pheasant eggs were distributed to cooperating farmers in the state. The eggs were to be hatched and the young ringnecks raised and released. In addition to the egg distribution, the state continued to release fully grown birds.

Stocking continued through these early years and by 1930, pressure for a controlled hunting season was beginning to make itself felt. By 1932, state officials had received enough public demand that pheasant hunting was again made a part of the Kansas fall scene.

Fortunately, in 1927, the legislature saw fit to give the Fish and Game Commission some leeway in setting hunting seasons. The Commission was given the authority of setting open seasons within framework dates specified by the legislature. Thus, the pheasant season was set much the same way the state's waterfowl regulations must currently fall within framework dates designated by the Federal government.

The first regulated pheasant hunting season lasted two days, October 20 and 21, with a daily bag limit of two cock birds.

During the period 1932 to 1939, there were numerous changes in the boundaries of the area open to pheasant hunting. The accompanying maps

illustrate how the hunting areas were moved around to keep up with the fluctuating pheasant numbers. However, the rapidly growing pheasant population was showing its trend by 1939 and the area open to hunting slowly followed the bird's spread southward and eastward from the northwest corner of the state. It was also in the years 1939-1940 that the state's pheasant farm was built at Meade. For the next 20 years, the Fish and Game Department raised and released its own birds. The pheasant farm was discontinued in 1964 since further stocking was unnecessary. The ringneck had become a firmly established "native" in the Sunflower State.

It should be noted here that 1935 marked the repeal of a statutory hunting law that would be of major benefit to hunters for all years to come. During the years prior to '35, all hunting was prohibited on Sundays. The Sunday "no hunting" law was repealed and gave more freedom to the hunter. Although probably not apparent at the time, the law's repeal would eventually give the Fish and Game Commission more freedom in setting hunting season dates. There would be no need to juggle open days to avoid Sundays.

In 1937, the first liberalization of the bag limits and season length occurred. The season was changed to three days, still in mid-October, and the daily bag increased to three birds. Interestingly enough, the option of taking a hen was permitted in the daily bag limit. Something that even today is a highly controversial subject.

The 1939 season was the first to be set in November—November 1-3. At this same time, the possession limit was reduced from nine to six birds, but the daily bag limit still included a hen. The legal hen remained in the bag though the 1941 season. The hen was then dropped for three years, included in the 1945 bag, then dropped until 1961 and 1962 when a hen was again a part of the legal bag. No hens have been permitted since.

Into the forties, the pheasant population continued to spread eastward. That part of the state open for pheasant hunting also continued to spread,

following the bird's expanding range. Another day of hunting was added to the season in 1942, but for the pheasant hunter, and all other hunters, 1943 saw the most significant change in Kansas' hunting laws. The legislature gave the Fish and Game Commission authority to set hunting seasons and bag limits on all game species. The Commission could now set annual hunting seasons that were in line more with game populations than with current political pressures.

The pheasant hunting area had been expanded to the Oklahoma border by 1946. In the nearly twenty years since then, pheasant hunting, as well as the number of birds, has improved in many of the more eastern counties. The present-day hunter can pursue his sport over near three-fourths of the state.

Season dates and area open were not the only things to vary since the first pheasant season. Shooting hours seemed to be a favorite item for changing. Since 1917, pheasant hunters have had to follow five different sets of legal hours involving seven separate regulation changes.

Walleye Operation Completed, More Northern Pike Stocked

STOCKTON—Fishery crews of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission recently completed the annual walleye egg collection and hatching operation with the taking of 13,215,000 eggs.

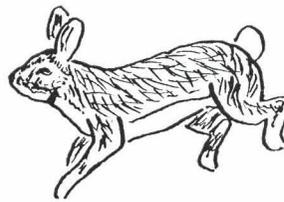
"We were unable to live-trap enough male walleyes during the final days of the collection process resulting in improper fertilization and a low hatch for a large number of eggs," Roy Schoonover, chief of the fisheries division, said. More than 5 million eggs were hatched and stocked with a majority placed in the new Milford Reservoir.

In addition, 1,400,000 walleye fry were stocked in Elk City Reservoir. These fry were hatched from eggs obtained from the Nebraska Game, Forestation and Parks Commission.

Northern pike numbers in Kansas waters were also increased with the addition of one million fry in Wilson and Cedar Bluff Reservoirs by the Cedar Bluff National Fish Hatchery.



By MARVIN SCHWILLING



Were it my choice I don't believe I would remove any month from the calendar, but June is one of the months I enjoy most. Young prairie dogs come above ground, wobbly-legged fawns still unafraid of man may be found. Birds still in their top color are nesting. This is the "top" hatching month for game birds. Their success or failure this month will determine season length and bag limits this fall. Insects are abundant, although most have not yet reached their annual peaks. Fishing is still good and will be until summer heat slows down the daytime activity of the fisherman.

In early June something seemed amiss at the chickadee nest just ten steps outside our back door. The male came to the woodpecker cavity I had cut out, like a block of stove wood and set atop a fencepost, with the usual mouth full of insects for the incubating female. But the female was not responding to his low "foods here" notes. I walked out to the box. Tell-tale hairs around the entrance told me a house cat had climbed the post and fished the mother bird out the entrance. I checked the cavity with a dental mirror. Two tail feathers and a few body feathers remained atop the nest, one of the six eggs remained unbroken. As I left the nest the male returned almost immediately to the entrance perch and continued to try to talk the female into coming out to eat. I rigged my camera for remote control and set it up about three feet from the perch at the entrance and succeeded in getting some good Kodachromes of the confused male.

It was late in the afternoon before he gave up trying to coax the female out. He failed to return the following day.

In late June the bright red sun still appeared disproportionately large and was throwing shadows longer than the cattails across the plant-choked waters of the marsh. I left

the car and sloshed through the shallow water toward the heronry. This was a fine morning for "bog trotting." There was little wind and the list of bird life that could be recognized by their songs were impressive.

Red-wings dive bombed me as I peered into a nest containing four (blue, blotched with black) eggs. Yellow-headed blackbirds, black terns and foresters terns took an aerial swipe at me and voiced their disapproval of my invasion of their private domain. Coot slipped off their nests and clucked disapprovingly. Pied-billed grebes hurriedly covered their eggs then slipped like a shadow off their nest and sank quietly like a submarine leaving not even a ripple.

Dragonflies, the big green darners, and several smaller species, would leave their perch as I approached. Avocets, killdeers, phalaropes and Franklin gulls could be heard. A pair of blue-winged teal took to wing; far ahead pintails and mallards were also visible. A female redhead flushed from a slump of cattails. Entering, I located the nest heavily lined with the down feathers plucked from the female's breast. The nest contained 11 eggs. Had the female left the nest without being disturbed she would have carefully covered the eggs with the down and grass-like rush.

As I neared the heronry black-crowned night herons took to the air by the dozens, then by the hundreds, until an estimated 1,500 birds were in the air. Fewer numbers of yellow-crowned night herons, great

blue herons, snowy egrets, American egrets, and white-faced ibis were associated with the colony. Numerous haphazardly constructed nests of weed stems, mostly firebush, contained the four eggs of the black-crowns; snowy egret nests with a smaller nest bowl and constructed a little more like a nest should be were in a corner of the heronry that they had staked off as their very own. The ibis nests were mostly constructed of current green growth of bullrush neatly woven into a deep, well-built bowl and holding eggs appearing much like large glossy robin eggs.

Leaving the heronry and continuing on a circular route through the marsh, I noticed a nest appearing somewhat like a coot nest that was ahead and to my left, but no coot could be seen or heard leaving the nest. I sloshed over to investigate and found a nest containing 14 eggs. This well-woven nest of smaller spike rush with an overhead woven arch of green bullrush must be the nest of a gallinule or king rail. Closer inspection proved it to be the latter.

As the month closed, I could hear the hungry calls of the fast-developing young house wrens in the woodpecker box atop the post from inside my home. The parent birds were making a trip to the box and stuffing food in the open mouths about every four minutes. Little time for singing now. A few more days and they will be gone from the protection of the cavity. This is the same box where the house cat caught the chickadee earlier in the month.

The box is now atop a pipe post—the wrens will not be catfood. I again set up my camera and photographed the young—their wide open mouths thrust outside the opening as they were fed by the adults.

Opening Day Anglers Find . . .

Norton Is A "Natural"



BOATS AND MORE BOATS—Boats of every description, from canoes to cabin cruisers, plied the waters of Norton Reservoir when the new impoundment was opened to fishing. A large congregation of craft in a certain area simply meant: "Here's where the fish are bitin'".



BASS FISHERMEN ARE WE—Perry Smith, Norton, (left); Robert Smith, Overland Park, (center); and Ed Hartig, Kansas City, Mo. proved their prowess with rod and reel during opening weekend activities at Norton Reservoir. The trio caught their limit (10 apiece) of black bass each day despite cool temperatures and rain. The bass, stocked in the fall of 1965, ranged from 1 to 2½ pounds. (Fish and Game Commission Photos).



HAPPINESS IS—catching northern pike in Norton Reservoir. Ed Hartig, Kansas City, landed these beauties during opening weekend activities. He also landed three larger northern pikes, slightly less than two apiece.

NOTICE TO

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A Couple of "Cool Cats"



Kansas. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Mahon, Dodge day activities at Norton Reservoir. The years of age, weighed nearly eight pounds



MR. AND MRS. Bill Brumley, Topeka, show a couple fine "cats" taken from below John Redmond Reservoir this summer. The big one weighed 35 pounds.

READERS

distributed free to Kansas residents, upon and zip code number should accompany tion. Anyone moving to a new address vision, Kansas Fish and Game Commis- if they desire to continue receiving the

New Pike Record Set

Watch for a Whopper!

MANHATTAN—Going fishing soon? Keep something in mind, will you?

Lurking in many Kansas waters are record fish—records for the state and possibly even for the world. At any time, while fishing Kansas waters, you might pull in a trophy fish. If you think you have a record, get it checked—fast. If there is any doubt, again, have it checked.

This was just what Albert W. Wood, Manhattan insurance man, did recently when he hooked a big Northern Pike in the River Pond area below Tuttle Creek Dam at Manhattan.

Wood got in touch with Game Protector Alvin Ayers, and had the pike weighed and measured with proper witnesses on hand. Sure enough, he had a new state record—14 pounds, 15½ ounces.

There's no doubt that a world record or two might be lurking in Kansas waters.

Last Spring, fishing below the dam at Toronto Reservoir, Henry Baker of Wichita landed a whopper white bass. For awhile, he didn't think much about records. Word spread, however, and he finally pulled the fish from the water, took it to a nearby bait shop and had it weighed. It tipped the scales at a whopping five pounds, four ounces. Baker had two new records—the first world record for Kansas, and a new state record. The previous record was 5-2, and the old state record was 4-11½.

There's no doubt in the minds of Kansas Fish and Game officials that even larger white bass are awaiting anglers in Kansas waters. Fall River Reservoir, near Eureka, has been a white bass haven for years, and several have been seen in its upper reaches during spawning time that are believed large enough to surpass even Baker's catch. Undoubtedly, too, larger ones lurk at the Toronto facility. Where there is one lunker, there are generally more.

Just about any time, some lucky Kansas angler could easily set a new state walleye record. The present standard is 10 pounds, eight ounces,

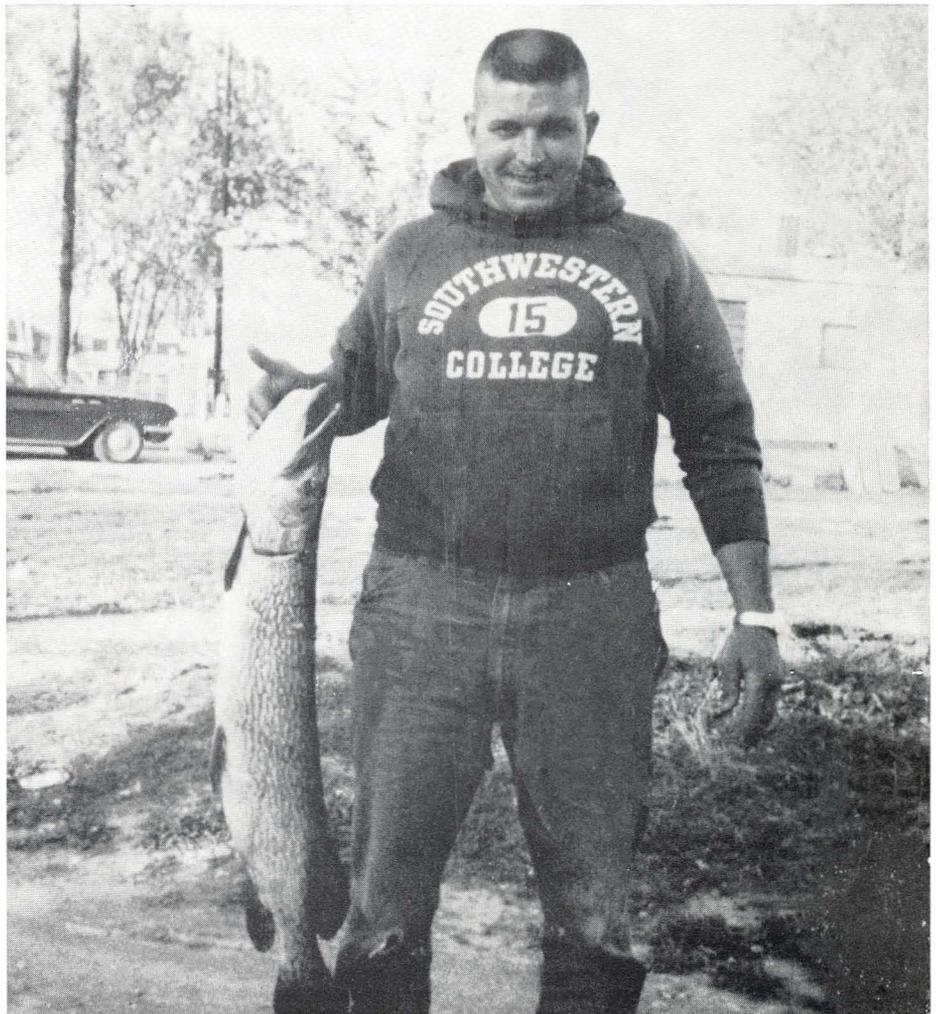
they dressed the fish before they realized the size and magnitude of their catch.

I've heard several times of a walleye caught by some unidentified angler from Cedar Bluff Reservoir near Ellis which weighed more than seven pounds after it was cleaned. It, undoubtedly, would have topped Laster's catch.

Last year, during the annual walleye "milking operation" to extract and hatch eggs for stocking of other waters at Webster Reservoir, personnel of the Fish and

set by Roy Laster of Hutchinson with a catch at Kanopolis Reservoir on April 2, 1961.

Undoubtedly, a few walleye which would have been records have been caught since that time, but the successful anglers made one of two mistakes. They didn't have the fish weighed and measured as required for certification as a state record, or



NEW STATE RECORD northern pike, a 14 pound, 15½-ounce beauty caught from the River Pond area below Tuttle Creek Reservoir, is displayed by Al Woods, Manhattan. It's the first record fish caught in Kansas this year.

Kansas Fish Records

Largemouth Black Bass—Weight, 11 pounds, 3 ounces. Length, 25 inches. Charles Prewett, Pittsburg, Kansas; taken from private lake in Bourbon Co. on January 6, 1965. Spinning rod and reel; Johnson spoon with porkrind.

Spotted (Kentucky) Bass—Weight, 3 pounds, 12½ ounces. Length, 17½ inches. Angler was John I. Waner, Newton, Kansas; taken from Marion County Lake on April 5, 1964. Rod and reel with Shyster for bait.

Walleye—Weight, 10 pounds, 8 ounces. Length, 30 inches. Taken by Roy Laster, Hutchinson, Kansas, from Kanopolis Reservoir on April 2, 1961. Rod and reel with live minnow for bait.

Channel Catfish—Weight, 32 pounds even. Length, 40½ inches. Taken by Edward S. Dailey, Gardner, Kansas, from Gardner City Lake on August 14, 1962. Taken on trotline with small sunfish for bait.

Flathead Catfish—Weight, 86 pounds, 3 ounces. Length, 55½ inches. Angler was Ray Wiechert, Brazilton, Kansas; taken from the Neosho River near St. Paul on August 24, 1966, using a trotline and sunfish for bait.

Bullhead—Weight, 4 pounds, 3½ ounces. Length, 17 inches. Taken by Frank Miller, Eureka, Kansas, from a Greenwood county farm pond on June 18, 1961. Taken on rod and reel with beef melt for bait.

White Bass—Weight, 5 pounds, 4 ounces. Length, 17 inches. Caught by Henry A. Baker, Wichita, at the spillway area below Toronto Reservoir on May 4, 1966. Rod and reel (spincasting) with "Tiny Tot" for bait.

Paddlefish—Weight, 26 pounds. Length, 75 inches. Caught by John C. Huston, Lawrence, Kansas, from the Kaw River near Lawrence on September 19, 1962. Rod and reel with worms for bait.

Gar—Weight, 28 pounds. Length, 60 inches. Taken by Mike Carter, Chetopa, Kansas, on June 17, 1966, from the Neosho River below Chetopa Dam. Taken with a rod and reel, small jig for bait.

Bluegill—Weight, 2 pounds, 5 ounces. Length, 11 inches. Taken by Robert Jefferies, Modoc, Kansas, from a Scott county farm pond on May 26, 1962. Rod and reel with worm for bait.

Green Sunfish—Weight, 2 pounds, 2 ounces. Length, 12 inches. Angler was Louis Ferlo, Scammon, Kansas; taken from strip pit in Cherokee county on May 28, 1961. Taken on rod and reel with Abu spinner.

Drum—Weight, 27 pounds even. Length, 37 inches. Caught by Louis Hebb, Howard, Kansas, from Howard City Lake on June 27, 1953. Rod and reel with live crayfish for bait.

Carp—Weight, 24 pounds, 9 ounces. Length, 38½ inches. Taken by Harvey W. Haas, Junction City, Kansas, from Clark's Creek near Skiddy on June 18, 1963. Spinning rod and reel, 10 pound test line using worms for bait.

Sturgeon—Weight, 4 pounds even. Length, 30½ inches. Caught by J. W. Keeton, Topeka, Kansas, from Kaw River near Topeka, on November 17, 1962. Taken with rod and reel with worms for bait.

Buffalo—Weight, 29 pounds, 14 ounces. Length, 36 inches. Angler was E. V. Harrelson, Ellinwood, Kansas; taken from Kanopolis Reservoir on October 1, 1965. Taken on trotline with toad for bait.

Black Crappie—Weight, 4 pounds, 10 ounces. Length, 22 inches. Taken by Hazel Fey, Toronto, Kansas, from Woodson County State Lake on October 21, 1957. Rod and reel with live minnow for bait.

White Crappie—Weight, 4 pounds, ¼ ounce. Length, 17½ inches. Caught by Frank Miller, Eureka, Kansas from a farm pond in Greenwood County on March 30, 1964. Rod and reel with live minnow.

Northern Pike—Weight, 14 pounds, 15½ ounces. Length, 38½ inches. Caught by Albert W. Wood, Manhattan, Kansas, on April 22, 1967, from the River Pond Area below Tuttle Creek Reservoir. Set line with live minnow for bait.

Game Commission netted several walleye which weighed more than Laster's 10-8 catch. One was a whopping 13-pound, 8-ounce beauty.

On the national level, it's possible that Kansas could possess the world record for both black and white crappie. They would be tremendous catches, to be sure, but like the white bass, crappie show tremendous growth in some of our waters, and a national record is not beyond reality.

The world crappie records, at present, are five pounds for black crappie

and 5-3 for white crappie. Kansas records at present are 4-10 for black and 4 pounds, one-half ounce for white.

Other Kansas state records include Largemouth Black Bass, 11-3; Spotted (Kentucky) Bass, 3-12½; Channel Catfish, 32-0; Flathead Catfish, 86-3; Bullhead, 4-3½; Bluegill, 2-5; Green Sunfish, 2-2; Drum, 27-0; Carp 24-9; Sturgeon, 4-0; Buffalo, 29-14; Paddlefish, 26-0; and Gar, 27-8.

To officially register a fish as a new state record, the angler should follow these steps:

1. Weigh the fish as soon as possible on scales legal for trade (grocery store or meat market) in the presence of at least two disinterested witnesses. Measure the fish in length and girth (around the middle).

2. Have a photo taken of the fish and fisherman. A clear, sharp photo for the purposes of identification is necessary.

3. Write the Fish and Game Commission (Box 1028, Pratt, Kansas 67124), for an official registration form, to be filled out and returned immediately. It's desirable that you preserve your fish by freezing or mounting until after certification of the record.

The best way to catch a record? Just keep fishin'.

Ponds: Piscatorial Palaces

By LEROY LYON

The bobber skipped and circled then returned to its silent sentry on the quiet farm pond. A few seconds later the bobber again began a series of dips and dives—then plunged beneath the surface. A gentle flick of the wrist, a flurry of action and another channel cat was added to the stringer.

Such is a typical scene on many of Kansas' farm ponds.

Currently more than 70,000 farm ponds are scattered across the state providing Kansas anglers with a popular and productive sport.

During recent years the building of farm ponds has been given great impetus largely through efforts of the Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Extension Service and Soil Conservation Districts. The addition of watershed lakes further enhances Kansas' claim as a land of fine fishing waters.

Although these ponds have been constructed primarily for agricultural purposes, they have become important to Kansas anglers. Ponds provide untold pleasure for thousands and are a good spot for family fishing enjoyment.

A large majority of the ponds over one-half surface acre in size have been stocked with bluegill, channel catfish and largemouth black bass—fish that will maintain a natural balance between prey and predator species. Properly stocked in the right ratios, ponds can produce 50 pounds or more of fish per surface acre annually.

In addition to stocked species, some ponds contain good populations of crappie, bullheads, common sunfish and carp.

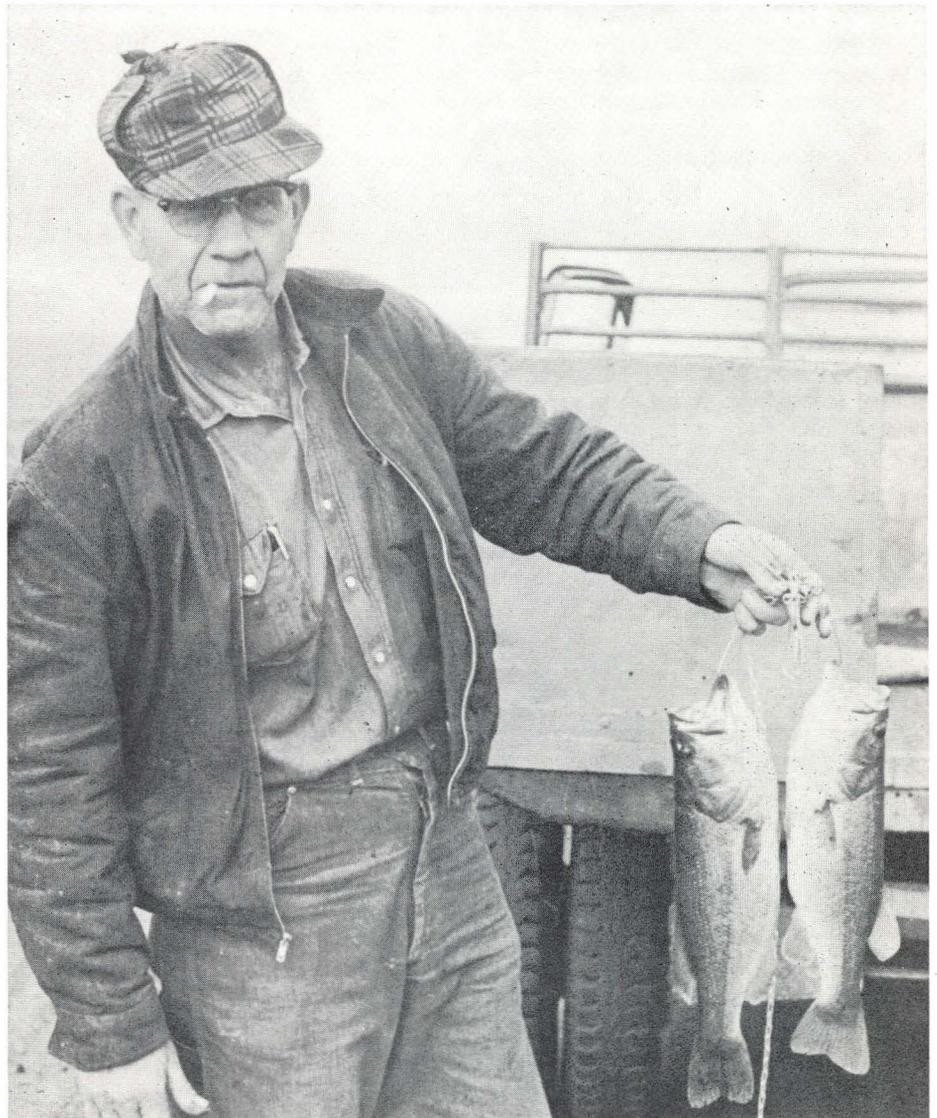
It's no secret that ponds should and must be fished heavily to keep them in good balance. Any farm pond can support only a certain number of fish depending on its size and the food available. The surplus fish must be removed or stunting will result. Harvesting of the surplus provides a great amount of fish for sport and table fare.

Many ponds are not producing properly because they are not fished heavily enough. The farmer who saves his ponds for friends, relatives

or himself, is doing an injustice to all concerned. A pond fished too little soon has very few lunkers and thousands of stunted, underfed fish or else it is soon "over-run" with thousands of one species. It's worse than the "overfished" pond.

Another farm pond management problem is "selective fishing." Be-

cause bass and channel catfish fishing in Kansas is preferred over bluegill, many anglers will fish almost exclusively for the preferred fish. This results in a decided decrease in the population of the larger bass and channel cats. There must be larger bass left to control the bluegills. Farmers and fishermen should both realize the importance of returning some of the larger bass to the pond. Small bluegills should be caught, and removed as they are caught. It is suggested that five pounds of bluegill be removed to one pound of bass or



A PAIR OF NICE BASS from a farm pond, taken on a surface lure, are displayed by Junior Reynard, Toronto.

channel cat to insure good pond balance and excellent fishing for the future.

If a pond is stocked with fingerling fish in the fall it should probably be fished the next fall. The best criterion to determine time of harvest is to take bass and channels when they are 12 to 14 inches long and bluegills when they are large enough to be eaten.

Ponds, when properly fished and maintained, can produce whopper fish. In fact, four of the current state records have been taken from private farm ponds. The white crappie, bluegill, bullhead and largemouth black bass records prove that some of the best angling opportunities in the state are provided by private ponds which dot the countryside.

To the average Kansas fisherman, it is surprising to discover the number of good-sized farm ponds located within short driving distances. But just locating a pond is not enough. Anglers should, first of all, be sure to ask farmers and ranchers in the area for permission to go fishing in their private ponds. The pond owner or tenant who obtains fish for stocking purposes from the state hatchery has the right to determine who shall have access privileges on his land.

Most rural folks are friendly and usually allow fishing in their ponds—provided the angler conducts himself as a true sportsman. Quite often the owner will tell what kind of fish are in the ponds—if any—and what to do for best results.

An old fishing story relates that once there was a fisherman who spent all winter looking forward to his summer vacation. When the happy time arrived, he gathered all his tackle and headed for the country. Next morning he made his way to the nearest pond, went out in a rowboat and began to fish. After several days, he had caught nothing—in fact he didn't even get a nibble. He tried everything he had ever read about pond fishing but it was no use.

After a week of futile fishing he happened to notice a farmer who was watching from shore. He rowed in, visited with the farmer—and learned the horrible truth.

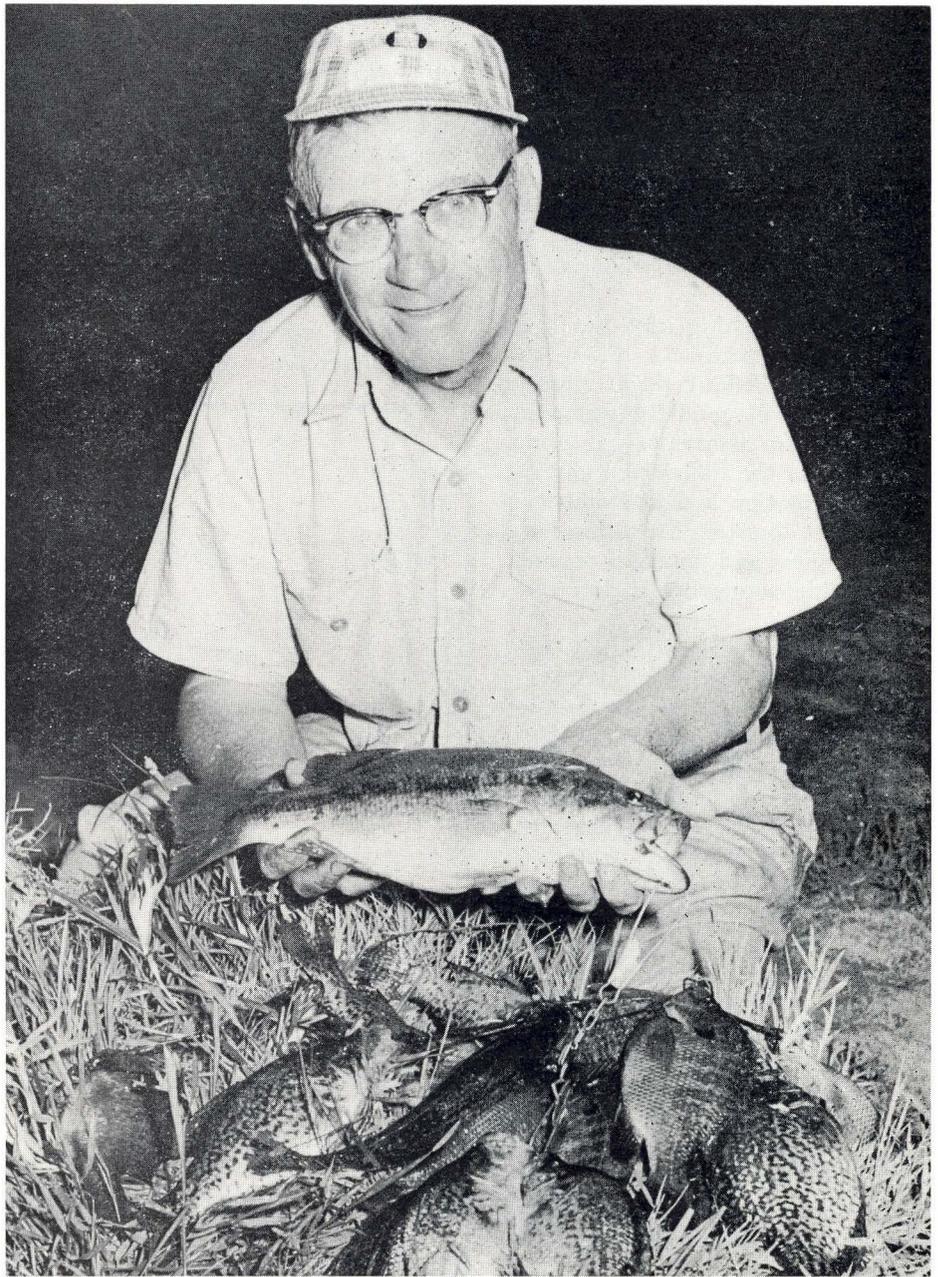
There weren't any fish in the pond! No one had ever stocked it.

You can make up your own moral but the point seems rather obvious. Before fishing strange waters, make a few inquiries. Find out all you can about the place. Remember not all ponds in the state have been stocked with fish.

In addition, not every farm pond is a fish pond. Ponds must be planned and built for fish. Often they are located on dammed streams where flood waters wash away the fish stock

or where there is too great a flow of water for the small plant and animal life to flourish. Silt from erosion and excessive aquatic vegetation often prevent many ponds from being suitable for fishing.

However, a large number of farm ponds do offer unlimited angling opportunities. Many anglers have discovered that some of the best fishing spots in the state are the farm ponds—impoundments which continue to play a double role of serving agriculture and Kansas anglers.



FORMER STATE GAME PROTECTOR Jim Carlson, Salina, an avid farm pond fisherman, displays nice catch of bass, crappie and bluegill from an Ottawa County impoundment.

It's Not All "Beginner's Luck"

It seldom fails. Take a first-timer out fishing and he generally winds up catching the biggest fish, the most fish, or both. You, the expert, force a grin and attribute his success to "beginner's luck." Maybe so, but it happens too frequently to be entirely coincidental.

Let's take a closer look at this so-called "beginner's luck"—some of it might rub off. Inviting someone, particularly a novice, to go fishing involves a responsibility on your part for his comfort, safety, and success. You're the host, Harry. This means you'll probably let the "pupil" use your favorite Mitchell or Abu-matic spinning outfit. With just a few minutes practice anyone can get the knack of handling this modern fishing gear.

The day's fishing spot has been selected with care. A phone call to a reliable fishing dock operator brings news of good fishing conditions and also assures you of a boat and bait for the following morning. The anticipation and excitement of your guest about his first fishing trip is contagious and you find yourself at lakeside somewhat earlier than usual.

This gives you time to pick out a dry boat, some choice minnows, and spend a few minutes chatting with the proprietor. He tells you of a little cove that's been a "hot spot" for bass. Because of your friend's unfamiliarity with a pair of oars, you graciously take over the rowing. Underway, you explain the Mitchell spinning outfit, emphasizing the importance of the adjustable teflon drag, and clear Platyl monofilament line.

After shipping oars and letting the breeze drift the boat into position, you instruct your "crew" on the proper way to drop anchor—slow and easy. The "foot shuffling lamp is out," you announce warning that fish feel vibrations so the less you move around in the boat, the better. Talk all you want, but no foot stampin' or tackle box droppin'.

The lessons continue as you show your friend how to make sure the

hook is sharp, by giving it a few strokes with the hook hone.

The liveliest minnow is hooked carefully just under the dorsal fin, and cast out towards a half-submerged tree trunk. You hand the fishing rod to your companion, and start to rig up your own outfit.

Suddenly, your friend has a fish on and he lets the whole world know it. The bend of the rod tells you the fish is a big one, so you raise the anchor and row the boat out into open water. The fight continues as your "pupil," acting upon your instructions, handles the fish perfectly. At last it's in the net and you can both relax. You offer congratulations and your friend adopts a grin that would put the Cheshire cat to shame. The fish turns out to be the prize catch of the day.

On the way home, you and your friend talk over the day's events,

and he modestly accepts the theory of "beginner's luck." No such thing! You made your own luck when you got out of your rut and shook off your old, sloppy, fishing habits.

Going back to fundamentals reminded you of techniques you once followed closely, but have forgotten or discarded for some reason. The trip was well planned. Good tackle in good condition was used. An early start gave you valuable extra time for further attention to details. You handled the boat in an unselfish way with your partner's best interests in mind. Basically, a genuine team effort accounted for the good day's fishing. And—you started a newcomer off the right way. Your job as a fishing guide was a complete success. Plan your next trip just as carefully and you can forget about "fisherman's luck."



"Boy!! He Was a Dandy"

At a recent Kansas Fish and Game Commission departmental training school, John Ray, Pratt, fisheries biologist, presented a brief talk on Kansas' experimental program with the striped bass.

The "striper," of course, is a fish which, when young, resembles the white bass which are now well-established in Kansas waters. When they grow a few years, however, the resemblance stops. "Stripers" get as big as 50 pounds, and are renowned for their extremely fine fighting ability.

In South Carolina and other southeastern states, the "striper," originally a salt water fish, has been well-established after becoming landlocked in several big reservoirs.

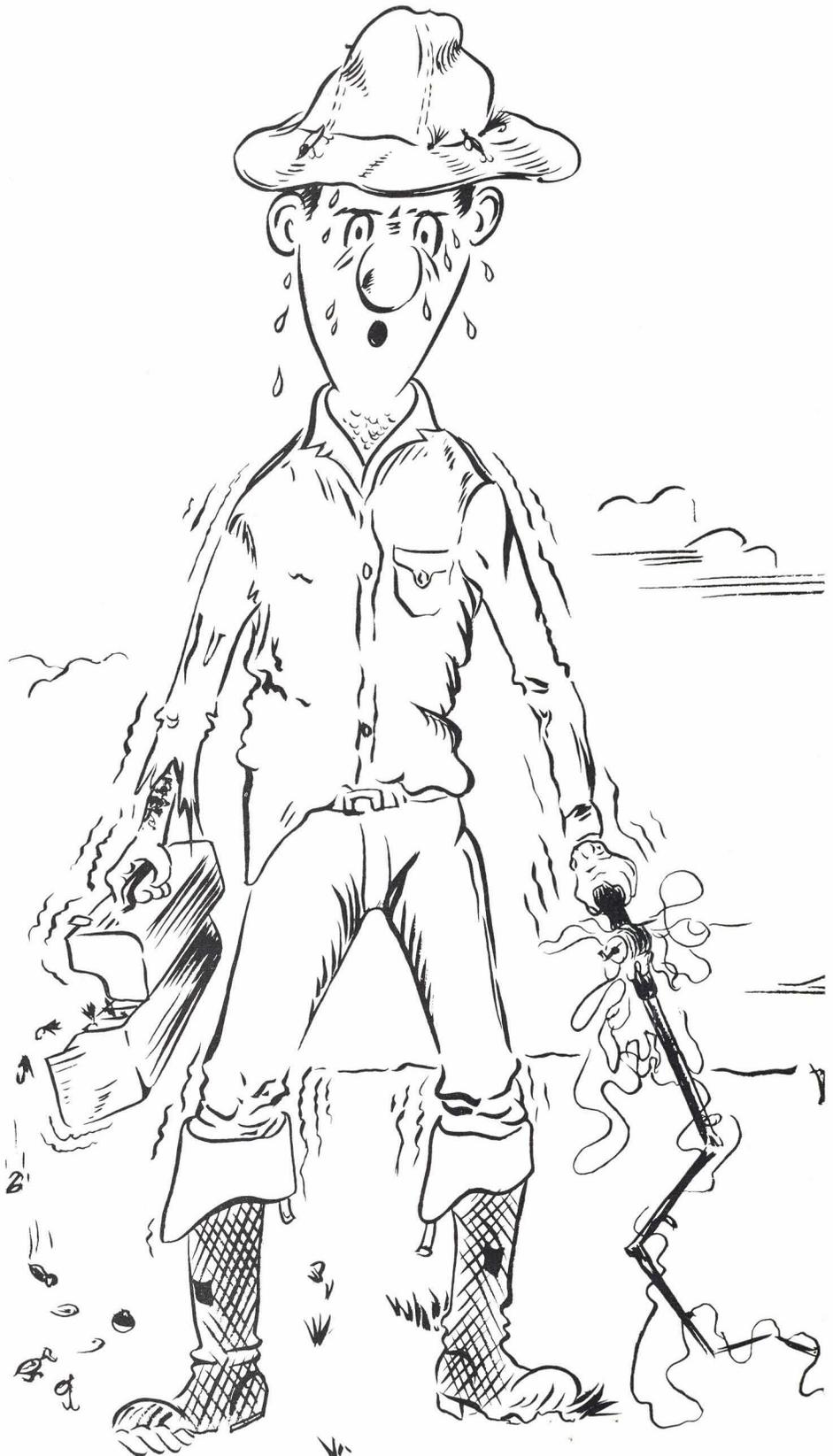
Kansas, as described by Ray in an article in *Kansas Fish and Game* (Spring Issue, 1967) has secured several thousand "striper" fry in recent years from South Carolina and stocked them in several large impoundments around the state, in an effort to get them to "take."

While Ray talked about the program at the recent school, he mentioned that they grow to tremendous size, and are an excellent fighting fish.

"They will really shake you up," he said in describing them, "and if we get them established in Kansas, a lot of fishermen are going to lose a lot of tackle before they learn how to catch them."

With this comment, Dick Gragg, Wellington, one of the state's game protectors, and a fine amateur artist, pulled his pen from his pocket, grabbed a piece of paper and started drawing. His interpretation—and an excellent one—of the future striped bass fisherman in Kansas (we hope) is pictured at right, with Dick's own caption reading: "Boy!! He was a Dandy." We thought Kansas fishermen would enjoy it, as we did.

—Thayne Smith.



KANSAS' STRIPED BASS FISHERMAN of the Future (We hope) . . . by Game Protector Dick Gragg.

Old "Bigmouth" --

A Prized Battler

Ever wonder why bass, America's most popular game fish, are caught mostly around cover like logs, stumps, rocks and weeds? "Sure," you say, "that's where they find their food." True, but there is another, little-known reason. Next time you catch a bass, do this: For five seconds cover one of its eyes with your hand, then quickly remove it. Look closely and you'll notice that the bass' pupil does not change size. Do this same thing to the eye of a human, or your pet dog, and you'll see the pupil immediately contract when suddenly exposed to bright light.

This means the bass has a "fixed focus" pupil, and since it is fixed in a wide-open position, here would be some logical assumptions to help you catch more bass:

(1) Bass do not see as well in bright sunlight as they do in shadow. So, during the bright hours of the day, fish around shady areas. Deep trolling, where little light penetrates, is good also.

(2) Ideal light conditions occur at dawn and dusk, and this is when most bass per fisherman-hour are caught. Likewise, on overcast days, bass can be caught throughout the day.

(3) During the bright, summer months, fish at night. The large fixed pupil equips the bass for nocturnal feeding.

Know more about your fish, and you'll catch more, observe the experts. Worth remembering, eh?

And what about that old "big-mouth"—the Black Bass? What are some of his principal characteristics?

Without doubt, America's most popular freshwater sport fish is the largemouth bass. And, for very good reasons . . . its fighting ability is superb, its endurance long, and it will strike anything that resembles food. Besides, it is usually good fare on the dinner table.

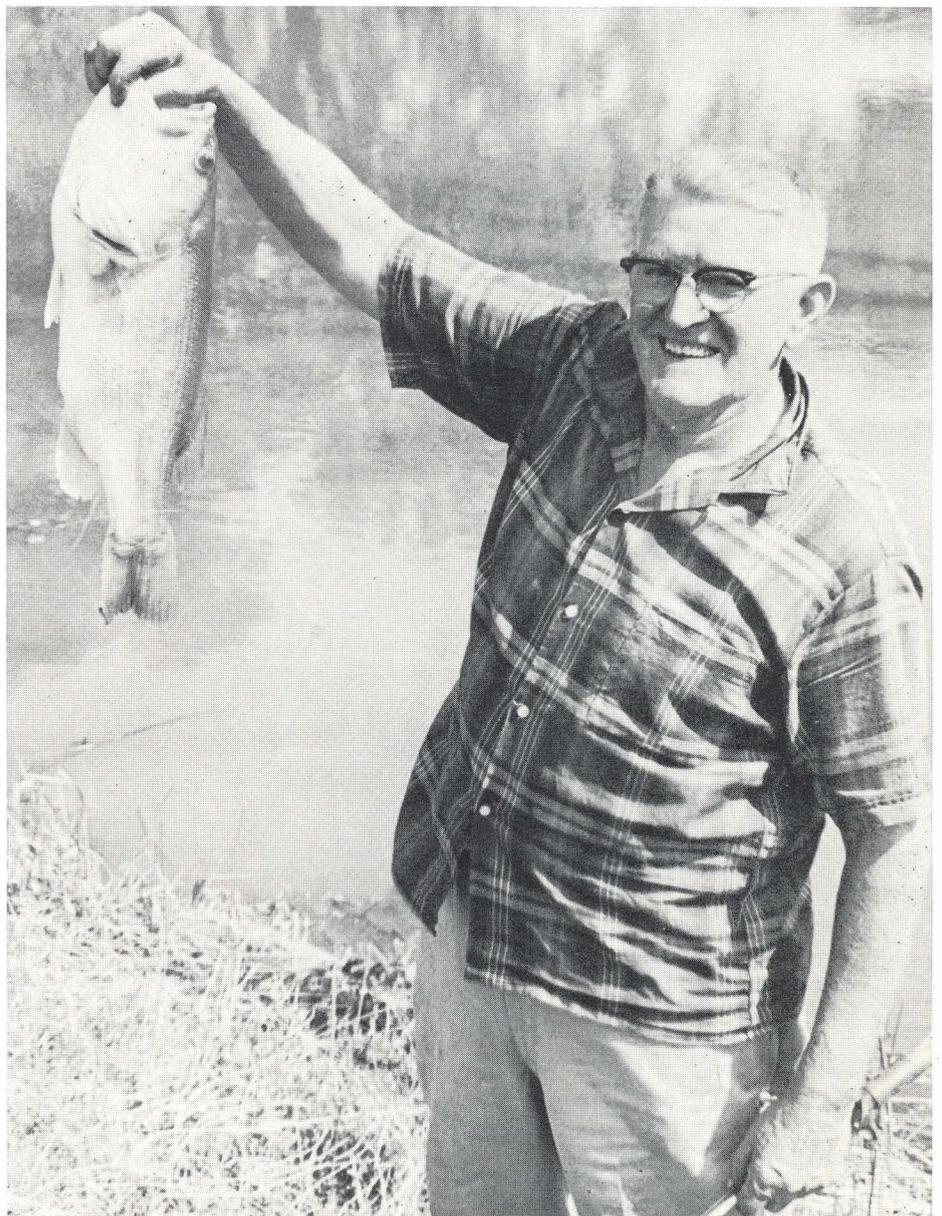
Here are the important things to know about this fish . . .

of 1932. There is a possibility, although slight, this record will be broken.

Range: Now found in all the United States except Alaska, thanks to ju-

(Continued on next page)

World Record: 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, caught in Montgomery Lake, Ala., in June



LUNKER LARGEMOUTH caught from his pond is displayed by Paul Garst, Sr., Pratt. Bass weighed about six pounds.

How to Cheat Old Age

By CLELLAND COLE

If you're doubtful about the advantages of living too long, here is a set of rules for use when out fishing or hunting which might help you cheat old age:

1. Never ask permission. What the heck—you've spent your good money for a license, and you've driven all this distance, and by—you intend to hunt and fish. Be stupid that way—overlook the fact that you have no right, moral or legal, on a farmer's land unless he grants permission—any more than that farmer would have to drive his car up in your yard, picnic on your lawn, take home a bouquet of your choice roses, and tell you you are a selfish old galoot when you run him off.

2. If you find somebody fishing or hunting in a likely looking spot—barge on in. What business has he got there if you can't be there, too? Don't bother to walk softly along the bank where the other fisherman is located, or drive your boat right through the area where he is fishing. If a group of hunters is making a drive through a field and others of the party are waiting on the other end—barge out there and shoot first.

3. **If you're about to cast, let her fly high, wide and handsome. Don't bother to look around or try to avoid hitting some other fisherman. If you snag him in the ear, give the line a good yank to set the hook. Shoot right across in front of other hunters. Swing the muzzle**

of your gun across them. Carry a loaded gun in the car. Drag the gun through a fence after you—by the barrel. Leave the safety off—it's too much bother to shove the safety off as you raise the gun to fire.

4. Enjoy yourself. What's a hunting and fishing trip if you can't get crooked and act like an idiot? Besides, you are just as good a driver after two or three slugs of old crow-bait as other fellows are cold sober. That explains how you can pass on an uphill curve, run stop signs, or speed through cities and get by with it. It will also explain your obituary being in the home paper.

5. If you're boating, don't be a sissy. Leave the life preserver on the dock and take a couple of extra friends. So long as the boat will float, what difference does it make if it is overloaded. You're too smart to get fooled by a sudden storm, anyway.

6. Go ahead and pot those birds, even if it is out of season. And if the fish are really biting, maybe you can string out about twice as many bank lines as the law permits and really haul in a sack full. Of course, you just might face a judge who takes a dim view of such hooligan stunts and lower the boom on you. Or some zealous sportsman might bat you across the head with a fence post and leave you lay in the thickest sand burrs he can find.

7. **Flip your live cigarette and cigar stubs from the car window; throw lighted matches down. It's**

a lot of bother to be sure there's no chance of a fire. Toss a batch of camp trash on your fire as you leave; that way you'll not have to smell the fumes. If you burn down the timber maybe nobody will know who started it. Nobody but you, that is.

8. Kick your bird dog when he gets in the way. It might cause you to kick the other chap's dog, too, and he can bounce a rock off your head to get you out of the way.

9. Leave gates open, cut fences, poach on the other fellow's hunting or fishing lease, swear violently when you miss a shot or let a fish get away; blame anything but yourself. Folks around you will just love you; maybe sprinkle a little arsenic on your sandwich.

10. Borrow tackle and firearms regularly. What the heck, if your neighbor wants to get his gear back, he can ask for it—same as you asked when you borrowed it. No sense tying up a lot of your own money when he's already got those things bought, anyway. If you louse up the gun or jim his reel, best not to say anything about it. No use calling his attention to it, and he might not figure out who did it, if you just keep quiet. Or, again, he might watch you 19 miles from home with a flat tire and no jack and lend you his jack handle—laying it neatly across the side of your face.

This set of 10 rules should be sufficient to defeat the spectre of old age.

Old "Bigmouth"

(Continued from page 20)

dicious transplanting and this fish's excellent ability to tolerate environmental extremes.

Habitat: Look for it around such cover as logs, rocks, bushes, fallen trees, gravel bars, pilings, deep holes,

undercut banks, weed beds, lily pads, etc.

Lures: It can be caught on worms, minnows, hellgrammites, crawfish, frogs, and other live bait; most any artificial lure, properly presented, will produce a jolting strike and battle.

Tackle: All types, fly, spinning, spincasting, and bait casting. For all-

around bass fishing, try a Zebco 3490 combo.

Fishing Tip: First, fish shore cover. If no fish are found, then tie on a floating-wiggling lure, and attach a keel sinker .15" ahead of this. Troll slowly until you catch a bass, then anchor and fish the area carefully for additional fish.

Kanopolis—A “Comeback” Lake

By THAYNE SMITH

KANOPOLIS RESERVOIR—It was a perfect morning for fishing!

An old friend, Emil Kroutil, resident engineer at Kanopolis for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers was waiting. He had boat and motor hitched to his “fishing” car. His gear was loaded, and minnows were waiting to search the depths of one of Kansas’ finest and oldest flood control lakes.

Fishing had been spotty at Kanopolis, Emil told me. A few white bass, a number of giant crappie for which Kanopolis is famous, and a few walleye had been reported caught by the hundreds of fishermen who frequent the lake.

Our gear stashed quickly, it was only a matter of minutes until we were on the water, headed for the harbor in front of the reservoir outlet tower.

“We’ve been taking a few nice crappie in this area, but it’s hard work even if you know where they are,” Emil reported. Luckily, he knew.

About 100 feet in front of the tower, Emil dropped the anchor at the rear of the boat. It didn’t touch bottom. He moved the boat slowly to the west, and within a few feet, the anchor dug in a ledge below.

“That’s it,” he said. “They are laying along the ledges, and you aren’t going to have much luck anywhere else.”

Picking out nice shiners, we baited up, using No. 2 hooks, tied about a foot above a fairly heavy sinker at the end of the line. We dropped them over the side—no casting needed here.

When the sinker touched bottom, 30 feet below, we reeled up about two inches, letting its weight keep the line tight. The old, old task of man trying to catch fish had begun.

In a matter of seconds, Emil was reeling in a beautiful 2-pound white crappie. Seconds later he had another. My line never moved.

Then, there was the lightning pull on the line that only a nice crappie seems to make, and I hauled in one going about 1½ pounds.

While I baited up again, Emil’s rod

had to let out line, as something on the other end twisted and turned and tried to head for the middle of the big lake. After a five-minute struggle, he grabbed the net and boated a 4-pound walleye.

“That’s the biggest one I’ve caught in Tower Harbor,” he said, “and I’ve fished here for more than five years.”



KANOPOLIS RESERVOIR MANAGER Emil Kroutil at his favorite relaxation—fishing Kanopolis’ waters for crappie and walleye.

It wasn't his biggest from the lake, however. Earlier, he landed an 8½-pounder while trolling.

Moments later, small white bass moved in on us. They were thick. As fast as you could drop a minnow into the water, you had a white bass six to 10 inches long.

It was time to forget the crappie fishing, and move to different waters. We headed for another area about two miles west, where a buoy marks water which is too shallow for boats.

"The old Smoky Hill River channel is about 100 yards north of that buoy," Emil said. "And the water there is from 30 to 50 feet deep."

We tied snap swivels on our lines, and each took out a one-quarter ounce Hellbender lure, shad color. Shad is the favorite food of the wall-eye and big white bass, and the Hellbender had scored well in this area for us on many occasions.

Cutting the motor to its slowest speed, we dropped in and fed out about 75 feet of line. The Hellbenders, deep-diving plugs, headed for the bottom, and in seconds we felt the thump, thump of our rods as the lures skipped on the sand below.

We started from the shallow area, and headed north. After about 100 yards, the lures hit deep water. We were over the old channel.

Suddenly, my rod was nearly pulled out of my hand. Emil cut the motor, and grabbed the landing net. I boated a 2½-pound white bass.

They kept coming on each pass from the shallow water, over the ledge of the old channel. Within an hour, using the shad Hellbender and another deep-diving lure, the Heddon Deep 6, we trolled our way through a dozen white bass from two to three pounds each, and many smaller ones which we threw back for hoped-for future pleasure. Emil also landed another walleye, this one tipping the scales at an even four pounds, before we headed home.

While we fished, I recalled that a few years ago, fishermen complained that Kanopolis was no longer an "angler's" lake.

About that time, however, it was

Commission Accepts Strip Pit And Barber County Contracts

PRATT—Contracts for work at Barber County State Lake and at the Strip Pits Wildlife Management Area have been awarded to low bidders by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission.

Two contracts totaling \$30,504.45 for water wells, pumps and pipeline at Barber County State Lake were accepted. Layne-Western, Wichita, was awarded an \$8,660 contract for drilling of two irrigation-type water wells and installation of pumps. EVE, Inc., Hutchinson, submitted a low bid of \$21,844.45 for pipeline and other materials.

Walter Harrison, chief of the field services division, said the contracts will provide the lake with a supply of water. In order to maintain the water level of the lake, a dike is being constructed at the shallow end reducing the surface area from 77 to 51 surface acres.

In the Strip Pits Wildlife Management Area, two contracts were awarded. Fred Beachner Construction Co., St. Paul, was successful with a low bid of \$6,194.30 for construction of a reinforced concrete box culvert at the Pittsburg Quail Farm while Hy-Grade Materials, St. Paul, was given a \$21,670 contract for 11,000 yards of gravel on 25 miles of access road.

In other action, the Commission:

stocked by the Fish and Game Commission with walleye and white bass. Both have grown and reproduced well in its sprawling waters. They're both fine fighting and eating fish, and a welcome addition to waters of most of Kansas' large reservoirs.

Anyway, there is nothing wrong with the fishing at Kanopolis now. It and other big reservoirs in Kansas—Cedar Bluff, Kirwin, Webster, Pomona, Lovewell, Tuttle Creek, Norton, Toronto, Fall River and others—are full of good fish. They can be caught, too, if you're willing to work for them.

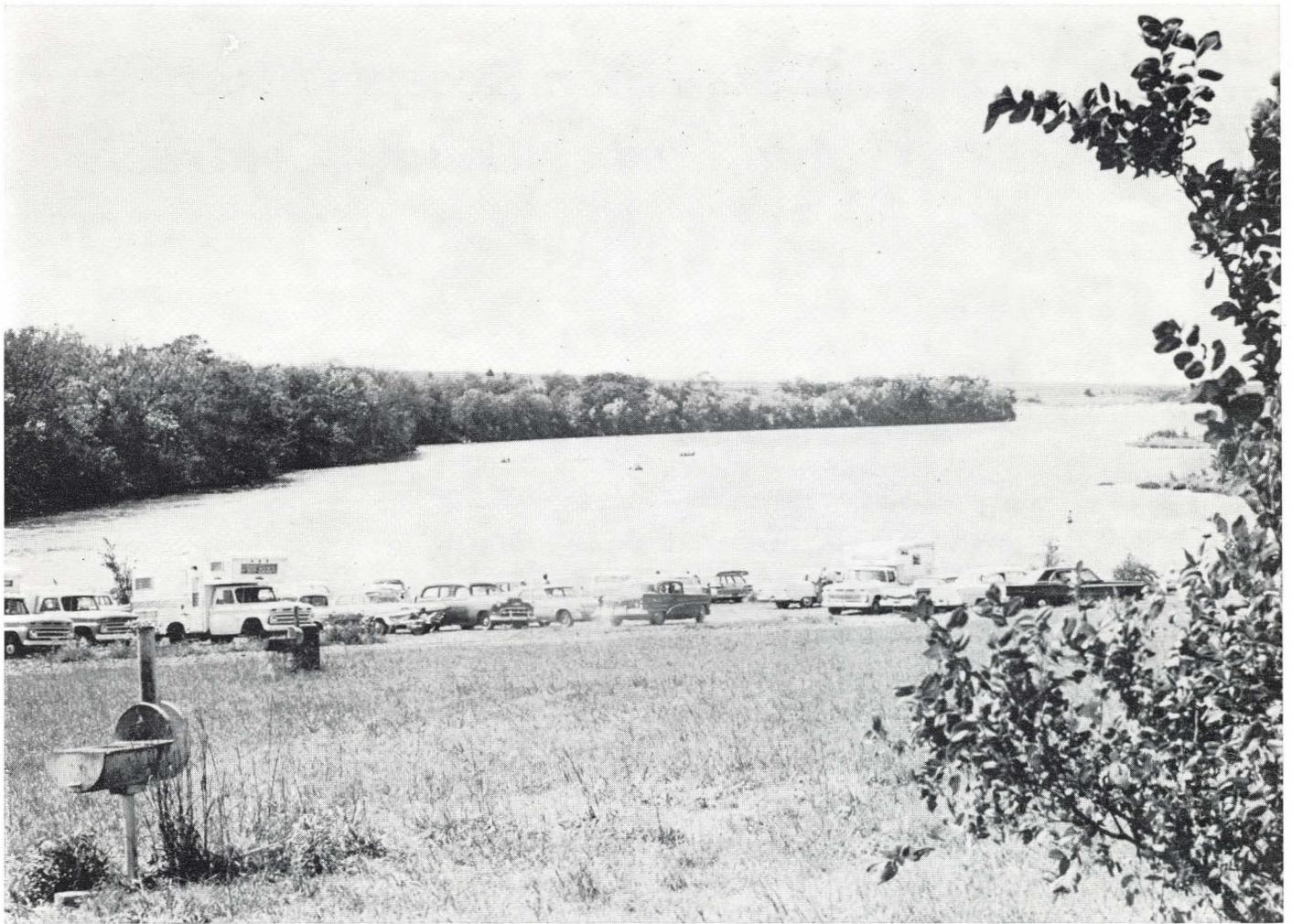
1. Voted to take over ownership and management of the Kansas Power and Light Company property known as Rocky Ford, on the Blue River, south of Tuttle Creek Dam at Manhattan. The power firm presented the site to the Commission as a gift, including buildings, parking areas and several acres of land along the river channel. The site has long been a popular fishing spot.

2. Voted to give Barton County 20 feet of right-of-way along 1½ miles of county road at the east edge of Cheyenne Bottoms, northeast of Great Bend. George Moore, Fish and Game Commission director, said the road will be widened and surfaced by the county.

3. Approved a regulation, recommended by the game division, to close the Marais des Cygnes and Neosho waterfowl areas to teal hunting during the special teal season in September. A large number of wood ducks have been killed during the special season the past two years at both areas, when apparently mistaken for teal, Dave Coleman, game division chief, told the Commission. He added that only a small number of teal generally frequent the two areas.

4. Voted to proceed with plans for a number of "bank pond" fishing areas along the Ninescah River in the Kingman County Game Management area west of Kingman. This will consist of digging several trench-like ponds several feet deep and up to 100 yards long perpendicular to the river, and letting them fill with water from the river. "They make excellent fishing spots," Director Moore said, "and can be constructed at a nominal cost." The Kingman area, of course, is open to the public, free of charge, for hunting and fishing purposes.

The wild goose has about twelve thousand muscles—ten thousand of which control the action of its feathers.



SUMMER IS HERE, and outdoor recreation for the year is foremost in the minds of most Kansans. And, it has been an excellent year for them all—fishermen, campers, picnickers and just plain loafers. This scene, at Geary County State Lake south of Junction City, is repeated many times and places each week. (Fish and Game Commission Photo).