

Jim Carless

KANSAS



FISH AND GAME

VOL. III

FEBRUARY, 1941

No. II



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KANSAS FISH AND GAME

Published Monthly By

THE KANSAS FORESTRY, FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Pratt, Kansas

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THE CHUKAR PARTRIDGE

With the awakening of public interest in wildlife conservation has come a thirst for more knowledge about fish and game. At the request of many interested BULLETIN readers, we are beginning anew a discussion of the fish and game native to or more recently introduced into Kansas game fields. In this month's BULLETIN we discuss the chukar partridge, a stranger to Kansas game fields.

The chukar partridge is native to inner Mongolia, Tibet, India, Arabia, Egypt, Asia Minor, and southern Europe. The term "chukar" is commonly applied to only one of the four species of red-legged rock partridges of the genus *Alectoris*, this being the species *A. graeca*, which includes 22 subspecies. The bird imported into this country as the chukar is the Indian variety *A. graeca chukar*.

In 1893, W. O. Blaisdell, of Illinois, brought in five pairs of chukar partridges from Karachi, India, and from this stock a few birds were liberated at Macomb, Ill., the following spring. One of these was shot at least eight miles from that place, but no further report of this liberation is available. In 1928, at San Francisco, Cal., Frank E. Booth introduced some chukars direct from India. Phillips, in his bulletin "Wild Birds Introduced or Transplanted in North America," says that "in some old correspondence of Henry Oldys with Gustav Walter, of New York, mention is made of some trials with chukars in both Massachusetts and Nova Scotia." Whether the last-mentioned introductions antedate Blaisdell's attempt in 1893 is not known. There have been unconfirmed reports that Georgia and Maryland have introduced some chukars from Egypt.

For the past ten years, and especially during the past three years, interest in the liberation of chukars has been steadily increasing. A majority of the states have already made attempts to establish the species. Most of the liberations, however, are so recent that it seems unsafe to assume that the success of the birds is assured in any state. Table 1 shows what has been done to date in the introduction of this species, and lists the states in which at least some success has been attained. So far it appears that the birds are making better progress in establishing themselves west of the Mississippi river.

The superintendent of the State Game Farm in California reports that the chukar is taking especially to the more arid parts of that state and that it is doing exceptionally well. Other observers, however, are less optimistic about the results. Up to and including 1938 more than 9,500 of the birds had been released in California. Minnesota conservation officials have stocked 13,908 chukars to date, nearly 12,000 of which were liberated in 1939. The game officers report the 1938 and 1939 natural reproduction as being good. Wisconsin has planted at least 3,845 of these partridges, and though state officials decline as yet to declare the species an established success, they report that the birds have stayed more or less in the localities where they were liberated, mainly in stubble fields and open country. Washington officials released 681 chukars in 1938, and they are much impressed with the success of reproduction and have hopes that the species will adapt itself to the arid parts of the state. Nebraska, up to the close of 1939, had liberated 4,000 chukars. The birds there appear to prefer low cover in the river valleys and are said to withstand deep snow very well. The state warden of Wyoming reports that flocks of chukars released in that state in 1937 and 1938 are increasing, and that large coveys have been seen near the points where the "seed" birds were liberated. Biological Survey officials in Nevada say that the chukar seems to be fairly well established in at least four counties and that large flocks have been observed. The North Dakota Fish and Game Department wrote in 1938: "This species has done exceptionally well since it was liberated."

An important factor to consider in the introduction of any exotic species into a new habitat is possible competition with native species. It was expected that at least in some instances severe competition would occur between quail and chukars. All state game officials in reporting their experiences with the chukar, however, state that to the best of their knowledge no serious competition is evident. The territory occupied by the chukar in some parts of California, namely the more or less barren and wasteland sections of the state, is reported to be largely devoid of any other game birds. Chukars have nested on the Mohave Desert.

One nest of eggs was hatched even in the middle of August in King's Canyon, concerning which the superintendent of the state game farm says: "If there is any hotter, dryer place on the face of the earth in the month of August than this area, we do not know where it is." In places in Missouri, where chukars and quail were observed together, no competition was noticeable. In two cases quail and chukars were seen feeding together in an open field, but they have not been found roosting together. Missouri officials feel, however, that "if the chukars become . . . numerous, competition for food might result."

Observations of a flock of birds released in Box Elder county, Utah, in the summer of 1936 disclosed a definite inability to endure winter conditions even with a generous supplementary feeding. Pheasants were abundant in the same area and did well without feeding. With the onset of severe winter conditions the 18 surviving chukars left the field and sought food and shelter at a ranch yard. Six of them failed to live through the winter and the remainder disappeared the following summer.

No extensive study of the food habits of the chukar has been made, but in captivity these birds do well on diets fed to quail. Lespedeza, ragweed, the sorghums, and grasshoppers are definitely known to have a high place on their food list. According to some reports, corn is not relished by either captive or wild birds. Game officials of Georgia, however, report that peanuts, cracked corn, pine mast, and peas are eaten. Chukars do much scratching and turning over of debris as they feed.

The red-legged hill chukar, as the subspecies introduced into this country is sometimes called, makes its home in its native land in cultivated fields, along streams, and in barren hilly areas. It is commonly found in the foothills of the Himalayas, and ranges even to timber line, following the snow line as the season advances. In the United States it appears so far that chukars are doing best in the drier climates of the West. It seems to take the old stubblefields, open prairies, or even deserts and other arid lands. The ultimate success of the species in this country is, of course, still in doubt, but it seems to have a chance of becoming established at least in some states west of the Mississippi river.

Our Cover

Our cover this month is one of Vern Newton's pictures, the first trophy of his African hunt. The young lady in the picture, who should be extremely jittery, but apparently isn't, is his daughter, Verna, who accompanied him on the hunt.

Mr. Newton, a Wellington, Kan., sportsman, has been showing motion pictures of this hunt to sportsmen's clubs throughout the state.



Senator Elmer E. Euwer, formerly a member of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, who is now protecting the sportsmen's interests as chairman of the senate fish and game committee.

Resigns

Mr. Elmer E. Euwer has resigned as a member of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission to represent his district as state senator. Mr. Euwer's resignation was prompted by his desire to maintain the commission as an agency free of political influences. He was originally appointed to fill the unexpired term of the late Joe Flora. During the year that Mr. Euwer was a member of the commission he was responsible for many improvements in the general fish and game conditions of the district he represented.

Arrests for December and January

Trapping and selling fur without license.....	30
Hunting without license	40
Violations of fur laws.....	34
Defraud by issuing license.....	1
Illegal fishing	1
Fishing without license	3
Dynamiting fish	2
Pheasant shooting out of season.....	2
Taking game birds by use of automobile.....	1
Hunting ducks without license or duck stamp.....	1
Shooting quail out of season	2
Hunting ducks before legal time.....	1
Possession of illegal nets.....	4
Total	122

Appointed

Harry F. (Swede) Lutz, 35, Sharon Springs newspaper publisher, has been named by Governor Payne H. Ratner as a member of the commission to succeed Elmer E. Euwer, recently seated as state senator from the thirty-ninth senatorial district. Mr. Lutz, borne and reared in Wallace county, graduated from Kansas State College and has owned and operated the Sharon Springs *Western Times* since 1934. He is serving his second term as mayor of Sharon Springs. Mr. Lutz needs little introduction to the Kansas sportsmen as he has been the secretary and treasurer of the Wallace County Fish and Game Association since its organization two years ago. Mr. Lutz fills one of the three Republican positions on the bipartisan commission and will represent the third commission district.

The Commission Meets

The Commission meeting in Topeka on January 27th and 28th outlined their game bird distribution policy for the insuing year and adopted the following resolution relative to the distribution of pheasants and its participation in Federal Wildlife Aid Funds.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Forestry, Fish and Game Commission of Kansas desires to restock pheasants in certain counties in Kansas, under the provisions and benefits of the Pittman-Robertson act; and

WHEREAS, It is unlawful by existing statutes to hunt, kill or take pheasants in Kansas, except in such counties as may be declared to be open by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission; and

WHEREAS, The Forestry, Fish and Game Commission passed a resolution on July 20, 1940, by which resolution the Commission committed itself not to open the counties hereinafter named to pheasant hunting before the fall of 1943: Now, Therefore,

Be it resolved, That the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission restock the counties hereinafter named with pheasants on the county unit basis, and that the Commission commit itself by this resolution not to open said counties to pheasant hunting before the fall of 1943. Said counties being named as follows: Greeley, Hamilton, Stanton, Morton, Wichita, Kearny, Grant, Stevens, Scott, Finney, Haskell, Seward, Lane, Gray, Meade, Ness, Hodgeman, Ford, Clark, Rush, Pawnee, Edwards, Kiowa, Comanche, Barton, Stafford, Pratt, Barber, Lincoln, Ellsworth, Rice, Reno, Kingman, Harper, Cloud, Ottawa, Saline, McPherson, Harvey, Sedgwick, Sumner, Washington, Clay, Dickinson, Marion, Marshall, Geary, Morris and Riley.

And be it further resolved, That if pheasant hunting is permitted in any of the said counties in the fall of 1943, that the killing and taking of pheasants be limited to cock pheasants.

Under the policy of the Fish and Game Commission, pheasants to be propagated at the Meade County Pheasant Farm will be distributed only in areas where they are wanted and where conditions are known to be favorable to the natural requirements of the birds. Bobwhite quail will continue to be stocked heavily in eastern Kansas.

Quail Stamps

A report on the sale of quail stamps during the 1940 season indicates that 4,000 fewer hunters were in the quail fields than during the 1939 season. This is due, in a large measure, not to fewer birds, but because of the bad weather prevailing during the first part of the season.

Biennial Report

The eighth biennial report of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission in formal form is now being printed. Since this report is intended primarily for the information of the legislature, only a few extra copies are being printed. If any BULLETIN reader desires a copy of this statistical report, a copy will be sent on request.

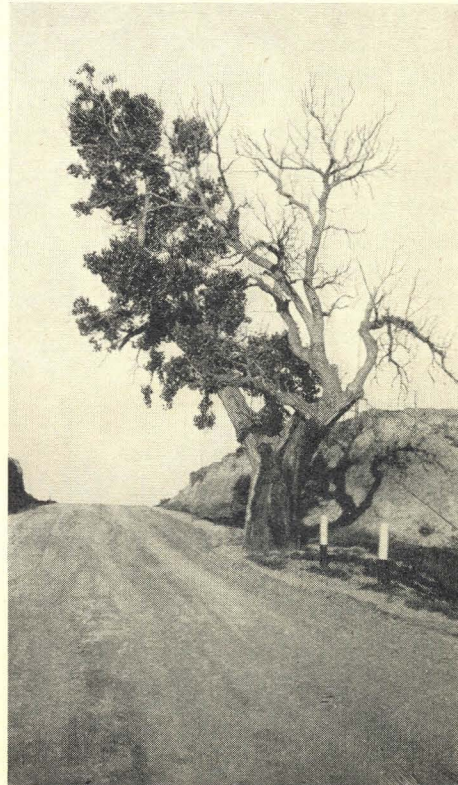
Protectors Busy

The protectors, without exception, have spent the last six weeks in the tedious task of checking and re-checking the records of fur dealers, in an attempt to ferret out the trappers who neglected to comply with our trapping-license requirements. This year, for the first time, protectors have checked the records of fur houses in Missouri, Nebraska, Colorado, Oklahoma and Iowa, to determine if any furs are being shipped from Kansas in violation of the state and federal laws.

An act of congress, May 25, 1900, known as the Lacey act, provides, among other things, that it shall be unlawful to make interstate shipment of furs contrary to the laws of that state from which such furs were shipped or otherwise transported.

Our purpose in checking the records of out-of-state fur buyers is to detect violations of the Lacey act and at the same time to learn how many Kansas furs are being shipped to out-of-state buyers.

We picture below a historic southwest Kansas landmark that played a tragic part in the development of the southwest. This tree, now gone, was the oldest and perhaps the only large tree in Meade county during the late eighties, and served as a scaffold for a party of surveyors hanged by Indians. Mr. Harold C. Short of Leavenworth, then eleven years old, missed the fate of his father because on the day of the massacre he accompanied another party of surveyors.



Club News

Fred Kahn, busy secretary of the very active Douglas County Sportsman's Organization, after talking us out of four and one-half tons of grain, has written that he expects to use the members of the club and the members of the 4-H Club of Douglas county in distributing this grain, as a part of their county's winter feeding program.

J. E. Mulligan, president of the Marion County Fish and Game Development Association, reports that he has been keeping his organization active in a winter feeding program.

The Meade County Fish and Game Development Association met for the first time since its organization one year ago and elected the following as officers for the ensuing year: Curtis Uts, Plains, president; O. G. Dittle and L. Weatherman, Meade, vice-presidents; W. J. Cooper, Fowler, secretary and treasurer; Glen Kaufman, Willis Wolf, Cecil Bohan, Walter Coats, Floyd Borger and H. Beezley as directors. The immediate objective for this group is to improve fishing conditions at the Meade County State Lake.

Kingman Sportsmen Meet

Kingman county sportsmen are without a doubt rugged individuals. Despite sleet, snow, ice and near zero weather, two hundred of them met recently in Kingman to view the big hunting pictures taken and shown by Vern Newton of Wellington. Dr. W. M. Benefiel, director of the State Association as master of ceremonies, ably assisted by Glen Ferguson of Kingman, put on a show that will long be remembered by the attending sportsmen. Out-of-town guests included Vern Newton of Wellington, Fish and Game Commissioner, Howard Gillespie of Wichita, Ben Jones, Hutchinson's Sportsman Chief of Police and George Gould, Dodge City, treasurer of the Kansas Fish and Game Development Association.

Shawnee County

At long last we have heard from our good friend, Jack Campbell and of the activities of the Shawnee County Sportsman's Fish and Game Protective Association.

At the January 20, 1941, meeting of the Sportsman's Fish and Game Protective Association of Shawnee County, held at the new Topeka Municipal Building, it was decided to hold a Spring Amateur Field Trial for shooting dogs.

The proposed plan is to run the trial March 9 on the ground owned by Shawnee county at Shawnee Lake about two miles southeast of Topeka. This tract has an area of approximately 1,000 acres and has fair cover for quail. The board of county commissioners has granted the Association permission to use the grounds.

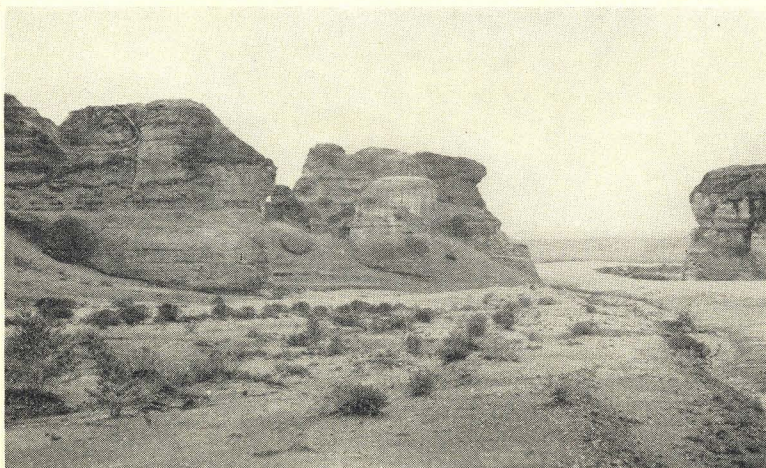
The plan, as tentatively outlined, is to plant quail on the courses so that every dog will have an opportunity to find game. No birds will be killed.

The Sportsman's Fish and Game Protective Association of Shawnee County has 434 members and a large number of them are interested in hunting dogs. Consequently, the trial should have a large entry list. It will not be a requirement that owners of the dogs entered belong to the Association.

The officers of the Association are Joe F. Springer, president, Verne Saunders, vice-president, Chas. N. Stitt, treasurer, and C. A. Marlatt, secretary. The field trial committee is composed of Dr. J. G. Stewart, Byron Gourley and J. A. Campbell.

Those interested in shooting dogs are invited to attend this trial and run their dogs.

The Sportsman's Association will have a meeting February 10, in the evening, at the Municipal Building at which time subcommittees will be appointed to handle the work in connection with the trial.



Here is a view of a few of the sandstone formations just outside of Scott County State Park



Verne Newton with another trophy of his African game hunt

Allen County Sportsmen Meet

Barbecued opossum, coon and fresh oysters was the bait used to lure two hundred Allen county sportsmen to the annual meeting of the Allen County Fish and Game Conservation Club held at Humboldt early in January. Kenneth Sharp, president of the organization, has informed the BULLETIN that the local Rotary Club canceled their regular meeting in order to attend the banquet and to assist the Allen county boys in celebrating a year of worthy achievements. The BULLETIN sincerely hopes that the Humboldt Rotary Club will make conservation part of their program and join with the Allen County Association in making further improvements in the fish and game conditions of Allen county. And, incidentally, we would remind the president of the Allen county group that the BULLETIN staff has always had a hankering for barbecued opossum, coon and fresh oysters.

The Sportsmen Elect

Art Gorman of Salina was elected president of the Saline County Sportsmen's association last night at the annual meeting of the organization. Held in the chamber of commerce rooms the meeting was attended by sixty. Other officers are Hugh Carlin, Mentor, vice-president; Walter Kelley, Salina, secretary-treasurer, and directors: Roy Rose, route two; Albert Eagle, Assaria; Grover Simpson, Salina; George Wallerius, Salina; John Fonck, Hedville; Jesse Jones, route two and Ben Peterson, Brookville.

Jimmy Carlson, local state game protector, was extended a vote of congratulation for the work he has been doing, and Guy Josserand, state warden, here as guest speaker, also congratulated Carlson. Josserand outlined work being done by the state department in general and called attention to the heavy penalties being levied against those caught breaking state game laws. Short talks were given by Dave Leahy, Pratt,

assistant director of the State Fish and Game Department; Lee Larrabee, Liberal, chairman of the state commission; Jerry Mulligan, of Marion, and Dick Atwood of Lincoln county.—*Salina Kansas Journal*.

On the Fire

Here we give you an exclusive preview of a few of the proposed bills now being considered by the present session of the legislature.

A bill authorizing the Fish and Game Commission to set all seasons and bag limits.

A bill declaring the cottontail to be a game animal.

A bill that would regulate the taking of bullfrogs and require those taking same to be possessed of fishing license.

A bill designed to modify the present game possession and transporting law.

A bill providing the issuance of nonresident hunting licenses on a reciprocal basis. Under this law, Kansas would charge the residents of other states exactly the same fee that would be charged Kansans hunting in that other state.

A bill providing for the issuance of a recreational license to be issued in connection with the Commission's state park program.

A bill providing for the issuance of search warrants and for the confiscation of any device or articles used illegally in the taking of fish and game.

Band Statistics

Since the banding of pheasants in Kansas was undertaken for the first time this year, too few bands have been returned to enable us accurately to report the migration or shuffle of the birds so far released. Wisconsin has made a study of this matter and we quote below some interesting statistics compiled by the Wisconsin Department of Conservation.

"Of the total number of reported bands, 86.2 percent were shot during open season; 2 percent were killed by vehicles; .6 percent were killed by predators; and the cause of death from unknown origin, 11.2 percent.

"A comparison was made of the bands returned from the northern and southern counties, as much importance is placed on the stocking of pheasants in the northern counties. However, there was no noticeable difference in migrations of birds in the northern section and in the southern section.

"The statistics revealed that 2.8 percent of the pheasants were taken during the open season in the same section in which they were stocked; 16.2 percent were taken within a radius of one to five miles of the stocking site; 3.8 percent were taken within a radius of six to ten miles from the stocking areas and 13.2 percent were taken in the same township; and 1.6 percent were taken over ten miles from the stocking site. The remaining 62.4 percent of the pheasants reported were those on which we have no definite information as to the stocking sites or the places where they were taken.

"Of the incomplete bands, it was found that fifty-five percent of them were taken in the same county in which they were liberated.

"As a point of interest in considering the pheasants that were picked up over a distance of ten miles from the point of liberation, the following few instances are noted:

In Clark county a pheasant cock was found to have migrated sixty miles from the liberation point. Dodge county reported a pheasant hen to have migrated seventy-eight miles north from the point of liberation. Eau Claire county reported a pheasant cock to have migrated twenty-six miles southeast of the point of liberation."

"There is a possible chance for error in the reports submitted to the conservation department, either in the actual banding process or the exact site where the birds were taken. However, in reviewing the majority of bands returned, it can be safely said that pheasants are inclined to stay within a reasonable distance from the point of liberation, providing the conditions for feed and cover are suitable."



FISH FACTS

The "wreck-fish," or rudderfish, derives its name from the fact that it has the curious habit of accompanying floating logs or planks, or of taking up its abode within floating barrels or broken boxes.

The attraction to these fishes is the barnacles and other minute and succulent forms of animal life with which derelict timber is almost invariably covered.

Certain species of Gobies habitually live inside sponges, the bodies of the little fishes being of an even diameter which allows them to slip in and out of the larger orifices of the sponge's surface.

Some fishes solve the problem of severe weather by going into a winter sleep, or hibernation, which is gradually induced by the drop in temperature as winter approaches, and is sustained until the mercury once again rises in the spring. They do not fall into complete unconsciousness, however, but simply cease to feed, seek shelter among weeds or stones, and become more or less torpid. The carp, for example, always moves into deeper water, and this species spends the winter in groups, some of which may contain 50 or 100 individuals. They make a cavity in the ground and pass the time until spring huddled in circles with their heads together.

The three-spined stickleback is so named because of the sharp isolated spines on the back. These fish are known for their ability to build nests from available vegetation, with front and back entrances leading to a tubular hallway. The male alone builds this nest and "cements" it together with a sticky, threadlike secretion from his body which he manages to work into the inner sides of the nest, where it hardens.

The ghost shrimp—used as bait on the Pacific Coast—is a very soft-shelled crustacean, more or less transparent, so that the internal organs and even the beating of the heart may be seen through its shell. It lives in burrows in the mud and sand from Vancouver Island, B. C., to the mouth of the Tia Juana river, San Diego county, California.

The shape of the California flying fish has been likened to that of the hull of the Bellanca plane. It has been estimated that in "taking off" this fish attains a speed of 35 miles an hour. While it can remain in the air for 30 or 40 seconds, most flights last for only 2 or 3 seconds. It reaches a foot or more in length and lives in the open ocean from off southern California to Baja, California.



This picture, one of many being shown by Mr. Newton to the sportsmen's clubs, is of the largest trophy taken on his African big game hunt

The trunkfish is most appropriately named, for he literally "lives in his trunk." His body is completely enclosed within a hard, stiff, bony shell, the only movable portions of his anatomy being his eyes, jaws, fins, and tail. The little pine-cone fish is another whose thick scales unite to enclose the body in a sort of box.

The rate of breathing in different fishes seems to vary greatly—ranging from about 12 to 15 respirations per minute in the wrasse and the rockling to as many as 150 in the minnow and stickleback. If the water is at all deficient in oxygen, the rate of breathing is accelerated, naturally, and the fish appears to "pant."

To enable a fish to glide easily along in the water, its body is covered with a slimy mucous which is being constantly poured out in large quantities by special glands situated in the epidermis. This mucous makes the body of the fish slippery and also minimizes friction with the surrounding water.—*Federal Fish & Wildlife Service.*

From West Virginia Conservation comes this story:

A new type of fishing with rod and reel, comfortable and useful during winter nights, has been called to our attention. It is "fishing for rats." It seems that a night watchman named Dick Sullivan developed the sport. Fastening a piece of cheese or apple to a hook, he casts the bait into another room and then puts the drag on his reel and waits for things to happen. Yes, he actually catches them. "When I hear the reel spinning," Mr. Sullivan explains, "I know I've got a strike and start winding in. Some of the rats really do cut up before they are subdued."

Nurses Wild, Tame Fawns

A doe on the H. J. Bussa Ranch in Bandera county has defied civilization in order to continue nursing one of the two fawns born to her this year and yet also nurses the wild one, a member of the Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission reports.

One of the doe's fawns was picked up in the woods by a ranch hand several months ago and taken to the ranch house. It was not long before the mother appeared, jumped the fence of the enclosure where her baby had been placed, and nursed it. She has continued to do so daily every day since. She returns to the woods immediately after nursing the fawn held in captivity and nurses her other offspring, which is extremely wild. The captured fawn is very tame.—*Monthly Bulletin, Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission.*

Winter Feeding

In the December issue of this publication, we urged the sportsmen and others interested in the conservation of our upland game birds to begin early their winter feeding program. That suggestion of ours was favorably acted upon by many county sportsmen's clubs, Boy Scout troops and other interested individuals, in cooperation with our field employees.

We would remind you again that now is the time to improve next year's hunting conditions. The Game Department has accumulated large quantities of grain which may be procured by you either on a direct request to the Commission's offices at Pratt or to your district game protector.

Long-lived Animals Rare, Not Common, Officials Say

Stories about animals with average life spans of 100, 150, or even 200 years are usually flights of someone's imagination, declare officials of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior. "As a matter of fact," one scientist said, "man probably has a higher life expectancy rate than any other animal known, with the possible exception of the tortoise."

Available information is inadequate for establishing definite averages, the scientists point out, because little work has been done on the life span of animals, but conservative observers make estimates far below the popular idea.

In some instances, it is suspected, long-lived animals like the elephants are credited with being much older than they actually are because of errors in records handed down from one owner to another. It is thought that animals probably live longer in captivity than in the wild.

The elephant's life span has been set at 100 or more years, but records show that it is between 40 to 50 on the average. The oldest record for an elephant in captivity is 78 years, as reported in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society in 1933.

Most tortoises, it is believed, go to their happy hunting grounds between their 50th and 60th birthdays, although cases of extreme old age have been reported.

Among other animals whose average life span is debunked are the following: Falcons, credited with living as long as 162 years, are believed to live only 7 to 10. A vulture 118 years old is far older than most of its brothers and sisters, who, according to some observers, die between the ages of 15 and 20. Golden eagles more likely live to be 18 or 20, not 100; swans 15, instead of 100; and geese 16 to 20, instead of 200 years. The parrot's reputed life span of 200 years dwindles to about 17, while a 40-year-old crocodile can be said to have lived 4 times longer than the average member of the clan.

Rattles Don't Always Tell Age

Popularly it is supposed that one can tell the age of a rattlesnake by counting the rattles, but this is not always true, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior. To get even a moderately accurate estimate of the age, one must have a complete set of rattles, including the true button. The true button is the one with which the snake is born.

Geese, Ducks Crowd Wildlife Refuge; More Food to Be Raised on Lake Bottom

Good news for many waterfowl hunters and outdoor enthusiasts everywhere is contained in a Fish and Wildlife Service report. The Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina, well-known winter resort of thousands of Canada geese, whistling swans, pintails, mallards, black ducks, and other migratory waterfowl, has as large a population of wintering birds as the area can handle.

A happier New Year note for conservationists was the statement that Service officials are not attempting to provide additional food on the area so that even more migratory waterfowl will be able to stop and feed at the famous Atlantic coast refuge near Pamlico Sound. As soon as the wave action of the water can be controlled on the 15-mile long, 5- to 6-mile wide Lake Mattamuskeet, many acres of waterfowl food plants can be grown on the now unused lake bottom, the report stated.

At present the major portion of the big, but shallow, lake has a rich layer of soil, but the constant action of the wind-blown waves keeps the lake turbid and makes it impossible for plants to take root. Lake Mattamuskeet has an average depth of two feet and is not more than three feet at the deepest point. The conservation agency plans to reduce the wave action to take advantage of the fertile lake bottom that potentially can produce an abundance of waterfowl food.

Dykes thrown across the lake may be one way of cutting down wave action and allowing the rich soil to settle, officials believe. Dr. Maynard S. Johnson, the refuge manager, is also increasing the utility of the marsh acreage by practicing controlled burning where the vegetation is dense, thus allowing new shoots to come up and increasing the area where water can be collected and birds can feed.

Additional feeding areas are also being created by throwing up a double furrow where rain water will collect, thus making food available which would not be utilized by waterfowl under ordinary circumstances.

Whatever the results of increasing the feeding areas so that more wild birds can find adequate feeding grounds on the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, the report of the Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that a "full house" statement would be good news to the outdoor enthusiasts who have watched the progress of the migratory waterfowl in their "come-back" struggle toward numbers that will approach those of the 1890's and early 1900's.

The outlook for migratory waterfowl, the report states, looks promising.

Fishing Alone

I didn't believe I'd go this year,
No, I didn't see how I could.
I mused in the flickering light
Of the burning, smoldering wood.
My friend you see had answered the Call,
The one that we all will hear,
And I knew I'd have to go alone
If I went at all this year.
We'd always gone together
My fishing friend and me;
I knew it wouldn't be the same
I knew that it couldn't be.

The firelight dimmed and lessened
Then vanished completely away;
And in its place I could see his face
And I could hear him say:
"Don't grieve, Old Friend, I'll never be
Any further away than your thoughts of me.
Go where we always went, Old Pal,
Don't sit at home and brood;
Fish the same pools and riffles,
Travel the same old road.
You'll hear the waters murmur
You'll hear the woodbird's song;
Go where we used to go, old friend,
And take my memory along."

—BOB KEAGLE.

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