

# KANSAS



# FISH AND GAME

VOL. III

MAY, 1941

No. V

*Horse Thief Canyon—Scott County State Park*



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# KANSAS FISH AND GAME

*Published Monthly By*

THE KANSAS FORESTRY, FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Pratt, Kansas

GUY D. JOSSERAND, *Director*

DAVE LEAHY, JR., *Asst. Director*

E. J. KELLY, *Secretary*

LEE LARRABEE, *Chairman*

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## A Commissioner Goes to Work

Jay J. Owens, Salina, a member of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, is sponsoring a plan for increasing the pheasant population of the seventeen counties within his district. This is a coöperative project of sportsmen, farmers and members of the 4-H Clubs. The plan, according to Commissioner Owens, is for members of the county sportsmen organizations to purchase pheasant eggs and chicks for distribution free of charge to farmers and 4-H Club boys and girls who apply for them. The eggs would then be set under bantam hens, and when hatched and sufficiently grown, be released on suitable areas.

The fish and game commissioner said several beneficial results were to be expected from the plan. Primarily, he said, this will enlist the coöperation of a great many people in a widespread pheasant propagation program. The fact that farmers and 4-H Club members themselves are interested also will act to curb illegal shooting.

"Our game laws are not nearly strict enough," Owens asserted. "With the farm people directly interested in the pheasants released on their farms, they will help curtail illegal shooting to protect the birds."

"Along with all this," Owens said, "we are hopeful that this program will aid in promoting good will between hunters living in the city and farmers on whose premises pheasants are hunted."

The commissioner declared success of the project is assured by study of results attained in Marshall county last year, when the scheme received its first trial. At that time Marysville business men purchased 350 eggs, and later 187 pheasants.

The Saline county sportsmen's organization, Owens revealed, is planning to purchase 3,000 eggs for distribution over the county.

The other counties of Owens' district, all of which, he said, are planning to coöperate, are: Jewell, Republican, Washington, Marshall, Mitchell, Cloud, Riley, Geary, Dickinson, Ottawa, Lincoln, Ellsworth, McPherson, Marion and Morris.

The commissioner said he thought the results of the plan in operation would be opening of the pheasant season in the western sixty counties of the state within three years. At the present time open seasons are declared in only twenty-one northwestern counties.

## Pheasant Season Set

The Commission meeting at Pratt, April 17, designated October 27, 28, and 29, as the 1941 season on pheasants in Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith, Jewell, Republic, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Rooks, Osborne, Mitchell, Wallace, Logan, Goye, Trego, Ellis and Russell counties. The daily bag limit being set at three cocks or two cocks and one hen. Season and possession limit, two days legal bag limit.

**Season on Bass and Crappie of All Species Reopens May 26, in All Sections of Kansas.**



Picturing potential possibilities of the Woodson County State Lake near Toronto, Kansas.



A 52 pound cat taken from the Neosho River near LeRoy, by Will Winn. A sparrow was used as bait.

## Sharpshooters

Kansas sportsmen are developing accurate shooting eyes these days, judging from records being made at regional zone shoots. Whether this is because of threatening parachutists or because of these be-whiskered "pioneer" times, we are unable to determine. We do know, however, that the present state champions will have tough going to hold their crowns at the next state meet. Here are the results of two of the three zone meets which are held each year to determine zone champions:

*Eastern Zone, Kansas City, Kansas, April 20.*

Zone 100-16 Yard Singles Championship:

Winner, Matt Colovich, Kansas City, Kansas. 97 out of 100 targets.

Zone Handicap:

Winner, Roy Grider, Toronto, Kansas. 46 out of 50 targets.

Zone High Over All:

Winner, H. T. Lewis, Osawatomie. 182 out of 200 targets.

*Southern Zone, Pratt, Kansas, April 27.*

Zone Singles Championship:

Winner, Glen Porter, Wichita. 93 out of 100 targets.

Zone Handicap:

Winner, F. E. (Tiny) Blair, Atlanta. 47 out of 50 targets.

Zone Doubles:

Class A Winner, Harry Gillispie, Anthony. 43 out of 50 targets.

Class B Winner, Bill Lassen, Goddard. 42 out of 50 targets.

Zone High Over All:

Winner, Jess Sherman, Wichita. 167 out of 200 targets.

Women's 100-16 Yard Singles:

Winners: Mrs. Weaver, Lyons. 80 out of 100 targets.

Mrs. Mary Lassen, Wichita. 74 out of 100 targets.

The Western Zone championship shoot is scheduled to be held at Russell, May 11. The winners of the state zone championships will contest for state championship honors at the state shoot at Wichita, May 30, 31 and June 1.

## Park Rule No. 14 Amended

The commission has amended State Park Rule No. 14 to read as follows:

Any person having proper fishing license and persons exempt by law may fish during legal open seasons on or within any state park. The Forestry, Fish and Game Commission may further restrict or entirely close any park to fishing at any time, if in its judgment conditions demand it. Each person so fishing is limited to not more than two fishing rods or poles with not more than two hooks attached to any line, or a fly rod and line with not more than two flies attached, or a casting rod with not more than one artificial bait or lure attached. Any fishing device or equipment used in any state lake, except as provided in this regulation, is prohibited, declared to be unlawful, and may be seized and confiscated by the park superintendent or any game protector. Any person fishing in a state lake must have the fishing rods or poles in possession, and any fishing rod or pole left set in bank or attached to anything in such manner that hooks may be taken by fish is unlawful and may be seized and confiscated by the park superintendent or any game protector. A daily bag of ten fish of all kinds is allowed. Bass less than ten inches; catfish (except bullheads) less than twelve inches; crappie less than seven inches; and yellow perch less than six inches in length must be at once returned to the water. Dumping minnows or any kind of live bait in the water of a state park is prohibited.



—Photo by Cherry.

**AB. ROSE, HUTCHINSON,**  
Present State Champ. Trapshooter.

## OUR WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Since we, the wise ones, are constantly being surprised by facts we knew not, we intend to devote one section of KANSAS FISH AND GAME to a discussion of the wildlife resources of this state. In this issue we shall present a few facts concerning the crappies, on which the season reopens May 26th.

The crappie is a native Kansas fish. There are two species or kinds of crappie; however, it is difficult for one to distinguish them unless a special study of the two kinds has been made. Both varieties usually go by the name of crappie, or "croppie."

The White or River crappie grows to a length of from twelve to fourteen inches and attains a weight of from one to one and one-half pounds, and very rarely exceeds this weight in Kansas. The general ground color of the body of this species of crappie is a silvery white, flecked with small blotches of dark or olive green. The dark green mottling is to be found chiefly on the upper half of the body, and in some specimens shows a tendency to arrange itself in the form of narrow vertical bands, ordinarily from seven to ten in number, showing in some specimens taken in states east of Kansas quite distinctly. This banded condition is not very apparent in Kansas specimens, and unless the fish are examined when taken from the water may not be noticed at all.

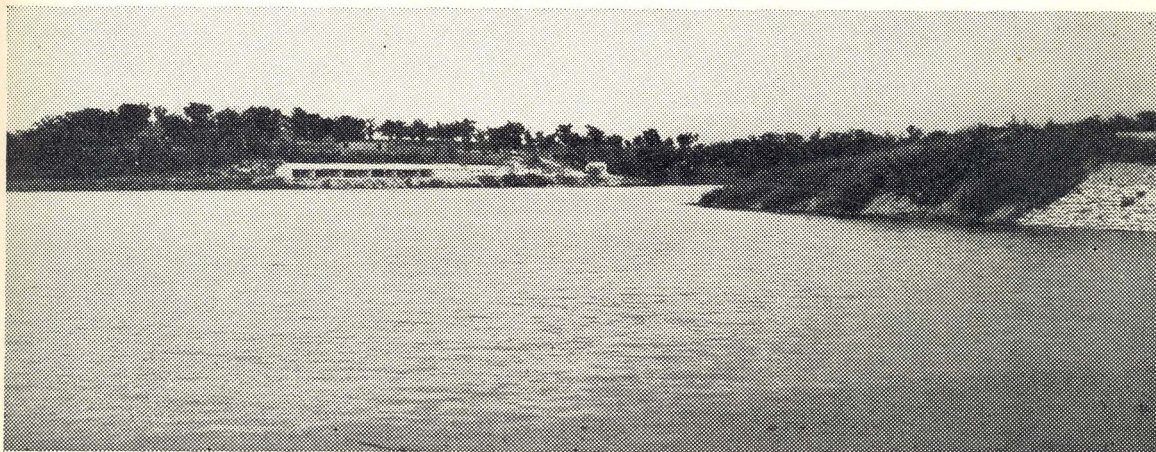
However, the best way for the novice to distinguish the White crappie from the Black crappie is by the number of sharp spines in the dorsal fin. In the White crappie the number of sharp dorsal spines is typically six, very rarely five or seven. In the dark colored, or Black crappie, which will be the next one described, the typical number of sharp dorsal spines is seven and sometimes eight, but rarely nine and very rarely ten or six. The White crappie is longer and thinner in proportion to its weight than the Black crappie and is lighter in its general color on its sides and back.

The Black crappie (*Pomoxis sparoides*) is also known as the Small-mouthed crappie. It has a variety of local names, depending upon the locality where it is found, such as Strawberry bass, Grass bass and Calico bass. In Kansas the Black crappie is frequently called the Giant crappie by fishermen, owing to the fact that a very considerable number of fish weighing from one to two pounds each are caught.

The ground or general body color of the Black crappie is silvery white, the same as in the white species, but there are very considerably more of dark olivaceous blotches in the Black crappie, especially on the upper half of the body. This colored mottling shows no tendency to form in transverse bands as it sometimes does in the White crappie. The mottling or spots on the fins are also more distinct than on the light-colored variety, and their color, while apparently tinged with dark green when looked at in good light, usually look sooty black in most specimens.

The crappie is scarcely classed as a game fish among real anglers, yet it makes rather a quick move when it takes the hook, but does not put up fight enough to free itself from the hook and get away to suit the sportsmen, at least those who have been accustomed to fish for trout and Black bass. Yet the crappie is a fine fish to take with a light tackle, and what it lacks in dash and splash is in a good measure made up by the beautiful picture of silver and green that is presented to the fisherman as soon as the captive is lifted from the water. There are hundreds of fishermen, and "anglers" too, who enjoy fishing for crappie. The crappie will frequently take an artificial lure, rising to a fly or dashing after a small spoon when these tricks are skillfully handled and properly cast upon the water. However, the best bait for a novice or unskilled crappie fisherman is a grasshopper, a young crayfish, or a small minnow from one to three inches long.

Crappie like to stay near old logs, brush heaps and tree tops, and it is around such places that the wise crappie fishermen seek for them.



The above is a part of Lone Star Lake near Lawrence. Good crappie and bass waters.

## A Question

A reader inquires: Does the inbreeding of quail have any noticeable effect on the quail supply? Many with whom I have discussed this matter are definitely of the opinion that inbreeding does impair the species. What is your opinion?

We, too, have heard such declarations but not, however, from accepted, competent authorities. Professor Aldo Leopold, in our opinion one of the most reasoning of the ornithologists, writes in "Game Survey of North Central States," as follows:

*"Alleged Inbreeding.* It is widely believed by sportsmen, throughout this region as well as elsewhere, that if quail covies are not dispersed annually by shooting, they inbreed and deteriorate in size, vigor, and abundance.

"That shooting stimulates dispersal is probably a fact.

"That dispersal depends on shooting is not a fact in Georgia, and probably not in this region. Stoddard proved by banding thousands of birds in hundreds of covies that shuffling of individual birds between covies begins as soon as the chicks are hatched, and continues throughout the closed as well as the open season. Covies with young of two or more sizes arise not from two successive broods from the same pair, as many sportsmen believe, but from this automatic shuffling between the broods of different pairs.

"That quail would deteriorate, even if natural dispersal were absent, is improbable. Domestic species do not do so, except where similar genetic weaknesses exist in both parents. Wild species have not been tested, but the laws of inheritance as now understood would indicate less, rather than more, damage from inbreeding in wild species than in domestic, because they represent purer strains from which the tendency toward undesirable variations has been weeded out by competition.

"In short, there is not a shred of real evidence that quail inbreed if unshot, or that it would hurt them if they did. Isolated covies on the northern edge of the range might not have a chance to mix with others and thus inbreed, but these border birds (except where diluted with or supplanted by Mexican stock as in New England) are traditionally large and vigorous.

"The belief in damage from inbreeding is so widely entertained, however, and management policies throughout the world are so often premised upon it, that its validity should be subjected to scientific test. This will require dividing a homogeneous sample into two halves, and inbreeding one while outbreeding the other in the same environment, for many generations. Some well-to-do sportsman could build a lasting monument to himself by financing such a test in some competent university.

"In spite of the universal fear of inbreeding, only

one instance of actual action to prevent it was encountered during the survey. On the Lyer preserve in Phelps county, Missouri, annual trapping operations are carried out, and the cock birds moved to locations as far as possible from the point where trapped. A decisive increase has accompanied this practice, but so has winter feeding and very light shooting. The cause of the increase may lie in these management measures, rather than in the moving of cocks."

## Looks Good

Reports received from the superintendents of the commission's three game farms would indicate that the forthcoming bird production season will be very successful. The Pittsburg Quail Farm reports that their first quail egg was found April 2d. The birds at the Calista plant went to work nine days later. Incubators at both plants have been put in operation and are at present housing 4,000 potential bobwhite quail. At the Meade County State Pheasant Farm nearly 5,000 ringnecked pheasants are on the fire at this time. Due to the fact that these plants have been enlarged and further improved, we expect this year's production record will exceed that of last year. This we predict wishfully and with our fingers crossed, as "almost anything" can be expected to happen at a state game farm.

## Fur Sale

Many Kansas and Colorado fur buyers were attracted to Pratt, April 17, 1941, to bid for the 255 beaver pelts sold at this annual fur sale. The Williamson-Hitchcock Fur Company of Denver, Colorado, purchased all pelts at a price averaging slightly more than \$22.50 per pelt. These animals had been trapped by state trappers under game department supervision from the streams of northern Kansas.



Lum Harris, Stafford, 2½ pound crappie taken in Stafford County.

The National Coursing Association closed its eight-day session of spring racing at Salina, May 4. The spring meet saw the distribution of nearly \$8,000 in prize money. Here are the final results and the new crown champs:

*Futurity*—Won by Aw Fooey, owned by B. E. Randle, Idana, when Moocher, owned by Mrs. Molly Gibb, Far Hill, N. J., was withdrawn.

*Futurity Consolation*—Won by My Trouble, owned by Ollie Payne, Blackwell, from Mathe Matics, owned by Delta Kennels of Rio Vistal, California.

*Derby*—Divided by Pitch Out, owned by Claude Betterson of Salina and Gold Flag, nominated by Betterson.

*Derby Purse Final*—Won by Sunday, owned by Keith Dillon of Cedar, Kansas, when Norma Thorn, owned by Vernie Mikels of Bartlesville was withdrawn.

*Derby Plate Final*—Won by Wise Judgment, owned by F. C. Lawman of Severy, Kansas, from Albie Haft, owned by John Pesek, Ravenna, Nebraska.

*Sapling Final*—Divided by Frontier Lad and Officer Upset, both owned by Ohlinger and Blair of Jewell City, Kansas. The dogs are litter mates.

*Sapling Consolation Final*—Won by Scat Davis, owned by F. R. Gurley, Fort Worth, from Risky Joe, Knox Brothers, Talmage.

*Futurity Special Final*—Won by Silver Sir, owned by F. A. Brumbaugh of Portis from Mi Due, owned by Keith Dillon of Cedar.

*Sapling Special Final*—Won by Turner, owned by May Bergfield of Sequin, Texas, from Frosty Bait, owned by F. A. Brumbaugh of Portis, after the dogs had first run a "hat off."

*All-Age Special Final*—Won by Smoky Gangster, owned by Francis Flint, Chapman, from Crafty Andrew, owned by Cliff Waller, Aurora, Nebraska.

## Another Whopper!

Elsewhere in this Bulletin is pictorial proof of the fishing possibilities of the Neosho river. District Game Protector Hepperly forwarded this picture to the Bulletin staff with an explanation that the fish weighing fifty-two pounds was taken from the Neosho river near Le Roy by Will Winn and others. We have Mr. Hepperly's word, too, that a sparrow was used as bait.



Don Miller, Roy Craig, and Bill Hinton, all of Hiawatha, bagged these 34 hawks and crows in a one-day conservation effort.

## Kansas Fish-Game Program

On the whole the Kansas Fish and Game Commission's program in the recent session of the legislature scored about fifty percent in spite of the fact that seven out of nine measures proposed were defeated.

There were two really important bills: One permitting the commission to fix open seasons on fish and game, which was defeated; and the other taking the premium or "bounty" of \$10 apiece off arrests and convictions by game wardens of persons violating the state's game and fish laws.

There was another bill which was dangerous and should have been defeated, as it was. This was the provision to give game wardens extensive search and confiscation powers and to permit sale of seized hunting and fishing equipment. It was a bill that could easily have led to abuses, as the law paying \$10 a head for persons convicted of game law violations already had done.

Outside of these the measures were minor in importance: Bringing rabbits, squirrels and bullfrogs under protection, raising license for both residents and nonresidents, requiring all persons from sixteen to seventy to have licenses, and authorizing the commission to make uniform regulations for state parks. The one other law passed, permitting storage of game for thirty days instead of fifteen days, also was minor.

On the whole the fish and game commission has operated satisfactorily and on a nonpartisan basis through a bipartisan commission, with the local sportsmen's clubs choosing the game wardens. The chief criticism has been too much zeal in arresting persons for alleged violations to get the \$10—which has been eliminated. The commission can, by wise controls of game seasons, better the wildlife conditions in Kansas, and it is too bad this power was denied it. But by and large the sportsmen of Kansas gained as a result of the legislative session.—*Kansas City Star*.

## A New Law

The action of the legislature in repealing that section of the law providing for the assessment of a ten dollar fee against those convicted of the fish and game law, is expected to result in a stricter enforcement of game laws by the county game protectors. Heretofore county game protectors and other peace officers were reluctant to enforce game laws lest they be charged with making the arrest simply for the fee involved. Hereafter, this fee will not be assessed against game law violators, either by district game protectors, county protectors or peace officers. This does not mean that cheaters are to get off with lighter penalties, as we expect the courts will assess larger fines.

### Scott City and Western Kansas Plan Park Opening

Reserve Sunday, June 8, for a visit to the Scott County State Park, fourteen miles northwest of Scott City. This date has been tentatively set as the official opening of that park for the 1941 season. Although the park remains open during the entire year, the Scott City Chamber of Commerce and the other communities of northwestern Kansas plan a day of celebration to officially open the park season.

We guarantee you an enjoyable day at that park. An elaborate program has been arranged, including speaking, baseball games, picnics, and other sports. Lake McBride, a hundred-acre lake within the park, is a very good fishing lake. The canyons, trails and bridle paths will also be a source of pleasure to the hiker, equestrian and nature student.

### Br'er Fox Easy on Chicken and Quail

Contrary to general belief, foxes do not subsist entirely at the expense of the local chicken roosts and quail covies. In fact, these delicacies are only a small part of the diet of Br'er Fox.

According to the Alabama Coöperative Wildlife Research Unit, insects and rabbits form the principal entree on the bill of fare. For the past several months the Unit, which is one of a series supported by the American Wildlife Institute, has been studying the food habits of both red and gray foxes. Suprisingly enough, bobwhite quail were little in evidence, the number eaten being insignificant when compared with the total food taken. Undoubtedly there is a direct connection between the number of quail destroyed and the number of rabbits on hand, something of a simple supply and demand proposition at work. Rabbits apparently offer a free meal ticket much to Reynard's liking. So long as the rabbit supply holds out, the quail population seems to be in relatively slight danger. Undoubtedly quail hunters will think twice before shooting at the bounding cottontails just to get "the feel of the gun." Every cottontail spared by the hunter means more quail in the bag. That is, if the fox co-operates!—American Wildlife Institute.

### Federal Fish Hatchery

Over in Crawford county, near the Crawford County State Park, as the Bulletin previously advised you, the government has undertaken the building of a federal fish hatchery. The fish produced in this nearly completed hatchery will be placed, for the most part, in the waters of Kansas. Since the Fish and Game Commission is vitally interested in this project, we have continued and will continue to give the government our whole-hearted coöperation in the development of this project.

### Coffey County Sportsmen Meet, Elect and Act

The annual meeting of the Coffey County Wildlife Restoration Association held at Burlington, April 22, elected the following as officers for the ensuing year: A. D. Sanders, president; Geo. Gallagher, secretary-treasurer; and H. C. McVey and L. L. Dewey of Waverly, Corbett Lewis of Lebo, George Moore of LeRoy, Oscar Applegate of Strauss, Herman Valland of Aliceville, Chris Steahm of Gridley, and Floyd Williams of Burlington, vice-presidents.

The association has several projects planned for the ensuing year, one of which is to declare war on seiners, whom they accuse of endangering the fish supply of Coffey county.

Fish and Game Commissioner Garland Atkins and other well known sportsmen from other counties attended the meeting.

ARRESTS FOR MARCH AND APRIL	
Fur violations .....	13
Shooting migratory waterfowl out of season.....	13
Fishing without a license.....	9
Operating illegal fishing equipment.....	6
Hunting on private land without permission.....	4
Hunting without a license.....	3
Resist and assault of game protector.....	1
Taking game birds out of season.....	1
Total.....	50

### Coyote Bounty

By an act of the 1941 legislature coyotes are again worth \$1 per head as bounty payment. The new bounty law permits the counties to make the payments for which they will be reimbursed by the state. The bounty is payable at the offices of the county clerks.

### Holds Ninth Annual Meeting

The ninth annual meeting of the Douglas County Sportsmen's Club held at Lawrence, April 16, was attended by 350 sportsmen from Douglas and other nearby counties. Dr. W. P. Taylor, senior biologist of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, showed two reels of motion pictures, one a cartoon by "Ding" Darling, entitled "Once Upon a Time," and another by the United States Biological Survey entitled "A Heritage We Guard." Chairman Lee Larrabee, Commissioner Garland Atkins, Fish and Game Director Guy D. Jossierand, and many other well known sportsmen attended the meeting.

The officers of this very active club are Earnest Pontius, president; Gilbert Francis, vice-president; Fred W. Kahn, secretary-treasurer; all of Lawrence.



## A Letter About Fishing, Flat Tires, and July Heat

The following letter is from J. G. Willard, Commander United Spanish War Veterans, Fort Dodge, Kansas:

"One hot afternoon, last July, I was sitting in the shade because I did not have the ambition to do anything more strenuous, when my good friend, J. C., ambled along and slid into the first seat available. After the usual salutations and remarks about the weather, I suggested that we go fishing on the following day. J. C. argued that it was too hot for the fish to bite and gave a number of other reasons, such as not having any bait, but after much arguing and persuasion he reluctantly consented to go. He left to get his boots, minnow bucket and other equipment and came back presently to tell me it was absolutely useless to go. I asked his reasons, and he showed me the fish calendar, which was black, signifying "no good." I said, "Well, we can at least go out along the creek and be at peace and close to nature as God made it, and anyway, I never fish much in the sign. I fish mostly in the creek."

"It ended by our going to the river to seine minnows, and we had very poor luck. J. C. argued it was because the sign was wrong. But we finally succeeded in capturing about two dozen fair-sized minnows and three extra nice shiners which J. C. thought would be plenty. We came back and proceeded to get our paraphernalia ready.

"We planned to start at 4:30 a.m. My friend wanted to drive his car on account of more room, mine being a coupe. He cautioned me many times about not being late, as when I am late he is very unhappy. I awoke the following morning about four and hurriedly got a bite to eat. Four-thirty came and then five, and then at last J. C. came and informed me had left his switch on all night and for some reason his car wouldn't start. I got my car out to give him a push, and after we finally got his car out of the garage, "ye Gods," a tire was flat. Well, we finally changed the tire, our dispositions getting sweeter all of the time, but finally I gave him the push and he was off. By the time we had everything loaded it was six-thirty. We had an uneventful drive of some thirty-five miles and arrived at the creek.

"J. C. was the first to get a line into the water, and before I was rigged up he had caught about as nice a crappie as I have ever seen; finally, we both got to fishing in earnest. The fish were biting slow but we had enough for a small mess by eleven o'clock. It was getting awfully hot. I asked J. C. what time it was and he said it was 11:25, so I said, 'Well, I will cast over under that brush and get a bass.' In the meantime, I had put on one of our big shiners, which was

about four inches long, and I was using a hook size 6, very small. I made the cast and landed my minnow directly under the bush, and my line hadn't straightened out until it started to leave for parts unknown. I set my hook and the fight was on. When I first felt the strength, I thought I had a big snapping turtle, but the speed soon convinced me it was a fish of some kind. She stayed right at the bottom for more than ten minutes before she broke water. There were three brush piles in the creek and she knew where they all were. All I tried to do was turn her from them. I didn't try to hurry her in the least. After I saw her head, the thought came to me that I had used my line for three years, so I just let her do the fighting. Incidentally, I hear fishermen tell about straightening the hook right out, and I have just this to say, they either had hold of a stump or they were poor fishermen. Well, she finally gave up the fight and turned over on her back and I got my hand in her gills and lifted her out. She was a channel cat (*Ictalurus Punctatus*). I asked J. C. what time it was and he replied twelve o'clock noon. I had been just thirty-five minutes landing that fish and I was plenty busy all the time. It was very hot, and we decided we had a mighty good mess of fish so we came on home.

"We stopped at the store and Mrs. Cleveland weighed my fish. She weighed seventeen pounds, two ounces, and measured thirty-two inches long. She had three and one-half pounds of spawn in her. This fish was caught on the seventeenth day of July and I caught an exact mate to her on the twenty-fourth day of September. These two fish, I claim, are the largest two channel cat caught in western Kansas in 1940. The catching of channels has no unfathomable secret attached to it; the only secret, in my estimation, is being able to locate the spot where they are most likely to be. I have spent quite some time studying this particular one and one-half miles of creek and I feel amply repaid. I got two seventeen-pound channels, one five-and-one-half and one two-pound channels, besides many other species of different weights. I am anxiously awaiting warm weather, to be up and at them again." Yours truly, J. G. WILLARD.

### Mixed Diet

Many a dyspeptic human might well envy the digestive apparatus of an alligator . . . Some queer things are found in the stomachs of these animals . . . Recently a scientist unloaded the following— all found in the stomach of an alligator: 11 heavy brass rings . . . three-links of coiled wire . . . one glass bead necklace . . . 15 arm and leg bones of various animals . . . three spinal columns . . . one length of cord made from black fiber . . . 18 stones of assorted sizes . . . and of all things, several porcupine quills.

## Creel Limit and Psychology

The following is an article written by Kenneth A. Reed, executive secretary, Izaak Walton League of America, and appearing in the April issue of "Wyoming Wild Life." Mr. Reed has a full understanding of the subject, and as we agree, the article is reprinted in this publication:

A creel limit is supposed to be a conservative measure. Its intent is to restrict the take of fish to a reasonable number so that the supply may not be unduly diminished by the fishermen. Obviously then, creel limits should be determined by the demand and the supply. Where fishing is very intense, or the carrying capacity of the waters very limited, creel limits should be smaller than in lightly fished or very productive waters in order to accomplish their purpose. However, it seems impractical under the present degree of state management to have creel limits adjusted to the varying needs of different localities, so the usual practice is to have a uniform creel limit applying statewide. In recent years there have been increasing numbers of especially managed waters governed by special regulations, but in general the regulations including creel limits are applicable statewide.

In general our fisheries regulations and particularly the creel limits are far behind game regulations and bag limits. While bag limits on game have been progressively revised in keeping with the increased demand, creel limits on fish have apparently not taken these factors into consideration, and remain in many states today at levels that were suitable in the time of our grandparents when fish were many and fishermen few.

We contend that creel limits, which are above the normal expectancy of the average fisherman for a day's catch, are in no sense conservation measures, but in reality the reverse. The average uninformed fisherman reads his fish laws and on discovering the creel limit on trout, for instance, is twenty-five per day, figures that that is what he is entitled to—that twenty-five is par on the fishing course. Consequently he sets that number as the standard of his day's success and if he fails to reach that figure he feels that he has failed to achieve the full measure of success to which he is entitled. When this figure is set so high that the average fisherman is fortunate indeed if he reaches it during one or two days of the season, or where the great majority actually never come near it, the result is an army of dissatisfied fishermen with many of them exhausting themselves and destroying the enjoyment of their sport through their vain efforts to achieve a fictitious par on the fishing course.

We had a first hand example of the bad psychology of limits which were too high in our native state of Pennsylvania a few years back. One evening we met

two casual acquaintances on one of the mountain streams, casting their flies in the failing light.

"Well, boys, how's fishing today?" we asked.

"No good," came the reply.

An examination of their creels revealed twelve fair trout in one and fourteen in the other. The limit at that time was twenty-five trout a day, and we might add that these two fishermen were away above the average in ability and their catches were more than double the average.

Two years later, after the creel limit had been reduced to ten fish per day, we met these same two fishermen on the same stream as they were taking down their tackle one evening. In response to the same inquiry came this cheerful response in unison, "Fine, we got our limit."

So fishing was no good when two men had creeled a total of twenty-six trout, when the combined limit was fifty; but the same two men on the same stream considered it fine when with the same effort they had creeled only twenty trout when the combined limit was twenty. Verily there is a lot of psychology in this fishing business.

Of course you may say, as we feel, that the real sportsman does not go out to catch his limit of fish, but to enjoy a day's sport on the stream, and that where fishing is intense you should keep only an occasional good fish, returning the others carefully to the stream. But unfortunately the facts are otherwise. The angler-conservationist who fishes for the fun of fishing and considers the creel incidental, or who does not carry one at all, is even today the rare exception, while the great army of fishermen still measure the success of the day by the weight or number of dead fish in the creel, and insist upon bringing home the limit if possible in order to prove their prowess to their friends back home. Whether we like it or not we must look the facts in the face and act accordingly.

We contend that creel limits should be revised to the number or weight of fish that can be taken by the average fisherman in an average day's fishing. Not only will this constitute a highly desirable conservation measure which will make for a vastly improved quality of the fishing, particularly in heavily fished waters, but the fishermen themselves will be better satisfied because they will consider they have done a successful job when they have achieved "par on the fishing course." Let's have more fish and more satisfied fishermen by putting the creel limit within the latter's reach.

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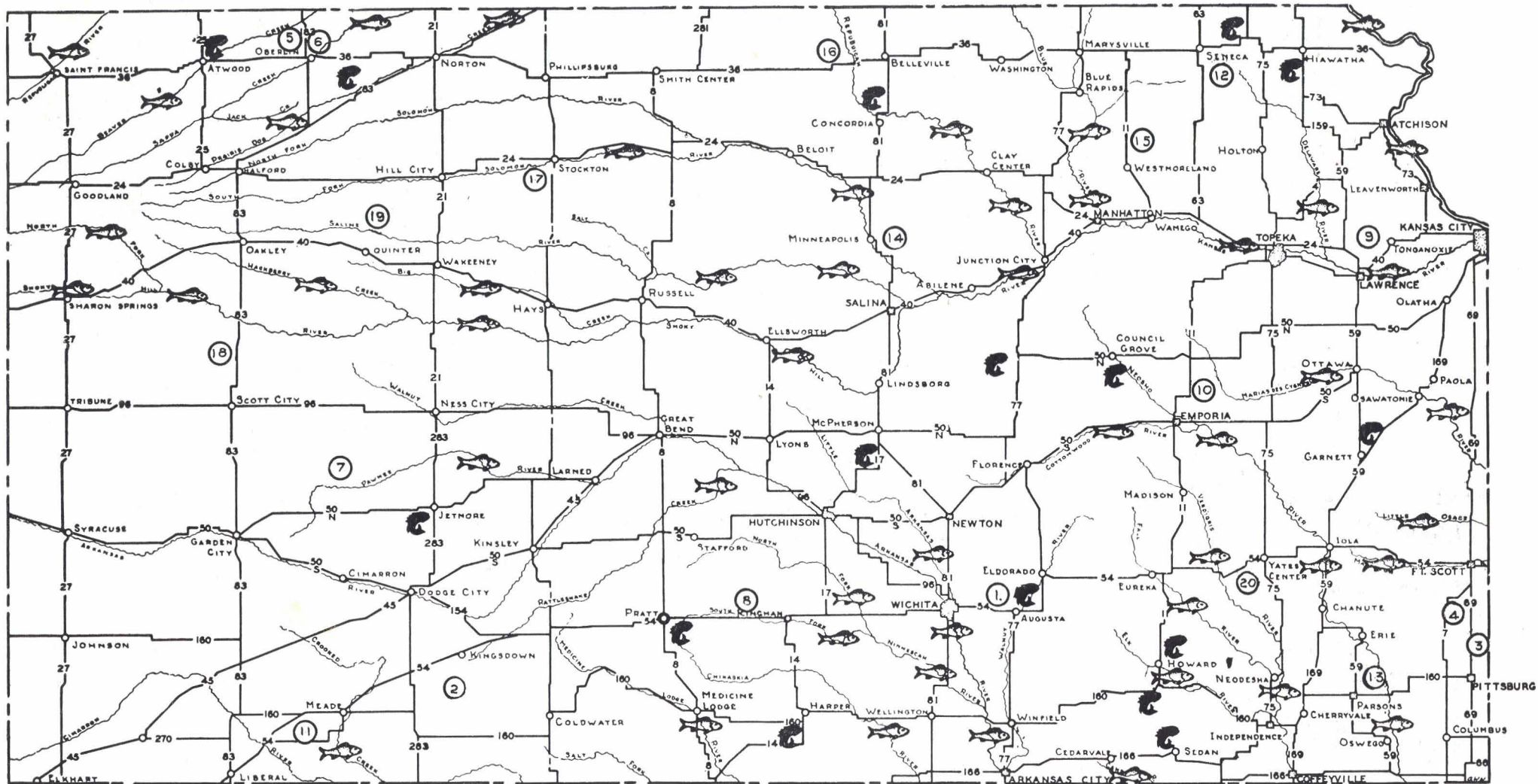
Incidentally, the creel limit in Kansas for one day is 15 of all species; except at state lakes, where the catch shall not exceed 10 fish of all species. Size limits: bass, 10 inches; crappie, 7 inches; ring perch, 6 inches; catfish (except bullheads), 12 inches; drum, 10 inches.

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## Dreams of a Game Breeder

As I lay on my bed, when a hard day was o'er,  
I dreamed of a place with a beautiful shore  
Where game birds and waterfowl happily throve,  
Where no crows or hawks were circling above.  
All kinds of vermin, which cause such dearth,  
Had long since been gone from the face of the earth.  
All kinds of feed were most plentiful too,  
The grass was bright green and the sky a rich blue.  
As I settled myself beneath a large tree.  
I awoke with a start! "Now what could that be!"  
I could hear my dogs barking out near the wood.  
So jumped into my clothes, not feeling so good,  
Loaded up the old shotgun, grabbed a flashlight,  
And hustled right out through the chill of the night.  
Both dogs were barking around a big tree,  
So I flashed on my light to see what I could see.  
I searched through the leaves, which were heavy and green,  
And to my great disgust, not a thing could be seen.  
I cursed both the dogs for getting me out  
And turned on my light for a last look about.  
Then appeared two bright eyes in the rays of my light  
And "Old Betsy" boomed out in the still of the night.  
A big cat came tumbling down at my feet,  
And I thought, "No more birds will that so-and-so eat."  
I returned to the house and crawled back into bed,  
Thinking the only good cats were those dead.  
I soon fell asleep to once again dream,  
Thought not of the land by the beautiful stream,  
But a place that abounded with weasel and crows,  
Cats eating my birds right under my nose,  
Foxes stalked rabbits, hawks sailed in the air,  
Again I awoke with a sigh of despair.  
It was time to arise and the morning was bright.  
I thought of the dreams that I had in the night,  
Then I arose with a bit of a prayer,  
Thanking God for this beautiful land free and fair  
And thinking that though sometimes things seem adverse,  
Nine times out of ten they might have been worse.

—LAWRENCE D. BENTON, *Granite Game Farm, Kerhonkson, N. Y.*



② State Lakes

🌊 City and County Lakes

🐟 River and Stream Fishing

1. Butler County State Park
2. Clark County State Park
3. Crawford County State Park No. 1
4. Crawford County State Park No. 2
5. Decatur County State Park No. 1
6. Decatur County State Park No. 2
7. Finney County State Park

8. Kingman County State Park
9. Leavenworth County State Park
10. Lyon County State Park
11. Meade County State Park
12. Nemaha County State Park
13. Neosho County State Park
14. Ottawa County State Park

15. Pottawatomie County State Park
16. Republic County State Park
17. Rooks County State Park
18. Scott County State Park
19. Sheridan County State Park
20. Woodson County State Park