

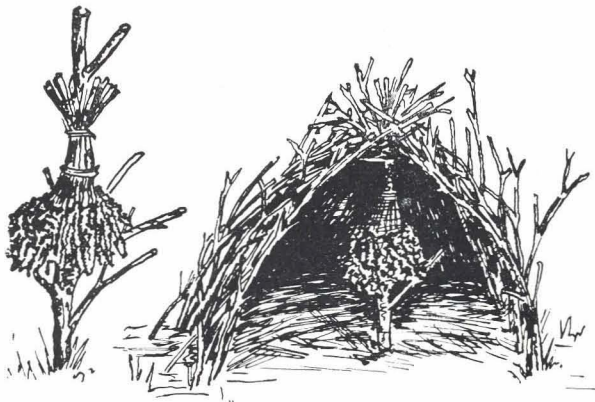
KANSAS FISH AND GAME



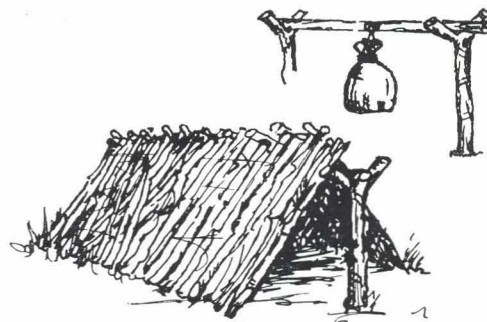
VOL. V

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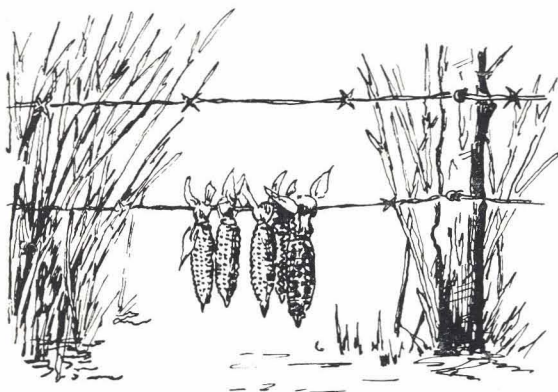
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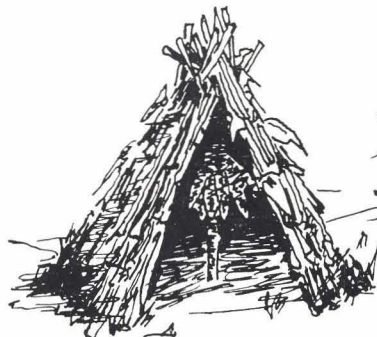
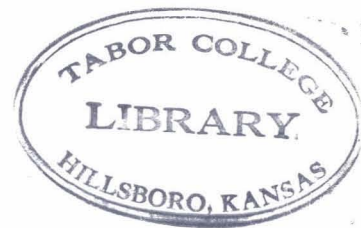
TEPEE-TYPE BRUSH SHELTER & FEEDER



LEAN-TO SHELTER & FEEDER



FOOD SUSPENDED FROM A WIRE FENCE



LEAN-TO SHELTER ON FALLEN TREE

TEPEE-TYPE SHOCK SHELTER & FEEDER

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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*

GARLAND ATKINS, *Secretary*

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VOL. V

NOVEMBER, 1943

No. XI

Trapping Season Opens December 1

The 1943-1944 trapping season will open this year December 1 and continue through January 31. The fur-bearers that may be taken at that time include the muskrat, skunk, raccoon, opossum, civet cat, badger, bobcat, lynx, marten, weasel, red or gray fox, and swift or prairie fox. The regulation declares it to be an unlawful act for any person to destroy any muskrat house, beaver den, mink run, or any hole, den, or runway of any fur-bearing animal; or to cut down or to destroy any tree that is the home, habitat, or refuge of any fur-bearing animal; and forbids the use of ferrets, smoke guns, smoke, gas, and liquids for forcing fur-bearing animals from their holes or places of concealment. The regulations set out that steel traps, dogs, or guns legally may be used in the taking of fur-bearing animals in the open season on them. The number of steel traps that any one person may use is limited to twenty. The trapping license fee remains at \$1.

About Furs and the Fur Season

Nearly twenty thousand Kansans will participate in the state's annual fur harvest December 1 to January 31. A few of these so engaged will take only a few furs; many others, however, will take large numbers of them and a nice profit for their efforts. The fur industry of Kansas, although not exceedingly large is much more important to the state than the average citizen supposes. A paucity of records admits of nothing more definite than estimates regarding the true economic value of our furs. The farm boy takes only a few furs in order to supply himself with funds for extra spending money and needed schoolbooks. The professional trapper, on the other hand, with his full line of equipment depends on the fur he traps for most of his annual income. The fur buyers handle many pelts valued at thousands of dollars. The frequent exchange of these pelts between buyers and trappers makes an actual accounting of the number of pelts taken or their worth a difficult, if not impossible, task.

Elsewhere in this issue of KANSAS FISH AND GAME we reprint a part of the law and the Commission's regulations that governs the taking and selling of furs; and for information of our readers generally, we tell you about a few of the fur-bearers found in Kansas.

Game Harvest 255,400,000 Pounds

Hunters who harvested the wild game crop during the 1942-1943 hunting season took 255,400,000 pounds of usable meat, according to a report made by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Based on data taken from state game departments and other sources, the tabulation reveals that deer alone yielded more than 59,000,000 pounds with elk 9,000,000, and antelope, moose, bear, mountain sheep, and goats totaling 1,650,000 pounds.

Among upland game, wild rabbits amounted to 68,735,000 pounds; squirrels, more than 22,000,000; while raccoon, opossum and woodchuck totaled 14,222,000 pounds.

Ducks accounted for 32,500,000 pounds; and geese, 3,000,000.

Upland game birds, including quail, pheasants, grouse, partridges, and wild turkey, totaled 42,243,000 pounds, with pheasants (15,000,000) accounting for 30,377,000 of the total.

Doves, bandtail pigeons, and woodcock added 2,405,000 pounds.

"With the present severe shortage of domestic meats due to the necessity for shipping such large quantities of meat to our armed forces and to our allies, these wild species provided a food source that is becoming increasingly important," said Albert M. Day, assistant director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. "A deer or an elk or a pheasant or a creel of fresh water fish taken by a sportsman and used in the home or given to his friends, releases an equivalent amount of beef, pork, lamb, or poultry that can be consumed by the public or made available for military needs."

Fur Regulations

For the information of trappers, fur buyers, and citizens generally, we are reprinting below four regulations pertaining to the trapping and handling of furs. These regulations were adopted by the Commission June 30, 1943; filed with the Revisor of Statutes July 6, 1943; and officially published in the official state paper July 10, 1943.

REGULATION 1. No person shall buy, trade, or deal in pelts, furs, or fur-bearing animals, alive or dead, within the state of Kansas, unless first licensed therto

as hereinafter provided. A resident of the state of Kansas shall pay an annual license fee of ten dollars (\$10), and a nonresident of Kansas shall pay an annual license fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25). The license may be obtained from the Forestry, Fish, and Game Department at Pratt, Kan., after making proper application and paying the fee. The applicant must give his name, description, address, and location of place of business when applying for a fur dealer's license.

REGULATION 2. The Kansas fur dealer's license is a permit and license for the licensee of a valid and existing license to buy, sell, trade, or deal in pelts, furs, or fur-bearing animals, alive or dead, at the location or place of business specified and described in said licensee's application and license; and said license is also a permit and license for the licensee of a valid and existing license to buy, sell, trade, or deal in pelts, furs, or fur-bearing animals, with any other duly licensed fur dealer at the place of business specified and described in such other fur dealer's license.

And further, it is hereby declared to be prohibited and unlawful for any person to buy, trade, or deal in pelts, furs, or fur-bearing animals, alive or dead, in the state of Kansas except as hereinbefore provided.

REGULATION 3. Each person buying, trading, or dealing in pelts, furs, or fur-bearing animals, alive or dead, must keep a complete record, setting out accurately and in a legible manner, the following information.

1. The name of the person (fur dealer) and address, giving the city, county, and street address.

2. The number of such person's fur dealer's license.

3. The date each piece of fur or pelt is purchased or acquired.

4. The name and address of each person from whom each fur or pelt is purchased or acquired, and the number and kind of furs or pelts purchased or acquired from said person, and the amount of money paid to each such person.

5. The state trapping license number, with prefixing letter, of each person from whom the fur dealer purchases or acquires a fur or pelt and if such person has no state trapping license then such fact shall be set forth in the record.

6. A separate record must be kept by the fur dealer for each fur dealer's license which he holds, and each record must contain the required information relative to the business and dealings transacted under each license. The record must be kept up to date and shall be subject to and open for inspection by all state game protectors.

7. The fur dealer's record as hereinbefore provided for must be forwarded to the Forestry, Fish, and Game Department at Pratt, Kan., on or before the first of March of each year.

REGULATION 4. The possession of fur by fur dealers in Kansas is limited to the regular trapping season and ten days thereafter, and the possession of fur by fur dealers for a longer period of time is prohibited and declared unlawful. Later shipments or possession of fur by fur dealers may be allowed only on special permit issued by the Director of the Forestry, Fish, and Game Commission, Pratt, Kan.

Sexless Pheasants Reported in South Dakota

Some of the most interesting curiosities among the pheasants of South Dakota are what might be called "the sexless" pheasants. These birds occur very rarely. The few that have been examined by the author show an unusual feather pattern and other striking characteristics.

The most spectacular peculiarity of these fowls is their head, rump, and tail plumage color. For the most part they have almost typical female plumage coloration over the head and neck. The white ring is present in modified pattern, being reduced in width and not as pronounced as in our typical male. The rump and tail feathers, however, are very much modified, combining female and male characteristics. The tail feathers are about the length of the typical male, but the color and banding are like those of the female.

The female has more or less uniform coloration of the back and rump. Feathers in these areas are relatively short and are structurally typical. In the male pheasant, back and rump feathers are elongated and form a plume. Such feathers have the barbs at the tip of the feather, but they are very long and branch independently of the others. In a typical feather the barbs are held together by the barbules and form a rather sheathlike unit. On the sexless birds the rump feathers develop somewhat the appearance of the male, although they do not reach the proportions of the typical male feathers.

The coloration of some of the plume feathers of our males is the most gorgeous on the rump and back. Some of the outer feathers display a tinge of green as well as black, white, and golden brown. The pattern in which these colors are arranged on the various feathers make a very beautiful design. Like the shape, the colors of the feathers of the sexless animals are modified; and they range somewhere between those of the male and the female.

Other characters are also modified. The birds examined showed only the rudiments of spurs, very much like the spur buds of the female. The size of the fowls also appeared to be larger than a typical female, but smaller than the normal male.

These pheasants have been designated as sexless because those thus far examined had neither ovaries or testes. Whether these glands failed to develop because of some diseased condition or because of an abnormal arrangement of tissues during the development has not been determined.—RAYMOND J. GREB, *South Dakota Conservation Digest*.

More persons have heard owls than have seen them because most owls are active at night.

Need for Winter Feeding

Winter is a critical period for many species of wildlife. Coverts then grow smaller in area and, without foliage, afford less protection. Available food supplies also diminish in both quantity and quality. The species of wildlife that hibernate or migrate do not suffer from these changes; but by midwinter the upland game birds, many songbirds, and small mammals are forced to subsist on scanty and undependable foods.

As a result, starvation may kill these creatures or so weaken them that they become easy victims of predatory animals or more susceptible to cold, disease, and other misfortunes that do not menace the well-nourished. Well-fed game birds, for instance, rarely die from exposure to cold, even in the most severe winter weather; and if food is abundant in and near good cover, they have little to fear from natural enemies. Food, which is always a limiting factor in determining the distribution and abundance of wildlife, becomes of the utmost importance, therefore, in times of excessive cold, sleet, deep snows, and blizzards, especially for birds. Yet many coverts are seriously deficient in available winter foods, and in such cases man can sometimes come to the rescue with winter feeding. Nature's lack offers a challenge that he should be quick to accept. His aid can frequently be an individual matter, but organized feeding campaigns often produce more lasting benefits.

All winter feeding campaigns require work and effort; and regardless of the type of organization, preparations should be made well before feeding becomes necessary, as the test of the efficiency of winter feeding comes when roads are drifted, traffic paralyzed, and all ordinary transportation tied up. Well-planned organization will facilitate feeding activities at such times. In the past, much winter feeding has been ineffective because bad weather had not been anticipated far enough in advance or because preparations had lagged. Feeding operations should be under way before the usual critical period arrives. In some instances, liberally provisioned caches handy to feeding stations should be made far in advance of the ordinary storm periods.

A town or city game association sponsoring winter feeding may well form a definite organization to raise funds, solicit labor, and in general obtain the coöperation of hunters, Boy Scouts, women's clubs, businessmen's associations, the local press, outing-goods stores, grain-elevator operators, feed-mill proprietors, rural mail carriers, railway section workers, and others.

Having obtained such coöperation, the organization should delegate certain individuals who are well acquainted with local farmers to make arrangements for wholesale, systematic feeding, because any feeding campaign to be successful must have the coöperation of resident farmers. Farm boys and men are best

equipped to feed wild game in winter, not only because of their place of residence but also because of their general interest in wildlife and their intimate knowledge of its many forms. They do most of the winter feeding in most cases simply for the enjoyment and occasional sport they derive from having the birds on their properties.

Although in many cases it is not necessary to pay farm owners either for services or for grain to be used in feeding birds, there can be no question that reasonable reimbursement for the grain at least will go far toward establishing better feeling between farmers and sportsmen. When arrangements are made to leave standing or shocked corn or to feed threshed grain, payments certainly should be made. If hunters make the production of game profitable to the farmer even in a small way, it is reasonable to suppose that he will be willing to leave a half-acre thicket here and there for cover and food, and that he will take an interest in increasing his game stock. If, however, hunters are unwilling to assume some of the cost of production, farmer-sportsman controversies may be accentuated, and the game birds left without cover and short of food will continue to decrease in numbers.

At present game birds and animals often constitute a liability rather than an asset on farms, as their very presence subjects the farmer to annoying and sometimes destructive trespass by hunters; and where winter concentrations of game birds occur, the birds may eat more than the individual farmer can afford to spare even though he is willing to donate a reasonable supply. Where these concentrations are of a semi-migratory species which may have left the property before the advent of the hunting season, there is often real cause for complaint. It is useless, under such circumstances, to urge farmers to feed game for the implied purpose of furnishing sport to strangers; and arrangement for reimbursement must be made; the sooner the better.

Sportsmen's organizations are generally willing to purchase grain for the birds. Farmers invariably take a great interest in feeding the ordinary numbers of game birds found on their properties and are glad to assist in promoting their welfare.

Though permanent all-winter feed patches and regularly tended shelters provide the best means of feeding birds in winter, in emergencies almost any kind of feed will substantially aid wildlife for short periods. It should be ascertained, however, that only temporary and not permanent feeding is needed. A common tendency is to consider feeding ample if grain is carried out once or twice a winter, but in most cases food shortages extend over weeks or even months. Then, too, unless stations are so placed as to be protected from winds and drifting snow, the grain put out in the morning may be covered and unavailable later. It is

altogether inadvisable, wasteful, and ineffective to scatter loose grain upon soft snow. Feeding stations should not be established in such a way as to encourage the birds to congregate on main-traveled highways where they are subject to mortality from fast-moving traffic and from poachers.

Pits in the snow with chunks of ice, crust, or even soft snow thrown up around them are good windbreaks for open-field birds including Hungarian partridge, snow buntings, longspurs, horned larks, and red polls. Grain thrown on the ground on the sheltered side of these barriers is easily visible to the birds, but the supply must be renewed repeatedly as it is likely to become drifted over.

Natural windbreaks such as those formed by trees, shrubbery, fallen logs, and stumps, southerly exposed hillsides that blow bare, and other areas not covered by snow may be taken advantage of in distributing shelled grains. A variety of species may be fed under grapevine tangles and in various other places that afford shelter.

Airplanes have sometimes been used to drop bags of grain, which burst in falling into coverts that otherwise could have been reached only with great difficulty as in mountainous country inhabited by wild turkeys.

Convenient cheap foods for day-to-day or emergency use include screenings from mills, threshing machines, combines, or elevators, haymow chaff, food-products-manufacturing wastes, and dry or fatty table scraps that are more or less resistant to freezing. Ordinarily these should be supplemented with grain.

For use in feeding game birds it is occasionally possible to obtain sheaves of wheat, buckwheat, oats, or other grains stored in barns for late threshing. Such sheaves can be set upright in the snow or hung by wire or cord from limbs of trees so that the birds can reach them by jumping.

Ear corn may be used in any of several ways; it may be hung on wire fences or from branches, impaled on nails driven through boards resting on sticks, put in wire-basket feeders, thrown loose in protected places, or even set up in the snow. The ears can be picked up easily and moved or stored, and they do not sink out of sight in snow so rapidly as loose grain so that not much of the corn is wasted.

Straw stacks frequently afford sheltered places bare of snow where ear corn, loose grain, haymow chaff, or screenings may be placed to good advantage. Some straw stacks also contain enough waste grain and weed seeds to make it worthwhile to open them up from time to time to expose a fresh supply.

In some sections the daily spreading of manure on snowy fields is common enough to be an important factor in attracting game birds throughout the winter as the manure contains enough undigested grain and seeds to afford some food for small birds as well as for

pheasants, quail, and Hungarian partridge. Throwing a little threshed grain on the manure after it has been spread on the field is particularly efficacious, since on such a surface the whole grain is more visible to the birds and does not quickly sink out of sight. The purpose of winter feeding of birds is to bring them through periods of famine and into the nesting seasons. It is an enjoyable work and one that pays big dividends in more birds to participating sportsmen.

The game commission stands ready to render any assistance that might be needed by your club or yourself as an individual coöperator in furthering this work.

Warning Against Tularemia

This is the time of the year when cases of tularemia usually begin to occur with some frequency. Meat shortages and rationing will increase the urge to hunt rabbits—always a favorite sport with men and boys. The hunters will dress rabbits and the housewives prepare them for cooking; and if the rabbits happen to be sick with tularemia, their germs will find entrance to the human body through breaks in the skin, such as small cuts or abrasions. The chief danger of contracting tularemia is in handling and cleaning rabbits. Cooking kills the germs.

For prevention of this disease, use every precaution in cleaning rabbits. Make sure the blood tissues of the rabbit do not come in contact with open breaks or scratches on your hands. Use rubber gloves whenever possible. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water and use an antiseptic on open cuts after handling the rabbits with your bare hands.

Last year, twenty-five cases and two deaths from tularemia were reported in Kansas. In 1939 the state had one hundred and thirty-four reported cases with nine deaths—the highest record since tularemia was first reported in Kansas. The 1940 record was thirty-nine cases with seven deaths. Obviously, we should guard against this disease.

Although tularemia may result from the bites of ticks, deer flies, stable flies, squirrels, and fleas, it is caused principally in humans by rabbits—hence its common name, "rabbit fever."

A tularemia ulcer usually forms at the site of infection. Typical signs of the disease are headache, chills, body pains, vomiting, prostration, fever, and pain where the ulcer is forming. Diagnosis can be confirmed by blood test. From the beginning of the illness, the tularemia patient should have the care of a physician, who will instruct the nurse as to precautions against transmission of the infection. One attack of tularemia gives a life-time immunity to the disease.

Your state health department urges extra caution in the handling of wild rabbits and the prompt attention of the family should the symptoms of tularemia appear.

Mudhens are Tasty if Cooked Properly, Says Game Authority

So you don't think you would care to dine on mudhens—sometimes called coots?

Well, then, you've never eaten "Coot Bouhya," prepared according to the recipe of Bob Becker, famous sportsman. If Mr. and Mrs. Average American give up some of their foolish taboos, he points out in the current *Rotarian* magazine, they'll find mudhens, jack-rabbits, and other often-spurned game will save many ration points.

Getting rid of that extra gamey taste in wild fowl and animals is just a matter of smart cookery, Becker points out. In the case of rabbit he advises that a teaspoonful of vinegar be added to the water in which it is boiled. Another secret is never to boil rabbits too rapidly. Muskrats should be soaked overnight in salt water to draw out the blood and to reduce the gamey flavor. As for the common complaint that pheasant meat is dry, Becker suggests rubbing the bird with olive oil mixed with salt and pepper, or basting with sour cream during the cooking period.

This year hunting is more than a sport, the author asserts; for sportsmen can add to the family larder and help farmers harvest wild fowl eating their grain. Last fall American hunters "cropped" more than 254 million pounds of wild game meat—venison, elk, moose, rabbit, pheasant, and other wild fowl. This year the game laws are liberal, and the War Production Board has made about eighty-two million shotgun shells and approximately twelve million rifle cartridges available to hunters.

Red Fox

The red fox, on which there is an open season, is an animal that needs little introduction to most Kansans. In our early youth we learned from the fairy tales much about the cunning and wariness of this animal. In more recent years we have observed him at city zoos and often been privileged to observe him in the wild state.

The red fox, due to the beauty and texture of its fur, is one of the state's valuable fur-bearers. Not many of these animals are trapped annually in Kansas, but the few that are, and that number is much greater than is generally supposed, represents a tidy income to Kansas trappers and fur buyers.

Contrary to common belief the red fox is nonmigratory in habit. It usually remains on the same range year after year. The fact that they are observed in greater numbers during the winter months is not to be taken as an indication that more animals have moved in, but simply is an indication the fox population has increased since last you saw them. Although we freely admit that the fox occasionally preys on farm fowl and

wild game, we claim for it certain beneficial virtues. The young lamb and the occupants of the hen house are only on rare occasions made a part of Reynard's diet. The farms that do suffer such losses are recompensed by a reduction in the number of rabbits, mice, moles and other rodents usually found on the Kansas farm and killed in great numbers by this animal yearly.

The fox itself is not without many natural enemies, including coyotes that are daily increasing in numbers. Records show that the fox population will decrease in proportion to the increase of coyotes.

Other facts: The speed of the fox has been clocked at nearly twenty-seven miles per hour. The large brush tail which is an easy mark of identity, is primarily an item of utility and not of beauty. It serves as a wrap or cover to protect the fox against the blasts of winter when it is asleep or resting. The size and color of the tail, incidentally, is in proportion to the coolness of the climate.

The track of the fox does not differ greatly from that made by a small dog. Mating begins in February and early in March. The gestation period is fifty-one days. The number of young ranges from four to nine. Both male and female take an active part in rearing their young. Range: mostly eastern Kansas. A fox skin at present prices will net the trapper about \$5.00.

The Recent Pheasant Season

The 1943 pheasant season, which extended from November 8 to 14, was satisfactory in every respect according to Nimrods who participated in it. Because of the lateness of the season, there was less cover than during the seasons of former years and for that reason the retrieving of dead and crippled birds was not difficult. The weather, too, favored the hunters. There was some complaint that there appeared to be fewer birds in areas that teemed with them last year, but such reports were the exception. For the most part hunters found many targets and took home their legal limits. All in all it is evident that the 1943 season was actually a good one.

Now that the upland game bird seasons are closed and the migratory waterfowl all have gone, the attention of Kansas Nimrods is turned to rabbit hunting. At this time Kansas rabbits appear to be in strong and healthy condition and should be utilized as food in reasonable numbers. We would remind you, however, that there is always a possibility of a hunter contracting rabbit fever. Therefore, in order to minimize that danger to yourself and your family, we are reprinting elsewhere in this issue of KANSAS FISH AND GAME advice from the State Board of Health.

**TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT
"OLE DAVE" JOTS IT DOWN**

The majority of Kansas hunters, we are happy to say, faithfully and conscientiously obey every article and clause of the game laws. A few, however, the outerfringe of the sportsmen group, will with pride and boasting obey the laws only when game protectors or true sportsmen are in evidence. It is the latter few that we hear expressing themselves as "seeing no harm in pot-shooting game birds and game animals since there is a shortage of shells." It is these same fellows who attribute virtues to the devil and are mentally capable of bashing in the head of a cribbed and sleeping baby. We do not like them. They are not sportsmen and should not be recognized as such. True sportsmen are only protecting their interests when they report such violators to the game protectors. A few pot-shooters can if given a free hand in their destructive practices do irreparable damage to the game supply in a very short time.

The recent two-day prairie chicken season was not so hot. Despite the shell shortage many hunters tramped the eight open counties but reported seeing few birds and far fewer killed. A small number of hunters got their limits of six birds for the two days. Others reported killing one or two chickens. The majority of the hopeful Nimrods got nothing more for their efforts than an armed walk.

In an earlier issue of this publication we reported that there was a generous supply of these birds in nearly every one of the open counties. The reports truthfully reflected the conditions existing at the time that the reports were made. Our reports to you were based on information furnished us by game protectors and other competent observers in whose judgment we have the greatest of faith. The fact that the birds appeared to have vanished from their ranges between the time of filing the reports and the official opening of the season was not a matter of surprise or alarm to us. Prairie chickens are noted for such tendencies and seem to fluctuate without apparent causes. Ten years ago, for instance, the writer of this column made a thorough survey of the chicken population of Woodson county. That survey indicated that the chickens were almost extinct. Less than two years ago estimates of that county's chicken population ranged as high as eighty thousand birds.

Sportsmen therefore should not become discouraged because few birds were seen during the recent open season. They should bear in mind that birds can be plentiful one year and very scarce the next. At this

time we are being told almost daily that there are more quail in Kansas today than at any other time in its history. These reports are given to us by enthusiastic hunters who would like to see a longer quail season this year or if not a lengthened season at least more liberal bag limits. The provident sportsmen during days of plenty will assure for himself good hunting in the future by staying well within the established bag limits and by making fewer hunting trips this fall.

There has developed during these days of meat rationing a regrettable tendency on the part of sportsmen and, we are sorry to say, on the part of some conservation agencies to place an exaggerated value on fish and game as substitutes for our domestic meat requirements. Elsewhere in this issue of KANSAS FISH AND GAME we have reprinted a news release from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in regard to this matter. We are of the firm belief that the figures listed by this federal agency are grossly exaggerated. But in all fairness it should be pointed out that the figures used were originally submitted by the various state game commissions. We know for a fact that but few of the states require hunters to make a report of their annual kill. The states that do require such reports frankly admit their inadequacy.

For the sake of argument we shall presume that the figures are correct. If they are, it will become evident to you, after a little figuring, that the annual game harvest as reported by the survey supplies less than two pounds of meat annually to each person in the United States. Hence this column does not attach great importance to wild game as a food resource. To encourage the taking of wild game for domestic purposes will result only in excessive and illegal shooting. Such practices at this time will endanger the nation's supply of wild life. Any further decrease in the supply means for the future only closed seasons.

In the first place it is not necessary to utilize our wild life resources as a substitute for domestic meats. There is no shortage of the latter as any farmer or ranchman in this section of the United States will tell you. There is a shortage of points, but certainly not a shortage of meat.

The Emporia *Gazette* reprints "The Dying Fisherman," written by the late Walt Mason, Kansas poet, who was a member of that newspaper's staff.

Once a fisherman was dying in his humble, lowly cot, and the pastor sat beside him saying things that hit the spot, so that all his futile terrors left the dying sinner's heart, and he said: "The journey's lonely, but I'm ready for the start. There is just one little matter that is fretting me," he sighed, "and perhaps I'd better

tell ere I cross the Great Divide: I have got a string of stories that I've told from day to day; stories of the fish I've captured, and the ones that got away, and I fear that when I tell them they are apt to stretch a mile; and I wonder when I'm wafted to that land that's free from guile, if they'll let me tell my stories if I try to tell them straight, or will angels lose their tempers then, and chase me through the gate?" Then the pastor sat and pondered for the question vexed him sore; never such a weird conundrum had been sprung on him before. Yet the courage of conviction moved him soon to a reply, and he wished to fill the fisher with fair visions of the sky: "You can doubtless tell fish stories," said the clergyman, aloud, "but I'd stretch them very little if old Jonah's in the crowd."

The present game conditions do not justify such enthusiastic expressions as "the state's largest game crop," "I see quail everywhere," and "a million rabbits." As a matter of fact considering the state as a whole—and that we must surely do if we are to estimate properly the game supply—the game crop of today is not much larger than it has been in other years. It certainly does not permit of complacency on the part of sportsmen. In some sections of the state there appears to be an abundance of wild life. In many other areas, however, there is actually a shortage of both game birds and game animals. An uneven distribution of game as exists in Kansas cannot be considered a healthy game situation. It indicates that many areas are not capable of sustaining wild life for various reasons, principally because of the absence of feed and cover and an overabundance of predatory birds and animals. Such areas can be improved through the coöperation of sportsmen and farmers.

Another factor that must soon be faced if we are to maintain the present supply of game is the matter of winter feeding. Winter often takes a tremendous toll of game birds during the months when protective cover and feed are scarce. The effects of winter on game birds can be held to a minimum by a little extra work on the part of sportsmen during the critical periods.

In view of the shortage of shells, sportsmen will find controlling predators by killing is out of the question. Loss by predators can be greatly reduced, however, by erecting shelters and feeding stations where and when needed.

Presuming that conscientious sportsmen, with an eye to the future, are willing and capable of devoting some of their time to such efforts, we are dedicating most of this issue of KANSAS FISH AND GAME to a discussion of winter feeding. If we would have wild game, we must preserve and protect it.

The meadow lark is the state bird of Kansas.

Skunks

This animal, ordinarily unwelcome as a household pet, has become known in the fur trade as a bearer of valuable fur. There are three principal groups of skunks with about thirty-two recognized kinds. The large striped skunk (*Mephitis mesomelas avia*) and the smaller prairie spotted skunk (*Spilogale interrupta*), more commonly misnamed the civet cat, are found in Kansas in reasonable numbers. Because of the rich, glossy, black hair, both will net an attractive profit for all courageous enough to trap them.

The skunk is not the villain many picture him to be. He is one of the most patient of creatures and has few natural enemies. Since nature has armed this animal with a powerful weapon of defense, he commands the respect of man and beast alike. Conscious of its power, it swaggers about the prairie, fearing only the great horned owl and its ancient enemy—man. However, the skunk, being a square shooter as well as a straight shooter, is reluctant to display its power and will not unless its adversary forces the issue. Then he usually warns that he is ready for combat; that is, with the head lowered toward the target, tail erect, and tail hairs distended. If you are prudent and quick to heed this warning, you need have no fear of being unwelcome among men.

Weasel

The family of weasels with its many members is scattered in abundance throughout all sections of the United States. The Kansas member of the family, one that may be trapped during the annual trapping season, is the slim, swift, bloodthirsty, long-tailed weasel. Like all its near relatives, it is highly carnivorous and predatory, representing an extreme development in such tendencies and traits. Its preferred food is the blood, which is sucked from the base of the skull of the hapless victim. The animal, undoubtedly, is a killer at heart as it will often kill great numbers of smaller animals, game birds, and poultry without feeding upon them. This fact would seem to indicate that it kills for sport and the sheer pleasure of killing.

In Kansas and other states having a similar climate, the weasel does not change from brown to white as in the case where winters are more severe. The following is a description of the weasel as given by Seton in *Lives of Game Animals*.

SIZE, male: Length, about eighteen inches; tail, six inches. Weight, adult, about seven ounces. Color: all above, pale warm yellowish-brown; darker on crown and back; lightest on legs. All below, rich warm buffy yellow. Tips of tail for one-fourth of its length, black; chin, cheeks, and upper lips, white.

RANGE: Throughout the entire state.

FOOD: Squirrels, rabbits, mice, and other rodents, and occasional chickens or game birds.

ARRESTS IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1943

DEFENDANT	CHARGE	PROTECTOR	DISPOSITION
Perry Hinkle	Taking wild duck in closed season	Jones, Ramsey, Lacey	Convicted
Robert Brock	Hand fishing and fishing without license	Jones, Ramsey, Suenram	Convicted
Everett Lakey	Hand fishing	Jones, Ramsey, Suenram	Convicted
Wm. Elbl	Hand fishing and fishing without license	Jones, Ramsey, Suenram	Convicted
E. R. Welch	Hand fishing, fishing without license, and possession illegal length fish	Suenram, Carlson	Convicted
Chas. Kottal	Fishing without license	Carlson, Suenram	Convicted
Jack Amershek	In possession of illegal size seine	Kyser, Minckley	Convicted
Evan Hitch	Fishing without license	Jones, Ramsey, Suenram	Convicted
Hershley Hadley	Fishing without license	Faulkner	Convicted
Chas. Bailey	Illegal possession fur-bearing animals	Rickel, Piggott	Convicted
Adam J. Garrett	In possession of illegal size fish	Jones	Convicted
John Buffington	Hand fishing, fishing without license, and possession illegal length fish	Carlson, Suenram	Convicted
John Rust	Shooting pheasant out of season	Golden	Convicted
Ernest J. Coates	Illegal fishing with trotline	Rickel, Piggott	Convicted
Frank Maxwell, Sr.	Fishing without license	Jones, Ramsey, Andrew	Convicted
M. L. Lampton	Shooting doves on the set	Jones, Ramsey, Andrew, Shay	Convicted
Walter E. Voigt	Hunting wild ducks with unplugged gun	Jones, Ramsey	Convicted
Frank Klepper	Hunting wild ducks with unplugged gun	Jones, Ramsey	Convicted
Marcus Boger	Hunting wild ducks without duck stamp	Jones, Ramsey	Convicted
Chancey Brown	Hunting wild ducks with unplugged gun	Jones, Ramsey	Convicted
Walter F. Mellies	Hunting wild ducks with unplugged gun and without duck stamp	Jones, Ramsey	Convicted
Paul Furch	Hunting without license	Toland	Convicted
Don Collins	Fishing without license, and fishing with illegal trotline and hoop net	Benander, Toburen	Convicted
M. J. Reinhart	Hunting without proper license	Suenram, Ramsey	Convicted
E. C. Mayfield	Fishing without proper license	Dean, Holmes	Convicted
R. O. Moore	Hunting after sunset	Suenram, Ramsey	Convicted
I. W. Grantz	Hunting after sunset	Suenram, Ramsey	Convicted
Lee Ayres	Hunting after sunset	Suenram, Ramsey	Convicted
Glen Taylor	Selling fur without trapper's license	Carlson	Convicted
Fred Schungle	Shooting pheasants out of season	Shay, Ramsey	Convicted
Cecil Scott	Fishing illegally and in possession of illegal length fish	Rickel	Convicted

Firearms Tragedies

Last year firearms accidents took 45 lives in Kansas, 14 more than in 1941, and 22 in excess of the 1940 fatalities of this type. During the fall and winter, when hunting is one of the most popular sports, many guns are being handled and left lying around in places of easy access. Because of careless handling of guns—chiefly failure to unload a gun promptly after use—1,811 persons have lost their lives in Kansas during the last thirty-one years.

Twenty-five of the fatal firearms accidents last year were reported as having occurred in public places. Eight of these men were killed while actually in the field, hunting. Four men were accidentally shot when they stumbled while walking; two persons were killed when guns leaning against a wall were accidentally discharged; running in the path of bullets killed two children; two deaths were caused by carrying a loaded gun in a truck; one man was killed as he removed a gun from a car; another while examining a gun. Every

cause can be basically charged to the careless handling of firearms.

Twenty accidental deaths from firearms occurred in homes or their environs in Kansas last year. Four persons were killed while cleaning guns; two while playing with guns; two persons died because guns discharged as they were being carried through doors; a loaded gun leaning against the wall was the instrument of death for two persons; and a person who was carrying a loaded gun slipped on a carpet and accidentally discharged a fatal shot; another dropped a loaded gun; and still another was trying to dislodge a shell from a gun.

The Kansas record shows that few persons are killed while actually hunting—thousands follow this enjoyable and healthful sport safely every year. The record does give emphasis to the need for greater caution in handling of guns—the basic safety rule of unloading every gun promptly after use and carrying it on safety in the field until ready to shoot.

HUNTING SEASONS AND REGULATIONS, 1943

Ducks and Geese. Season—October 15 to sunset December 23. Daily bag limit, 10 in the aggregate of all kinds, including in such limit not more than 1 wood duck or more than 3 singly or in the aggregate of redheads and buffleheads.

Possession Limits: Not more than 20 ducks in the aggregate of all kinds, but not more than 1 wood duck nor more than 6 of either or both of redheads or buffleheads.

Daily Bag Limit: Geese, 2, but in addition 4 blue geese may be taken in a day. In case only blue geese are taken the daily bag limit is 6.

Possession Limit: Geese, 4, other than blue geese, but in addition 2 blue geese are allowed; if only blue geese are taken, 6.

Rails and Gallinules. September 1 to sunset November 30. Daily bag limit, 15 in the aggregate. Possession limit same as daily bag limit.

Coots. Season—October 15 to sunset December 23. Daily bag limit, 25. Possession limit same as daily bag limit.

Doves. Season—September 1 to sunset October 12. Daily bag and possession limit, 10.

Fur-bearing Animals. Season—December 1 to January 31. Beaver and Otter, season closed.

Prairie Chicken. Season—October 21 and 22 in Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Coffey, Franklin, Greenwood, Wilson and Woodson counties. Daily bag limit, 3. Possession limit, 2 days' bag limit.

Legal Daily Shooting Hours for the foregoing migratory and upland game birds: Not earlier than one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

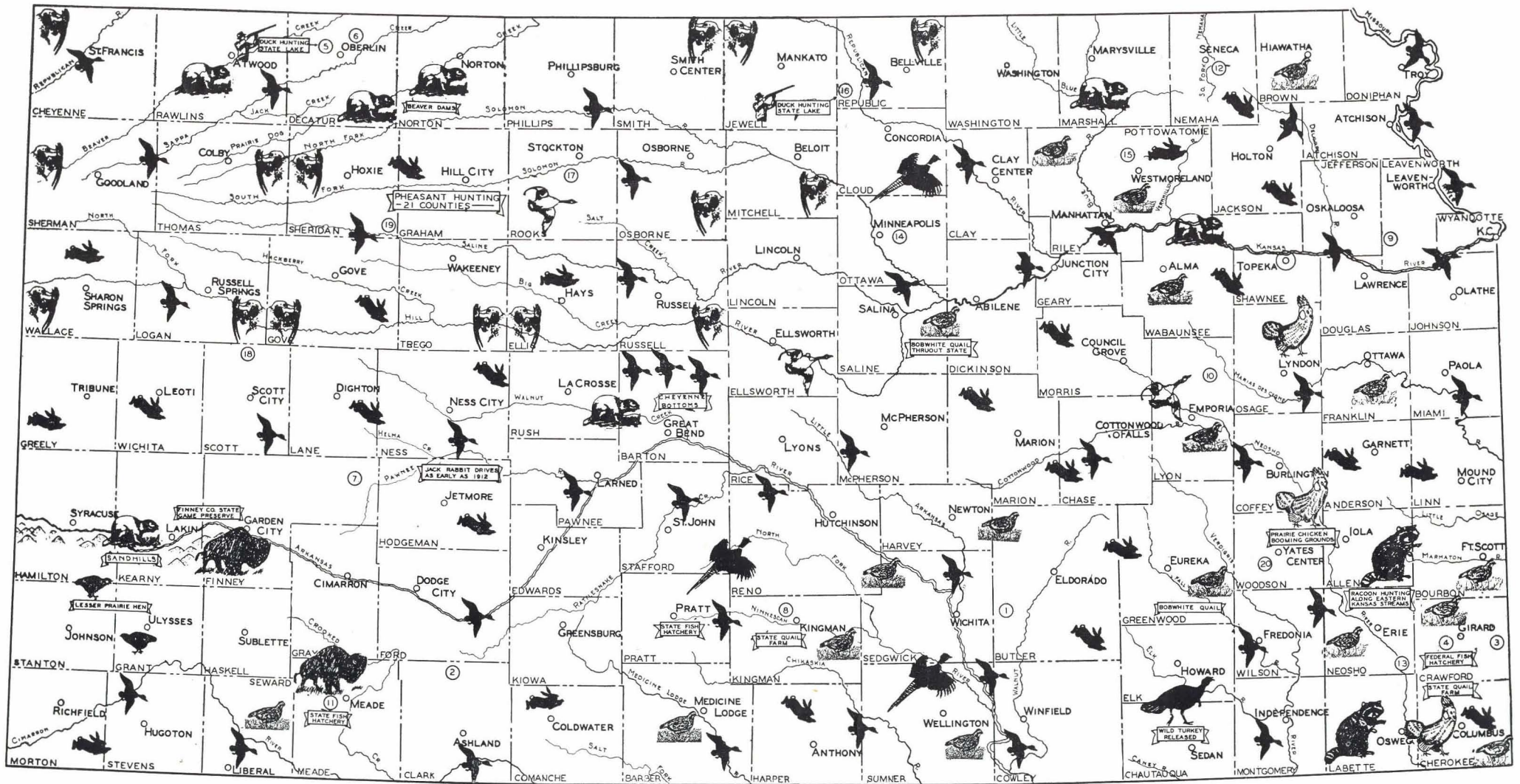
Pheasants. Season—November 8 to 14, both dates inclusive, in Cheyenne, Decatur, Ellis, Gove, Graham, Logan, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rawlins, Rooks, Russell, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Thomas, Trego, Wallace, Mitchell, Jewell, and Republic counties. Shooting hours each day, from noon to sunset. Daily bag limit, 3 cocks. Possession limit, 6 cocks.

Squirrels. Season—June 15 to November 30, both dates inclusive. Daily bag limit, 8. Possession limit, 2 days' bag limit.

Quail. Season—November 20 to 30, inclusive. Daily bag limit, 10. Possession limit, 2 days bag limit.

Federal Duck Stamp. Must be had when taking any kind of migratory waterfowl (ducks geese, brant). Persons under 16 years of age exempt. Stamp may be purchased at any first or second-class post office.

KANSAS WILD LIFE AREAS



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