

KANSAS WILDLIFE

January/February 1983 Single copy \$1.50



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special photographic issue

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KANSAS WILDLIFE (ISSN 0279-9030) is the official bimonthly publication of the Kansas Fish & Game Commission, Rural Route 2, Box 54A, Pratt, Kansas 67124 (316) 672-5911. Subscription rates: one year (6 issues) \$5.00; two years (12 issues) \$9.00; and three years (18 issues) \$12.50. Single copies are available at \$1.50 per copy.

Articles in the magazine may be reprinted with permission provided proper credit is given. Second class postage paid at Wichita, Kansas, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Kansas Fish & Game, Rural Route 2, Box 54A, Pratt, KS 67124.

Postal I.D. Number: ISSN 0279-9030

Covers: Flint Hills sunset by Ron Spomer

A different kind of scenery

Kansas has an image problem.

The denizens of Manhattan penthouses and Beverly Hills estates have a vague gray perception of the state made up of equal parts of Dust Bowl documentary and the Judy Garland rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." With the possible exception of Oklahoma, Kansas may be the nation's longterm favorite as a butt of jokes.

If this view were restricted to Los Angeles and New York, there wouldn't be much reason to take it seriously. The residents of those places have long since disqualified themselves as judges of quality real estate—it's obvious that no one who chooses to live in a smog-clouded swarm of five or ten million people has a lick of sense. The catch is that these urbanites feel called upon to export their opinions, no matter how uninformed. Whether through New York-based magazines or Hollywood video, they go to some pains to let us

know that the Great Plains are the largest single expanse of table-flat, windswept, black-and-white boredom on the continent.

Not many Kansans have a chance to respond to these allegations man to man, so we shake our fists at the writers and talk show comics who make them and comfort ourselves with thoughts of wheat yields, oil fields, and Lear jets. And the defensive reaction belies what we would never admit to the big city critics—too many of us are starting to believe what we're told about where we live.

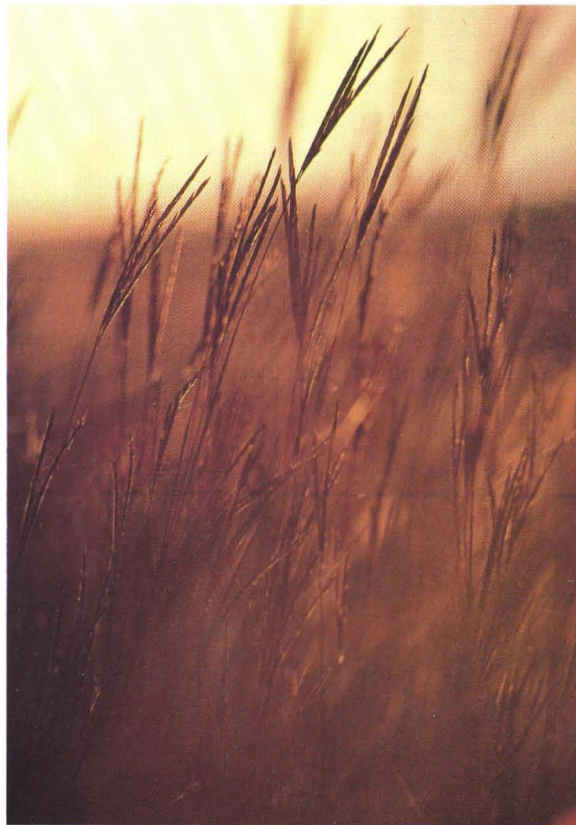
Kansas takes some getting used to. There are no Grand Canyons, Niagaras, or snow-capped ridges; in fact, there is only one compelling element in the typical plains landscape—space. To travelers on their way to Denver or Kansas City, that space is generally tedious and often a little threatening. In their hurry to get off the flatlands, they seldom have time to discover the faint mood of expectation

that comes with an open horizon. If something isn't happening, wait a while. It will.

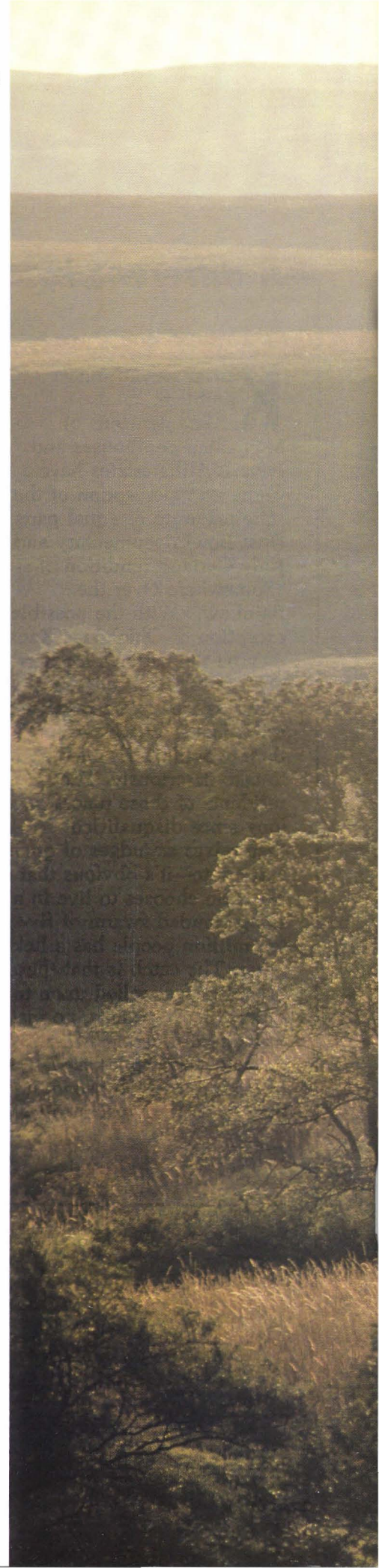
The great natural spectacles on the plains have always been ephemeral—the flickering interaction of light and land; sudden looming fronts, escarpments of cloud; the seasonal passing of the grassland flocks—whooping cranes and sandhills, geese, curlews, plovers, and phalaropes. Set against these continental doings are smaller discoveries that come to those few who are gifted with unusual patience or luck—the unexpected glimpse of a den of young swift foxes, a bald eagle perched on a streamside snag, a bobcat working a wooded draw. This issue of **KANSAS WILDLIFE** is designed to support the proposition that Kansas has more than its fair share of wild beauty. To outlanders who doubt it, we offer these pages as evidence. To the residents who may have forgotten it, we offer them as reminders.

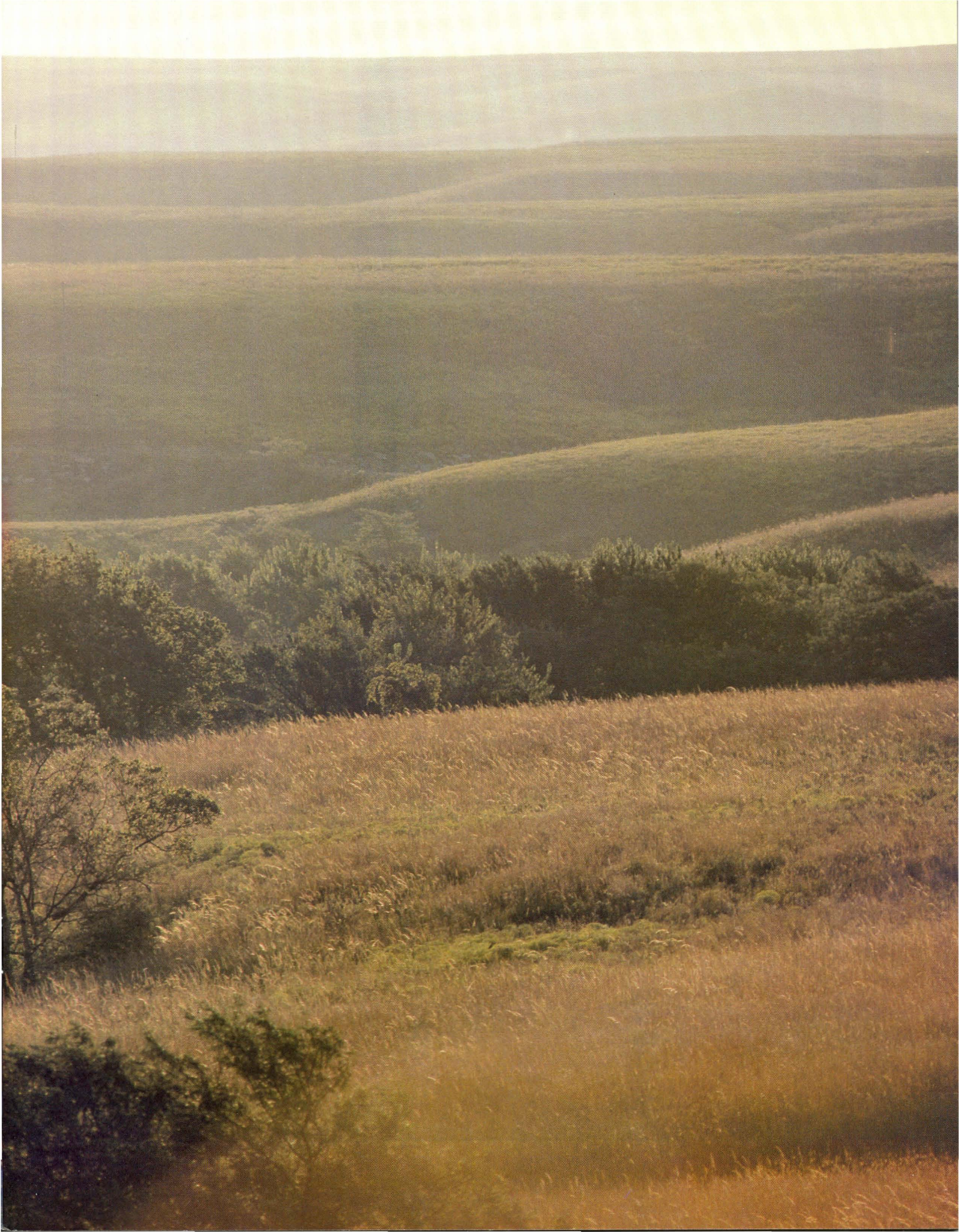
At first glance, the face of the prairie is bright and guileless, an expanse that seems incapable of keeping a secret. A dozen generations of travelers have looked out to the unbroken horizon and reached the same conclusion—and a dozen generations have been fooled. Explorers and settlers on the flatlands soon discovered that the prairie could hide timber and water, buffalo and elk, Sioux and Cheyenne, in short, almost anything an outsider most needed to see. Nor have things changed much in the century since the grass has been tamed. It still conceals its own by seeming to conceal nothing. Rich with wildlife, it shelters its wild things in unseen breaks and swales or insulates them with so much space that they disappear. A garden of wildflowers from May to November, it drugs travelers with heat and glare and sends them on to the Rockies without revealing its color. Carved by wind and water, it keeps its buttes and badlands in out-of-the-way places and dwarfs them with immeasurable sky. Learning to appreciate the prairie is learning not to trust first impressions.

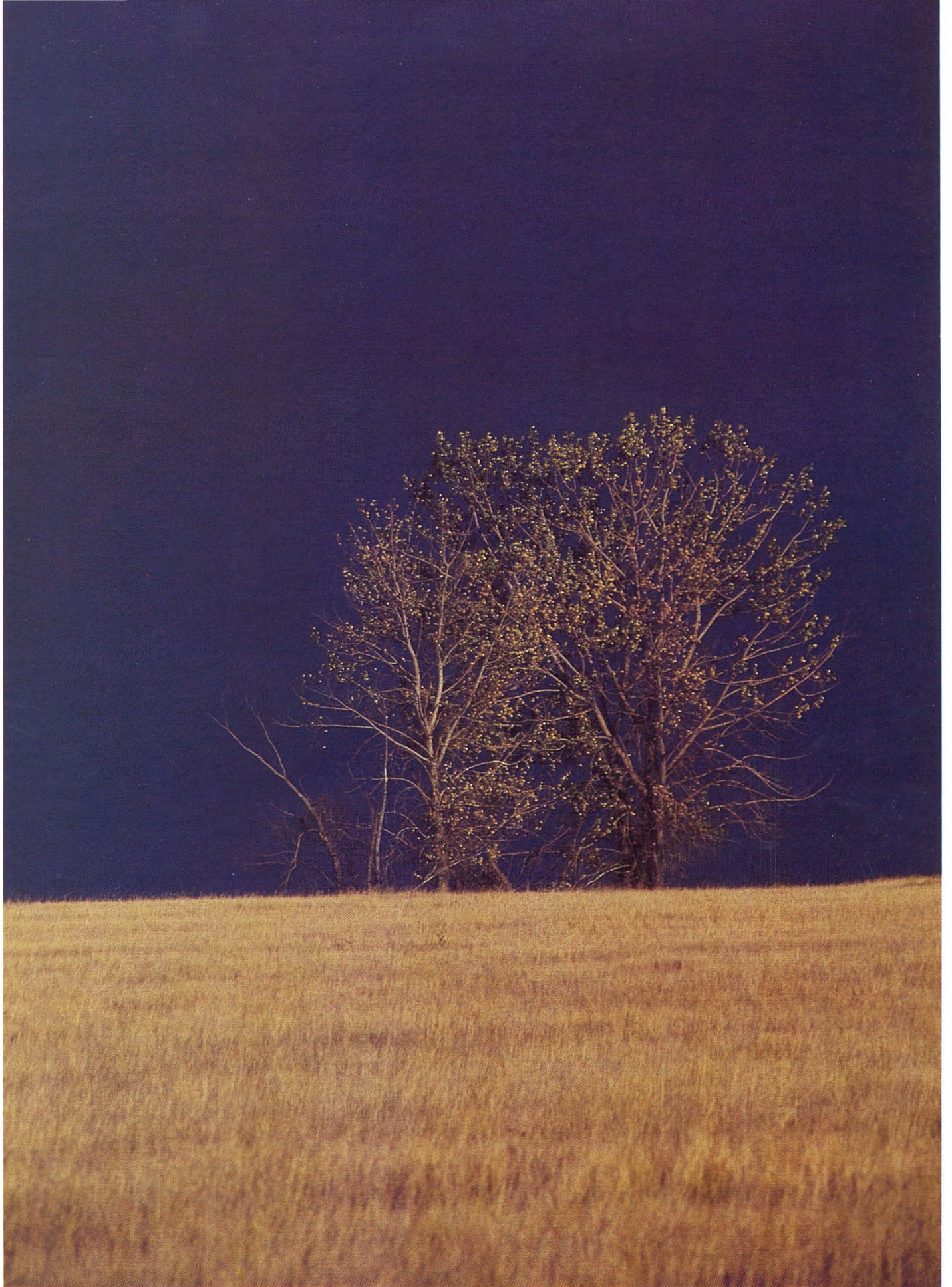
grass



big bluestem (Ron Spomer)







summer front (Ron Spomer)



sunflower (Chris Madson)



tallgrass prairie (Ron Spomer)

coyote (Gene Brehm)



swift fox (Gene Brehm)





long-tailed weasel (Ron Spomer)



black-tailed jackrabbit (Gene Brehm)



black-tailed prairie dogs (Chris Madson)







pronghorn (Gene Brehm)

mule deer (Gene Brehm)



white-tail buck standing in cordgrass (Gene Brehm)





Trees and grass don't get along. The two biomes have shoved each other back and forth across the heart of the continent for millenia, the prairie winning ground through the long droughts, the timber creeping back during the wet times. Since the last glacier, Kansas has found itself mostly on the grass side of the contest, but the most recent round has gone in favor of the woods. The difference has been man. City or country, Kansans have surrounded themselves with trees, and, as prairie fire has been suppressed, native riverside timber has prospered as well. Corridors of lowland forest combined with the patchwork of homestead woodlots and shelterbelts have opened up new vistas for eastern wildlife. The result is an unexpected variety. A wanderer on the landscape can spend his day on the uplands among burrowing owls, antelope, and prairie chickens and share the evening shade of a cottonwood grove with quail, white-tailed deer, and wild turkeys. A day thus spent will convince an Easterner of two things—if you've come to take a look at the prairie, be sure to bring a hat; if you plan to settle, bring a tree.

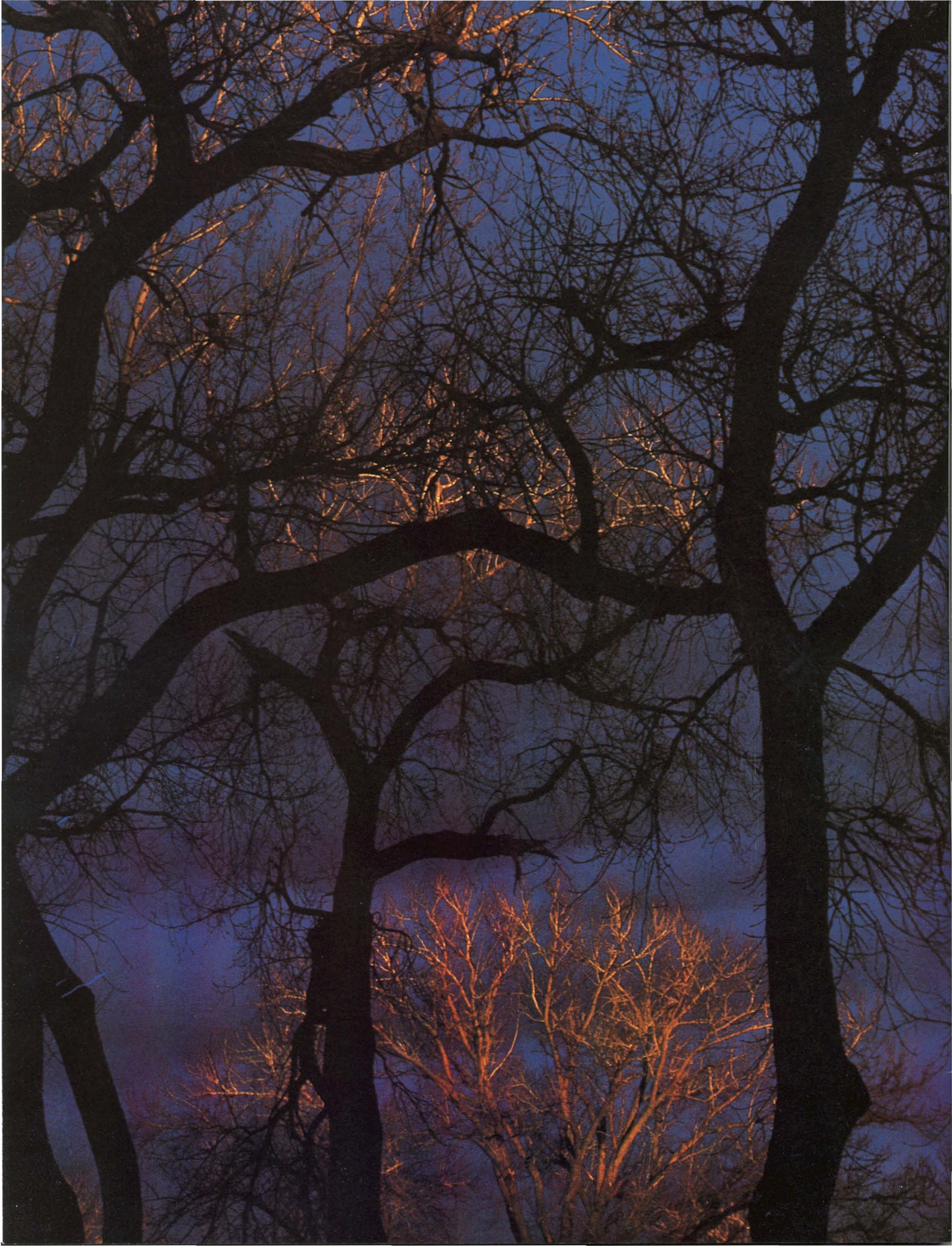


maple leaf (Ron Spomer)

timber



American elm (Ron Spomer)



the yellow pages

edited by Ron Spomer

WRITING READERS “?&...!”

Something to Howl About



One July day in 1976, when I was driving home from work in Ottawa, an animal crossed the highway about two miles west of Pomona. It came to the edge of the roadway and, like a coyote, waited for me to pass, then crossed.

I told my husband that I knew I had seen a wolf. He said I had probably seen a large coyote. Then I told my cousin, who is a fur buyer, and he said it was probably a German Shepherd dog. But I was still sure it was a wolf. It was medium dark in color, thin, and had short hair. But it had the slanted eyes and appearance of a wolf. I have been married to a coyote hunter for many years, so I know what a coyote looks like.

A few days later my husband came home and told

me he had seen the same animal in about the same place, and it was a wolf. He said he turned the car around and followed it into the bean field where it had ran. He said it tried to cower down like a coyote, but he too was sure it was a wolf.

Soon after that he was talking to the farmer who owned the bean field and told him about seeing the wolf. The farmer said it had been around for several days, and that he had helped his neighbor run it away from some calves. But a few nights earlier it had been killed on the highway. It was a female and they also believed it to be a wolf.

The ranch, known locally as the Usher ranch, has changed hands but one of the employees told my husband that he saw a wolf on the ranch last fall when they were working cattle.

I still believe what I saw was a wolf, not a coyote, German Shepherd, or even a coyote-dog cross.

Marita Lee
Quenemo

Dear Marita:

Oh boy! Wolves! We've wanted to bump into one of those critters ever since we heard about Little Red Riding Hood. It's a wild, stimulating feeling knowing there's something in our midsts that can turn our technological superiority to shaky knees in a single glimpse.

Whether or not you really saw a wolf we can't say. Only you and the wolf know for sure. We can think of two ways for a wolf to get to Quenemo. An outcast from a northern Minnesota pack (the nearest wild wolves) might have wandered down here. Wolves can travel 20 to 40 miles per night. More likely, a pet wolf escaped or was released by its owner. Several breeders are selling pure wolves and wolf-dog crosses in this country.

What I don't understand is why the road-killed wolf carcass was not delivered to a biologist, zoo, or museum for study and identification. The last wild wolf in Kansas was recorded in 1905. A new one should have inspired news reports, autopsies, and coffee cup conversation for months.

Deer Hunting Already

Editor:

Could you please send me information on how to apply for a firearms deer permit for the 1983 season and a map of public hunting areas?

Victor C. Stanton
Plains

Dear Victor:

Your map is on the way. The 1983 deer season hasn't been established yet. The Commission will do that in April. Applications will be

available from licensing agents (sporting goods stores, county clerks, Fish & Game offices) statewide in early July. The drawing for the limited rifle firearms licenses will be held in mid-August. Unsuccessful applicants will have their money returned in early September. Successful applicants will get their licenses after that. You are wise in beginning your deer hunt this early. Hunting deer these days isn't as hard as hunting a place to hunt deer. Start scouting and talking to landowners. By next December you could have a big buck all but tagged.

Bump in the Night

Editor:

In the early morning hours in late October, my neighbor and I were fishing in a private pit in southeast Kansas in a 12-foot aluminum boat. It was still dark so we had a bright light along. All at once something jumped out of the water and landed at my feet in the boat. I put both feet on him to keep him from jumping out again. It was a 16¾-pound carp.

Talk about a scare. We had it.

Jimmie Simone
Columbus

More Money

Editor:

I regret that this has to be an anonymous letter, but I am sure that I speak for many hunters, fishermen, and other sportsmen when I write this letter.

I have just read an article in the November 1982 issue of FIELD & STREAM entitled "The New Poachers."

I became enraged at what the article reported is happening to our precious resources. I love the outdoors as much as anyone, and as a cooped-up city kid whose home is really on a marsh, I feel like I should do my part to report any crimes against the wildlife laws of Kansas. While at home in Lyons over Christmas, I heard that law enforcement officers had tried to arrest a man for illegally taking deer, but were able to only catch him trespassing. I just hope that someday this man will fire his gun or shine his spotlight at the wrong time, and you will be there to arrest him.

It seems to me that a problem with the law enforcement comes from lack of funds to hire sufficient numbers of officers. May I suggest, then, that in-state hunting license fees be raised to \$15 or \$20 per year to raise more money? It seems that \$8 is a very nominal amount for a year's entertainment in the outdoors, and that sportsmen would gladly pay more if it meant their environment was being protected more thoroughly. I know I would.

Finally, let me compliment the Kansas Fish & Game Commission on the job that you all do so very well. Kansas is a beautiful state, and its wildlife make it

so for me and thousands of others. Keep up the great work, and those deer and the flights of mallards will be around for my grandchildren to enjoy.

A Concerned Sportsman

Lifetime License

Editor:

Would you please send me some information on how to get a lifetime fishing license for my wife and myself. Thank you.

Kenneth McMillan
Elwood

Dear Mr. McMillan:

Application forms for lifetime licenses are available from county clerks, regional Fish & Game offices and Pratt headquarters. All you need do is complete the form and mail it to us with payment. You have the option of paying the \$200 per license (\$400 for the combination fish and hunt) in one sum or via our installment plan. We'll provide you with a plastic laminated license that is registered for replacement if lost.

Pesticides Aren't Forever

Editor:

I started a petition against sickness-causing pesticides in Oklahoma last year.

We have been under the assumption we would have

to expose and force farmers to quit using pesticides. But maybe the solution is simple: just show a less costly, efficient method of control. No one else seems to lead in this method, certainly not the Department of Agriculture. Fads come and go. Surely pesticides can't last forever.

Larry Nossaman
Cherokee, Okla.

Regulations Please

Editor:

I recently bought a fishing and hunting license for myself and my wife, but have been unable to find anyone who has the 1983 regulation book. Everyone tells me they never receive any of the books. Surely Kansas publishes them.

I also would like a subscription to your wildlife magazine which is published by the state. I received it many years ago when it was free. I am aware there is a fee for it now, but since I am retired, I plan to do a lot of fishing this year.

Elmer Cromer
Kansas City

Dear Elmer:

Hunting and fishing regulations are provided to all license vendors in Kansas. If they run out, all they need do is contact a Fish & Game office or employee for a fresh supply. We try to print enough but not too many regulations. Some years we run short; other years we have leftovers.

The 1983 regs haven't been printed yet. The

state printer is swamped now and promises us delivery by March. Next year, we plan to have them ready by January 1.

Hunting regulations can't be printed until the seasons are set. The last of the seasons to be set are usually established during the summer.

Good Farmers, Good Hunting

Editor:

My son and I have hunted the Smith Center area the past seven years. I believe this is the best hunting trip we have had. We saw a lot of quail this year (and in past years). I was wondering why quail season didn't open until the following week.

I have hunted other states, but the farmers in Kansas are the friendliest farmers I have met. We were not turned down by any farmers. We drive a long distance to hunt and we appreciate all the help we get.

Jerry Szemare

Dear Jerry:

The Commission delayed the quail opening in portions of western Kansas to ease hunting pressure on the birds. A flood of hunters opens the pheasant season in western Kansas. If all of them were shooting quail, the limited bobwhite population out there would get hit hard. With a delayed opener, locals get more realistic quail hunting opportunities.

Closing Shop

HUNTING



Much as we'd like it otherwise, hunting is a seasonal activity. And the season is over for now. It's time to put away the tools.

The way you store your gun during the off-season could do more to ruin it than two months of wading through marshes and bulling through brambles. Neglect and time have a way of breeding rust. So, take a little time and oil now to

keep your guns looking new until next fall.

Your first step is to check and double check that your firearm is unloaded. Operate the action several times. Look down the empty barrel from the breech end, if possible. You should see daylight, not vegetation, mud or mouse nests. You'll also probably see flecks of powder residue. Scrub them out with rags soaked in gun cleaning solvent. Push them through with a proper sized cleaning rod. Let the saturated barrel sit for five minutes. Then run a few clean, dry rags through. Repeat the process until the dry rags come out clean. Especially dirty barrels may need to be worked over with a copper bristle.

If you're cleaning a shotgun barrel that has fired plastic shells, use a bristle brush and plenty of solvent to clean the chamber. Plastic residues are notorious rust catalysts.

Once the barrel is clean, push an oil saturated rag through to give it a protective coating. Now turn your attention to the action. If your gun or rifle saw plenty of hard, dirty use, you may need to open the action and clean it. Refer to the instruction manual that came with the gun or use your natural mechanical insight. Usually, a few pins or external screws release the trigger mechanism from the receiver of repeating arms. Scrub it with a toothbrush

dipped in solvent. Oil lightly. Too much oil attracts dirt and gums up the working parts.

Clean magazines, bolts and all other metal parts, oil lightly and reassemble. Briskly rub an oil rag over external portions of the barrel and action to remove rust and protect. Lastly, place the gun in dust-free storage out of the reach of children and thieves. Remember that vinyl and sheep wool lined gun cases hold moisture and spawn rust. Don't use them for storage.

RS

Topeka Man Arrows State Record Whitetail

Quite an archer, Michael J. Rose. With a single arrow, he toppled a huge whitetail deer and a nine-year-old state record.

Rose's big ten-pointer scored 183 5/8 Pope and Young points, almost four more than the 179 7/8-point old Kansas record typical whitetail taken from Riley County in 1973 by Stan Christiansen of Manhattan. The new record antlers spread 24 6/8 inches. The longest tine is more than 13 inches.

Rose didn't just luck into his trophy buck. He'd been scouting for months. In fact, he selected his hunting territory (near Perry in Jefferson County) back in March 1982. But it wasn't until the evening of Oct. 11,

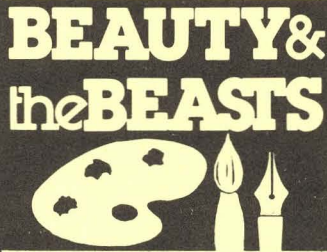
1982 that he had a chance to shoot. It was his second hunt from that stand. He launched an aluminum arrow just 17 yards from the deer.

Keith Sexson, Fish and Game Commission deer project leader, estimated the buck was 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 years old, quite young to have grown such a huge pair of antlers. Sexson credits excellent habitat and food, as well as good genetics, for the record growth. The deer's teeth have been sent to a lab for accurate age analysis.

In addition to being the biggest typical archery whitetail rack ever recorded in Kansas, Rose's trophy should rank high in the Pope and Young world records.



Crain Art on Loan



Why would a self-taught Colorado artist work in an electronics factory in Missouri? The artist himself couldn't answer that, so he quit his job and began painting nature scenes fulltime.

For most folks, that would be an invitation to starvation. For Tom Crain, it was the discovery of fulfillment. "I am so thankful God has allowed me to pursue a career in what I enjoy most," the softspoken Missourian said. "I give Him the credit."

And a lot of credit it is. Since quitting his factory job in 1979, Crain has won the Delaware Trout Stamp Competition and the Missouri Waterfowl Stamp Contest. His paintings have received Best of Show awards at two National Wildlife Art Shows in Kansas City and a First Place award in an Oklahoma City show. He's garnered Honorable Mentions in Missouri and Indiana Trout Stamp contests, and has had two Cabela's Sporting Goods catalog covers.

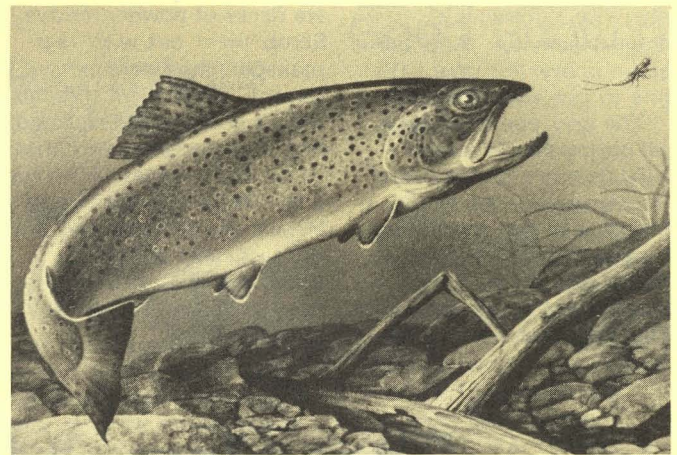
Creating realistic renditions doesn't happen overnight. Crain spends hours in researching, photographing, and sketching before he lays down his first brush stroke. He'll often devote 100 hours of concentrated effort before he touches the last paint to the canvas.

Crain came by his talents

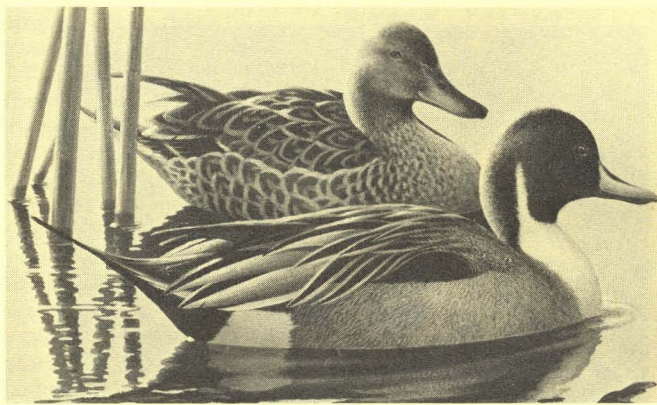
naturally, which is probably appropriate for a man who loves to hike, camp, and fish. He grew up in the Colorado Rockies, and even as a boy sketched a variety of subjects. His budding creative talents led him to a correspondence course at the age of 16. He never finished it, and that hasn't seemed to hurt him

any. After his marriage to Sherrill, he started his factory job in Missouri, but his artistic talents weren't to be denied.

Today, Crain lives and paints at his country home near Willard, Missouri, where he also builds his own frames for his originals.



1983 Duck Stamp



Phil V. Scholer, a professional wildlife artist from Kasson, Minnesota, won the 1983-84 Federal "Duck Stamp" competition in Washington, D. C. on Nov. 4 with his acrylic painting of a pair of pintail ducks on water.

Scholer had entered the federal competition on four previous occasions, placing high in the national judging but never winning the prestigious honor. His persistence paid off this year, however, as his entry topped 1,563 other paintings during

two days of judging at the Department of the Interior.

His design will be reproduced on next year's Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, which must be purchased by all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older in the United States. The design for each year's stamp is selected through an annual contest—the federal government's only regularly sponsored art competition. Revenue from the sale of the "duck stamp" is used to buy wetlands and other types of waterfowl habitat under a program administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

By buying the stamps, nearly two million conservationists, most of

them hunters and other sportsmen, provide about \$15 million in support for this program each year.

Non-hunters and a growing number of stamp collectors are also discovering the duck stamp. The Interior Department encourages outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy wildlife through photography, birdwatching, and other activities to join hunters in supporting the nation's conservation effort by buying an annual duck stamp. Post offices sell them, as do an increasing number of National Wildlife Refuges across the country.

This year's issue will go on sale July 1, 1983.

COLD CATS BITING

FISHING



Catch channel cats through the ice? Not quite, but close. And lots of them.

According to several wise cat fishers in southeast Kansas, channel catfish never stop biting. The only reason no one catches them in winter is because no one tries. Usually, a thin layer of ice puts the freeze on fishing, but when it melts in

mid-February, the catfishing can be the best of the year. T. E. Wester, Fish & Game conservation worker at Neosho and Bourbon State Fishing Lakes, claims that more channel cats are taken in his area from mid-February to mid-March than during any other 30-day period of the year.

The cold water has the cold-blooded fish moving like molasses, but a winter kill of shad usually starts them feeding. Some folks guess the strong odor of the rotting bait fish lures the cats. Predictably, shad sides are the best bait. Johnny Fram, a Parsons fisherman, recommends a piece no bigger

than your thumb. Hang it from a rather small hook, say a No. 4, because the channels aren't feeding as aggressively as they do later in the spring. They'll gently inhale a small bait, but a larger chunk gets them to nibbling off pieces all day.

Wester said the bites are subtle. Almost everyone who knows what he's doing uses a slip sinker between the bait and rod. After casting and letting the bait settle, they pull several feet of line off the reel and let it hang loosely between the first two guides. When the line begins moving out, don't get impatient. Give the fish time to swallow the bait, then rear

back and enjoy the fight. These cold cats do put up a tussel, though it's not as violent as it could be in warmer waters.

Most lakes and ponds in southeast Kansas should produce this ice-out channel cat catching. Neosho State Fishing Lakes, Neosho Wildlife Area ponds, Bourbon State Lake, and the Neosho River are a few of the waters the Parsons anglers work. The river dams from Iola to Chetopa are good. Fish below them. The drifting odor of your shad bait will pull the big cats upstream if they aren't already there.

RS

NATURE



Robins on the lawn might mean spring to some, but "nature nuts" know the real early birds are ducks.

In early March, ice might still be holding lake waters hostage across much of Kansas, but waterfowl will be mating and moving north to an appointment with the future. They have nests to build and eggs to lay and entire species to perpetuate. Their job is an important one, and they can't wait to get started.

While it is photoperiodism--the birds' response to lengthening daylight--that stimulates

Spring Air Show

migration, it is lingering winter that determines day-to-day progress. As soon as ice and snow release their hold on the food supply, the ducks and geese move in. By early February, goldeneyes and mergansers squeeze into pockets of open water throughout Kansas. Hot on their tails are mallards and pintails breaking trail for the waves of gadwalls, wigeons, shovelers, teal, scaup, redheads, and others to follow. Great flocks stand on the ice and mill about the open water at Cheyenne Bottoms, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Marais des Cygnes and John Redmond National Wildlife Refuge.

The majority of mallard drakes have wooed and won a

hen by now, and they busy themselves protecting their prizes. Bachelor bands of greenheads harass the few females remaining unspoken for, and nuptial chase flights flash passionately across the skies. As many as thirty drakes may court a single hen, dazzling her with their feathered finery.

Pintail romance is even more exciting. The streamlined males in their elegant brown and white attire slice through the air like arrows from Cupid's bow. Where the drabby dressed female of their ardor goes, they follow, twisting, climbing and diving to keep pace, each hoping she will accept his advances.

By early March the

marshes are filled with color and sound. Rafts of scaup and ring-necked ducks bobbing on the liberated waters. Bunches of redheads punctuated with a white-bodied canvasback. White-and-green wigeons whistling optimism echoed in the neon blue bills of the ruddy ducks. Drake shovelers showing off their imitation mallard outfits that outclass the originals. Blizzards of snow geese.

It's a stunning pageantry here and gone in a flurry, leaving witnesses rich in the timeless adventure that spans a continent.

RS

Nature's Notebook

by Joyce Harmon

Wildlife Education Coordinator
Kansas Fish and Game Commission

If you've ever tracked through your home with dirty shoes and been caught, you know about

TELLTALE TRACKS

From tire tracks to tennis shoe imprints to bobcat pawprints, tracks are all around us. Mud, sand, snow, and wet cement make excellent mediums for these trademarks. Tracks leave behind a tale or story about their source, direction of travel, and size of the animal or machine that made them. Winter provides many opportunities to observe tracks in snow or mud and learn about animals we may never actually see.

Warm clothes and the curiosity of a detective are required for this expedition. Go outdoors and search for as many different kinds of tracks as you can find. Include tracks made by tires, shoes, animals, sleds, skis, etc. Keep a lookout for unusual tracks and ones that may be hard to identify. Make a list of what you find and see if you can answer the following questions for each track or your favorites.

1. Where was the track located (i.e. in mud on the side of the stream bank)? Draw a map of the location, and a picture of the track.
2. Did an animal or machine make the track?
3. What direction were the tracks headed?
4. What can you tell about the size of what made the track (i.e. small with four legs or has big feet with webbed hind toes)?
5. How do you think the track was made? By walking, running, sliding, rolling, hopping, jumping, skidding, falling, etc.
6. Where would you guess you'd most likely find this track again (i.e. in a driveway, near a tree, etc.)?
7. Can you follow the track to a den or nest?
8. What made the track?
9. Make up a story about what you think happened to make this track. Share what you discovered with a friend or classmate.

To help tell animal tracks apart, here are a few points of interest:

Members of the cat family (house cats, bobcats, lynx, etc.) have retractable claws. When they leave a track behind, there are no claw marks. Members of the dog family (coyote, fox, wolf, etc.) make a claw mark as well as the mark from the foot pad.

Animals with hooves make a distinct round or triangular print.

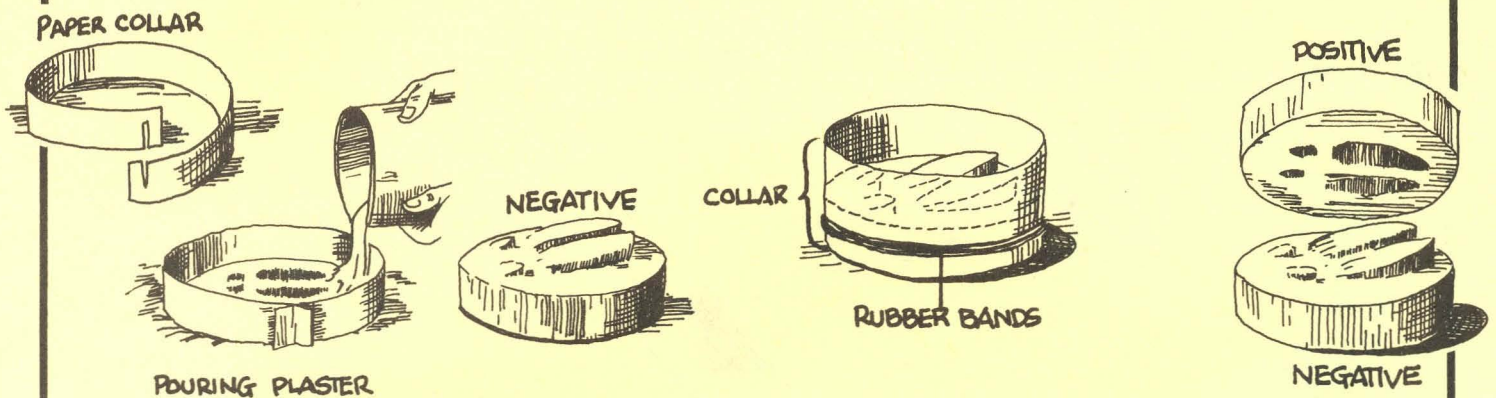
Birds and mammals with webbed feet are easy to distinguish by their "signature" of skin between toes.

Rabbits and hares have "snowshoes" of thick fur that help spread their weight over a large area. They tend to stay on top of the snow instead of sinking into it.

Tracks can be preserved for further study in two ways. Probably the most common is by making plaster casts.

To begin with, you'll need to find an undamaged track. Look around until you find a particularly good one. Moist clay soil and silt along shorelines are especially good places to find quality tracks. Carefully remove any litter that may be in the track. Excessive moisture can be absorbed from tracks by dusting them with dry plaster of paris.

Once a track has been selected, fit a construction paper or oak tag collar around it. Strips of paper 1 inch wide and 13 to 17 inches long, stapled or paper clipped into a circle, make the collars. Mix plaster of paris and water in a tin can or plastic container. Sprinkle plaster into the water without stirring until the proportion is about 7 parts plaster to 4 parts water. Stir the mixture gently with a stick until it is smooth and the consistency of pancake batter. Too thick plaster will not pour; too thin plaster will take too long to harden. A small amount of vinegar in the plaster mixture slows the hardening. A pinch of salt speeds it up. Pour the plaster until it fills the collar to a ¼-inch thickness. The cast should dry in 20 to 30 minutes. When the plaster has hardened, loosen the soil around it. Brush off any excess soil when the cast is completely cured. Record the date, place track was found, and species of animal that made it.



PARAFFIN CASTS can be made in a similar manner. Melt wax in a tin can and pour slowly into the track. It will harden in minutes.

Your finished track casts will be "backwards" and raised rather than sunk. To make them look "natural," as if the animal had stepped in your plaster, you'll need to coat your "negative" cast with liquid soap or oil and pour another mound of plaster or wax over it. Of course, you can't pour hot wax over a wax negative without melting it.

Casts can be made from snow tracks if the temperature is below freezing. Fill the track with a dusting of dry plaster followed by a gentle misting of cold water. Allow the track to freeze. Push the edge of the cardboard collar into the snow around it. Pour the plaster as before. When the track is completely hardened, it can be carefully cleaned with a small brush.

Plaster casts can be hardened by boiling them in a Borax solution. Varnish, paint, or decorate them and make a display.

If you want to avoid the mess of plaster casts, collect tracks on smoked paper. Hold shelf or poster paper over a burning candle, but don't let it burn. Carbon from the smoke will coat the paper. Anything that touches it will leave a mark.

You can lure animals into a tracking pit with food. The pit is a cleared area, 4 to 6 square feet, on a level spot near vegetative cover. Rake the area smooth and dampen the ground for sharp tracks. Distribute appropriate bait in the pit.

Note:

Also, a reminder to teachers and youth leaders interested in National Wildlife Federation's annual Wildlife Week celebration. Informational packets can be obtained at no cost by writing to: Dept. KWW, National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036. This year's theme is "This Is Your Land" and begins March 20.



WHO GOES

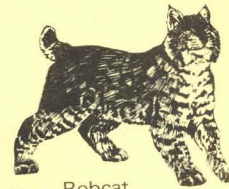
Match the Kansas



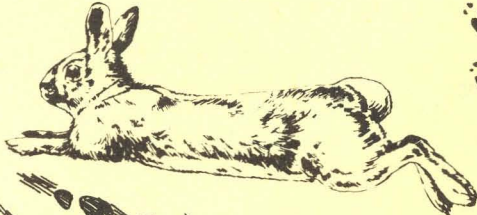
Badger



Prairie Dog



Bobcat



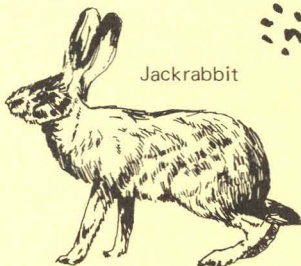
Cottontail



Skunk



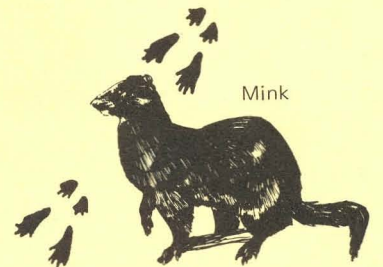
Raccoon



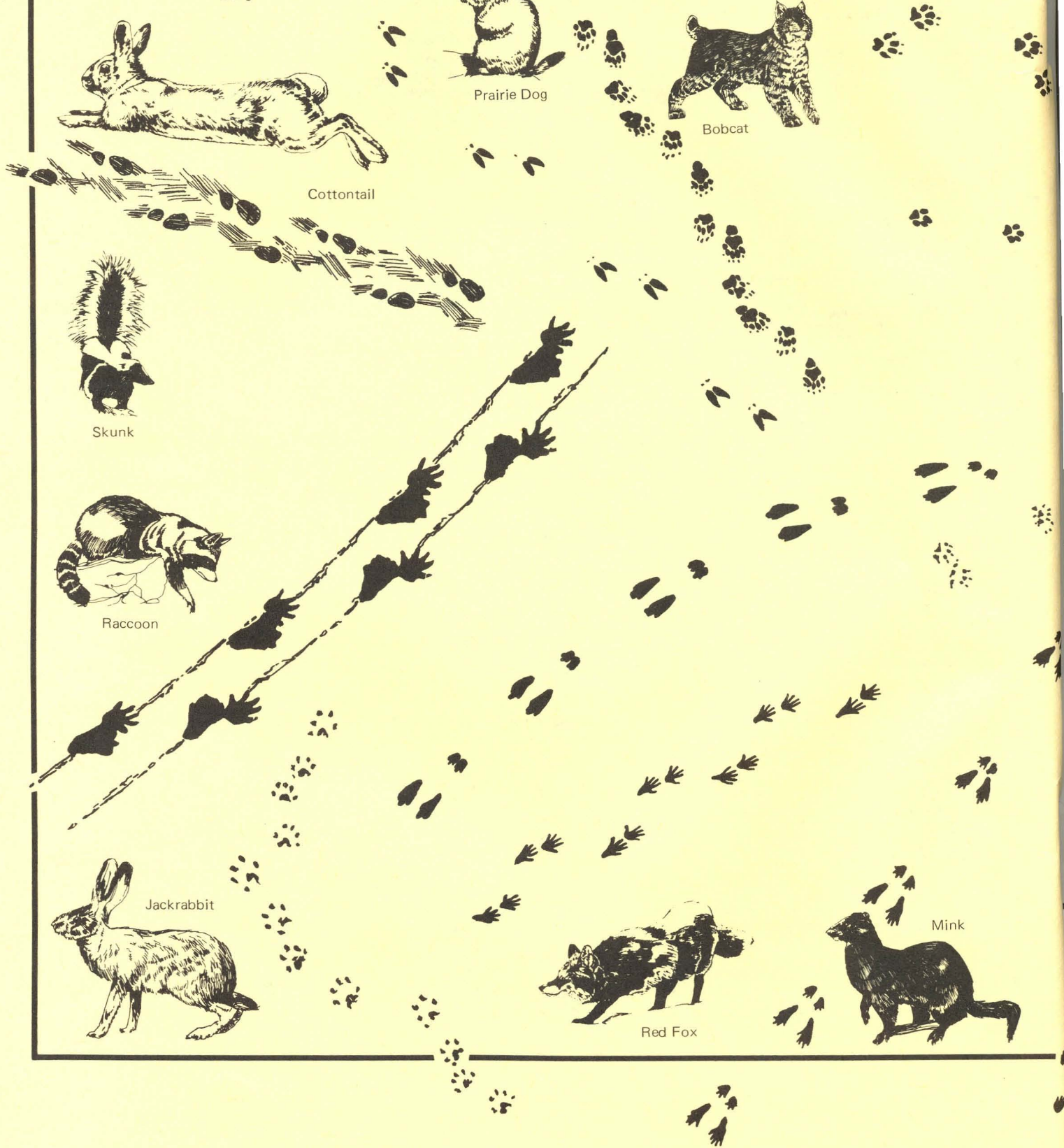
Jackrabbit



Red Fox



Mink

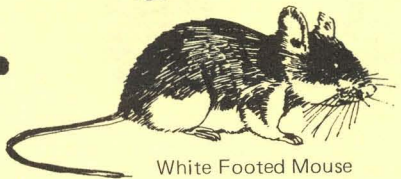


THERE?

mammal to its track.



Porcupine



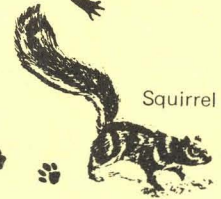
White Footed Mouse



Opossum



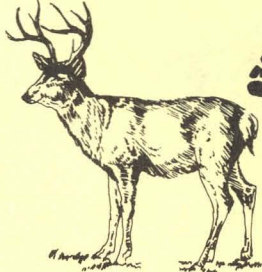
Beaver



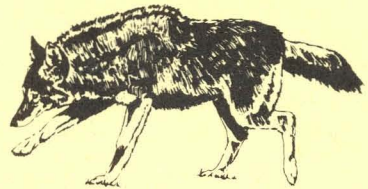
Squirrel



Kangaroo Rat



Mule Deer



Coyote



Bison

Mixed Bag Violating



Silliest Things

Some people will get in trouble for the silliest things. Wayne M. Hopkins, Ottawa, paid the judge \$100 after being convicted for shooting a cormorant. Game Protector Johnny Ray caught Hopkins. Cormorants are fish-eating water birds protected by federal law. They are black and about the size of a Canada goose, so Hopkins might have been guilty of misidentification.

But knowing which species may be hunted and which may not is part of the responsibilities of being a sportsman.

Citizen Catch

Monte Millick knows that there aren't enough game protectors to catch all the poachers in Kansas. Everyone must get involved if we want to protect our wildlife. So Monte got involved.

On the night of December 5, 1982, Millick saw three men poach a deer near his farm. He recognized one of them, and called Game Protector Marvin Meier.

Thanks to Millick's vigilance and willingness to testify, Troy V. Randall, Havensville, Allen Brucken and Patrick Brucken, both of Soldier, were apprehended and convicted of hunting deer during closed season and hunting deer with artificial light. Each man paid \$350 in fines, plus \$19 court costs.

Owl not Permitted

Bob E. Brenner of Ottawa paid \$100 in Federal Court for illegal possession of a live great horned owl. Federal law prohibits anyone from possessing a live raptor without a special permit. Without such restrictions, traffic in pet trade would threaten wild populations of many species.

A Brave Man

We're all wrong at one time or another, but how many of us will admit it?

Game Protector Arch Moberly knows and respects one man who did. A sportsman from Wamego who wrote the following letter:

Dear Officer Moberly:

On the afternoon of Nov. 14, 1982, my friends and I were returning home via Highway 18 after hunting pheasants at Nakota. We were stopped at the outskirts

of Lincoln for a game check. After a search, a pheasant breast was found and taken as contraband by the Kansas Fish & Game Commission. During this time I was acting unbecomingly of a hunter and in general raising hell with the officers in charge. For this I extend my most sincere apologies and hope to keep another incident like this from happening in the future.

Name withheld at editor's discretion

Dumber Than A Coot

The common coot, also known as the mud hen, is not praised for its wariness. Flocks of these black rails are common on marshes and lakes during the autumn duck hunting season, and licensed hunters may legally bag 15 per day. Because of their poor reputation as table fare, few hunters ever hunt them. Except Jackie L. Williams, Hillsdale, and Randall K. Oliver, Paola. And they couldn't do the job right. They chased and shot at the coots from a motor boat under power. That's against the rules of fair chase, and Game Protector Johnny Ray put a stop to it.

Each coot chaser paid the judge \$50.



Violator

Some folks just can't play fair. James LeRoy Edgerton, Lawrence, just had to take advantage of the closed season to poach an unsuspecting deer.

He got caught by Game Protector David Hoffman on Nov. 13, an unlucky day for him, but a lucky day for wildlife. He was fined \$500 plus \$19 court costs for illegally killing the deer and \$50 plus \$84 court costs for trespassing. His 30-day jail sentence was suspended to a year's probation. Edgerton surrendered his hunting license and, ironically, his firearms deer permit that would have allowed him to take his buck legally in early December.

License Cheat

Folks from Louisiana are welcome to hunt in Kansas, but they must first purchase a nonresident license. Edward L. Kemp didn't.

Kemp was in Pratt County working oil rigs when he bought his license--a resident license. All he had to do was lie about his home address and residency to fool the license vendor, but he couldn't fool the Game Protector. When Tracy Galvin did a little investigating, he discovered Kemp's ruse.

Rather than appear in court, Kemp forfeited a \$100 bond.

NATURAL ISSUES



TWS Down on Endrin

Apparently, wildlife biologists aren't too wild about endrin or heptachlor. The Wildlife Society--a nonprofit organization of professional wildlife biologists, resource managers, and others dedicated to enhancing wildlife populations--recently adopted a resolution recommending the permanent termination of the field use of these two chemical pesticides.

Amid all the Whereases and Therefore that make up an official resolution, the Society pointed out that endrin and heptachlor are chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides (like DDT) acutely toxic to many forms of life. Endrin, for example, is thirty times more toxic than DDT. Just .004 ounces of it can kill a 150-pound person. Manufacturers' labels on endrin cans warn that wildlife in heavily sprayed areas will probably be killed.

According to the Society, spraying these chemicals on crop fields disrupts ecosystems, and because the poisons are persistent (they remain toxic in the environment for ten years or more) they create long-term problems. Birds carry them within their bodies long distances. A duck hunter in Kansas can contaminate himself or his family by feeding them a highly toxic teal fresh in from Canada where it had been living on

Bugs, Birds & Budget Lumber

endrin-polluted ponds. Not a nice thought, but frighteningly realistic.

The Wildlife Society members don't like those odds, so they have officially recommended the immediate and permanent termination of the field use of endrin and heptachlor in the U. S. and other countries. They further resolve that appropriate governmental agencies increase the level of research and development of alternative control methods, including evaluation of their effects on wildlife populations and their habitats. The Society believes that we can and should provide agriculture with less hazardous damage control methods.

Bugs to the Rescue

An army of soldiers could someday be mustered to eat crop eating insects, according to Jeffrey A. Aldrich of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The soldier bug plan involves applying harmless, man-made pheromones (scent attractants) to a crop. Predatory soldier bugs are drawn by the pheromones. When they move in to the smell, they find a windfall of insect prey which they set about devouring.

In experiments last year, Aldrich trapped more than 1,300 soldier bugs with his attractant, which is made from simple compounds readily available.

If the voracious soldier bugs prove effective--and there's no reason they shouldn't--some entrepreneur could begin raising them by the millions for sale to farmers who could unload them on fields under siege by a variety of insects.

Soldier bugs kill their prey by sucking their insides out. The USDA doesn't know when soldier bug pheromones could be made available to commercial growers, but I'll lay ten to one odds the big ag chemical companies don't push the idea.

Kansas Ruffed Grouse Safari

The Safari Club International is going hunting. For money. Money they will donate to the Kansas Fish & Game Commission for the reintroduction of ruffed grouse to the state.

Ruffed grouse are upland game birds that live in woodlands. They used to occur in eastern Kansas forests and river valleys, but man pushed them out. The Kansas City chapter of Safari Club International is willing to spend about \$30,000 over the next four years to bring them back.

The Fish & Game Commission will do the actual work of releasing and monitoring the wild grouse it receives from Wisconsin where they will be captured.

SCI will begin raising money for the project on March 5, 1983, at its Third Annual Awards Dinner and Auction. The 8 p.m. auction will offer such adventures as guided hunting trips to Canada, Alaska, Russia, and Missouri. Rifles, art prints, jewelry, taxidermy work and decoys will be offered. A set of false teeth will even go on the block, all for the good of the ruffed grouse.

If the reintroduction program takes, Kansans may enjoy a limited hunting season for these popular northwoods grouse, but probably not for some eight to ten years. The main concern right now is initiating a self-sustaining population for the esthetic and ecological integrity of Kansas. Without the SCI's help, the Fish & Game Commission wouldn't be able to complete the project in this time frame.

The SCI banquet dinner begins at 7 p.m., March 8 and costs \$15. The auction at 8 p.m. is free. Wildlife lovers are welcome. No need to be a member.

Federal Waste

The U. S. Forest Service plans to build a \$100,000 road to harvest timber worth half that amount on land bordering a Montana wilderness, reports the *Billings Gazette*. Congress had purchased the 3,677-acre area 60 miles south of Bozeman for nearly \$1 million in 1977 to spare

its pristine and wildlife values from pending subdivision. The Nature Conservancy acted as go-between on the sale. Locals dispute the forest supervisor's contention that the timber salvage is necessary to abate beetle infestation.

Wildlife Week

More than 15 million school children, teachers, and conservationists will observe the 46th annual Wildlife Week, sponsored by the Wildlife Federation, from March 20-26. This year's annual week campaign, entitled "This Is Your Land; Public Lands Belong To All Of Us," is chaired by Loretta Lynn, the "First Lady" of country music. She has made radio and television public service announcements that will be aired all year.

The public lands theme was chosen this year to

remind all of us that we have a stake in ensuring that our public lands are maintained wisely for citizens to use and enjoy. Nearly half a million educational kits about Wildlife Week are being distributed to schools to promote this understanding.

"These lands are some of the world's most cherished areas: parks, forests, refuges, and wilderness," Ms. Lynn said. "They range from wilderness in New Mexico to fishing streams in the Pacific Northwest and barrier islands along the Atlantic Coast. They are rich in natural resources, and home for an undetermined variety of wildlife and plants. It's time for all Americans to understand their role in taking care of this land."

The Department of the Interior manages nearly 70 percent of America's 740 million acres of public lands. Interior Secretary James Watt has long been criticized for his schemes to sell some of this public real estate. It is interesting to note that states

with little or no public land have limited or no populations of elk, moose, bears, sheep, and mountain goats.

Radio Awards Lifetime License

"Name that tune and you win a lifetime of hunting in Kansas!" How's that again?

Listeners to KKAN radio in Phillipsburg must have been surprised when they heard the 'Let's Go Hunting In Kansas' promotion. All they had to do was register at sponsoring sporting goods dealers and they were eligible to win various prizes, including a Kansas lifetime hunting license donated by KKAN radio.

It isn't every day one hears a radio station promote hunting. KKAN is almost certainly the first radio station that has ever given away a lifetime hunting license.

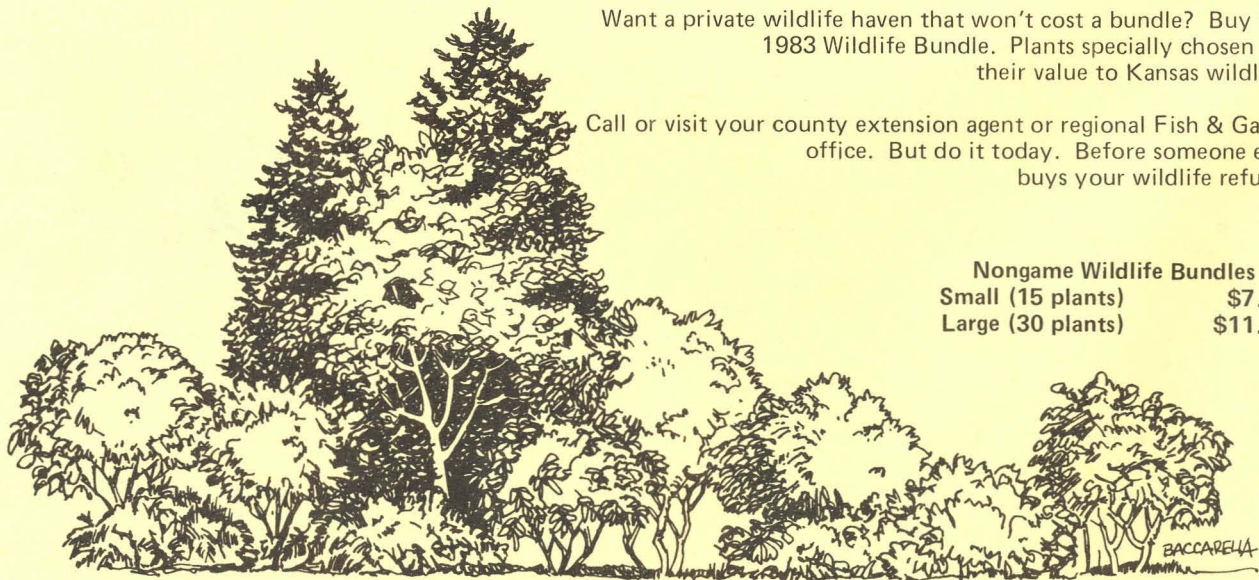
Michael Specht of Smith Center won the license. KKAN and its sponsors had excellent response to the promotion, and plan to use it again. Keep listening.

Refuge Guide

The new "Visitor's Guide to the National Wildlife Refuges" has just been published by the Interior Department's U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The guide is available for \$2.25 (or \$31 per 100 copies) from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402 (specify stock no. 024-010-00529-7).

YOUR OWN WILDLIFE RETREAT



Want a private wildlife haven that won't cost a bundle? Buy the 1983 Wildlife Bundle. Plants specially chosen for their value to Kansas wildlife.

Call or visit your county extension agent or regional Fish & Game office. But do it today. Before someone else buys your wildlife refuge.

Nongame Wildlife Bundles
 Small (15 plants) \$7.50
 Large (30 plants) \$11.75



long-eared owl (Gene Brehm)



spring rain and maple leaves (Ron Spomer)



Rio Grande turkeys (Ron Spomer)

white-tail doe and fawn (Ron Spomer)





Rio Grande turkey gobbler (Ron Spomer)





northern oriole (Ron Spomer)

cardinal (Ron Spomer)



pileated woodpecker (Ron Spomer)



The Great Plains are a land of perpetual drought. The high country to the west wrings every drop of rain out of approaching Pacific fronts, and what the mountains don't steal is lost to the searing wind almost before it hits the ground. The major east slope rivers return some of that moisture, but, if rain were the flatland's only source of water, Kansas might fit its early nineteenth century billing as "the great American desert." Luckily for all grassland residents, human and otherwise, there are other sources. When the snowpack is thin and August starts to bear down, it is plains ground water that keeps the plains alive. Few of the springs in Kansas are spectacular; most are imperceptible seeps at the base of a low ridge, but they spawn a network of small, clear, dependable streams that have always been a key to the survival of the grass country's wildlife. In addition, huge shallow basins have combined underground flow and thunderstorm run-off to form vast marshes which, along with uncounted playa puddles and buffalo wallows, have concentrated immense flocks of migrating wildfowl and provided year-round homes and watering places for more sedentary wildlife. If there is any place on the plains where a faint echo of the old wild abundance still persists, it is where the grass gives way to water.

water



mallards (Gene Brehm)





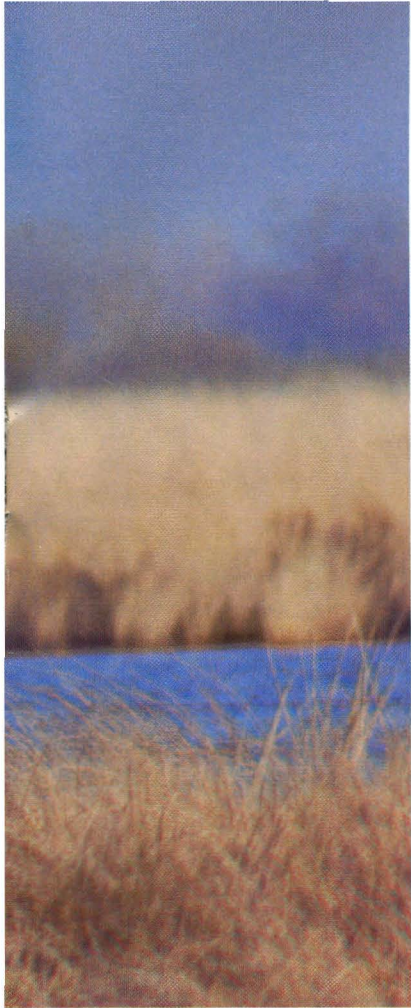




pintails (Ron Spomer)



overleaf: ducks against thunderstorm (Ron Spomer)



mallards (Gene Brehm)



pintail (Ron Spomer)

mallard (Ron Spomer)





coyotes and waterfowl at Quivira Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (Ron Spomer)





muskrat (Ron Spomer)



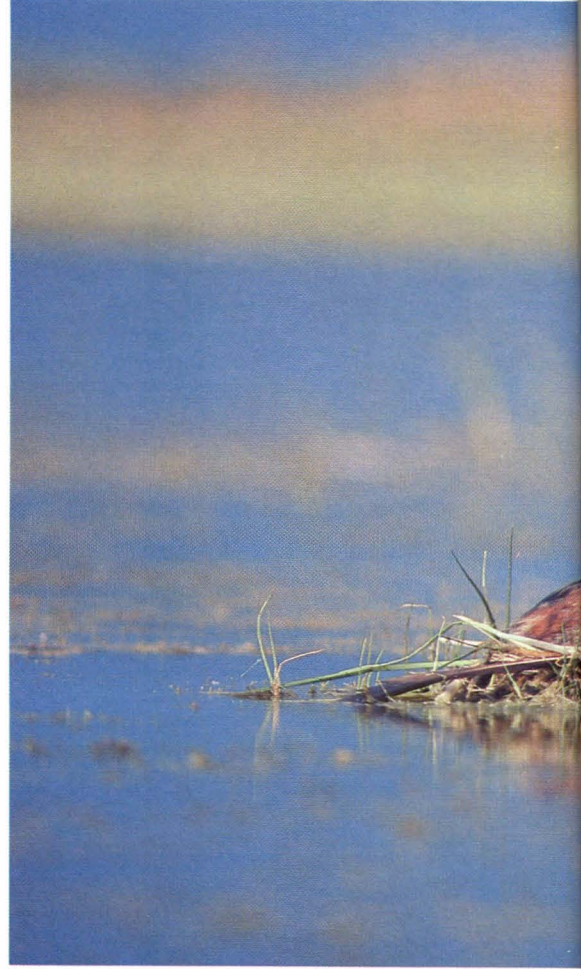
beaver tracks (Ron Spomer)





black-crowned night herons (Gene Brehm)

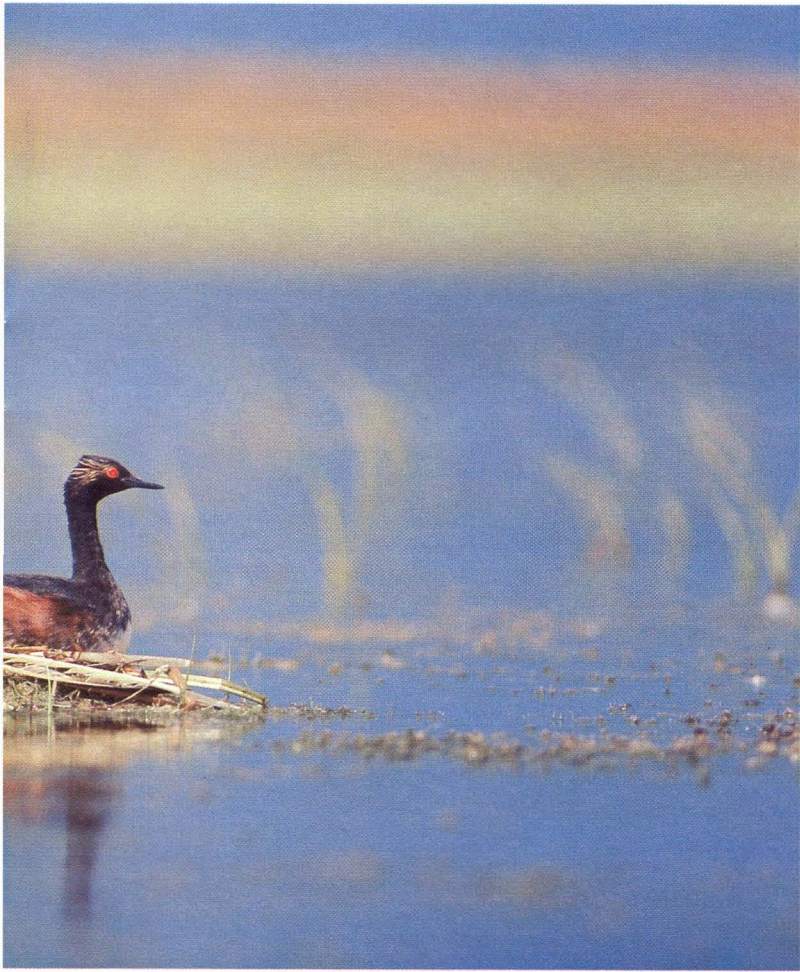
eared grebe (Gene Brehm)



white-faced ibis and young (Gene Brehm)



least bittern (Ron Spomer)



little blue heron (Gene Brehm)



eared grebe (Gene Brehm)



white-faced ibis and young (Gene Brehm)



