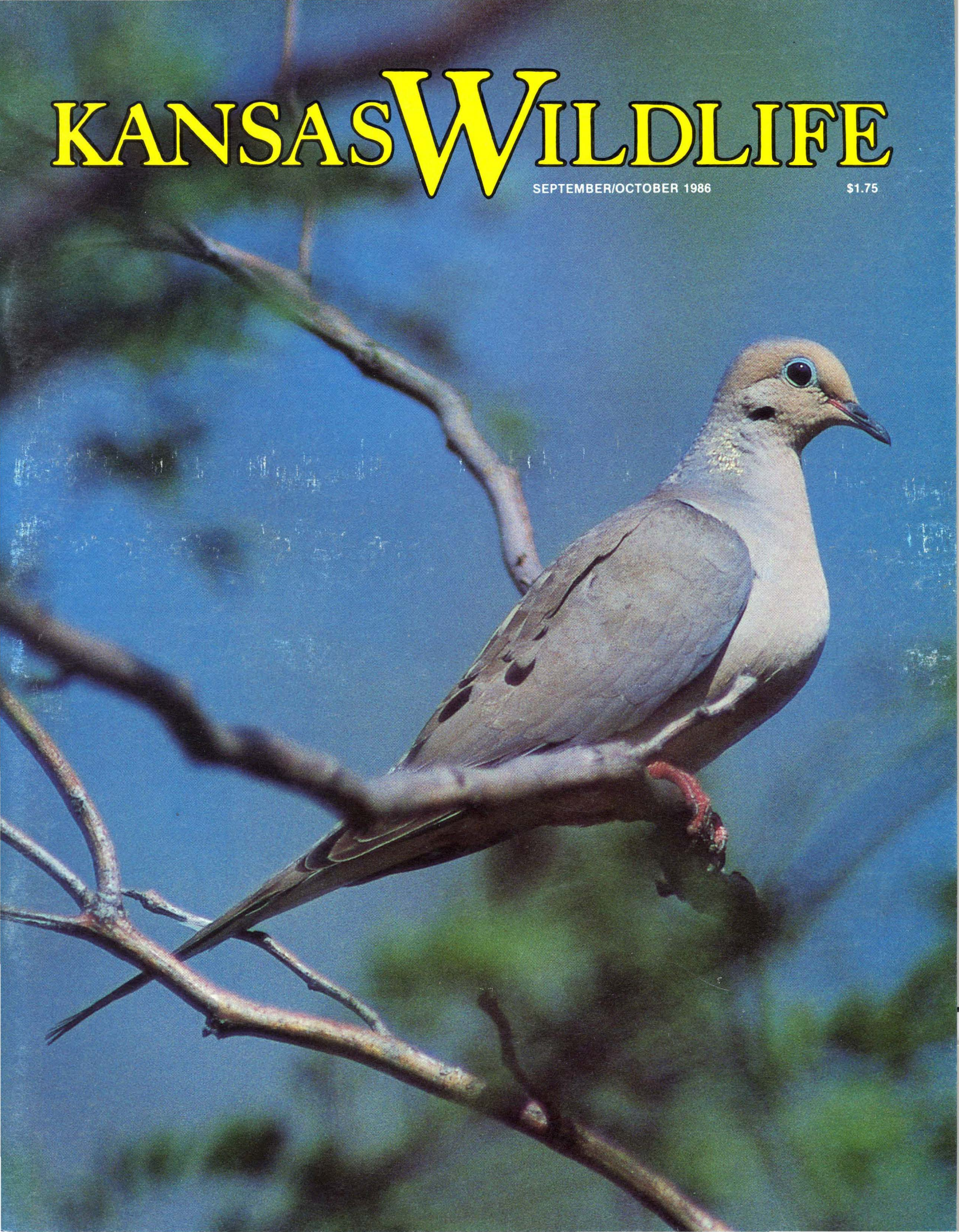


# KANSAS WILDLIFE

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986

\$1.75



# KANSAS WILDLIFE

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986

Vol. 43, No. 5

**GOVERNOR**  
John Carlin

**COMMISSIONERS**

Joe Fowler, Chairman  
*Weir*

Gary Caplinger  
*Larned*

William Carriger Sr.  
*Topeka*

Ronald Hopkins  
*Wichita*

John Ostmeyer  
*Colby*

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Director**

Bill Hanzlick

**Assistant Director**

Kent Jackson

**Chief of Administrative Services**

George Axline

**Chief of Information-Education**

Mike Cox

**Chief of Fisheries**

Mike Theurer

**Chief of Game**

Darrell Monti

**Chief of Law Enforcement**

Omar Stavlo

**MAGAZINE STAFF**

**Editor**

Paul G. Koenig

**Associate Editor**

Mike Miller

**Illustrator**

Patti Murphy

**Photographer**

Mike Blair

**Staff Writers**

Rob Manes

Mary Kay Spanbauer

Joyce Harmon Depenbusch

Bob Mathews

**Editorial Assistant**

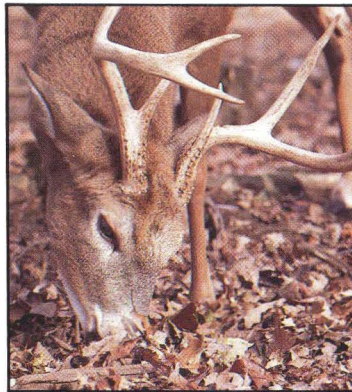
Bev Aldrich

**Circulation**

Kathy Gosser

KANSAS WILDLIFE (ISSN 0279-9030) is the official bimonthly publication of the Kansas Fish & Game Commission, Rural Route 2, Box 54A, Pratt, KS. 67124 (316) 672-5911. Subscription rates; one year (6 issues) \$6; two years (12 issues) \$11; and three years (18 issues) \$15. Single copies are available at \$1.75 per copy. Articles in the magazine may be reprinted with permission provided proper credit is given. Second class postage paid at Wichita, Kan., 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



6

**THE BUCK STOPS HERE**

Big George

1

**The Games Doves Play**

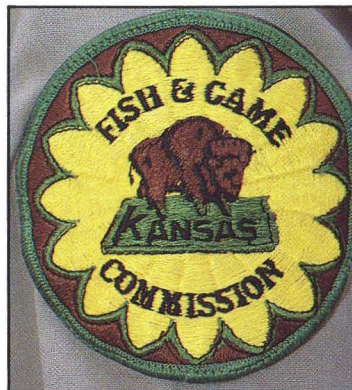
Just a brief hunt with me signals even the likes of Betty Crocker that I'm no expert when it comes to dove hunting. by Rob Manes

2

**Bucking The Odds**

Deer are creatures of habit . . . sometimes. And that means they can be intercepted during their travels . . . sometimes. by Gene Brehm

6



11

**Fishy Business**

We're not CIA agents, yet many Kansans don't know what we do to protect and enhance the state's fisheries resource. by Tommie A. Berger

11

**the center section**

edited by Mike Miller

15

**Return Of The Prairie?**

Much of the original Kansas prairie has vanished. But the Conservation Reserve Program should restore some of this land. by Bob Culbertson

28



36

**Bowhunting School**

The International Bowhunting Education Program informs and educates bowhunters on the fundamentals of their sport. by Jerry Burkhart

32

**KANSAS WILDLIFE Gallery**

photos by Mike Blair

36

**Singing The Blues**

The Kansas Fish and Game Commission has trapped and transplanted scaled quail in several southwest counties since 1982. by Mark Sexson

38



**About The Covers**

**Front:** Mike Blair photographed this Reno County mourning dove using a 600mm lens. Blair set his aperture at f/8, his shutter speed at 1/250th of a second. The dove was attracted to two decoys Blair had rigged in a honey locust.

**Back:** Gene Brehm captured this six-month-old doe last November with the aid of a 400mm lens. Brehm set his shutter speed at 1/125th of a second. Aperture was f/11.

**HIGH GROUND**

First Bass For The Lass by Mary Kay Spanbauer

41

**Editorial Creed:** To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

# THE BUCK STOPS HERE



## Big George

**O**n the day after the Kansas City Royals won the 1985 World Series, the city threw a parade for her victorious sons.

Nice job, you guys, the downtown crowd told the handsome gladiators. And party, baby. Party.

Which the town did and so, presumably, the guys who creamed the St. Louis Cardinals in Game 7. George Howard Brett, the Royals veteran third baseman, likes a party, too. But on this day, after all the smiles, speeches and attaboys, George Brett rain-checked the party. He and former teammate Mike Jones drove to a western Missouri hunting preserve and quail hunted.

Crack wingshot and ace bass fisherman, Brett is not. But his love of hunting and fishing made him a natural choice for honorary chairman of National Hunting and Fishing Day. Sept. 27 marks the 15th annual observance of NHF Day.

Established in 1972 with presidential and congressional approval, NHF Day recognizes American hunters and fishermen for their role in wildlife conservation. Each year sportsmen contribute more than \$600 million to conservation programs, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation. (For more information on NHF Day in Kansas, see page 27.)

Brett's earliest hunts were at his brothers' side in the Southern California desert. But hunting trips weren't as

frequent as trips to the beach. "I did what my brothers did," says Brett. And hitting the beach is much more attractive than sweating the desert.

Brett rarely hunted again until 1975, when then-Royals manager Whitey Herzog took him quail hunting. Brett and Herzog are still tight pals. Whitey invited George to go fishing before Game 6 of the 1985 World Series. Brett said yes at first, then cancelled. Fishing is supposed to take a man's mind off his business, but that's probably not the best move when your team is down three games to two in the World Series.

Last year while fishing with teammate Bret Saberhagen, Brett caught a 7½-pound largemouth bass in Peculiar, Mo. Brett had the lunker mounted and hung the prize keeper between his and Saberhagen's locker. Sabes was a frequent fishing companion in 1985 but through early July the team's ace pitcher and third baseman had yet to hit the water this season.

When they fished together, Brett showed a liking for spinnerbaits. Saberhagen would rather work a plastic worm.

"I don't know how to worm fish yet," Brett confides. "I haven't mastered the technique. But I like Hula Poppers and other topwaters. It's that excitement of seeing (the strike) happen. Even if you don't catch them, you can still see the hit."

During the off-season Brett bass fishes near his home in Rancho Mirage, Calif. His favorite fishing holes? The water hazards on the golf course that is his backyard. Brett rises early and fishes those small ponds until about 8 or just before golfers begin filling the fairways.

This year he'll also spend several days marlin fishing off the tip of Baja California. Last year he boated a 140-pound marlin and wants to better that mark this time out.

"I had a blast last year . . . five of us on an 80-foot yacht," Brett remembers. "You jump on a plane and go there for one reason, and that's to catch fish."

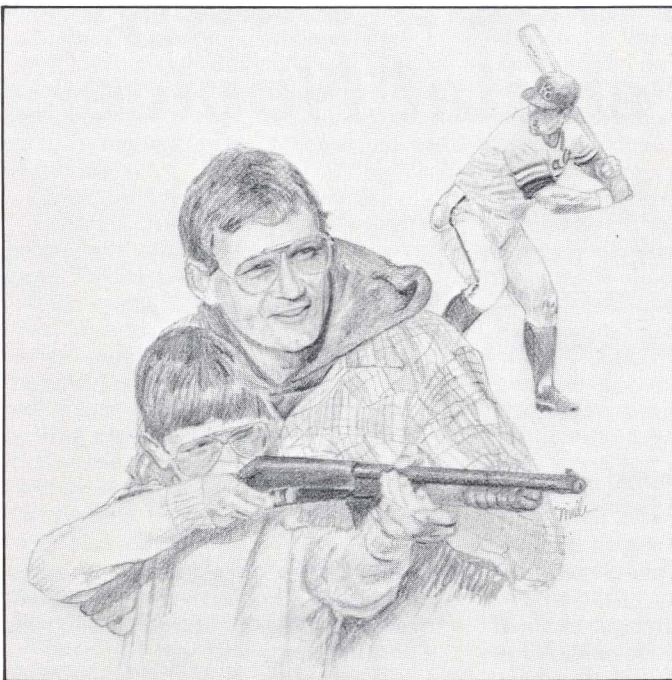
Brett likes to golf, too, and since lower Baja is hurting for golf courses, he and his friends got to thinking. "We figured if we'd go to Hawaii, we could play golf *and* fish." These, of course, are the dreams of the off-season.

On Sept. 27, about a week before season's end, American sportsmen will celebrate their contribution to wildlife conservation. Forgive the honorary chairman, though, if he doesn't join in the festivities. He must prepare for a 7:05 home game that night against the Oakland A's.

Talk of big bass and huge marlin will have to wait.

*Paul*

Paul G. Koenig  
Editor



Mike Miller illustration



# ***The Games Doves Play: Tips From A Perennial Novice***

Just a brief hunt with me signals even the likes of Betty Crocker that I'm no expert when it comes to doves. The perennial novice speaks.

by Rob Manes  
*Education Coordinator*

**"**I can only tell you how. I can't do it for you," a nearly-out-of-patience football coach once explained to me. His arm was draped fatherly around my shoulders, but I

suspect his other hand was clenched in a tight fist.

It's with that same frustrated spirit that I scratch out these dove-shooting tips. Though I've been chasing those

cooing devils since before my teens, just a brief dove hunt with me signals even the likes of Betty Crocker that I'm no expert.

Anyway, I've studied this ego-bust-



Benny Yates illustration

ing matter enough to know many of the fine points. So let me tell you — not show you — some things that might improve your dove hunting.

A short anecdote illustrates how I view mourning doves. Last fall a buddy and I were standing at the end of a long, wide shelterbelt. A lone dove came flying toward us over the center of the trees.

“Here he comes,” I said softly.

“Yeah,” my buddy barely whispered, without averting his skyward gaze. “We’ll get him.”

Sure enough, the dove came right over our end, just above the trees. But as we shouldered our Remingtons, I thought I saw the devilish bird wink and grin at us. It fell into a steep dive, pulling up just before it smacked the dust at the shelterbelt’s end. Then the bird executed a stunning barrel role that banked it hard around the dense trees and out of sight.

We were left stammering and out-classed. Neither of us had fired, though the dove came within 15 yards.

There’s no way to prepare for such a shooting situation, but you can use a

few special mental tricks to improve your success. Perhaps the most fundamental aspect of wingshooting is seeing the target clearly. Your attention should be focused on that dove, so much that you can pick out missing feathers. Concentrate on the target the way a pitcher concentrates on the catcher’s glove.

No amount of sight concentration will correct poor shooting form. Your head should be forward and down, your cheek resting solidly on the stock. The stock should be gripped firmly, just as a pistol grip is held. The other hand should support the forearm, without squeezing too tightly. You must be able to elevate and swing the gun barrel smoothly.

Shooting too quickly can be a problem, too. Give yourself time to do everything right — see the target, get your head into position and shoulder the gun properly.

Perhaps the most feared shot is the overhead in-comer. Fact is, it’s one of the easiest. Remember, it’s mainly a mind game. Concentrate on the target.

You should start the overhead in-

comer shot by forming a sight picture with the dove just above the barrel’s end. As the target draws near, swing the barrel smoothly upward so that it blots out the bird. Fire the moment the bird disappears completely and keep swinging the barrel backward. Nationally acclaimed shotgun expert Tom Roster summed this shooting technique best: “Aim, blot, fire, follow through.”

**T**hough I’ve made the overhead in-comer shot many times, it still amazes me. My Brittany, Buck, likes it because the birds frequently fall at my feet. This saves him the trouble of retrieving dry, loose-feathered doves on a hot September day. Surprised by such a dove that fell almost on him, Buck once vaulted off a steep bank, propelled by his mortal fear of snakes. He offered only a look of disgust as he returned to await the next retrieve.

Straightaway shots are even easier. Simply form a sight picture with the

dove right on top of the barrel and pull the trigger. If the bird is quartering away slightly, only a small lead is needed. The important thing is to keep the bead just below your target.

Pass shooting doves is great fun, but I can't afford the shells I need to fill a limit that way. Buck usually crouches low in the weeds during pass-shooting sessions. The cover makes him feel safe from my spastic flailings during fits of frustration.

Still, I know pass shooting can be easy. The key is follow-through — especially with speedster doves. Once you determine your lead distances at different ranges, it's a simple matter of maintaining that sight picture before, during and after the shot. Keep the barrel swinging. Failure to do so will place your shot string behind the bird. The only way you'll become proficient at judging lead distance is through repetition. With enough practice, it becomes instinctive.

Passing shots are sometimes more difficult when the target approaches from your non-dominant side. Since I am right-handed, for example, left-to-right passers are toughest. You can make this shot easier by using a good shooting stance. Your non-dominant foot should be slightly in front of the other, and your feet should be about shoulder-width apart.

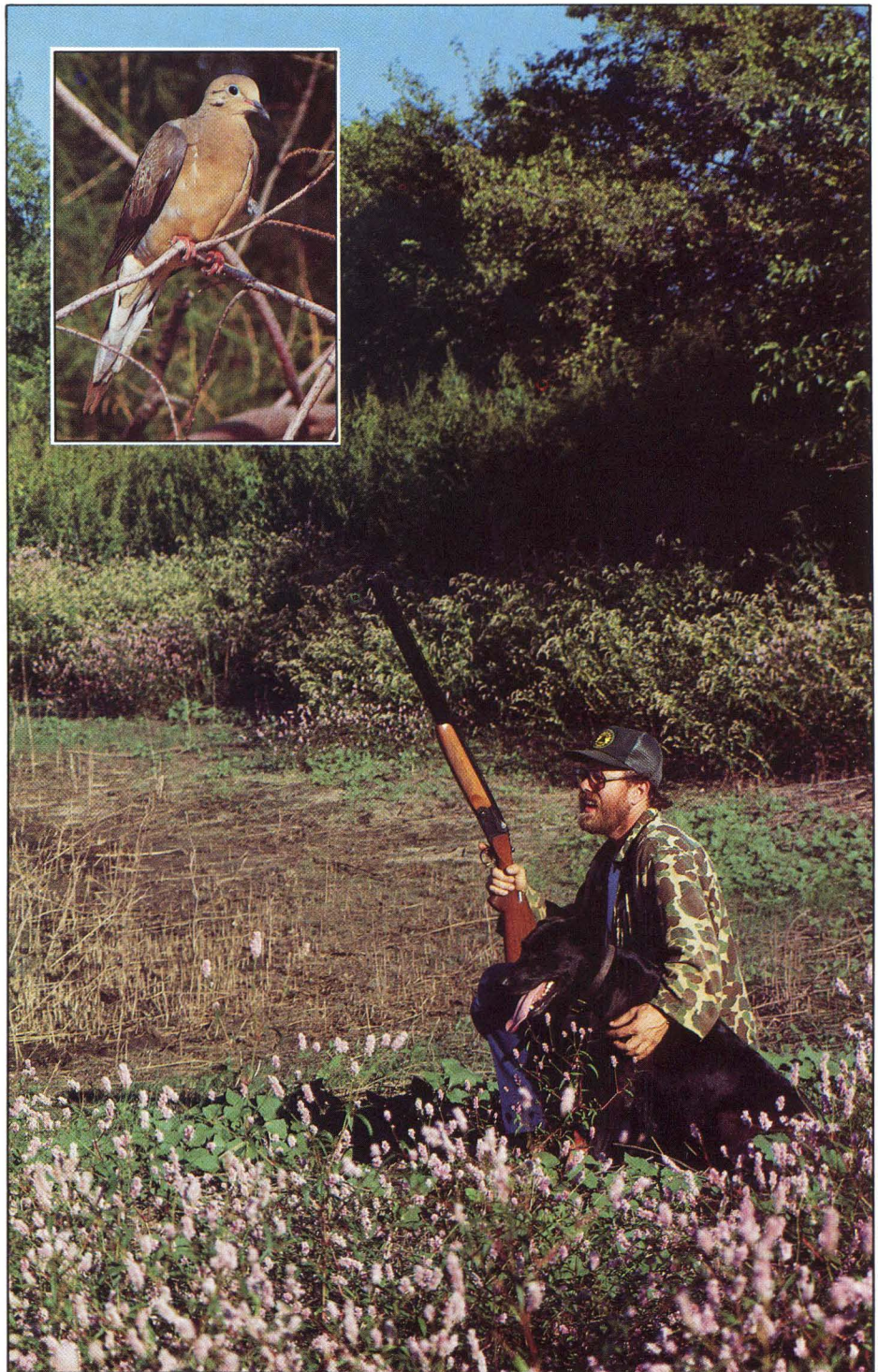
Right-to-left or left-to-right pass shooting is no problem. Just pick your lead and keep the barrel swinging. I often avoid pass shooting, however, by setting up where most of the birds will come from behind or in front of me. You, too, can make your shooting easier if you pick your spot wisely.

Traditional dove-hunting spots are watering holes, roost sites, feed fields and the flight paths between these areas. If it's fast-paced, challenging shooting you want, set up in a flight path — say between a feed area and a shelterbelt roost. There you'll get a variety of shots but mostly passing ones.

Hidden near a watering hole or feed field, you'll get more easy shots. Not only will the birds be coming to you, but they'll often be slowing down to land. Dove shooting over a watering hole often affords a look at hovering birds before they land. This makes a perfect situation for a youngster's first trips afield.

An ideal sitting spot for dove shooting is in tall weeds adjacent to sparse wheat stubble. If you can find sunflowers next to the stubble, that's even better.

You can get plenty of straightaway shots by walking along shelterbelts where doves roost. The birds will fre-



Dove hunting can be enjoyed with or without a dog, but a canine will help find downed birds. The 1986 Kansas dove season runs Sept. 1-Oct. 30. The daily limit is 15.

quently frustrate you by flying over the treetops instead of out the side.

**M**y favorite dove hunting spot is a small pond less than 25 yards in diameter. The dam is covered with tall weeds to hide Buck


and me. This little watering hole is surrounded by pasture, but nearby are roost trees and crop stubble. Doves frequently stop to water on their way from feeding to roost.

Each year several of my co-workers make a day of the dove season opener. I hate it. The event always starts my

hunting season in depression and humility. My friends at work are mostly top-flight wingshots. Even I do fairly well with pheasants and quail, but the start of dove season is torture. Practice on claybirds doesn't seem to help much either.

Last year I shot 14 times (no joke) before dropping my first dove. The year before I was 0-for-16 before I drew a feather. My friends are polite. They don't laugh, and they let me study their techniques without offering me too much coaching.

I'm nervous about this year's dove opener. So's Buck. Though my growing knowledge of the sport gives me new confidence, I've had stiffer shock absorbers installed on my pickup so I can haul more ammunition. If I can only conquer the mental aspect of dove shooting, I know I can be as good as my dead-eye hunting buddies. And Buck wouldn't have to cower in the weeds.

Let's see . . . passing shots — lead, fire, swing through. Overhead incomer — aim, blot, fire, swing through. Straightaway — dove on top of barrel and fire. Get a good stance and find a good spot. Most of all, see the target clearly. 



Gene Brehm photo

Fields adjacent to shelterbelts and tree lines provide a good place to set up your dove stand.

## Dove Hunting . . . Safely

**D**ove hunting presents some special hazards, accounting for 13 percent of the 1985 Kansas hunting accidents. Dove hunting fields often are much more crowded than fields holding pheasant or quail hunters. And each dove hunter usually fires more rounds because the bag limit is liberal and the birds often come in large groups. Doves tend to be harder to hit, too.

It's important to know where other hunters are around your position. Let them know where you are, too. Hunter orange clothing is the best protection. Even an orange cap may be enough to alert a nearby hunter of your presence. Only two of the 38 hunters involved in accidents last year were wearing safety orange.

If you set up to hunt a field before dawn, listen carefully for voices signaling the presence of other gunners. And don't be afraid to let them know you're there.

Dove hunting is a good beginner's shooting sport, so give special consideration to youngsters who may be in the area. Nearly 20 percent of last year's hunting-accident victims were not yet 21 years old. About the same percentage of the shooters involved were in that age group.

If you're guiding a new hunter, be especially attentive to his or her gun handling as well as the youngster's hunting success. A good first experience will draw them back to the sport.

Perhaps more than with other types of hunting, dove hunting presents one of the most common accident situations — hunters swinging their aim to follow moving targets. When the gunner's attention is focused on the bird, it's easy to overlook another person in the line of fire. When doves are coming from all directions, as they often do, this danger becomes more acute. Take your time, get mentally set to make a good shot and be sure the line

of fire is clear. Nearly three-fourths of last year's hunting accidents involved shotguns, and 92 percent were at ranges of less than 50 yards.

A slow, deliberate shooting style also will prevent you from taking the wrong bird. Kestrels, bluejays, swallows and others birds can momentarily fool even experienced dove hunters.

Avoid a line of fire that is low and parallel to the ground unless you're absolutely certain all is clear. If there's a possibility that other people are nearby, wait for a higher shot. This is particularly important when hunting near farmsteads or roads.

Walking shelterbelts for doves may be dangerous as well. Again, blaze orange can prevent disaster. Special precautions are required if blockers are used or if there is more than one person on each side of the trees. It makes the hunt more pleasurable and safe if you take turns with the first shot at each bird.

—Rob Manes



Gene Brehm photo





Big bucks are where you find them — in the thick stuff, at left, or at field's edge, above. Veteran bowhunters know nothing pays off like preseason scouting.

# Bucking The Odds

Deer are creatures of habit . . . sometimes.  
And that means they can be intercepted  
during their travels . . . sometimes.  
Time now to start scouting.

by Gene Brehm  
*Videographer*

**D**eer are creatures of habit . . . sometimes. They tend to travel on paths that we call deer trails and often feed in the same general areas in their home range. Because of these tendencies, humans would like to think that given some luck, deer can be intercepted during their travels. And, in a nutshell, that's the game that bowhunters play.

During the fall, deer travel for two major reasons. They move every day to find food. During the rut, which peaks in November, movement is triggered by an overpowering sex drive.

Since the Kansas bowhunting season opens Oct. 1, scouting should concentrate initially on the movements of feeding deer. These early scouts should consist of two procedures.

First, look for tracks leading to and from feeding and bedding areas. Once you spot an active feeding area by reading tracks, glass that area at dawn and dusk to determine schedules. You can't tell time from the tracks. Only through observation can you determine the timetables deer follow.

Question yourself constantly during observation periods. Are the deer trav-



Gene Brehm photo

Big bucks will rub sapling-size trees on up to 12-inches. Above, a big buck's calling card.



eling into the wind as they move to feed? From what cover are they emerging? Do the deer travel through any natural bottlenecks that might later become ideal ambush sites? Do the deer pass these sites during legal shooting hours? That list will grow as your experiences grow.

When you're satisfied with the visual check of the terrain, walk the area once again and mentally merge the data. In Kansas the prevailing winds are usually north-northwest or south-southwest. With this thought foremost in mind, check those spots that you have conceived as bottlenecks. You're now looking for tree stand sites. A tree overlooking an avenue that naturally funnels the deer's travel lanes is a candidate. But you'll need two such trees, one for each wind direction.

Life being what it is, trees usually don't grow how and where we want them. Ground blinds can be used successfully in such cases. Late in the 1985 season, veteran bowhunter Mike Gilbert of Garden City observed a huge whitetail moving to feed on an alfalfa field. No trees grew in the area, and it seemed unsatisfactory to perch in sagebrush. Keeping the prevailing wind direction in mind, Mike dug a pit near the trail that the big buck had been using. He'd used the tactic successfully on antelope.

The tactic proved effective on

whitetails, too. Mike used the pit unsuccessfully for several hunts, but the big whitetail finally made its appearance. Mike Gilbert's experience, planning and shooting practice all paid dividends. That buck scored 167 4/8 Pope and Young points.

Kenny Marsh of Pratt took his 1984 buck from ground level by choice. Kenny watched that buck on two consecutive evenings. "That deer was moving from a bedding area to a feeding area," Kenny explained. "His route took him through a bottleneck site where he milled around until dusk."

"On the third evening the wind was right, so I took a stand in the crotch of a large cottonwood that forked at the ground. The buck came in just as he had the previous two evenings and I got my shot at point-blank range." Scoring 134 3/8 points, the whitetail was Kenny's first Pope and Young buck in 16 years of hunting. Sound scouting made it work.

If November arrives and your deer tag is still in your billfold, take a new approach. The deer rut usually peaks at this time. Experienced bowhunters know this, and rutting behavior sign begins to guide their hunting decisions.

Aside from the track sign that you've noted from the onset of the season, two new types of sign become noteworthy: rubs and scrapes. I use rubs for one bit of information only. They may be used to indicate the relative size of the bucks that make them. Bucks have mock battles with trees. The scarred tree is then known as a rub. Big bucks will attack trees from sapling size up to those with 12-inch diameters. Younger bucks stick to the small stuff. If you're relatively sane and choose not to be a trophy hunter you can totally ignore rubs. But if you like to hunt the big boys, an impressive rub should trigger intensive scouting in that area.

**D**uring the 1984 bow season, I was photographing deer on private land and discovered a very impressive rub in November. My brother Gary had permission to hunt the area so I mentioned the sign to him. His close examination of the area was promising, and he chose to hunt the area intensively. All the homework paid off. On the final day of the first segment of the bow season Gary shot that deer over a scrape. The rack

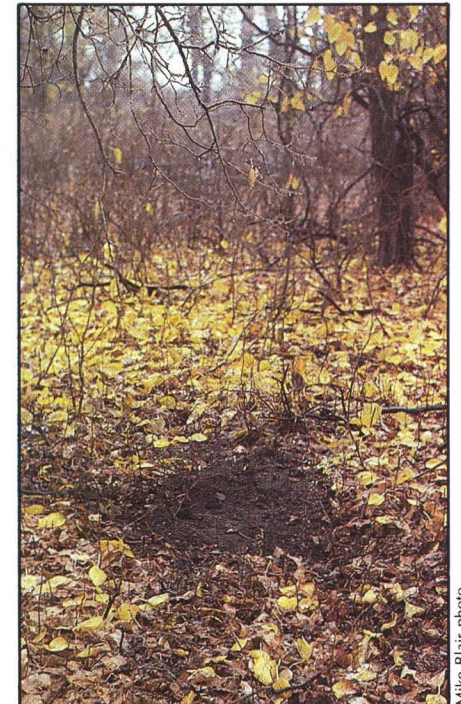
scored 175 5/8 Pope and Young points. I'm learning to be more selfish with my information.

Thinking of that deer brings to mind one more aspect of reading signs. That rub was the only clue that either Gary or I found in the area. Tracks found there could never have been considered unusually large. A check of the hooves of that trophy buck showed us why. The tracks that big buck's hooves had been leaving were only slightly larger than those of the 1½-year-old buck I took that same year. Big-antlered bucks are not always big-bodied deer.

Volumes have been written about the whitetail deer scrape signs. Let's first discuss what a scrape is. Scrapes are made by a buck as a type of sexual signpost for does in his territory. These pawed-out areas are always found under overhanging branches low enough to be reached by the deer using it. The location of a scrape may actually be a spot where a doe has urinated. Then a roaming buck may scent the chemical "signals" and paw away, or scrape, the spot. The hottest, or primary, scrapes are always where does often travel or loaf. Bucks check these areas frequently as the breeding season peaks. When a doe is approaching estrus she may urinate in a scrape to send out the message. Because of this unique behavior, bow-



A buck paws a scrape as a sort of sexual signpost for does in his territory.



Mike Blair photo



Joe McDonald photo

A feeding deer may present a good shot. Quartering and broadside are the two best.

hunters have successfully used scrape sites as their most productive hunting areas during November.

There is good reason for this success. At no other time of the season do deer travel so actively during the daylight hours. I have watched many scrape sites while photographing for *KANSAS WILDLIFE* magazine. Some sites that seemed active proved unproductive. Yet one 10-point buck

seemed to check his scrape line like clockwork, coming at dawn, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and again at dusk.

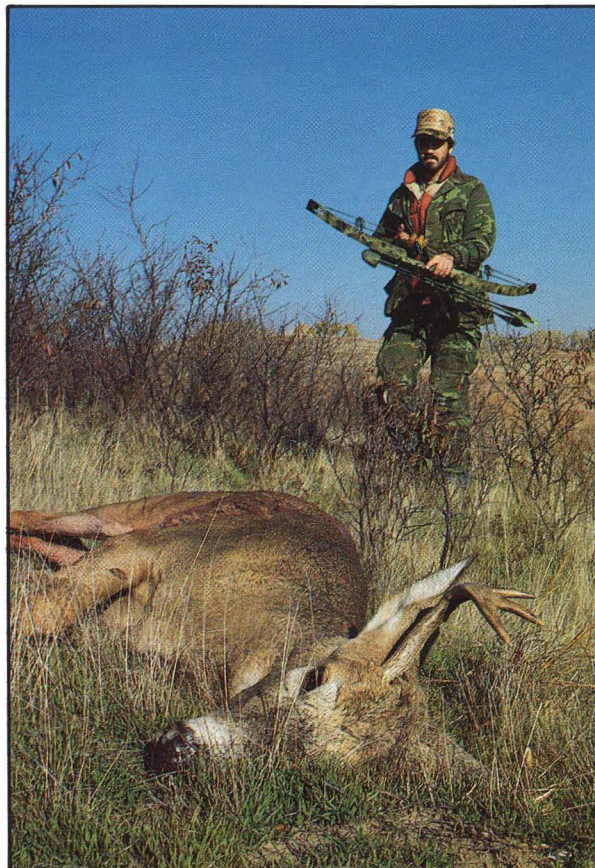
Since a whitetail buck works many active scrapes during his daily routine, a hunter can be choosy in his choice of stand sites. Look for a site that has it all: a scrape located in a travel lane with food nearby and, possibly best of all, in a natural bottleneck. These factors all add up to meat in the freezer.

**N**ever occupy such a stand when the wind direction seems unfavorable. Patience is rewarded in bowhunting as in no other sport. Wait for the right conditions, and always maintain alternate stand sites. Ideally I look for a stand with the previously mentioned characteristics and then go one step further. If a buck's scrape line route ever travels east-to-west or west-to-east, then there's my spot. With Kansas winds as they are, a smart hunter should seldom be scented at such a site. On south wind days, set up north of the scrape, and on north wind days make your stand south of the scrape.

Not all scouting must be done in the field. In unfamiliar areas, use of good topography maps can be a powerful advantage. I usually look for intersections of habitat types. Here in south-central Kansas where I hunt and photograph, shelterbelts may intersect to form a T-junction. Deer may be expected to come from any of three directions. These maps can be ordered from the United States Geological Survey.

Thus far we've only discussed deer sign and how to read it. A good hunter, however, should remember that as he scouts he can leave a lot of sign for deer. And they make their own interpretations. I'm talking about scent. Some good hunters use rubber hip boots as their footwear when they walk into their hunting areas. If rubber boots are properly cared for and stored, human scent can be minimal. Deer have many senses on which they rely heavily. They have keen eyesight on moving objects but will often further investigate an object that has caught their attention. What they're doing is trying to position themselves downwind to use the sense they trust most of all — their sense of smell. I have taken many photographs of deer that have caught a slight movement from my position, but seldom have I photographed a buck that has caught my scent first.

Last fall I was photographing white-tails in a hardwood forest. I spotted a nice 8-point buck slowly working his way parallel to my path of travel. After positioning myself beside a large oak tree, I realized that I could only take a back-lit photograph of the deer if he continued on his present route. Deciding to go for broke and attempt for a



We seldom label it as such, but bowhunters are nature-watchers in a grand sense. The sight of a magnificent buck standing on a huge field, above, is reason enough to be out during bow season. The actual kill, right, is rewarding but only a part of the hunt.

front-lit shot, I used two sticks to imitate a fight between two deer. I'm almost certain that the buck was not fooled into thinking a duel was in progress. But since his eyesight did not satisfy his curiosity, the buck moved downwind to remove all doubt. Downwind happened to also front lit. I had time for several photographs before the wind currents betrayed me, and the deer bolted with a fury.

Luck was not with me in a similar situation while bowhunting during the 1974 season. For three consecutive evenings I'd watched a 10-point white-tailed buck move 100 yards upwind of my tree stand. On the fourth evening I moved quickly to a tree that, from a distance, looked to be a good stand site. Finding that I could not safely climb the tree, I backed up some 30 yards to a suitable tree to begin my vigil. Like clockwork the buck approached from the west 30 minutes before sunset. Also as expected, my adrenal gland went to work. Many of you understand. That deer moved down the trail right at my position until he was only 12 yards away. As the buck passed, he would offer a perfect quartering shot. But no. That fool in the tree had not been wearing his rubber boots or any coyote cover scent. As the deer crossed the path that I'd taken to the first tree, he froze. There was time for a shot but I would not take that head-on shot. Better no deer than a wounded deer. It raised its tail to half-mast and almost seemed to crouch. Ten seconds passed until his brain processed the situation. Then he bolted, and I never saw that whitetail again.

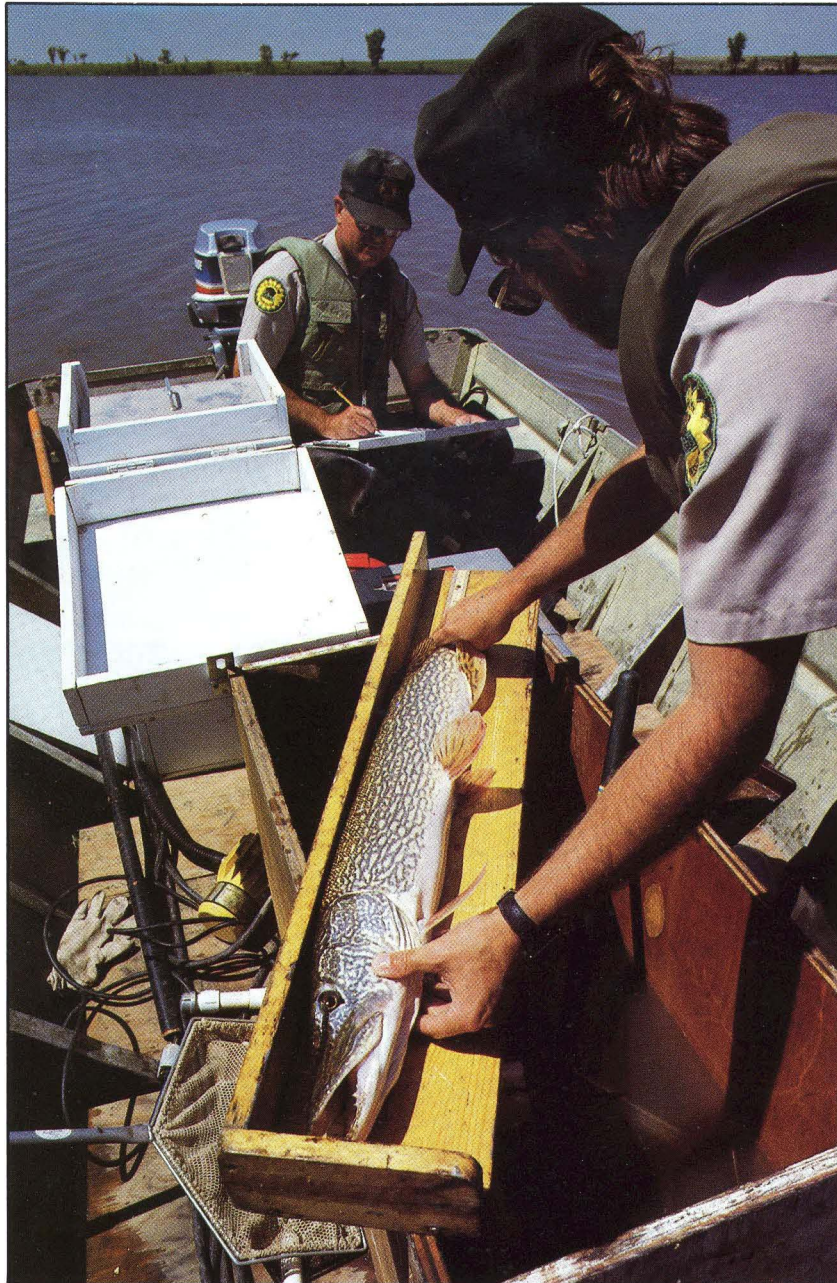
Bowhunting is truly a challenging sport. Unfortunately only the participants understand the many avenues of enjoyment the sport offers. Scouting and reading signs seems almost a separate sport of its own, so many bowhunters truly have rewarding seasons without ever releasing a shot during the season.

We seldom label it such, but bowhunters are nature watchers in a grand sense. Sights are revealed to us that few other outdoorsmen witness, thereby fueling hours of off-season stories to be shared with friends. We hunt the white-tailed deer using clues from his sign, usually to find that the animal defies interpretation.



*The author, who is based in Pratt, has been fooling with and fooled by white-tailed deer for 25 years.*

Cene Brehm photos



Mike Blair photo

Biologists at work: Ron Marteney measures and weighs a northern pike while supervisor Lanny Jones records the data on Butler State Fishing Lake.

# Fishy Business

by **Tommie A. Berger**  
*District Fisheries Biologist  
Dodge City*

Fisheries management: A look at my job. Second in a series.

**W**hat's the very first thought that comes to mind when you hear the words fish and game or see a uniformed employee with a sunflower emblem on each shoulder? I'd be willing to bet 90 percent of you said game warden. Right?

Well, that's not always the case. There are many employees of the Kansas Fish and Game Commission who aren't game wardens or wildlife conservation officers, as we now call

them. Perhaps by explaining a bit about a fisheries biologist's job I can show you how we work with the public and within our agency.

The Kansas Fish and Game Commission is a conservation agency with a staff of some 276 employees. The titles are varied: director, administrator, biologist, wildlife conservation officer, secretary and maintenance worker, to name only a few of many positions. These occupations are all geared toward the same goal: to conserve wildlife and valuable habitat; to provide recreational, educational and wildlife-related opportunities compatible with the resources and consistent with public demand; to inform the public of wildlife's status and problems.

The Kansas Fish and Game Commission is organized into five divisions: Fisheries, Game, Law Enforcement, Administrative Services and Information-Education. The division I'm assigned to — Fisheries — is composed of three sections: research, culture and management. Research and culture are support services for management, but all three work hand-in-hand to meet the needs of Kansas fishermen.

A fisheries management biologist implements decisions and applies conservation principles to improve the quality and quantity of a resource. Fisheries management is defined as the art and science of producing sustained annual crops of wild fish for recreational and commercial purposes. Management biologists carry out that definition. Fisheries management means growing more largemouth bass and less bullheads, fewer but larger bluegill, lots of channel catfish and fewer carp. In other words, management is manipulating fish populations in a reservoir, lake, pond or stream to produce the most, healthiest fish. Management biologists evaluate the resource's needs and the public's desires and blend these two wants into something beneficial to all.

A fisheries biologist's work year begins in early spring. Preparation and equipment repair are generally top priority before starting fieldwork. Traps and nets used in the fall are always in need of repair. Vehicle trailering lights always seem to go on the blink during winter, and boat motors need the cobwebs cleaned out after winter storage.

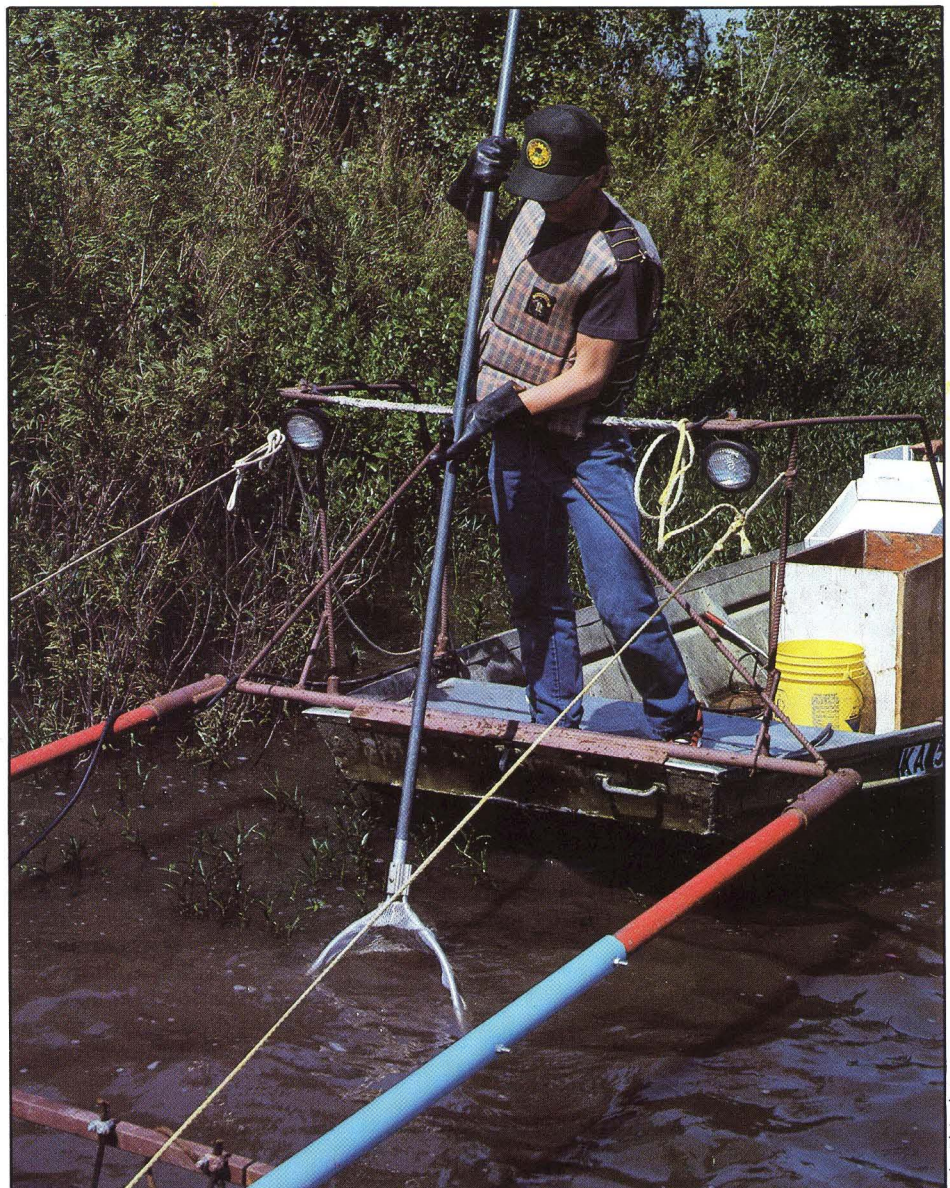
Next comes the business of trapping walleye, striped bass and white bass for egg-taking, tagging or population evaluation. Brood fish are taken each year from selected reservoirs for egg and sperm collection. These eggs are artificially fertilized and hatched in one of our local hatcheries, which produce fish for our stocking programs.

Tagging studies are conducted to evaluate fish growth, movement and harvest. When I was stationed in the Manhattan area we tagged walleye on Tuttle Creek Reservoir and saw several of these tagged fish travel 30-40 miles up the Blue River to the Marysville Dam. Some of the walleye also moved out the tubes to the Rocky Ford area and even on down the Kansas River between Wamego and Topeka.

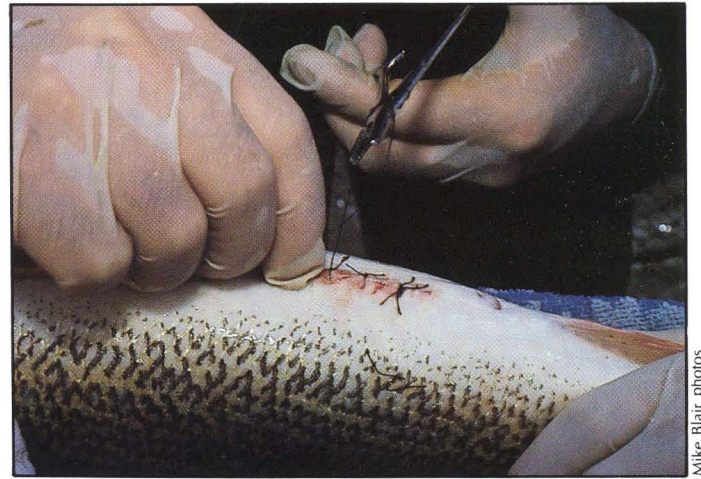
Other spring work includes gathering fishing reports, conducting creel

surveys on area lakes, teaching fishing clinics, performing habitat work and meeting with community lake organizations, to name a few of several activities.

Late spring and early summer becomes an even busier time for the fisheries manager. General data collection continues with special test nettings of fish populations, electrofishing for black bass, special projects (such as implanting radio transmitters in walleye or striped bass to evaluate summer movement), lake renovations, stocking evaluations and gizzard shad investigations. Summer projects include shoreline seining, cove treatments to evaluate fish populations, stream surveys, vegetation control,



Electrofishing is one way biologists can sample a lake's fish populations.



Mike Blair photos

With the help of a summer aide, the author implants a radio transmitter into a healthy walleye, at left. A few minutes later Berger applies the finishing stitch, at right. These transmitters, which have a range of 500-600 yards, allow biologists to monitor a fish's summer movements.

water chemical analysis, fish stockings, farm pond inspections and other assorted duties.

Fall is one of the busiest times for field biologists, who conduct nettings on all public waters. These nettings provide valuable data on a lake's overall fish population. Lengths, weights, scales and spines are taken from the fish and recorded. Populations are evaluated, and this data is compared with that from recent years to evaluate changes. Special field projects are completed at this time, too. Channel catfish stockings in state and community lakes occur in October or early November. Then all equipment is cleaned and stored for the winter.

Office work is the norm during winter, and occasionally the paper blizzard inside seems to rival the snowy version outside.

Many people think fisheries biologists take a winter vacation, but no such luck. Ask my typewriter, calculator or microscope. Winter work includes reading scales and spines to age fish, gathering, sorting and analyzing all data collected throughout the year, writing progress reports and developing management plans for the next year.

Budgeting is another winter project. All budgets for upcoming fiscal years are developed, discussed and passed up the chain of command. Many biologists are involved in teaching fishing classes at this time. In cooperation with the Dodge City Recreation Commission, I've developed a class that meets once a week for eight weeks from February through April. These two-hour classes are popular—more than 60 persons showed up weekly for an eight-week session.

Many people think fisheries biologists take a winter vacation, but no such luck. Ask my typewriter, calculator or microscope. Winter work includes reading scales and spines to age fish, gathering, sorting and analyzing all data collected throughout the year, writing progress reports . . .

Much of our habitat construction is done during the winter and early spring. We put lots of Christmas trees or brush on the ice, then let nature take its course. Habitat work can be a monumental task with just one biologist, but we get lots of volunteer help from local fishermen, sportsman groups and bass clubs. And we really do appreciate the help. Were it not for these fellows, we couldn't do near the volume of work. But neither would we get the criticism.

I'll never forget the older gentleman at Pottawatomie State Fishing Lake #1. Every time I went to the lake it seemed he was there, and he took each

opportunity to give me a tongue-lashing on all the snags I'd put in the lake. He said he'd lost hundreds of dollars worth of tackle and numerous large fish on my brushpiles, which were clearly marked. I took note that nearly every time I'd seen him, he was fishing on the north end of the dam right near a brushpile.

Finally I asked him why he always fished in the same area. His comment was: "This is the only place I ever get any bites."

"Why don't you throw over here, away from that brushpile?" I asked.

"If I get too far away from them snags, I don't get no bites!" he said.

"Well, does that tell you anything?" I said, mumbling, as I went about my business.

He scratched his bearded chin, contemplated the situation for a minute and called after me, "Say, buddy, you got any more of these brushpiles in the lake where I can fish?" Finally the correlation between the brushpile, getting bites and snags finally dawned on him. His fishing success continued to improve as he fished the habitat, and he never complained again about the biologist and his blankety-blank brushpiles.

Management biologists frequently interact with the fisheries research and culture sections. All sections must work as a team in order to achieve a management objective.

**W**e in the management section depend heavily on our research biologists for expertise and guidance. In the past few years, for instance, Fish and Game has

developed length limits on largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass. Don Gabelhouse, our pond research biologist, developed a study to evaluate length limits on selected state lakes and reservoirs. With the assistance of management biologists who collected data, posted and helped enforce length-limit regulations and supplied statewide information, Don was able to develop usable and workable length-limit regulations for the state. Each management biologist determines what length limit best suits the bass in the lake he manages and then sends that recommendation to headquarters. There it's printed into the annual fishing regulations.

Dave Willis, our reservoir researcher, has developed a host of recommendations on net types, seining and electrofishing catch rates, evaluating forage populations, to name a few areas he studies. Our research people also help by editing professional papers we develop on management projects and provide valuable ideas on developing our own little research efforts.

Sometimes management biologists are aware of problems with certain species in a lake. That problem might be common in other lakes. He may then request that research be done to study that problem. Some of these ideas might be crappie overpopulation in small lakes, threadfin shad introductions and benefits, or stocking rates of channel catfish in small lakes. These problems are examples of problems recognized but prove too time-consuming for the management biologist to tackle.

The interaction between the management biologist and the culture section may be a bit more clear. Obviously, as we manage fish populations we occasionally need fish stocked in our lakes. The culture section is in charge of raising these fish. Each year fisheries management biologists develop a list of fish needs for the coming year. The list includes fish stocked to maintain existing populations, new fish introductions and experimental fish introductions.

The culture section then plans to produce the fish management biologists request. Occasionally, in the case of walleye, striped bass, white bass and sometimes even black bass, sunfish and catfish, brood fish are needed to meet culture goals. Management personnel usually help collect these brood fish from state waters and either strip the eggs and sperm on location or transport the fish to the hatchery. This joint effort ensures a continual supply of fish to meet statewide needs.

Culture and management people work closely to get fish to the lake. Walleye fry are usually stocked in April, wipers and largemouth bass fingerlings in May or June and channel catfish and fingerling sunfish during the fall. Management personnel also are involved in assisting culture biologists with draining of rearing ponds and other hatchery maintenance work.

Fisheries management biologists lead an interesting life and get involved in lots of exciting projects. No, we don't just fish all the time, and although we all enjoy our jobs and wouldn't likely trade them for others, we do have some nasty jobs, too. In-



The familiar buffalo-and-sunflower emblem, worn by Kansas Fish and Game Commission field personnel and summer aides.

vestigating fish kills is no fun, especially when you have to count thousands of dead and bloated fish carcasses while wading knee-deep through a polluted stream.

Other jobs I'd just as soon leave to others is getting called at 3 a.m. to help catch illegal netters. Many fisheries biologists also are deputy wildlife conservation officers and assist the Law Enforcement Division, especially on opening weekends of hunting season and over summer holiday weekends.

We assist the three other divisions, too. A fisheries management biologist might help the Game Division by planting trees in the spring, trapping and transplanting turkeys in the winter, helping on buffalo roundups and answering animal damage complaints. Assistance to the Information-Education Division might include developing photograph ideas, helping produce TV news spots, compiling fishing reports, giving fishing demonstrations and writing articles such as this one. The Administrative Services Division enlists our support, for example, on designing new fishing lakes and suggesting renovations on old lakes. We've run dump trucks, hauled riprap, poured concrete.

Everyone who works for the Kansas Fish and Game Commission is not a game warden. Those of us who work as fisheries biologists have a responsibility to the fish of this state. And to you.



Mike Blair photos

Berger fields questions from a few visitors at Clark State Fishing Lake. Keeping the public informed is part of the job, too.



# the center section

Edited by Mike Miller

## LETTERS

### BOX TURTLE FANS

Editor:

I sincerely enjoyed "The Buck Stops Here" in the July/August issue. I grew up in Argonia in the 1950s, so your article had special meaning to me. There are a lot of good kids in this country but you usually only read or hear about the ones that get into trouble. It is refreshing to read about those good kids once in a while.

Theo Smith  
Overton, Nev.

Editor:

I would like to thank everyone involved with the fine articles dealing with Kansas' newest state symbol, the ornate box turtle. I have heard many positive comments about your July/August issue because of the state reptile articles.

I am sure that the massive state and even national coverage of the ornate box turtle for state reptile project has helped make Kansans a little more aware of one of our nongame animals. Maybe the exposure of this animal to the public will even help promote a better understanding of all native plants and animals in Kansas.

Larry L. Miller  
Caldwell

Editor:

I enjoyed your article on the ornate box turtle; but it did nothing to solve a mystery. If it takes seven to eight years for the young to mature, where are they? The smallest box turtle I have ever seen in over 50 years was about two inches. There must be over a million

around, all less than one-half inch. How come I've never seen one while hunting, fishing or driving on the roads?

Bud Reagel  
Jefferson City, Mo.

Dear Mr. Reagel:

**When ornate box turtles hatch, they are the size of a quarter. According to J.T. Collins, the state's leading herpetologist, they are quite secretive and require very little space. They feed mainly on very local insects and plants. As they grow older and larger, they will develop an expanded range (up to five acres) although they never seem to move a great deal. At times, you may see numerous adults along short segments of road, particularly in the springtime. These are local populations, which attest to the total number of these animals in the wild. The young, however, simply move very little.** Ken Brunson

### ETHICS

Editor:

As a Kansas sportsman and wildlife enthusiast, I was very pleased to see "A Matter of Ethics" discussed in the July/August issue. It is, I think, a subject that gets far too little play.

. . . I have to think the sort of overindulgence discussed in the article smacks of gamehogger. Nevertheless, if our professional fisheries people are absolutely certain that these isolated cases . . . do not harm Kansas' crappie and white bass populations, then it would be a mistake to apply arbitrary daily creel limits.

On the other hand, we certainly don't have to parade the results of this type of angling behavior before the general public on the front pages of our newspapers. It is hardly the image our sport needs or deserves.

Finally, I would take hard, immutable exception to one of the statements attributed to Mike Theurer, Chief of Fisheries: "If you have a finite number of fish, birds, animals or anything else, a limit is imposed to give everyone their fair share."

The phrase "to give everyone their fair share" is a highly dangerous and explosive string of words. The very idea that the purchase of a fishing (or hunting) license entitles one to a fair share of anything is wrong. What it does do is entitle one to the "opportunity" to pursue as many fish or game animals as everyone else. (I have no doubt Mike Theurer would agree on this, at least in principle.)

All in all, though, I found "A Matter of Ethics" to be an interesting, thought-provoking article, and I look forward to more like it.

Randy Winter  
Manhattan

Dear Mr. Winter:

Your point concerning the phrase "(a limit is imposed) to give everyone their fair share" is well taken and a result, I believe, of your taking those words out of context. In no way do I mean that the fisheries resource of a lake should be handed out like fillets off a truck. The only biological function of a creel limit is to distribute harvest among users. A biological limit makes no statement concerning ethics, which is more properly placed with the user, the opportunity and most importantly, the wise use of fish and wildlife resources. Mike Theurer, Chief of Fisheries

Editor:

I am writing this letter in regard to "A Matter of Ethics," which appeared in the July/August issue. I am amazed at all the people who think just because someone catches a lot of fish that he or she is a slob fisherman. Did it ever occur to anyone that some people really love to eat fish? In my way of thinking, if someone catches 289 crappies and cleans them all, those fish won't go to waste. You should be more concerned about the people who catch a lot of fish (or even one for that matter) and

don't get around to cleaning them until they are spoiled.

I've fished Clinton Reservoir every year since it opened, and although it has its ups and downs (mostly ups), I can't see where fishing pressure has made a dent in the crappie populations.

The most important point I wish to make is that if there were a need for a limit the Kansas Fish and Game Commission would set one. I've lived and fished in Kansas all my life and have watched the quality and quantity of fishing grow every year. Kansas Fish and Game should be given more credit, and people should not question why they do something. They do it for us, the fishermen of Kansas.

Robert F. Cook  
Kansas City

## CALL FOR SNAKES

Editor:

As I read through your magazine, I can't help but notice that one very important part of Kansas wildlife is ignored. I would like to make an appeal for the snakes of Kansas.

As one of the most misunderstood creatures since Adam and Eve, or whenever man became man, snakes have been unduly persecuted. I make my plea to all readers to not kill a snake just because you see it. Just avoid it in the road and anywhere else. Let it live, for not one snake is going to seek you out just to bite you. Anytime you encounter a snake, remember, don't be afraid. It will want to get away from you even more than you will want to get away from it. I am not, in any way shape or form, advocating their capture, raising, selling, and/or trade, but rather the preservation of an important and beneficial part of our natural heritage.

Steve Kamb  
Lawrence

## BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Editor:

On June 17, 1986, while combining wheat in Ellsworth County, I nearly ran over a small fawn-like animal. It was about the size of a jackrabbit and struggled to move a few feet to hide in the thin wheat and cheatgrass. My first impression as I hit the breaks was that one of the combines had already run over it, but I saw no evidence of blood . . . the white hair patch

es on each side of its rump identified it as a baby pronghorn antelope.

About 7 p.m. as we were cutting in another part of the field, we saw the mother pronghorn approach the area. Soon she left to the northeast and a small, brown "spot" followed her.

Jack Grothusen  
Ellsworth

Editor:

My brother and I were fishing in a farm pond. I was using lures and plugs. He didn't have any luck with minnows, so he wrapped a white bread tie around his hook, put lead weight on the eye of the hook and used it like a jig. He caught five nice largemouth bass. I thought that was an unusual bait.

Cliff Chambers  
Yates Center

Editor:

On June 8, while fishing at Kanopolis Reservoir, I hooked a turtle on the right foot. I identified it as a midland smooth softshell. The largest specimen listed for Kansas had a shell length of 9 5/8 inches. Mine measured 10 1/2 inches. It was a female and a state record. It is now part of the collections at the University of Kansas.

Wayne Dickerson  
Lawrence

## GOOD ADVICE

Editor:

Prompted by Gerald Segreaves' article "Floating the Ark," (July/August) my son and I decided to take the Raymond-to-Sterling float.

Taking Gerald's advice of an even better put-in spot, we put in one-half mile east of the west Raymond bridge. Barring a few obstacles between the Raymond bridges, we had good canoeing to the south Alden bridge where we camped overnight. After breakfast the next morning, we continued on to the south Sterling bridge and were picked up there.

As we were unfamiliar with the river and the surrounding countryside, we really appreciated the signs telling present location and of bridges up river and down river.

We observed wildlife, miles of beautiful river and had adequate water all the way, even

though we were heavily loaded. It was a very enjoyable overnight float.

Ray Manning  
Kanopolis

## LIKES LIFETIME

Editor:

The lifetime fishing license you offer to the Kansas citizens is right, and I highly commend you for this.

I farm and my time is limited. Most stores are closed when I go to work and most of them are closed when I get off duty. It's hard to get anything done.

The lifetime fishing license will surely simplify my life.

Dale L. Anderson  
Colby

## COMPLIMENTS

Editor:

In the May/June issue, Peter Frevert noted that black oil sunflower seeds were a favorite of wild birds in Kansas. The seeds are also a favorite of many wild birds here in northern Arizona. The black oil sunflower seeds are in such demand locally they are usually on back-order at stores.

I particularly enjoyed your story "The Record, The River and The Man" about Ray Wiechert, and the picture of his large flathead catfish. I grew up in the Belle Plaine area, and recall as a young boy seeing a flathead caught in the Ninnescah River that would not fit in a large washtub. I have told that story several times here in the West and have been guffawed at. Now I have this article to show.

G.D. Batt  
Sedona, Ariz.

Editor:

Your article, "The Record, The River And The Man," was superb. I am only 16 years old and have been fishing the Neosho River with my father since I was eight. I have seen a few 50-pounders come out of there myself. Please keep writing articles about river fishing.

Mike Bailey  
Frontenac

# THE LAW

## OGT PROGRAM WORKS

The Operation Game Thief (OGT) program has been initiated in several states across the U.S. New Mexico's program recently experienced one of its largest successes.

**The antelope appeared to have been chased before being shot and run over. The hindquarters of the adult antelope were taken and the fawn was left untouched.**

Four men were cited after an OGT tip led to an extensive investigation. A fawn, a doe and two buck antelope were killed on a ranch north of Roswell. The antelope appeared to have been chased before being shot and run over. The hindquarters of the adult antelope were taken and the fawn was left untouched.

The four men were fined \$2,800 each — \$400 on each of seven charges. A jail sentence of 42 months each was suspended in lieu of three years of supervised probation. The men paid \$20 each in court costs. They were also assessed \$300 per animal, the worth of the antelope to the state. That payment was divided among the four.

A total of 28 misdemeanor charges were filed against the four men. The fines, civil assessments and court costs in the case totaled \$12,480. *New Mexico Game and Fish*

## BOMBS AWAY

Almost every fisherman who's had a day of bad luck has threatened to blow up the lake just to see if there are any fish in it. Those threats are made in jest, not to mention frustration.

But last April a Herington man was charged with using an explosive device to try to take fish at Herington City Lake.

Herington Police Chief Jerry Payne said fishermen reported seeing a man trying to catch fish by using explosives below the dam. Payne made the arrest, and the man was charged with taking fish by illegal means and method.

"I don't know what it was or what to call it except an explosive device," Payne said. "It had some type of electrical detonator with wires to set off the charge."

Payne said whatever the device was, it wasn't powerful enough to kill fish. He said the fish would come to the surface stunned, but would go back down before they could be scooped up.

Lanny Jones, regional fisheries supervisor for the Kansas Fish and Game said the use of explosives to catch fish illegally was uncommon. The use of an old telephone crank, stunning the fish with electricity, is more common in fish poaching.

The man's Herington City Lake permit was suspended for at least a year. *Jim Reid, The Wichita Eagle-Beacon*

## CHARITY CASE

An Ohio man contributed to Ducks Unlimited but not by choice. For shooting three wood ducks out of season, the man paid \$150 to DU, had a choice of four days in jail or two days of community work and had to attend a hunter-education class. *Ducks Unlimited*

## LIFESAVERS

July 4 turned out to be a bad day to be at the lake. The wind howled in 30-35 mph gusts, and small craft warnings were issued at Glen Elder Reservoir. A man and woman and their dog found out the hard way what the wind can do to a 15-foot fishing boat.

The couple were fishing on the lake when they decided to return from the south side to their camp on the north side. As they crossed the open water going with the wind, the bow dipped into a wave and the back of the boat flipped over.

Wildlife Conservation Officers Randy Benteman and Mike Ehlebracht were patrolling the lake area in their vehicle when they saw the capsized boat from the dam. They quickly drove around to the marina. The officers borrowed a boat at the marina to save time and reached the man, woman and dog in just minutes.

Benteman said both persons were wearing life jackets and did the right thing by staying with the boat. Most boats today have enough flotation foam that they will float even when swamped. Attempting a long swim to shore in the white-capped water could have been disastrous. *Cawker City Ledger*

## OFFICER AWARDED

Dick Cole, wildlife conservation officer from Clay Center, was named Shikar Safari Club International Wildlife Officer of the Year. The award was presented at the May 28 Fish and Game Commission meeting in Pratt.

"I'm honored," Cole said. "It was a big surprise, a highlight of my 22 years as a wildlife conservation officer." Cole has spent his entire law enforcement career in the Clay Center area.

Safari Club International presents the award in each state and Canada. The club will donate \$25,000 to conservation projects on behalf of the recipients. *Miller*

## HIGH DOLLAR ELK

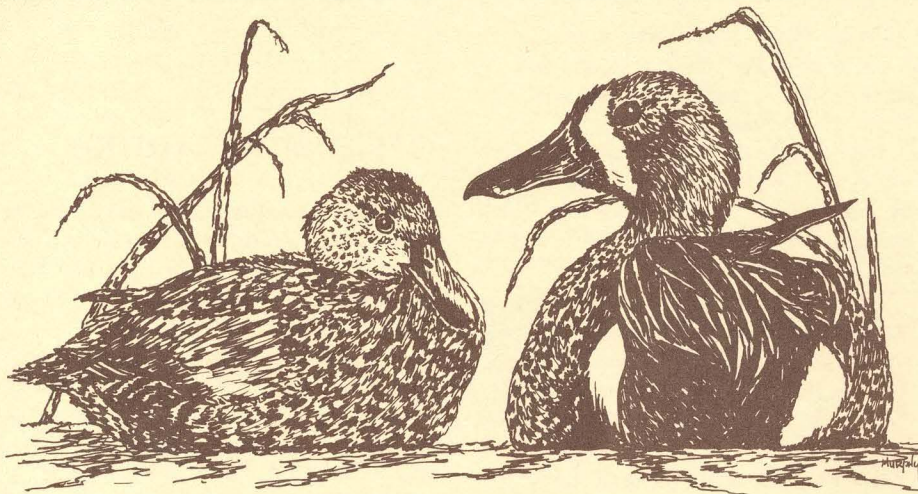
New Mexico holds elk in high regard. According to a New Mexico Game and Fish news release, a Fairview, N.M., man paid more than \$2,000 in fines for illegally killing and possessing an elk. The man, who pleaded guilty, paid \$1,000 for killing the bull elk out of season and \$1,000 for possession of the elk. That doesn't include court costs, the confiscation of his firearm and the \$300 assessed for the state's loss of the game animal. On top of that the man faces possible revocation of his hunting and fishing licenses. *Miller*

## OBSESSION

An Illinois man has the symptoms of what could be called an obsession. Early one morning, the man showed up at the Bennett Spring State Park hatchery with a dip net and a cooler. He had 31 fish in the cooler when the Missouri Department of Conservation's hatchery crew caught him and called the county conservation agent.

The man paid \$349.50 in fines at the sheriff's office and headed back to the park so he could make the morning whistle and go fishing. *Missouri Dept. of Conservation*

# HUNTING



## TEAL: EARLY BIRD

The early teal season, Sept. 13-21, is a special thrill for duck hunters. For the dedicated duck hunter, spring and summer is a long time to wait for the chance to be back in the marsh. The Kansas waterfowl season doesn't start until the last week in October, so the September teal season is an early chance to don the waters and throw some decoys.

In the Central Flyway, much of the emphasis is put on the large number of mallards and pintails. These large, wise ducks are cream of the crop for most waterfowlers. But don't underestimate the diminutive teal. If the weather cooperates, large numbers of blue-winged teal are present in Kansas along with some greenwings. These little birds may not be as cautious as the larger ducks but they make up for it with their flight speed and daredevil maneuvers. They're also top-notch table fare when barbecued with a strip of bacon wrapped around the breast.

It doesn't take a truckload of decoys set in a calculated spread to attract teal. A dozen decoys will work just fine. The little ducks seem to prefer small shallow, weedy water. Teal will also respond well to your mallard duck call, so you can get in some good calling practice.

The temperature during the early season is usually quite comfortable. T-shirts or light jackets are all that's needed. If there are some large ducks in the area, the early season offers a chance to brush up on duck identification. The early teal season shooting hours begin at sunrise, not one-half hour before as in the

regular waterfowl season. So there's time to sit back and watch flights of big ducks before the teal shooting begins. *Miller*

## AMORY CITED

Cleveland Amory, president of Fund for Animals, an anti-hunting and trapping organization, has been cited for cruelty to animals, according to reports from Washington, D.C.

According to reports, Amory and other animal rights activists were protesting the use of face branding on cattle on the steps of the Capitol. For dramatic effect, Amory had brought along a calf, complete with a "brand" in the shape of an X painted on the calf's cheek. Amory was similarly adorned, as were several of his followers, for the benefit of the television news cameras covering the protest.

As expected, the drama peaked when Amory unveiled the calf, which up to that point had been kept in a small trailer.

Without adequate ventilation and water supply, the calf was semiconscious and could not be moved from the trailer. It seems Amory had failed to provide the calf with adequate water. Amory had provided the animal water. . . in a pan. As anyone who has ever spent time around animals knows, young animals must be taught to drink from a pan, trough or other vessel. There was some doubt at press time as to whether the calf had even been weaned at the time of Amory's protest.

The USDA officials notified the authorities of the alleged violations, and Amory was cited for cruelty to animals.

The calf recovered from the incident but not before television film crews documented the entire episode. Amory's antics got him the coverage he sought, but the 6 o'clock news that night shed light on a side of the animal rights movement that Amory would rather have kept in the dark. *Voice of the Trapper*

## WATERFOWLERS' SAFETY

Waterfowling involves some special safety considerations. To begin with, most waterfowling puts gunners in the close confines of a boat, a blind or pit. That means there can be absolutely no confusion or misunderstanding about each hunter's safe zone of fire. Establishing shooting zones should be the first thing you and partners do, before you load up. If only one hunter is to fire at a time, be sure that everyone in the blind knows who it will be. When handling a gun in close quarters, it's essential to know exactly when and in which direction it's safe to shoot.

Have control of your gun at all times. In a boat, that means have the gun in a secure rest with the muzzle pointing in a safe direction. Never prop your gun up with the muzzle resting against the side of the blind. It could easily slip or be knocked over by an anxious retriever. If there's no secure rest, hold your gun with muzzle pointing up and away from the boat, blind and companions.

Never get in or out of a blind, boat or pit with a loaded gun. In a blind, stand up and unload the gun with the muzzle pointing in a safe direction. Never grab a gun by the barrel and pull it toward you. Have someone hand it to you or place it outside the blind when you leave. *NSSF*

## OL' DOVES, NEW DOGS

It's always tempting but seldom a good idea. New dog owners often take advantage of the early dove season to provide their young canine field companions with hunting experience — but many experts say it's not a good idea.

Extreme heat and a mouthful of dry, loose dove feathers can dampen even the most enthusiastic dog's retrieving desire. It may be worth the wait for upland bird season to start a bird dog retrieving. Most experts agree quail are better than pheasants for starting young dogs. A crippled cock could overwhelm or injure a pup. Such an incident can discourage future retrieving. *Rob Manes*

## UPLAND BIRD UPDATE

Last winter was mild in Kansas and that's good for pheasant and quail. The mild winter ensures that there are plenty of adult birds to breed. It also leaves the adults in good physical condition and better able to reproduce. But it takes more than mild winters to build upland bird numbers.

One very important factor is spring nesting conditions. Good nesting conditions can mean the difference in maintaining a population and increasing one.

A warm, relatively dry spring is beneficial. Pleasant weather lets the birds begin the mating rituals earlier. A cold, wet spring may postpone the breeding. As a result, the peak hatching period may be during the heat of the summer. Ideally, the peak hatching period should be June 10-15. If it is later, the mid-summer heat reduces hatching success and is hard on the chicks that do hatch. The late hatch also results in more nests being destroyed in wheat harvest activities.

Contrary to popular belief, hens that nest early do not nest again if their first brood is successful. The young chicks seen late in the summer are usually the result of a nest that was destroyed. In this case the hen will sometimes re-nest.

Bill Hlavachick, Fish and Game species investigation supervisor, is pleased with the nesting conditions this spring. "The wheat was tall enough to provide good nesting cover and the weather was almost ideal," he said. "The adult populations are still below the 10-year average, so we're still rebuilding. But it looks promising." *Miller*

## BIRD HUNTER'S GAME

Skeet, the Scandinavian word for "shoot," was the winning entry in a 1926 magazine contest to name a new clay-target game. The new game was developed by a group of Massachusetts bird hunters to practice their wingshooting during the off-season.

The layout had 12 stations in a circle to simulate field shots. A single trap threw targets from the 12 o'clock position to the 6 o'clock position. When a chicken farm started in the field adjacent to the shooters' layout they had to cut their circle in half. They solved the problem by installing another trap in the 6 o'clock position and created what we know today as skeet.

There are other games (none of which require any modification of the trap or skeet field) that can simulate field shots. The essence of

each is the element of surprise and, in keeping with actual field conditions, all games are shot with the gun starting in the low position.

"Doc Adams" is a game where trap targets are shot from skeet stations 1-7. On combination fields, which include both trap and skeet houses, the stations are in place. On a trap field, simply mark off skeet stations 1-7. With birds flying out of the trap house at different and unpredictable angles, "Doc Adams" is a challenging game.

The game of "Skrap" takes this concept one step further and requires a combination trap/skeet field. Again, shooters fire from skeet stations 1-7, but instead of just using the trap house, the puller has the controls to the high house, low house and trap house. At each station, the shooter may get a bird from any house, at the puller's option. "Skrap" goes a long way in helping develop smooth gun mounts and a fast swing. *NSSF*

## DEER SEASON RESULTS

The Kansas deer season has come a long way since the first one in 1965. The results of the 1985 season show a steadily growing and healthy herd.

Interest in bowhunting deer has grown tremendously since 1965, when 1,220 bowhunters bought permits. Those hunters harvested 164 deer for a success factor of 14.2 percent. The first season lasted 46 days. The 1985 season was 83 days. Last year 16,204

bowhunters purchased archery permits. They harvested 4,230 deer for a success factor of 30.5 percent, one of the highest in the country.

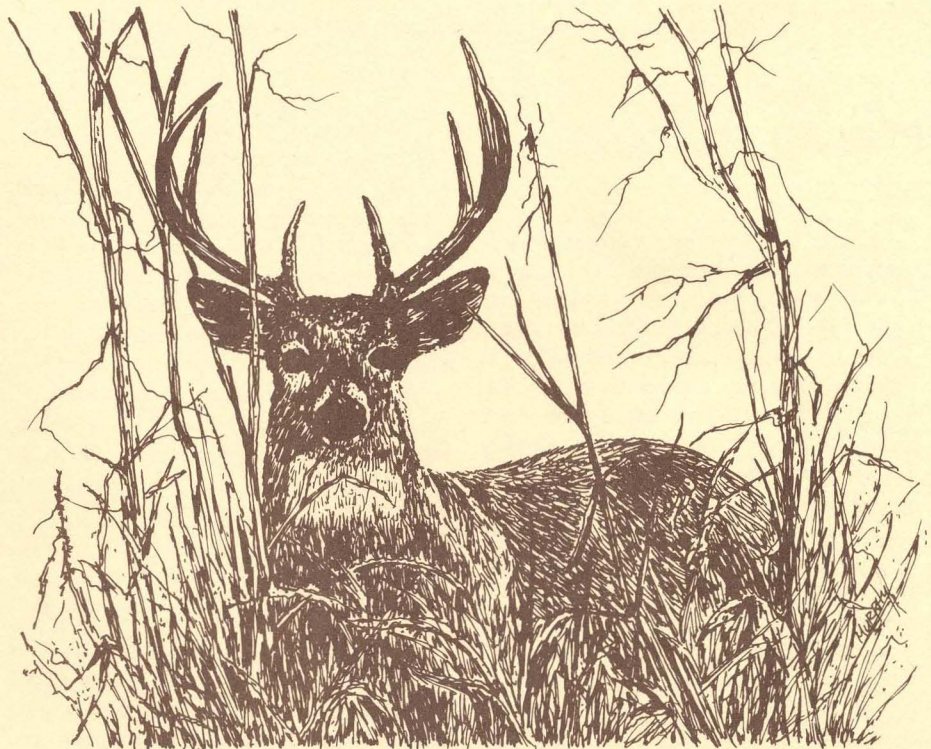
The 1965 firearms season was only five days long and had 4,575 hunters draw permits. Of the hunters who hunted, 1,340 harvested deer for a success rate of 37.8 percent. The 1985 season saw 33,885 hunters draw permits. Hunters harvested 21,596 deer for a whopping 69.4 percent success rate; again, one of the highest in the country.

The northwest part of the state boasted the highest success for bowhunters. The High Plains Unit had a success rate of 47 percent. The Osage Prairie Unit had the most bowhunters with 2,053 and yielded a 27.3 success rate. None of the major units recorded a success rate below 20 percent. Many neighboring states have total success rates far below that figure.

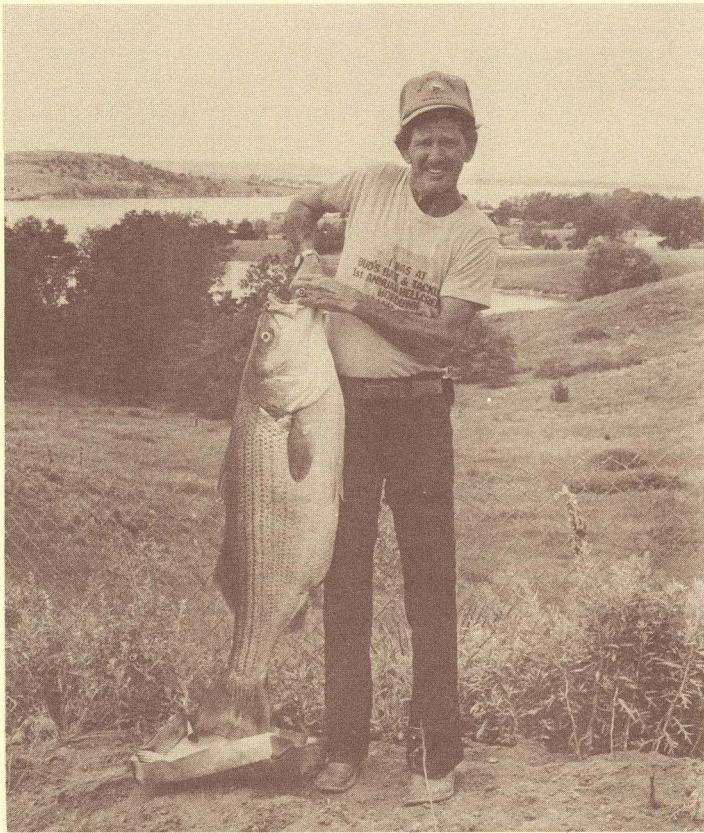
The northwest part of the state also had the highest percentage of firearms hunters bagging deer with those units averaging more than 80 percent success. The lowest percent rate in the state was recorded in the southcentral part of the state, where 66 percent of the hunters were successful.

As the success rate and deer population continue to increase, the Fish and Game Commission has increased the number of firearms permits each year. There were 7,160 more firearms permits allocated in 1986 than in 1985. The objective is curb growth in the herd without sacrificing the quality of the hunting.

*Miller*



# FISHING



On June 1, Bud George of Wilson caught this 42-pound striped bass.

## RECORD STRIPER

On June 1, 1986, Bud George of Wilson wrote his name into the record books. George is an avid striped bass fisherman and when he couldn't sleep that night, he decided he might as well be fishing. Fishing through the night without a bite, George had just moved to a new spot at 5:30 a.m. when a fish took his green sunfish bait. After 30 minutes of give and take, George managed to net the 40-inch fish single-handedly. After waking up everyone he knew, George took the fish into Wilson to have it weighed on certified scales. The fish came in at 42 pounds even, beating the state record by more than six pounds.

George had caught a 28-pounder last summer and is a veteran flathead catfisherman, so big fish are nothing new to him. But this fish excited him.

"When he rolled to the surface, he looked like he was eight feet long," he said.

Two weeks later, the Kansas Fish and Game Commission recognized the fish as the state record. The previous record was set in February 1985 from Cheney Reservoir.

How long will George's record last? Probably not long. Stripers are growing well in Kansas reservoirs, and biologists report that bigger fish have been caught in test nets. One thing's for sure: if there's a bigger fish in Wilson Reservoir, Bud George will be on the water after it. *Miller*

## POND PROGRAM

Kansas Fish and Game Commission studies the state's anglers are getting their license money's worth from the farm-pond stocking program, even though no list of state-stocked

ponds is available to the public. A Kansas Licensed Angler Survey revealed that most of the state's fishing license holders prefer to fish farm ponds. The majority of those 55,000-plus ponds is privately owned. Many pond anglers enjoy catching fish stocked, free of charge, under Fish and Game's pond program.

Before pond owners can receive fish, they must apply to the Kansas Fish and Game Commission before July 1. After the applications are processed, Fish and Game representatives inspect the ponds to determine whether they meet certain qualifications.

In order to be eligible for the program, a pond must have no fish life, it must cover at least one-half acre and must be at least eight feet deep at some point. Ponds that meet these standards will be stocked with proper densities of each fish.

Channel catfish or a combination of bass, bluegill and channel cats may be stocked. The fish are released as fingerlings. Channel catfish and bluegill are delivered in October; bass arrive the following July.

Pond owners who receive fish are encouraged, but not required, to allow others access to ponds smaller than 20 acres. The owner, his tenant and their immediate families may fish in the pond without purchasing a Kansas fishing license. Anyone else, however, must possess a valid license, and all other state fishing regulations must be obeyed.

Owners of Fish and Game-stocked ponds larger than 20 acres must sign an agreement stating they will allow angling access to anyone who asks. This remains in effect for 10 years from the stocking date. The agreement also requires the pond to be posted with a "fishing by permission" sign listing the owner's name, telephone number and residence. Wildlife conservation officers must be allowed access to any pond stocked by the agency, regardless of the pond's acreage. *Rob Manes*

## \$1,000 AWARD

Lyle Houghton of Winfield received \$1,000 from Berkley for catching a 6-pound, 9-ounce black bullhead catfish. The fish set a new International Game Fish Association line class record. It was the largest of the species recorded during 1985. Houghton received the \$1,000 check because he used Berkley's Trilene fishing line to catch his world record.

Houghton's fish was the Kansas state-record bullhead, but his place in the record books was short-lived. Barely one month later, David A. Tremain of Havana caught a bigger bullhead. Tremain's fish weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces. *Miller*

## GETTING AWAY

Many of our nation's past presidents sought relief from their on-the-job pressures by going fishing in their spare time.

The fishing styles of former presidents are as distinctive as their personalities. Franklin D. Roosevelt, for example, preferred quiet, secluded lakes. He typically fished while dressed in a business suit. Harry S. Truman and Herbert Hoover dressed more informally, but both could easily be identified by familiar old felt hats they invariably wore while fishing. Dwight Eisenhower dressed for the occasion when fishing vacations took him to Colorado's trout streams, and Jimmy Carter enjoyed flyfishing in quiet eastern waters. The most colorful presidential angler of all, however, was undoubtedly Benjamin Harrison. He drank whiskey, chewed tobacco from a plug he carried in a hip pocket and spit on worms for good luck. Rumor has it he cussed roundly when a fish got away — some things never change.

AFTMA

## FALL SMALLMOUTHS

Sept. 1 represents the beginning of hunting season for many Kansas sportsmen. Time to put away the fish tackle and get out the shotgun. Dove season is open, the early teal season soon follows and bowhunters are preparing for deer season. But the two-season sportsman who fishes in the spring and summer and hunts in the fall and winter should take a lesson from his year-round fishing friend: Fall may be the best time of the year to enjoy fishing.

Several years ago I found out just how good fall fishing could be. I was fishing for largemouths on the then-new El Dorado Reservoir, but smallmouth bass kept slamming our crankbaits and diverting our attention away from the largemouths. These small fish weren't even close to being keepers but they fought so hard we didn't care. We also had the lake to ourselves.

The smallmouth bass is a relative newcomer in Kansas. It was first stocked in Wilson and Milford reservoirs in the early 1970s. Since then most lakes that have the proper habitat and water quality have received smallmouths. The scrappy fighter can really get under your skin.

Smallmouths are abundant in lakes that received the first stockings. Most of the fish will be 11-13 inches long, but bigger fish also lurk there. Fishing will be good in the spring and early summer. Small fish can even be caught into the heat of summer, but fall may be best. Smallmouths are a little spooky and don't stay around when boats are roaring back and forth.

In the fall, however, most of the crowds are gone and on a weekday you may have the lake to yourself. The weather begins to cool, and there aren't a lot of storms disrupting the fishes' patterns.

The prime ingredient for smallmouth habitat is rocks. Rocky points or gravel flats are good places to cast for the bronze fish. The riprap along the dams of reservoirs will also hold smallmouths. As the fall weather allows the water to cool, the fish will move into the shallower water, about 6-10 feet deep. At these depths, smallmouths will be easier to catch than in the summer when they were deep.

The favorite dish on the smallmouth's menu has to be the crayfish. Find rocks and you find crayfish; find rocks and crayfish and you've found smallmouths. In the fall, the gizzard shad will also be a mainstay in the fishes' diet because of the baitfish's availability. Imitate either of these two food sources and you'll probably catch fish.

Probably the most-used smallmouth bait is the crawdad crankbait. I've found that deep-diving crankbaits with large bills are best. These will get down to 10 or 12 feet and bounce off the rocks. If they hang up, they will often float up off the snag. The more your bait is hitting the bottom the more strikes you will get. On some days, a fast and erratic retrieve can really arouse the fish.

Another good smallmouth lure is the rubber-bodied grub. An eighth-ounce jig head with a two-inch grub can be deadly. In clear water, I've had most success with smoke, smoke-green and white-colored bodies. It takes a little more practice than the crankbait; you must pay attention constantly. The jig should be allowed to sink near the bottom, then retrieved with a jiggling motion back to the boat. Take care to keep the line fairly tight as the jig is sinking, and always watch your line. Smallmouths will usually hit the jig as it falls, and these strikes may only be detected by a slight twitch of the line.

Once you set the hook into a smallmouth, watch out. These fish will really fool you. Many times I've thought that I had a keeper largemouth on the line, but it turned out to be an 11-inch smallmouth. They don't concede the fight easily and often keep fighting and flopping until you turn them loose. Few fish put on an aerial show as exciting as the smallmouth.

The smallmouth is a black bass and in most waters there is a 15-inch minimum length limit on all black bass. Check local regulations before fishing any water. *Miller*

## POPULAR ACTIVITIES

Fishing was the second most-popular recreation in America in 1985. This was found in

the Gallup Leisure Activities Audit, a representative national cross-section of 1,528 adults, 18 or older. They were asked which of 50 activities they had participated in during a recent 12-month period.

Thirty-four percent of the respondents said they fished. Swimming was the most popular with 41 percent marking it. Hunting was 16th on the list with 14 percent. Fishing was first with the men, 44 percent of whom participated. Fishing also ranked high among women (23 percent participation). Hunting was 10th among men (23 percent participation).

Fishing is a \$25 billion industry when you consider the money spent on equipment and other fishing-related expenses. The sport also provided employment for 600,000 people in 1985. *The Gallup Poll and American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association.*

## AT ANY COST

A group of bass fishermen from South Africa traveled 14,000 miles to participate in a B.A.S.S. tournament at Logan Martin Lake in Alabama. The reported cost per man was \$6,000.

The state federations shared boats with the South Africans during the tournament. Allan Ross-Smith, South Africa's team captain, says not only are bass boats in South Africa a scarce item, but fishing waters as well. "We come to America for the reputation of its fishing and the size of the fish. South Africa has little rainfall.

"We fish the B.A.S.S. Southern Region because it gives us the chance to fish in Florida where the big bucketmouths are," said Ross-Smith.

Ross-Smith revealed another reason why they have spent \$250,000 to travel to America over the past three years to fish. "We are dedicated," he said.

"Our B.A.S.S. federation is growing and we can share our learned tactics with our members. They can't wait for us to get back, especially to see the tackle we have purchased," he said.

A lure that would cost \$5.90 here would be as much as \$20 in South Africa. With the huge markup on fishing equipment, South Africans go mad when they shop in the states.

"When Americans fish, they throw away plastic worms when they get a strike," Ross-Smith said. "They are always amazed when we dive over the boat and grab the worm. It can always be patched by welding it with heat." *B.A.S.S.*

# ISSUES

## CHLORDANE SCARES

In the last year, several warnings have been issued concerning the chemical chlordane. The chemical has been found in fish in the Arkansas River in Wichita and in the Kansas River near Lawrence. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment recommended that people daily not eat more than eight ounces of carp caught from those areas. But what is chlordane and how does it affect us?

Chlordane is an organochlorine chemical that has extensively been used for pest control over the past 30 years. It's common use has been as a soil insecticide in row crops (especially corn), as a termiticide for wooden structures and as an insecticide for the home and garden.

Technical or commercial-grade chlordane is a mixture of various chlorinated hydrocarbons with a typical composition of about 50 percent pure chlordane. The remainder is heptachlor, chlordene, nonachlor and several other closely related compounds. These multiple characteristics make the chemical difficult and costly to trace in the environment.

Chlordane is one of the last of the persistent organochlorine chemicals to be used for pest control in the U.S. Related insecticides that have been banned or severely restricted in use include aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor and DDT. Agricultural use of chlordane was prohibited in 1978 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, but existing stocks of the chemical may have been applied to row crops until the early 1980s in some areas. Chlordane was not restricted as a termiticide and is the single most important chemical for termite control. Chlordane is not a restricted pesticide and can be purchased over the counter, but the only legal use is for termite control.

As a termiticide, chlordane is applied to soil and gravel fill adjacent to foundations and under concrete floors in new structures. Experts believe that misuse of new or old (leftover) chlordane by the general public could also cause contamination problems.

It is believed that fish pick up the chlordane from the water. Fish food organisms probably contribute to a lesser extent. Chlordane is fat soluble and concentrates in fatty tissue. The concentration is directly proportional to fat content.

Chlordane in fish does not pose an immediate

human health risk. The concern is that chlordane is a suspected carcinogen. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has established 0.3 parts per million (ppm) as the maximum safe level for long-term consumption of fish. This figure is based on an average consumption of four ounces per week and a risk level of 10-5 (which means a person's chance of dying from cancer is increased by 1 in 100,000). This risk is quite small when compared with other day-to-day activities. *Ronald L. Crunklton, Water Quality Research Biologist, Missouri Department of Conservation*

## DIRECT THREAT

The best hope for bringing about an end to sport or trophy hunting lies in educating children to respect life and appreciate animals and the environment on their own terms.

That statement, from the Humane Society of the United States, reflects the great threats faced by sport hunting and wildlife management in the country. The National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education (NAAHE) has designed a highly effective tool to accomplish their goal. Called "People and Animals — A Humane Education Guide," the package is ready for classroom use, with little teacher preparations.

The materials humanize animals (wild and domestic) and make villains of people, especially sportsmen. The curriculum is well-designed, avoiding direct attacks on hunting and other activities deemed undesirable by the NAAHE parent organization, the Humane Society of the United States. Instead, it emphasizes and encourages children's emotional, uninformed views of death in nature.

One portion of the curriculum, titled "The Hunting Trip," portrays a man and wife who go hunting together. The wife defends each animal from her husband, and students are asked why she behaves this way. Then the students are asked to decide which of the two characters' feelings are more like theirs. Students are also asked who they believe are the major beneficiaries of wildlife management programs — all people, hunters, non-hunters, animals. Other leading questions are: "Should people hunt for fun?" and "Would you want to kill a deer?" "A wolf? A duck? A dog? A cow? An eagle?"

A Humane Society representative has told college students that "most hunters are slob who are drunk and want something to destroy." It is important that conservationists monitor state and local school systems to ensure this curriculum is not used. The sort of misinformation and misguided sentiment it spreads is potentially lethal to successful conservation programs.

*Rob Manes*

## FIGHTING BACK

The Interior Department and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies have fired a couple of powerful judicial cannons at the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in response to the protectionist group's lawsuit to prohibit sport hunting on national wildlife refuges. The salvo, in the form of two convincing legal briefs, leaves no doubt that federal law and Congress solidly support hunting on refuge lands.

HSUS initiated its legal action last year "to end sport hunting on national wildlife refuges." The lawsuit challenges hunting of waterfowl, upland game and big game on each of the approximately 250 refuges on which hunting is permitted. HSUS takes the position that sport hunting should not be allowed on refuges since they are havens for wildlife and not public hunting grounds.

In deposition testimony, an HSUS spokesman said that the group views "sport hunting, that is the killing of animals for fun," as a form of cruelty that should not be allowed on refuges. The Society claimed that hunting on refuges causes its members grief because their enjoyment of the area is impaired by the knowledge that the animals they see later will be subject to hunting.

As a legal basis for its lawsuit, HSUS interprets the 1962 Refuge Recreation Act, 1966 Refuge Administration Act, Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act as providing numerous roadblocks to hunting on refuges. It says that at least seven separate written analyses or opinions are required before hunting may be allowed on any refuge. It asked the court to prohibit hunting on refuges until this ton of paperwork is completed. HSUS apparently wants to choke the administrative system with costly paperwork.

The International's arguments against the HSUS allegations point out that hunting is compatible with the purposes of most refuges and has been permitted on many since 1924. According to the brief, numerous refuges were purchased using funds raised through the sale of duck stamps to waterfowl hunters. *Wildlife Management Institute*



# NATURE

## VALUABLE TREES

A northern Maryland businessman was sentenced to serve two months in jail and pay a \$20,000 fine for cutting down five state-owned trees.

The businessman was convicted of cutting down five 20-year-old ash trees that were obstructing his service station sign along Interstate 95 in upper Maryland. He had been warned by state highway officials that the trees, planted as part of the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, could not be removed because they were state-owned. Nevertheless, the businessman hired a tree service company to cut down the trees despite the company's concern over ownership of the five ashes.

Although the jail sentence (actually 15 months with 13 months suspended) surprised the state officials who brought the charges, the term was viewed as a stern warning to potential violators of the state tree-cutting ordinance. The offender has started paying the fine but the remainder of his sentence was eventually suspended after an appeal. *The National Urban Forest Forum*

## DEER WEIGHTS

Which deer weighs the most, whitetail or mule? The most accepted answer to that question is that mule deer, of course, weigh more than whitetails. A well-known outdoor writer recently wrote that he had trouble spotting whitetails after hunting muleys for many years. He thought the whitetails he was spotting through his binoculars were coyotes because they were so much smaller than the mule deer he was used to.

Are whitetails really that much smaller than mule deer? Deer are what they eat. Many of the farmland whitetail bucks of the Midwest are anything but small. Leonard Lee Rue III, in his book *The Deer of North America*, lists a study in Nebraska that showed the average weight of mule deer in that state was less than the average weight of whitetails. Rue also wrote that the heaviest whitetail on record in Minnesota had an estimated live weight of 511 pounds. And in 1962, one Iowan harvested a whitetail buck that weighed 440 pounds. Whitetails in the northern United

States tend to be larger than Dixie whitetails. A hunter would notice a big difference between mule deer and extreme southern U.S. whitetails. But northern whitetails will rival any mule deer in body weight. So there probably isn't as much difference between whitetails and muleys as some believe. *Miller*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Humans may abhor poison ivy, but many animals revel in it. Bluebirds and chickadees eat its seeds, warblers and woodpeckers enjoy its berries while cottontail rabbits and mule deer relish the foliage.

Approximately 1.7 million species of plants and animals have been formally named since Linnaeus began the "Binomial" system of naming species in 1753. Yet scientists are still debating the true number. Some believe the Earth's total may be as high as 10 million species, while other scientists estimate the total may be as high as 30 million.

The development of many synthetic drugs — including aspirin, cortisone and oral contraceptives — depended on chemicals derived from wild plants and animals. Aspirin, for example, was first isolated from willow bark in Europe.

The Japanese and Chinese are so fascinated by the chirping of grasshoppers that many are kept as pets.

Female robins often become confused while building their nests and can end up making more than 10-12 nests side-by-side in one backyard. *National Wildlife Federation*

## OBSERVATION

Hunters are not usually thought of as observers of birdwatchers. But bowhunters, especially, have the opportunity to observe and enjoy many of the lesser seen wild animals.

One of the true joys of bowhunting from a tree stand is the chance to observe wildlife in its natural behavior. The bowhunter takes care to enter his stand from the upwind direction, often uses cover scent and sits motionless above the ground level. In this position, the

hunter is in good position to see not only deer, but many other animals as well.

Bowhunters will observe a multitude of songbirds. Raccoons, bobcats, coyotes, rabbits, hawks and squirrels also are among the wildlife that will file by the bowhunter.

Kansas Fish and Game asks that bowhunters fill out a survey card of wildlife seen. The Commission has found that they often observe enough wildlife to give a good account of furbearer population trends.

A successful bowhunting trip rarely ends with a harvested deer. Yet many a wide-eyed bowhunter has enthusiastically told his buddies of the other wildlife he witnessed as he waited in his stand. The real beauty of bowhunting is being in the woods unnoticed by the wildlife. *Miller*



## WOODPECKER FOUND

Thought to be extinct for more than 10 years, the ivory-billed woodpecker has been discovered in Cuba.

Acting on rumors, Cuban scientists and ornithologists from the American Museum of Natural History located the bird in a heavily forested area of the island nation. The Cuban government has ordered all clear-cutting of timber to be stopped in areas where the ivory-bills are living.

The bird once ranged throughout Florida and westward to Texas and Oklahoma. Destruction of old-growth timber stands, however, eliminated the species from the U.S. 30 years ago. *Wildlife Management Institute*

# NOTES

## SPORT CLUBS

According to a National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) survey, nearly 80 percent of the nation's sportsmen's clubs want new members — but less than two percent are doing anything about it. According to A.H. "Rock" Rohlfling, president of the NSSF, many sportsmen's clubs give the impression that they're not interested in newcomers when, in fact, a few new members at the clubhouse door would be as welcome as the first day of hunting season.

Rohlfling said that the typical shooter doesn't join a club so he can spend his nights and weekends planning membership campaigns. He joins to shoot. To help clubs gain new members, the NSSF has talked to various experts on the subject of membership promotion. With these ideas NSSF has put together a 24-page membership manual. There are also three posters and a six-page leaflet that club members can place around town to inform all hunters and shooters that they're welcome at the local club.

Sportsmen can receive free information on the NSSF's membership promotion materials — or a sample packet of materials for only \$1 — by writing NSSF, P.O. Box 1075, Riverside, CT 06878. *National Shooting Sports Foundation*

## RV CATALOG

The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) has a new publication, "Catalog of Publications about the RV Lifestyle," that lists a variety of free brochures and pamphlets, as well as publications for sale by mail order.

The first of the catalog's four sections is devoted to RV buying hints. It offers a variety of consumer information publications, including the 1986 editions of "Hanley's Buyer's Guide to Van Conversions," "Who's Who in RV Rentals," "Trailer Life's RV Buyer's Guide" and "Woodall's RV Buyers Guide." The second section lists publications pertaining to RV safety and camping publications, including four 1986 national campground directories that can be ordered through RVIA.

To obtain a free copy of RVIA's "Catalog of Publications about the RV Lifestyle," send

a self-addressed stamped envelope to RVIA, Dept. POF, P.O. Box 2999, 1986 Preston White Dr., Reston, VA 22090. *RVIA News*

## FURHARVESTER ED.

If you were born after July 1, 1966, and you want to harvest furbearing animals in Kansas — you have to go to school. Since 1983, Kansas law has required anyone who fits this category to take the State Furharvester Education Course. Taught by certified volunteers, the course introduces youngsters to furharvesting ethics and basics.

Some people have had difficulty in finding instructors to teach the course, especially in remote areas of the state. Often there are too few students in an area to merit offering the course.

As of July 1, the Kansas Furharvester Education Course is available through correspondence to anyone who can't find a nearby classroom course. The correspondence format takes six to seven hours to complete. Students may receive guardian assistance in studying the materials, but test completion must be the student's own work.

It is recommended that the Furharvester Education Course be taken from a certified instructor whenever possible, but the correspondence program will assist those who cannot. More information about the course is available from the Kansas Fish and Game Commission headquarters office in Pratt. *Rob Manes*

## KANSANS WIN

Three Kansas students have won awards in the 1986 National Hunting and Fishing Day Poster Contest. David Miller of Climax, Jennifer Erickson of Eureka and Susan Gilham of Topeka all won Merit Awards in the national contest. Each will receive a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond.

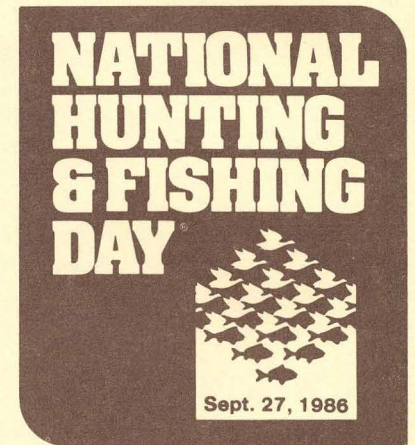
Their posters were among thousands entered by students in local NHF Day Poster contests sponsored by schools, youth groups, sportsmen's clubs and civic and conservation organizations across the country.

Entries were judged on how well they illustrated the contest theme, "Sportsmen and Conservation — Working Together for Wildlife," and on their artistic merit and originality.

In addition to prizes awarded in local contests, there were nearly 100 national awards totaling more than \$7,500 in U.S. Savings Bonds.

The purpose of the National Hunting and Fishing Day Poster contest is to encourage students to learn more about conservation and to foster an increased awareness of the role that sportsmen play in this country's conservation efforts. The contest is open to all students in grades 5-12.

Information on how to sponsor or enter the 1987 National Hunting and Fishing Day Poster Contest is available free from NHF Day Headquarters, P.O. Box 1075, Riverside, Conn. 06878. *National Hunting and Fishing Day*



For more information on National Hunting and Fishing Day see page 27.

## BUTTERFLY LIST

A 224-page book *An Annotated List of the Butterflies of Kansas* by Charles A. Ely, Marvin D. Schwillig and Marvin E. Rolfs, will please the butterfly enthusiast. The book summarizes information currently available on the species and distribution of the butterflies of Kansas. A state map showing known county distribution is provided for each species. Also provided are flight periods, number of broods, habitat preference and food plants.

This publication is available from Fort Hays Study Committee, Forsyth Library, 600 Park St., Hays, KS 67601-4099. The price is \$8. Please make checks payable to Fort Hays State University. *Paul Koenig*

# NATURE'S NOTEBOOK

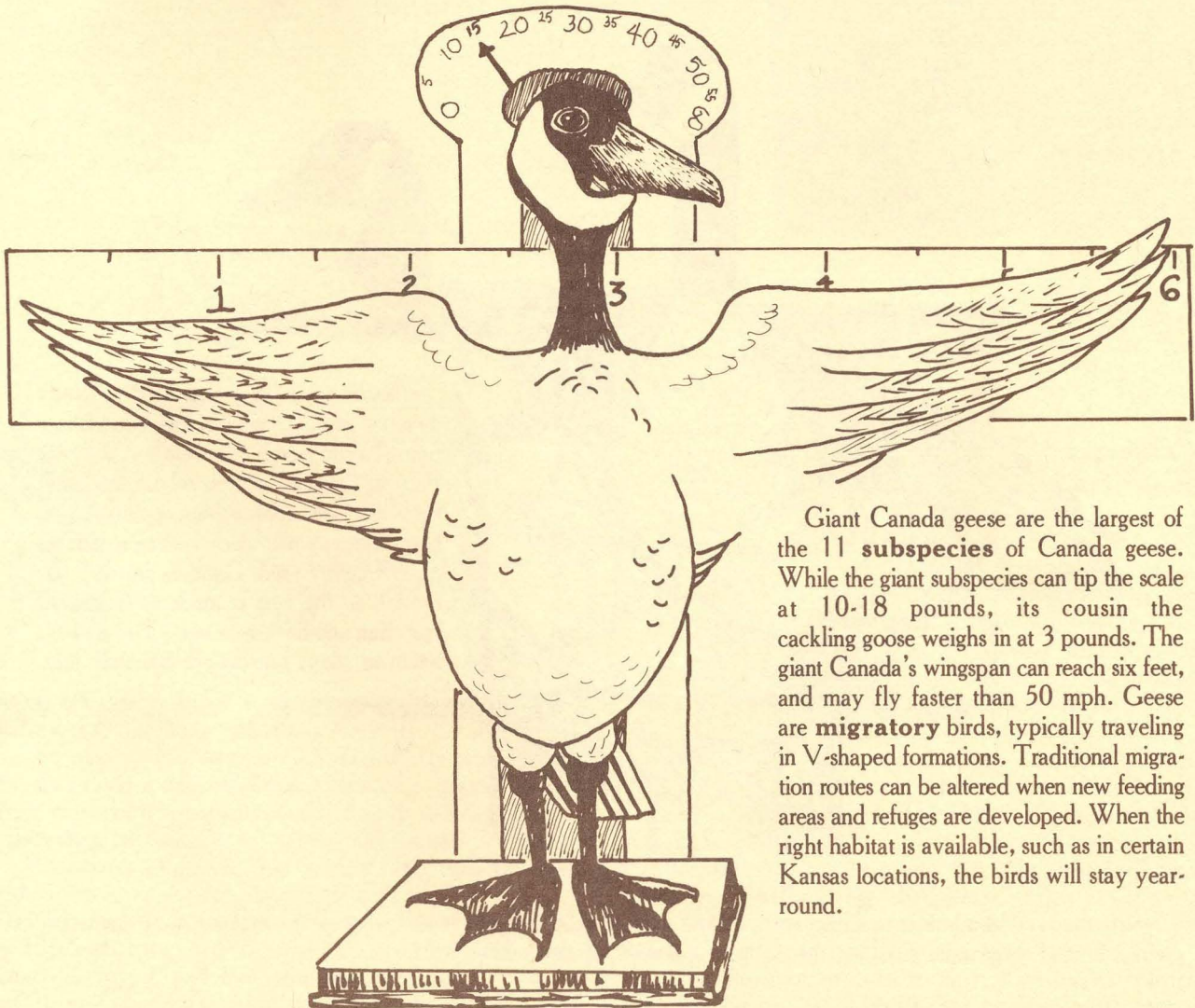
by Joyce Harmon Depenbusch Wildlife Education Coordinator

What do wildlife managers do when a species is **extirpated** (no longer living in an area, but found elsewhere)?

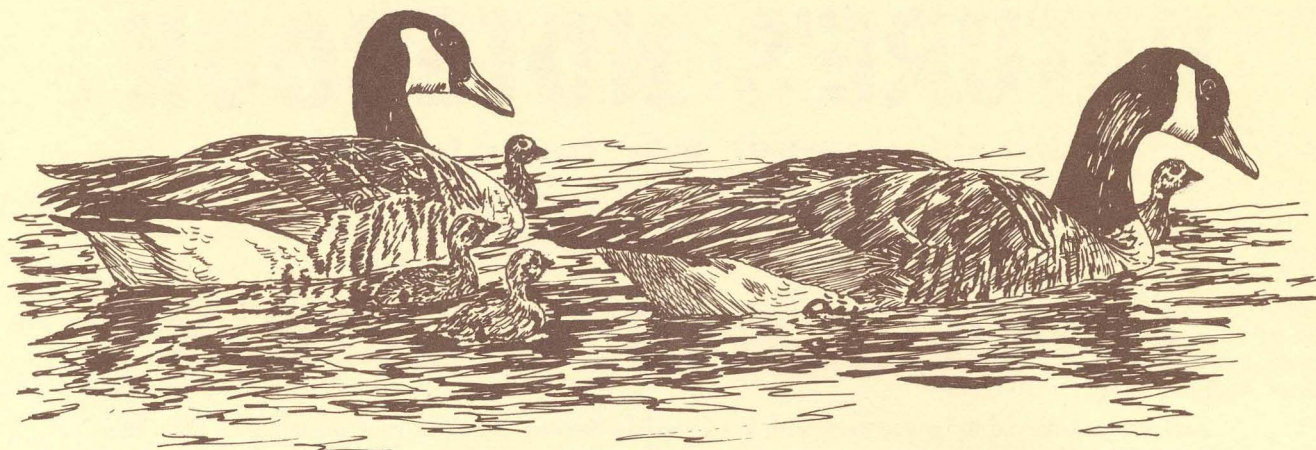
## HONKER RESTORATION

A species once believed to be **extinct** is alive and well in Kansas. Biologists have reestablished populations of giant Canada geese in several Kansas locations. These birds once nested over much of the Great Plains, including most of Kansas. Settlers captured the young geese and raised them for food. Habitat destruction and year-round hunting also helped eliminate the giant birds from Kansas by 1906. Restoration flocks of giant Canada geese have been established in the Marais des Cygnes, Flint Hills, Pratt, Cedar Bluff and the Mined Land Wildlife areas. The young from several of these flocks are captured and released in the Flint Hills to restore the population in that area.

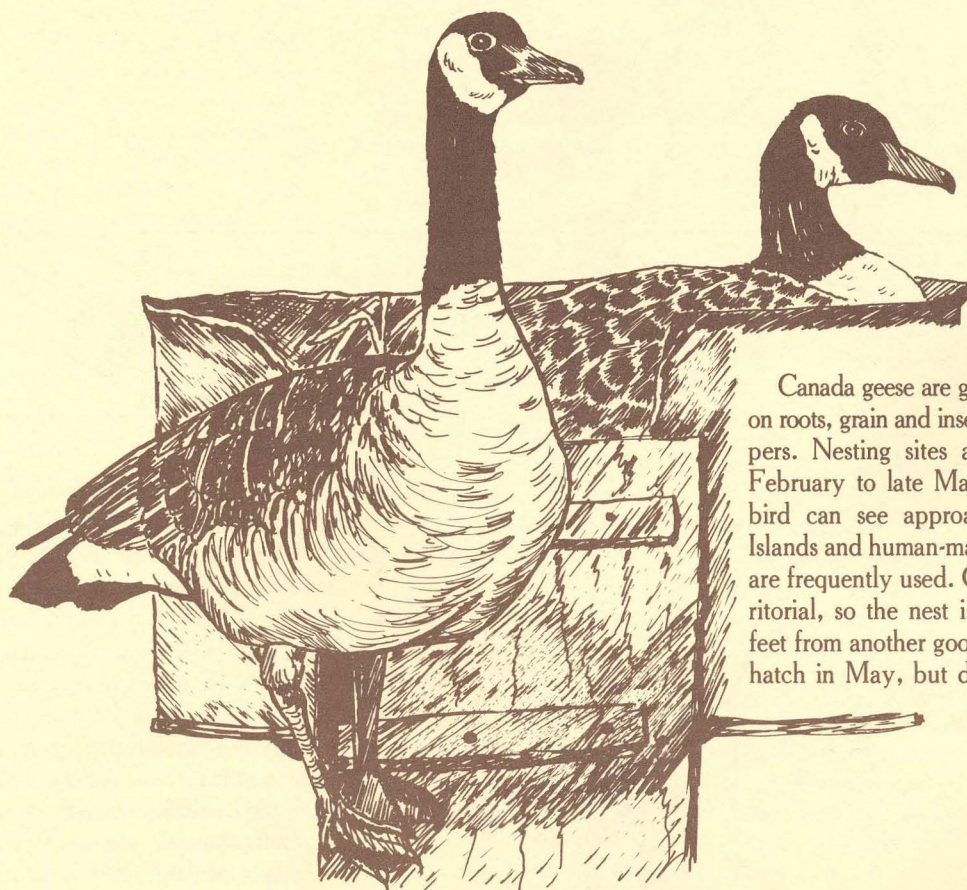
Why all the fuss over a bird that makes loud honking noises and provided the contents of feather beds? Read on.



Giant Canada geese are the largest of the 11 **subspecies** of Canada geese. While the giant subspecies can tip the scale at 10-18 pounds, its cousin the cackling goose weighs in at 3 pounds. The giant Canada's wingspan can reach six feet, and may fly faster than 50 mph. Geese are **migratory** birds, typically traveling in V-shaped formations. Traditional migration routes can be altered when new feeding areas and refuges are developed. When the right habitat is available, such as in certain Kansas locations, the birds will stay year-round.



Canada goose families could be excellent models for people. The adults select one mate for life. A new mate is accepted only if the old one dies. The male adamantly defends the nest, watching over the female. The female does all the **incubating**, leaving the nest only to feed. Intruders discover that a thrashing from the **gander's** bill and powerful wings is nothing to sneeze at. The family of five or six young **goslings** is cared for by both parents.



Canada geese are grazers, feeding mostly on roots, grain and insects, such as grasshoppers. Nesting sites are selected in mid-February to late March where the adult bird can see approaching **predators**. Islands and human-made nesting structures are frequently used. Ganders are very territorial, so the nest is made at least 200 feet from another goose nest. The goslings hatch in May, but do not fly until July.

Whether you're a hunter or a bird-watcher, the sight of giant Canada geese makes all the restoration efforts worthwhile. Spend some time enjoying the sights and sounds of the honker.



Linda Picken painting

## *Kansas Celebrates*

# National Hunting And Fishing Day '86

**T**he Seventh Annual Kansas Wildlife Art Show is slated for Sept. 27-28 in Wichita. The annual festival, held in conjunction with National Hunting and Fishing Day and Kansas Wildlife Day, will run from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on the 27th and from 1-6 p.m. the following day at the Beech Activity Center.

The art show will feature 65 nationally acclaimed artists displaying scratchboard, stained glass, wood carving, watercolor, bronze, acrylic and oil works. The fifth painting in the Kansas Fish and Game Commission's Wildtrust Wildlife Art Series also will be displayed.

Originals and prints will be for sale. Sportsmen will enjoy the exhibits and booths, in conjunction with National Hunting and Fishing Day.

The Beech Activity Center is located at 9707 E. Central. Admittance is free; so is parking.

**A**nother celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day, OutdoorFest '86, will be held Saturday, Sept. 27, in Shawnee. Shawnee Mission Park Marina (7900 Renner Rd.) will serve as the site of the event, which runs from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

All events are open to the public.

The day's activities include the popular bullfrog catchin' contest (2 p.m.), a children's fishing clinic (10 a.m.) and fishing derby (11 a.m.) and a bass boat biathlon (1 p.m.).

Demonstrations on tap for that day include wind-surfing, sailboating, camping, hiking, orienteering, backpacking, blackpowder, BB gun shooting, shot-shell reloading, archery and outdoor cooking.

For more information, call: Kansas Fish and Game Commission (913-722-6024) or Johnson County Park and Recreation District (913-888-4713).

# Return Of The Prairie?

Much of the original Kansas prairie has vanished.  
But the Conservation Reserve Program will  
help restore some of this lost land.

by Bob Culbertson  
*District Wildlife Biologist  
New Strawn*

photos by Mike Blair



**K**ansas is prairie. Well, it was prairie.

The plow, mismanagement and concrete have all taken a bite out of the original prairie. But has prairie conversion climaxed and is Kansas headed toward regaining a portion of

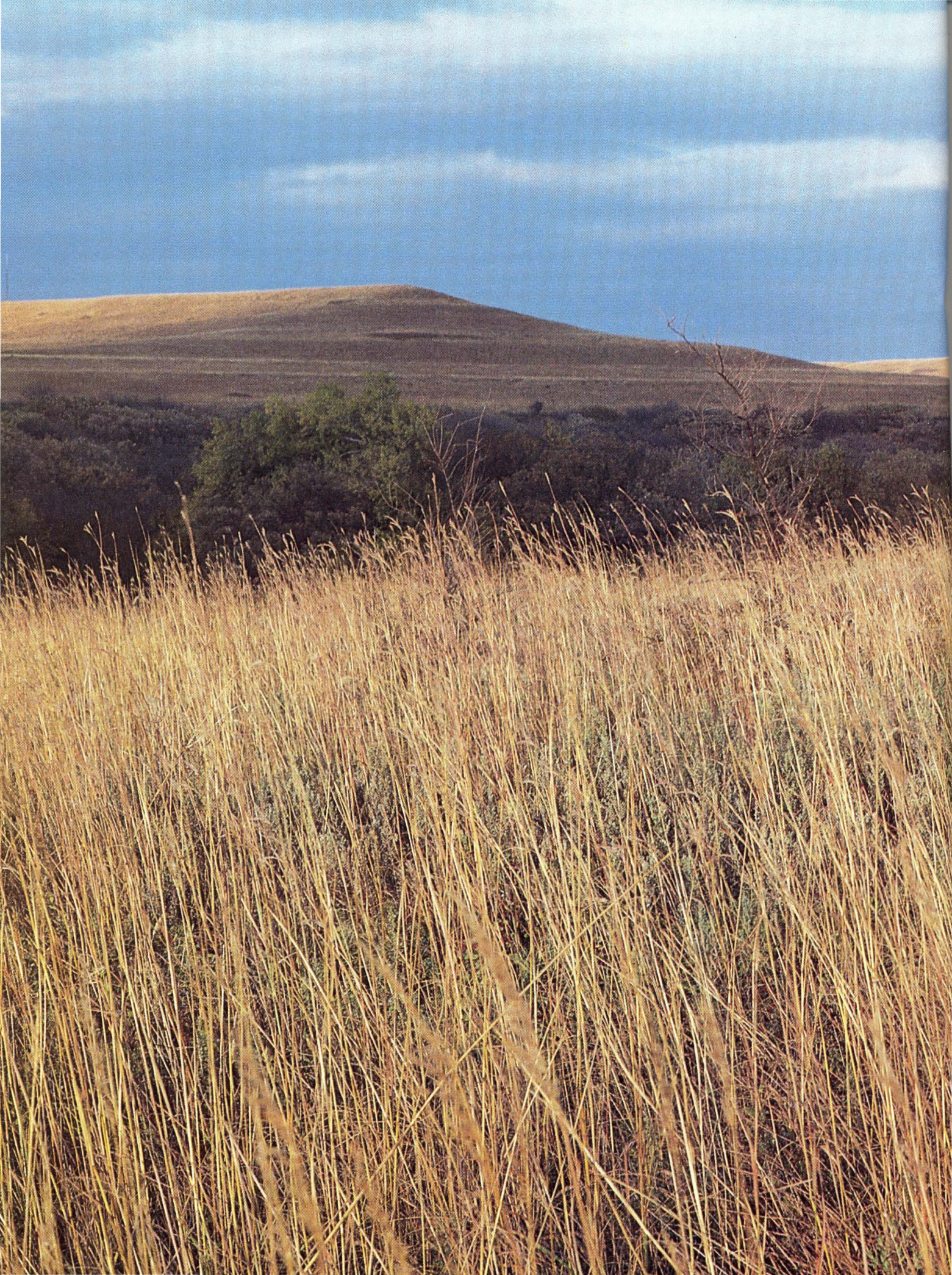
its lost landscape? The 1985 Farm Bill and the changing economy may help. These factors appear to be fostering the prairie as a popular crop.

Early explorers and the first settlers in Kansas found a sea of grass, quite different from the eastern forests and

woodlands that they'd known. Kansas had trees, but grass dominated the plains. Both hills and flatlands were covered with vigorous stands of native grasses and forbs (wildflowers). Although the prairie was a grassland, the diversity of grasses and forbs plus a ►

Vast stretches of big bluestem grass, shown in the large photograph, were once common on the Kansas prairie. The Conservation Reserve Program encourages the planting of the five native prairie grasses shown below: (from left) big bluestem, little bluestem, Indiangrass, switchgrass and sideoats grama. A mix of all five, right, provides wildlife with a variety of grasses that mature at different heights and different times.





sprinkling of shrubs and trees created an ecosystem that supported a myriad of wildlife.

The explorers Meriweather Lewis and William Clark came to Kansas in the early 1800s. They had this to say about our prairie:

*This scenery already rich and pleasing and beautiful was still further heightened by immense herds of buffaloe, deer, Elk and Antelopes which we saw in every direction feeding on the hill and plains. I do not think I exaggerate when I estimate the number of buffaloe which could be comprehended at one view to amount to 3,000. . .*

The variety of wildlife didn't end with the large hoofed mammals. Settlers also found prairie chickens, upland sandpipers, rabbits, woodcock, ducks, geese, wild turkey and raccoons, to name a few of many species that inhabited the grass country.

Early settlers coped differently with the new frontier. Some found the unrelenting wind, prairie fires, Indians and life in a sod house unacceptable and migrated back to the eastern woodlands. Other settlers found the prairie held answers they'd never found in those eastern forests. Perhaps they were natural plainmen or maybe they liked being the tallest figure on the landscape.

It didn't take long for settlers to discover the rich humus under the prairie sod. Breaking sod was hard work, but faster than clearing the forest of trees and stumps for a cropland back home. When drought or insects did not wreak havoc, the rich prairie soil grew bountiful crops. The trend has continued through the 1980s to produce more wheat, milo, beans and other grain. Today there is less than 17 million acres of prairie in the state, or about 30 percent of its original magnitude.

The plow wasn't the only enemy to the prairie. Overgrazing often occurred after farmers and ranchers brought livestock and fences to the grasslands. Fencing prevented cattle from free-ranging, and grazing pressure increased on some areas. Overgrazed during the summer growing season, protein-rich forbs and grasses were soon grubbed to the ground. Less desirable grasses and weeds followed.

The settlers also began a fire-prevention program on the prairie. Because prairie fires were destructive and frightening to the pioneers, the natural tendency was to prevent all grass fires. But fire is a necessary force on the prairie. The prairie and its wildlife evolved under a system of frequent burning, which maintained a

nearly brush- and tree-free environment. Without fire, the prairie ecosystem is slowly destroyed.

During the last 50 years of ever-increasing growth, shopping malls, expanding suburbia and highways also have turned prairie into concrete. Fortunately, Kansas prairies have not all met with the plow or mismanagement. Of the nearly 17 million acres of native grassland in the state, the Flint Hills region represents some of the best, not only in Kansas but in the country. There is a rich cattle tradition on many ranches, and sound management has survived. The use of fire on the Flint Hills prairies has even endured, thus keeping the grassland productive.

Does the future look bright for the remaining prairie? Could we even regain some of our lost grasslands? There is no definite answer, but there are some indications the Kansas prairie outlook may be improving.

Last December President Reagan signed the 1985 Food and Security Act, better known as the Farm Bill. Within this massive document is one section that could stimulate planting of native prairie grasses. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is designed to protect this nation's soil resources by removing highly erodible cropland from production. Although this program is quite different from the Soil Bank Project of the 1950s, its potential for wildlife is the best we've seen in a federal farm program since those Soil Bank days. In addition to providing beneficial wildlife habitat, the program should reduce soil erosion, improve water quality by reducing sedimentation in rivers and streams and curb production of surplus commodities. That's the word from Department of Agriculture experts. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) is responsible for the program's administration.

**E**ligible land in the CRP is to be planted to one or more of the following vegetative covers: native prairie grasses, tree plantings, wildlife habitat, field windbreaks and introduced grasses and legumes such as brome or fescue. The federal government reimburses each participant up to 50 percent of the cost of establishing this permanent cover.

Annual rental payments are provided to participants for taking land out of production. Competitive bids may be submitted by any producer

with eligible land. If the bid is accepted, a 10-year contract is signed and a conservation plan is designed by the Soil Conservation Service district conservationist. During the 10-year period, grazing, haying, seed production or other harvest is prohibited.

Only highly erodible cropland is eligible. All cropland having a land capability classification of VI, VII or VIII is eligible, in addition to any other cropland having total annual sheet, rill and wind erosion losses greater than three times the rate of soil production. In short, only eroded, windblown, marginal farm ground will qualify.

One of the program's ironies is that much of this erosion-prone cropland has been created in recent years to qualify as set-aside acres under past federal farm programs. Set-aside acres are required for certain program benefits. The requirement is intended to reduce production, but it can be dodged by breaking additional sod and claiming it as set-aside acres two years later. So the program's intent to curb production has been diminished. In addition, millions of acres of erodible cropland have been created nationwide as well.

Since CRP involves retiring marginal land for at least 10 years, the most popular reseeding practice should be native prairie grasses. Native grasses will thrive on poor soils without fertilizers, last indefinitely under sound management and continue producing excellent livestock forage once the 10-year contract has been fulfilled. The advantages of native grasses for this program are evident, but prairie establishment is a foreign subject to many operators who've been indoctrinated with exotic cool-season grasses such as brome and fescue in eastern Kansas. It is unknown how much of the 1.5 million acres eligible in Kansas will be returned to prairie grasses.

What are the costs involved in reseeding this land to protect it from erosion and create something usable for the landowner? Costs vary from area to area and depend upon the cover selected. But some average costs can be developed.

Native grasses have often been overlooked because of reseeding costs. In eastern Kansas, establishment costs for a native mix will typically run \$40-\$45 per acre. The primary expense is the grass seed. Brome establishment also will run \$40-\$45 per acre with the major expense going for fertilizer and herbicide. The difference comes during the CRP's 10-year maintenance contract. The native grass planting will require spring prescribed burning two to four times, which is a minimal ex-



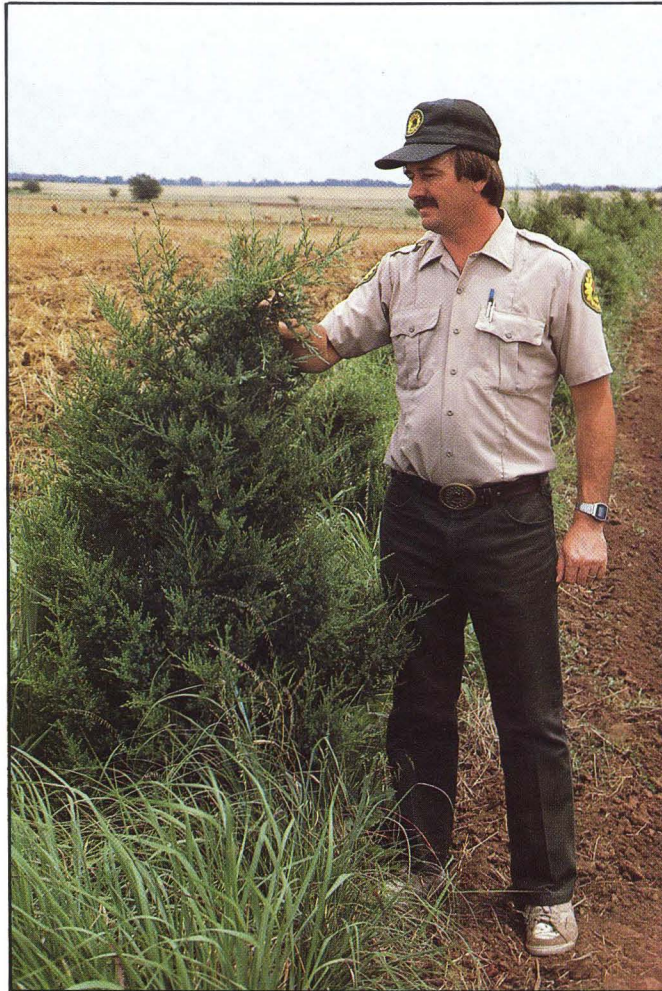
pense. Required brome maintenance, on the other hand, includes mowing and possibly fertilization. At the least, one could expect to spend \$40-\$45 per acre during the 10-year period for brome maintenance. The Extension Service CRP publications and Soil Conservation Service supplied these estimates.

The first CRP sign-up in March 1986 produced less-than-expected results in Kansas. State-wide, 22,142 landowners presented bids to ASCS, and 681 of these were accepted. Approximately 47,500 acres of CRP ground will be reseeded as a result of the first sign-up. Osage County in eastern Kansas had excellent participation. More than 30 percent of the 97 interested landowners had their bids approved. District Conservationist Bud David reported 1,468 acres were accepted into the program. More than 900 acres were planted to native prairie grasses in April and May. Another 350 acres was signed into the wildlife practice. Lands under this option are planted in trees, shrubs, native grasses and food plots. Trees were planted on 15 acres, and only 175 acres of brome and fescue was seeded. If this trend continues during the CRP, native grass reseeding will be significant and several hundred thousand acres in Kansas could be returned to permanent native vegetation.

In central and western Kansas, the field windbreak and tree planting practices also are being used. The opportunity to create excellent upland wildlife habitat in these areas can't be overstated. Acres returned to native grasses as well as tree and shrub borders will provide quality pheasant habitat within the bird's range.

Although re-established native grasses do furnish good wildlife habitat and livestock forage, we must remember the virgin prairie cannot be re-created except by time. The multitude of forbs, legumes and grasses in the unbroken prairie is a plant community all its own. It took centuries to create; it will not be replaced in one year, even 10.

What is to keep the cycle of prairie sodbusting from repeating itself after the 10-year contract has expired? After all, it would appear to be a wasteful investment of public money to pay half of the cost of reseeding an area plus as much as \$600 per acre over a 10-year period and then see the plow re-enact the original problems of soil erosion,



Multiple-row plantings of eastern red cedar, left, help stop erosion and provide valuable food and cover for wildlife. These plantings are encouraged under the Conservation Reserve Program. The sign-up period continues through 1990, and the goal is to retire 40 million acres nationwide. It is a goal we must not take lightly if our children are to see the prairie remain productive.

additional grain production and lost wildlife habitat. Fortunately, another part of the 1985 Farm Bill will help discourage this activity. The sodbuster program provides for stiff penalties if fragile land is broken and planted in crops. Many of the program's specifics weren't known at the time of this writing. In general, the law says that highly erodible lands that are broken out of grass and not protected will have U.S. Department of Agriculture assistance withdrawn. Price support payments, Farmers Home Administration loans, farm storage loans, production adjustments and disaster payments could all be affected. If the sodbuster portion of the farm bill doesn't get watered down, it could be very costly to plow grass in the future.

The agricultural industry is no stranger to hard economic times. Since 1981 dropping land prices, increased production costs, lower cash grain prices and soaring interest rates have combined to drive some farmers into

bankruptcy. Times were better during the early 1970s. Wheat hit \$5 a bushel, gas was 40 cents a gallon, land prices were steadily increasing and the prime interest rate was nine percent. These factors created a positive atmosphere for farming. Unfortunately, it also meant the end to prairie that had not felt the plow for decades, if ever. Native grass prairie that could not show a profit through the livestock it supported could be made profitable through farming. It all worked for a short time.

It appears the corner has been turned on this process. Yes, there is still native prairie being broken, but the trend is much less evident than during the mid-1970s. The economy is providing the main push while the CRP offers a way out for more than a million acres here that are impractical to farm. The intent of the CRP, however, is not to reseed every acre of cropland but to protect millions of tons of soil.



# Bowhunting School

The International Bowhunting Education Program informs and educates bowhunters on the fundamentals of their sport.

by Jerry Burkhart  
*Pratt*

photos by Mike Blair

The morning sun was still just a pink glow in the east when I settled between two cottonwood branches. The night creatures were just giving way to the daylight animals, and the sounds around me kept drawing my attention. The one sound I'd not yet heard, however, was the sound of an approaching deer.

I'd chosen the cottonwood because it was on the edge of the timber bordering a milo stubblefield. I had seen

deer along this edge before, and by the evidence of the tracks I was certain a deer would pass here sooner or later.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by the sound of running animals inside the timber. I readied my bow and in an instant a doe raced by, though just out of range. I wondered what had spooked her and marveled at how cautious she was as she watched her back trail. I found out just seconds later when her fawn came running to her.

They both left, snorting as they ran.

To my astonishment, a coyote was hunting the fawn. That is, until it crossed my trail where I'd entered the trees. It stopped chasing the fawn and sniffed the strange scent on the ground. After a minute of investigation the coyote, too, was gone.

---

Instructor Terry Clarkson describes the parts of a bow during an IBEP class.



I settled back down and waited, hoping the coyote had not spoiled my chances of seeing more deer. Then I caught a glimpse of brown and gray to the west. Nine does and fawns were working their way toward me and feeding as they traveled. This was what I'd been waiting for — my first chance to harvest a deer with a bow and arrow.

The deer continued to approach. When the biggest doe was only 11 feet away, I found myself with my heels locked against one limb and my knees braced against another. I hadn't practiced from this position or any elevated position for that matter, but I felt confident that at 11 feet the arrow would fly true.

As I drew the bow back, I thought of how proud I would be to harvest my first deer. I released and sent the arrow on its way. The doe jumped, and I was certain the arrow had passed completely through her.

I stood in the stand and waited for the arrow to do its work. Minutes passed. The deer kept feeding away from me at a leisurely pace. I thought a mortally hit deer would die quickly. That was the way it was supposed to work; that's what the magazine articles had said.

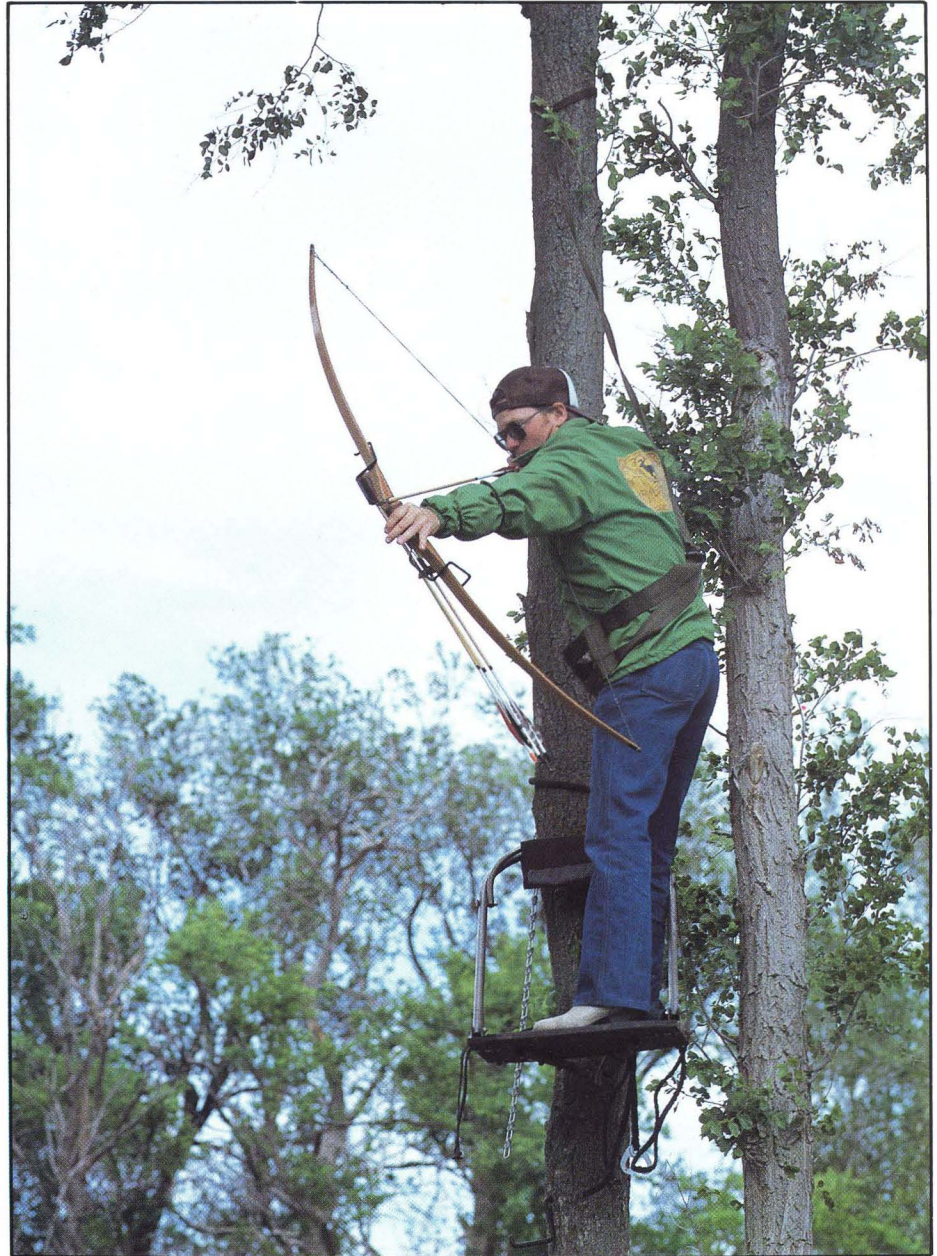
But the deer was still standing an hour after the shot and had drifted east and into the timber toward the bedding ground. I climbed down from the tree expecting to find the arrow covered with blood, proving the shot was good.

What I found was a wooden arrow with everything in perfect condition, except for a broadhead buried six inches in the ground. And the broadhead had no trace of blood. I couldn't have missed at 11 feet. No way. I could hit an orange at that range. I couldn't have just missed a whole deer. Or could I? After examining the deer tracks, I conceded that I had indeed missed.

The year was 1969, and that was my first experience at hunting big game with a bow. I had read every article and every book I could find on bowhunting for deer. I knew it could be done because I had seen pictures of people who had done it. I'd even seen photos of Kansas bowhunters who had taken deer.

It wasn't until five years later, however, that I took my first Kansas white-tail with a bow. But I had acquired a respect and determination for bowhunting I know will serve me for the rest of my life.

Few Kansans knew anything about deer and deer hunting in the late 1960s. I'm certain there were other



Clarkson demonstrates the proper use of a safety belt while in a tree stand. The IBEP recommends all bowhunters use safety belts while hunting from above. More than half of all serious bowhunting injuries result from falls. A safety belt just plain makes sense.

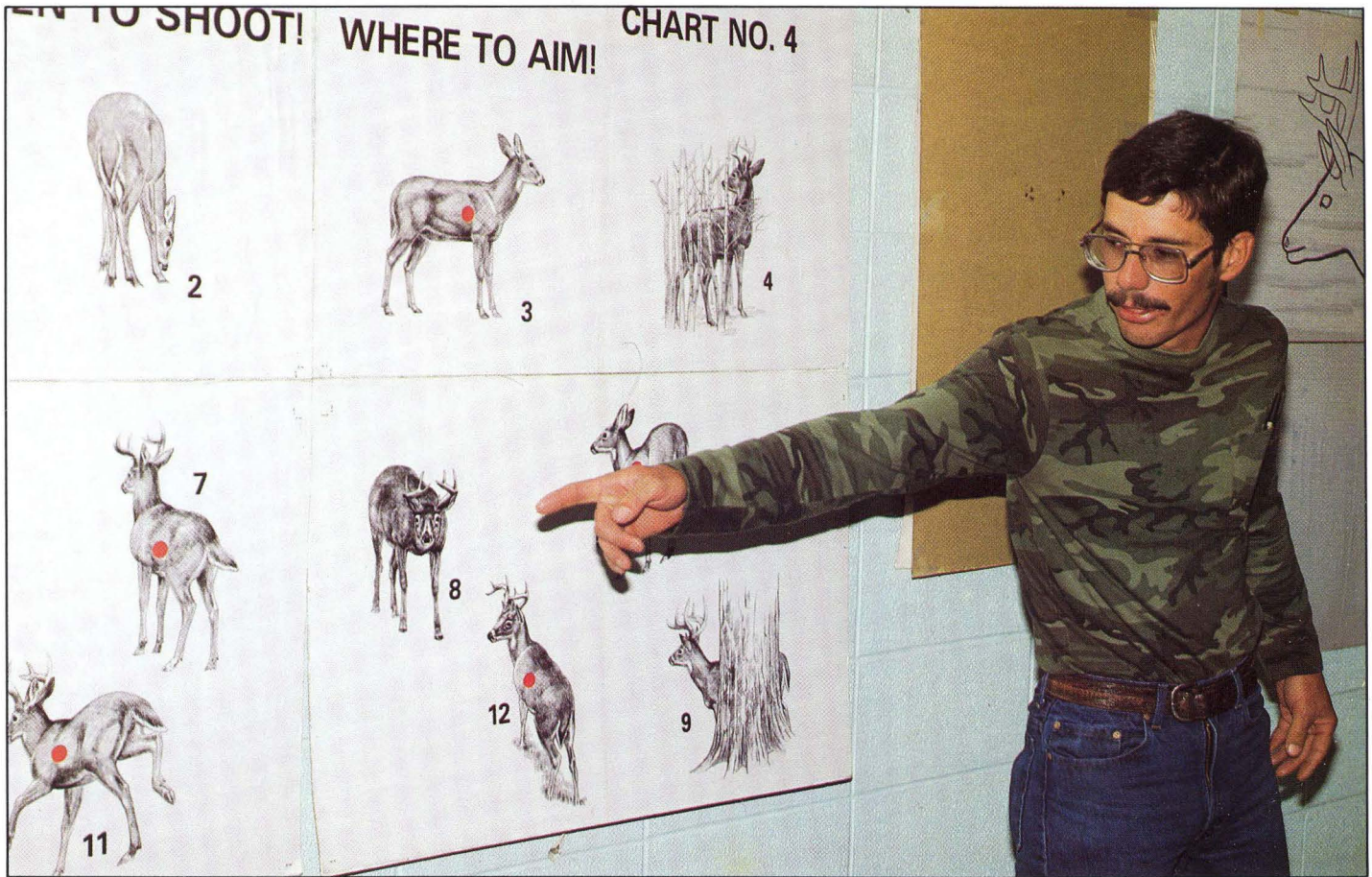
bowhunters who lived near me, but I never had a chance to meet them.

Things have changed since 1969. I learned by trial and error. Today that doesn't have to be the case. There's a worldwide program aimed at educating the novice as well as the veteran bowhunter.

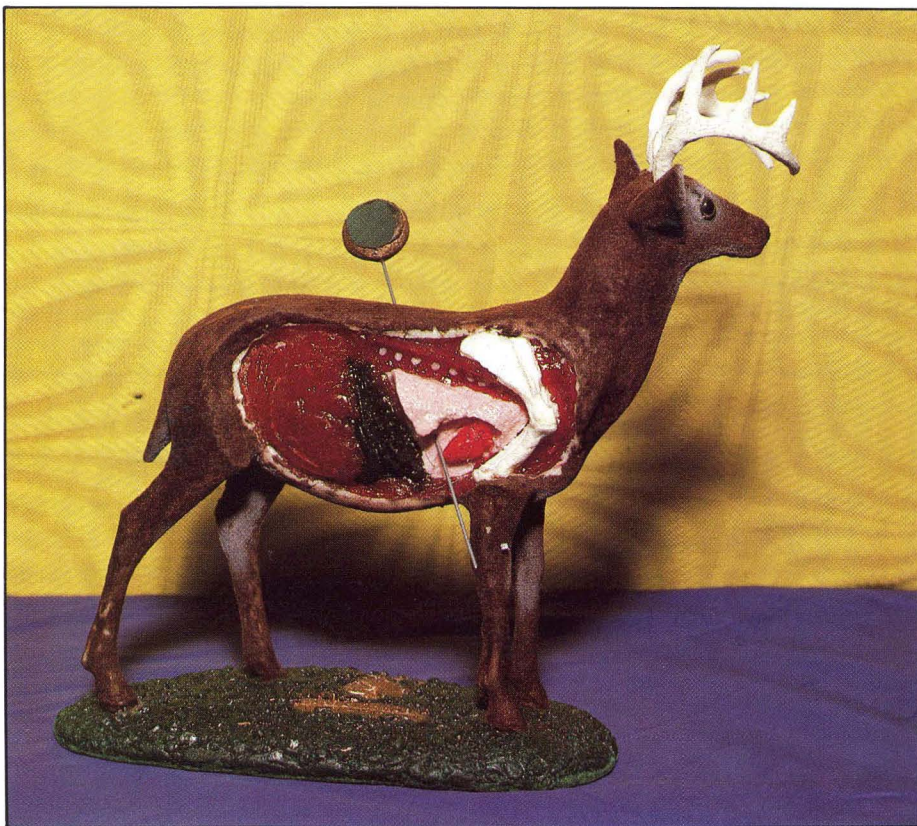
The International Bowhunter Education Program (IBEP) is a global foundation whose purpose is to inform and educate bowhunters on safe bow techniques, an appreciation and respect for the environment and the importance of ethics in outdoor sports.

The IBEP was introduced to Kansas some years ago with the help of the Kansas State Archery Association, the National Field Archery Association and the Kansas Bowhunters Association.

The program is presented in two sections: The Hows of Bowhunting and The Field Experience. A typical class usually consists of 10-15 students who may range in age from 14-70. Years of bowhunting experience varies. Some students have never shot a bow; others may have 20 or more years of experience. ►



Instructor Lynn Leonard shows his class where to aim and when to shoot. The 3-D deer cutaway, below, shows the arrow's path of entry and exit.



The Hows of Bowhunting consists of four one-hour sessions on any number of days. This section, held in a classroom, covers such topics as bowhunter responsibilities, how an arrow harvests game, the unwritten law of the bowhunter, bowhunting methods, bowhunting safety, sharpening and handling broadheads, proper equipment, how to practice, limiting length of shot, picking a spot, knowing a deer's vital organs, reading game signs, game trailing, blade injuries, first aid and survival, field dressing and proper care of a harvested animal.

With all these topics, the instructors use visual aids such as flip charts, diagrams and even a 3-dimensional deer cutaway that allows students to see which vital organs are hit, depending upon arrow placement. The instructors keep the class informal, enabling students to ask questions freely. The class also features a 15-minute VCR presentation showing proper field dressing and skinning techniques.

The Field Experience usually consists of one two-hour segment conducted outdoors. Demonstrations on the correct form, draw, hold, anchor, release and follow-through may be in-

cluded in The Field Experience, but the course is not intended to teach participants how to shoot. Rather, they should be directed to clubs and archery lanes, dealers or schools to learn to shoot and practice properly.

Topics covered during The Field Experience include proper clothing and equipment, sharpening broadheads in the field, equipment review, individual questions and answers, using proper equipment safely, determining bowhunter ability and helping them set their personal shooting limitations, showing how to use tree stands and ground blinds, following a blood trail and scouting for deer sign.



**D**uring the class, hunter ethics and safety are heavily stressed. There's probably as much discussion on game regulations and hunter ethics as on any other topic. Most students want to know the game laws. Consequently some instructors' groups enlist Kansas wildlife conservation officers to answer student questions.

Bowhunting is one of the safest sports today, but the lack of safety practices can kill. One of the few fatalities of modern bowhunting occurred when an eastern bowhunter shot over a buck. The arrow continued downhill and struck another hunter. The most common bowhunting accident, however, is self inflicted: finger cuts when installing broadheads and blades, and mishandling an arrow, for example. Never carry a nocked arrow while walking.

Failure to select a bow quiver that adequately covers the arrow broadheads has accounted for cut fingers and damaged equipment. Selection of a hooded bow quiver is essential. So is practicing with your bow. Choose a place with a good backstop such as a dirt bank or hay bales. But never use the side of a barn or building as a backstop. And know that hunting arrows at close range have more penetrating power than a bullet.

Another area relating to bowhunting safety is covered in tree-stand safety. Permanent tree stands are discouraged for several reasons: (1) In some areas they're illegal. (2) With age they can become rotten and give way under the hunter's weight. (3) Many people consider them unsightly and prefer that bowhunters not use them on their property. The IBEP highly encourages the use of portable tree stands. There

are several good models on the market today. Portable tree stands, which are usually removed and inspected each year, are generally safer than most permanent stands.

The use of shooting safety lines or straps is highly recommended. This line or strap goes around the hunter's body and the tree in which he's standing. It allows the hunter better visibility, accuracy and safety. A shot that normally could not be taken without a safety strap is often possible because the hunter can lean out beyond the shooting platform. During each class someone will relate a story of a bowhunter who was not using a safety line and fell from the tree stand. Broken bones, concussions, even deaths have resulted from not using safety lines.

This is just a summary of the IBEP class. There are about 110 instructors for the IBEP in Kansas. These volunteer instructors teach the class and give of their time much like hunter-safety instructors do. The instructors have met the IBEP qualifications to teach the course. In addition to these people, there are 10 Master Bowhunter Instructors in Kansas. These 10 can certify new IBEP teachers. They also teach the basic IBEP class.

The cost of the IBEP class to students is \$5. Each student receives a textbook and handouts. Listed at right are the Master Instructors in Kansas. These people will help anyone set up an IBEP class in their area. Please feel free to call upon these people to help set up a class in your area.



An IBEP student sights on a black bear target as part of the class. The next scheduled class will be held Sun., Sept. 21, in Hutchinson. For more information call Don Pilger, whose phone number is listed below.

## Kansas Master Bowhunter Instructors

Terry Clarkson  
Cimarron  
(316) 855-2479

Dennis Frederickson  
Phillipsburg  
(913) 543-6228

Don Pilger  
Lewis  
(316) 324-5704

Dave Rogers  
El Dorado  
(316) 321-1496

Charlie Stevens  
Cawker City  
(913) 781-4369

Roger Lathan  
Salina  
(913) 825-9153

Jerry Howarter  
Garnett  
(913) 448-6333

Dave Easton  
Manhattan  
(913) 457-3789

Ron Smith  
Topeka  
(913) 266-8466

Jerry Burkhardt  
Pratt  
(316) 672-2035

*The author, an avid archer, has been bowhunting Kansas deer every year since 1969.*

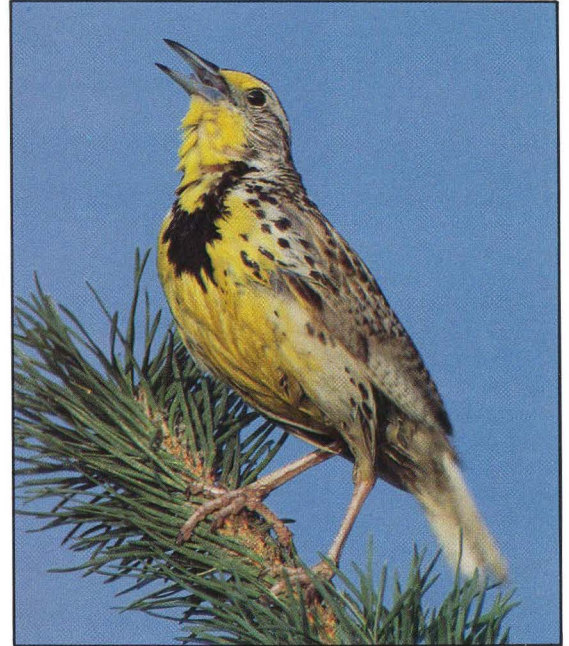
# KANSAS WILDLIFE

## Gallery

photos by Mike Blair



Mulberry trees, scorned by many land-owners for their messy fruit, provide a high-energy food for young birds during nesting season. A robin illustrates this fact during a brief stopover at the nest. Shot with 50mm, f/11, 1/60, two flashes.



The marsh hawk (or northern harrier), left, soars buoyantly above grassy fields in search of prey. It is readily identified in distant flight by a white rump patch separating tail from wings. Shot with 400mm, f/5.6, 1/500. The state bird since 1937, the western meadowlark, above, occupies the western two-thirds of Kansas. The bird is cherished for its melodious song. Another strain, the eastern meadowlark, is similar in appearance. Shot with 600mm, f/11, 1/125.



Handsome as they are, bluejays are the tough guys of the woods. Known for stealing food and plundering the nests of other birds, jays are also known for their jeering cries of alarm. Few animals are better watchdogs when danger is near. Shot with 600mm., f/8, 1/250.



The scaled quail, right, usually lives in coveys consisting of 30-60 birds.

# Singing The Blues

The Kansas Fish and Game Commission has trapped and transplanted scaled quail (also called blue quail) in several southwest counties since 1982.

by Mark Sexson  
*District Wildlife Biologist  
Garden City*

photos by Gene Brehm

**T**he most common name for the upland gamebird native to southwestern Kansas is scaled quail, but this covey bird also goes by at least two other names. Most of those names are derived from the bird's physical features. The name scaled quail comes from the bird's coloration and breast markings, which look similar to fish scales. This species also goes by the name of blue quail because of its overall bluish-gray color. Cottontop is a favorite, too, because of the tuft of short, upright white feathers on the bird's head.

Unlike the bobwhite quail, the male and female scaled quail are hard to tell apart. And it's all but impossible from a distance. Wildlife biologists trained to distinguish between

male and female have mistakenly identified birds, even though they were in hand. Yet there are subtle ways of distinguishing the sex of these birds.

As with most species of birds, the female's coloration is usually drab when compared with the male. The female's color pattern blends with the environment, thereby camouflaging her from predators. This is important during nesting season.

As any duck, goose or deer hunter can tell you, a broken color pattern is better than a solid color when trying to blend with nature. The side of the male scaled quail's face is a uniform pearl gray, with the exception of the brownish ear patch. The throat is generally white just behind the lower



mandible and blends into a yellowish or buffy wash on the lower throat. The females head plumage has a streaked, dirty gray appearance caused by vertical black streaks on a gray or grayish-white background. The throat also is streaked, but the background color is much lighter than the bird's face. Often the streaks are less pronounced so that the throat is white and lacking the yellowish wash found in males.

The scaled quail is limited to southwestern Kansas, which has the driest and warmest climate in the state. Precipitation and temperature are probably two of the main factors that limit these quail to the southwestern corner. But habitat requirements and land use are probably the two factors that restrict the movements of scalies into new areas.

The potential range in Kansas extends as far north as Wallace County and as far east as Clark County. But the lack of suitable habitat restricts the movement of scaled quail that far north and east. Of the eight counties that have excellent climatic conditions for scaled quail, only four (Hamilton, Kearny, Morton and Stevens) can claim sizable populations. Except for isolated areas, the other four counties don't meet the scaled quail's minimum requirements. (Please see the accompanying range map.)

Individual birds have been known to travel great distances, but scaled quail usually live in relatively small areas. The average home range of a scaled quail is 50-160 acres, although they've been known to occupy as little as 24 acres and as much as 2,000 acres. The size of the home range depends on how far quail have to travel for food, water and cover.

Further complicating the bird's natural ability to expand its home range are large expanses of agriculture, which separate quail from new areas. Scaled quail require cover such as brush, yuccas and cactus, so single-plant cropfields are effective barriers. The Kansas Fish and Game Commis-

sion, in an effort to bridge these barriers, has trapped and transplanted scaled quail since 1982.

The use of pen-raised scaled quail to start new populations would be expensive and ineffective. In addition, pen-raised birds can't survive the rigors of nature. Wild birds taken from native populations are best able to adapt in new areas.

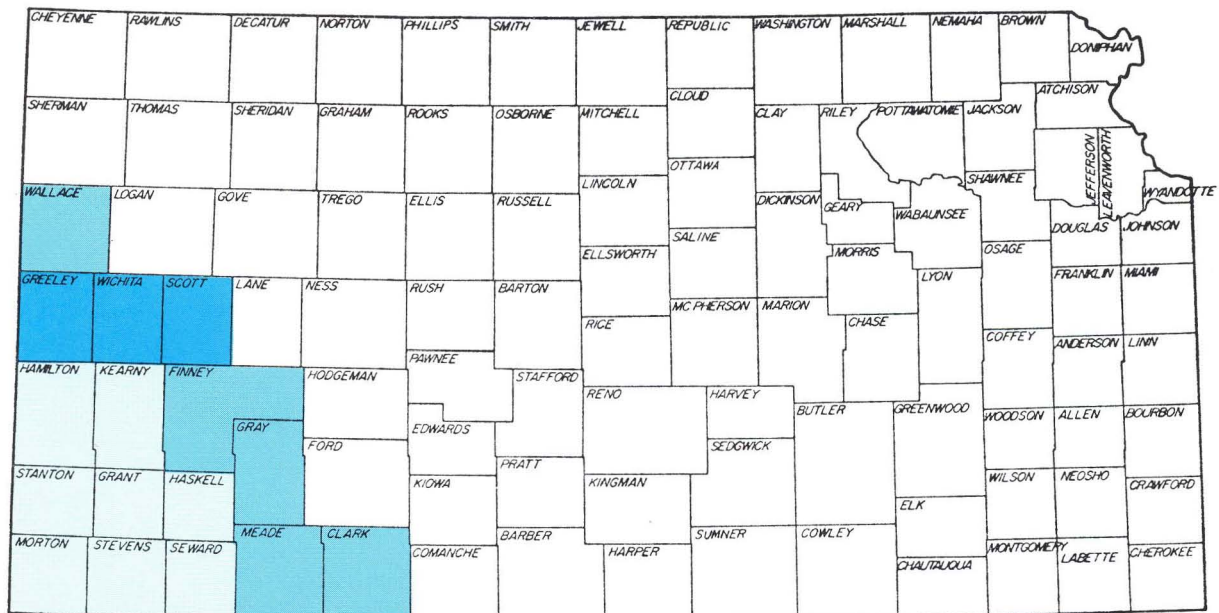
The wild quail used for the Kansas reintroductions are trapped from areas where scalies are abundant. Homesteads and feedlots are among the most productive areas for trapping. These areas supply most of the scalies' winter requirements for survival. Hunting is almost non-existent because of nearby homes and livestock. These two factors provide healthy, undisturbed populations from which to trap.

Trapping occurs in late winter (usually February) after the hunting season has closed but before covey breakup or breeding season has begun. Coveys sought for transplant birds usually consist of 30-60 quail, although I have observed wintering coveys of several hundred birds. To assure future trapping sites, coveys are never trapped below 50 percent of their numbers.

A wire trap baited with whole milo is used to capture scaled quail. A trap is placed over the bait once the birds have become accustomed to the site. The trap has two funnel-type openings that allow the birds to enter but not exit.

**T**rap and transplant operations began in February 1982 when 27 birds were trapped and released in Finney Game Refuge near Garden City. Since that first suc-

## Scaled Quail In Kansas



Counties with permanent populations
  Counties where releases have been made
  Counties with potential to support scaled quail

successful reintroduction, 100-150 quail have been relocated in six to eight transplants each year.

After trapping, the quail are immediately stocked in new locations. The new area must supply exceptional quail habitat since the birds are being released north and east of their current range. The release area also must be isolated from any established populations. It would make little sense stocking birds where the species already is present.

Releases usually consist of 12-20 birds with as close to a 50:50 male/female ratio as possible. One pair of quail could conceivably start a new covey, but the release would fail if one of the two birds died. By releasing a dozen or more birds, the success of the stocking is assured . . . if the conditions are right. In one case, a new release was made using 21 birds near a feedlot. The next year the owner of the lot reported more than 90 birds in the new covey. Quail for yet another transplant were trapped from that 90-bird covey.

Most of the new releases are being made in areas where hunting is restricted or not allowed. Once scaled quail are established, however, they are able to withstand hunting pressure. Quail have been harvested around several release sites. As is true with our other game species, sport hunting has little effect on scaled quail populations. Many of the stockings have been successful, but only time will tell if the program will result in strong, healthy coveys.

Habitat is the key to the scaled quail's survival. It could be generalized that they require grasslands. But since all native Kansas wildlife developed with grasslands, this generalization isn't very enlightening. The scaled quail's habitat is made up of several components, all of which are crucial to its survival.

Scaled quail eat seeds, insects and green plants. Seeds such as Russian thistle, gumweed, pigweed, sandlily, sunflower, croton and ragweed make up most of the bird's diet. Yet insects such as grasshopper's, beetles, insect galls, treehoppers, walking sticks and cicadas constitute most of their diet during spring and summer. Green vegetation is consumed during certain times of the year. Scaled quail are opportunistic and will take advantage of waste grain left after harvest. Sorghum, or milo, is a favorite food when fields are near grasslands.

Water is important to all wildlife, but how it's obtained depends on the species. The scaled quail, for example, doesn't require standing water for survival. Considering that these quail are more common southwest of Kansas in Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, it's obvious they prefer even drier climates and have adapted to survive there.



One pair of quail, above, could conceivably start a new covey, but 12-20 birds is the normal number transplanted at any one release site, below.

Although scabies collect dew and use standing water when available, most of their water requirements are met in the food they eat. The bird's digestive system will extract any water the seeds, insects or plant material may contain. Quail guzzlers, stock tanks and water hauls provide additional water although the bird's survival does not depend on these devices.

Quality cover also is important to the bird's survival. Cover is usually divided into two types: nesting and protective. Scaled quail use structural cover for nesting as well as protection. Structural cover includes brush, shrubs, soapweed, rockpiles, post pilings and old machinery. Bobwhites, by comparison, nest in grassy areas but use brush and shrubs for protection.

Scaled quail populations can easily be enhanced in areas where structure cover is lacking. This is especially true where short-grass areas lack any natural shrubs such as yuccas or sagebrush. By building brushpiles of tree limbs or stacking up old posts, man can enhance the habitat and provide for more quail. The cleaning up of old homesteads, burning of brush and plowing of grasslands, however, will lead to the reduction or loss of this native upland gamebird, the scaled quail.





by Mary Kay Spanbauer

## First Bass For The Lass

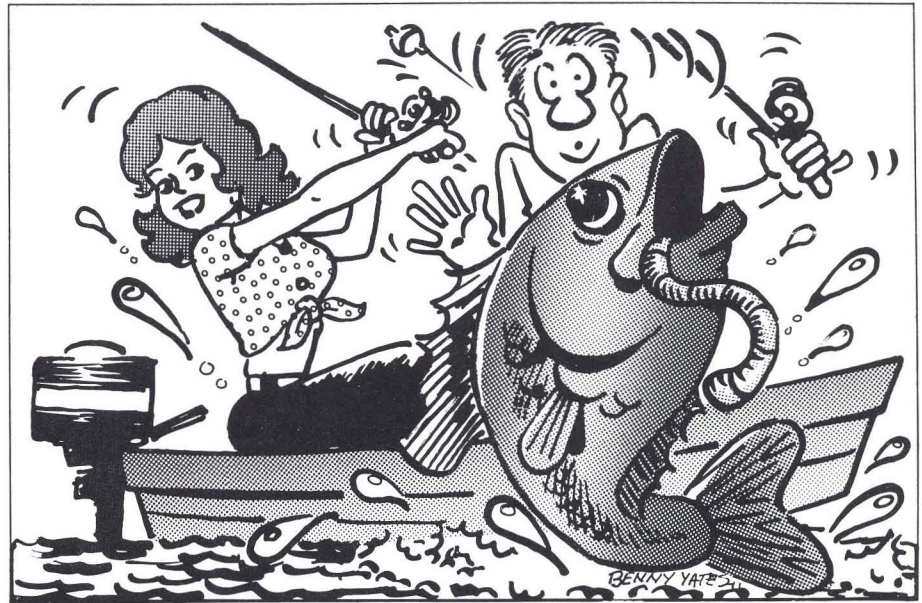
I've fished ever since I can remember. Summer vacations were spent fishing with Uncle Herby and my cousins in Minnesota. Armed with cane poles and freshly dug worms from Aunt P's garden, we'd spend hours catching nice stringers of crappie, bluegill and pumpkinseed for dinner. I learned a lot about fishing from my Uncle Herby — the difference between bluegill and green sunfish, not to talk so much because it scares fish away and if something works don't change it.

Those early fishing experiences were limited to panfish and a few attempts at California surf fishing. Bass fishing was foreign to me although I'd heard plenty of fish stories from several friends. So I was eager to accept an invitation from co-workers to bass fish in the southeast Kansas strip pits.

And I was ready to catch bass — big bass — when I arrived at the designated strip pit on a warm fall day. Co-workers Robbie, Tom and John are veteran bass fishermen and were ready to teach the rookie all they knew. We took two boats so we could work both sides of the long, narrow pit.

I'd bought some bass lures but was told plastic worms were the way to go. Robbie helped me rig my spincasting outfit. He tied on a worm hook, then weaved on a purple sparkle worm and rigged it weedless. Then he patiently instructed me on the finer points of worming . . . how to work one, how to know when a fish is on, how to keep the worm from getting snagged. This sounded a little more complicated than fishing for bluegill and waiting for the bobber to disappear.

We began by running the trolling motor and working slowly along the pit's steep slopes. There was little visible cover, but I managed to find some and in the process lose a lot of worms. Gradually, however, I began to get the hang of casting into the brushy banks. I also learned to bump the worm along the bottom. My gallery said I was catching on quickly, and I could soon tell the difference between the ever-present and annoying weeds and an investigating bass. I began to key in on



Benny Yates illustration

the distinctive *tap, tap, tap* of a bass checking out a potential meal.

I got lots of nibbles, even a few strikes as we worked down the strip pit. But hard as I tried, I couldn't catch a bass. Why? The experts said I wasn't setting the hook hard enough for bass. OK, no problem. Next fish, guys.

We moved a little farther down the pit and continued casting into the brushy cover. Soon I felt that familiar *tap, tap, tap* and I just knew I had a lunker bass on the line. I gave the fish slack and let it get a good hold on the worm. Then I sat down and set my feet firmly on the bow for leverage.

This was one fish that would not get away, and I waited for just the right moment to let him have it. A loud, persistent little voice reminded me to set the hook, **HARD**. And I did . . . unfortunately, too hard. Someone had neglected to tell me that the seats weren't firmly clamped to the sides. My momentum propelled me backward into the bottom of the boat. Suddenly I was flat on my back with my head in an open tackle box. I was surrounded by all sorts of fishing equipment and also being attacked by the now-unattached chair.

Nobody moved. I wasn't hurt, but

my ribs soon began to ache from laughing so hard. The gallery tried not to laugh but once they saw I was OK, they roared.

Meanwhile, the bass was still on my line. In all the commotion I'd still managed to hang on to the rod.

I began to extract myself from the web of equipment I'd crashed into. I gave my pole to Robbie, then managed to right myself and wrestle down the chair. After I regained control, Robbie returned the rod and I reeled in my fish. I'd set the hook firmly (with a little help from gravity) and knew the bass was hooked well.

That largemouth wasn't quite the 8-pounder I'd envisioned but a nice 2½-pounder nonetheless.

Since that trip, I've caught many more bass and returned to that same pit several times. None of the trips has been quite as eventful as the first, and I now check my chair every time I go out. Even though I've graduated to more sophisticated fishing gear, I've stuck with the purple sparkle worms, which I use almost exclusively.

Superstitious? Maybe. But they work for me. I think Uncle Herby would understand.



