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The State Lakes of Kansas...series

(by George Valyer)

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View of Leavenworth County State Lake from the south shelter house.

THE STATE LAKES OF KANSAS . . . *first of a series*

Leavenworth County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

(EDITOR'S NOTE: From time to time in future issues of this magazine, articles will appear on various state lakes. With forty of these fishing impoundments already established, and more contemplated, there will be no lack of material for many issues to come. Kansas sportsmen can well be proud of these lakes which their license dollars have built and this series is designed to make them better acquainted with the outdoor recreational opportunities offered by these waters and parks.)

Driving through the Kaw river valley in the month of October is a pleasant experience for anyone. It was particularly nice on this crisp fall day because no frost had yet dulled the green of summer on the leaves and yet the air was pleasantly cool and invigorating. Apple trees along the highway were

loaded with the red and yellow fruit of the season and the long rows of corn, browning in the afternoon sun, were promise of a full granary.

I was very pleased at the moment because I was headed for a spot of which I had heard much. Many had told me that Leavenworth County State Lake was a good place to fish at this time of year besides being one of the beauty spots of Kansas. Even with the previous descriptions running through my mind, I was not prepared for the beautiful vista which spread out before me at every turn of the road.

After turning of U. S. 24-40 at Tonganoxie, you im-

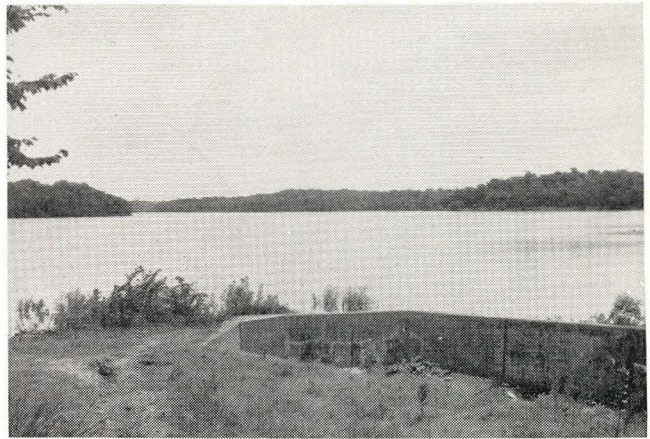
mediately find yourself in sharply rolling hills as you drive on state highway K-16. You are there almost before you know it because the entrance to the park is only four miles from this pleasant little town. For a few moments after you enter the park you do not see the lake at all but then, through a break in the trees, there it is—sparkling clear and beckoning.

If you are like me, you don't want to wait a moment longer than necessary to get a bait in the water when you reach a spot like this. But in this case, let's take in a little of the scenery before we start in to lure fish. The asphalt road on which we are driving takes us along the edge of the hills and affords many beautiful views overlooking the lake. A spring-fed stream gurgles down a rocky channel past a picturesque camping area. A little farther along we see the gravel road leading to the lake shore and concession area. We'll come back to this road to get to the boat dock.



Here is Superintendent John White.

As we wind our way around the hills we come across the park headquarters and stop a few moments to talk with John White, the superintendent. John tells us that "Yes, fishing is pretty good this time of year." "The bass are hitting surface lures and channels are taking chicken livers." He also informs us that if you can come up with some minnows, you might get a string of crappie. John also assures us that J. G. Simpson, the concessionaire can supply us with the minnows and any other bait we might want. Boat rental is also very reasonable—only \$1.50 for eight hours.



A view of the lake from the spillway at the west end of the dam.

As we travel on around the lake, we eventually come to the dam which creates this fine fishing spot. Incidentally, this dam was constructed in 1928 just two years after the original state lake building program was inaugurated. It backs up 175 surface acres of water. We park on the dam itself and get a good look at a great portion of the lake but we still can't see the boat dock which is off to our right in an arm.

On we go, up into the hills again and soon we come across a secluded picnic and camping area on the west side of the lake. Here also is a stone shelter house—one of two in the park. The other one is located on a hill overlooking the lake from the south.

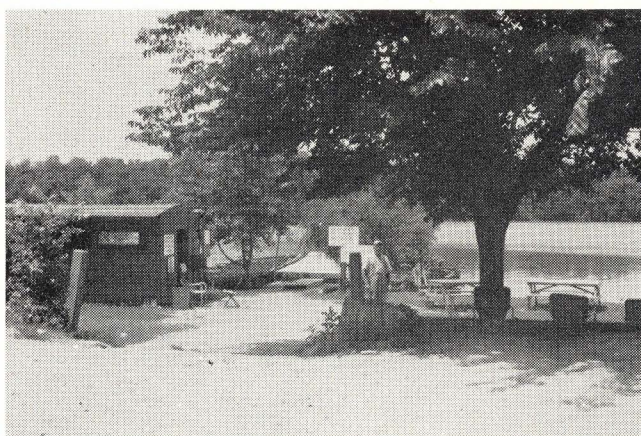
Now it's time to retrace our path back to the road which leads us to the waters edge and, in a few minutes we step out of our car at the boat dock. Just as promised, here was everything a fisherman could desire. A good boat, plenty of bait and even a snack of sandwiches and coffee. In a few moments we have loaded tackle into the boat and mounted our motor. Away we go to the west end of the lake where sharp rock bluffs rise abruptly from the water. This ought to be a good place for bass. Out come the casting rods and plugs and we are ready for an afternoon of good fishing.

If I told you that I caught lunker after lunker that afternoon, you'd think I was bragging. If I told you that the fish weren't hitting, you would think I wasn't very smart because, after all, you have to be smarter than the fish to catch them.

Nearly all species of fish commonly found in Kansas waters can be found in Leavenworth County State Lake. There are channel catfish, flatheads, large-mouth bass, crappie, drum, and bluegill. Large flatheads running from 40 to 50 pounds are occasionally taken. Channels run up to 13 pounds in size and bass falling into the lunker classification (five pounds or over) are not uncommon.

Leavenworth County State Lake is a favorite fishing spot for many northeast Kansas fishermen. Almost any day of the spring, summer and early fall you can find anglers from Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City, Leavenworth and many smaller towns fishing along the banks or from boats. Many campers find the park area of 506 acres inviting and, through the summer, nearly every state in the nation is represented by tourists who request camping permits. To give you an idea of the number of persons who use this lake and park, here are some figures. Last year, 43,406 fishermen used the lake and 1,397 campers set up their tents within the confines of the park.

Yes, it is a popular lake and park, but there is always room for one more. If you have never visited this jewell-like lake resting in these tree covered hills,—well, you've missed a mighty fine spot in the old Sunflower State.



Pictured here is the bait house and boat dock at Leavenworth County State Lake. Concessionaire J. G. Simpson stands to the right of entrance walk.

The Man with the Badge

By ERNEST F. SWIFT

Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation

On November 18, 1955, a West Virginia conservation officer, E. S. Anderson, shot and killed Clyde J. Tennant for resisting arrest when caught spotlighting for deer. Anderson was later charged with murder. The officer was an old-timer in the business, 67-years-old, and with a reputation for good judgment. Anderson claimed Tennant threatened to shoot him and he did not fire until Tennant raised his gun and took aim.

Anderson was in the locality looking for Tennant at the request of the owner of the land upon which the shooting occurred.

Anderson had to stand the costs of his own defense,

but conservationists rallied to raise part of the expense money. Naturally stories were circulated to prejudice public opinion, common in cases of this kind. Just a little illegal game for a life. Supposing the officer had lost his life for just a little illegal game?

The basic difference to be considered is that the officer represented all the concepts of law and order around which governments have developed, while the game violator represented lawlessness and a contempt for human life. His greed was paramount to public interest.

Anderson was recently found not guilty by a jury trial.

Pinning a badge on a man does something to him; his mental outlook has to adjust to the responsibility and authority vested in him. The authority to restrict the liberty of fellow citizens should not be taken lightly nor should it be abused. The adjustment will determine a man's ability, self-restraint, judgment and courage.

A successful game warden by nature is an individualist. He enjoys being his own boss, working out his own problems and the competition of matching wits with offenders of the law. He is not just a woods cop, although he must be a crafty manhunter, with the sleuthing ability of a city detective as well as a master craftsman in the woods. He must know the laws he enforces from A to Izzard and be something of a trial lawyer.

In this present day of automobiles and radio, he is beginning to lose affinity with nature; with the woods, fields and waters. He hikes less, rides more and does not put forth the physical effort of his predecessors; seldom carries a pack or sleeps in the brush.

Too few wardens ever reach their full potential in their own field of conservation. When a warden allows the job to become routine, he is either slipping or lacks imagination. There is no place for routine game law enforcement. In addition to knowing all the tricks of the trade in enforcement, the warden should be well grounded in the biological field of fish and game, and have a working knowledge of forestry and land management. All these specialties develop him into the overall field man that he should be. By virtue of these additional attributes he will be less a cop and more of a conservationist; better balanced in humor and humility.

Above all, he must have an intense fever for his work, be fanatically conscientious, indifferent to hour, physical discomforts, poor pay and public abuse. Many are called, some are chosen, but too few succeed. There is no better job in the entire field of conservation upon which to build decision and judgment for all specialties than some basic training in law enforcement.



THE STATE LAKES OF KANSAS . . . *second of a series*

Located in Southwest Kansas, the waters of Meade County State Lake are seldom placid due to the almost ever-present wind. A rocky shoreline prevents this lake from being constantly turbid by preventing wave erosion.

Meade County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

To the average Kansan, thoughts of the western one-half of the state would bring on visions of a flat plain dotted with farms and small towns and interlaced with dry washes. While this is true of some areas, this picture is not indicative at all of some of western Kansas.

Most of the major east-west highways in the state bypass the more scenic areas. One has to get off the main roads to find the hills, valleys and unusual formations which are worthy of note. Certainly this is true in the case of our subject in this article.

Meade County State Lake and Park is located seven miles south and five miles west of the town of Meade on state highways 23 and 98. The casual visitor is immediately impressed by the change in terrain as he descends into the valley which contains this popular park. Upon entering the gate, one notices the beautiful groves of trees shading picnic tables and camping areas. Beckoning invitingly are the breeze-rippled waters of Lake Larrabee, named for the man who was primarily responsible for the establishment of this

park. Lee Larrabee of Liberal, who served as a member of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission for nearly 25 years, was active in the initial lake building program of the commission which was begun in 1926.

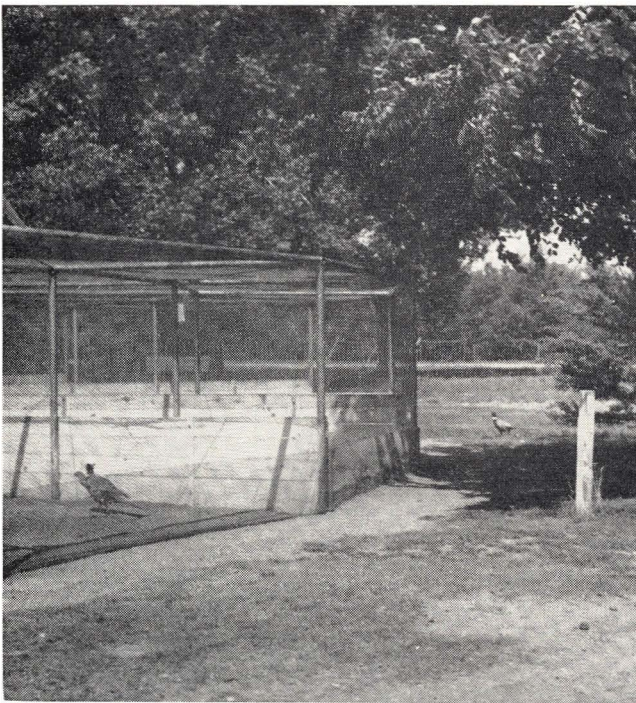
Of the 1,240 acres which now comprises the Meade County State Park, 920 acres were originally purchased in 1927. The land was part of what was then known as Turkey Track Ranch and through which flowed Stumpy Arroya, a never failing water supply. This stream is fed by a number of springs many of which are on the park property. In the spring of 1928 the dam to form the lake was completed and fish were stocked in the lake that fall. Six fish rearing ponds were also constructed at that time.

In 1934 and 1935 a depression spawned CCC camp was established at the park and improvements were made to the lake. Also, additional fish rearing ponds were constructed. This camp remained active till 1942. In 1940, the CCC enrollees began construction of the permanent buildings on the grounds which house the pheasant rearing facilities of the Commis-



The new shelter house at the north end of the lake nestles in a grove of trees. An artesian well seen in the foreground is three-hundred feet deep and flows at the rate of 100 gallons per minute.

sion. These buildings, including a concession and bath house located at the southwest portion of the lake, were designed by the U. S. Park Service and are of



Located near the headquarters area is a large bird display part of which you see pictured here. Note the wild pheasant to the right of the pens.

Spanish design with adobe construction. The adobe blocks were manufactured on the site and of materials near at hand. A sand beach was also established near the concession.

A favorite picnic grove near the hatchery buildings now boasts a beautiful native-stone shelter house which was completed in the fall of 1957. Its location is near an artesian well which pours out an estimated 100 gallons of water a minute.

In the fall and early spring of the year, many ducks use the lake and rearing ponds for loafing and resting during migration.

Other attractions abound at Meade County State Park. A portion of grassland is fenced off as a big-game refuge and contains buffalo and elk. A large flock of peafowl roams the area and deer are frequently seen within the confines.

Needless to say, fishing is one of the biggest attractions. The lake is considered one of the best in southwest Kansas for channel catfish, drum and bass. Boats are available for rent during season and a launching ramp provides access for those who tow their own craft behind their car.

Whatever your reason for being out-of-doors, be it camping, fishing or just sight-seeing, Meade County State Lake and Park offers abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation. Spring, summer or fall, you're bound to find something of interest.

The goldeneye is commonly known as a "whistler" because of the loud, high-pitched whir of its wings, which produce a curiously resonant effect when a flock is on the move.

A running antelope carries most of its weight on its front legs. Its hind legs serve as supports, and don't hit the ground as forcefully.

The feet of pronghorn antelope are padded, and thus the animals suffer little from sore or tender feet, even though they may often run on abrasive rock outcrops.

Though elk calves nurse throughout their first summers, calves probably begin feeding on vegetation before they are a month old.

Mature antelope of both sexes express anger or anxiety by an explosive snort or "blow" similar to the blow of a whale.



One of the picnic and camping areas located in a grove of trees on the west side of McPherson County State Lake. This grove is known locally as the "crow's roost."

THE STATE LAKES OF KANSAS . . . *third of a series*

McPherson County State Lake By GEORGE VALYER

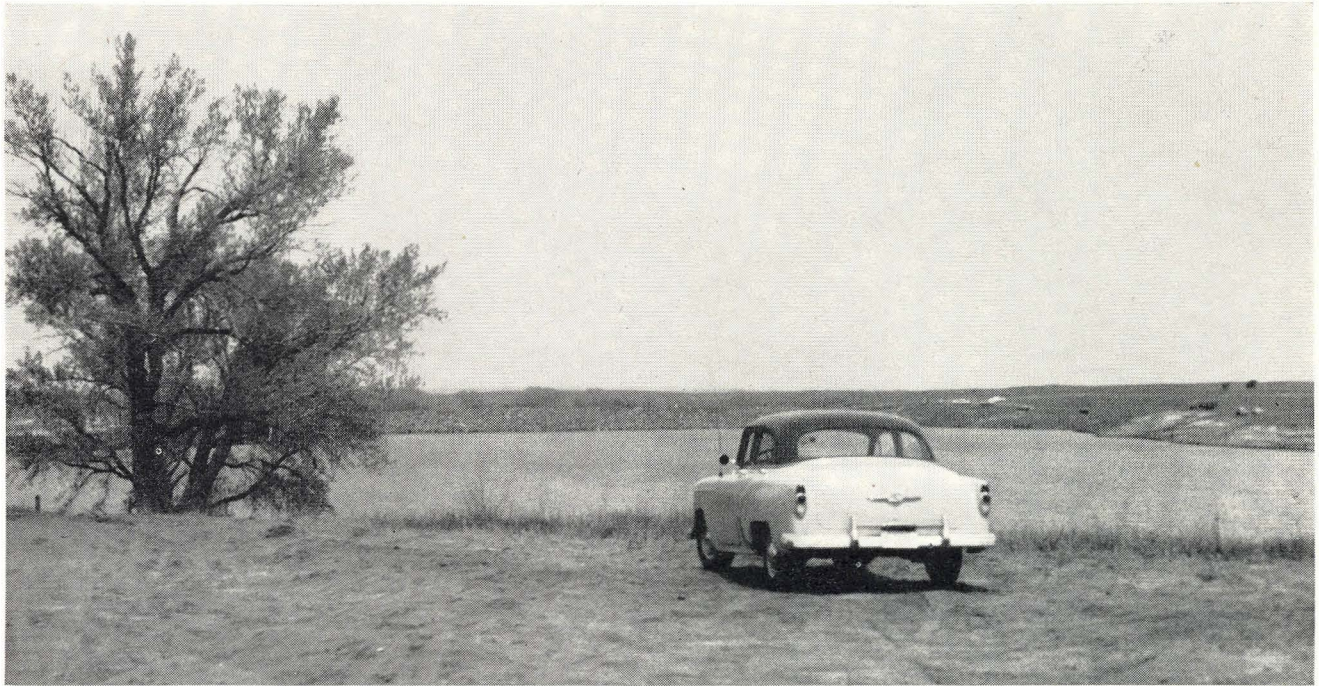
What is it about a body of water that attracts the eye and fills the soul with delight? What is it about a lake that seems to beckon to the passerby? Few are those who have not felt the magnetic force of a lake or reservoir. For a fisherman this attraction is doubled, especially for a lake which just plain "looks fishy." This is certainly the situation at McPherson County State Lake.

The greater portion of McPherson County, Kansas, is as level as probably any spot on this earth. Rich fields spread luxuriantly, broken only by an occasional small draw. However, the extreme northern part of the county has an entirely different terrain. Here, you find rolling hills of grass and sharp valleys with small spring-fed tricklets or streams. It is in such surroundings that you find McPherson County State Lake.

Leaving U. S. Highway 56 between Galva and Can-

ton, you travel northward on a county road for seven miles. The last three miles of travel takes you from the flat to the hilly country. As you turn east into the park, your attention is immediately drawn to a grove of trees overlooking a valley. As you drive to the crest of the hill, the lake materializes before you. Here is a sparkling gem set in a background of green hills.

The lake is not large as lakes go. It measures only 46 surface acres but its twisting shoreline and meandering coves give it the appearance of a larger body of water. The water is normally clear since the creek which feeds the lake is springfed. Above the lake one can see the remains of beaver dams built by nature's engineers in times past. These dams were deserted during the drouth years between '52 and '55 when many of the springs ceased to flow enough to keep the ponds full.



McPherson County State Lake from a hill near the entrance.

The dam to form this lake was constructed in 1954 and enough water was backed up by the following year to allow the stocking of fish. Evidently the feeder creek contained specimens of fishlife since the lake contains green sunfish and bullheads, neither of which were stocked. The species placed in the lake include largemouth black bass, crappie, bluegill and channel catfish and they are all found in abundance. Fishing was opened April 1, 1957, and fishermen had fabulous luck for the first few days. Naturally, fishing dropped off somewhat after the initial flurry, but good fishing is expected to be the rule at this fine lake.

The McPherson County State Lake lies on a fenced-off portion of the Maxwell State Game Refuge. Land for this refuge was donated to the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission by the late Henry Irvin Maxwell. This 2,560 acre refuge of undisturbed prairie land is the home of herds of buffalo, elk and deer. The buffalo and elk are fenced away from the lake, but the deer occasionally crawl under the wires and are seen near the shores. The lake and park area are located on the west side of the refuge while the headquarters and overlook for the refuge are on the east side of the property. To get to the lookout tower from the lake, it is necessary to retrace your route to the west entrance, go north two miles, east three miles, then south two miles to the east entrance. The observation tower is located on a high hill from which most of the area can be readily seen.

The park surrounding the lake is well equipped with all day-use facilities. Picnic tables and grills are plentiful in well shaded locations. Six sanitary units have been erected. Camping is permitted. The major camping and picknicking area is on the west side of the lake where the large grove of trees is located. An additional facility, a boat dock, is expected to be completed this spring by the McPherson County Fish and Game Association, a local sportsman's club.

The next time you want to cast for bass, flip a fly for pan-fish or just lean back and relax while waiting for the catfish to nibble, you might consider McPherson County State Lake. If you look down the shore a few yards, you might see me there too.

When digging its burrow the chipmunk either moves the excavated soil several yards from the opening or makes another entrance, often under a little bush or overhanging rock, and then plugs up the first opening.

Buffle-head ducks use old woodpecker holes or natural hollows in trees as nesting sites. These ducks can dive quickly and emerge from a dive in full flight. In the days of slow-burning powder, they could dive at the flash of the gun and thereby avoid being shot.



View of the concession area at Woodson County State Lake.

THE STATE LAKES OF KANSAS . . . fourth of a series

Woodson County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

Twenty-three channel catfish weighing a total of 144 pounds make this a picture of complete satisfaction. All were caught on one day, April 3, 1958, at Woodson County State Lake. From left to right are Bob Rohr, Don Rohr, Rollie Sloan, Kenneth Strawder, Roger Ranes, Jess Rohr and Don Corbin, all from Le Roy, Kansas. Another member of the party, Bud Vollard, took the photo.



Like to fish for bass? Big channels? Crappie that sometimes hit the scales for two and three pounds? Well, you're in luck if you happen to be at Woodson County State Lake at the right time. One of the prettiest of the state lakes in Kansas, it is also a consistent producer of some of the finest fishing at various times throughout the year.

As all fishermen know, any lake has times when fishing is good and other times when results are nearly nil. This is a natural condition which can not be predicted. But, day in and day out, I'd just as soon take my fishing chances at Woodson County State Lake as any other lake I can think of in the Sunflower State.

This lake is known to many sportsmen of the area as Lake Fegan. The origin of this name lies in the fact that the owner of a considerable portion of the land purchased by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission for construction of this lake was one Ben Fegan. In case you are interested in some vital statistics, the lake covers 179 acres which lies in a park of 445 acres. The eastern shore is almost completely wooded and rises sharply from the lake's edge. The western shore is mostly gentle, grass-covered hills. The camper and picnicker have a wide choice of types of locations to pitch their tent or spread their lunch.

During the summer heat, most prefer the sylvan eastern portion of the park because of its cool shade and pure spring water.

A swimming area has been designated on the eastern side of the lake and many persons enjoy a dip in



Fish-rearing pond below the dam at Woodson County State Lake.

the water at that location. Swimming is not permitted at any other place in the lake.

By now, you should be ready to visit this splendid area so let's get into the car and start out. Perhaps the best way to reach our destination is to turn off U. S. 54 where it junctions with K-105 and go south to Toronto. There, you get on a county road and go five miles east to the park entrance. Let's stop at the superintendent's house and meet congenial Mr. and Mrs. Mat Sprigg. Mat will be happy to advise us of the fishing conditions and the best place to camp. After getting our camping permit, we hurry to the wooded campsite and pitch our tent. Let's not waste any time since the fish are waiting. On our way to the concession area, let's stop at the spring to fill our jug; a fellow can get mighty thirsty out in a boat even if there is water all around.

We find the concession area neat as a pin and equipped with a cafe, baithouse and covered boat dock. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fey and their two sons are ready to serve us with a good boat, all kinds of bait and plenty of encouragement, so away we go to try our luck.

We'll be back a little later to sample some of Hazel Fey's sandwiches and homemade pie.

Woodson County State Lake was constructed in 1933 and was immediately a favorite with fishermen. After a period of years of high productivity, the fish population slowly grew out of balance and in 1949,

the lake was drained and rehabilitated. Fishing has been generally good since the lake was reopened on January 1, 1953. Except for periods of heavy rains, the water is clear and good habitat for bass and crappie. Channel catfish also do well in this water and some large ones have been caught. Some record crap-



Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fey, operators of the cafe, bait house and boat dock.

pie probably inhabit Woodson County State Lake since at least one weighing an unofficial 4½ pounds was hauled out last year. Only one other crappie of that size is known to have been caught in Kansas. It was taken from a strip pit near Pittsburg in 1954 and won first place in the Field and Stream fishing contest of that year for its classification. Perhaps another winner is lurking somewhere in the watery depth of Lake Fegan.

The Feys will be glad to show you pictures of some of the large fish that have been caught at their favorite lake. In fact, when you enter the cafe, the pictures on the wall will attest to the fact that fish grow large in this body of water.

Since channel catfish seldom have suitable spawning places in lakes, the Fish and Game Commission maintains a rearing pond for this species just below the dam. Young channel fingerlings are placed in this pond and raised to a size where they will not be easy prey for the large game-fish in the lake. Then, they are placed in the lake to provide more hours of fun for the catfish fisherman.

On a summer Saturday or Sunday, you will probably find people from all over eastern Kansas enjoying the fine facilities at this recreation spot. On occasion, visitors from other states come to enjoy the excellent camping and fishing. You, too, are invited to join with the many others who find relaxation and enjoyment at Woodson County State Lake.



Mr. and Mrs. Mat Sprigg occupy the superintendent's cottage at Woodson County State Lake.



A spring on the wooded hillside is piped to these barrels near the roadside. Although the flow is not large, the water is pure and cool.

Former Commissioner Dies

James R. Peck of Independence, former member of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, died at his home May 19.

Mr. Peck was appointed to the Commission in 1947 and served until 1951. He was born in Avoca, Oklahoma, in 1884. After living in Rogers, Arkansas, for several years, he moved to Neodesha in 1904. He was prominent in civic affairs and in his church, the Neodesha Christian Church. In 1941, he moved to Independence where he operated a car and implement business. He retired in 1948.

He is survived by his wife, Georgia; a daughter, Mrs. Harold Alford of Independence; two sisters; and three granddaughters.

The fastest animal native to North America is the pronghorn antelope. Its top speed allows it to outrun any of its enemies.

Motor boats may be used on the State Lakes of Kansas for fishing purposes only.

Squirrel season in Kansas opens September 1.



Campers find attractive spots in which to pitch their tents or park their trailers.

THE STATE LAKES OF KANSAS fifth of a series

Kingman County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

An excellent wildlife area; real great fishing; it's a beautiful spot; these are some of the things you'll hear when Kingman County State Lake and Park is mentioned. Almost everyone who has ever visited this largest of state parks in Kansas would agree that this area truly offers a lot to the outdoorsman.

Most casual visitors do not realize the extent of the land area within the boundaries of the park. The 1,562 acres contain many types of terrain including marsh land, meadow land, crop areas, forest and a few low hills. The park is bisected by two outstanding

Picnic facilities are heavily used at Kingman County State Park. This scene shows a family from Wichita enjoying the opportunity of outdoor living.





Kingman County State Lake from hill on the east side.

features, U. S. Highway 54 and the Ninnescah river. South of the highway as it passes through the park you find pasture, meadow and crop land plus one of the two quail hatcheries operated by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. To the north lies the 185-acre fishing lake, the camping and picnic areas, more meadows and the wooded section.

Many visitors from all parts of the nation are attracted to this area because of its proximity to the major east-west highway and many tourists use the park for camping or just resting from their journeys. One of the most popular attractions in the park is the herd of buffalo which grazes in the pasture near the highway. Travelers from the eastern part of the U. S. have repeatedly remarked that this is the first glimpse of buffalo they have ever had.

The quail farm and hatchery comes in for its share of attention also. Thousands of persons visit this installation each year and are treated to the sight of the 300 well kept units which house the breeding pairs. Also on the grounds are exhibits of other game birds such as pheasants, ducks and non-native quail species. In late spring and summer, young bobwhites by the thousands can be seen in the brooder houses.

The marsh and wooded areas as well as the meadows contain much native wildlife which can be observed by the nature lover. Large areas, which can be explored only on foot, are set aside especially for wildlife. Beaver thrive in the lowlands near the river and their tree-cutting and dam building activities are apparent in numerous places. Squirrels frisk about in gay abandon and the whistle of bobwhites drifts gently on the breeze. It would be nearly impossible to describe all the animal and bird life found at King-

man County State Lake and Park but one could hardly forget the large numbers of waterfowl which use the area during the fall and spring. Some have been known to stay nearly all winter.

Kingman County State Park, like most others in the state park system, is a game refuge and no hunting is permitted. Waterfowl which use the lake and adjacent marshland as a sanctuary during the hunting season leave the park to feed thus providing hunting opportunities in the surrounding countryside.

What about fishing? Well, it's great if you're there at the right time. Nearly every species of fish commonly caught in Kansas is found in the lake. There are both black and white bass, crappie, channel catfish, bluegill, bullheads, carp and other minor species in small numbers. Experimental plantings of wall-eyes have been made in the past but, apparently, they do not do well in the smaller lakes such as this one.



West Highway Entrance to Kingman County State Park.

The lake is not a deep one as lakes go but springs in the watershed keep it running over the spillway except in times of extreme drought. Large channel catfish and lunger bass are taken from the lake, particularly during the spring and fall. During the dead of summer, night and early morning fishing is usually the most productive. Even though the lake is relatively shallow, the inflow of springs on the north side keep the lake reasonably cool during summer's heat.

Adequate picnic facilities and camping spots are located all along the east edge of the lake and two wells provide drinking water. The hills overlooking the lake to the east are used annually by Boy Scouts as the site of camporees. 1,200 Scouts from Wichita used the area as a campsite this June.

Although there is no concession operating in the park, groceries and gasoline are available on the highway just west of the entrance to the quail farm. Fish bait is obtainable on the north side of the park at the Hartley Fish Farm.

Land for the establishment of Kingman County State Lake and Park was purchased in February of 1931 at a total cost of \$79,149. Construction of the dam to form an 80-acre lake began in 1932. In 1955 construction began to raise and lengthen the dam to impound a greater area of water. This enlarged the lake to its present surface area of 185 acres.

If you have an interest in the animal, bird and plant life of the Sunflower State, by all means you should visit this park. One can spend a day or a week roaming this unspoiled area observing the abundant wildlife and uncultivated foliage.

If you wish to camp, just contact genial Byron Walker, superintendent of the quail hatchery and caretaker of the park. He will issue you a permit.

Whatever type of outdoor recreation you desire, you will probably find it at Kingman County State Lake and Park.

Waterfowlers Can Prevent Losses

Sportsmen can bring about an immediate increase in the waterfowl population if they will co-operate in a nation-wide effort to reduce serious crippling wastage. Facts compiled by the Atlantic Flyway Council, the co-ordinating unit for states and other agencies in a flyway-wide waterfowl program on the East Coast, show that gunners can give a material boost to duck populations.

Millions of ducks are being wasted annually through crippling in the nation's flyways. Reduction of this loss is possible only in one way—by the hunters themselves. Participation of each gunner in a self-imposed

campaign to kill cleanly and recover each duck downed is the sole way the job can be done.

To emphasize the seriousness of this crippling loss, the Atlantic Waterfowl Council cites facts and figures from recent studies by a number of state fish and game departments. They show that annual crippling losses range from 8 to 53 percent, and average 25 percent on a nation-wide basis. These are the figures only for birds knocked down in sight of the observer and not retrieved. Obviously, the birds which fail to fall and die later add substantially to the total. Diseases, food shortages, poaching and other illegal killing hardly equal the waterfowl wastage entailed by crippling loss.

It may be that nearly half again as many birds are wasted as are taken home. The possible magnitude of these additional losses is found in the results of X-ray studies in the West, which showed 25 to 35 percent of all ducks examined carrying shot in their body tissues.

The problem ties right down to gunning practices. Only hunter co-operation can solve it. Listed by the Waterfowl Council are the following gunning practices which cause this crippling and costs you better hunting:

1. Trigger-happy shooting—that business of letting fly at anything that passes even though you haven't a good chance to kill a bird.
2. Inability to judge distance—fellows with this difficulty try to knock down every high flier that comes over. The duck finches but never falls. Gunners who do this drive out all the ducks in an area and spoil anyone else's hunting as well as their own.
3. Poor marksmanship—the kind of gunning demonstrated by the fellow who doesn't practice shooting until he goes out ducking and then tries to sharpen his shooting eye on every bird in sight.
4. Inability to recognize limitations in the range of modern shells—the emphasis on long-range loads encourages too many people to try to kill ducks at distances exceeding their ability to properly swing and shoot.
5. Failure to retrieve birds—many downed birds are lost in marsh or other heavy vegetation by the failure of the gunner to have a dog to retrieve them or by his failure to drop them in a spot where they can be recovered.

Heaviest crippling losses occur in the early part of the season when marsh vegetation is most dense. Decoy shooting tends to reduce losses when the hunter fires only at birds in or over his decoys, providing they are set at the proper range. But there are losses, too, over open water when birds are not killed clean.

The Atlantic Waterfowl Council suggests the following code to guide co-operating gunners in their campaign to reduce this loss.

1. Shoot only when birds at reasonably close range. When you hit them, you kill, and when you miss, you miss clean.
2. Use a retriever—it adds to the sport and cuts cripple-wastage by more than half.
3. Think—will the birds lose life slowly and needlessly?



This shady overlook on the south side of Lyon County State Lake gives a good sample of the beauties found there.

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . sixth of a series

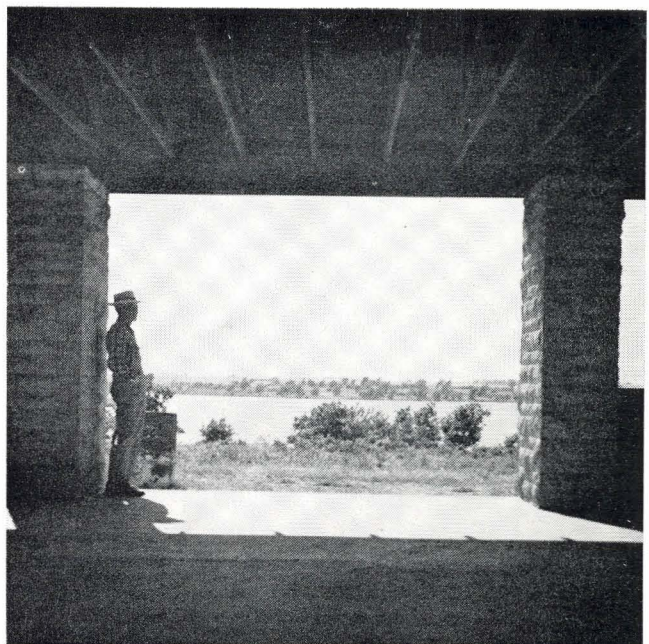
Lyon County State Lake By **GEORGE VALYER**

Almost any summer week end is a good time to visit Lyon County State Lake if you want to see a lot of people having a good time. They'll be fishing, swimming, picnicking or just driving around enjoying a look at the countryside. This is an outdoorsman's lake, a lake which offers rugged camping spots, adequate facilities without frills and a chance to view rolling prairies, unspoiled by modern civilization.

The park area surrounding Lyon County State Lake is an excellent example of unbroken prairie land typical of eastern Kansas. Native grasses flourish within the boundaries and wildflowers add their note of color in season. The word "peaceful" might well be used to describe the vista as one stands on a high point on the south shore overlooking the wind-rippled water.

The trees dotting the shoreline and shading the picnic areas are a welcome relief and ample evidence that an effort has been made to create a pleasant recreation facility. Numerous boats may be seen at times as their occupants search for that good fishing spot or troll

A view of the lake through the native stone shelterhouse.





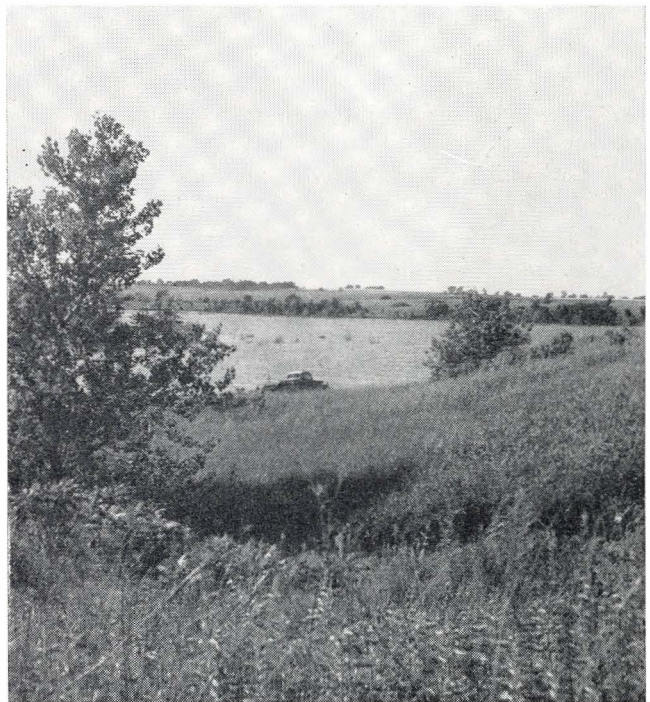
The sparkling waters of Lyon County State Lake invite the swimmer in for a dip.

A favorite fishing spot with many is this cove or arm located on the south side.

slowly along the shore. As with all state lakes, boats are used for fishing purposes only and the angler need not worry about having his fishing interrupted by a speeding vessel towing a waterskier.

Lyon County State Lake is one of the older of the state lakes. It was constructed in the year 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps with material furnished by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. The 582 acres of land comprising the park were purchased earlier by the commission in 1931. Lack of rainfall following completion of the dam caused some delay in opening the lake and it was opened for public use for the first time in 1938. The 135 acres of water contain many species of fish including largemouth and Kentucky bass, channel catfish, crappie, drum, bluegill and bullheads.

The lake is best known for its drum and bass fishing but consistently produces good catches of all species present. According to fisheries biologists, it is one of the better lakes in the state in that the fish population is relatively stable. There seems to be little tendency for out-of-balance in fish numbers.



Like all other lakes, fishing at Lyon County State Lake has its ups and downs. Some days the fish are willing to take almost anything offered; on other days there seems to be very little feeding activity. If anyone could come up with a reason for this day-to-day variance, he could certainly avoid some hours of fruitless fishing time.

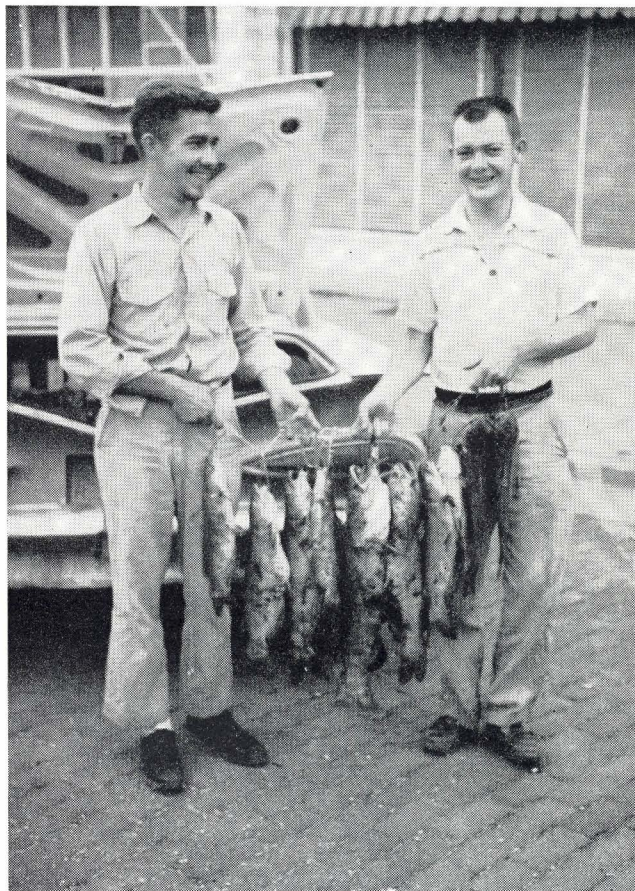
Lyon County State Lake is located fourteen miles northeast of Emporia or six miles west and one north of Reading. Its proximity to the latter town explains why it is often called Reading Lake. Located only one mile off state highway 70, it is accessible even during stormy periods. All main roads in the park are graded and graveled. Some of the minor access roads are merely auto trails and are not usable during wet weather.

Although swimming is allowed in the buoyed area next to the spillway, such activity is discouraged by signs placed at the entrances to the lake. The reason for this is that there have been several drownings there in the past. The lake bottom is characterized by sudden drop-offs which have been responsible for deaths. Persons have been wading in relatively shallow water only to step off into an area of deep water. A person unable to swim is in a dangerous position when this happens. It is recommended that all possible water safety precautions be observed by anyone desiring to swim at this lake. Even the best of swimmers get fooled once in awhile so it is always best to have a companion along to lend assistance if trouble should be encountered. Of course water safety should be practiced at all times on every lake but particular care should be exercised at this lake, due to its nature. If there is any doubt about your swimming ability or the ability of those with you, it's best to forego the pleasure of a dip at Lyon County State Lake.

The park area, because of its lush grassland, is known to be home for the greater prairie chicken. In the past, numerous broods of this fine upland game species have been hatched out in the park. Quail, doves and many species of song and insectivorous birds find the area to their liking. The land also supports its share of small animal life and, on a moonlit summer night, you might hear the plaintive wail of a coyote family.

Yes, for those who enjoy their outdoor sports in relatively unspoiled territory Lyon County State Lake fills the bill. Its very nature creates a balanced feeling of serenity and challenge, of peace and activity. Spend some time there and you'll see what I mean.

The black-footed ferret weighs about a pound and may be two feet long.



These nine channels and one flathead were plenty to bring smiles of pleasure to Karl Naylor and Kenny Robertson of Chanute. The fish averaged four pounds each and were caught from the south fork of the Cottonwood river.



James Oliver Baker of Fort Scott has been after the big ones at Crawford County State Lake No. 2 again. Here is a four-pound, nine-ounce largemouth which he took in May while fishing with a flyrod.

The badger is a member of the weasel family.



A view of Farlington Lake from the south end.

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Sixth of a Series

Crawford County State Lake

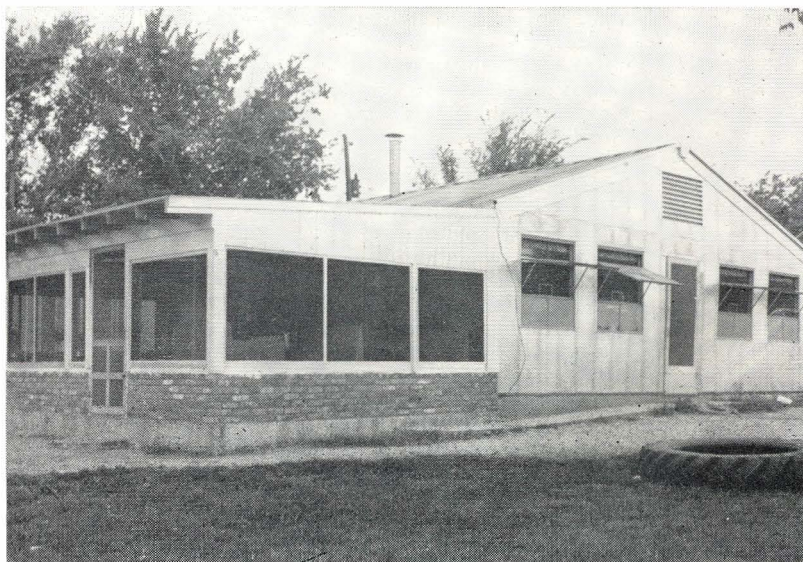
By GEORGE VALYER

Just talk to anyone from southeast Kansas. They'll tell you it's the prettiest lake in the state. They will also tell you it can't be beat for fishing unless you want to travel many a long and weary mile.

Yes, the residents of the "lower righthand" corner of the Sunflower State are proud of their lake and they have a reason to be. Crawford County State Lake, better known as Farlington Lake, is indeed one of the best. Its natural attributes include a rocky shoreline, wooded camping and picnic areas and sparkling clear water. And, the facilities are there too, picnic tables, shelter houses, fireplaces and grills, an enclosed fishing dock, bait station and a fine little cafe with a screened-in dining porch. Put all these together and you have a splendid place for those who like the out-of-doors and good fishing.

Crawford County State Lake is one of the older

The concession house with its new screened-in dining porch.



lakes in Kansas. It was constructed back in 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. This agency of the federal government was active during the 30's and constructed many of the older lakes in Kansas. One of the conditions for the use of CCC labor was that improvements be made on state owned land. Therefore, residents of southeast Kansas, in order to get a lake at that location, formed an association to purchase the land and donated it to the fish and game commission. This association reserved for private ownership certain lots around the lake for use as cabin sites making this the only state lake in Kansas with such developments around its shoreline. While the Commission feels that such developments do not serve the public interest, in the case of Crawford County State Lake the cabin sites do not seriously hamper full use of the lake by the public in general.

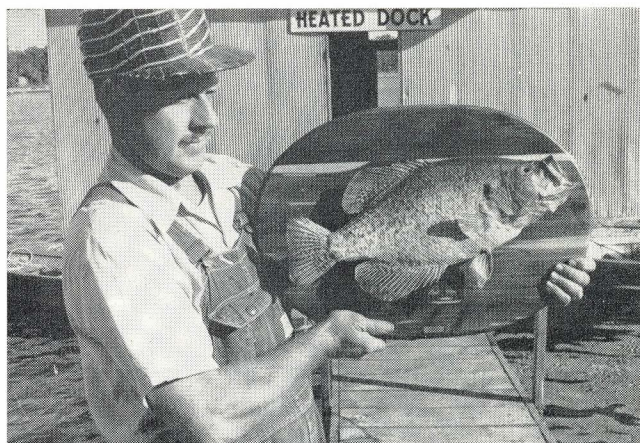
All the shoreline of the lake is owned by the state and is open to the public. The cabin lots are, in most cases, at least 150 feet back from the lake shore. All boat docks on the lake are on state property and thus open to the public. There are ample picnicking and camping areas on all sides of the lake and the use of these areas is quite extensive.

Another interesting feature of the area is the federal fish hatchery located below the dam. This installation is operated by the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and works in close co-operation with the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. Water for the hatchery ponds is obtained from the lake by means of a conduit through the dam. The manager of the hatchery is Bob Highland and he is always ready to welcome visitors and explain the operation to interested individuals.

Terrain around the lake is relatively flat but an abundance of timber, mostly hardwoods, make a beautiful backdrop to a pleasant scene. Birds of all kinds in abundance are to be found in the park and small animal life includes squirrels, rabbits, and at least two species of chipmunks. Deer visit the park on occasions. Timber rattlesnakes are also found in the area and hikers should be vigilant when in heavily covered areas.

Crawford County State Lake covers a total of 150 acres and is set in a park of 460 acres. The location is one and one-half miles north of the little town of Farlington and then east one mile. Access is from state highway K-7. Fort Scott is only 19 miles away and Pittsburg residents are just 23 miles from the park entrance. Proximity, however, seems to make little difference since many of the visitors and fishermen come from all over eastern Kansas and western Missouri.

Anglers find this lake much to their liking. It



Concessionaire James Marsh proudly displays a four-pound crappie taken from Crawford County State Lake No. 2. In the background is the enclosed fishing dock, the first one constructed in Kansas.

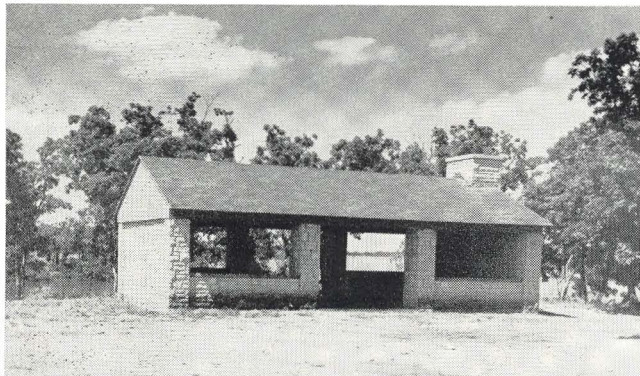
abounds in crappie, bass, channel catfish and bluegill. Some truly large channels are taken frequently with one of the largest taken being 18 pounds, 4 ounces. This whopper was caught last year by James Oliver Baker of Fort Scott. Largemouth black bass also attain lunker size with four and five pounders not uncommon. Crappie fishing is at its best in the spring and fall and literally hundreds are taken at the enclosed fishing dock.

The mention of the fishing dock brings up a point which should not be overlooked. This floating facility was the first one to be built in Kansas and was constructed by the concessionaire, James Marsh. Jim, his wife Irene and daughter Joyce have operated the concession at the lake for nine years and are presently occupying a new cafe building which they built two years ago. Recently, a dining porch was added overlooking the lake and it is expected to be quite popular with their patrons. The old concession building burned to the ground in the spring of 1957 and the new, modern facility is a result of the Marshes' determination to provide an ever increasing service to the fishermen and campers who stop at Farlington Lake.

Other services are offered to the fisherman beside the cafe and heated floating fishing dock. Jim keeps a good supply of minnows and other bait on hand at all times and has many good boats for rent to those who wish them. He is also ready to give the latest information on what the fish are hitting and what part of the lake is producing best.

Since the lake is located a few miles off any federal highway, tourist campers do not use the park to any great extent. There is always plenty of room in the camping areas for anyone to pitch a tent in relative solitude.

This fall would be a good time to try Farlington Lake if you haven't had the opportunity to do so. October and November fishing is good and crappie can usually be taken all winter from the heated dock. You're sure of a good time when you make a trip to Crawford County State Lake.



One of two native-stone shelter houses which are located at Farlington Lake.

Good Hunting Last Year

By MARY ANNE CRABB

You could see the scores of happy pheasant hunters trudging in from successful hunts last fall; the smiling prairie chicken hunters who had their limit by 10 a. m. and the many nimrods who put quail, duck, rabbit, squirrel and dove on the family dinner table. And you knew the 1958 hunting season was a satisfying one from practically every standpoint.

Now the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has assembled figures from a sampling of last fall's hunters to prove just how successful that hunting season was.

Many more hunters were in the field and much more upland game was taken than the previous year, according to the small game survey prepared by Dave Coleman, commission game biologist. The greater numbers of hunters found upland game more plentiful, the happy result of a good carry-over of brood stock, ideal nesting conditions and plentiful supplies of food, water and cover.

The duck kill, as determined by a separate survey also conducted by Coleman, showed a decline in 1958, but the goose kill increased.

Upland Game Kill Up

The statewide kill of five upland game species, as estimated in the survey, increased significantly over 1957. For quail the estimated state-wide kill was 2,093,629 for 1958, compared to 985,647 in 1957, an increase of 112 percent. The pheasant kill rose 271

percent, from 151,945 to 563,096. Other species increases were: prairie chicken 68,706 in 1958, 23,353 in 1957, increase of 194 percent; mourning doves 1,196,393 in 1958, 676,794 in 1957, increase of 77 percent; squirrel, 467,624 in 1958, 395,318 in 1957, increase of 18 percent. The cottontail kills, tabulated in 1958 for the first time, was estimated at 1,896,893.

For four species the average total season kill for each hunter was up substantially. Each quail hunter, for instance, was estimated to have taken 13 quail during the 1957 season. In 1958 the survey showed each hunter took 20.48.

A comparison of the average hunter's season bag of the other species follows: (1957 listed first) pheasant 2.03, 4.72; prairie chicken .78, 1.45; mourning dove 15.07, 22.56; squirrel 10.06, 8.01. For squirrel, the drop in the hunter's season kill still added up to an increase in the total statewide kill because of the greater number of hunters in 1958.

Goose Kill Higher

The goose kill was up 160.6 percent. The estimated kill was 24,372, compared to 11,514 for 1957 and 9,353 for the past 5-year average.

The statewide kill of ducks was estimated at 339,738, compared to 363,865 for the 5-year average and 607,971 in 1957. The 1958 kill showed a 6.6 percent decrease from the 5-year average.

Each duck hunter was credited with an average season bag of almost five, compared to more than eight for the previous season. The average number of days duck hunters spent in the field was estimated at approximately 8½, compared to a little more than nine in 1957.

Duck stamp sales in 1958 were reported by the Department of Interior to be 68,652 in Kansas. This compares with the all-time high of 72,872 in 1957 and the 5-year average of 56,072.

The five counties in which waterfowl were hunted most were Sedgwick, Barton, Reno, Stafford and Shawnee. Sedgwick replaced Barton as the No. 1 county and Shawnee county replaced Greenwood county as the No. 5 county.

The species composition of the 1958 duck kill was not greatly changed from the 5-year average. The greatest increase in percent-of-total was green-winged teal. This species increased 6.9 percent. Mallard, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal and pintail again made the bulk of the kill (81.8 percent).

Both the waterfowl and small game surveys were made by tabulating replies to questionnaires sent a random sampling of Kansas hunters. Returns were tabulated and processed by IBM machines.



Concession house and swimming area.

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Seventh of a Series

Scott County State Lake

By GEORGE VALYER

Unique in western Kansas—a beautiful oasis—these are terms which have been used to describe Scott County State Lake and Park. Such terms fall short of describing the beauty and spacious grandeur of this spot. Still, it is a unique and beautiful location which defies description and makes poetic words seem drab and colorless by comparison.

Scott County State Park is a spot apart; it is like suddenly being transported into a different country. It is traveling from a flat, nearly treeless expanse to a valley of bubbling springs, stately trees and cool grass surrounded by tall bluffs. There is located a gem of a lake, perhaps not the best fishing lake in the state, but still a lake capable of providing angling opportunities for anyone who wishes to wet a line.

As if scenery were not enough, providence has seen fit to bestow this area with a rich historical background. Who can blame the Indians for revering the spot if white man finds it so attractive.

The visible history of Scott County State Park began around 1650 when a band of Taos Indians fled their historic homeland in what is now New Mexico

and traveled into western Kansas to establish a new home. Evidently their reason for migration was to escape oppression of the Spaniards who were then in control of Mexico and the great Southwest. Here in this beautiful valley, they built a pueblo which served them for twenty years until the time they re-

Big spring flows from the face of this cliff.





Typical scene at Scott County State Park.

turned to their home in the Southwest. During their stay in the park, they established the first irrigation system ever known in Kansas and traces of their canals can be found in Scott County State Park yet today. The source of water for this ingenious effort is believed to have been "Big Spring" which still flows at the rate of 400 to 500 gallons of water per minute.

About 1701, a band of Picurie Indians, whose home was only a few miles south of the Taos in Mexico, fled their pueblos because of a religious superstition and came to the park to occupy the abandoned pueblo. Their period of occupancy is believed to have been short, lasting only two years. They were evidently induced to return to their homeland by a representative of the Spanish government of Mexico.

It is reported that a Spanish trader named Juan Uribarri opened a trading post in the pueblo in 1717, marking it as the first white settlement in Kansas. The five-acre plot upon which the pueblo ruins are located is owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution who have erected a monument at the location. Excavation of the original pueblo was made in 1896 by Dr. S. W. Williston of the University of Kansas. At that time he reported that his excavations were evidently not the first to be carried out by any

This monument marks the location of the Indian pueblo ruins.



predecessors had probably only removed the original building rocks to be used by themselves as building stones. Doctor Williston's work revealed the over-all plan of the pueblo and uncovered much evidence and artifacts to link the builders with the Taos tribe.

Periodic excavations have been made from that time on and interest in the area persists. The last excavation at the pueblo was made in 1958 under the auspices of the Scott County Historical Society. But, enough of the famed El Quartejejo, the most northern pueblo in the U. S.

Other attractions are awaiting us in the park. There is an excellent example of a pioneer sandstone home on the site. Although vandals have left their impressions in the soft rock and wood, the over-all character of the place remains unchanged from the time of construction 65 or 70 years ago. It is known as the Steele home in honor of the pioneer family who built it.

Other significant features of the park are of more recent vintage. The 115-acre lake was constructed in 1928 and has been a popular fishing and recreation spot since that time. The lake was drained in 1955 for rehabilitation of the fishery and, after being restocked, was reopened to fishing in January of 1958. A concession operated by John Norman is open through the summer months and provides light refreshments, boats for rent, a bathhouse with showers and a unique attraction for the swimming area, a watersled launching tower. The swimming area is quite popular with residents of the vicinity and campers who pick this park as a stopping point.

Camping and picnicking facilities are plentiful and well maintained. Park superintendent Raymond Young takes a great deal of pride in his charge and everywhere you go, the place is as neat as a pin.

Located just outside the park boundaries are two summer camps maintained by religious institutions. These two camps with extensive permanent developments serve thousands of church youth annually with inspirational camp programs. They are ideally situated to take advantage of the lake and park for recreational pursuits.

Scott County State Park has always been a popular place with residents of the area. It was so even before acquisition by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission and the building of the lake. The Garden City, Gulf and Northern Railroad built its tracks through the Ladder creek valley before the turn of the century and residents of Scott City used to ride the cars as far as the valley to picnic and fish. The name of the line was later changed to the Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma and was operated as a freight connection line only. Still, people rode the caboose into this picturesque area for weekend and



The old Steele home, a pioneer landmark.

Sunday outings. With the abandonment of the line and the advent of the auto, the old grade was used as an access road. The deep cut one drives through today to gain access to the park from the south was carved by the railroad in their original track-laying effort.

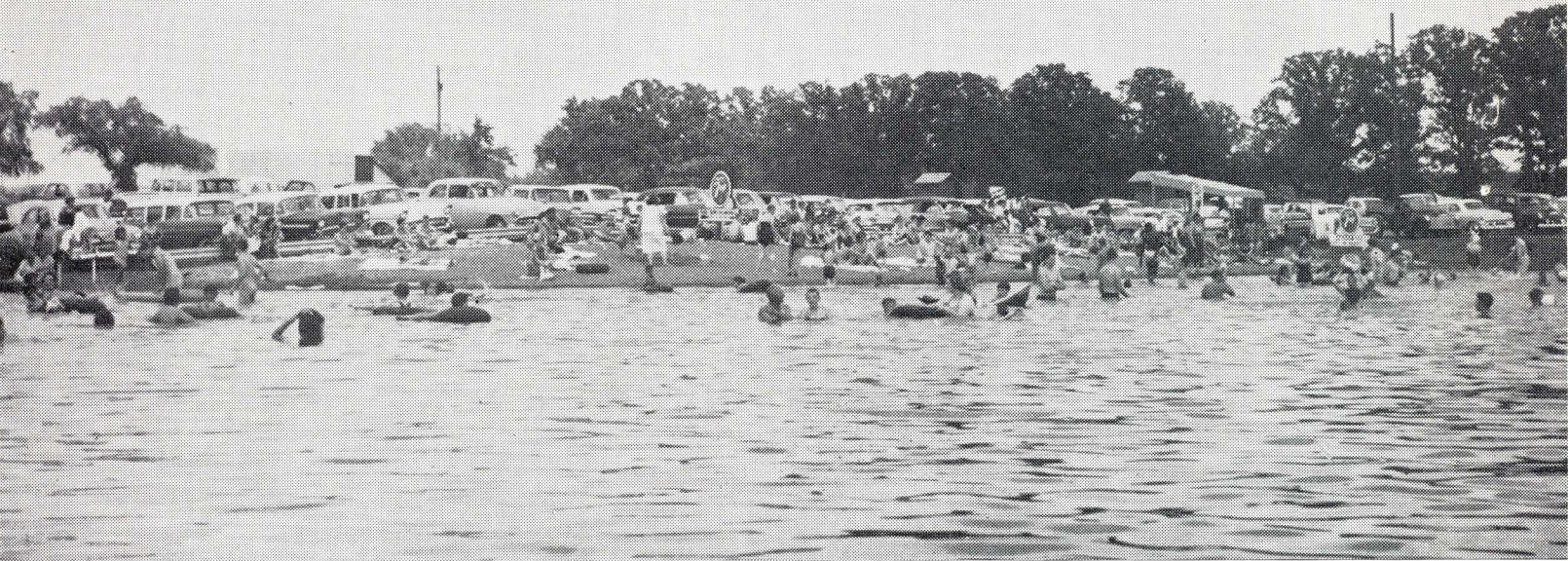
The park area of 1,280 acres was acquired by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission in March of 1927 after two years of negotiation with landowners. The purchase price for all acreage involved was \$18 per acre. This was considered to be a big price at that time. Owners of the land were Herbert L. Steele, George Phillips and the Kansas City Life Insurance Company.

Fishermen who visit Scott County State Lake will do well to remember that not all the fishing is to be found in the lake itself. The creek below and above contains many pools where one may hook on to a lunger or experience some fine fishing for panfish. The main creek which feeds the lake is known now as Ladder creek but in times past, went by the name of Beaver creek. Another stream, Timber creek, comes into the park from the northwest.

Scott County State Park and Lake is indeed an interesting spot from almost any point of view. Fishermen, hikers, campers and those interested in things historic can find much to see and do at this unusual western Kansas area.

The antlers shed by deer each year are seldom found. Mice, porcupines and other rodents gnaw them for the minerals they contain.

The coyote can run much faster than an ordinary dog and is more than a match for a dog of its own size and weight.



The swimming area is quite popular, especially on holiday weekends.

Montgomery County State Lake By GEORGE VALYER

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Eighth of a Series

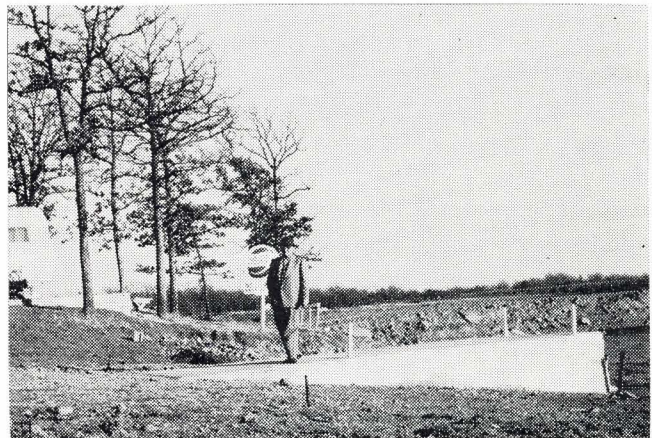
If you like your lakes with rocky shores, cool sparkling waters and plenty of facilities, you'll certainly go for Montgomery County State Lake. And, you won't be alone. On any nice spring, summer or fall day, you'll find fishermen, picnickers, campers and swimmers by the dozens. If you happen to be there on a holiday, you might be amazed at the crowds you see.

Yes, Montgomery County State Lake is a popular recreation spot for southeast Kansas residents. Although the majority of the people you see there come from Independence and Coffeyville, you're liable to see cars from nearly anywhere.

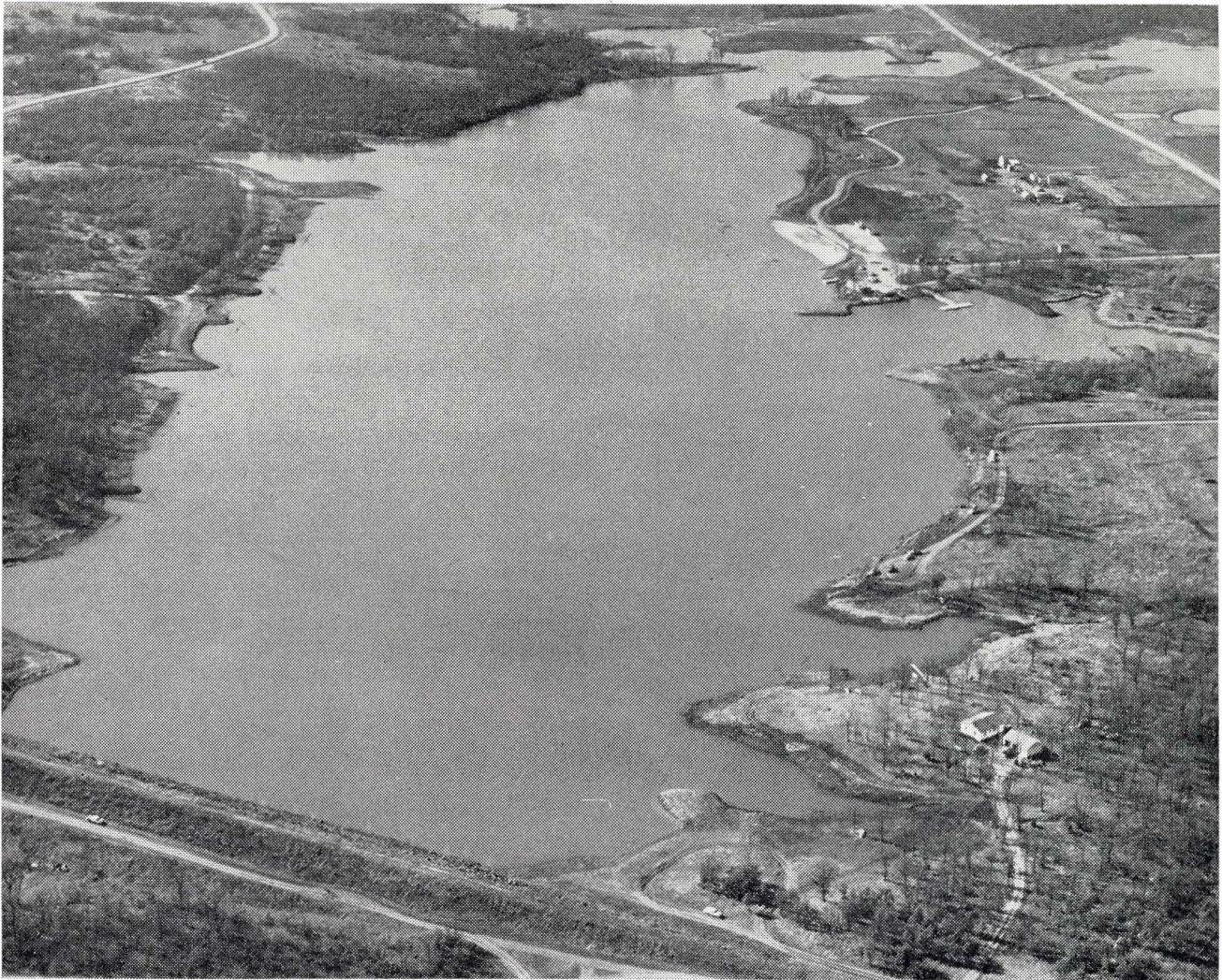
What is the reason for such popularity? Well, it's probably a combination of factors. First of all the facilities are excellent. Here is a prime example of what the citizens of a community can do to make a real recreation spot. Of course the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission was responsible for the construction of the lake and the establishment of the basic facilities. But, the people of the area were quite ready to proceed with the further development of the lake and park. Several thousand dollars were raised by donation for additional improvements to the lake

area and materials and labor were also provided. The results have been outstanding.

The Fish and Game Commission chose wisely when it selected the site for this lake. It is located in a naturally scenic area of rough, rocky hills with an abundance of trees to provide shade for bank fishermen, picnickers and campers. Montgomery County



Carter Buton, concession operator, stands on the new boat pier at Montgomery County State Lake.



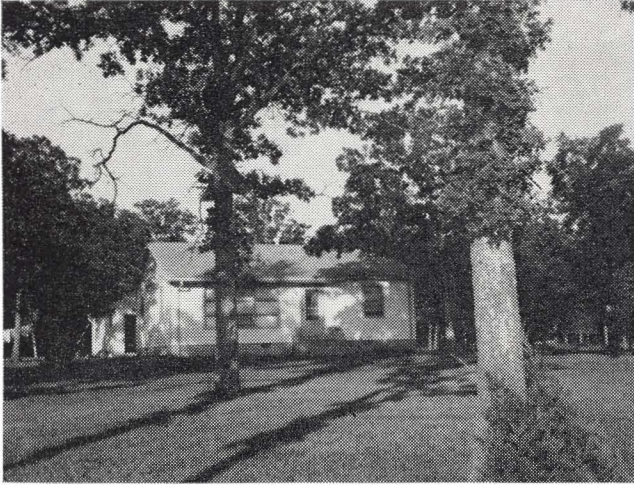
A view of Montgomery County State Lake from the air showing the earth fishing points. These fishing areas were constructed in the fall of 1959.

State Lake was one of the first state lakes to be built under the reactivated lake building program in 1953. The water area totals 105 acres set in a park of 408 acres. It was the first lake in Kansas to be built with the assistance of federal funds in the form of what is commonly known as Dingell-Johnson monies. The Dingell-Johnson bill, passed by congress in 1950, established a federal excise tax on fishing tackle at the manufacturers level. The proceeds from this tax are apportioned to the states for fishery improvements including the establishment of fishing lakes. The state provides one-fourth of the construction cost and the federal government the remaining three-fourths on approved projects. The total cost of the project amounted to slightly over 150 thousand dollars. Perhaps it might be well to point out that the Kansas fishermen really footed the bill through their pur-

chase of fishing licenses and the tax on the tackle they use. Of course this is true of all state lakes.

Montgomery County State Lake is located three miles south and one east of Independence. This location is only a short drive from Coffeyville and Cherryvale and within easy driving distance of many other southeast Kansas towns. Coal creek, normally a clear stream, winds its way to the lake from mostly grassland drainage. The lake provides good fishing for bass, crappie, channels, bluegill and bullheads.

With the many natural attributes of this location, it is quite understandable that the local citizens would be proud enough of their lake to want to make further improvements. Under the leadership of concession operator, Carter Buton, funds were raised from contributions and a program of improvement was begun. The first effort was the making of a sand beach and swimming area west of the concession. Material com-



Caretaker Rollie Clark's residence at the lake.

panies donated sand and construction companies donated the trucks to haul it. The beach was an immediate success and the crowds last summer were huge, especially on holidays and weekends. A floating boat dock was also constructed from donations by local sportsmen, merchants from Elk City, Coffeyville and Independence and County Commissioners. The dock also serves as a fishing pier with a portion 60 ft. by 12 ft. reserved for this purpose. (Note cover photo.)

These projects were only the beginning. With two projects brought to successful completion, plans were made for several additions during the fall and winter of 1959. Included in the project list were enlargement of the beach and the installation of diving towers, the deepening of the boat dock channel, construction of boat ramps and a new boat pier, construction of fishing access points around the lake and the removal of some underwater snags from certain areas. To facilitate these improvements, the lake was drained down in the late fall of last year and construction got under way. Donations of over \$10,500 poured in and equipment and man power were contributed. With the work completed, the lake was again brought up to normal level and ready for the spring fishing and picnicking season.

The fishing points were constructed with bulldozers by pushing up dirt from the lake bottom. These points are therefore surrounded by deep water. It is too early yet to know if this operation will result in better fishing in the area but early spring success gives indication that the points will be well worth the effort.

Seventy-five tons of sand now cover the beach area and an additional 380 tons cover the lake floor under the swimming area. As soon as the water gets warm enough for comfortable swimming, you can bet there will be plenty of people ready to give it a try.

Naturally, all improvements were authorized by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. The Commission carefully studied all project plans to determine if they were in the best interest of the lake and the fishermen who use it.

Concessionaire Buton provides adequate and clean facilities in his "Lakeview Snack Bar." You can get a cold drink or a complete meal and the specialty of the house is a ham dinner. There are boats for rent and you can get plenty of bait of all kinds.

The whole park area is adequately maintained by a full time caretaker. Rollie Clark and his family work many long hours to see that the picnic and camping areas are kept clean and ready for use. Clark's job also includes patrolling the lake area to make sure that park regulations are observed. Any time you happen to meet up with this congenial fellow, he'll be glad to tell you where the fish are hitting or advise you on the best spot to set up your camp.

Here is the perfect spot for a fine family outing. Pop can take Junior fishing while Mom and Sis get a good tan on the beach or take a cool dip. Then everyone gets together for a picnic and hike along the pleasant shoreline. If you don't have fun at Montgomery County State Lake, then you had better see your doctor—you're sick man, sick.



One of the well-kept picnic areas at Montgomery County State Lake.

Aptly described by its name, the burrowing owl lives in vacated holes left by prairie dogs, foxes and badgers.

A duck's visual equipment includes a transparent membrane which the bird can pull over its eyes while in flight.



Willow and cottonwood trees line the shore of Kearny County State Lake.

Kearny County State Lake By GEORGE VALYER

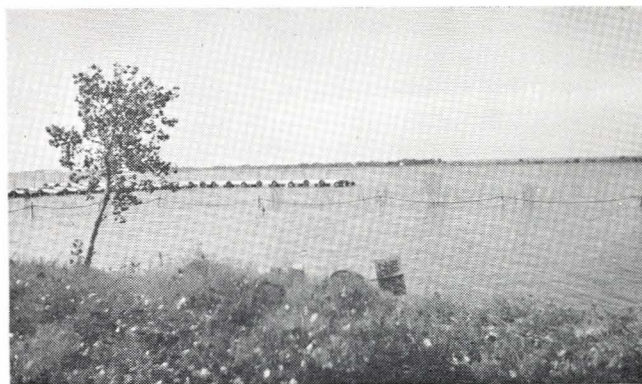
The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Ninth of a series

Anyone who has traveled through western Kansas on U. S. Highway 50 has probably seen this lake or at least a small part of it because Kearny County State Lake is just a short distance north of the highway. This is a unique lake in several respects but the most outstanding feature is its size, three thousand acres. Traveling along the highway, one cannot get a true picture of the magnitude of this body of water. So, let's inspect it a little closer by leaving the pavement.

Kearny County State Lake, commonly known as Lake McKinney, is located two miles east of Lakin, Kansas, in the heart of the sugar beet country. Actually, the lake is northeast of Lakin since U. S. 50 angles in that direction as it leaves the town. Small signs along the highway indicate the roads leading a short distance north to the lake. As you approach, your view is obscured by the growth of willows which grows almost solidly on the south shore. Only after you actually stand on the edge of the shoreline can you get a real view of the vast expanse of water.

What is so unique about this reservoir? Well, in the first place its 3,000 acres make it the largest State Lake in the state. Secondly, it is the only State Lake not actually owned by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and

Game Commission; it is leased from the United States Irrigation Company of Garden City. Thirdly, it is the only State Lake open to boating sports including water skiing; boats may be used on other State Lakes for fishing purposes only. Also this lake is open to waterfowl hunting during the open season for such species; only one other State Lake has waterfowl hunting, Republic County State Lake northwest of Jamestown.



This boat dock, built by the Lake McKinney Association, was damaged by ice in the winter of 1959 and 60. The club is rebuilding the facility.

Kearny County State Lake was constructed as an irrigation reservoir shortly after the turn of the century by the United States Irrigation Company. This reservoir was one of the factors in the establishment of a thriving sugar beet industry in the Arkansas River valley between Garden City and Lakin. Due to the level terrain of the wide valley the lake was, of necessity, a relatively shallow lake with an average depth of about 7 feet. It was formed by throwing up a long dam across a natural draw. The source of water for the reservoir is the Arkansas River. A diversion dam on the river west of Lakin channels the flow through a canal to the head of the lake. A system of canals below the lake carry the water to thousands of acres of farm land. Except during periods of prolonged drouth, the lake level is relatively stable with the in-flow compensating for the outflow. Naturally there is some fluctuation of the water level when irrigation is at its peak. The maximum depth of the lake when full is about 17 feet.

The United States Irrigation Company, owners of the lake, requested the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission to take over management of the reservoir for fishing, hunting and recreation. The commission officially assumed control of the lake in February of 1947.

Although the commission does not allow the use of motorboats for other than fishing purposes on the smaller state lakes, Lake McKinney's 3,000 acres provides plenty of room for boating and water skiing without congestion and interference with fishing activity. Boaters from all over southwestern Kansas use the area extensively during the summer months. In 1957 a group of enthusiasts from the area formed an association which has been responsible for several improvements to the area including a concrete boat launching ramp and dock. At present the association is planning additional improvements including a water well in the picnic area at the east end of the lake.

Because of its shallow nature, this lake has proved to be quite attractive for migratory waterfowl. It is a common occurrence to find as many as fifty to one hundred thousand ducks using the lake during the late fall and winter. Because of its large size, gunning pressure does not materially affect use of the lake by the ducks and geese. Therefore, the hunting of these migratory species is permitted during the regular open season. With the thick vegetative growth around the shore, a hunter has only to secret himself in the tangle and wait for the fowl to come within shooting range. Many hunters use the area each fall and report good success.

Fishing in Kearny County State Lake is generally fair for channel catfish, bullheads, crappie and carp.

Since the water supply comes from the river, there is no control of the species which inhabit the lake. The Fish and Game Commission has stocked the lake with channels, crappie and bass but very few bass are taken. Occasionally good catches of both channels and bullheads are made and the waters provide angling opportunities for many persons.

All in all, Kearny County State Lake fills a vital need for recreation resources in southwest Kansas, an area where lakes are few and rainfall is usually not adequate to maintain a lake which depends upon runoff water. When the ducks are flying this fall, I'll be waiting for you. Come on out and we'll see if we can fill our limit.



From left to right are Clarence Lindly, Eddie Blass (age 9) and Dan Blass, all of Arkansas City. In the foreground are 15 of the nicest channel catfish you'll see anywhere; the total weight of the catch was 110 pounds. Chicken livers dunked in Cowley County State Lake did the business in only 3 1/2 hours time on June 29.

Squirrel and Bullfrog Seasons Open

July 1 marked the opening of two seasons. Bullfrogs and squirrels became legal prey on that date. The squirrel season will run through November 30 with a daily bag limit of 8, and possession limit of two days' legal bag limit. Squirrels may be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

The legal season for taking bullfrogs closes on September 30. Eight bullfrogs are permitted as a daily creel limit. The legal method of taking bullfrogs is restricted to the use of hand dip-nets, hook and line, and by hand. Any and all other means and methods of taking bullfrogs are unlawful. A fishing license must be in the possession of any person taking or attempting to take bullfrogs.



A view of Nemaha County State Lake from the south end of the dam.

Nemaha County State Lake

By GEORGE VALYER

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Tenth of a series

In many years of traveling about the state of Kansas, I had never before been to Nemaha County State Lake or ever very close to it, that is until this summer. I am sure that there are many Kansans just like me who overlook these places close to home and venture far afield in the search for the just-right spot for a weekend of camping, fishing and other outdoor recreation. It didn't take long for me to realize I had been missing something good and satisfying.

Nemaha County State Lake is truly a beautiful body of water nestled between verdant hills of green. Almost all of the northeast Kansas north of the Kaw river is characterized by these rolling waves of grassland interspersed by wooded valleys and streams of various sizes.

Like several other of the older state lakes, Nemaha County State Lake was a project constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (commonly known as CCC) in the year 1934. The 760 acres of land on which the lake is located was donated to the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission by the citizens

of Nemaha county as a memorial to the war veterans of that county. The dam across the Nemaha river was constructed in a north-south direction and carries State Highway 63 which connects with U. S. 36 at Seneca, four miles north of the park. Because of its proximity to a major tourist route, many campers



The bathhouse located near the swimming pool.



It is not hard to see why the swimming pool is popular as a facility at Lake Nemaha.

use the facilities each year and some have returned time after time.

Kansans also like to use the campgrounds and picnic tables at this lake and one can see many different counties represented by the different license tags on a summer weekend. The major attraction is naturally the fishing but others come for the pleasant surroundings and fun of outdoor living. The facilities at this lake are excellent and well maintained.

Among those things which are attractive to many are a swimming pool, stone shelter house, bathhouse with showers and well kept picnic and camping areas. Park Superintendent William Diggs spends countless hours during the summer months in keeping the area mowed and the trash removed. Visitors can always count on "Bill" to lend assistance in many ways. He'll be glad to help you find a place to camp, tell you the latest fishing information or just chat for a few minutes.

The citizens of Seneca have been generous with their time and money in helping with the many facilities at this park. The Lions Club along with help from the Chamber of Commerce have just recently installed a pressure system to provide running water

at the campground and at the bathhouse. This system replaces an older gravity system which was no longer adequate. These two organizations were also responsible for the development of the swimming pool and equipping the children's playground.

At the time the lake was constructed, nearly all the land in the drainage area was in native grass pasture. However, some of this land was broken up for crops



On the left is the "guest cabin" and the building to the right is the residence of Superintendent Diggs.

during the 40's. The result was, as could be expected, an inflow of silt into the lake reducing its desirability as a fishery resource. Never-the-less, Nemaha County State Lake continues to produce fair to good fishing for channels, crappie, flatheads and bluegill. Large numbers of bullheads are also caught. Some truly large flatheads are taken, occasionally in the neighborhood of fifty pounds.

Local residents tell of the canoe fisherman who was pulled all over the lake while hooked fast to a monster of a fish. After a battle lasting over two hours, the giant finally made his escape by running into a brush pile and breaking off. Most of the large flatheads are taken on heavy tackle with large chubs or small sunfish for bait. The majority of the channel catfish fishermen at this lake use either chicken livers or blood but other baits seem to produce well at times. Due to the turbidity of the water, bass are not frequently taken but are present in the lake in limited numbers.

Although there is no concession in operation on the lake, a steak house is located just off the park property on the east side. Around the east and north sides of the park are several cabins, located on private property. The south and southwest parts of the park are quite heavily vegetated with the entire western shore south of the dam a virtual wilderness. Trails through the trees afford access to the shoreline for fishermen. Many different species of birds and small animals may be seen in this part and deer are known to frequent the area.

Located just west of the superintendent's residence is what is called the "guest cabin." This building is equipped with tables and a fireplace and is popular as a meeting place for local groups and organizations. Advance reservations are necessary for the use of this facility. Also popular is the native stone shelter house on the east shore of the lake.

Picnic facilities are located at strategic points in well shaded areas. The major camping area is found close to the main entrance at the north end of the dam. Here a grove of trees affords an excellent camping spot and a check on almost any summer evening will reveal families from many different states enjoying the pleasures of tent and trailer living. Picnic tables and grills are provided.

Maybe Nemaha County State Lake is just the place you have been looking for. If you have never been there, give it a try. You'll join many others who come back again and again to fish or just enjoy the scenery. If you happen to catch one of those whoppers, have your picture taken and send it to us. We'll be happy to put it in this magazine.



Kanopolis reservoir yielded this one to G. B. Kile of Bushton. The flathead weighed 52¼ pounds and was taken on a trot-line with crayfish for bait.



Lowell Dam on Spring river was the location of this catch. Chet Acton of Turner, Kansas, took this 11-pound flathead using worms for bait. The three channels look small in comparison.

Plastic Rabbit Food?

The story comes from down under that a young Englishman thought he had the answer to Australia's rabbit problem. He made plastic "wire" netting, took it to the rabbit country and set it up. "If they get through that, I'll eat my hat," he said. The rabbits ate every strand of his plastic fence.

Golden eagles have wing-spreads of from six and one-half to seven and one-half feet.



A view of Ottawa County State Lake with the dam and spillway on the right.

Ottawa County State Lake By GEORGE VALYER

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . *Eleventh of a series*

"In the Dakota limestone country five miles north-east of the town of Bennington, Ottawa county, the Commission has, by condemnation proceedings and purchase, acquired title to 720 acres of virgin prairie through which two creeks flow. The creeks join near the center of a section, creating thereby a basin of about 140 acres which will be flooded by a dam downstream and to the south side of the section."

The above paragraph was taken from a publication of the Fish and Game Commission of the year 1928. The article goes on to say that the area is particularly good for a lake site since practically all of the drainage area is from lands which are uncultivated and still in native grass. Such was the situation at the time of the establishment of Ottawa County State Lake and Park. I wonder what the men of that time would have said if they had been told that, in the centennial year of 1961, a missile base would be located just a mile and one-half from the park.

Today, Ottawa County State Lake is a favorite playground for many persons. Its proximity to Salina, Shilling Air Force Base and many other smaller communities insure capacity crowds on summer weekends. Camping, fishing, picnicking, sail boating, all are popular activities.

The park scene has changed from that which greeted the eyes of visitors in the late twenties. Some of the changes have been good, others not so good. To view the negative side first, it might be pointed out that the once clear lake is now turbid with silt. This is a situation which is undesirable for fish and fishermen. It was brought about by the breaking up of the virgin grassland of the watershed. The bulk

The stone shelter house is popular with families and business groups.





The concession house boasts a screened-in dining porch.

of the tillage operation in the drainage area was stimulated by the call for increased crop production during World War II and the increased prices for farm commodities. At that time, lands which had never seen a plow were broken up for wheat, corn and other food crops. The result was inevitable: tons of silt from the rolling land was poured into the creeks and settled out in the relative stillness of the lake. The once-deep lake bottom received layer upon layer of this eroded topsoil until today, there are few deep spots in the impoundment. Nevertheless, fishermen still catch occasional good strings of fish from this lake although the accent is on channels, flatheads and bullheads rather than the sight-feeding fish such as bass and crappie.

There are numerous crappie in the lake; in fact they are too numerous. Little can be done in the way of fish management as long as the lake remains turbid. The only solution is up to the landowners in the watershed. Soil conservation practices on tilled land and the return of land to grasses might, in time, produce the effect of clearing. If and when such a thing happens, the lake can once again be managed for better fish production.

Even though the fishing picture is not the best at Ottawa County State Lake, there are a number of

fishermen who still consider it as their favorite fishing spot. Among those is a fellow by the name of Ed Hahn, Sr., of Wichita, who loves to fish for the big flatheads in the lake. Hahn and his wife spend many days and nights each summer waiting for the big ones to strike and they certainly come up with their share of lunkers. Hahn, a retired railroader, uses his car (seats folded down into a bed) as base of operations. His rods are placed on the hood and whenever a fish bites, the movement of the line sets off a buzzer which

Ed Hahn, Sr., of Wichita, fishes at Ottawa County State Lake.



he has devised. The buzzing wakes him from the soundest sleep and he piles out to set the hook. If you'd like to know more about his alarm system, he'll be glad to show you. Just look for him almost any time during the summer around the north end of the lake which is his favorite fishing area.

The camping and picnicking spots are numerous and well maintained by park superintendent Harold Peterson. Peterson and his wife and family occupy a residence on the park and are always ready to be of service. If you plan to camp, don't forget to see him for a permit.

One of the outstanding features of the park is the excellent concession operated by Mr. and Mrs. John Whitney. Although the concession building itself is old, it is well maintained and you can get almost anything your heart desires in the way of food. If you like fried chicken, a steak or just a sandwich, you'll enjoy what you get at this place. The kitchen is probably the cleanest and most well equipped you'll find at any similar establishment. John also has boats for rent, bait service and operates a bathhouse in conjunction with the swimming area.

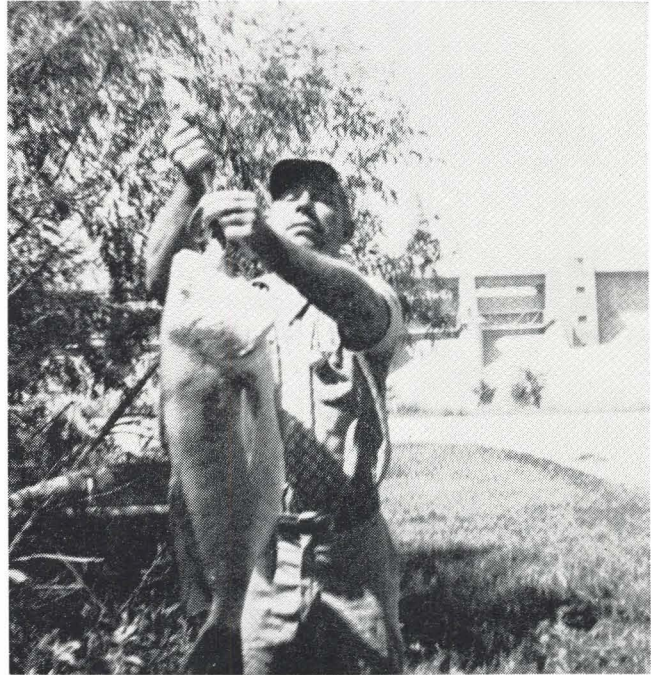
Many business and family groups use the facilities at Ottawa County State Lake for outings and get-togethers. It is not uncommon for literally hundreds of people to be found there on a summer weekend. A shelter house located just north of the concession area is extensively used for reunions and picnics.

A number of summer homes are located on the west side of the lake, just off park property. Most of these are owned by persons who live in Minneapolis or Salina and like to spend their weekends near the lake. Some of the homes are occupied the year around by retired individuals who have picked this spot to spend their declining years.

When the lake site was originally purchased by the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, it was nearly all prairie with few trees. Extensive forestation was carried out in the late thirties with the assistance of the National Youth Administration. Today, the park is resplendent with beautiful shade trees and some areas support a thick growth which would do credit to any forest.

Wildlife of all kinds can be found in the park and bird lovers should find good viewing at almost any season of the year. Deer are seen frequently at the north end of the lake in the more densely wooded portion and one can always see several species of small mammals including fur bearers.

Yes, Ottawa County State Lake and Park is an interesting spot. It's a place for many and varied outdoor activities. If you are looking for a place to spend a pleasant weekend, don't overlook this place.



Big fish of all species seem to congregate below the dam of big reservoirs. Here is a 14½-pound drum taken last August by Jack Brown of Wichita while fishing below Fall River Reservoir. Note the outlet structure in the background.



Although most sportsmen in Kansas are not aware of the fact, the extreme southeastern part of the state is included in the natural range of the swamp rabbit. Normally associated with lowlands of the Old South, "swamps" are frequently taken by hunters in Cherokee and Labette counties. As proof, here are Bill Benson and Ralph Gene Knight with a limit of seven swamp rabbits and three cottontails taken on December 19 with the aid of Beagle hounds. Although cottontail populations are down considerably in some portions of the state, swamp rabbits are plentiful in Cherokee county according to these two hunters.



A view of Cowley County State Lake from a hill overlooking the Spillway.

Cowley County State Lake

By GEORGE VALYER

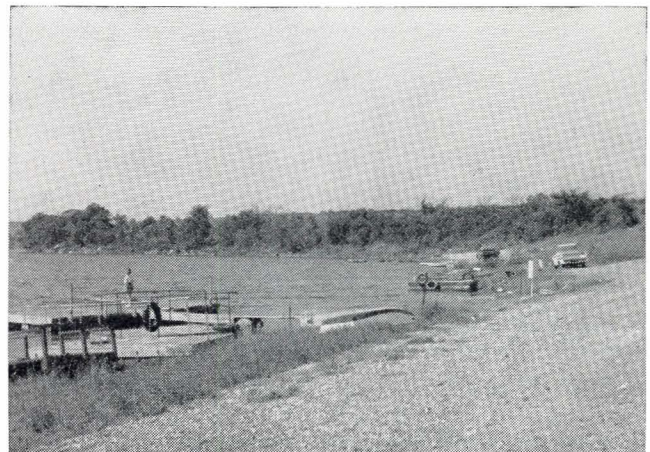
The State Lakes of Kansas . . . *twelfth of a series*

Almost the entire southern border of Kansas from the most eastern county to the far western border is characterized by a wide variety of terrain. Within the space of a relatively few miles, one can travel from gently rolling agricultural land, across rivers and streams and through sharply rising hills. The variety of scenery ranges from the southern portion of the Kansas Flint Hills and their seemingly endless waves of grassland to semi-desert in the Cimarron valley in the Southwest. Between these lie the agriculturally rich Arkansas river valley, the Gyp Hills of Barber county, the big basin area and the flat lands around Hugoton which produce natural gas.

Many persons consider the southern tier of counties as being the possessors of some of the most outstanding scenery in the state and Cowley county certainly upholds this belief. As one travels east from Arkansas City, he moves from the Arkansas River valley into the hilly region in a short few moments and the remainder of the 13-mile trip to Cowley County State Lake is through the hills and valleys characteristic of the southern Flint Hill region.

The lake itself is formed by a dam across Panther creek, a clear, spring-fed stream. The steep hills on both sides of the lake form what could almost be called a canyon resulting in a long, relatively narrow and deep body of water. On the hills overlooking the lake,

The boat dock and launching area at Cowley County State Lake.





The picturesque spillway, cut through solid rock, forms a waterfall where the ledge ends. Note the spray at the top of the falls, a result of strong wind currents. (Photo by Charles Booth, Winfield Daily Courier.)

the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has laid out picnic and camp areas and a service club from Arkansas City has built a shelter house. A small concession building is also in operation with sandwiches and beverages. A small number of boats are available for rent.

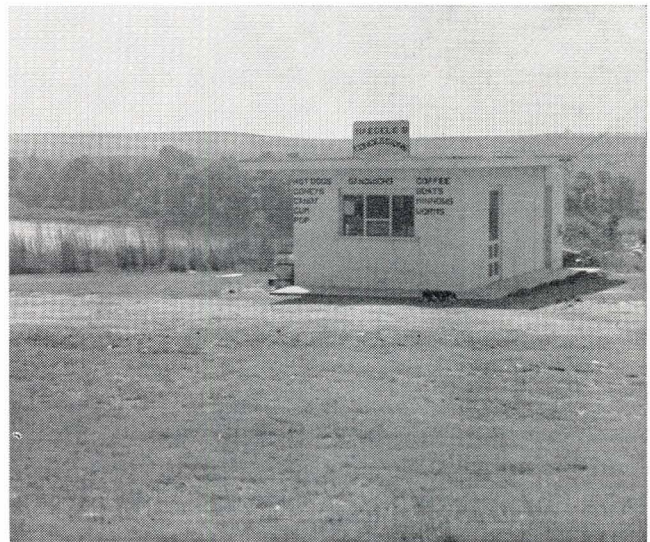
Cowley County State Lake was constructed in 1954 at a total cost of \$146,518. This figure includes cost of the land. The total land area amounts to 197 acres with the lake occupying 84 acres. Construction of the spillway is unique in that it was carved through the side of a hill into solid rock. This provides a scenic attraction when the water is up and running over the drop at the outlet.

Because the lake is clear and deep, it provides ideal habitat for game fish. Large bass and channel catfish are taken consistently and the crappie and bluegill also provide great sport. During the height of the summer, vegetative growth is quite pronounced around the edge of the water in the shallower areas. This is somewhat of a hindrance to bank fishermen and most prefer to use a boat at this time. Actually, submerged aquatic vegetation is almost always a problem in clear lakes. Because the water contains such little suspended sediment, the sun's rays penetrate deeply into the water, stimulating the growth of aquatic plants. Where

waters are not clear and the turbidity is high, sunlight can not penetrate and thus vegetation can grow only in very shallow water.

Those who trailer their boat to Cowley County State Lake will find a boat launching ramp available. The access road to the docking area is quite steep and one

The concession building sits on a hill overlooking the lake.



should make sure he has good brakes before starting down the incline.

The whole area is well maintained by superintendent J. W. "Curley" Desbien. You'll find him almost any time of the day mowing the picnic and camping areas, removing trash or checking on conditions around the lake. Curley will be glad to help you with the latest fishing information or give you directions to the camping or picnic areas.

Many kinds of song and game birds inhabit the area and one can almost always hear the whistling of quail. Occasionally, prairie chicken come into the park from the surrounding pasture land and waterfowl use the lake for resting during the spring and fall migrations. Another attraction for the nature lover is the display of spring and summer wildflowers which grow in profusion on some parts of the property.

Yes, Cowley County State Lake is an interesting spot, particularly attractive to fishermen. Perhaps you can schedule a week end there in the near future.

Nest-building Time

If you were asked "what builds a nest and lays eggs," you would probably say a bird. But, you could also say a fish and be correct. As time is reckoned geologically, fish were present on this earth long before birds ever appeared. However, all fish do not lay eggs; some bear their young alive somewhat in the manner of mammals. The guppie, which is commonly found in aquariums is a notable example of this. Most of the fish native to Kansas are egg layers. Fish which lay eggs are called oviparous. Those which bear their young alive are said to be viviparous. The only fish in Kansas which is viviparous is a small specimen commonly called western mosquito fish.

A typical egg-laying fish is the bluegill. The male bluegill begins his nest building operation in late spring or early summer with June the best month to look for nests in clear water. They will be found along the shore in relatively shallow water. The bluegill needs a sandy or gravelly bottom and the male uses his tail to fan the water creating currents which wash out a shallow saucer-shaped nest. If you find one bluegill nest you will probably find several more in the same locality because these fish usually nest in colonies in suitable sites.

The male usually takes several days to complete the nest since it is from one to two feet in diameter and the depression must be swept free of all foreign matter. Only after the nest is complete does the fish give any thought to a mate. But once the nursery is completed,

he chooses a female and drives her over the nest where she lays her eggs. The male then fertilizes the eggs with milt. The bluegill is polygamous and eggs from several females are usually found in one nest. Each nest may contain as many as sixty-thousand eggs.

In the fish world the father is the guardian parent. Once the female has laid her eggs, she leaves the nest for deeper water and pays no more heed to her potential offspring. The male bluegill remains near the nest to guard it by driving away intruders with vicious charges. After the young are hatched the father fish guards them for a while but as soon as they are swimming about on their own, they are left to fend for themselves.

Young fish just hatched are awkward creatures for they carry a bulky yolk sac which makes their swimming attempts look clumsy. This yolk provides nourishment for the small fish until they grow strong enough to seek out food. As the nourishment is used the sac gradually disappears.

Not all fish build nests and guard their eggs. Some species merely seek out a likely looking spot and scatter them along the bottom. The male accompanies the female fertilizing the eggs before they settle to the bottom. The eggs and young fish are left to the mercy of whatever comes along. Prime examples of this would be walleyes and carp.

The major problem facing young fish in any water is to keep from being eaten alive. Young fish are not even safe from their own kind; cannibalism is quite common in the fish kingdom. Although many young fish die from one cause or another, the large number of eggs laid each year provide assurance of survival of the species.



Lowel Dam on Spring river was the site of this catch of nine crappie weighing up to one and one-fourth pounds. The pleased anglers are Mr. and Mrs. Alex Mann of Galena.



Pottawatomie County State Lake No. 2

The State Lakes of Kansas . . . Thirteenth of a series

by George Valyer

Wispy, hazy clouds with a brilliant sun shining through marked this late July day as a hot one. Shimmering heat waves on the road ahead seemed to obscure the horizon and the absence of flying birds indicated that they were sticking close to shade, waiting for cooler temperatures of evening.

Even though the thermometer on the car window registered over the century mark, I was happy because there was an oasis waiting a few miles ahead. Soon I would be in Manhattan from where it would be only a few minutes' drive to Pottawatomie County State Lake Number Two.

This is a lake where cool shade abounds and one can always while away a few afternoon hours fishing or relaxing in the pleasantest surroundings. The fishing usually picks up around evening time and I wanted to rest a little before getting down to the serious business of trying to land a bass or two.

Although located a little off the beaten path, Pottawatomie County State Lake Number Two is quite easy to find if one looks for the road signs. About two miles east of Manhattan on U. S. 24, one of these signs directs you north on a gravel road for a couple of miles. Another sign indicates a westerly direction at this point and, after a mile or so up and down hills, you are directed to a winding road leading directly to the lake. From the top of a hill near the park entrance, you get a panoramic view of the clear, blue waters and tree covered shores.

Picnic areas abound on the western shore of the lake and everything is as neat as a pin. It is only a few steps from some of the tables to the shoreline and the afternoon sun can't possibly blister your neck if you fish along this side of the lake. Now to stretch out and do a little bait fishing until the sun gets a little lower.

"Darn those pesky bluegill. They just won't leave a worm alone. It keeps a fellow busy just taking them off the hook. Wow! Look at that line zip out! That's no bluegill. Wonder how I'll land this monster on this light spinning line." You breathe a sigh of satisfaction after landing a three-pound channel catfish. That's the way the afternoon goes.

Hungry? Let's go around the west arm of the lake to the concession house and see what's available. On the way you pass the home of superintendent Alvin Ayres, caretaker of the lake and park. This is the man to see if you wish to camp overnight since a permit is required. Alvin is proud of his lake and will be glad to direct you to the best camping spot available.

The concession house is clean and well stocked with provender of all kinds. You can order a wide variety of sandwiches and soft drinks, supply your tackle box with necessities or purchase live bait from the bait house. Need a boat? You can rent one from concessionaire Ivan Foster.

During the summer months, you will almost always find plenty of activity at Pottawatomie County State Lake Number Two. Its close proximity to Manhattan, Junction City and Fort Riley makes it a popular spot for residents of those towns as well as the smaller villages of the area. Through the week, the most activity occurs in the evenings but the weekends bring forth picnickers and fishermen by the scores. In addition, campers from nearly every state utilize the park for overnight stops.

Fishery biologists of the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission have recently conducted netting tests on this lake and the consensus of opinion is that it is in good shape to produce fine fishing. Good populations of largemouth black bass, bluegill and channel catfish await the serious angler and one may also catch crappie and bullheads. An exceptionally good hatch of bass occurred in the lake last summer which foretells a good future for this water.

The lake itself is roughly "V" shaped with the bottom formed by the broad base of the dam. The concession area, boat dock and launching ramp lies on the point between the two arms of the lake. A bluff drops off sharply at the west side of the concession and this deep water has proved to be a good fishing spot for channels at certain times of the year. Another good area lies off the end of the point near the boat launching ramp. The best bluegill and crappie fishing is probably found near the main picnic area and on the east side of the eastern arm.

Pottawatomie County State Lake Number Two is not an old lake. Construction began in 1954 and the dam was completed the following year. The park area

of 247 acres was chosen for its scenic beauty as well as the fact that the drainage area of the lake is almost all grassland. This makes for clear water with little siltation. The 75-acre lake provides excellent fish habitat.

A few miles to the northwest lies the Blue River valley with its gigantic development called Tuttle Creek Reservoir. Doubtless, Tuttle Creek will soon overshadow this smaller lake but there are always those who prefer the small, intimate bodies of water which provide good fishing in an unhurried atmosphere.

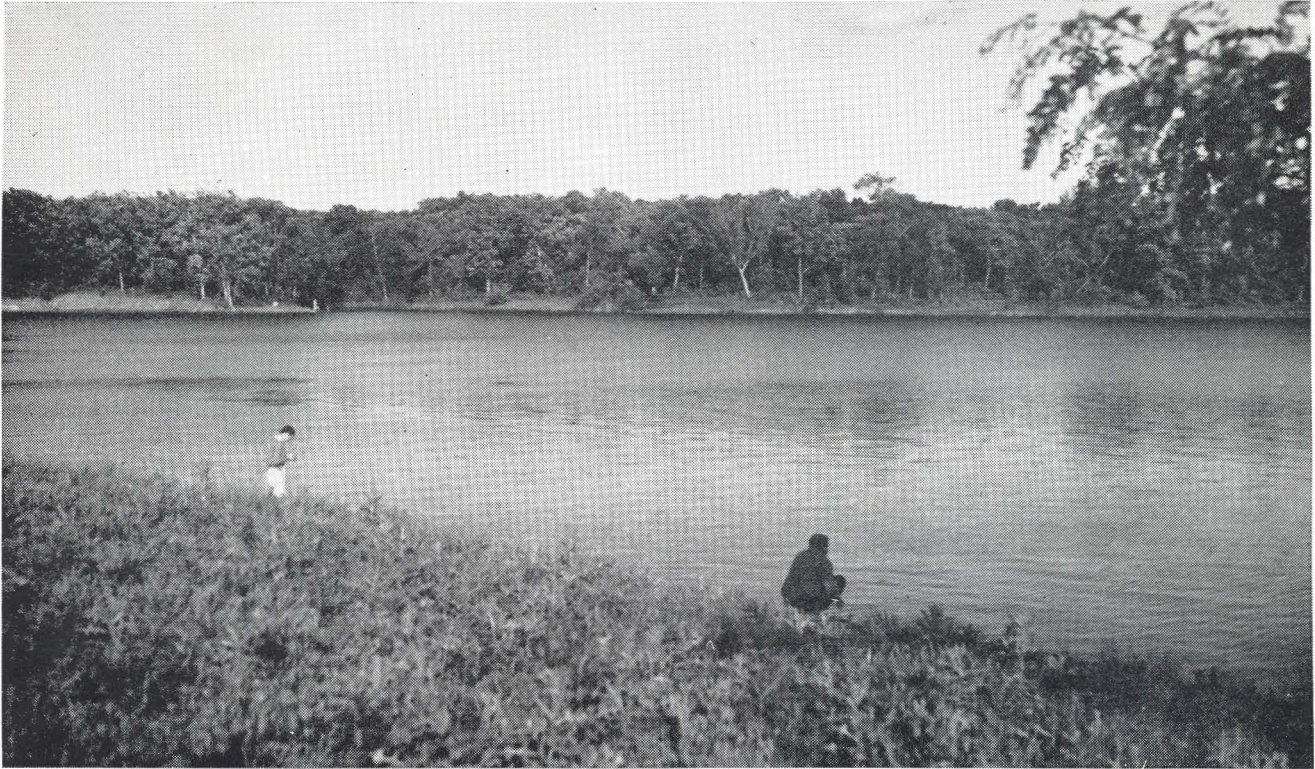
Local interest in the lake has been excellent. The Riley County Fish and Game Association has provided several improvements including two water wells at the picnic areas and a boat dock near the concession building. Fishing is permitted from the dock with the reservation that boats have the right-of-way for docking purposes.

Evening shadows are beginning to lengthen and it won't be long till sundown. Time now to get after those bass before the full moon pokes its beams over the hills later on in the evening. There, see that big ring in the water over by those willows. That's a feeding bass. Let's lay a plug just beyond and see if we can't raise a customer on the retrieve. Easy does it now. Just a little extra jerk on that popper when it's right under the willow branches. Hey! Set the hook now! Play him easy. He's a big one. Don't get too excited! Let him have a little line and . . .

What better way to end a day?



Sandwiches, soft drinks, fishing tackle, live bait and boats. These are some of the things available at the concession house. And these are the kind of things a fisherman needs.



Since access to the water is easy from the bank, a boat is not a necessity at this lake. Although portions of the lake have bluffs for banks, for the most part, you can approach the lake through grass or shady woods. The lake drains grassland, for the most part, and the water stays clear most of the time. Biologists from the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission say an exceptional hatch of bass occurred in 1960, which means the lake should have some exceptionally fine bass fishing coming up in another year or two.

About the Cover

On the cover is a picture of a night fisherman at the canal below Kingman County State Lake. When the lake was drained for rehabilitation, a canal was dug below the dam and the game fish from the lake were released into it. The canal connects with the Ninnescah River.

When the canal was opened to fishing, a boom was on. The fish became accustomed to their new home and in a few weeks people were proclaiming the canal as the best fishing in Kansas.

A large number of channel catfish were released in the canal. Many moved into the river, but those that remain make it worthwhile for a man to try a little night fishing.

The glow of a lantern, the twitch of a rod tip, followed by a yank on the rod. A fish feels the sting of the hook and begins to struggle somewhere out in the darkness. The fish tires and allows itself to be pulled toward the lantern. The light frightens the fish and the struggle is on again. Finally the frantic rushes are over and the fisherman puts the catch on his stringer. Night fishing.

Do Your Fish Taste Too Fishy?

Do your fish taste too fishy? If so, don't blame the fish, maybe the fault lies with the catcher, not the caught.

Experts advise that a stringer might be handy, also an ice chest, but both have shortcomings. The stringer, unless handled very carefully, will kill the fish. And ice softens the flesh. Both help give fish that too fishy taste.

Better ways are . . . one, carefully remove hooks and place fish in a live well, or a wire mesh fish bag, so they can move around. And two, keep them cool on the way home. A wet, breeze exposed burlap bag is good. And when you get home, soak filets in salt and soda for at least an hour.

Cook until just done, never overdone. You'll be eating fish with all the goodness kept in . . . not flaccid flesh with a fishy tang that curls your wife's upper lip.

Decatur County State Lake

Fourteenth of
A Series on

The State Lakes Of Kansas

When you get into northwest Kansas, particularly the last six counties of the state, you get into an area where both trees and fishing water are scarce. The sun beats down on the short grass prairie.

Before the coming of the white man, it was real buffalo country. In fact the chief industry of the early settlers was gathering and selling buffalo bones. They sold for about \$8 per ton.

The early settlers built sod houses due to the lack of lumber. And the main reason the houses did not wash away was probably because the area gets only about 20 inches of rain each year.

Situated in this dry (by eastern standards) but beautiful land is

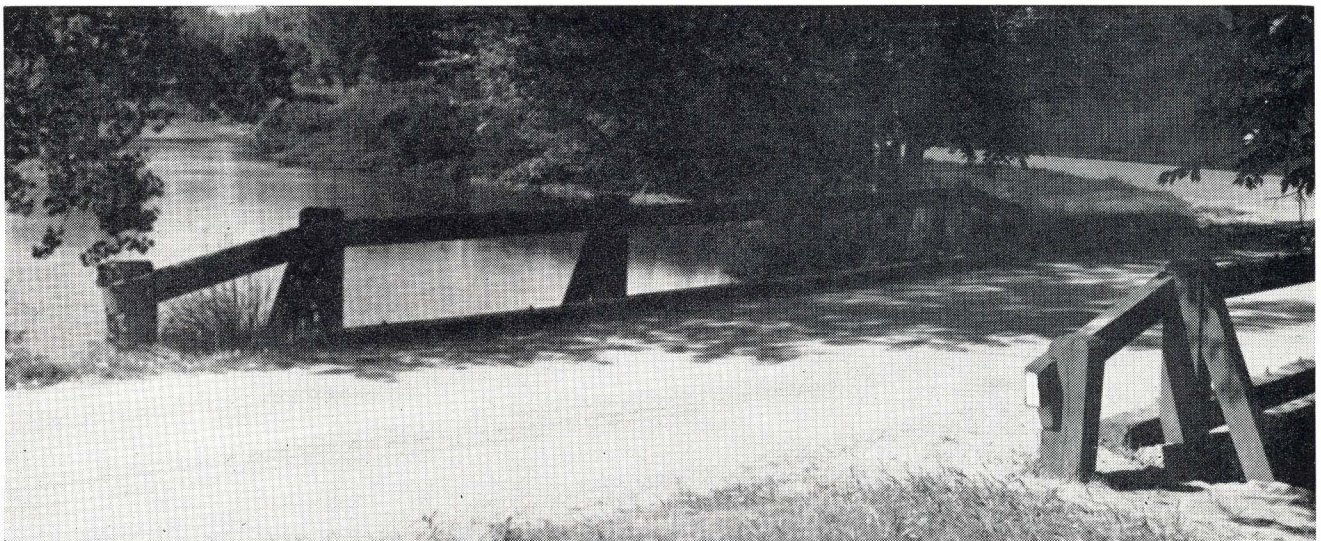


Decatur County State Lake and Park. It is known as Sappa Lake locally. The lake is formed by a dam across Sappa Creek which backs up 170 acres of water.

Fishing is rather restricted due to the lake's shallowness. In hot weather the water becomes very warm and the fish in turn become very sluggish. When fall comes

along, though, or when the waters become just moderately warm from the spring sun, fishing picks up and can be considered good. But it has been a long time since Sappa Lake was a real fishing hot-spot. Crappie, carp, drum and catfish inhabit the lake.

For an afternoon of quiet fishing in an area of the state with very



Sappa Lake and Park is a beautiful area. This bridge, about half way up the lake, is shady through the afternoon and reported to be a good place to fish. Camping areas are to the right of the picture and on around the lake road beyond the bridge. In addition, there are camping areas back up the road bringing the total to five tent areas and one trailer area.



The lake has an island. And the island has a dense growth of trees that break up the view which would otherwise be just a wide expanse of water. The whole setting of the lake is peaceful; a good place to go fishing or camp out.

little in the way of fishing water, Sappa Lake serves the purpose.

The lake and park do not stand idle through the hot months. In July and August the park around the lake becomes an oasis to tourists. The park is located just north of U. S. highway 36, the shortest route from Denver to Indianapolis, so the signs say. Many of the tourists using the highway come from the east and find the park somehow familiar with its abundance of trees and shade.

In the past four years the park has become very popular with campers. The park has all that is needed for a pleasant camp-out and, thanks to the nearby town of Oberlin, it has a few luxuries to boot.

The town has invested money and effort in the area and provided for improvements not found at other parks. There are five tent areas and one trailer area for campers. Fireplaces and tables are located throughout the park and the

shelterhouse boasts the only hot shower available at a state lake.

There are swings and a merry-go-round for children. Wood is

furnished and the camping areas are well lighted. Safe water is piped through the park from a big well up on a hill.



The shelterhouse was constructed during the depression days. It is spacious with several large rooms making it possible for several groups to hold meetings or other gatherings there at the same time. The shelterhouse has a unique facility in it. It holds the only hot shower available on a state lake and park area.

Between Eugene Shepherd, superintendent of the area, and the town, the park has become a favorite stop with tourists motoring and camping across country. In 1956 only 85 campers registered to spend the night. In 1960, there were over 3,000 registered tent pitchers and their families. During the busiest months, and on weekends, Shepherd has had as many as 70 tents and trailers spending the night in the park.

Maybe all these statistics have little to do with fishing or hunting, as the name of this magazine would lead you to expect, but the story of this lake is a story of outdoor recreation.

In the case of Sappa Lake, camping is a very important recreation. And camping takes up the slack during the hot months when the fish bite poorly at best.

The primary purpose of building the lake was to provide fishing. This the lake has done. In addition, it has developed into an unexpected resource and asset to Kansas.

Controlling Pesticides

The New York Times, July 31, 1961.

Efforts to modify Government pest-spraying programs, so as to safeguard public health and minimize damage to wildlife, are making some progress. But the recklessness of official pest-control agencies is only part of the problem.

Government uses but a small fraction of the estimated three to four billion pounds of the so-called "economic poisons" that are being spread annually, and in increasing volume, across the American landscape. Most of the new, potent chemicals are sprayed or broadcast privately by farmers or householders with little thought given to the effects upon wildlife, to the consequences of a build-up of poisons in the soil, or the dangers of runoff into streams and reservoirs.

Drenching trees and the soil beneath them with DDT has been highly destructive of bird life in many communities, while failing to

halt the spread of Dutch elm disease. There is evidence that some insect problems have grown worse with the use of chemicals, the effects of which are not yet fully known.

Federal and state studies of stream pollution show a growing number of instances where fish have been killed by agricultural poisons. In one example cited by the U. S. Public Health Service, fish kills occurred in fifteen different tributaries in the Tennessee River Valley following the application of an insecticide to cotton fields in eight Alabama counties.

To meet this difficult and growing problem two things are necessary. The first is more intensive research into safe control methods and more specific poisons, *i. e.*, materials that will kill the pest without damaging a variety of other living forms. The second need is for adequate information to the public about the dangers.

At present no agency of the Federal Government, and probably none in most states, has been given authority or direction to instruct the public in safe methods of applying pesticides and in the hazards of misuse. If the industry fails to assume its own responsibility, Government may have to step in with controls.

Fish and Drought Study Published

Fish Populations, Following a Drought, in the Neosho and Marais des Cygnes Rivers of Kansas is the title of a sixty-six page booklet published this year by the Museum of Natural History of the University of Kansas.

The author, Dr. James E. Deacon, now is a staff member of the University of Nevada at its Southern Branch in Las Vegas, on the north shore of Lake Meade. He studied the fishes in the Neosho and Marais des Cygnes rivers of Kansas from 1957 to 1959, completing a six-year study begun by others in 1952. He was an employee of the State Biological Survey of Kansas working under the technical supervision of Dr. Frank B. Cross, Associate Director of the Survey, and received financial support from the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission.

According to Dr. E. Raymond Hall, Director of the State Biological Survey, co-operative studies of this kind yield basic scientific information of great value because the information can be put to practical use. For example, it is possible to increase or decrease the number of individual fish of a particular species in any given body of water. "Clear up the water and raise more bass or promote a larger flow of murky water and raise more catfish" he stated. Fifty-five species of fish were found in the two rivers.

Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, Pratt, Kansas, or from the State Biological Survey Office in the Museum of Natural History at The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.

News From Other States and Around

WEST GERMANY—In West Germany, limits are imposed on the number of boats which may be operated on Bavarian lakes. For example, there is a limit of 350 boats on one lake measuring 17 by 2 miles. This would amount to something around 21,000 acres of surface area or about 60 acres per boat. The number is controlled through a license roster, a boat license being good for just one lake—with no inheritance rights!

Barber County State Lake

Fifteenth of
A Series on

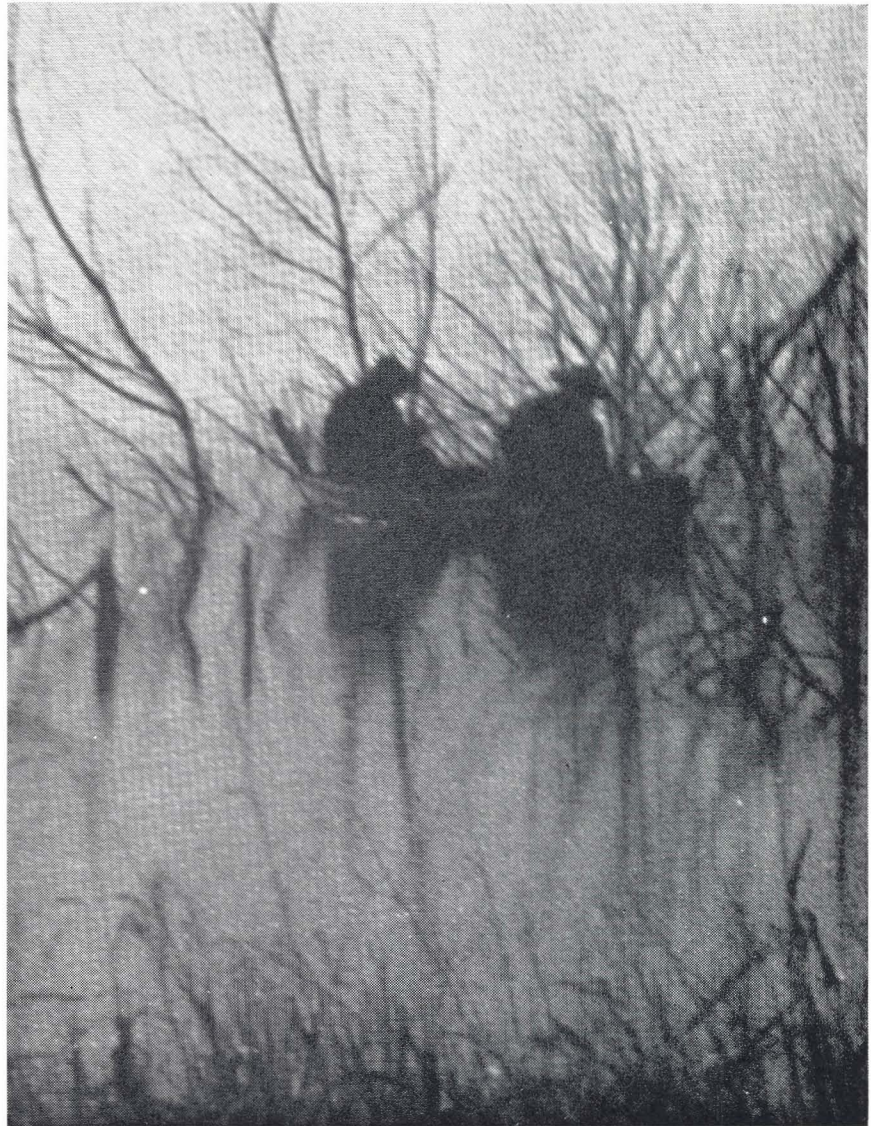
The State Lakes Of Kansas

By George Valyer

Dark, chill waters lapped at the shore and a pale sun oozed through a partially overcast sky. The chilly breeze from the southwest made a coat feel pleasant. An occasional flight of greenwings or pintails over the lake gave indication to the late fall season.

Out on the lake a small rowboat was tied to the branches of some submerged willows and a pair of crappie fishermen were busily occupied in dunking minnows. Occasional activity aboard indicated at least some success. On a nearby bank, an elderly woman with a cane pole patiently waited for some action on the end of her line. Even though Thanksgiving had come and gone, the lure of fishing was still stirring the residents of Barber county, Kansas.

As I traveled farther up the shoreline on this late November day, I could recall the hot summer day when I had been there last. At that time the lake was literally surrounded by fishermen and numerous boats dotted the water. Bass and bullheads had both been hitting then and many long strings of the latter species were in evidence everywhere. Plug fishermen were



clustered around a point on the upper end of the lake on the west side where the bass were feeding. Now and then someone would get a solid strike and all activity would cease while envious eyes watched the lucky angler battle his fish.

Barber County State Lake is just a stone's throw from the city of Medicine Lodge and the residents of this south-central community are pleased, indeed, with the fishing opportunity so close to their back door. Although their enthusiasm of the first year has settled into a feeling of prideful acceptance, the

people of the area are still delighted with this body of water and do not hesitate to tell you so. Only one of the persons contacted seemed to be indifferent about the presence of the lake and he was fishing there at the time.

The past two summers have brought on a few complaints from some anglers, not against the lake or the fishing, but in regard to the presence of parasitic worms in the flesh of some of the bullheads taken from the lake. These worms are the common yellow grub which may infest any body of water in



Barber County State Lake is just a stone's throw from the city of Medicine Lodge and the residents are pleased with the lake at their back door. The hillside to the east of the lake has become a popular building site and many new homes now have a "lake view."

Kansas at any time. This parasite has a complicated life cycle and the adult worm lives in the upper digestive tract of wading birds such as the herons. While the birds are feeding in the water, eggs from the parasite find their way into the water where they hatch into tiny swimming organisms. The organisms move about in the water for a time and then attach themselves to snails where they live and develop. After the period of growth, the grub leaves the snail and moves about until it comes in contact with a fish where it penetrates the skin, forming a cyst with the worm inside. To complete the cycle, an infected fish must be caught and eaten by a wading bird, thus allowing the adult grub to again lay eggs which find their way into water.

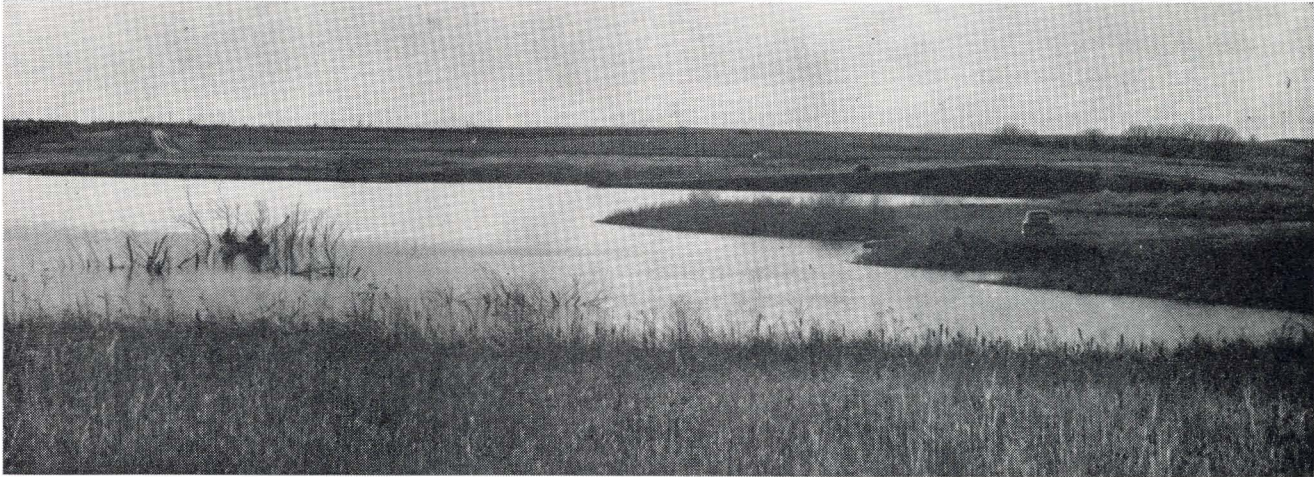
The presence of yellow grubs was more pronounced in bullheads taken from Barber County State Lake during the summer of 1960

than in the summer just passed. Creel census was taken by employees of the commission both years and the number of bullheads infested with these parasites showed a definite decline in 1961. Authorities who have made intensive studies of these parasites state that they will not affect humans in any way. They would do no harm even if injected in living form. Fish which are host to yellow grubs may be eaten without worry but most persons prefer to remove the flesh in the infected area. If the fish is exceptionally heavily parasitized, it would probably be best to destroy it.

Needless to say, there is no treatment for this parasite. Any chemical strong enough to eliminate them from any water would also kill all the fish. These grubs have evidently infested only bullheads at Barber State Lake and are on the decline in this species.

Barber County State Lake lies in a hilly tract of grassland which totals 189 acres. The lake itself contains 64 surface acres of water and is readily accessible from U. S. Highway 281. The dam lies across a draw which passes through the middle of the town of Medicine Lodge. The hillside to the east of the lake has proved to be a popular building site and many new homes have been erected with a "lake view."

Construction of the lake was completed in 1954 at a total cost of \$91,000. This figure includes the purchase price of the land which was slightly over \$14,000. The shores are popular locations for picnics and the facilities include tables and grills. Sanitary facilities are located both on the east and west sides of the lake. The shoreline is easily accessible most of the time through a system of roads leading to all except the extreme upper portion of the lake. During periods of

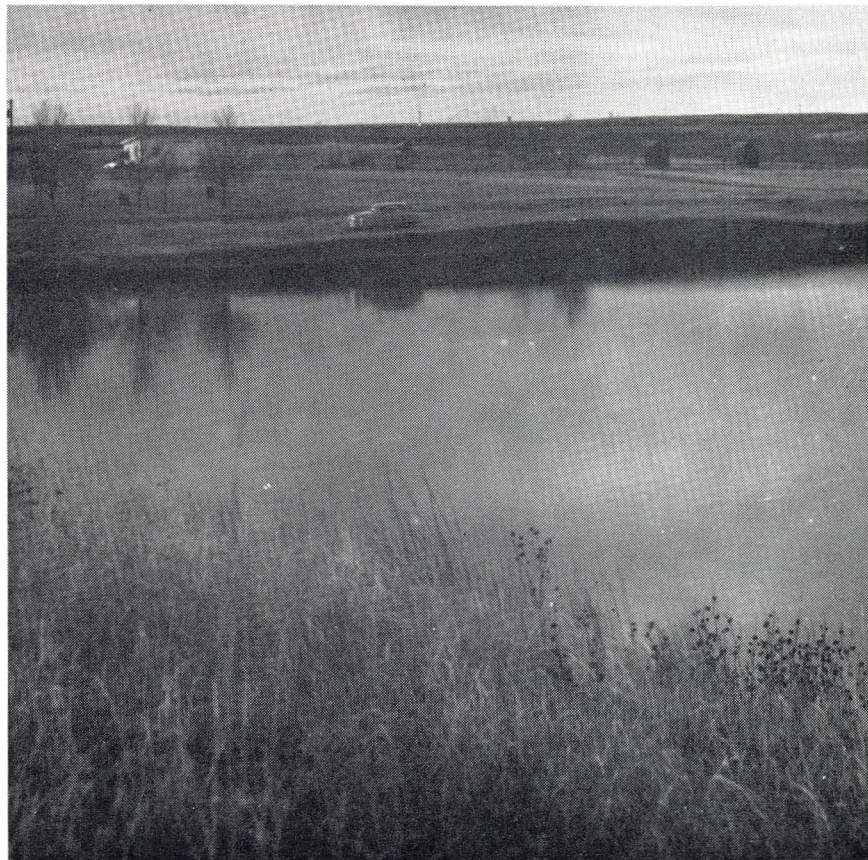


Even though Thanksgiving had come and gone, the lure of fishing was still stirring the residents of Barber County. In the summer, the lake is often literally surrounded by fishermen and numerous boats dot the water.

heavy rain, portions of the roads become quite muddy and access is limited to the dam area. A surfaced boat launching ramp is located on the west shore and is heavily used during the summer months.

The lake contains good populations of channel catfish, crappie, black bass, bluegill and bullheads. Several large channels were taken this past summer, much to the delight of the local fishermen. The largest we heard about weighed eleven pounds. Evidently the channels are making good gains in this lake. Although not too many bass are being taken they are running good size. Several have been caught weighing above five pounds. During the summer, respectable bullheads are easily taken by most fishermen. The crappie and bluegill take is also great at various times.

Although camping at this lake is not as popular as at some others, a few tents are seen each summer, mostly on the west shore near the dam. Accommodations and restaurants are plentiful in nearby Medicine Lodge and are utilized by those who come to fish from a distance. All in all, Barber County State Lake has much to offer. Maybe you'd like to try it some time.



The shores are popular locations for picnics and the facilities are located both on the east and west sides of the lake. The shoreline is easily accessible most of the time through a system of roads leading to all except the extreme upper portion of the lake. A boat launching ramp is located on the west shore.

Jewell County State Lake

Fifteenth of
A Series on

The State Lakes Of Kansas



"It was the kind of morning I like for bass fishing. A half mist, half drizzle, was falling as I arrived at Jewell County State Lake. An old-timer told me at least six fishermen left with their limit of bass the day before."

by BOB TODD

"They were biting yesterday. And they'll probably be biting again tomorrow. But they ain't a'bitin' today."

That's the answer I get all the time, seems like. The last time I got that answer was at Jewell County State Lake, near Mankato. I was asking about largemouth bass.

The old man fishing there when I arrived gave me the answer slowly as he struck a match and put it to his pipe. He elaborated. He said the lake was stocked in '58 and the bass were now really coming into their own. He said the day

before he'd seen at least six fishermen leave with their limit.

The old timer looked like a stump on the lake shore. He was squatting on the bank with his two cane fishing poles out over the water in front of him. A half mist, half drizzle was falling that morning and the water gathered in little drops on his hat.

It was the kind of morning I like for bass fishing. I wished the old timer luck and started up the bank with my spinning tackle.

The old timer was right, the bass weren't hitting. That is the big bass weren't hitting. I caught many small ones, some not much larger than the plug I was using. From

time to time something nipped at the plug, but I figured it was just moss. Like any clear lake, Jewell County State Lake has its share of moss.

★

After an hour's fishing, my stringer was still in my pocket. I had caught a whole slug of small bass, up to maybe a half pound or so, but no stringin' size bass struck the plug. I started back down toward the dam.

When I got to the old timer I asked him if he had caught any.

"A few," he said. "Catch any bass?"



"After an hour's fishing, my stringer was still in my pocket." . . . "I put on a spinner lure and began working along the dam. On the third cast something bumped the lure, and at first felt like moss. But this time whatever it was didn't pull loose, but instead began to put up a fight." . . . The old man placed the crappie in the swirling hot oil. They sizzled and popped and their tails began to curl. . . . "This here lake's got somethin' bitin' all the time," said the old man.

"Lot's of little ones," I said.

"Told ya they wasn't hittin'," he said. "Have ya got one of them spinner kind of lures? I 'spect you might pick up a few crappie if you do."

"Thanks," I said. I felt like saying, how would you know? The mist and drizzle had stopped now and the old man's cane poles were wet, but not dripping. He was still squatting in the same spot with his minnow bucket and tackle box by his side.

Figuring I had nothing to lose, I

put on a spinner lure and began working the water along the dam. On the third cast something bumped the lure, and at first felt like more moss. But this time whatever it was didn't pull lose, but instead began to put up a fight.

The crappie's struggle was short and it was soon on the stringer. A few casts later another crappie struck and I fought him in. This one flipped out of my hands as I tried to open the stringer snap.

I caught two more before the

old man hollered at me that he thought it was about time for lunch. He yelled that if I had enough fish for my lunch he'd be glad to cook them up with his.

He already had a blaze going in one of the fireplaces. I walked back down to where he was fishing and told him I'd take him up on the offer. He put me right to work.

★

He took three large crappie from a burlap bag laying in the water and handed them to me to clean along with my three.

The old man took a big cast iron skillet from the back of his battered pick-up. Then he took a one-gallon can of liquid shortening out and filled the skillet about half full.

"Ya know," he said as he poured salt and flour into a paper sack, "I used to think fish had to be cooked in lard to be good. But that corn oil sure is handy and I can't tell the difference anyway."

I said I couldn't tell the difference either and added that I'd never tasted fish cooked with flour instead of corn meal.

"I like 'um rolled in corn meal if my wife is gonna cook 'um," he said, "But seems like they taste a lot better in flour when they're cooked out in the open like this."

"Catchin' fish out of this lake makes ya hungry to eat 'em. There ain't just too many places as pretty as this." He lit his pipe and placed the skillet on the grate.

★

I finally finished cleaning the fish and he put them all in the paper bag. As he shook the bag, little white puffs of flour came out at the seams. Then he placed the fish in the swirling hot oil. They sizzled and popped and their tails began to curl.

The old man went to the truck and brought back another paper sack. He took out some paper plates, cups and a variety of old silverware. Then he took out some potatoes and onions from the bottom of the sack and handed them to me.



“Catchin’ fish out of this lake makes ya hungry to eat ‘em,” said the old man. “There ain’t just too many places as pretty as this.” He lit his pipe and placed the heavy skillet on the grate.

“You can be pealin’ them while the fish are cookin’,” he said. “Looks like we got enough fish for lunch, but I always cook some taters too. Taters purify the grease.”

The clouds were breaking up as we started eating the fish and fried potatoes.

“Guess I should have tried a spinner on them earlier,” I said.

“Naw,” he said, “the crappie weren’t bitin’ when you started up the lake. The bluegill was bitin’ then. I got a whole sack full of them on ice up in the truck. My wife likes them better than anything so I save them for her and eat crappie and bass when I’m out fishin’.”

“I was just waitin’ for a school of bluegill to swim by when you come along. After you left a school came in to feed. When they quit the crappie started in at bitin’. They were almost done when you came back by. They’ve stopped bitin’ now.”

I kept on eating—and the old man kept on talking slowly between bites.

“The channel cats’ll be bitin’ a little this afternoon and the bluegill will start again later on. There might be a few bass hit late this evening, but they won’t hit good again ‘til tomorrow mornin’.”

“You must fish this lake a lot,” I said.

The old man shook some more salt on his potatoes and said he fished Jewell County State Lake at least once or twice a week. He said he was retired now and fished quite a bit.

“Lovewell Reservoir ain’t far from here and I do some fishing up there. But this little lake, about 60 acres I’d say, is my favorite. I’m not the kind of fisherman who gets along very well with big water and big boats. I like a quiet place where I can squat down behind a cane pole and wait for the fish to bite.”

“When I was younger I used to traipse all over creation and back just like you was doing this mornin’. I caught a lot of fish back then too. But I found out that at some lakes you can always catch something if

you just git a good spot and sit and wait.

“This here lake’s got somethin’ bitin’ all the time,” he swallowed the last bite and laid his plate aside. “All you gotta do is know what’s bitin’ and what they’re bitin’ on. If you fished this lake as much as I do, you’d begin to catch on too.”

★

We cleaned up our lunch debris and stuffed the waste in the trash barrels. I thanked him for the advice and the lunch and said I had to be moving on.

The old man was putting a large piece of chicken liver on his hook as I turned to leave.

“If I was you,” he said, “I’d try to get back here early tomorrow morning to catch some bass. They’ll be hittin’ real good then.”

I couldn’t make it back to the lake the next morning, but word reached me later that a couple fishermen from Mankato had given it a try and both brought out their limit before 8 a. m.

Chase County State Lake

Sixteenth of
A Series on

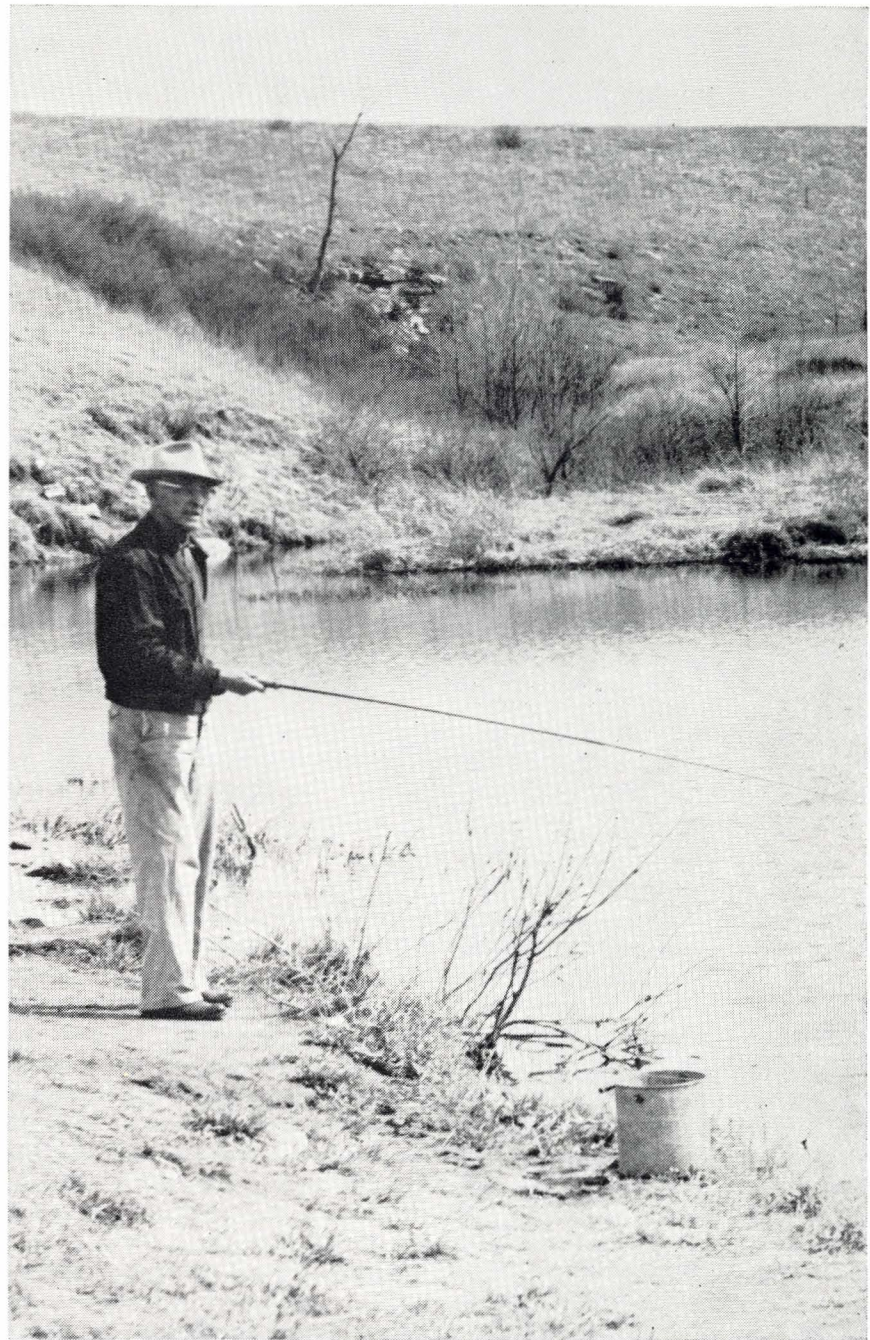
The State Lakes Of Kansas

by GEORGE VALYER

Did you ever fish in a place where you knew there were plenty of big ones and yet, despite your every effort, you couldn't get a thing to hit. Well, if you are an average fisherman, you have probably had this happen many times. Such was my experience the last time I visited Chase County State Lake. I knew they were there because I had seen the tabulation on the last test netting by the fishery division of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission and I had certainly had my share of good fortune there in the past. Still, not a one could I get to take a bait.

Frankly, I'm a little suspicious of those who claim to catch fish every time they go fishing. Not that I would boast of being an expert; there are many better fishermen. But still, there seem to be those days when even an expert just can't seem to get a strike on anything. I can assure you that I wasn't in the least unhappy with this lake.

Chase County State Lake is a beautiful bit of water regardless of what point of view you have. Its 109 acres hold the promise of fulfilling the angler's desire for big bass, crappie and channel catfish. Its cool, opalescent waters originate in springs higher up in the hills to the southwest of the lake and, even during times of heavy rains, the water is clear and free of a significant amount of silt due to the fact that the drainage area is all in grass. Located in the heart of the Flint



Hills, this lake is truly a gem of unmatched beauty.

Originally, Chase County State Lake was surveyed and planned back in the late 30's. It was the desire of the residents of Chase county to make the lake site available for construction by the Public Works Administration which built

several other lakes during that time. A formal request was made to the U. S. Department of Interior but, before any action could be taken, World War II signaled an end to such developments.

Title to the 360 acres of land was transferred by the county to the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game



Chase County State Lake is a beautiful bit of water located in the heart of the Flint Hills. It is truly a gem of unmatched beauty. The rocky bluffs on either side of the lake hold interest for those who like to hunt for geological specimens. Channels up to 9 pounds and bass up to 6 pounds and large crappie can now be taken from the lake.

Commission in 1954 following a decision by the Commission that a lake should be constructed on the site. The dam was completed in April of 1955 with a total cost of \$81,500. However, it was not until nearly two years later that enough water was impounded for the stocking of fish. By the summer of 1959, the lake was full to capacity and tests revealed that fish growth had been excellent. On November 10 of that year when the lake was opened to fishing, channel catfish up to three pounds were taken in large numbers.

During the past 2½ years, continued good growth has been noted on all species and channels to 9 pounds, bass to 6 pounds and some large crappie can now be taken from the lake. The bluegill population is also good and a flyrod in the hands of a fisherman can produce a lot of sport. Bullheads also are present in Chase County State Lake

although they are not caught in the numbers they were during the first year of fishing. Because of the clearness of the water, adult bass keep the young bullhead fry thinned down.

Early spring fishing seems to be best in the old stream channel now hidden by the lake waters. In general, the old water course followed the rocky bluffs at the southeast side of the lake. Since there is no road on this side, many persons use a boat for fishing during the months of March and April and others walk around below the dam to fish from the bank. As soon as the water warms sufficiently, fish can be caught in any part of the lake.

Incidentally, the stream which feeds Chase County State Lake was a favorite location in the past for the seining of minnows for use in other areas. Old timers who live in the area say that it was no trouble at all to take a good supply of bait

with only one or two sweeps of the net. At least one such individual, Roy Park of Cottonwood Falls, now fishes the lake consistently and considers it one of his favorite spots.

Visitors who come to Chase County State Lake usually arrive by heading west out of Cottonwood Falls for a distance of three miles. This county road continues on west and eventually hits U. S. Highway 50 at Elmdale. Persons arriving from the west can leave the highway at this point, travel east crossing the Cottonwood river, and wind up at the entrance to the lake.

Chase countians are quite proud of their lake and have made substantial contributions to its facilities. A large metal sign spanning the entrance was built and erected by a group of local citizens. The Cottonwood Falls Lions Club, with the assistance of other interested individuals, has built an excellent

(turn to page 21)



Bourbon County State Lake

Seventeenth of a Series on The State Lakes of Kansas

By GEORGE VALYER

For some time now I have been convinced that a person cannot really get a good impression of the state of Kansas by traveling the federal highways. With a few exceptions, the majority of the highway mileage seems to avoid the more picturesque and scenic parts of the state. I am now more thoroughly convinced of this fact since

visiting Bourbon County State Lake.

The traveler who passes through eastern Kansas on U. S. 54 can little imagine what beauty lies just a few miles to the south of Bronson. Although the highway passes through rolling hills, one has little inkling of the sharp hills and deep valleys which are associated with the countryside surrounding the lake.

Bourbon County State Lake is

located four miles east of Elsmore and approximately eight miles south of Bronson. Due to the fact that it is close to the Allen county line, it is sometimes called the Allen-Bourbon State Lake. Access is from state highways K-6 and K-39 and U. S. 54. All-weather roads lead to the lake with signs to point the way.

If any lake ever looked "fishy," this one certainly does. Its clear, blue-green waters rippling in the breeze seem to sing a siren song to any fisherman who gazes upon them. Although peace and serenity come from the hills and woodlands surrounding, the angler's

pulse cannot help but quicken with the promise of what is to come.

Pathways and trails lead to all parts of the lake so it isn't necessary to have a boat to fish this lake. Nevertheless, it is quite apparent that many persons prefer to fish from watercraft. The launching ramp on the west side is a busy place on weekends and one can almost always see boats and rafts moored in the adjacent cove.

Camping spots are plentiful at Bourbon County State Lake. The gently sloping shore line on the west side provides an ideal spot to pitch a tent or park a camp trailer. Water is available just south of the boat ramp and, although it is of high mineral content, it is safe for drinking. Picnic tables are also

located at many spots around the shore line.

The lake itself is relatively new. Construction of the dam was begun in 1957 and fishing was not permitted until late in 1959. Since that time the fish have made good gains and channel catfish up to 7½ pounds have been taken this year. Unconfirmed reports tell of at least one 9-pounder of this species. Largemouth bass are plentiful and several in excess of 5 pounds can usually be seen on stringers during a good fishing week. Other species include crappie, bluegill, green sunfish and bullheads.

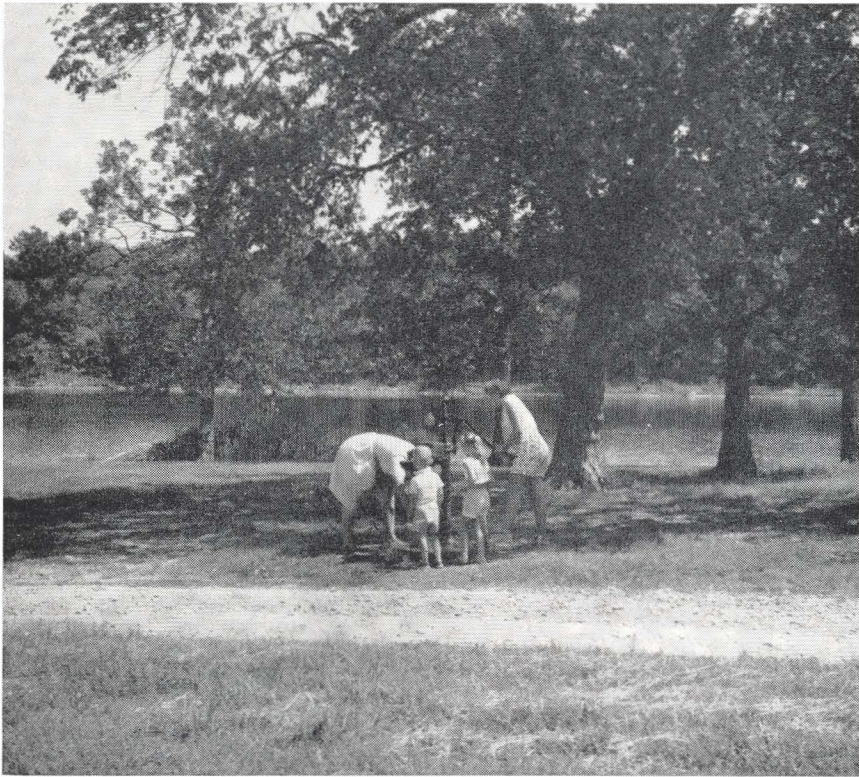
The cost of constructing the dam was partially financed by the federal government through the use of Dingell-Johnson funds. These funds

are derived from an excise tax on fishing equipment and are apportioned to the states for approved projects. Although the state stands all of the cost originally, it is reimbursed for three-fourths of the amount from the federal funds. In the case of Bourbon County State Lake, federal participation amounted to \$66,622 of the total construction cost of \$88,829. The Dingell-Johnson funds are used for fishery purposes only; other federal funds (Pittman - Robertson) are used for wildlife restoration and management.

If you are interested in statistics, the total surface area of the lake measures 103 acres set in a land area of 380 acres. A considerable part of the upper portion of the lake



The boat-launching ramp is heavily used on weekends and many watercraft may be seen anchored around the cove. Due to the roughness of the surrounding terrain, most of the watershed is meadow and pasture land.



Time out to fill the picnic jug. This well is located south of the boat-launching ramp. Picnic tables are located at many spots around the shore line.

has a solid rock bottom as do the streams which feed the impoundment. Due to the roughness of the surrounding terrain, most of the watershed is meadow and pasture land. Naturally, the result is clear water and very little siltation. Sight-feeding fish such as largemouth bass make the most rapid growth in waters such as this. We can look for Bourbon lake to produce fine fishing for many years to come.

Several residents of the area have become enough convinced of the potentialities so that they have purchased land adjacent to the state property for the construction of weekend cabins. Several of these are now located near the lake, at least one additional cabin is now under construction and several lots serve as a parking place for house trailers. This gives an indication of the growing popularity of Bourbon County State Lake.

There is no concession at the lake but most kinds of fish bait are available just off state property at the west end of the dam. Eating establishments are available in Elsmore and Bronson.

The canyon which contains the lake is known locally as the "wolf pen." Just why it carries this name seems to be lost in unrecorded history. Perhaps at some time in the early history of the area, someone captured a wolf in the valley and it thusly was named. A variety of wildlife can still be found in the vicinity. Deer are known to frequent the lake, especially the eastern shore, and small animals and bird-life are abundant.

Yes, Bourbon County State Lake has a lot to offer to anyone who likes to get off the beaten path. If you prefer your fishing in a setting of rocks, trees and hills, you'll like this lake.

About Doves

The pleasant, almost sorrowful coo, coo, coo has given the *Zenaidura macroura* the name "mourning dove." It also is called the Carolina, turtle or wild dove, and wild pigeon.

There are three sub-species: *Z.m. carolinensis* (Eastern United States and Canada); *Z.m. marginella* (Western United States and Canada); *Z.m. macroura* (believed non-migratory and restricted to the Caribbean islands).

The male, topped with ash-brown feathers tinged with green, has a "sunny" beige to its underparts. Its tail, blue-gray and spotted with white, has black running along the sides. A black spot adorns the "cheek," and the neck feathers are iridescent. The bill, small and slender, curves slightly downward.

The female has a shorter tail and lacks the iridescence of the male. Adults average about 12 inches, tipping the scales at around 4 ounces.

Nests are built in a variety of places, usually seven or eight feet from the ground. (Some have been found as high as 20 feet.) A clutch generally consists of two eggs, and hatching occurs in about two weeks.

Both the male and female contribute to incubation—the male takes over from morning (about 8:00 a. m.) to evening (about 5:00 p. m.). Maturity is reached in about six months.

Fires and heavy rains account for heavy losses during the nesting period, and snow adds to the toll by covering the precious food supply. Wheat, oats, rye, corn and barley make up about 30 per cent of the diet, with the remainder coming from seeds of weeds. About 1 per cent of the food consists of insects (grasshoppers, worms).

Rooks County State Lake

Eighteenth of
A Series on

The State Lakes of Kansas

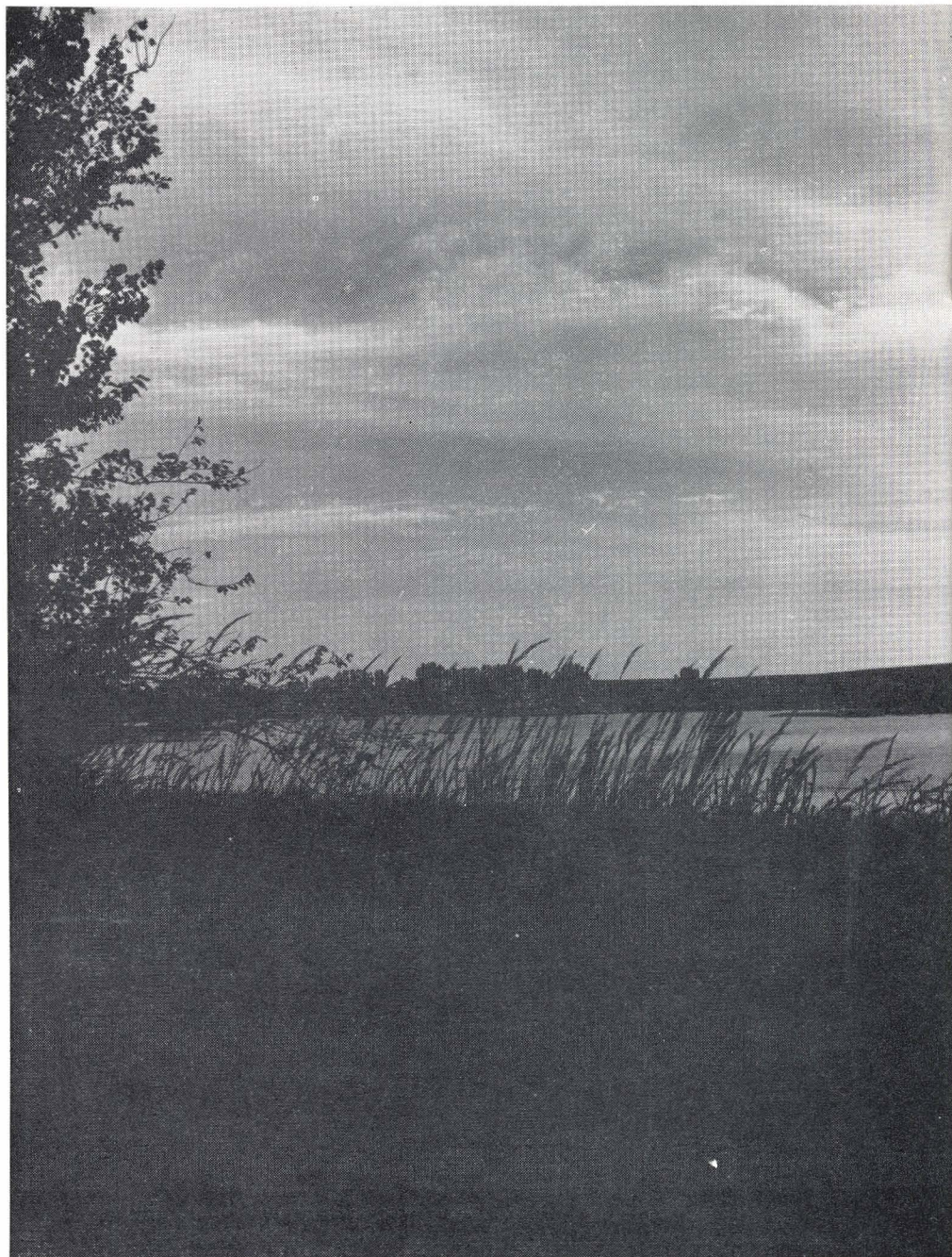
By GEORGE VALYER

Weather frontal systems are now quite familiar to most citizens of the United States. The popularity of TV weather programs has accomplished this in a relatively short time. Most Kansas residents are also now aware of the fact that not all cold fronts moving into the state produce rain. Some result in merely a shift of wind and a big blow. Such was the case upon my first visit to Rooks County State Lake.

The weather had been hot and dry for over a week when I headed my car in a northwesternly direction from Pratt. The temperatures in the upper 90's were not unusual for the month of July but a dry southwest wind seared the countryside. Cooler weather would be welcomed but a rain would be a blessing.

As I left Hays and was traveling north, high cloudiness to the northwest foretold the approach of a weather change. The gusty wind had shifted to the north by the time I left Plainville and, by the time I reached the lake, it was whipping the water into a spray.

Most of us like to think of water as being quiet and peaceful but Rooks County State Lake certainly did not fit that description that day. Large waves cresting white on top were pounding the south shore. Only the extreme southern portion of the lake was relatively calm where the twisting shoreline and trees provided some measure of wind protection.



Dark wind-swept waters were the order of the day when this photo was taken. Rooks County State Lake certainly did not look like a fisherman's dream that day.

It was my plan to take pictures and try the fishing, but who would want to look at photos of a lake being blown all over the countryside. Besides, the light conditions were poor due to the cloudiness. A few drops of rain mingled with the dust. It seemed useless to try the fishing but it might be worth a try if I could find a spot where

the wind wouldn't blow the bait out of the water.

Stranger things have happened, but even in all that wind, the fish were hitting. Several large bluegill were hooked and released that afternoon and one bass of about a pound took my grasshopper offering. The pictures would have to wait until a later date,

Fishing at Rooks County State Lake can be classed generally as being good. The water is clear except during times of heavy rains and the fertility is satisfactory for the proper growth of the fish population.

Spillway damage at this lake has occurred at least twice since the lake was built in 1934. The first damage occurred in 1940 after an exceptionally heavy rain in the watershed. In 1958 additional repairs were needed and it was decided to lower the lake for the work. Along with the needed repairs it was decided that the fish population should also be completely removed in order that rehabilitation could be complete. This was accomplished in the spring of '58 and the lake was restocked in the fall of that year. The reopening of the lake to fishing occurred on November 1, 1960.

The present fish population is composed of the usual species, channel catfish, crappie, largemouth bass and bluegill. The bluegill run especially large from this lake, some up to eight inches long. The bass are also doing well with the reported catch of a four and one-half pound specimen. Channels have not been taken in great numbers but they appear to be making satisfactory growth.

Known locally as "Stockton Lake," due to its proximity to this town, Rooks County State Lake has been a popular recreation spot for many years. In recent years it has been overshadowed by Webster Reservoir which is located only a few miles west. Nevertheless, there are still many persons in north-central Kansas who like to fish the smaller bodies of water and you can find these people at Stockton lake on almost any summer day.

Although this lake has no resident caretaker, the grounds are well maintained by Earl Richardson who is caretaker of the Forestry, Fish and Game administered Webster Reservoir. The usual facilities are to be found including picnic tables, grills, a native stone shelter house and sanitary units. Camping is permitted at this location just as it is at other state lakes.

Rooks County State Lake was begun in 1935 as a project of the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee. The land, 333 acres, was donated to the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission by the citizens of Rooks County along with enough materials to complete the dam. After an initial failure to establish the lake, the KERC turned the project over to the Works Progress Administration, a federal agency born in the depression days of the 30's. This agency completed the dam and spillway.



Heavy rains resulted in this damage to the spillway apron in the year 1940. Such occurrences pose a problem of constant maintenance at the State Lakes in Kansas.



A young visitor to Rooks County State Lake peers intently at the water. I wonder if he would like to fish or splash?

In 1943, the lake area was made available to the U. S. Army for the training and maneuvering of troops. The use by the military left the area in a less desirable condition than was to be expected and considerable improvements were made to the roads and other facilities following the second World War. In 1951 a new stone shelterhouse was erected on the east shore of the lake and numerous trees and shrubs were planted. The latest major maintenance effort was in the fall and winter of 1960 when trees and brush were

cleared from the dam and spillway area.

My last trip to Rooks County State Lake was in marked contrast to the first. A light breeze rippled the water surface and the coolness of fall blanketed the surrounding hills. A swirl in the water next to the shore marked a feeding bass. A flock of teal basked lazily at the upper end of the lake. Unfortunately, I had only time enough to snap a few pictures and be on my way for a meeting. The fishing, this time, would have to wait for another day.

Can Costs Man

According to the National Wildlife Federation, a Red Wing, Minn., man in the habit of tossing beer cans out the window of his car was ordered to pick up the beer cans and other debris from both sides of U. S. Highway 10 for a distance of 7½ miles or forfeit \$75. Pierce County Court Judge Paul A. Magdanz fined the litterbug \$100 on possession of opened beer in a moving car and \$25 for depositing debris on a public highway and ordered that \$75 of the fine be refunded when the violator had satisfactorily cleaned up the road,



A view of Brown County State Lake from the north entrance.

Brown County State Lake

19th of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

By GEORGE VALYER

"Any fisherman worth his salt will tell you that springtime fishing is the best of all. That is, except those who prefer fall fishing. As far as I am concerned, I'll just fish whenever the opportunity arises."

This sentiment was expressed to me by a wiry fellow of about fifty years of age the last time I visited at Brown County State Lake. Unfortunately, I didn't record this man's name but I guess it doesn't make a lot of difference anyway. He wasn't having any more success than I was and the result for both of us was almost nil.

Considering the last statement made, it may surprise you to know that, for my books, Brown County State Lake is a good fishing spot. The same went for this fisherman. He, too, was convinced that this lake had much to offer and his conviction was based on past experi-

ence. He had taken his share of lunker bass from its cool, clear environs and had seen many large channel catfish gracing the stringers of other fishermen.

Let's face it, the people who really catch fish are those who fish often and long. The fellow who fishes only four or five times a year, and then for only an hour or two, can hardly expect to come home with enough for a meal. Of course it does happen, now and then, but it is not the rule. The most successful anglers I know are those who spend a lot of time at it, at least enough to learn how to properly present a bait and study the various water conditions and how they affect fish. This is not to say that the occasional angler doesn't have fun. Sure he enjoys himself. And, occasionally, lady luck drops him a good catch.

The point we are trying to make is that no one can adequately judge the fishing potential at any lake by one visit. Recently I fished for a few hours at one of the best reservoirs in this part of the country and came away with only a memory of the beautiful surroundings. It would certainly be an error to claim that there were no fish in the lake, just because they wouldn't hit that day.

Let's review some of the facts. Brown County State Lake is located in the glacial hills of northeast Kansas where the corn grows tall and the meadows are thick and verdant. The bulk of land in the drainage area is in pastures interspersed with patches of cropland. Some silt is carried into the lake during periods of heavy rain but, for the most part, it remains clear enough for good bass and crappie production. In the bottom of the lake are several springs which help maintain the water level in times of subnormal rainfall.

(Continued on page 18)

Brown County State Lake

(Continued from page 16)

Brown County State Lake was contracted in the spring of 1953 and construction was finished in January of 1954. An interesting aspect about the construction phase was that a vein of coal was uncovered while the footings for the dam and spillway were being excavated. This coal was relatively hard but, since all coal is porous, it had to be removed to prevent seepage. Cultivated land in the 1,400-acre drainage area was mostly under conservation practices prior to the building of the lake.

Enough water had been impounded so that stocking of the lake was made in the fall of 1954. At that time channel catfish, largemouth bass, crappie and bluegill were placed in the lake. As is usually the case, other species of fish inhabited the watershed and bullheads found their way into the impoundment.

Access roads were constructed during the summer of 1955 and other facilities were added at that time. By the fall of '56, the fish had grown to a good catchable size and opening day was set for November 29 of that year.

Opening day dawned clear and cold with a thin sheet of ice over the water. This failed to chill the

ardor of the hardier fishermen and those who fished from boats were well paid for their efforts. Bank fishing was almost out of the question due to the ice. Channel cats made up the bulk of the take and they averaged nearly 2½ pounds each.

Since that time large bass and channels have been regularly taken at Brown County State Lake. Last spring several bass weighing over six pounds were strung and even larger ones may be expected this year. Crappie fishermen will also be kept busy when this species is on a feeding spree.

A concession operated by Ray Zimmers is located on the east shore of the lake and Ray is happy to serve the public with food, fish bait and rental boats. Gasoline for outboards is also available. Picnic tables and grills are located at many spots around the shoreline and camping is popular during the summer months.

Caretaker Eddie Grove is a busy man but he will be glad to visit with anyone who has a problem or wants some information on the fishing. He can be found almost any day during the spring or summer at the equipment shed northeast of the concession or mowing the day-use areas. He might also ask to see your fishing license while on his regular patrol around the lake.

The shape of Brown County State Lake could be roughly described as a hand with three fat fingers. The dam is located where the wrist would be and the fingers fan out to the north. A favorite fishing spot with many anglers is off the points which separate the three lake arms.

When the fresh, tender leaves of springtime are bursting forth and a light breeze is rippling the water, who could help but feel a twinge of excitement at such a view. If your fishing fever isn't already at a peak, we suggest you give Brown County State Lake a look-see. Maybe this spring will be the time you catch that big one and maybe this will be the place.

Talking Turkey

(Continued from page 7)

partment has hastened this movement by live-trapping the turkeys and transplanting them along drainage systems farther north. As a result of these efforts, Kansas has a small breeding population of Rio Grande turkeys becoming established along its southern tier of counties, from Elk and Chautauqua Counties, west. Population growth has been slow, but it is thought that poaching and the ravages of spring floods have played havoc with the struggling "newcomers." This practice of live-trapping and transplanting turkeys has worked exceptionally well in all states using this technique as a means of restoration.

Today, there are approximately 360 wild turkeys in the state. Over two-thirds of these birds are the Rio Grande subspecies. The remainder are pen-reared eastern and Merriam's turkeys. Two principal methods were used to collect the turkey population data. Personal interviews with local residents residing in the occupied range, and a turkey questionnaire were the basic techniques used to determine the population. In addition, on-the-spot field checks, often in the company of rural residents or other interested persons, were made in an effort to document sight records, and to verify reports. As has been previously stated, most of the turkeys are located along the southwestern tier of counties, but recent releases of pen-reared turkeys by interested persons in Decatur and Norton Counties in northwestern Kansas have temporarily established the bird in that area. You will note that the word "temporarily" was used. Every state, with the exception of Pennsylvania, that has used pen-reared turkeys in their restoration programs has met with failure or only limited success. In the attempt to produce a "good" wild bird through selective breeding, game-farm advocates have come up with a semi-domesticated tur-



The concession is a popular meeting place in the main fishing season.



Hosts of fishermen from southwest Kansas find Hamilton County State Lake to their liking. Here is a typical weekend scene.

Hamilton County State Lake

BY GEORGE VALYER *20th of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas*

Nobody ever complains when it rains in western Kansas. That is not unless the rain comes in the middle of wheat harvest time. Even then, the squawks are not too loud or too long. Precipitation is always welcome in any area where the annual rainfall average is less than 20 inches per year.

None-the-less, I was unhappy with the weather the last time I was in the western part of the state because I had gone there specifically to take pictures of Hamilton County State Lake. The skies didn't exactly open up but there

was continual low cloudiness with drizzle and an occasional harder shower. It was quite cool for the latter part of May also and not at all the day the weather bureau had forecast it to be.

My companion, from Lakin on west, was Homer Burkhart, State Game Protector for Kearny and Hamilton counties, who had volunteered to go along on this expedition. At his suggestion, we took the precaution of equipping ourselves with a few minnows, just in case of an emergency. The emergency certainly arose. Here we

were at Hamilton County State Lake and there wasn't enough light to take any decent photographs. There was absolutely no other recourse but to start fishing and hope that the sun would break through.

Since we didn't want to get wet, we decided against standing out on the shore to plug for bass. Instead it was decided to hook on a minnow or two and still-fish while waiting in the protection of the car. Even this wasn't very satisfactory with the chill wind blowing in the open doors of the vehicle.

After a patient thirty minutes of

no action, Homer decided to check his bait while I tried to get a picture of him reeling in his line. Then it happened. Without warning the tip of my rod made a sudden dive and the reel click sang in a high-pitched whine. I had my hands full of photographic equipment and Homer had his hands full of his own fishing equipment. By the time I had replaced the camera in the car and scampered back to the rod, he had the situation well in hand. Homer had dropped his pole and come to the rescue to set the hook. Graciously he handed the rod over to me and I had the fun of landing a respectable channel catfish. Its sides were a light metallic color with the dark spots showing clear and bright.

Channels such as the one we had just taken are sometimes readily caught at this lake. Not considering the federal reservoirs, Hamilton County State Lake probably produces as many or more fish per acre of water than any other spot in Western Kansas. Besides channels, the waters contain largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie and bullheads. The lake received a supplemental stocking of yearling channels in 1962 and the return has been gratifying.

Many fishermen in the southwest part of the state are well aware of the fishing potential at this impoundment. On a spring or summer weekend, you can find them from as far away as 100 miles. On holiday weekends, the shores and every available picnic table are crowded. Tents and camp trailers from many states of the U. S. mark this lake as a stopping point for travelers.

Its proximity to U. S. 50 probably accounts for its popularity with out-of-state campers. Located just a mile and one-half north of the highway, it is easily accessible on a well maintained all-weather road. The most popular camping area is located below the dam where the facilities are best. Picnic tables, grills and sanitary facilities are located at this area which is accessible from the first gate you

come to when traveling north from the highway. Supplies of all kinds are available in Syracuse three miles east of the point where you leave U. S. 50.

Until recently, water was available from a spring located on the west shore near the north end of the lake. However, this spring has ceased to flow during the recent dry weather. With additional rainfall, perhaps it will again provide a source of drinking water for visitors.

Hamilton County State Lake was established in 1956 and contains 94 acres of water at normal level. Lake sites are not plentiful in the southwest part of Kansas and some which have been built there in the past have failed to maintain an adequate water level during dry conditions. The Fish and Game Commission chose wisely when it picked the location of this lake. Springs in the drainage area help maintain the lake level during times of little runoff water. The stream which feeds the lake is known as Cherry Creek. Although the lake is now about six feet below normal level, adequate rains in the watershed would soon bring it up to capacity.

In June of 1957, a rain of near cloudburst proportions fell in the

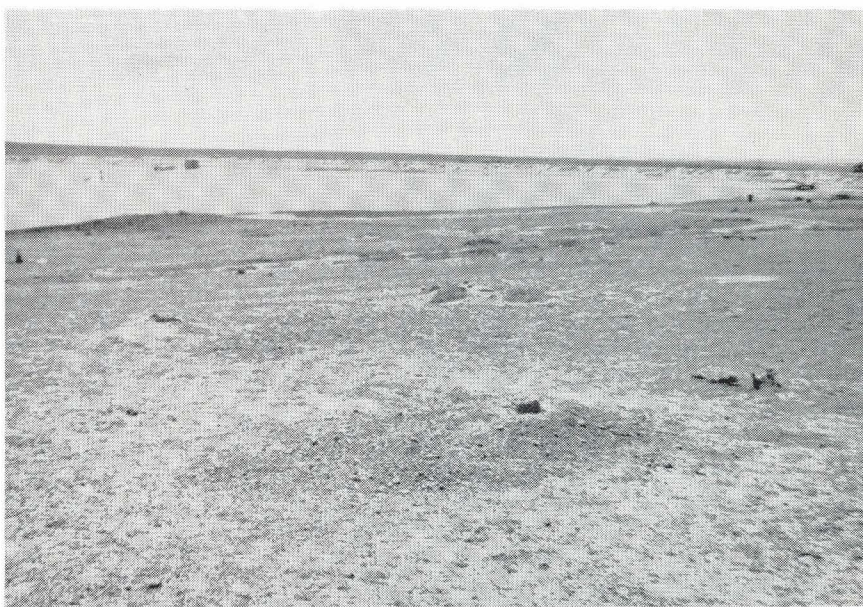
area and the lake was filled to overflowing in a few short hours. Since that time the impoundment has received very little runoff water.

The Hamilton County Sportsmen's Association was quite active in various improvements at the lake. As one of their projects, they removed some of the large dead trees from the lake the summer after construction. These were mostly large cottonwood logs which were washed into the lake by the high water. Additional work was done by this group in supplying a concrete boat launching ramp.

One of the more interesting features of the Hamilton County State Lake area is the abundance of wildlife to be found in and around the lake. The variety of shorebirds to be seen there is astounding for the size of the water. On my visit I saw at least three different species of gulls, one specie of terns, killdeers, bank swallows, sandpipers, and several others which were not close enough to identify. The lake was still hosting two or three small bunches of ducks, even though it was the middle of May.

On the western side of the main body of the lake is located a colony

(Continued on page 19)



This scene at Hamilton County State Lake shows a portion of the prairie dog town in the foreground. Many visitors enjoy watching the animals frolic in the sunshine.

The preceding discussion treats mainly the academic background requirements of the fisheries and wildlife biologist. In addition to academic training, a biologist must be dedicated to work with fish and wildlife, and with people. His personality and moral character must be such that he is considered an asset to a community. He must have reserves of stamina and energy to endure long hours of work. Often he has to be in the field no matter what the weather conditions might be. Summing up all of the preceding, you can see that just a casual interest in hunting and fishing is not enough background for the person who seeks to become a fisheries or wildlife biologist.

If you or one of your acquaintances is considering entering the field of fisheries or wildlife management, weigh some to the ideas in this article. If you meet the qualifications, have the interest, aptitude, personality, and intelligence, by all means pursue the career with determination. Fisheries and wildlife work is an extremely satisfying and rewarding profession for those who are so inclined.

Hamilton County Lake

(Continued from page 11)

of prairie dogs. These cute animals are fascinating to observe and provide an attraction which alone brings visitors to the site. Sudden noises or movements may startle the animals into disappearing below ground but they soon reappear if quiet prevails. Usually associated with prairie dog towns are burrowing owls and you can see these interesting creatures there too.

Burrowing owls do not actually dig holes in the ground for their nest. They simply use abandoned prairie dog holes. The best time to view these birds is late in the evening or early in the morning. During sunny days, they spend the most of their time below ground.

Rattlesnakes are also occasionally found at Hamilton County State Lake. The rocks which form the spillway at either end of the dam are prime habitat for these reptiles and children should be cautioned to stay away from these rock piles during the warm months of the year.

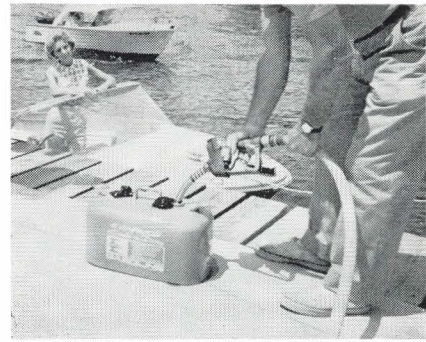
It would be foolish to recommend that anyone living in the eastern part of Kansas should plan a fishing trip to this far western state lake. There are a host of good lakes within much closer driving distance. However, if a person lives in southwest Kansas or happens to be in that vicinity, Hamilton County State Lake is a good place to cool down a case of fishing fever. Try it and see.

Quiz for All Outboard Buffs

Most boatmen make it a point to start the season with their equipment in topnotch condition. Too few of them, however, take the time to brush up on their boating savvy, which is just as important.

To test your knowledge, here's a short quiz that covers several aspects of recreational boating. Give it a try. If you don't do as well as you should, spend a few hours now getting boned up on boating. It will pay off during the rest of the season as well as in future years. The correct answers are found at the end of the quiz.

1. A steady but slowly rising barometer usually indicates: (a) settled weather; (b) unsettled weather; (c) thundershowers.
2. If your outboard motor idles roughly, first check: (a) propeller; (b) spark plugs; (c) shock absorbers.
3. To anchor properly in moderate weather, the ratio of length of line to depth of water should be: (a) 1:1; (b) 3:1; (c) 6:1.
4. A boat designed to run on top of the water rather than through it has a: (a) planing hull; (b) displacement hull.
5. When making a landing or picking up a mooring, use the wind or current to advantage by approaching: (a) into it; (b) with it.
6. The determining factor in select-



Play it safe. Authorities recommend removing a portable fuel tank from the boat while it is being filled. This will prevent fuel from spilling in the boat and eliminate the job of wiping it up.

ing a propeller should be: (a) speed; (b) power; (c) the rpm of the engine.

7. Standard red and green running lights are designed with the red light on the (a) port side; (b) starboard side.

8. A corroded marine battery is best cleaned with a mild solution of water and: (a) baking powder; (b) boric acid; (c) baking soda.

9. Black and white vertically striped buoys indicate: (a) mid-channel; (b) obstructions; (c) right side of channel.

10. A tachometer is used to measure: (a) boat speed; (b) engine rpm; (c) water depth.

Correct answers are: 1. (a); 2. (b); 3. (c); 4. (a); 5. (a); 6. (c); 7. (a); 8. (c); 9. (a); 10. (b).

Outboard Should Not Be Run Out of Water

Some outboard boatmen make it a practice to start their motors after they have been removed from the water. The idea is to expel any water that may be left in the cooling system. Although the theory is sound, this practice should be avoided. In most cases, the water will drain out by itself and, except in freezing weather, the small amount that may be left will not hurt anything.

Running an outboard motor out of water for even a short time can cause overheating and will invite water pump damage. If you want to make sure all of the water is out before putting the motor away for an extended period, disconnect the spark plugs and give the starter rope a few easy pulls.



The camping fisherman finds much to his liking at Osage County State Lake. This camp scene is on the west shore close to the west entrance.

Osage County State Lake

By George Valyer, 21st of a series on the State Lakes of Kansas

With the temperature down around the zero mark and snow hiding the landscape, it is usually difficult to remember the hot, muggy days of last August. At least it is hard to remember just how uncomfortable a person can be with perspiration running down his face trying to unsnarl a backlash and keep the mosquitoes from boring through the hide on his back. I guess that it is fortunate that our memories tend to retain only the pleasant thoughts of summer and the glories of the fishing trips we took.

The August heat was bearing

down on the countryside the last time I visited Osage County State Lake. Wavy mirages danced ahead on the blacktop but there was enough humidity in the air so that a haze was collecting around the horizon. If signs meant anything, it could foretell of a shift in wind and perhaps a thundershower by evening. At least that was what I was hoping for since, with the high temperatures of the season, fishing is best in the late evening. If a weather change was in the offing, the fishing should be good.

As I passed through Lyndon on the way to the lake, I decided to

find out how the fishing had been and how good a reputation it had with the local residents. While filling my gas tank, the service station attendant informed me that fishing was as good there as anywhere in the area. Another resident told me, "Man, they have really taken the big ones up there recently. Caught an eight-pound bass just last week." When I queried him as to whether he had taken it, he replied that he hadn't but he did see the fish and it was the largest bass he had ever seen.

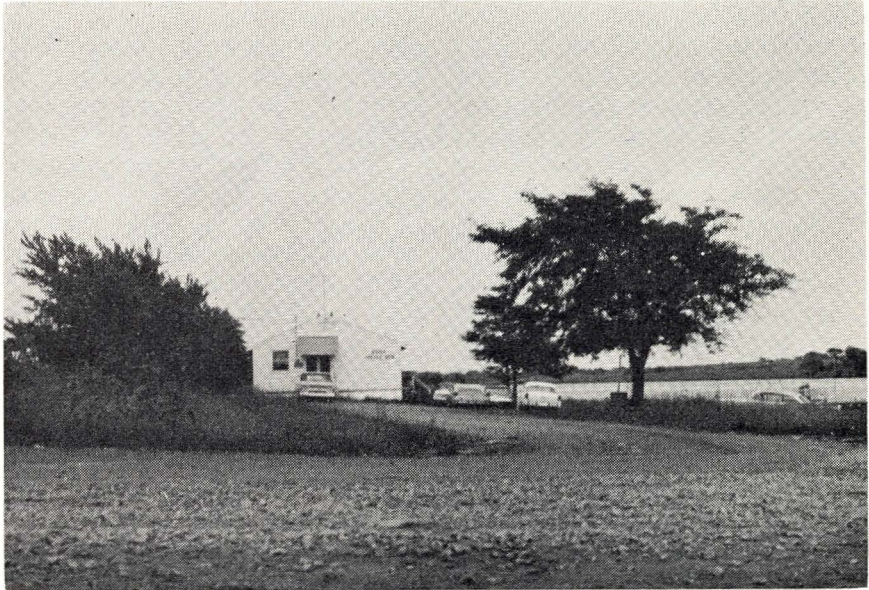
Proof that Osage County State Lake is popular with fishermen was

forthcoming. Upon my arrival, I found that nearly every camping spot was occupied and almost every shady spot on the bank sheltered a fisherman. They were there mostly from Shawnee and Osage counties but a surprising number of the automobiles present carried out-of-state tags. For the most part, these nonresidents represented service men from Forbes Air Base which is located just a few miles to the north. However, some were travelers and others, mostly from the Kansas City area, represented the appeal of this lake for those who like to travel out of their own locality for fishing.

Osage County State Lake is located just a short distance from the junction of U. S. 75 and U. S. 56. Access is marked on both highways with the lake lying about one mile southeast of the junction. Good gravel roads lead to both the north and west entrances.

The lake site lies close to the old Santa Fe Trail which occupies a hallowed spot in Kansas and United States history. Although the main trail actually passed through south of the location, some persons believe that a loop of it passed through a part of the land now owned by the state. Regardless of whether this is fact or fancy, one can almost envision in his mind's eye a procession of covered wagons wending its way down one of the rolling hills and into the valley now covered by the lake waters.

Osage County State Lake has a picturesque quality characteristic of its location. The rolling, grassy hills of the northeast part of the state coupled with the wooded valleys give a feeling of intimacy to the countryside. One would expect to find clear, sparkling waters in a lake in this area and there is no disappointment. With the exception of rainy periods, the waters are relatively clear. Wherever sunlight penetrates into shallow water, vegetation is a problem to fishermen. The clearer the water, the better the vegetation flourishes and persons who fish the shallower



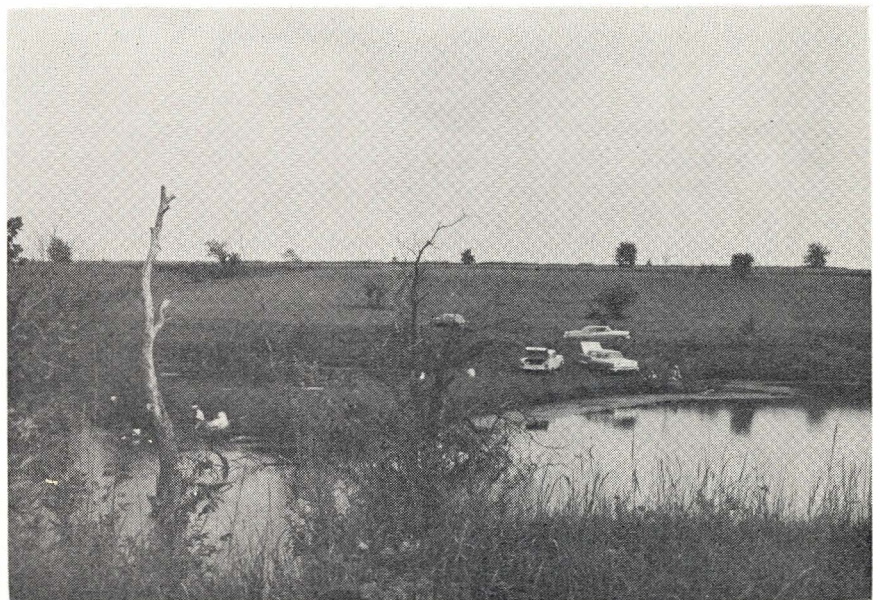
The concession house is a popular spot for hungry and thirsty fishermen. This is also the place where you can rent a boat. The boat launching ramp lies just out of the picture to the right.

areas at this lake find it troublesome during the summer months. The three arms on the eastern shore of the lake are favorite fishing spots with many anglers but these seem to suffer worst from the water weeds.

None-the-less, fishing is usually great at Osage Lake. The boat

fisherman comes into his own, during the late summer, fishing at night along the edges of these weed beds. At such locations, a surface lure produces well on bass up to three or four pounds. And, there is always the chance that you might connect up with one of the lunkers

(Continued on next page)



A favorite cove on the east shore attracts many fishermen. Summer water vegetation can be noted in the shallower waters close to shore.

which are to be found there. One of the favorite locations for bass fishermen is at the first point of land directly across the lake east from the boat launching ramp.

Channel catfish fishermen also find much to recommend this lake. Specimens up to twelve pounds have been taken and even larger ones can be expected in the future. Crappie fishing is also good at times with early spring probably the best. Almost any youngster with the simplest tackle can take bluegill from the stumpy water on the northwest shore.

Construction at Osage County State Lake was begun in 1955 and the dam was completed in November of that year. The actual cost of the lake, not including the price of the land, was 76,229 dollars. The Forestry, Fish and Game Commission was reimbursed for three-fourths of the cost by the Federal Government since the lake was an approved federal aid project. The monies for such federally-approved projects come from an excise tax on fishing tackle and are apportioned to the various states for fishery improvements.

A drouth during 1956 delayed the initial stocking of the lake since water was inadequate to build up a good pool. Stocking with bass, channels, crappie and bluegill was accomplished in 1957 and the lake was opened to fishing on November 10, 1959. The opening day saw a horde of fishermen descend on the lake with varied success. One thing was apparent right from the start, there was certainly an adequate supply of bullheads present and fishermen were urged not to throw any back. One can still take bullheads from the lake but they are not so numerous now. Evidently the bass are taking care of the surplus by their predation on the young fry.

A concession is in operation during the major portion of the fishing season and offers food, bait, tackle and boats for rent. The concession area is located on the west shore near the south end of the lake. This location also contains the boat

launching ramp with adequate space for trailer parking. Like other state lakes, the use of motor boats is limited to fishing purposes only.

The favorite camping areas are on the west shore of the lake north of the concession. This shore is more gentle in slope than the east side and an abundance of trees provide the desired shade. Picnickers also seem to prefer this area but tables and grills are located at several points around the lake.

Raymond E. Parish is the caretaker at Osage Lake and he also serves Lyon County State Lake near Reading. Since he divides his time between the two lakes, you won't find him there every day. However, you may be sure that he will be glad to assist you in any way possible when he is present.

In case you are interested in statistics, Osage County State Lake has 140 surface acres of water. The total land acreage is 506 acres in an irregular shape. A considerable amount of the land is in good wild-life cover and supports a healthy population of quail. Prairie chicken used the area in the past before the lake was built so there may still be some nesting in the more remote parts. Native wildlife of all species may be seen at various times throughout the management unit.

As evening approached, the sun did a premature fade-out calling attention to the bank of dark grey clouds in the west. As the darkness settled, lightning flashes jabbed from cloud to cloud and it was plain to see that a summer storm was indeed on its way. As the wind freshened and the lake waters grew rough, I was content to reel in my line and head for the car. It would be nice to fish in the rain and try for one of those big ones which often go on a feeding spree in such weather. But, I had quite a distance to travel and much to do the next day.

As I drove by a camping area on my way out of the grounds, I stopped for a moment to watch a newly-arrived fisherman and his

family hastily pitching their tent in anticipation of the coming rain. Thunder rumbled closer as they made a hurried dash to the car for bedrolls and then back to the tent. Was that you and your family that gave me a cheery wave? If it was, then perhaps I'll see you back there again. If it wasn't, maybe it'll be you I see there on some other summer evening. At least I hope so.

Is Your Boat Overloaded?

How many small boat skippers are carrying excess weight around?

Well, the Outboard Boating Club of America says that boatmen are a pretty active bunch, so it's doubtful that there are many modern mariners carrying excess poundage around the middle. And most small boat skippers are savvy to the fact that they should check the weight capacity of their craft before starting out on a pleasure voyage.

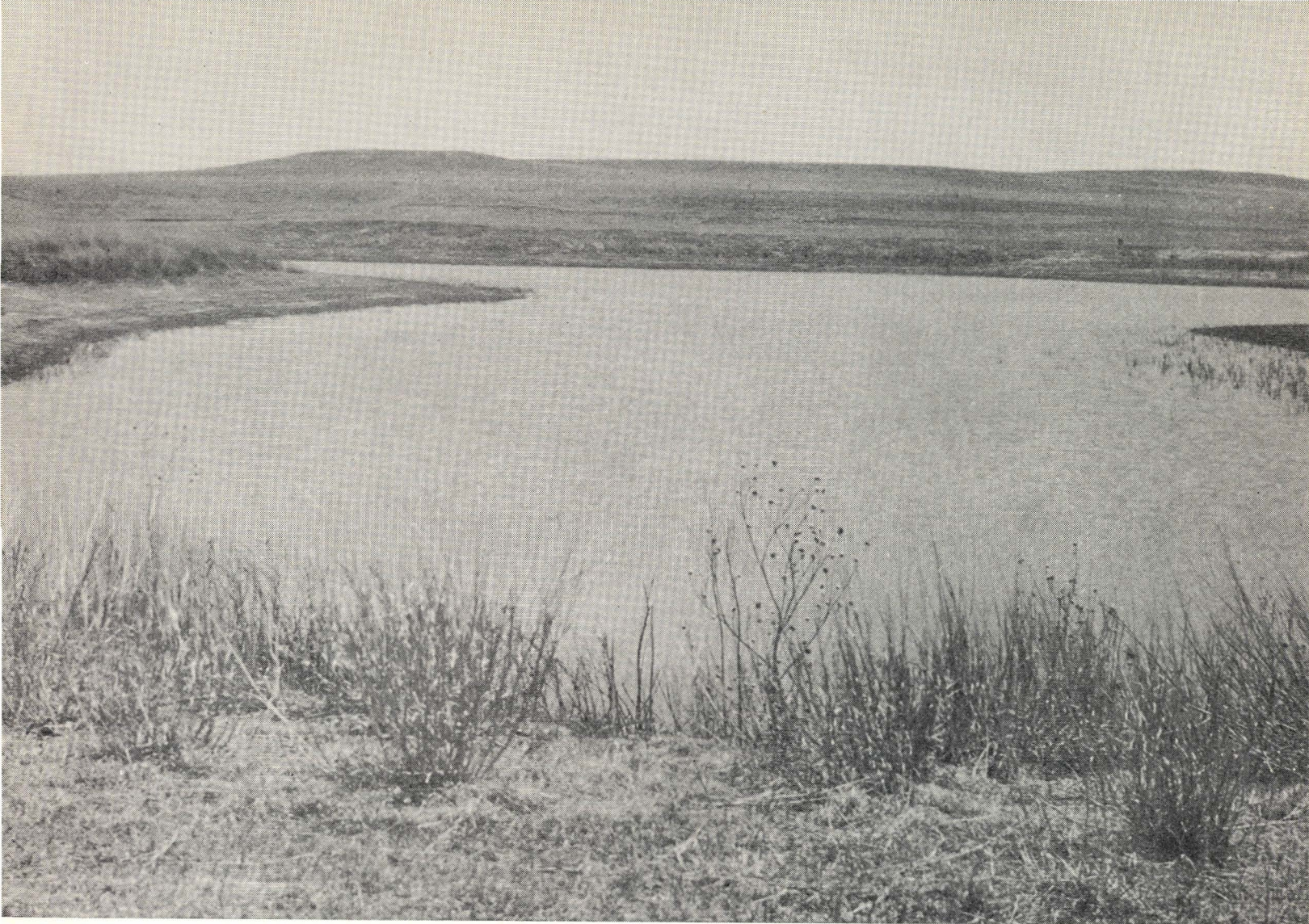
However, OBC has this reminder for boatmen: The weight capacity recommended by the boat's manufacturer—usually found on a small plate near the transom—gives the total weight capacity of the craft. To determine how much weight in passengers and gear a boat can handle, follow this simple procedure:

1. Add up the weight of your outboard motor (check manufacturer's specifications), battery, fuel (gasoline weighs six pounds a gallon), and normal operating gear, such as anchor, oars, radio, fire extinguisher and the like.

2. Subtract this total from the manufacturer's recommended weight capacity.

3. Never exceed the resulting total in weight of passengers and extra gear.

GET PERMISSION
from Landowner
To HUNT or FISH



A view of Hodgeman County State Lake looking from the northwest to the southeast.

Hodgeman County State Lake

22nd of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

By **GEORGE VALYER**

If you like the wide open spaces for your fishing, Hodgeman County State Lake will fill the bill. If you like a spot away from the crowds, this lake will provide the solitude you seek.

Hodgeman County State Lake has many attributes and it also has some aspects which are not desirable. One of the major problems

concerns water supply. The last runoff of any proportion in the watershed was nearly two years ago. Naturally, the lake is low at this writing and the appearance is not as good as it might be. Nevertheless, it is producing some fishing for channel catfish and bullheads.

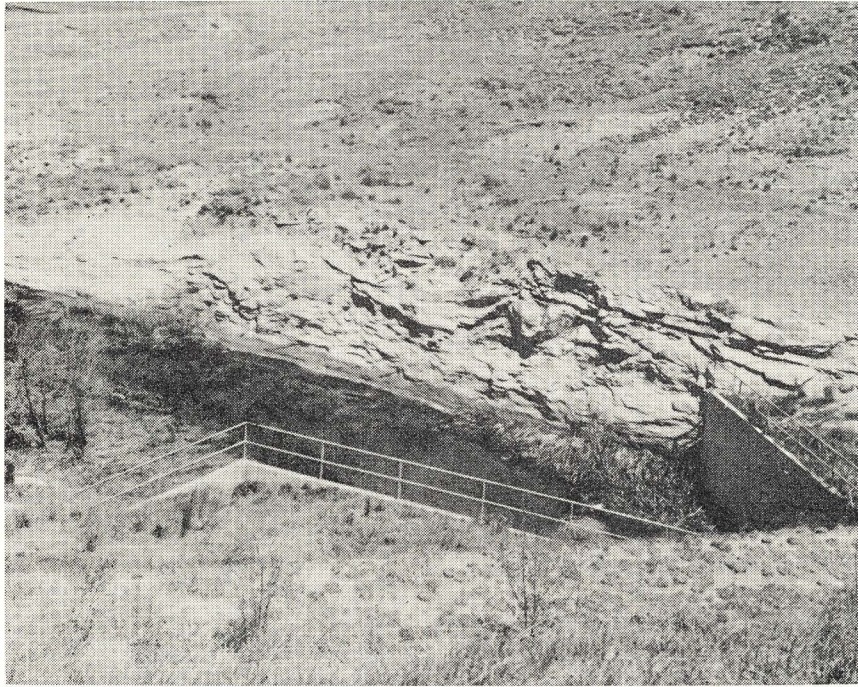
Even considering the drawbacks,

this is an interesting lake area and has some fascinating points to recommend it for those who enjoy wildlife of the western plains. The population of ground squirrels is good and these small animals are relatively tame. I came across one at the west end of the dam which stood next to its hole and scolded

(Continued on page 16)

Hodgeman County State Lake

(Continued from page 7)



The outlet tunnel below the dam showing the sandstone ledge.

me severely. Only when I approached to within a few feet did it disappear into its burrow. Along the lake shore, I found the tracks of several animals including those of the raccoon and coyote.

On the downstream side of the dam, several interesting observations were made. The outlet tunnel is apparently being used by a large number of swallows. At times, the air seemed full of these graceful birds as they swooped and wheeled around the entrance. Apparently they are using the tunnel as a nesting site although I didn't enter it to find out. The creek below contains considerable water although it did not seem to be running. Apparently the source of supply is from springs and seeps from the sandstone cliffs which form the eastern bank of the stream. Local residents say that the fishing is good in the pools below the dam. Some of them ignore the lake to fish these waters.

The aforementioned sandstone

ledge has figured considerably in the history of Hodgeman County State Lake. This ledge forms the east end of the lake and was apparently the cause of considerable seepage immediately after it was filled for the first time. The dam was completed in 1956 and the lake filled with water in 1957. In October of '57, the first stocking of fish was made with the introduction of channel catfish, bass and bluegill. However, the lake level dropped continually until it was down to a few acres in the fall of 1959.

After an inspection in the spring of 1960, it was decided that the sandstone ledge was responsible for the water loss. During the fall and winter of that year, the valve was opened, the fish removed and taken to other lakes and repairs were instigated. A masonry sealer was applied to the ledge and tons of clay material were compressed on the area to provide an additional water barrier. This effort was apparently

successful and rains in 1961 provided enough water for the restocking of fish. Once again bass, channels and bluegill were placed in the lake.

Although the leak has apparently been sealed, the lack of rainfall in the area plus the normal loss due to evaporation has resulted in the present low level of the water. The only remedy for this situation is a good rain in the watershed.

Hodgeman County State Lake was opened to fishing on October 19, 1963. Although the temperature was in the 60's, gusty southwest winds were whipping the lake at the time of opening. The bulk of the catch on the first day was bullheads averaging about a half pound each. Some channels were also caught measuring in length between 11 and 17 inches. Although the lake contains bass, none were taken on opening day.

Although the watershed above the lake is mostly grassland, the waters are turbid most of the time. The nature of the soil in the area and the wind action on the lake tend to keep the sediment in suspension in the water. Due to this murkiness, the channel catfish and bullheads will probably provide the bulk of the fishing in the future. Turbid waters are not the best for the growth of sight-feeding fish such as largemouth bass.

The lake is equipped with the usual facilities such as picnic tables, grills and sanitary facilities. The favored area for picnicking and camping is at the east end of the dam on a hill overlooking the lake. There is virtually no shade available but the area is pleasant, even in the heat of summer, during the morning and evening.

The location of Hodgeman County State Lake is somewhat off the beaten path. To get there, you travel east of Jetmore for a mile, turn south for two miles and then east about two miles to the lake entrance. Except for periods immediately after rainfall, the roads are good. Be sure to take a supply

(Concluded on next page)

of drinking water with you since none is available on the area.

A western Kansas sunset is something to behold. It is particularly enjoyable when fleecy cumulous clouds seem to focus the sun's rays into ever changing patterns. One of the most beautiful sunsets I have ever seen was while looking out across this lake from the high hills on the east shore. The reds and golds on the western horizon seemed to climax a good day.

VALUES AND PROBLEMS

(Continued from page 9)

vest over as long a period as possible for the greatest number of Kansans.

Another major problem we face in our fish and game program is developing ways to assure an adequate distribution and harvest of our natural resources. A major factor that limits an adequate harvest is unnecessary and antiquated restrictions placed on the harvest of wildlife. Often times these restrictions resulted from demand by uninformed but good-intentioned sportsmen. This philosophy is the result of attempts by sportsmen as well as fish and game administrators to maintain and increase animal numbers without understanding population dynamics. This usually developed into more and more restrictions that had no biological value and often produced results directly contrary to good fish and game management. Many restrictions have become a part of our social life and will be extremely difficult to eliminate. In other words, laws that do not give all hunters an even break or if they sap our wildlife "capital," are not sound laws. Poor laws usually result when pressure groups or private interests promote legislation that is ill advised or has selfish intent.

There are few clear-cut and distinct problems that are not related to ignorance, selfishness, social or economical desires. Education can overcome certain problems but

those who try to promote selfish interest above all others must be controlled. Furthermore social and economical problems must be faced head-on and an attempt be made to resolve them so each person can be assured of a reasonable amount of sport yet not materially effect the well being and income of others.

A problem, we who are connected with any public agency must always face, is financing. I am a strong believer in the philosophy that those who benefit from services should be the ones who pay. Fortunately the Fish and Game Commission is financially sound and those who benefit foot the bill. Just how long this envious situation will last depends upon needs in future years and the services demanded by the people.

In the future we will be offered many programs directed toward outdoor recreation. Programs which will feature many advantages at costs that must be only partly financed by local monies. Unfortunately, we will not be getting "something for nothing." Improvements must be maintained and after spending only a small amount for the improvement, the taxpayer will be called upon to spend a great deal of money for maintenance. It is extremely important that we formulate plans for maintaining facilities developed by matching federal funds before they are accepted. It is better, for those who must pay, to know at the time a request for funds is made what the cost of maintaining such facilities will be, rather than waiting until repairs are needed. At the same time, it can be more easily administered by those who must handle such funds.

What You Can Do

In conclusion you probably wonder what you, as an individual, can do to help make better hunting and fishing in Kansas. To answer this question I must review a few facts presented earlier.

You must be convinced that this type of recreation has real and

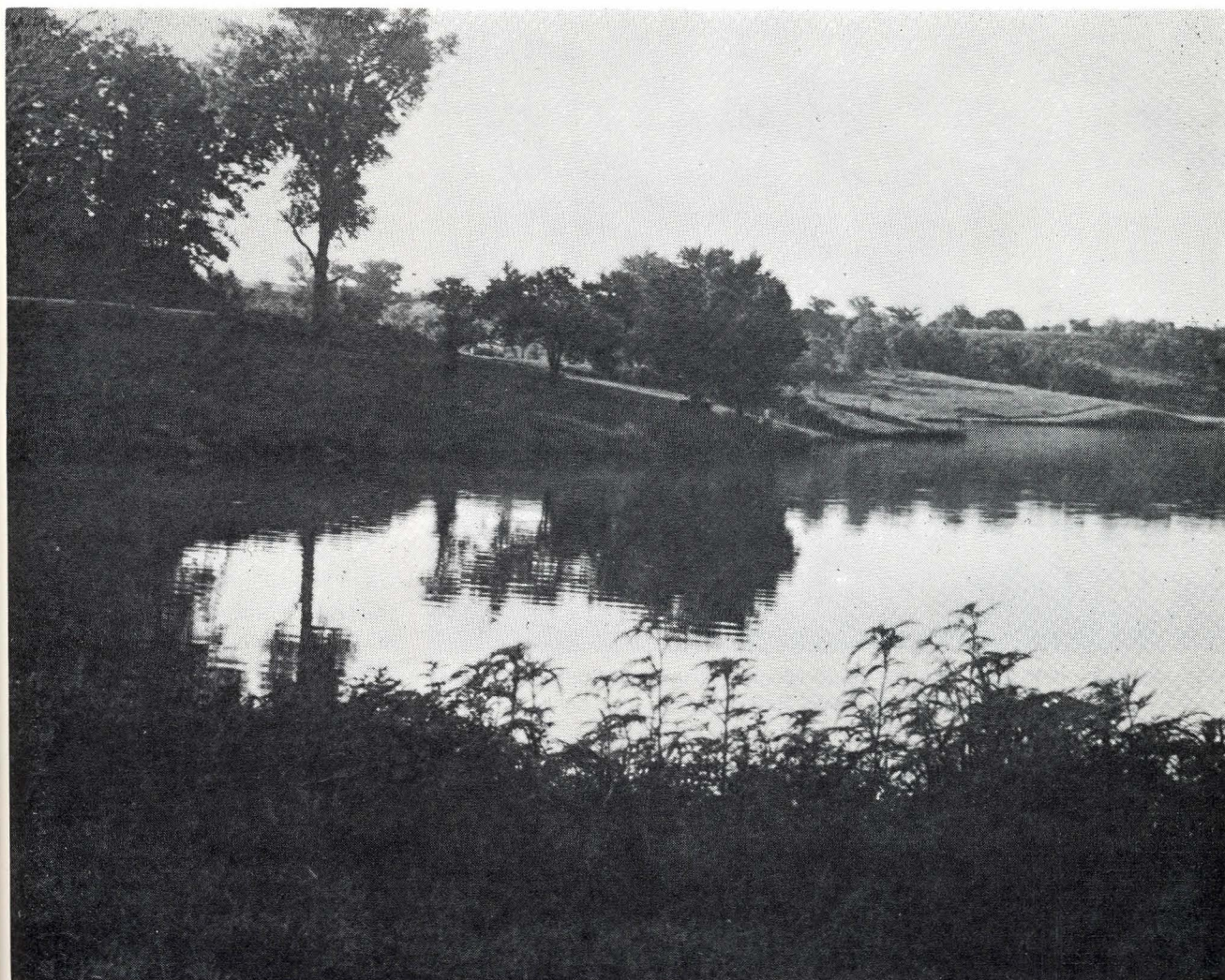
tangible values to the people. You must familiarize yourself with the Commission, their facilities and personnel and you should support them. You should recognize that fish and game management is a science and must have well trained and permanent personnel. It is only by using the knowledge that must be obtained through research by highly skilled persons that has made this country great. We cannot go only half way in the use of our talents and skills. We must apply them to all phases of our society.

You as individuals must insist that laws regulating fish and game be fair and equitable. You must insist that your department resist pressure and special groups who usually promote legislation for useless stocking projects, refuge schemes, bounty payments, game farms, pork barrel lakes or other ill advised work. You should insist that seasons, bags, creels and other restrictions be based on biological facts that are up-to-date and accurate. You should get your information from those who serve you.

You can assist the Commission in developing methods of assuring that as much land as possible remains available for public hunting. It may be necessary for all of us to change our thinking regarding free public hunting. Maybe one solution would be to encourage landowners to make a nominal charge for the use of their land. The landowners should be willing to offer some incentive to the hunter if he considers a charge for using his land.

There is no question in anyone's mind that hunting and fishing has a tremendous impact on our economy. We must understand this resource and manage it for maximum values. We must work together if we expect to resolve the problems facing us.

You as citizens have a lot at stake. Complacency is dangerous.



The soft light of evening lends a sparkle to the water at the south cove, Atchison County State Lake.

Atchison County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

23rd of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

The July sun beat mercilessly down as I sat on the rock boulder and contemplated the scene before me. Straight ahead, to the north, lay the beckoning waters of a lake but on either side was the reason for the trek up the hill. Blackberry and raspberry bushes grew in profusion along the hillside and there were a few ripe berries as well as green ones on almost every bush.

As I nibbled at a handfull of sweet, ripe fruit, my mind wandered back to the first time I had

ever seen Atchison County State Lake. The construction crews had been gone only a short time and the raw scars in the earth left by the machinery were plainly visible.

Since that time, the healing hand of nature has made a verdant retreat of the area nestled among the limestone hills of northeast Kansas. The rolling tree-covered hillsides and the grassy shores form a beautiful backdrop to the sparkling clear waters of the lake. A towering thunderhead in the distance

seemed to crown the view with regal splendor.

Anyone wishing and longing for a quiet place to while away a summer day could look long and wide before finding a spot superior to this. During the week, while most are forced to toil for a livelihood, only an occasional hum of a fisherman's outboard gives indication that others are enjoying the serenity of this lake. On weekends,

(Continued on next page)



Caretaker Dean Bell stands by the stone marker designating Atchison County State Lake as Lake Hetherington.

the scene changes to that of a playground with dozens and even hundreds of campers, picnickers and fishermen.

Located away from major tourist routes, Atchison County State Lake does not attract a great number of campers from outside the state. Most of the persons using the lake come from the immediate area surrounding or, at least, from the northeast part of Kansas and north-west Missouri. On occasion, travelers will turn off U. S. 73 or U. S. 59 at Atchison in order to pitch their tents at this location.

In comparison with the larger lakes and reservoirs, Atchison County State Lake is small with only 66 acres of water. However its depth is surprising. Due to the terrain, its banks slope sharply into thirty- and forty-foot depths. One hundred eighty-three acres of land surround the lake and provide adequate room for outdoor activities.

Land for the lake site was purchased and acquired in early 1956 and construction was begun in July of that year. Final inspection of the new lake was made in May,

1957. Stocking with fish was possible in the fall of '57 due to the fact that springs in the watershed augmented the rainfall to help fill the lake.

The residents of Atchison, only five and one-half miles distant, were quite pleased with the location of the lake so close to their city. To show their appreciation, nearly every service club and organization in the town joined in a program to provide the basic facilities for the new lake. Brick and concrete outdoor fireplaces were constructed at several locations on the east and south sides of the lake and the spots were also equipped with picnic tables and sanitary units.

Atchison County State Lake is known locally as Lake Hetherington. The name was chosen by the people of Atchison county to honor a lifetime resident, Wert Hetherington, sportsman, banker, and civic leader. A stone marker at the lake entrance commemorates the good sportsmanship and civic responsibility of this man.

The lake itself lies in a south-

west to northeast direction with one large cove extending to the south from the main body of water. In this cove is located the boat launching ramp and docking area. Access roads are maintained on the south and east sides but the north-west shore can be reached only by boat or on foot.

All facilities at the lake are maintained by Dean Bell, the genial caretaker. You are liable to find Dean almost anywhere around the lake, mowing picnic areas or assisting some angler in launching his boat. He is always ready to give fishermen the latest information on what is being caught and the best baits.

All kinds of wildlife find Atchison County State Lake to be attractive. Many species of birds make their home there and may be observed by quiet visitors. There is even a barn swallow nest under the eaves of the maintenance building which is located close to the south entrance. When I last visited there, two young swallows, nearly ready to fly, were being fed by their parents. This nest is used every year.

Other interesting birds may be found in the area including the rare (for Kansas) bluebird, countless robins, doves, orioles, kingbirds and wrens. You may see a kingfisher perched on a dead limb hanging over the water waiting for a meal to come swimming by.

Deer are sometimes seen close to the lake and, at night, a coyote's wail may cause you to stir in your tent or sleeping bag. The area abounds in cottontail rabbits and squirrels which seem a little less timid than normal. The tracks of a raccoon along the shore indicate that this masked bandit of the animal world has been searching for a juicy crayfish the night before.

If you camp here during the month of July, you might augment your larder with wild raspberries or blackberries provided you have enough fortitude to brave the thorns. Two words of caution are in order though; be sure that you

do not destroy any plants since all growing within the area are protected by law. The second point to remember is that copperheads and timber rattlesnakes also like the rocky hills and wooded slopes. Young children should not be allowed to stray too far from the mowed areas unless accompanied by adults.

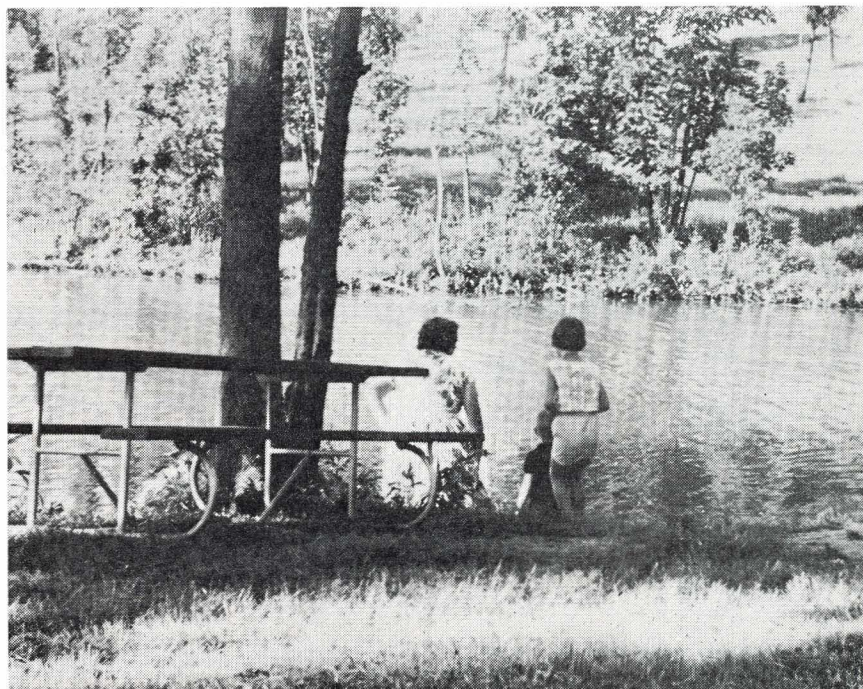
How is the fishing? Well, excellent at times, slow at others. This seems to be the nature of all lakes and Atchison County State Lake is no different. Early morning and late evening fishing is probably most productive during the months of July and August. The lake contains good populations of large bass, channel catfish, crappie and bluegill. A boat is not a must for fishing this lake since the bottom drops off sharply at many places along the shoreline. Only at the upper end will you find the shallows which are common to some lakes.

As the sun sinks lower toward the western horizon, the cool of evening creeps slowly up the hollows from the deep, clear waters. Bluegill dimple the surface on an evening feeding spree and, farther down the shore, a bass bulges a wake in pursuit of a minnow. Across the lake, a channel catfish nudges a bait, sucks it in and you hear the faint whirr of a reel click as he strips off line. This is contentment. Try it and see.

Sport Fishing Contest To Be in September

The third annual Kansas sports fishing contest will be held at Tuttle Creek Reservoir on September 12 and 13, according to the Kansas Wildlife Federation, the sponsoring organization.

The contest for individuals will run two full days, starting at 5 each day. A separate contest for married couples will be held September 13, ending at noon. Only



A lady fisherman tends her line while the children look on with anticipation.

artificial lures will be permitted. The winner in each division will receive an expense-paid trip to the World Series of Sport Fishing.

Entries must be sponsored by a sportsmen's club, civic or service club, or any other conservation or recreation organization. Each club will be permitted two entries. Entry fee is \$10 for an individual or for a couple. The KWF will supply boats, but contestants may use their own boats if they wish. Fuel, life jackets, fishing tackle, food and lodging must be supplied by each contestant. Contestants will fish two to a boat, as determined by a drawing.

Entry blanks and complete rules may be obtained by writing: KWF, 501 East Front, Bonner Springs.

The contest will be limited to that part of Tuttle Creek Reservoir north of the Highway 16 bridge.

The snapping turtle never feeds out of the water because it cannot swallow unless its head is submerged.

Temperature Counts

During the hot and cold months, fish are usually found on the bottom where the water temperature is more comfortable and food is plentiful. In the spring and fall, they range within a few feet of the surface, says the Johnson Motor News Bureau.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

JOHN D. POLSON.

Wilson County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

"Want to know where to catch 'em. Well, I'll tell you if you won't breathe it to a soul. You go up the west side of the lake until you start down the hill and you take the fork to the right. This leads you to the island. Just fish off the—"

It is statements like this that raise my blood pressure just a bit. Seems I just can't resist getting excited when someone gives me the location of their favorite fishing spot. Often as not the fish are not biting when I get there but a bit of inside information is always appreciated anyway. When a fisherman goes to a new area, he either spends some time finding out these things on his own or he is fortunate enough to come across someone who knows the area and is willing to give a little advice.

The island which my new-found friend had mentioned is not really an island at all. It is a peninsula. The only thing which keeps it from being an island is a narrow neck of land just wide enough for a roadway. It is located on the west side of Wilson County State Lake just south of the swimming area.

Wilson County State Lake is located just a short distance southeast of the town of Buffalo on U. S. 75. You can't miss it if you stay on the highway since the road passes over the dam. In 1954 when the highway commission planned relocation of this highway, it was decided that the planned earth fill over Woodruff creek could provide water storage for a lake. A conference was arranged between of-



The entrance road from U. S. Highway 75 on the east side of the lake.

ficials of the two state agencies and an agreement was reached whereby the Fish and Game Commission acquired the land and provided the cost of structures which were required to convert the road fill into a water-retaining dam. The actual cost to the Commission for the construction was slightly over \$22,000, a saving of over two-thirds the cost of a comparable dam.

Geologically speaking, the lake lies in an area of limestone outcropping which is underlain with shale. The sharply-rising limestone bluffs on the east side of the lake form a picturesque scene when viewed from across the lake or from a boat. Although there are few fossils to be found on the lake site, other outcroppings to the south and west are rich in remains of the seas which once covered eastern Kansas in ages past.

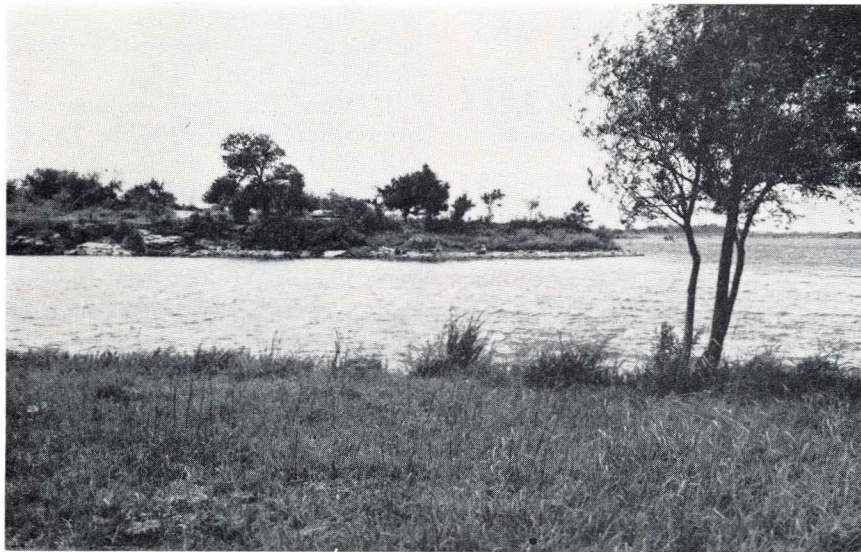
At the north or upper end of the lake, the old roadway which formerly carried the highway provides access to the shores on either side. One can travel all the way around the lake with the exception of a few acres of water lying to the north of the old highway bridge.

This bridge is a favorite spot for angling for crappie during the summertime. It is also a good spot for taking all species during the spring and fall when fish are prone to seek the shallows during the daytime.

The water is almost always clear or, at least moderately so. The drainage area is mostly pasture land and the rocky bottom of the creek tends to prevent rapid siltation.

Fish populations in Wilson County State Lake are generally good although a surplus of small crappie have been noted during the past two summers. These small crappie should not be returned to the water and anglers are urged to take them home. This will help to relieve overcrowding and the result will be larger fish. As far as other species are concerned, the channel catfish seem to be doing quite well at the present time. Anglers take many from one to three pounds and nine pounders have been taken this past summer. The bass range up to five pounds with some probably going larger.

When the lake was opened to fishing for the first time in November of 1958, large numbers of bass



A rocky shoreline greets visitors at Wilson County State Lake.

and crappie were taken. Fishing success slumped in '60 and '61 but is apparently coming back during the past year. Several thousand channels have been added to the waters each fall for the past three years. These have been larger fish fed in rearing ponds through their second summer and are large enough to survive in waters with a heavy bass population.

The superintendent at Wilson County State Lake is A. L. Clarkson of Buffalo. Al also takes care of Woodson County State Lake



The old highway bridge at the north end of the lake is a favorite spot for crappie fishing.

and, between the two, keeps as busy as can be. Being a native of the area, Al Clarkson is interested in all community activities. Before his employment by the commission, he operated extensive agricultural holdings in the vicinity. Al has now turned this operation over to his sons and devotes full time to keeping his lakes in good shape.

There is no concession in operation at the lake but a bait and tackle store is operated in conjunction with a service station just a short distance east on U. S. 75. Food and other supplies are available at Buffalo.

Wilson County State Lake has an abundance of good picnic and camping areas which are heavily used by fishermen and travelers. There is also a sand beach located on the west side of the lake. This swimming area was constructed by the American Legion of Buffalo as a community project and is heavily used during the summer months. The Boosters 4-H Club is also interested in the lake and has plans to place additional trash barrels on the area.

Just off state-owned land at the northeast side of the lake is a pri-

vate summer cabin development. Several cabins have already been constructed and new ones are now being built. This gives an indication of the growing popularity of the lake as a fishing hole.

The total land and water area measures 291 acres and the lake has a total surface area of 119 acres. The boat ramp is located on the east shore next to the dam. A water well is scheduled to be drilled at this location in the near future.

I have only one regret about my last visit to Wilson County State Lake. Time did not permit me to try the spot off the end of the peninsula. However, maybe you'll have time to try it for me. Just cast out about 40 feet off shore and to the east of the land. This is supposed to be the best spot for channels. If you don't catch any, don't blame me. I'm just passing along the information told me by my fishing friend.

Throw Out Old Outboard Fuel

If you have outboard motor fuel left over at the end of the season, throw it out. The Evinrude engineers say that trying to use the fuel next spring will probably cause hard starting and fouling in the fuel system.

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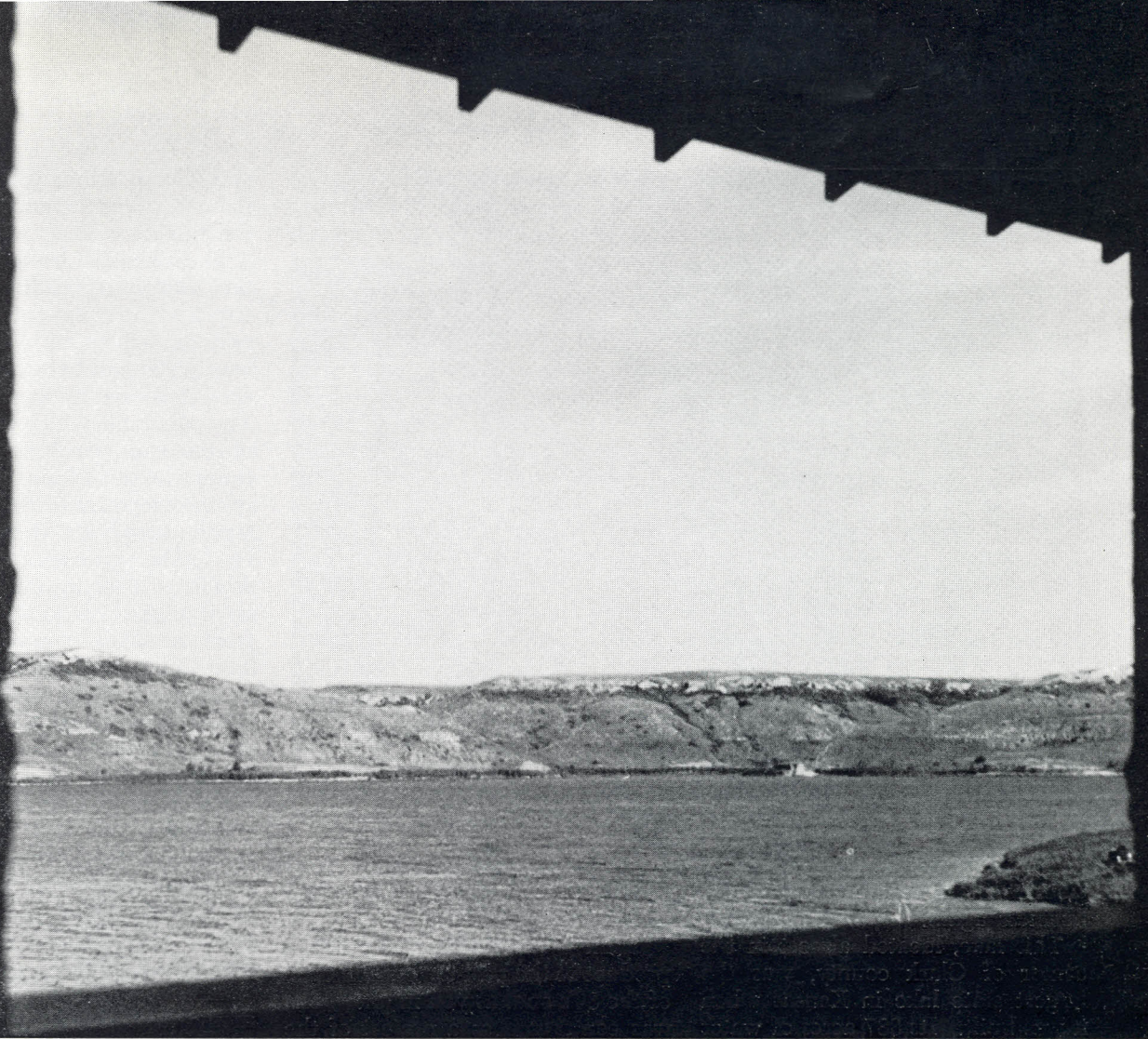
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The stone shelterhouse on the east side of Clark County State Lake provides a frame for the pleasant scene.

Clark County State Lake

25th of a series on the State Lakes of Kansas

By **GEORGE VALYER**

Not long ago, I saw one of the funniest cartoons I have ever seen about fishing. It showed a man sitting on a dock, fishing rod in hand, and a fish hook through his thumb. The caption underneath read: "gosh, golly, gee whiz, ouch, jeepers, oh me." This cartoon immediately made me think of Clark County State Lake because it was at this location that I last saw a fellow with a hook in his hand. The biggest difference was in what he

was saying and it wasn't gosh, golly, etc. The words he was muttering are not printable here but he was a game chap anyway. He went right on fishing after he had removed the hook.

The incident mentioned above occurred in 1963 on the occasion of the reopening of Clark County State Lake after undergoing rehabilitation. That was quite a day and I suppose it will be remembered for many years by those who were there. The bass hit like crazy and it wasn't unusual for fishermen to take their limit in an hour or two.

The channel catfish also cooperated well at some locations, primarily near the dam. Not too many crappie and bluegill were caught but large bullheads graced many a stringer.

The weather also cooperated with the event. It was a beautiful late fall day and boats dotted the blue waters of the lake in some numbers. A constant procession of vehicles, cars, pickups with campers and even farm trucks, wound their way around the lake shore and up and down the entrance roads

(Continued on next page)



Nestled between canyon walls, Clark County State Lake lures anglers from all parts of southwest Kansas.

leading into the lake. Yes, Clark County State Lake was back in business again.

This lake, located almost in the center of Clark county, was the largest state lake in Kansas when it was built. Its 337 acres of water with a shoreline of seven miles made it a tremendous attraction for fishermen from all over the western half of Kansas. Before the advent of the federal reservoirs, this lake had regular visitations from as far away as Wichita and Hutchinson. It still remains the largest body of

water in the southwest quarter of Kansas since no large reservoirs are located there.

Clark County State Lake was a product of the post-depression days of the 30's and, as you might guess, was constructed as a project of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Work was begun by that agency in 1935 and the dam and roads were completed in 1938. A visitor today can still see the foundations of the buildings which composed the CCC camp on the east shore of the lake. The Kansas Forestry, Fish



This photo, taken in the 30's, shows the construction of the dam and spillway. It was the largest dam in Kansas at this time.

and Game Commission provided the money for the materials used in the project.

The lake itself is nestled between the sharply-rising bluffs of Bluff Creek. Entering from either the east or west sides, one descends nearly 200 feet before reaching the canyon floor at the base of the dam. The panorama which greets the eye of the rimsider observer is sometimes breath-taking, especially when compared to the level countryside which lies to the north and east. The approach from the north, which is used by most visitors, is by way of U. S. 54 and then south from the small town of Kingsdown. The eleven miles from this village has recently been established as a state highway and a hard surfaced road now leads to the lake entrance.

When traveling in from the south, Ashland is the point where paved roads are left behind. A well-maintained county road winds northward through the Clark county hills and joins the state road just a mile from the entrance.

History and legend have woven many tales concerning the area. The canyon was supposed to have been the meeting place of various tribes of Indians prior to the coming of white man. It is evident even today that this was a popular spot for Indian encampments since artifacts may still be found in the area. Legend also states that this location was once the hideout of outlaws during the early days of the West. Some maintain that the notorious Dalton gang once camped there while traveling between Coffeyville and Mead. It is not hard to imagine such past scenes as one views the rugged, wild area of Bluff Creek canyon.

Fishing was excellent at Clark County State Lake for many years. Its depth, nearly 50 feet in places, helped to maintain good populations even in times of drouth. However, through the passing years, the fishing gradually became poorer as large populations of carp were built up and small crappie became too numerous to allow for growth. Many species of fish not suitable

for small lakes were also to be found in the waters. By the late 1950's, it was evident that something had to be done. It was decided to rehabilitate the lake completely through drainage, stabilizing the bottom with vegetative growth and then restocking following the refilling of the impoundment.

In 1960, the valve in the dam was opened and the lake began its slow death. The drainage operation produced many complications. Twice during the operation, the outlet became plugged with silt and pressure hoses brought in to open the passage. The salvage operation which followed the draining revealed that the decision to rehabilitate had been a wise one. Hoards of small, stunted fish were removed and only a relatively few good channels and bass were found.

Completed extensive repairs to the spillway which had been previously damaged by high water. As soon as enough water had been impounded, the lake was stocked with channels, largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie. Present fishing success indicates that fishermen should be well pleased with a trip to this Clark county attraction.

Almost everyone who has fished this lake has run into genial Leslie Freeman, longtime caretaker at this location. Lee is quite helpful to all visitors and will gladly give you tips on what bait is currently best and where to drop it. He knows this lake intimately since he has lived there for the past 20 years.

Clark County State Lake has the usual camping, picnic and day-use facilities. One of the favorite camping spots for many is located below the dam in a grove of trees.

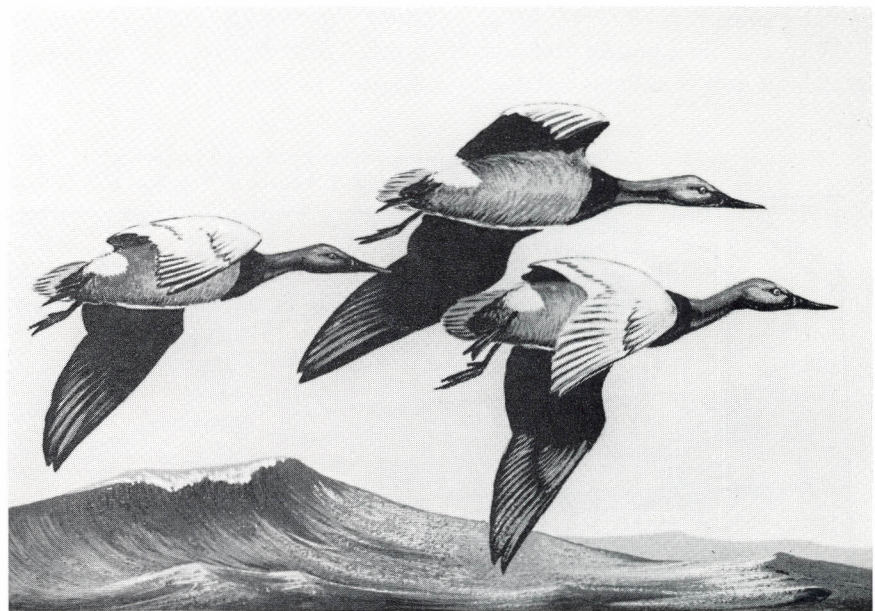
A shelterhouse is located on the east side of the lake close to the entrance. Numerous overlooks on both sides of the canyon provide inspiring views of the entire canyon. Although portions of the western shore and upper end of the lake are inaccessible to vehicles, paths and trails lead to these areas. Many fishermen appreciate the solitude which they find by walking these paths to a favorite angling spot.

On a warm summer afternoon, the purple shadows come early to the canyon and provide a welcome break in the heat. As the last rays of the evening sun highlight the cliffs on the eastern shore, the coolness of the lake seems to spread its comfort everywhere. High on the canyon rim, a coyote echoes his wail of welcome to a rising moon.



Typical of the catches on reopening day in November of 1963, this string of fine bass represents two hours of angling by two fishermen.

Then began the rebirth. During the summer of 1961, a good growth of vegetation was established on the exposed lake bottom and the valve was closed in the fall of that year. During the time the lake was dry, construction crews of the Fish and Game Commission ac-



New Duck Stamp

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia were represented by 85 artists who competed in the 16th Annual Federal "Duck Stamp" contest annually conducted by the Department of Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The winner, selected from 138 designs, is a wash drawing of three canvasback ducks shown over open water. Honors

go to Ron Jenkins, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. As customary, the new Migratory Bird Hunting Stamps go on sale July 1 and expire June 30 of the following year. About 1,500,000 stamps were sold last year. Nine artists from Minnesota submitted 18 drawings, putting that state ahead of all others. Illinois and Pennsylvania split second place honors with 10 entries each.



A view of Neosho County State Lake looking northeast. The caretaker's residence is in the background.

Neosho County State Lake

By **GEORGE VALYER**

26th of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

Seasons come and seasons go and there are things I like about all seasons in Kansas. But, if I had to pick a season I like most, it would be a toss-up between spring and fall.

When it comes to indulging a good case of spring fever, any time of year, I can think of no place I would rather be than Lake McKinley.

The name Lake McKinley is familiar to most residents in southeast Kansas because it was the first lake ever constructed by public funds in that part of the state. To others living outside the area, it is better known as Neosho County State Lake.

This lake was the first state lake to be constructed in Kansas and was completed in 1927. This was

only one year after the creation of the original Forestry, Fish and Game Commission by the state legislature. At that time, the commission was composed of three members with the governor serving as chairman. The new commission was quite interested in a program of development of fishing and recreational areas and Neosho County State Lake was the first completed

project. Despite the fact that it is the oldest in the system, this lake retains the charm for fishermen which it held from the beginning.

Credit for obtaining the first state lake must go to the sportsmen of Neosho and Labette counties who purchased the tract of land on which it lies and donated it to the fledgling commission. At that time, the commission was operating without sufficient money to purchase lands but did have enough to construct the dam. Through the efforts of M. C. McKinley, enough money was raised to pay for the land purchase. McKinley's efforts were not unrewarded and the lake has since born his name.

Neosho County State Lake does not have any large amount of land surrounding it under state ownership. The original donation was in the amount of 216 acres which has proved adequate for the needs at this location. The lake itself measures 92 surface acres. Picnic and camping areas are located on the east and northeast shores of the lake and are well shaded with mature trees.

Other facilities include a boat launching ramp and two large fishing piers. These piers, jutting out some 60 feet into the lake, are popular with fishermen who do not have access to a boat. To the east of the boat launching area, a shelter house is located in the main day-use location. This is a favorite facility for the nonfishing members of the family.

Lake McKinley also boasts two fish rearing ponds located below the dam. These ponds are used to feed channel catfish to a larger size so that they can successfully be released into lakes. Most of the channels reared at this facility are used at Lake McKinley but some are transported to other state lakes in southeast Kansas.

Neosho County State Lake produced fine fishing for hosts of anglers for many years. However, in 1961 the decision was made to rehabilitate the lake. After 32 years of operation, the lake contained



Luxuriant vegetation lines the shores at Lake McKinley.

hordes of stunted crappie and bluegill and a large population of rough fish. The only solution was to begin again with a new population in balance with the size of the lake. Draining of the body of water was completed in the spring of 1962 and restocking was commenced in the late summer of that year. On March 6 of this year, fishing was once again available at this location.

Since that time, fishing has been good to excellent with many limit catches of bass and channel catfish being reported. The largest bass so far removed this spring weighed in excess of five pounds. The top weight of channel catfish caught is in the neighborhood of seven pounds. Judging by these reported catches, Neosho County State Lake is still a good producer providing plenty of food for good fish growth.

Lake McKinley is located five miles north and three east of Parsons near the hamlet of South Mound. Six miles to the northeast lies St. Paul and the Neosho Waterfowl Management Area, another installation of the Fish and Game Commission. During the summer, the main pool at the waterfowl area is also open to fishing and fishermen

at either location can find alternate public fishing water with just a few minutes travel time. Both of these areas should provide excellent fishing and, if one is not productive, maybe the other one will be.

The genial caretaker at Neosho County State Lake is T. E. Wester who resides in the cottage located near the northeast shore. Wester also maintains Bourbon County State Lake south of Bronson. Whenever his duties are not elsewhere, "T. E." will be glad to assist fishermen in any way possible.

In days gone by, several cabins and summer homes were constructed on private property to the southwest of the lake. Some of these homes are still maintained in an attractive fashion and are regularly used by their owners.

Neosho County State Lake is located in a scenic part of Kansas just a short three miles from the verdant Neosho River Valley. Small springs erupt from the sandstone outcroppings of the creek which forms the lake. The hiker, rockhound and nature lover find much of fascination at this location. Many species of song birds and small animals may be observed in

(Continued on page 20)

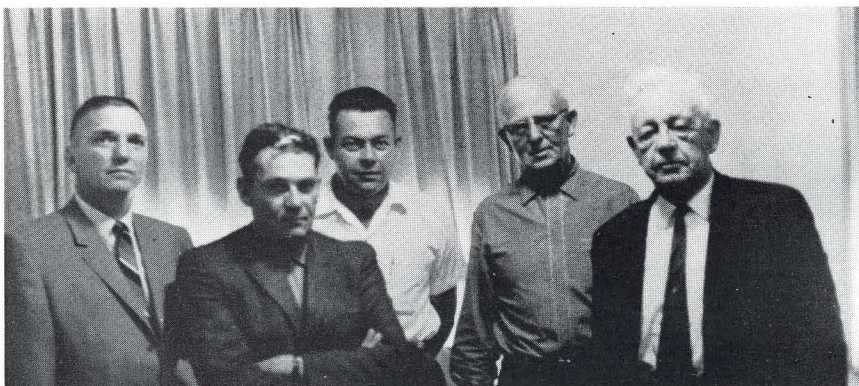
Wells Elected Chairman of Forestry, Fish and Game

The Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission elected a new chairman at their June 10 meeting in Pratt. Robert Wells of Garden City was named to succeed G. G. Boling, Leavenworth, who has served as chairman of the commission for the last four years.

Wells has served on the com-

mission since his appointment in October, 1963.

Harlan Boxberger of Russell was reelected as secretary of the Fish and Game Commission. Boxberger has been a member of the commission since it was reorganized in 1961. He was recently reappointed to a four-year term.



The five members of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. (Left to right) Robert Wells, Garden City, Chairman—Frank Lombard, Enterprise, Harlan Boxberger, Russell, Secretary—Lloyd Brown, Columbus and G. G. Boling, Leavenworth.

Bass Fly to Cheney and Wilson Reservoirs

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, in cooperation with the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, completed the first aerial stocking of fish in Kansas, Friday, May 21.

Intermountain Aviation Co., of Marana Park, Ariz., delivered the one million bass in a specially remodeled C-46 airplane to Cheney and Wilson Reservoirs. The fingerling bass were hatched at the Tishomingo Federal Fish Hatchery near Ardmore, Okla.

Roy Schoonover, Chief of Fisheries for the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, said, "According to all indications, the fish survived the flight and the 300-foot drop to the water quite well." Schoonover also pointed out that Kansas anglers can expect more stockings of this type in the future.



Plane used in aerial stocking of fish.

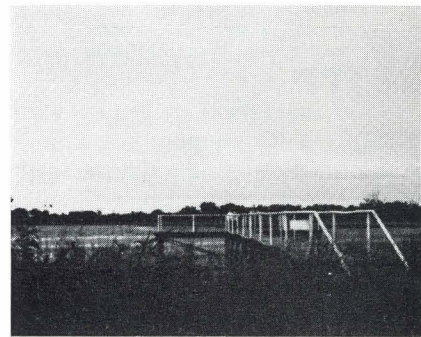
**Get
PERMISSION
to
HUNT or FISH**

Neosho County State Lake

(Continued from page 7)

the area. Heavy timber growth below the dam provides habitat desired by many types of wildlife.

If you have never visited this lake, now is a good time to make plans to do so. Try it and see if you won't have a good time. I will.



One of the popular fishing piers located at Neosho County State Lake.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
JOHN D. POLSON.

Blue-winged Teal

(Continued from page 10)

The small size of the blue-winged teal will separate it from all other surface-feeding ducks except green-winged and cinnamon teals. The blue wing patch of both sexes is noticeable in flight but in bright light appears almost white. In poor light, flocks cannot be distin-



Geary County State Lake

27th of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

By **GEORGE VALYER**

Sunrise on a late May day is a beautiful time anywhere in Kansas. It's especially beautiful in the Flint Hills. As the greys of early dawn are replaced by the emerald hues on the hilltops and the purple shades begin to blend within the valleys, it is almost impossible not to be absorbed by the wonder of the countryside.

The morning dew changes to iridescent gems as the first rays of the sun steal their way softly through the grass. A meadowlark trills his greetings to the morning and a cottontail sits erect, sniffing the fresh breeze, only to scurry under cover as a hawk wings its way overhead.

It was just such a morning when I last visited Geary County State Lake.

The lapping of the waters along the rocky shoreline gave evidence that nature was in tune and the symphony she played was satisfying to the soul. So peaceful was the scene, I almost forgot that I came here to sample the fishing and take pictures of the lake. For awhile, time almost stood still, that is until a young grasshopper plunked himself onto the surface of the water and was promptly smacked by a bluegill. This snapped the spell and I decided that fishing came first and everything else was secondary.

Geary County State Lake is the sort of a lake which can draw all of your attention to the business at hand. There are times when these waters yield enough fish to keep you busy as

can be just taking them off your line. But there are other times when a million dollars couldn't buy a strike. However, I don't believe this is a great deal different than any other lake or reservoir, regardless of the fish population. It is my belief that the uncertainty is a part of the fascination of fishing. Who would want to go if he knew every trip would yield a limit.

It is relatively easy to fish the eastern shore of this lake. If you have a boat, it's easy to get to any part because of the excellent launching facilities. However, if you don't have a boat, fishing the western shore or the west arm of the lake can be a problem. Especially if you don't like to walk. The access road runs from the

upper end of the lake all the way to the dam on the east side only. The west shore has no roadways but many anglers tell us they like it this way. It gives them the opportunity to get back away from the crowds and fish in areas where they can be by themselves. All that is required is a pair of legs that won't complain too much with hiking a half a mile or so.

Geary County State Lake is easy to find. You go south of Junction City or north out of Herington on U. S. 77 and the lake lies to the west of the highway a mile north of the turn-off to Rock Springs 4-H Ranch. You can see the head of the lake from the highway and a good graveled road leads down to the boat ramp and camping area. This past fall, the Geary County Fish and Game Association added to the facilities by constructing a boat dock near the ramp. This dock is well constructed and a prime example of public service work on the part of a sportsman's club. Naturally, the dock is available for the use of all who visit the lake and the club members are to be congratulated for their fine work.

The Geary county association has been active in other projects concerning the lake. Every spring they hold a clean-up day at the lake to assist maintenance crews of the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. They have also provided a hundred tons of gravel on the access road to the boat ramp and camping area and set out over 400 trees and shrubs at various locations around the lake. Another project of these sportsmen was the marking of underwater brushpiles and snags along the west shore of the east arm. These markings serve the dual purpose of warning boats of the obstructions and marking the sites of the crappie beds.

The main lake body lies in a draw which runs from southeast to northwest with the dam located at the north end. A shorter arm of the lake extends to the southwest. The lake covers 96 acres and lies in a 451-acre plot which was purchased by the Fish and Game Commission in 1960. Construction of the dam was begun in late December of '60 and was completed in July of 1961. Sharp bluffs rise from the lakeshore at some spots while gentle slopes characterize other areas.

The watercourse which forms the lake bed is a tributary of Lyon creek which wends its way to a junction with the Smoky Hill river near Junction City. Small wet-weather springs and seeps are to be found at the bases of some of the bluffs but they do not contribute significant amounts of water to the lake. The major water source is from runoff during times of heavy rains. Since the bulk of the land in the drainage is in grass, Geary County State Lake is relatively clear most of the time.

Four months after the lake was completed, sufficient water had been impounded to allow for stocking. At that time fingerling bass, channels, black crappie and bluegill were placed in the lake. These grew well and the lake was officially opened to fishing late in 1963. Also present in the waters are green sunfish and bullheads even though they were not stocked. This is not an unusual occurrence since, in all probability, these species were to be found in small ponds in the watershed above the lake.

Geary County State Lake makes an ideal destination for a family who likes to fish along with camping and picnicking. The fishing, of course, is

the big attraction but attractive camping areas with tables, grills and sanitary facilities are well used by those who enjoy the area. As is the case with all areas operated by the Fish and Game Commission, no extra fees are charged for use of the facilities.

There is no concession at the lake so one should plan to obtain his bait and supplies at either Herington or Junction City, depending on which route he takes. Water is available and has been tested and approved.

If you are looking for a spot to spend a day, a weekend or longer, you could do well by considering Geary County State Lake. The good fishing coupled with the wide vistas of the Flint Hills has a great deal to offer for the person who is looking for an escape from the fast pace of today's living. The tiredness of the mind and soul can find refreshment at a spot like this.

FISH SCALER

Of course you know that bottle caps nailed to a piece of broom handles make one of the finest fish scalers that money doesn't have to buy.



The Geary County State Lake boasts a fine boat dock, thanks to the efforts of the Geary County Fish and Game Association. This sportsmen's club has sponsored many worthwhile projects.

A New Approach

Lane County State Lake

By GEORGE VALYER

For many years, the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has been active in a lake building program in Kansas.

The primary purpose of this program has always been to provide fishing opportunities where few or none existed. The success of this lake building effort is apparent in many localities throughout the state today. Few communities are more than a few minutes drive from the nearest public fishing lake. The exception to this rule is western Kansas.

The problem in the western part of the state has always revolved around the availability of adequate water. Although there are many sites suitable for the construction of a dam, the annual rainfall is usually insufficient to maintain a lake at a level commensurate with good fish production. Siltation is also a problem since western Kansas lands are mostly cultivated and runoff water carries a heavy load of sediment.

Of course there are notable exceptions to these statements and a few western localities can boast excellent impounded waters. However, there are many areas where lakes are nonexistent or, where present, are of little value as a source of good fishing opportunities.

Recently, the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission hit upon a new approach to the problem of fishing water for the west. Many areas of this part of the state, although

lacking in rainfall during normal times, do have an abundance of underground water. It was decided that small fishing lakes could be supplied with water through the use of irrigation-type pumps and at a cost which would not be prohibitive. The first construction of this type is now nearing completion in Lane County near the city of Dighton.

Actually, there are many advantages to small lakes which are not found in larger bodies of water. The most important advantage is the ease with which management practices can be applied. Small lakes also yield more pounds of fish per acre of water because the fish are easier to harvest.

Where wells are used as the sole source of water supply, complete control of the lake level is possible and this makes it much easier for the fishery biologist to regulate or rehabilitate the fish population. These factors alone are adequate to give optimism to those who have the responsibility of providing fishing opportunities to Kansas sportsmen.

In preparation for the actual construction, it was necessary to determine whether adequate water was available underground. This was accomplished by the drilling of a test well. Through this testing, it was determined that enough water could be pumped at the proposed site of the lake. Soil testing was also necessary to determine the rate at which water would soak away. If percolation

through the soil was too fast, it would be impossible to keep a lake full with the pump. A natural depression was also required in order that construction costs could be kept within reason. Fortunately, the Lane County lake site, a natural lagoon, met the water and soil requirements.

During February, 1966, construction of the well was begun. Shortly thereafter, the building of the dike was commenced. All work on the lake has now been completed with the exception of compaction of the bottom. Filling of the lake should begin by mid-fall.

The lake itself will have an average depth of about nine feet with a total surface area of 31 acres. Pumped with a propane engine, the 155-foot well will yield 550 gallons of water per minute. Stocking with fish will be accomplished as soon as enough water is impounded.

Some trees have already been planted on the west side of the lake and plans are being formulated to provide other facilities. The location of the new Lane County State Lake is three miles east and six and one-half miles north of Dighton.

Another new lake of the same type is already under construction near Greensburg in Kiowa County. Should these lakes live up to their expectations, they may point the way to solving the problems of fishless communities in western Kansas.

"Pot One"—A Little Jewel

By GEORGE VALYER

Twenty-eighth of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

State Highway K-99 in Pottawatomie county is a good road. Although it traverses rolling hills, the grades are not steep and one can roll right along at the legal limit. Traffic ordinarily moves rapidly along the highway but there is one spot where you can expect almost everyone to slow down for a better look, even if they can't take time to stop.

The place is Pottawatomie County State Lake No. 1.

You can't fail to see it if you drive north out of Westmoreland or south from Blaine. It's right on the highway. In fact, the highway fill, as it crosses the valley, forms the dam for the lake—and a pretty lake it is.

Pottawatomie County State Lake No. 1 is not a large lake but it is located in one of the more scenic areas of Kansas. The upper Flint Hills are beautiful in the fall of the year with the bright yellows, pale reds and greens of the vegetation lending a festive touch to the valleys and hills. The lake itself is like a blue-green jewel with its clear waters and tree-studded shoreline. Well-graveled roads lead to the boat ramp and several picnic and camping areas.

The lake is roughly "L" shaped with the upright or leg portion extending west from the dam. The base of the "L" extends to the north and it is around this north arm where the most of the facilities have been constructed. A boat launching ramp is located adjacent to the main entrance on the northeast and a well with excellent drinking water is provided at this site. Sanitary facilities are located at the camping areas to the west.

As might be expected, the lake is clear most of the time. The watershed above the dam is composed almost entirely of pastureland and the result is a lake which is relatively unsilted despite its age of 32 years. In 1932, the

Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission purchased the lake site after working out the plan with the State Highway Commission. The highway group built the dam as part of the highway fill with the Fish and Game Commission providing \$15,000 for the water control structure and the rip-rap along the face of the dam.

Completion of the dam was accomplished in 1934 but the drought of the '30s delayed filling of the lake. By 1937 enough water was present to allow stocking of the waters.

Fishing was fine at Pottawatomie County State Lake for a number of years but, as time went by, it slowly became overpopulated with undesirable species. The out-of-balance condition had become pronounced by 1963 when the decision was made to rehabilitate the lake. Removal of the existing fish population was accomplished in September of that year by the application of fish toxicant to the waters. Restocking with largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish was completed in the spring of 1964.

Reopening to fishing occurred on March 5 of this year after two years of good fish growth. The spring fishing this year was considered exceptional by most local anglers although the coming of hot weather in July caused a drop in the lake. By late September, the bass were again on the prowl for food and good catches were reported on shallow running lures. Bluegill fishing has been good all season with the average size better than normal. The flyrod fisherman should not overlook this lake — it

seems to be ideal for the taking of pan-sized bluegill.

The good growth rate of the fish in this lake may be the result of a development project by the fishery division of the Fish and Game Commission. As a part of its regular management practice, commercial fertilizer was applied to the waters in an effort to increase the amount of natural food available to the fish. This program began shortly after the restocking and is continuing as a Federal Aid project. Two other lakes, McPherson and Leavenworth County State Lakes, are also receiving fertilizer and an evaluation of the effort will be made to determine the results as far as fish growth is concerned. Bill Cole, north-east area fishery biologist, is in charge of the program.

When I last visited the 24-acre lake, a south wind was rippling the water and clouds were moving in from the northwest. A cool front was on its way in and fishing was relatively slow. A boat containing two fishermen was slowly working its way along the shore of the west arm. Occasionally it was possible to see a rod arched in the sunlight as a bluegill struck at a feathered offering.

On the highway, a car slowed and braked to a stop in the shade of a tree and a fisherman got out to study the water. After a brief inspection, he unlimbered his rod and cast a plug carefully along the shoreline. Within five minutes he was playing a bass of respectable measurements and soon had it gripped firmly by the lower jaw. After placing it in the ice chest which he carried in the car trunk, he was right back after another one. It was certainly a temptation to join him but I was a long way from home and



SCENIC SETTING—North arm of Pottawatomie County State Lake No. 1, north of Westmoreland on K-99, is site of boat launching ramp, popular picnic and camping area.

the sun was getting lower in the west. Right then and there, I made a resolve to come back to this lake when there was more time to sample its fish population.

There is plenty of room for lots of fishermen at Pottawatomie County

Jewell County State Lake Is Restocked

MANKATO — Bass, bluegill and channel catfish fingerlings have been restocked in Jewell County State Lake, the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has reported.

Due to unbalanced fish populations, the lake was rehabilitated by use of fish toxicants during early autumn.

The lake will remain closed for fishing during the growth period of approximately two summers.

State Lake No. 1. Although it is popular locally, very few fishermen from outside the immediate area ever visit it. Perhaps the reason is the ready accessibility of other fishing waters. Just a few miles to the west lies Tuttle Creek Reservoir, a very popular spot for anglers from all over northeast Kansas and southeast Nebraska. Also near at hand is the larger Pottawatomie No. 2 lake just northeast of Manhattan. So, if you are looking for a fishing spot which is relatively uncrowded, number one lake may be just the place. If you like to take the family along on your trips, there is plenty of exploring room for the youngsters and Mom will like the well-shaded picnic areas.

All in all, this lake has a lot to offer the average fisherman. Give it a try. You may come up with a stringer full

of fish and I'm sure you'll enjoy a day in a beautiful area.

Cover Photo:

Not exactly a familiar scene in Kansas—but one that is greeting more and more persons each year—is the pronghorn antelope.

As you'll note from Bill Hlavachick's fine article on page 3, antelope aren't new to Kansas, and they're making a fine comeback through the Kansas Fish and Game's stocking and management program.

The cover photo shows five of a large herd of pronghorns secured from Colorado last year and released on a large ranch in the famous Gyp Hills country of Barber County, in South-Central Kansas. (Photo by Thayne Smith.)



PRETTY AS A PICTURE—Picnic tables, boats and other outdoor recreation facilities frame the blue, fish-filled waters of scenic Douglas County State Lake near Baldwin.

Douglas County State Lake

By GEORGE VALYER

29th of a Series on the State Lakes of Kansas

Just talk to anyone from the northeast part of the state. "They'll tell you that this lake is a "hum dinger." As one young college student put it, "This is a real fishy puddle." Far from being a puddle, Douglas County State Lake has a lot going for it in its 180 acres of water and its "Ozark" type of surroundings. It's a real surprise to some people to find this kind of country so close to the bustling town of Baldwin. Those who have traveled through the area on U. S. 56 are usually not aware of the fact that the gently rolling countryside you see from the highway breaks away sharply about a mile northeast of town. Suddenly you find yourself in narrow valleys surrounded by steep, wooded slopes.

Located in the headwater area of Coal Creek, the drainage is primarily composed of woodlands and small pastures interspersed with cultivated lands. Upland areas above the lake are more gently rolling than the immediate surroundings and considerable farming activity is practiced. An increased awareness on the part of the landowners concerning soil conserva-

tion has helped to maintain the clarity of the lake waters.

Douglas County State Lake is quite irregular in shape with a ridge of land dividing the lake on an approximate north-south line. The dam itself runs in a general east-west direction across the valley. Since the flow of water is to the north toward the Wakarusa river, the lake backs up south of the dam and the ridge points north like a giant finger toward the center of the dam. On the east side of the dividing ridge, the lake extends up three different arms. To

the west of the ridge, there is only one large arm with several smaller bays.

The city of Baldwin is justly proud of the lake which lies near its back door. Although this lake was opened only a short time ago, its economic impact on the community is already being felt. Merchants report that sales of outdoor related merchandise were up considerably during the spring and summer of 1966 following the opening of the lake in March. Although the concession, a good one, is in operation at the lake, sportmen must still pick up some of their supplies in town. The two miles from the lake to downtown Baldwin takes only a few moments and, there, one can find almost any desired supply or service.

At the lake fishermen can rent a boat and motor, get a variety of bait and fishing tackle or drive away the hunger pangs with a snack. The concession is located at the west end of the dam and provides mooring and docking space, in addition to other services. Straight across the lake arm to the south is the boat launching area and parking space for boat trailers. Picnic tables and sanitary facilities are spaced at intervals along the west shore.

The east side of the lake is reached by driving north from the dam and making a right turn at every public intersection. The east shore area is popular with bank fishermen but access by car is available only to the one developed area next to the dam. From this point, the angler can take off on foot into relatively secluded territory and fish in comparative solitude. Boat fishermen use these waters but the good sportsman respects the rights of the bank fisherman and usually gives him plenty of room.

Douglas County State Lake had its beginnings in 1959 when a preliminary survey by engineers indicated that construction at that site was practical. The dam was completed in 1961 with a total construction cost of \$240,691.

Three-fourths of the cost of the lake came from federal aid monies

under provisions of the Dingell-Johnson Act. This act is a part of the total federal aid to wildlife program and the funds come from an excise tax on fishing tackle. The state's share of the cost, like all other funds spent by the Commission, came from license sales.

Dry weather following construction delayed the filling of the lake but, by the spring of 1963, enough water was impounded so that the lake could be stocked. Bass, bluegill and channel catfish were placed in the lake in April of that year but the lake remained low for another year. This delayed the growth of the fish and the opening of the lake to fishing did not take place until March 5, 1966.

Those who participated in the lake opening will probably not forget it. A cold north wind whipped the water into whitecaps and periodic snow flurries reduced the visibility to a few yards. Fishermen were plagued with lines freezing in the rod guides and the strong winds made casting difficult. None-the-less, fishing was great for those who were brave enough to face the elements. The catch was primarily channel catfish the first weekend with some specimens weighing up to four pounds. Fishing remained good all spring and prospects look fine for the future.

In April of 1966, Douglas County State Lake received a stocking of 300,000 walleye fry as a part of an experimental program to see if these fish will be suitable for smaller lakes. With only a few months passed since their introduction, it is too early to evaluate the effort in any way. Only time will reveal whether or not this lake will produce good walleye fishing.

Five hundred and thirty-seven acres of public land surround the lake and, for the most part, it is excellent game habitat. For this reason, the Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has opened the area to public hunting. These lands are a natural for squirrel and quail and many local hunters report good duck flights during parts of the season. Temporary blinds may be erected provided they are removed immediately after the season closes. An abundance of nut trees—walnut

Whooping Cranes

PRATT—The majestic whooping cranes now number one less than at this same time a year ago, according to reports reaching the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission.

A total of 43 whoopers are now at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas coast. Refuge manager Phil Morgan states that this is one less than the 44 which were counted there last winter.

Several persons reported seeing whooping cranes in Kansas during the fall migration period. This is a normal occurrence since the migratory flight path of the whoopers takes them through the state during both spring and fall.

and oak—are found on the area which creates an ideal situation for squirrels. Quail habitat is also good and hunters report fine success on this species.

Douglas County State Lake is an ideal spot for a family outing. Even if some of the members of the party are not interested in fishing, there are many other activities possible for those interested in the outdoors. A variety of trees and plants provide interest for the amateur botanist and bird watchers should find a variety of species. Although there are no marked trails, the hiker will find numerous fascinations in the rocky hillsides and draws. Horses may also be rented nearby for those who enjoy a canter through the countryside. At the concession, a foot powered paddle boat is available for short cruises or, if you are really energetic, a trip around the lake.

Access to the west side of the lake is by way of an all-weather road leading north from Baldwin. It's only 2½ miles and the road is plainly marked. Several of the lake-side access roads have recently been graveled and wet weather should present no problems to the fisherman.

All-in-all, Douglas County State Lake shapes up as an ideal spot for either the casual fisherman or the serious angler. The fish are there and, with another season or two of growth, many should fit into the lunker classification.

Kanopolis—A “Comeback” Lake

By THAYNE SMITH

KANOPOLIS RESERVOIR—It was a perfect morning for fishing!

An old friend, Emil Kroutil, resident engineer at Kanopolis for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers was waiting. He had boat and motor hitched to his “fishing” car. His gear was loaded, and minnows were waiting to search the depths of one of Kansas’ finest and oldest flood control lakes.

Fishing had been spotty at Kanopolis, Emil told me. A few white bass, a number of giant crappie for which Kanopolis is famous, and a few walleye had been reported caught by the hundreds of fishermen who frequent the lake.

Our gear stashed quickly, it was only a matter of minutes until we were on the water, headed for the harbor in front of the reservoir outlet tower.

“We’ve been taking a few nice crappie in this area, but it’s hard work even if you know where they are,” Emil reported. Luckily, he knew.

About 100 feet in front of the tower, Emil dropped the anchor at the rear of the boat. It didn’t touch bottom. He moved the boat slowly to the west, and within a few feet, the anchor dug in a ledge below.

“That’s it,” he said. “They are laying along the ledges, and you aren’t going to have much luck anywhere else.”

Picking out nice shiners, we baited up, using No. 2 hooks, tied about a foot above a fairly heavy sinker at the end of the line. We dropped them over the side—no casting needed here.

When the sinker touched bottom, 30 feet below, we reeled up about two inches, letting its weight keep the line tight. The old, old task of man trying to catch fish had begun.

In a matter of seconds, Emil was reeling in a beautiful 2-pound white crappie. Seconds later he had another. My line never moved.

Then, there was the lightning pull on the line that only a nice crappie seems to make, and I hauled in one going about 1½ pounds.

While I baited up again, Emil’s rod

had to let out line, as something on the other end twisted and turned and tried to head for the middle of the big lake. After a five-minute struggle, he grabbed the net and boated a 4-pound walleye.

“That’s the biggest one I’ve caught in Tower Harbor,” he said, “and I’ve fished here for more than five years.”



KANOPOLIS RESERVOIR MANAGER Emil Kroutil at his favorite relaxation—fishing Kanopolis’ waters for crappie and walleye.

It wasn't his biggest from the lake, however. Earlier, he landed an 8½-pounder while trolling.

Moments later, small white bass moved in on us. They were thick. As fast as you could drop a minnow into the water, you had a white bass six to 10 inches long.

It was time to forget the crappie fishing, and move to different waters. We headed for another area about two miles west, where a buoy marks water which is too shallow for boats.

"The old Smoky Hill River channel is about 100 yards north of that buoy," Emil said. "And the water there is from 30 to 50 feet deep."

We tied snap swivels on our lines, and each took out a one-quarter ounce Hellbender lure, shad color. Shad is the favorite food of the wall-eye and big white bass, and the Hellbender had scored well in this area for us on many occasions.

Cutting the motor to its slowest speed, we dropped in and fed out about 75 feet of line. The Hellbenders, deep-diving plugs, headed for the bottom, and in seconds we felt the thump, thump of our rods as the lures skipped on the sand below.

We started from the shallow area, and headed north. After about 100 yards, the lures hit deep water. We were over the old channel.

Suddenly, my rod was nearly pulled out of my hand. Emil cut the motor, and grabbed the landing net. I boated a 2½-pound white bass.

They kept coming on each pass from the shallow water, over the ledge of the old channel. Within an hour, using the shad Hellbender and another deep-diving lure, the Heddon Deep 6, we trolled our way through a dozen white bass from two to three pounds each, and many smaller ones which we threw back for hoped-for future pleasure. Emil also landed another walleye, this one tipping the scales at an even four pounds, before we headed home.

While we fished, I recalled that a few years ago, fishermen complained that Kanopolis was no longer an "angler's" lake.

About that time, however, it was

Commission Accepts Strip Pit And Barber County Contracts

PRATT—Contracts for work at Barber County State Lake and at the Strip Pits Wildlife Management Area have been awarded to low bidders by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission.

Two contracts totaling \$30,504.45 for water wells, pumps and pipeline at Barber County State Lake were accepted. Layne-Western, Wichita, was awarded an \$8,660 contract for drilling of two irrigation-type water wells and installation of pumps. EVE, Inc., Hutchinson, submitted a low bid of \$21,844.45 for pipeline and other materials.

Walter Harrison, chief of the field services division, said the contracts will provide the lake with a supply of water. In order to maintain the water level of the lake, a dike is being constructed at the shallow end reducing the surface area from 77 to 51 surface acres.

In the Strip Pits Wildlife Management Area, two contracts were awarded. Fred Beachner Construction Co., St. Paul, was successful with a low bid of \$6,194.30 for construction of a reinforced concrete box culvert at the Pittsburg Quail Farm while Hy-Grade Materials, St. Paul, was given a \$21,670 contract for 11,000 yards of gravel on 25 miles of access road.

In other action, the Commission:

stocked by the Fish and Game Commission with walleye and white bass. Both have grown and reproduced well in its sprawling waters. They're both fine fighting and eating fish, and a welcome addition to waters of most of Kansas' large reservoirs.

Anyway, there is nothing wrong with the fishing at Kanopolis now. It and other big reservoirs in Kansas—Cedar Bluff, Kirwin, Webster, Pomona, Lovewell, Tuttle Creek, Norton, Toronto, Fall River and others—are full of good fish. They can be caught, too, if you're willing to work for them.

1. Voted to take over ownership and management of the Kansas Power and Light Company property known as Rocky Ford, on the Blue River, south of Tuttle Creek Dam at Manhattan. The power firm presented the site to the Commission as a gift, including buildings, parking areas and several acres of land along the river channel. The site has long been a popular fishing spot.

2. Voted to give Barton County 20 feet of right-of-way along 1½ miles of county road at the east edge of Cheyenne Bottoms, northeast of Great Bend. George Moore, Fish and Game Commission director, said the road will be widened and surfaced by the county.

3. Approved a regulation, recommended by the game division, to close the Marais des Cygnes and Neosho waterfowl areas to teal hunting during the special teal season in September. A large number of wood ducks have been killed during the special season the past two years at both areas, when apparently mistaken for teal, Dave Coleman, game division chief, told the Commission. He added that only a small number of teal generally frequent the two areas.

4. Voted to proceed with plans for a number of "bank pond" fishing areas along the Ninescah River in the Kingman County Game Management area west of Kingman. This will consist of digging several trench-like ponds several feet deep and up to 100 yards long perpendicular to the river, and letting them fill with water from the river. "They make excellent fishing spots," Director Moore said, "and can be constructed at a nominal cost." The Kingman area, of course, is open to the public, free of charge, for hunting and fishing purposes.

The wild goose has about twelve thousand muscles—ten thousand of which control the action of its feathers.