Aint' Cracker Game Good Enough?

By JACK HARPER

A Will-o-the-wisp pursued by starry-eyed sportmen and embryonic conservationists alike constantly makes its appearance in Florida. It's the glowing belief that if we only imported this or that and turned it loose in our woods and waters that all of our wildlife will be over.

It's a beautiful hope, a glittering phantasma which has attracted the enthusiasm of many before us, and probably will continue to beam, mirage-like, on the horizon for a long time to come.

Earnest, vocal sportmen are continuously yeering publicly for something new and different in the way of game and fish in the state. Florida's largemouth black bass, it is charged, are back-numbers, intent on race suicide, and the fishing attractions of the state need to be enhanced by the addition of trout, of northern perch, and—while it hasn't yet been advocated, it probably will be—of whales and muskies.

And then, of course, emerging to dry land from this sea of sentimental hope, there are the proponents of the ring-necked pheasant, of the choker, of the Hungarian partridge, and of the various other exotics whose introduction has been accomplished, or at least attempted, in other states.

"Give us something bigger . . . better . . . faster," goes their typically American plaint. "And by all means let's have a lot of them.

So far no serious suggestions have been made that the elk, the caribou or the buffalo be propagated in Florida, but it's probably only a matter of time before some north-woodsmen suggests the idea to the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. One influential sportman has already advocated stocking western antelope on South Florida's cattle ranges.

Somewhere or other all this talk makes Mother Nature look a trifle old-fashioned, as though, poor old lady, she did the best she could until the Year of Our Lord 1950, but now we're going to take over. That's a little rash.

Albert M. Day, director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, suggested recently that we go to foreign shores and investigate game birds and mammals that might make out well in America. Florida biologists agree but stress the point that much information is needed before.

Periodically a few Florida sportmen suddenly decide the state needs more exotic species and a great clamor is begun.

The author takes the opposing view and tells you why.
any thoughts of risking hard cash in a transplanted venture is harbored. On that they'd stand through hell, high water, and sessions of the legislature.

Whether you look at Florida, or any other state or any other country, you'll find that Mother Nature did pretty well as long as all she had to worry about was wildlife. It wasn't until man put his appearance—in our country, until the paleface showed up—that nature's problems began. Man ran, and has done, more toward upsetting the balance of nature than all the predators, the cannibalistic fish, the fires, floods and freezes put together.

The Florida black bass is Florida's chief game fish. It has been declared so by nature. Most of the sluggish, fertile, warm waters of the state are adapted to largemouths. Neither the forage nor climatic conditions are right, according to fish culturists, for other game fish except panfish such as bream and crappie. So no matter how nice it would be to have rainbow or brook trout, wall-eyes or muskies, or even small whites abounding in our lakes and streams, it just isn't feasible.

The commission insists on sticking to anything that nature knew best, and will bend its efforts to restoring the upset balance, rather than to introduce new species which might throw it even more out of whack. And it has a wealth of past experience to back its position. Everything from Louisiana's muskrats to Asia's huge Sambhar deer have been introduced in the state at one time or another, and with a few notable exceptions, all have failed.

Whenever someone wants a new species of animal, fish, or bird introduced in Florida the game department has to find the answer to four questions. Simply: Can it survive here? Will it compete with native game for food? Will it become a nuisance and damage agricultural crops? And is it economically sound?

The commission usually finds the project would prove too expensive, or not biologically possible, and turns its efforts to building up the native game stock. But it will be tried as an experiment if the foreign species looks as if it might fit into Florida's scheme of outdoor life.

Way back in 1930 the game department purchased barrels of muskrats from Louisiana and stocked them throughout Florida. They hoped to have trappers a fur animal that would pay off. But even though liberated and protected in habitat identical to their native home, they didn't take hold. No one yet has been able to explain why. So the biologist caught their heads and reasoned that Mother Nature wasn't so dumb anyway. Muskrats extended naturally to Alabama's Mobile Bay, they observed, and there is no reason to think they haven't migrated down on Florida. Just another secret the wise old girl is keeping to herself.

That same year the game agency, still anxious to help the trappers, tried their hand with beavers, and had identical results. Florida's only known beaver colony is found in the Torreya State Park near Marianna where it

The famous Sambhar deer of India and Asia, introduced successfully on St. Vincent's Island, but due to lack of knowledge concerning the habits of the deer, from India would run into money. And, as yet, no way to trap and sell the deer. Since a very few have been trapped in Florida and state trappers have tried. Even then, too, we don't know how many are needed for food or become a nuisance, like the Australian rabbit, and harm the state's cattle industry.

The most frequent request made of the game department is for the introduction of the Chinese pheasant. Florida, along with many other states, is giving this popular bird a try. The pheasant has become the bulk of upland game shooting in about half of the states in the Union, and it's roughly across the country north of the Mason and Dixon line. However, they have never accepted the South as

just sprung up without any help from man. They are amply protected there and are presently holding their own against illegal hunting.

Some foreign species adapt quite well to isolated sections of the state. One of these is the huge Sambhar deer from far-away India. There are an estimated four dozen of these animals roaming the wilds of St. Vincent's Island, a 14,000-acre hump of sand and scrub in the Apalachicola Bay off the coast of Franklin County. The Sambhar do, as the name implies, roam the west, was put there in 1908 by the island's wealthy owner, Dr. R. V. O'Neal.

The doctor, who was one of Florida's first genuine conservationists, determined to give the alien Sambhar every chance for survival. For years he kept the island closely protected, to keep them from any hunting. And when hunting was resumed, he was careful to see that only a limited number of bucks were removed each season.

Under such vigilance the little band of deer thrived happily, and by 1940 it was estimated the Sambhar population on St. Vincent's had grown well into the hundreds. This was a long jump from the four animals three deer and a buck—that were originally released. During the war, however, an epidemic of illegal hunting broke out, and the island's supply dwindled to the discouraging low of 50 or less.

Why doesn't the state stock those big exotic deer on public hunting grounds? Expense, mainly, but also the lack of knowledge concerning the deer. Sambhar, from India would run into money. And, as yet, no way to trap and sell the deer. Since a very few have been trapped in Florida and state trappers have tried. Even then, too, we don't know how many are needed for food or become a nuisance, like the Australian rabbit, and harm the state's cattle industry.

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 suitable for their requirements.

Florida, though, has a pheasant program underway in Hardee County and hopes to get at least gain information which will lead to their growth here. The birds are hatched in incubators or under hatchery hens and then allowed to go wild gradually. The commission is risking only $500 a year on the pheasant program.

Hardee County sportmen are enthusiastic about the future outlook. However, the state is skeptical of the pheasant's chances to establish itself in sufficient numbers to be classified as a game bird. Past failures in Florida and other parts of the South, as well as the opinion of pheasant authorities throughout the country, are responsible for this skepticism. If the pheasant does become a Florida game bird, it will be the first time he has made his home in the South outside a game farm. He is an old story with state wildlife people. In 1937, nearly 3,000 of them along with many Cuban guineas, were released in Florida. There is no trace of them now.

The Hungarian and chukar partridge have also been tried. More than 160,000 "Huns" have been liberated in 45 states of the U. S. They have taken hold in only 14. Florida liberated 100 altogether, and hasn't caught sight of one yet. Chukar prairies were being raised by a private individual at Crescent City with considerable success. As long as they're kept on the game farm, they thrive. But when released in the woods, they soon die. The chukar does well in the arid sections of western America but has not survived with any appreciable success in the South.

A glance at Florida's fishing situation will give the same story. Yellow perch, white bass, smallmouth bass and carp were transplanted in the Sunshine State. Only the German carp, a rough fish of unsusay reputation, has survived. He is found in extreme northwest Florida.

It looks as if Mother Nature knows best after all. Despite, there have been exceptions but they usually "just happened" and were not planned by man. The Florida armidillo is a pertinent example. Two escaped from a Sanford zoo in 1924, and since, their offspring, possibly aided by other escapes, have spread to 29 Florida counties.

Many of the country's domestic animals came from the old world. In the poultry and animal husbandry field, there are no representatives of pure American strains on our modern farms. Chickens, ducks, and geese all had their origins elsewhere. Horses came over with the Spanish explorers. Beef stock, dairy cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry—all domestic animals—were brought from Europe or Asia.

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THE PLIGHT OF THE FLORIDA BALD EAGLE

By CHARLES L. BROLEY

I first went to Florida humiliating for the King of the Air in 1989, I found ideal nesting conditions for bald eagles. In eastern Ontario, Canada, many people have asked me as to the present status of the bird. Is it increasing? Just holding its own? Or decreasing?

From 1989 to 1946 I could see little change in the nesting success of eagles in Florida. Each year, pairs that I observed brought forth broods of one or two young, with a usual nesting mortality of about 80 per cent with the exception of 1948 when there was a major mortality by a hurricane. But 1947, 1948, and 1949 have been disastrous years, with nesting mortality so serious that I am deeply concerned about it.

In 1947, of 125 nests under observation, 51 produced no young, a nesting failure of 41 per cent; in 1948, of 125 nests, 60 produced no young, a failure of 48 per cent; in 1949, of 106 nests produced no young, or a 50 per cent nesting failure—a vitally serious matter. Why did 60 of 108 nests fail to produce a crop of young birds? Fortunately I had kept close watch over them and knew, in part, why some of them had failed.

In 23 nests the old birds were present, but for some unknown reason did not lay eggs; in 31 nests the eggs were laid but did hatch; the adult eagles did not return to four nests; three were taken over by great horned owls; trees supporting three nests were cut down; and boys robbed one nest of its eggs.

This analysis of 66 nesting failures is both disturbing and puzzling. Why did 23 pairs of eagles fail to lay eggs after repairing their nests? What was the cause of the 60 per cent nesting failure in 1949? These are questions that, unfortunately, I cannot answer. As Joe Hickey, Wildlife Management Department, University of Wisconsin, said in a letter to me: "Bird-study would not be a lifetime hobby if we could catch up with all the answers in one year. Some of those problems will help to keep you young."

In the eastern United States there are two definite nesting concentrations of the bald eagle; the Chesapeake Bay area of Maryland and the State of Florida, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. These appear to have few nests, as fast as I can learn. In 1942 on Pine Island near Fort Myers, I found 12 active nests in a tract one mile and one-half by six miles long, containing nine square miles of pine forests. In January, 1949, I was disheartened to find practically all the large timber had been cut and that only four nests were occupied! Many adult eagles could be seen, but they were just loafing around, too far to leave their old nesting territory, and yet unable to find a suitable nesting site. Some of these birds may stay around Pine Island for two or three years before they decide to leave and try to nest elsewhere.

From the first thousand eagles that I banded in Florida, I have had 90 recoveries, or a known mortality of nine per cent. The bands returned to me, most of them taken from the legs of dead eagles that I had banded when they were living birds in the nest, came from practically every state east of the Mississippi River and from Canadian provinces as far west as Manitoba.

The disturbing feature here is that, although a few of the birds were alive and released after being caught in fox and muskrat traps, more than 80 of them, or 90 per cent of those on which I had returns, were shot and killed by irresponsible persons. All bird lovers are familiar with this type of wanton killer, to whom any wild creature, particularly large spectacular ones, are eagerly sought targets.

While I do not for a moment over-look the serious efforts of shooting of eagles, I am of the opinion that the rapid decline in nesting during the past three seasons in Florida is the most dangerous threat at present. Referring to toy figures for 1949, where 65 out of 108 nests went wrong, causing the non-production of 97 young birds (1.5 per nest being the average) this one season's loss is more than my 90 birds reported shot during the past ten years. The solution in Florida would be the establishment of more reserves such as the Everglades National Park where the eagles need undisturbed and safe.
Way Down upon the Suwannee

The Suwannee River, Florida's most famous stream has everything—colorful legend, scenic beauty—and fighting fish

by Charles H. Anderson

Right, a big bass comes out of the Suwannee. Below, fly-rodding for stumpknackers in the upper river.

The composer sat back in his chair. His latest manuscript was finished with one exception. Somehow the river in his song didn't fit the melody.

"Way down upon de Pedee ribber," he mused to himself. It didn't sound right. He tried his first choice again.

"Way down upon de Yazoo ribber." Something was still lacking.

It didn't make a great deal of difference one way or the other. Stephen Foster's only interest was to use the name of some southern river for the song that he had written for the great minstrel singer of the day, E. P. Christy.

As he was going over the words and melody again his brother Morrison entered the parlor studio with a new world atlas under his arm. In a matter of moments the two brothers were poring over the maps of the southern United States searching for rivers with two-syllable names.

Morrison saw the name first. It was attached to a river that had a beginning in Georgia and ran down through Florida to the Gulf of Mexico.

"Suwannee... Su-wan-nee," the musician mouthed the words several times and then happily crossed out Pedee and Yazoo in the original manuscript and by that act immortalized a river he may never have seen and made it as famous and well-known as any of the great rivers throughout the civilized world.

Today the Suwannee has almost reverted to its place in song and legend—a sleepy, nostalgic stream unruffled by the grinding wheels of progress. Commerce, a one-time booming industry on the river, has died to the point that there isn't so much as an excursion boat left. A large bold-faced sign on one of the bridges of the lower river still states that any boat wishing to have the bridge opened must give five days written notice to a Jacksonville address. A fact not encouraging to river traffic whether commercial or pleasure.

The Suwannee river has a wildly beautiful beginning in one of the last truly primitive areas of the country.
the world famous Okefenokee Swamp of south Georgia and north Florida. Among the fresh water swamps of the South only the Florida Everglades are larger than the Okefenokee. It is 45 miles long and 30 wide and covers parts of four counties in Georgia and two in Florida. The Seminoles, who lived in the swamp until pushed into the Everglades during the Seminole War, called the swamp "ecunnau finecusa" meaning a place of trembling earth. A just name as many parts of the swamp are covered with a spongy, earthy matter, solid enough to support the weight of several men but with each step the ground trembles and shakes over an area of fifty to seventy-five feet. In some instances the trembling is so great that even the large trees growing in the swamp will sway with every step a person takes in their vicinity.

Interesting to note on old maps of the swamp is the variation of the spelling of the swamp in the past 160 years. Note that each spelling is a variation or corruption of the original Indian words: 1790 — Ekanifanka; 1796 — Akenfinogla; 1816 — Ekenfinoeka; 1818 — Oqrananatoka; 1818 — Oke-fun-a-cas; 1813 — Okenfinoeka; 1824 — E-fun-tecas; and the present day Okefenokee. The people of the swamp pronounce the name leaving the final "e" silent — "Oke-fen-oh." During the great commercial expansion in the middle of the 19th century the Okefenokee and its two main rivers, the Suwannee and St. Marys, came into the national spotlight for the first time. But, as in two later ventures of the same type, the light went out and the venture failed.

In a report dated Washington, D. C., February 19th, 1829, to the Board of Internal Improvements, a Lt. John Pickett of the Army Engineers recommended that a canal from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico would save some 760 miles for ships plying the trade between New Orleans to New York and Liverpool. The route of his proposed canal was from the mouth of the St. Marys river on the Atlantic, into Billy's Lake in the heart of the swamp, then down the Suwannee to the present site of Ellaville, then by a canal, to be built, to the Ockilula (Ancilla) river and into the Gulf. Pickett's proposed waterway died without fanfare and it wasn't until 1877 that the idea was again brought to light. In that year a report was made by Lt. Col. Q. A. Gilmore of the Army Engineers on a Trans-Florida Ship Canal. The report resulted in an appropriation for a survey and cost estimate of the project. This also died without action. The final venture, of course, was the canal of the 1950's that was actually started but died for lack of support and funds.

Some fifteen years before Foster was to immortalize the Suwannee for all time, others were seeing the river for much more than a minstrel's song. Farms in the rich river valley were being cleared and towns were springing up in the wake of the new settlers. The NEWS of St. Augustine, October 25, 1845 noted: "Our readers may remember that it has been in contemplation for some time past to establish a mail route, by steamers, upon the Suwannee, from Cedar Keys to Fort White, to be connected thence with the St. Johns by stage... The Steamboat 'Orpheus' built in New Orleans, expressly for the purpose, has arrived, and taken her station on the route. We hear that she is a most beautiful vessel, 156 feet in length, and is fitted up in fine style, with 18 elegant saloons. She will carry the U. S. Mail from Cedar Keys to the new town of Santa Fe on the Santa Fe River, in Columbia county, once a week and will also run up the Suwannee to the flourishing town of Columbia."

The "flourishing town of Columbia" was also made note of in the St. Augustine NEWS in 1843 by an unknown writer doing one of the popular travel articles of the period: "... arrived in Columbus on Friday at twelve or one o'clock. This place is situated on the east side of the Suwannee, at what is called Platt's Ferry, immediately at the forks of the river. (Withlacoochee and Suwannee)... Columbus is in Columbia county, and is destined to become a place of considerable note. There are two large stores well stocked with goods, and several more being built. "... Wagons are continually coming loaded with cotton and other productions of the soil. I was informed by a gentleman that goods to the amount of a thousand dollars per day have been disposed of here... Over three thousand bales of cotton have been shipped down the river this fall from Columbus, and...

The "Three States" was typical of the steamboats plying the Suwannee around the turn of the century.

There was a time when the Suwannee was one of the South's busiest thoroughfares for wood-burning steamboats like this.

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FEBRUARY, 1950

FLORIDA WILDLIFE
Fresh Water Stripers

The striped bass is a salt water citizen but the author believes he has fresh water possibilities.

by John Dillin

It is rare fresh and black bass waters of some sections of Florida, a salt water fish in beginning to create a stir among sport anglers. They have come out well and tell us that they know all the time, but we are reminded that they do not say much about it.

I am referring, of course, to the striped bass (family Moronidae). Yes, I know the striped bass is classified as a salt water species. But let's look further. They are being caught and observed. A few places that we can tell you about. Right now is the St. Johns River which separates Sumter and Duval Counties. Black Creek in Clay County, Pellicer Creek between St. Johns and Flagler Counties, and St. Augustine River in the county of the same name. Black bass, you say? Possibly, but more fresh than brackish because they are being caught well inland.

The striper in Black Creek are many miles from the mouth where it flows into the St. Johns River. Mind you too, this month is only a couple miles north of Green Cove Springs and some 40 miles from the ocean.

Pellicer Creek is another example. I have caught black bass two miles seaward salt water than where I hung a striped bass. But what is more important, the stripers are appearing more frequently and seem to be coming up farther south than their normal range.

I have talked with at least a dozen Florida outdoor writers. Only one had ever heard of striped bass north of Pellicer Creek and they were observed there only on rare occasions. However, Marion Shaddox at Marineland, Fla., has definite proof of striped bass in Long Creek which is deep in Flagler County.

When we say "good," we mean just that. It is one thing to be able to talk about catching some fish and another thing to be able to point it out daily.

Marine Studios points with a bit of pride to a striped bass swimming in the ocean. This is the same fish, the very same, that was caught in Long Creek and so far as known is a bit of an all-South record.

It is just about a year ago now that the bass was placed in the Marineland tanks. It weighed only 2 pounds then. Now, we estimate it would tip the scales at 10 pounds.

We have been observing this bass for some time with the thought of learning something about him and all his brethren and sisters. He truly is a spectacular fish. They tell me that if I surf fishermen were pulled from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras they would see that their favorite game fish is the striped bass. He seems to always be rough and ready and like Garbo, wants to be alone. It has a vicious strike, is very fast and seems to have plenty of endurance.

I am not a colored fish, too. While there is little danger of confusing it with a species it does change appearance according to its habitat. Perhaps that is why it has so many nicknames such as the striped, the rock fish, rock bass, white bass, gizzard bass, spotted bass, and they were observed then.

It is sometimes called klondikes because of the way or eight dark stripes that markically from head to tail. The striped bass is principally a silver fish, with the upper sides changing from brassy green to silver.

Stripers from early settlers in North America point to the permanent abundance of striped bass in almost every fresh water stream. Calicoes in 1842, four men in 1911 caught 9,000 pounds of bass in a single night.

In the early 1950's off Long Island, it is reported about anyone who knows how to fish could fill a wagon. One Long Island angler caught just under one ton in seven days.

In 1814 at Point Judith, Rhode Island, 90,000 pounds were taken in a single trap in two weeks.

As for size, the world record is a 7-pounder on rod and reel. It was caught at Vineyard Sound, Mass., in 1915. Conner and Robinson have recorded striped bass up to 153 pounds.

With the history in mind, we might consider what this bass could mean to Florida. Our rival state of California transplanted the stripers in the early 1960's. California today has some of the best striped bass fishing in the world.

Our bass in North Florida apparently come by accident. It is reasonable to believe they could be very successfully grown here. They spawn in fresh water rivers and lakes like Black Creek, for example. Here would be an excellent place to start.

Reproduction should be very fast. One 20-pound bass is reported to have yielded 1,500,000 eggs.

At least transplanting would be something to consider.

Is it worth it? I would say yes. There are few fish that can compete with it for a fight. It will strike other artificial lures or natural bass. The live can be top water or sinkers. Their natural foods are small, all others mentioned and waiting to mention a few.

Will they thrive in Florida? That list of natural foods should indicate they will. But again I will remind you of the stripers that swam in the oceanarium at Marineland. In one year's time, it has grown eight pounds. Here is for more striped bass fishing in Florida.
SWANNEE RIVER

(Continued from Page 11)

a few miles wide are now
piled on the banks of the river.

The site of Columbus is cer-
tainly the most interesting.
The majority are small,
many of them being in the main
channel of the river and unnotice-
able. It is distant from the mouth
of the Swannee 180 miles, navigable
for steamboats and flatrivers.
This river is navigable for steamboats
as high as the Upper Mineral Springs.
I was told that the river was
actually been that high up and
found no difficulty in the depth
of the water. I am surprised that no
tourist has yet brought the
previously mentioned person to see
this place, a boat on this river,
there being produce enough sent
down to keep one well employed.

Long ago the “flying town
of Columbus,” along with the steamboats
and river traffic, passed into the
limbo of the forgotten. Standing near
the site of the “two large stores well
stocked” is a neon forecasting
“jail,” with its loud and blaring
noise box. There are no remains of the town
that was to be a place of considerable
notoriety.

The Upper Mineral Springs referred
to in the old papers are the
Promised Swannee at the site of the
proposed Suwannee State Park.

From its picturesque beginning in
the swamp, 217 miles from the
mouth, the river runs a lazy, winding
course most of the year. But with the
coming of the spring rains the river changes
character and is filled to overbreak at the
river’s headquarters is 120 feet
above sea level. Along this
section of 5,546 square miles in
southern Georgia, and 5,922 square miles in
Florida, the average depth of the
river is 150 miles is the river broad, and
and with spring rains, the river
sometimes changes from a
swampy to a boiling, turbulent
mass of water, often overflowing the
banks of the river. The
impression of doing a great deal of damage
to wildlife adjacent to the river. In some
cases of extreme high water the
flow has even reached out so far as
to destroy crops. It is first
while farming country for many miles
on each side.

With the ending of the spring rains
the river settles back to normal and
becomes a peaceful mixture of brown
stream and lapping waves.
The brown water of the swamp is from
its long contact with the tannic
acids of the cypress, palmetto and
pine that covers the greater portion
of the Chickasaw. Beginning with the
White Sulphur Springs at White
Springs, Florida, the amber water,
touched with the water of hundreds
of springs for the rest of its
journey, becomes silvery. Many of
these springs are in the midst of
the State Park and private enter-
prises. Others, such as White Sulphur
Springs, are noted for their medicinal
and recuperative powers. During the
water of either the Suwannee or the
St. Marys river. It is a matter of
actual record of one vessel keeping the
water level as high as 8 feet above
normal. When the last cast was finally
opened the water was as good as the day
as put aboard. Skippers of the old
windward shrews thought nothing of going
several miles out of their route to
rotate at the St. Marys or the Suwannee.
One
enterprising business-man went so far
as to erect a thousand gallon per minute
boil. Some of these larger springs
have been turned into recreational
water-supply plants or private enter-
prises. This fact could be seen if you
plan your Suwannee fishing in the summer don’t
forget that before the mosquito repel-
—need you it if you’re off late
in the afternoon.

CRACKER GAME

(Continued from Page 5)

Even the domestic turkey came
from the Suwannee.

Wild species haven’t been such
success among the tame brethren. He’s
more inclined to go hunting them on game farms but when they’re
turned-sea-shot sportsmen who
throughout the south of Florida. And they’ve got
nothing in common with the
Suwannee Bass is a branch of the
smallest family but is not a true
family and forever look to the
Kentucky Bass, it is found only
in the Swannee and its tributaries.
Another notable difference is
the black bass family the biggest difference to
the layman would be in the placement
of the fins and a slight difference in the
black mottled color of the side
latter part of the 19th century, White
Sulphur Springs was one of the popu-
lar “bathing” places of the great
and near great of the century. The town
of White Sulphur Springs now a small
bus on the bus lines, boasted 17 fine hotels.
However, the spring flows on the
and out and tour the
to the revitalizing sulpher
water.

For the smaller rivers,
the waters that flow both east and west
are abundant in small mouths
one of the ever present problems
of the Suwannee. The brown water
on long voyages the water was kept in
wooden casks and within a few months
it would sour and spoil. But not so the
P E A C E

By PAULINE MICKLE ROBINSON

I ask a bird in a tree top
Primping in solemn array
Where can I find peace, little bird?
But swiftly darted away
I ask the strange, old fellow
As he glided alone in the moonlight
"Where do you find peace, my friend?"
"Go to the river, my son.
I straightened the basket on my
Hooked a reel on my rod.
And followed the way to the river
Along with myself, and God.
I lifted a fly from my hat-band
Swung it far out the stream
Then gradually worked it inward.
Watching the ruddish beam.
So, I find peace, little bird.
A little more peace
With the lights of the nearest
glittering missis in the moonlight.
And the peace I had sought was found.

CRACKER GAME

(Continued from Page 5)

Next time you hit upon the
idea of trying your hand at
Timbuktu would be good hunting
in Florida, THINK before getting
on the wing and really
your commission for them.
Besides, ain’t the crackergame
good enough for you?

CRACKER GAME

(Continued from Page 5)

Next time you hit upon the
idea of trying your hand at
hunting, you should
in the city, you will
not find it.

CONSERVATION BY VIDEO

P erhaps education in South
Florida natural history and
conservation is being regularly
distributed through Miami’s 10,000 television
viewers. The University of Miami and
Station WTVZ, Miami’s one video station, are
co-operating to do it entertainingly
and authoritatively.

On a half-hour of choice even-
timeing time at 9 p.m. every other
Tuesday, "Science Show Window," a produc-
tion of the University of Miami Radio and Tele-
partment, presents University of Miami science
faculty members. The professors show specimens
and tell about them in a lively,
factual program.

In addition to its emphasis on
conservation, the series gains un-
precedented listener appeal by being pur-
posefully limited to the natural
history of South Florida. A high per-
centage of Greater Miami’s peo-
ples grew up and learned
extensive amount of instruc-
tion and had a number of popular
reading materials.

Popular appeal of the program is
indicated by the fact that it is
sponsored by the Taylor Construc-
tion Company, a large Miami
business organization. The firm is
producing a dramatic series produced by the Miami
Studio of the "Radio Workshop Players," who
alternate weekly with the science program.

Dr. Julian D. Coning, University of Miami ecology professor, explains the red-
bellied woodpecker on "Science Show Window." program.
FLORIDA WILDLIFE
FEDEIATION NOTES

ADVANCE NOTICE

When the next regular meeting of the federation is announced, we hope to plan to attend with as many members of your club as you can possibly congregate. There will be an annual attendance price offered at the time of our next session. With only five regular meetings during the year, it should not be difficult to create wide interest in your club to attend them.

During this year, it is proposed to have some entertainment arranged for such breaks as may provide real outdoor atmosphere, where suitable entertainment may develop spontaneously from among the "sponsors organization". This theme was carried out for the recent meeting of the Board of Directors, and proved to be the most progressive idea, also the association with the Florida Federation. Now, he pointed out, all the unexplored energy about the state for better conservation will be organized into one concerted effort.

The directors also voted to continue their program supporting the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in its efforts for better hunting and fishing conditions and their campaigns.

It was decided that special attention would be given the seasonal quail trapping program now underway which will transport coves of quail back into the woods. A committee was appointed to dissemble the information obtained from the sportsmen, clubs, state groups, schools and interested parties.

March through November is the date for the regular federation meeting and an uninitiated member was given Pro- Markham by the board.

Three times at the meeting were Pres. E. A. Markham, Gulfport; Vice President Clayton Graves, St. Petersburg; Treasurer William Forsey, St. Augustine; Convention President S. L. C. Greif, Milton; Director Mo. D. B. Bowman, Tallahassee; Vice President John Washington, Tallahassee; Secretary Merlin Mitchell, Orlando; Recording Secretary, George Speers, Jr., Sarasota; President A. D. Bailey, Miami; Press Secretary R. M. Shecht, Coral Gables and Ex-Recording Secretary Helen Sullivan, St. Petersburg.

Proposed New Project

The federation has received an appeal from national to make an effort to protect the last surviving dozen or so members of a species of quail. The species is the Florida quail. This is the smallest of the white-tailed sub-species, once common to most of Florida, but in recent years pushed back until now the few that remain are on Pine Key only. Like the passenger pigeon in the last century, it is easy to estimate unless some wildlife protection is given.

Colonel Newman, a federation director, has learned about this situation and is ready to offer advice on what may be done to save this Florida quail. It is perhaps the most interesting project to be presented in Florida in a decade. If you have information about this white tail, please pass it on.

Our General Public

It is astounding to learn that the general public has little or no idea what our federation stands for. Many people have believed that the federation is a group of men related to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and sponsored by state funds. Some people have simply wondered what it is all about, reading, as they have, newspaper releases about the activities of the federation.

The blame lies directly at our own door. As a federation, we have endeavored to assist sportmen and conservationists in organizing local clubs, and from them we have expected news of the federation programs and the club program to reach a penetrating local circulation.

Many business men who love to fish and hunt, do not have the time to join and attend local clubs. Many of them have a little private retreat of their own where they can enjoy the wildlife atmosphere which stimulates human exchange for the busy days which drag vitality down below.

This, we might say, is in the category of the "forgotten man" so far as federation activities are concerned. We have very little knowledge of our group, in the nick of time. In an effort to bring such men into the fold we have begun a campaign. We hope to do more, and more, in the way of education in the State, whereby, as each person goes about his or her daily routine he will be "spreading the word" of the federation objectives to every business man he meets and interest him in adding in some way.

It has been found that many such business men do not have the time to devote to analyzing the program or actively engaging in conservation work, but in most cases are willing and happy to lend financial assistance to the federation's work. With such aid, the federation will be in a position to carry on a more extensive educational program, to make more effective service to affiliated clubs, and to financially aid in restoration programs.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

January 1, 1950

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES

We are happy to announce that a hard-hitting conservation program for the coming year will be announced by the federation. This program, which will be accompanied by a new membership drive, is designed to educate the public about the importance of wildlife conservation.

The federation's officers and directors have been working hard to plan a series of events and activities that will attract the attention of the general public and encourage them to become involved in wildlife conservation efforts.

One of the most popular events will be the "Florida Wildlife Festival," which will be held in conjunction with the annual state fair. The festival will feature exhibits, educational programs, and a variety of other activities designed to promote public interest in wildlife protection.

In addition to the festival, the federation will be launching a new campaign to encourage businesses and organizations to become affiliated with the federation and to support its conservation efforts. The federation is confident that this campaign will be successful in attracting new members and in strengthening its existing base of support.

The federation is also planning to launch a new publication, "Florida Wildlife News," which will be distributed to members and the general public. The newsletter will feature articles on wildlife conservation, updates on federation activities, and other relevant information.

We urge all members to participate in these programs and to help spread the word about the importance of wildlife conservation. Together, we can make a significant difference in protecting our precious natural resources for future generations.

Sincerely,

E. A. Markham
President, Florida Wildlife Federation
They're BITING Here

Fishing is picking up throughout the state. The small fish have been off the beds long enough to be either too big or too elusive to make a bass macho, and the bass needs food to build up his roe to get ready for bedding this spring. So the mighty slinger is now desperately going for the baited hook. As baits and perch are hitting too, the angling will soon be at its best. "Excellent" fishing in Florida is the fisherman's highest heaven. So why wait? Why are you to go there? Break out the prized rod and reel, or that old standby, the Ugly Pole, carry your favorite fishing hole throughout.

LAKE APOKOA

The whole damn company is out fishing down on Lake Apokoa in Orange County and now will be big. Bass, broom, and perch are coming a fight for their money. The Hay Stacks, Hog Island, and Deep Creek water on the lake. Anglers cane-pointed with fish are having the best luck. White bass, redfish, and minnows are bringing in the "specks." The fishing times are daylight until 11 a.m. and from 4 p.m. until dark. P. H. Bledsoe, Columbus, Ohio, and Joe Walker, Oakland, California, caught a bass of 10 pounds last year in the lake. They entered the lake in the 10-pound class. The lake now has over 150 acres of water.

SOUTH FORTY CANAL

Fish at the end of the canal near Melbourne and about three miles east and your chances are better. Do the home bass are better than good. The bass are being caught on channel Catfish, Squirrel, and Minnows. The feeding on the canal have been catching their bag limits almost every day on top water flies. If you’re plumb crazy and fire of catching bass, trek to nearby Lake Washington and you’ll find all the bass you can catch. Your best bet is to call at 7 a.m. with an early start. A Dipsey Doodle. Early and late have been found to be top fishing times.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Lakes Hatzapaga and Clay in Highlands County are consistently offering the finest fishing spots that the state can offer. Spackled perch, Crappie, and the ever-popular walleye. On any lake, any fish, any weapon, your task will be good. A John Dillinger or a Black and White is sure to bring success. But don’t take our word for it, ask Judge A. L. Johnson, of Milton. The judge caught some of the finest catches of the month there in January.

ST. JOHNS RIVER

Throng of Florida fishermen are getting thrills again in another haul for shad on the St. Johns River. Aside from the top sport, they report shad and shad roe are making the tastiest meals in months at home. The most successful recommend using a plastic line and leader and Reflecto No. 1. Place a buckshot on the leader for weight and use either a fly rod or ordinary rod-and-reel. Set your kicker at slow speed and keep your bait deep.

Not only shad, but suckers, bass and broom are also giving everyone a run for their money. Pat and Ron Smith went up and down the river, Lakes Jessup and Howell, as well as the main body of the river, in Seminole County, and Blue Springs down to Lake Harris in Volusia County, are especially good for those industries. Those long, flat lake edges make fishing times. Prize bass fishing, but no bear on the river, though, is McGirt’s Creek near Jacksonville.

YELLLOW RIVER

If you can’t find a fish and feel the need to test your skill and the limits of all them all, the main body of Yellow River, near Santa Rosa County, is the place for you. Black bass are hitting in bait and artificial lures every day from around twice a.m. until 4 in the afternoon. Fish steep with any underwater plug and your luck will probably be good. A John Dillinger, or a Black and White is sure to bring success. But don’t take our word for it, ask Judge A. L. Johnson, of Milton. The judge caught some of the finest catches of the month there in January.

Florida wildlife

Past Hunting Season Featured Humor, Weirdness and Tragedy

The curtain fell on Florida’s hunting season this month. Some of the antics of the players are sure to be retail in the yarn-wrapping sessions in state hunting circles.

Take Austin Graham, Lakeland, who shot and killed a guil that never came through. Most quail hunters know a hell shot in the head will often glide down the brush and doesn’t do too. He plowed a flog which followed the pattern. But as Graham waited for the fall a hawk spied the bird and scooped it out of the peak of its rise, and made off with it.

Then Elmo S. Solomon of St. Augustine, will also have a good story to spin. It turns out the bird was killed during the summer months. Solomon’s turkey call proved realistic and, in another hunter.

ABcroft Carter, number of another hunting party, thought he was a turkey and shot him at close range with another four shot. Solomon was so seriously wounded he couldn’t be rescued for two hours.

In the hospital his condition improved, but medical authorities wouldn’t allow him to go to another hunting party.

FISHING THE EASY WAY

A Florida bass fisherman had a tanpop jump into his boat last month. Johnny Johnson, fishing guide of Panama, hooked a 45-pound tanpop while fishing with red-and-red in the salt water bays of Wakulla County’s Otter Creek. The tanpop took the plug, divined under a log and pulled at it. Then, not realizing the plug was free, it leaped into the air and landed in Johnson’s boat.

The guide intends to mount the specimen’s head.

Moore Haven Schedules Bass Day Celebration

The annual celebration of Lake Okeechobee’s bass day in Southeast Indian language, will be held at Moore Haven on February 16th. The bass day of Florida’s most famed game fish.

On the program this year is a National Championship, "Tarter Calling contest," "gator calling contest," and a state-wide duck calling affair. There will also be plug and flash casting contests for distance and accuracy, and both inboard and outboard motor boat racing.

Southeast Indians will be guests of honor at the day’s festivities which will feature a cracker barbecue with swamp cloggs at the table. The program gets underway at 1:30 P.M., and the games, tournaments for Florida are invited.

Send FLORIDA WILDLIFE to a friend!

Send FLORIDA WILDLIFE to a friend!
FLORIDA BALD EAGLE
(Continued from Page 7)

Many landowners, when clearing their land for market gardens, frequently have an "eagle tree" in mind. I sometimes wonder if this is wise, for the reason that frequently when the bird is incubating, men working close to the nest for a few days, keep the eagle off her eggs, which become chilled and do not hatch. I have seen this happen frequently. It might be better to eat the tree and thus have the birds locate again in wooded areas which, unfortunately, are becoming scarcer each year.

I know of eight nests that are very close to houses. The bald eagle is not a suspicious bird as building construction approaches closer and closer to its nesting tree, the bird, quite willing to be friendly, sticks to its nest.

I find that police, both in Ontario and Florida, give splendid cooperation in the protection of the bald eagle. I learned this through being arrested three times in one month in Florida. People who saw me climbing up an eagle nesting tree would report to police that a man was robbing the nest. The chiefs of police on the west coast of Florida all knew me, usually assure the worried informer that the "Eagle Man" is not doing anything.

The young eagles start their northern migration under a great disadvantage. They have become accustom-
ed to people and are not wary. Each year, I regret to say, I receive recoveries, particularly of bald eagles, that were raised in nests near human habitations. The first recovery I received came from the town of Poultney, New York. It was from a nest that was in one of the Florida nests near a house.

Recently, recoveries of Florida eagles have been reported in northern Ontario and one from 300 miles north of Winnipeg, Manitoba. I believe that many young Florida eagles move right up into the sub-arctic regions for the summer.

The Florida eagle is decreasing so rapidly that next year or the next 11 years I would not care to attempt to band another 1,111 eagles, even if I remain physically able to do so. Unfortunately, there will not be enough nests in the old banding territory to even approach those figures.

The daily grass fires in Florida destroy much timber. On February 14, 1949, I found an eagle tree badly burned at the base. It was a high tree and I wondered if it were wise to climb it, but I took the chance. Mr. Harry S. Slocomb of St. Petersburg sent word and he wrote me later that the tree fell on April 6, killing the young eagles. Incidentally, this raises the 1949 nestling mortality from 65 to 66 nests. I was saddened by this report, but glad that I was not included.

The eagle in Florida feeds mainly on fish and seems to prefer the catfish, which is not especially sought by anglers. Most fishermen are willing to participate if the birds are welcome to them. I have found as many as 19 catfish brought in by eagles in one place.

I have talked to many people who raise chickens and other domestic birds and they all tell me that the eagles do not bother their poultry. Some may be the exception, but I have examined the contents of some 900 nests and only twice have I found the remains of domestic fowl. One year I tethered a live chicken below a nest and hid in a blind to try and get a photograph of an eagle. I am sure that the adult birds saw the chicken but they did not bother it. I have never found any remains of quail in eagle nests.

If we are to save the Florida bald eagle from its present rapid decline, we must first set aside forested tracts in that state where the birds can continue to nest undisturbed. Although it is legally protected there, we also must see to it that the laws protecting it are so rigidly enforced that the inexcusable killing of these great birds is ended.

STICKS AND STONES
(Continued from Page 2)

WANTS ARCHERY LEGISLATION

Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading the current issue of your book and you have my sincerest compliments. Mr. Dan Dolack's article "Take a Tip from the Bobcat" was particularly appealing to me since I used to be an archery fan.

My work—and Uncle Sam—has taken me out of Florida on two separate occasions and I lost my opportunities to participate in this swell sport. I have never killed any form of game with arrows but I would like to. Would you please tell me if any legislation has been attempted thus far that would either set up a specific area closed only to bowmen? Some has been attempted, just what would be necessary to institute it and what would the chances be of seconding a proposition.

C. J. WILLIAMS
Editor, PENINSULAR LIGHT
Jacksonville

I suggest you archery enthusiasts, place your pressure on the Game, Fish and Forest Commission when it meets to set the hunting regula-
tions—(ED.)

ONE MISPLACED BEAR HUNTER

Dear Sir:
The December issue of your magazine contained an error in the bear hunting story, Bud Dowling, credited with being the first to shoot a bear, he lives in Baker County, not Taylor County.

He lives in what is known as the Taylor community, which doesn't have an office but does have a very nice country school. Mr. Dowling killed all his bears in Baker and Columbia Counties. He and his wife, who lives at Taylor, hunt together and the two of them killed 20 bears last year, possibly more.

LESTER MIKEL
Morrison

ORCHIDS FOR BILL SNYDER

Dear Sir:

I am a subscriber to Wildlife and like it very much. I was especially interested this month in the article by Bill Snyder, "The Man Who Grows Wild Or-
chids," Snyder has a very clever way of introducing his subject; then he handles it in a very interesting manner, as I wish you would compliment him for me.

A. H. HARBIN
Daytona Beach

Send FLORIDA WILDLIFE to a friend!

FEBRUARY, 1950

Tampa Man Named Head of Game Board For the Coming Year

Gecil M. Webb of Tampa was elected chairman of the State of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission at its annual organization meeting January 23. He succeeds L. G. Morris, of Monticello.

At the meeting permanent rules for issuing commercial fishing permits were set up for Lake Okeechobee and the St. John's River. Fishermen in these areas have been doing supervised netting on an experimental basis for two years.

Only slight changes were made in establishing the permanent rules. Non-game fish such as catfish, shad, and bream, may be sold on annual permits issued only in December and June.

New hours for fishing are from 3 A. M. to 5 P. M. daily which will give more than the daylight hours regulations of the temporary rules.

Hoop nets will be permitted on the St. John's River for the first time but no other areas were included in this ruling.

Nearly 70,000 acres of land owned by the International Paper Company, St. Joe Paper Company and small valley landhold-
ers will be opened by the commission.

The dollar lease permits the commission, the hooper to pay the state a dollar for each pound of fish weighing $1.75 a pound, with the remainder being split by the state and the county. The new permit will provide the area with special fire protection.

Three-year-old Bobby Tann and W. E. Miller of Lexington, Ky., examine a 91-pound bass taken in Lake County's Dead River.

More Arrests Made This Year With Fewer Game Wardens

More arrests were made with fewer wild-
life officers this year, according to compara-
tive figures for December of the past three years.

The records show a 51 per cent jump in arrests during the December period compared to December of 48. They also show a 26 per cent in number of enforcement officers in field service.

Similarly, arrests showed a six per cent increase over December of 47 with a five per cent cut in force compared to that period.

Director Coleman Newman attributed the rise to the following factors:

a) The early snow on the ground, which would attract the birds into the fields, roads, etc.
b) The increased number of the state's wardens.N

DIRECTIONS TO SEADUCK MILL LOCATION

To Seaduck Mill, take US 15 South to Seaduck. Continue south a mile and look for the mill to the left.

FINISHED SIZE:
11"x14"
300 lines

two columns

Leaders Change Daily In Indian River Fish Tourney At Vero Beach

Leaders in the boating are: Smith, Chester O. Hale, of Brevard, N. Y., 6-9 for the week, and 15 pounds, skipjack, by Robert A. Herle also of Fortochester, king mackerel, Ron Bory, Bel, Broom, 51 lbs., Spanish mackerel, Billy Cline, Family, 41 lbs., and 15 pound blackfish caught by R. S. Swain. Other leaders are: John Engle, 9 lbs., Paul, 5 pounds, pompano, Joe Mayos, 45 pounds, ladyfish, George Manning, 2 pounds, and speckled perch, B. F. Holland, 1 lb. 5 ounces. Mary Jean Todd and G. P. Grant tied at 5 pounds with crappie jack emerald. An intermediate taker prize was award-
ed Robert R. Lee for his 17 pound 14 ounce perch caught with a surf-casting at Vero Beach. Waddie Walker's 7 pound 12 ounce black bass also won an intermediate taker prize. A 245 pound channel bass caught by Hugh Corrigan still leads for the special artificial bait prize.

An albino deer was reported sighted by several actors on north Florida's Big Bend Military Reservation at the beginning of hunting season. No one got a shot at it, though.
State and Federals 
Arrest 213 Duck, 
Dove Law Violators 

State and federal game wardens made 213 arrests in Florida for violations of the migratory bird regulations during the 1949-50 season, Collier Newman, state game and fresh water fish commission director, has announced. The season on waterfowl ended Jan. 7, and dove season closed Jan. 15.

Newman said 127 cases were filed in state courts and 86 turned over to the U.S. fish and wildlife service for disposition in federal court. Of the total arrests 139 were for illegal taking of ducks. The remainder were for violation of dove and marsh hen regulations.

The director said the most prevalent single offense, 42 instances throughout the state, was shooting waterfowl from motorboats. Other frequent violations were shooting after the legal hunting hours, and hunting dove on closed days.

Leon County with 40 arrests led the state in number of violations. Putnam was next with 21 and Duval third with 18.

Fourteen-pound Bass Takes First Prize In Hillborough Contest

A 14-pound, 2 ounce bass caught by Paul Surrency, of Plant City, took first prize in the Hillsborough Fish and Game Club fishing contest last month.

Surrency's fish was caught on the Withlacoochee River on a black and white Eiger Dillinger. Other winners in the men's division were A. V. Yancey, second, 12 pounds, eight ounces; R. L. McAlahey, third, 12 pounds; Eugene Turner, fourth, 10 pounds, eight ounces; Jim Branch, fifth, 16 pounds.

In the women's division, Mrs. D. R. Eelman took top honors with a bass weighing 11 pounds, nine ounces. Mrs. J. E. Edenfield took second place with a seven and a half pounder, and Mrs. Jim Branch came in third with a seven pounder, two ounces.

The juniors were led by a slip of a girl, Betty Joan Combs, who caught a 11 pound, 13 ounce bass. Second was Marvin Prevett with a nine and a half pounder and Bobby Van's two and a half pounder brought him in third.

Most catches recorded in the contest included a 16 and a half pound catfish, a one pound 15 ounce speckled perch, and a one pound four ounce shad-kicker.

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Ocala Hunt Deer Meat Brought $10 A Pound

Ocala's deer hunt this year, says Dr. W. Mather, wildlife biologist and hunt director. That's what 8,375 minnows paid in licenses, hunting equipment, gas and incidentals to get a shot at Mr. Deer. Nearly $350,000 was the estimated total amount spent.

Youths bagged 59 deer and the adults 251. All told, they loaded on truck, tender, or car hood, 35,000 pounds of deer.

Stuart Catfish Tourney Held In "Veep's" Honor

When Vice President Allen W. Barkley referred to himself as "just an old channel cat", the Stuart Sailfish Club took him at his word and organized a catfish tournament for the Martin County beneficiaries.

O. C. Smith, president of the Sailfish Club, received permission from the "Veep" to name the tournament in his honor, after he explained that the tournament was to provide a "fair deal" to the boys and girls under 14 who couldn't participate in the expensive sport of sailfishing.