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FLORIDA WILDLIFE
DECEMBER, 1950

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COMMERCIAL VS. SPORTS

Dear Sir:

I was very much surprised to receive your letter calling my attention to the expiration of my subscription to your splendid magazine and I regret to inform you that I will not be renewsing my subscription any more until the Game Department changes its present program of codding the commercial fishermen at the expense of the sports fishermen.

I have always subscribed to your magazine, not only for myself, but for my three boys, none of which will be renewed this year, but do I hope you can find at least four trappers to take our place on your subscription list.

Each day that fish traps are permitted to operate on the St. Johns River with the blessings of our celebrated biologists who seem to have taken over our Game Department, they are driving tourists out of Florida and depriving the local citizens and sportmen of one of their finest recreations. The sportsmen who are making it possible for the Game Department to operate through their purchase of hunting and fishing licenses are being made the laughing stock of the Nation.

You have my permission to publish this letter.

W. HOMER SMITH
Tax Assessor
Volusia County

SALTLESS

Dear Sir:

I did not fail to send $1.00 to renew my subscription to FLORIDA WILDLIFE because I had too much to do. Primarily, I am a salt-water fisherman, and even with 40 pages instead of 30 pages, FLORIDA WILDLIFE can find no space for salt-water fishing, therefore, no subscription from me.

RICHARD WARD
Pine-A-Galle

Happy Hunter. Laughter
made tears, displays his
fishing cap in front of his
store, upper left. ""
During this season filled to the brim with the spirit of "Peace On Earth, Good Will Toward Men," I have been faced with the problem of making a momentous decision. As a result, with the ringing of the New Year’s bells, I will relinquish my position of editor of FLORIDA WILDLIFE and take over a brand new position at Silver Springs.

Someway or other, in giving up my editorial duties, I leave no fear whatsoever for the future of FLORIDA WILDLIFE. I know it will be taken over by safe, careful hands. I know too that the magazine is destined to grow and prosper. I have confidence that in each succeeding year FLORIDA WILDLIFE will assume more and more importance in welding the structure for an understandable and workable conservation program. I’m certain too that the program will result in Florida being retained as the last wildlife frontier in North America and, at the same time, guarantee to your kids and mine the same hunting and fishing thrills you and I have enjoyed in the Sunshine State.

Naturally, during my association with the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission for nearly four years, I have learned considerable about the problems involved in wildlife conservation. I have turned an understanding ear to the problems propagated by our sportsmen. I have carefully observed our five-man Commission tackle the problems as they were presented.

It would be foolhardy for me to argue that the Commission members have made no mistakes in handling those problems. They have made plenty of them. On the other hand, they have racked up an imposing list of successful decisions in formulating rules and regulations designed to guarantee the thrill of hunting and fishing for future generations. During my lifetime I’ve observed that the fellow who never makes a mistake is the same one who is doing nothing.

It’s true too that the five members of our Commission haven’t always been able to see eye to eye with each other in the solution of many of the problems that have confronted them. For my money, such a situation is to be cheered—not criticized!

I wouldn’t give a lead nickel for a Commission filled with "yes" men. It is American tradition and the American way of life that permits them to voice their personal opinions, be they right or wrong. The days when free speech and free thinking are taken away from our Commission members will mark the beginning of a "robot" reign and very likely the beginning of the end of conservation of our wildlife heritage.

During recent months, reams of newspaper publicity have centered around members of the Game Commission. Some of it contained wholesome, sensible suggestions. On the other hand, too much of it dealt with personalities rather than attempting to present the answers to the perplexing problems facing the Commission. Meanwhile, some good suggestions along with many stern, blunt demands have been heard from Florida sportsmen too. The constructive suggestions came from true sportsmen who have an undisputed and vital interest in the future of our wildlife. Too many stern demands came from a handful of sportsmen who are interested in taking fish and game with the same lack of thought and restrictions experienced ten or twenty years ago — restrictions that resulted in today’s perplexing problems of restoration and conservation of wildlife.

Now, I’m wondering why the December theme of “Good Will Toward Men” wouldn’t be the background for solving our conservation programs wisely and sensibly? If this same theme were followed carefully 12 months a year by sportsmen and Commission alike, I’m sure these problems could be solved in an orderly, well-planned program completely lacking the results of common bickering and selfish personal greed. I’m convinced that if “Good Will Toward Men” is a good idea in December, then it would be a swell one too in June or September. Lack of this feeling can well spell the doom of conservation — game law enforcement and eventually our God-given heritage, the last remaining wildlife frontier in North America.

In giving up my editorial duties, I do so with a lasting respect for the Game Commission and the things it stands for — a wholesome feeling of friendliness toward our vast sportsmen’s fraternity — an underlying interest in taking a small role in handling down a bigger and better wildlife heritage to my children and yours.

Good Will Toward Men!
Hunters who violate the game laws have long been recognized as the great enemy of wildlife but there is another enemy perhaps more to be feared—the scourge of wildfire in the woods.

And how does wildfire injure our game birds and animals? By destroying their food and cover; by destroying their nests and lairs of the young, and by destroying the birds and animals that are often trapped by the flames.

Every year, thousands of acres of woodlands are burned over by wildfire and every acre that is burned over takes its deadly toll. Last year for instance, more than 30,000 wildfires burned over about 4,560,000 acres. And that's covering a lot of ground! Just what the actual loss to wildlife was in numbers killed cannot be definitely fixed. But these things that state foresters and wildlife biologists agree on—and that is that casualties were terrific.

By CHARLES W. CHALKER
(Florida Forest Service)

Through these agencies, thousands of colorful posters are placed where they may be seen best. Newspapers carry stories and articles pointing out the dangers of wildfire. Public spirited citizens give lectures and speak over the radio. By all practical media, the message of forest fire prevention is hammered home to the people—people who, themselves, are guilty of starting 98 percent of all woods fires.

Records of the Florida Forest Service for last year show that Mother Nature started only 1.6 percent of all woods fires. But even more important to know, people caused 78.3 percent of all woods fires deliberately.

Little can be done to stop those who set fires on purpose, although a steady campaign of education plus vigorous enforcement of Florida's forest fire laws is being carried out. However, something can be and is being done to bring down the number of fires started carelessly.

The slogan of the annual forest fire prevention campaign this year is: Our Most Shameful Waste! Remember—Only you can prevent woods fires.

Comparatively little research has been done in Florida on the damage to wildlife from uncontrolled woods fires but this field is wide open for investigation. There is no doubt, however, that the damage and loss to wildlife is very great when it is known that the woodlands suffer wide damage every year. If over 3,000,000 acres of woodlands were burned last year, as was the case, then you can be certain that 3,000,000 acres of food and cover for wildlife were destroyed.

Even the smallest of fires creeping through the woods, burns nests, lagoons, and destroys the vegetable content of the soil, thereby important sources of food and cover.

There is a type of burning, however, that can be beneficial. This is called "controlled burning." Forestors have used it for 10 to 15 years to improve forest stands under certain conditions. Wildlife authorities have also used "controlled burning" to aid wildlife. Notable among these is Herbert L. Stoddard, the widely known authority on quail. Stoddard found that by burning lightly in selected places and in such a way that the entire tract is spot-burned every three or four years, he could get a more valuable stand of food plants for quail. But it must be remembered that such "controlled burning" should be done by experts. Under these conditions, fire may prove beneficial; wildfire, however, is always harmful.

Many farmers and woodland owners have set woods fires in the mistaken belief that they could get rid of screw worms, that injure their cattle, as well as ticks and ball weevils, and even snakes. But on the basis of the present available information wildlife does not get rid of these pests. There is no evidence that the type of wildfire that usually burns in the state does any harm to snakes. Most woods fires in Florida burn so slowly that they usually have time to retreat to their holes or get out of the path of the fire.

Therefore, the only conclusion that can be drawn about wildfires is that they destroy wildlife, either directly or indirectly by destroying its food and cover.

Hunters, fisherman, hikers, campers, woodcutters, and farmers can prevent the majority of woods fires if they will. They actually cause 98 percent of them.

Actually, wildfire in our woodlands has destroyed Nature's balance on the scales of wildlife existence. In the natural habitat, Nature maintains a balance between predators and game animals, but where woods fires destroy food and cover, the balance is upset. In the natural habitat, field rats and mice, and other bowing rodents provide much of the food for predators. But where the duff or leaf litter is burned, the floor forest is burned away by hungry flames; these ground rodents have no homes—those not destroyed by flames. Even squirrels may be tempted to seek new homes, for their too, is destroyed by fire.

So it is that preventive measures on game animals when Nature's balance is upset. But even then, in time, the Forest Service or other public agencies can seek new homes—or will be destroyed by fire.

Therefore, Florida's sportmen can say with Smokey Bear that burning is OUR MOST SHAMEFUL WASTE. And if they don't, maybe the Forest Service will come let them help PREVENT WOODS FIRES.
by
Ged Yates, Jr.

A frenzied chorus of gears clashing, mud splattering, and engines screaming, hot-rod buggies of a highly-specialized breed rumbled their awkward way into Naples to compete in the recent Second Annual Swamp Buggy Race. Especially designed by motor maniacs, swamp buggies are built around engines which have been hot-rod or soup-up to turn out the greatest amount of power and speed that it is possible to get out of the motor. Indigenous to Florida, they are designed for traveling the wildest reaches of the vast Florida Everglades swamps. Rough, rugged machines, they conform to no conventional pattern, being similar to each other only in their ultimate purpose.

Manufactured from any stray piece of vintage machinery the designer can lay hands on, they usually end up being high-slung, short-coupled, low geared gadgets equipped with huge bomber tires. Resembling some long extinct monster when finished, they are capable of traveling the worst country the great liquid center of the Everglades can produce.

Unusual as the machine itself is, the annual Swamp Buggy Race sponsored by the Naples Chamber of Commerce. The race comes as the dramatic and mud-drenched climax of a full day of festivities including parades, turkeyhoots, beauty contests, dances, picnics, and ball games.

The race is staged in the celebrated “Mile O’ Mud”, located two miles east of Naples proper. The course is a dismal morass. It magnifies every obstacle found in the Everglades, Water, greasy slick mud, felled timber, and matted sawgrass stretch for a quarter of a mile before the grandstands. Twenty-eight swamp buggies of 28 different designs competed in the muddy classic this year before an audience of 3,000 cheering fans.

Photos by
Morris Monts De Oca
Florida Advertising Commission

Shovels and saws, grunt and howl, of Male Train ain’t a-goin’ to leave.
Roaring down the final lap, they jockey for a winning place.
Spin ‘em slowly, Jocko, they ain’t got the boat of us, ya’ll.

The race is divided into two classes. The conventional two-wheeled drive vehicles, and four-wheeled, or tandem, drive machines. Four qualifying heats are driven in each class. The victors of each of the four heats then hold a wild and high-speed run-off to determine the winner. The final race of the day is a free-wheeling contest between the winning two-wheeled buggy and the winning tandem-drive machine.

Bounding to a mud splattered victory in the two-wheeled class, and also winning the free-for-all race, was Harry Love of Miami. Love drove his stripped down “Balloon Tire Bounder”, a mechanical combination of a Texas jackrabbit and a Mississippi steamboat.

Driving one of the powerful behemoths also takes a certain amount of cold-nerved skill. The winning driver is usually the one who has learned all the tricks of working his vehicle around, over, through, and across the gooey mile-long track.

Swamp-buggy racing also takes a gay, no-holds-barred attitude on the part of both audience and participants. Racing fans, dressed in their “Sunday best,” have been known to become so excited during the course of a race that they jump out of the grandstands, race across the slopes of the course, and bend a shoulder to the shore of freeing a mired buggy.

Most of the winning drivers seem to be of the flamboyant type—they have to be, for the race is speedy, wild, spectacular and funny at the same time. And, of course, there are always a few sad parts, like the sure winner who came in last, and the man who hurt himself when he fell off the jouncing rig.

The annual race draws attention from all types of camera experts—newswrap, television, still and expert cameras are everywhere. The combined novelty and excitement of the race also makes it a natural for publicity purposes.
MINING FOR BASS

Fortunes have been made from the discovery of mines that produced precious stones or metals. Millions of people have profited from the production of mines that produced valuable substances of one kind or another. Other millions of people have also profited from the by-products of various mining operations. These are well known facts.

But, comparatively few people know of the profits derived from one of the by-products of Central Florida’s phosphates—mining operations.

Probably nine out of 10 of the citizens of Florida could tell you that Polk County produces about 70 per cent of the phosphate that is produced in the United States, but no more than one out of 10 knows about the amazing by-product of these operations.

“Amazing” we say, for Polk County’s phosphate mines have the unusual distinction of producing fish—largemouth black bass—the most sought-after species on the lists of anglers in the country. And who ever heard of a mine that produced big bass—and in large quantities?

It is also amazing that so few people know of these “largemouth mines.” But it is, nevertheless, a fact that probably fewer than a hundred thousand people even know of the tremendous fishing opportunities offered by these operations to say nothing of having taken advantage of them.

We, ourselves, could be used as a good example of this. For we lived for more than 16 years within 50 miles of the northern boundary of the phosphate area without even dreaming of its existence. We travelled around and through the area on the way to other better known fishing areas without even dreaming that some of the biggest bass in a big bass state lay in waiting in those man-made “mountains and lakes.”

It was only after we moved into the area and had been introduced to the “pits” that we realized what we had been missing. We learned with a bang, however, when one small pool—not over six acres in area—yielded six consecutive bass which weighed over six pounds each.

Now, after some years of experience, we know that there is no more fruitful an area in the country, acre for acre, for the angler than these phosphate mines. We have learned also that there will yield at least as many big crappie (speckled perch) and

shellcrackers per acre as will any other waters.

And there are good and logical reasons for this high production. The pools are deep and clear with steep banks. There is some fertilization effect from the phosphate. Thus they are ideally suited to the game species rather than to the obnoxious “rough” species of Florida fish.

Although the area is small compared to the huge amounts of phosphate produced, being totally located in one county, there are still thousands of acres of well-stocked waters which annually produce hundreds of “lunkers.” Five to six pound bass are taken daily and hundreds of ten- or more-pounders are taken in the course of a year. While it is true that thousands of persons fish the pits annually, it is also true that it has been authoritative estimated that 95 per cent of the fish produced in the pits each year die of natural causes.

However, there is also a darker side to the picture than we have yet presented. The fame of these bass-producing mines would have been more widespread, and their opportunities more widely used, if it were not for a couple of facts.

Some of the pools are hard to reach. Most of them require the use of a boat which the angler must supply for there are no public camps. Most of the pools are within privately owned tracts and some of these are closed to the public. Some of the pits have been taken over by hyacinth.

But even this dark side is being brightened. Civic and sportsmen’s organizations are working on cooperative agreements under which the public will have access to the pools. The county, city, and private organizations are conducting a campaign aimed at the eradication of the hyacinth.

Phosphate companies which still own large areas that have been mined are cooperating with a public relations angle in mind. The future looks bright.

If the production of fish from mines is novel, so, too, is the phosphate industry itself. For one thing it is almost unbelievable to the uninstructed that such a large part of the phosphate of the country should be concentrated in the one-county area.

The huge electric-powered drag lines which remove the “overburden” and lay bare the matrix (the phosphate bearing rock) are almost unbelievable. With control cabs as big as a bungalow, they swing booms nearly 300 feet in length, and you could park your car in the scoop itself for it is as big as a garage.

This overburden, which may be any where between five and 30 feet thick, is removed and piled in ridges up to 50 feet high. This leaves a “mountain and lake” effect when the area is mined out. Since the matrix is sometimes 50 feet thick, the resulting pools are sometimes 50 feet deep.

And while the pools contain big fish, the ridges and surrounding land support various forms of wildlife. Rabbits, quail, otter, foxes, raccoons, oppossums and wildcat are all common. In fact, some of the best cat hunting in Central Florida is found in the older mined-over areas. Cats seem to like this rough country.

Oddly enough the pools are rarely, if ever, stocked with fish by man. One of the favorite questions of the area concerns the methods whereby the fish get into the newly mined pools. The answer has never been decided definitely, but the most widely accepted explanation is that the eggs or small fry of the various species are carried from one pool to another on the feet and legs of the numerous wading birds.

Be that as it may, it is nevertheless a fact that within a very short time, these really large bass are being taken on all types of tackle. To prove this for yourself all you have to do is to be at the right place at the right time with your right bait—and, maybe, hold your breath.
THE Eger BEAVERS

When the average John Fisherman planks his back down on the tackle counter and says, "I’ll take this one," it probably never occurs to him that a lot of time, effort and energy have gone into the production and marketing of that particular plug or fly.

If he thinks of anything, he probably wonders why they charge so much for a little hun of painted wood or fluff of pretty feathers. "After all," he may mutter to himself, "all they have to do is slap a few hooks and some paint on it, or tie a few feathers to a hook, and then sell it to somebody."

But you soon gain an entirely different impression when you first walk into one of Florida’s thriving bait factories like the Eger Bait Manufacturing Company of Bartow. Here you see that someone actually invests an amazing amount of perseverance and perspiration into producing the artificial lures bought and used by fishermen all over the country.

The first impression you get is that everyone, from Kenneth A. Curtis, the young vice-president in charge, down to the employees in the assembling and packing lines, has an eager attitude toward his work. Many of the employees like their jobs so well that they have been with the company almost since its inception in 1933. But the most interesting part of the factory to most persons is the opportunity to watch the evolution of a fishing bait from the rawest of materials to the finished product. From bags of feathers and yarns, pots of paints and glues, and stacks of seasoned wood and shiny metal come the beautifully finished baits and flies which make up the Eger line of fishing tackle.

To get some idea of the complicated processes involved, it is only necessary to know that the Eger fishing plugs alone, are produced in 145 different designs and patterns. This number, of course, does not take into consideration the numerous fly and bass-bug patterns which Eger is now producing as part of its new series of artificial lures for fly fishermen.

In the Eger plug known as number 315, for instance, there are five gaudy colors which must be carefully applied in a specified color scheme which cannot vary in the least from the master design. Close examination of this plug will show that it includes five separate colors: chrome yellow on the belly, light blue on the background, silverly scale markings applied lightly over the background, black for the eyes, and red on the lips and in streaks on the sides. This is the color pattern alone, and does not include all the other painstaking steps which must go into the manufacture of any plug.

But to understand how a plug is manufactured, you really have to follow it step by step from the rough plank from which it is derived to the cellophane-topped box in which it is marketed.

Eger fishing plugs start out in the back yard of the two-story building in Bartow, where long, heavy planks of red and white cedar are stacked for proper seasoning. White cedar, incidentally, is the light wood which is used in making top-water baits, while the heavier red cedar is used for under-water plugs.

In the actual manufacturing, the well-seasoned planks are first sawed into long strips about an inch square. The strips are then cut into 5-inch lengths, and these are the primary blanks from which the completed plugs gradually emerge as you watch.

The wooden blanks are then machine automatically into the proper shape and size by machines which were designed, devised or modified by Eger company employees such as H. M. Porter. Porter’s automatic machine actually turns the blank down to the proper shape, saws it off to the proper length, drills holes in it for weights and hooks and eyes, and then spews out the finished blank polished to a high gloss, all in one operation. Furthermore, the machine completes all of these operations at such high speed that it can turn out from 600 to 800 finished blanks every hour. The tolerances on this machine are set so close that the finished blank needs no further sanding, but can be used immediately.

The finished blanks then go into a water-proofing solution and, after drying, are fitted with the necessary lead weights, to balance the plug, and the hook and line eyes. The plug then receives no less than eight separate coats of varnish lacquer, and at least one additional coat of clear lacquer.

The blank, which now begins to look like a fishing plug, is then ready for the special accessories, such as hooks, guards, skirts and spinners, and the final color pattern.

All this for a dollar, yet, you say? Well, now the operations that go into the making of the finished plug begin to get complicated. When you take a look at the color-pattern room, you really begin to learn something.

Here you see that the majority of any color pattern is applied by spraying. The lacquered blank is inserted in special metal forms which are cut out to make the proper patterns when the color is sprayed on.

In a few of the Eger patterns, metal forms are not used since the coloring is so light that special processes must be used. An instance of this occurs in the No. 315 plug mentioned above, which must have a pattern of silver scales sprayed over a blue background, and each minute scale must look like a real scale, separated, perhaps by a line or a blue margin.

When I first saw this model of plug, many years ago, I wondered how such fine color markings were applied. Did a little man with a pistol paintbrush...

(Continued on Page 26)
HE-S-It! A curious sound like a leaking steam boiler came from the strikingly marked little snake. It drew its short, thick body into an awesome striking coil. Minutes later its triangular head with the sharply upturned nose and flattened neck struck viciously again and again.

By this time most any intruder would have turned tail and beat a hasty retreat. And the harmless little hog-nosed snake chalks up another moral victory.

Out of the numerous species of snakes found in Florida only the rattlesnake, the moccasin and the coral snake are poisonous, but many, like the hog-nosed snake, are so equipped that they need no poison to protect themselves from most of their enemies. Ministry, mock viciousness, and insolent attack are some of the methods used by snakes to discourage intruders.

The act of the hog-nosed snake is plenty convincing—so convincing, in fact, that many people dead it as much as the rattlesnake or the moccasin. "Spreadin' adders will kill you in a minute," say the uninformed. "If a rattler bites you, you got a chance. But, brother, say goodbye if a spreadin' adder bites you!" And Mother Nature goes shyly at the defense she has bestowed on another of her children. But that's not all. If his "poison not" fails to work, the hog-nosed snake rolls over on his back and plays "possum. To add a touch of authenticity he will even allow his tongue to dangle in the dust—a "sure sign" that he is dead.

Another snake that relies on viciousness for defense is the common blacksnake. The blacksnake is beautiful, insolent, and proud. He shows little fear for mere human beings and will often attack on little or no provocation. Head high and body flowing effortlessly, a black will glide deliberately towards an intruder. In this respect blacksnakes are exact opposites of rattlers and moccasins, which never attack. If the intruder stands his ground, he can receive a painful wound from the scores of needle-sharp teeth in the blacksnake's mouth.

Practically everybody recognizes a blacksnake on sight and realizes that it owns no death-dealing poison. But few people enjoy being attacked by a snake of any variety, so the blacksnake's bravado usually pays off. Having put his opponent to rest, the snake gives an indignant flip of his tail and goes on about his business. Most famous of the "chasing snakes" is the long, slender coypuchew as. There are few hunters, fishermen, or country dwellers who don't have a story about being chased by a coypuchew. In addition, most of them are firmly convinced that, had the snake caught them, dire consequences would have resulted. Some stories say that the coypuchew will wrap a person around a tree and whip him to death with its tail. Others claim that the coypuchew possesses a deadly stinger in its tail—a stinger capable of killing a sturdy tree if imbedded properly. These tales, are, of course, pure falsehoods. Actually the coypuchew is less harmful.

(Continued on Page 31)

by Vic Dunaway

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

DECEMBER, 1950
How About the Buck Law?

by Deane Matthes

Why do we have the so-called "buck-law" in Florida, which specifies that only buck deer with one or more visible antlers may be legally killed? Why don't we shoot doe deer, too, as are they now doing in some northern states? Will we ever have to shoot doe deer in Florida? Should Florida hunters be made to tag their deer so we have the correct hunting seasons? These questions, and many more like them, bother hunters and conservationists alike, every year when the hunting season rolls around.

Each year deer hunters suggest to wildlife officers and management area hunt officials that a portion of each season be set aside for the killing of doe deer. Most of these suggestions seem to be the sincere expression of what is considered a worthwhile practice. Perhaps some of the whims of a buck law will reduce the desire for legalized doe killing in Florida, until such a time as deer food shortages warrant it. There are two fundamental factors involved in the determination of any game-season—Safety for the sportsman and the Biology of the game. Here are some of the "whys" behind our present buck law:

Safety
Safety must be considered at all times, and is often the determining factor as far as length of season, legal game, legal guns and methods are concerned. These and other safety angles are brought out in the discussion below.

Biology
All living things, including Man, face an ultimate death of starvation, if other factors do not operate to keep the population down. Each kind of creature has the ability to reproduce itself in excess of normal losses, so long as adequate food, cover and protection are available.

In general the progress of history, in the case of deer, has been: no closed season—complete protection with no hunting—buck law, antler law—antlerless deer law. This is a natural sequence, following the exploitation of game resources as the country was settled and the human population expanded.

Protection
When it was realized that game resources were disappearing (in some cases, completely), hunting restrictions were developed. Varying periods of complete protection were established, so game could recover and make possible a periodic harvest. Where the public respected the game laws, game populations generally responded to protection, if food, cover, and breeding conditions were favorable.

Short Seasons
A very general method of controlling the number of animals killed is by regulating the length of season. Fewer hunters are able to participate in a three-day season, for example, than can take advantage of at least some portion of a two-month season. The success of a hunter in a three-day period may be greatly reduced by unfavorable weather. On the other hand, crowding hunting effort into a three-day period is not in the best interest of safety to the hunter. To have all the hunters in the woods every day or two, with the knowledge that they must succeed or wait until the next season, creates situations which inevitably lead to hunting accidents.

Bag Limits
Bag limits help to control the take each hunting season. More so, of course, where populations are numbered in tens of thousands, than in cases where they are numbered in hundreds.

Many states make their bag limits on deer, wild turkey and other relatively scarce game, more effective with a "tag" system. When the hunter buys his license, he receives one tag for each legal buck, deer, turkey, or other so regulated game. This tag must be fastened to the game before it is killed. When the tags are used up, the hunter can no longer attempt to kill or possess game requiring a tag.

Buck Law
Fortunately, hunters whose vision is good enough to permit them to safely use a gun, are usually able, in the case of deer, to tell an adult buck from a doe, yearling, or another hunter. Add to this the fact that deer are polygamous—one buck mates with several does—and you have a natural check on over-hunting with no reducing the annual production. Keep two things in mind, however: The open season must be at a time of year when the hunter can recognize buck deer, and it must be after the peak of the breeding season.

By hunting bucks only, and after most of the does are bred, the bucks so removed do not affect the ability of the population to breed. In the first place, the hunters will never kill every legal buck; secondly, the current fawn crop is half of them and are nearly antlerless and illegal—and they will mature and breed before the next hunting season.

Antler Law
Just a buck law for deer is not sufficient. Under this system, the sex organs determine the legality of the game. The ruthless antler hounds are encouraged to shoot first and then look, since he may get a "busted-headed" fawn or an old buck which has shed its antlers. Consequently these care-less hunters may wound nearby sportsmen; severe injuries are made into the fawn supply; and waste and reduced ability to produce more fawns automatically results from doe killing.

The antler law has been very successful in controlling the deer kill, as well as in maintaining and increasing the ability of the herd to produce fawns. Perhaps most important of all, it has given the hunter protection from his fellow nirnoids.

Consequently, the day of a one-deer law had best be buried forever. If the buck law is successful, the deer population can be expected to approach the limit of the food supply. When this happens, immediate action is necessary to reduce the ability to breed, since large numbers of deer cannot be artificially fed successfully. The only way to accomplish this is to reduce the population of doe deer.

When an antler law is in effect, the minimum which will be considered a "visible" antler makes a buck legal. A "visible" antler makes a buck legal. Some states require a forked antler or larger. These make the antlers visible in each case. The "visible antler" law tends to encourage the practice of shooting and then look.

Florida Wildlife

DECEMBER, 1950

(Continued on Page 33)
This is true of the copperhead, which in Florida is confined to a few counties in the northwestern portion of the state. Any books about snakes gave the range of the copperhead as extending to Florida, on the strength of a single specimen supposedly from Gainesville, sent in to the Smithsonian Institution in 1888. Later studies showed that this record was incorrect, and the copperhead was dropped from the Florida list. In 1957 one of the present writers (Allen) and a party of friends found a copperhead in Gadsden County, Florida, about 40 miles northwest of Tallahassee—the first authentic record for the state.

No others were found until 1950, when a collector for the Reptile Institute captured a second specimen in Liberty County, about 28 miles west of Tallahassee. No more copperheads have come to light from Florida! True, "copperheads" have been reported from many parts of the state; but investigation reveals that the snakes were actually baby cottonmouth moccasins, which look much like copperheads.

The copperhead lives among rocky outcroppings, thick tangles of weeds and vines, wooded ravines, or brushy hillside borders of a stream. In August or September, the female retires to a fallen log or pile of leafy debris, there to give birth to about eight or 10 living young. The babies shed the epidermis, or outer layer of the skin, a few hours after birth, and thereafter wander away to fend for themselves.

The copperhead resembles the parent in color, with one notable exception—in the young, the tip of the tail is bright yellow. The use of this yellow tail tip is truly remarkable. The young copperhead coils up in some shady nook, where its mottled pattern renders it well-nigh invisible against the background of similarly mottled fallen leaves and ground debris. The tail tip is then held aloft and set into a slow, writhing motion, like a little yellow worm. Passing frogs, lizards, or other small woodland creatures may investigate the "worm," and fail to note the outlines of the well-camouflaged copperhead. A sudden strike—and the lizard or frog becomes a meal for the little snake!

As the copperhead grows older, the tip of the tail becomes dull in color, and no longer functions as a lure. The adult snake, usually under three and a half feet in length, feeds upon mice, young

From the small, crowded store at the top, Gifford and Johnson built the large, modern tackle shop at the bottom.

Crazy like twin foxes is the only adequate label that can be pinned on Kit Johnson and Horace Gifford who operate the three-ring circus known as Florida Sporting Goods Co., Inc., in Vero Beach.

From a little, teapoy-horny hole in the wall, they have managed to build one of the largest tackle stores on the east coast of Florida by using one simple formula: "Keep 'em laughing while they fish and hunt."

To Kit and Horace, nothing is sacred, not even themselves. Most shopkeepers, when they find themselves stuck with a piece of unsalable merchandise, are inclined to hide their mistakes in the stock room, away from public eyes. Not Johnson and Gifford! They publicize their mistakes by newspapers, radio and word of mouth.

A case in point is the time they went into the shop with three enormous deep-fryers. Nobody would buy them. So they advertised the fact in a running series of ads, pointing out the huge proportions of their "Three White Elephants." In the ads, they marked them down 20 percent, and sold 75 percent, stating, with tongue in cheek, that "this is in line with the general trend of inflation all over the country, except that we never did manage to sell the freezers, but they made a small fortune in free publicity while they escaped.

Another time, Gifford got mad at Johnson about some minor detail, and immediately took to newspaper advertising to whip his battle in public. Johnson retaliated at the first chance that came along. The public laughed and laughed about it. More free publicity.

But most important of all is the fact that Johnson and Gifford are never too busy to snap up tales and humorous items with their customers. Every once in a while, one of them will decide that he knows a stranger's hook, and they promptly take time out fishing and having. This happens so often that they finally worked out a timetable of operations that is extremely simple and effective. First, Johnson goes fishing, then Gifford goes fishing. Meanwhile, the customers are left to entertain themselves, and have a good time doing it.

Not result is that the employees of Florida Sporting Goods Company may not want to see you immediately, but you'll have a fine time while you're waiting on them. One thing is sure, they don't have time to go fishing anyway. We want all selling fish-hooks in a hole in the wall in order to make enough money to go fishing ourselves. Then we started selling so many fish hooks in the place that our customers got lost among them. Now, to keep our customers happy we built a new, big store across the street. Now we're selling so many fish hooks that we don't have time to go fishing anymore. Some days you can't win for losing."

—Rud Darrow

(Continued on Page 33)
Keeping up with modern times, the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has definitely taken to the air after a preliminary year's trial with land-based light airplanes. The "flying game wardens," as the pilots are known, have proven that radio-equipped planes, working in conjunction with enforcement vehicles equipped with short-wave radios, are well worthy of recognition in game and fish management in Florida.

Covering the State's heaviest hunting and fishing areas, the fleet of airplanes and seaplanes is able to cover many thousands of acres in a short time. Constantly in contact with local wildlife officers via radio-Jeeps, violators are spotted and apprehended long before car-borne officers could even reach the scene.

Still, the flying game warden must do his primary duty, checking the sportsmen for license and legal-bag limits, as well as lending a helping hand whenever necessary.

As one fisherman indicated recently while being checked on Orang Lake: "By golly, I've seen it all now. Coming after us in a airplane. Violators had sure better get off the lakes or change their ways. You don't stand a chance against them seaplanes."

Noting Commission biologist with seine crew, Mitch flies onward to check other matters.

Obtaining high-octane gas and breaking out of kerosene are operational headaches of seaplane pilots on patrol.
Light lines will help you make nearly any lure work better. Less water resistance on the line allows you to make a larger and quicker surface bait to float higher. It might surprise you to learn how much difference that makes when you’re fishing a light line. This added depth may make the difference between making your lure work when the fish are in deep water.

Though I don’t fish the feather-light outfit, it shines its brightest when fishing is slow. When strikes are few and far between, casting with a heavy rod and reel becomes frustrating. But the fish need coaxing. On days like this, a bantam-weight rod and thin line take the “work” out of “working” for your fish; and the very satisfaction derived from effortless and accurate casting will enable you to do a good job of the persistent angling necessary to produce strikes. And when the fish are slow to strike, small lures nearly always pay off better than large lures. If Mr. Fish is wary or shy, a small, inconspicuous lure is not so apt to arouse his suspicions. Perhaps Mr. Fish just isn’t hungry. If this is the case, he’s more apt to try an appetizer than a shore dinner. As a matter of fact, even gluttons like largemouths take a major portion of their calories in the form of tidbits. Can you cast and manipulate a lure with your outfit? If not, you’re probably frittering away a great many bass that you could be catching if you had a large lure, because the fish are large lures are often productive and sometimes necessary, but you can cast large lures, too, with a light outfit.

I suppose most anglers who shy away from light tackle do so because they don’t think they can handle fish with it. The light tackle angler is largely to blame for this. Oh, he’s not quite right out and say that he takes an expert to use the light stuff. No; with the air of his outfit, he just modestly accepts such compliments as “How did you do with that light tackle?” By his very modesty and his apparent reluctance to expound on his light tackle abilities, he permits his friends to convince themselves that they’d better stick to their winches and big game reels, hug tanks, and head for deeper waters. You can’t blame him, really, after all, any angler is reluctant to share his fishing secrets with the world. You don’t tell every Tom, Dick and Harry about that never-failing hole or core where the big bass always hang out, do you?

Fishing in Florida:

**HERKOMER'S CAMP**

**QUIET AND RESTFUL IN BEAUTIFUL CENTRAL FLORIDA**

**1/2 MILE OFF U. S. HIGHWAY 41, IN HERKOMER, FLORIDA**

- Boats
- Motors
- Cabins
- Guides

Furnished Housekeeping Cottages With All Modern Conveniences

Bait at All Times and a Friendly Host and Hostess

A Sportsman's Dream Come True!

For Reservations, Write: P. O. Box 178

Hernando, Florida

DECEMBER, 1950

Please mention FLORIDA WILDLIFE when answering ads.
Orange Quail Wing

450 Miles In New Banding Program

Although it was not jet-propelled, one of Florida’s "Flying Oranges" winged its way 450 miles from Apalachicola to Miami in six days, according to Frank Winston, dove biologist of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. The orange-colored speedster, one of a flock of brightly dyed mourning doves recently released as part of a banding program, averaged 90 miles a day before being shot down by a surprised hunter.

Another dyed and banded dove was shot down near Apalachicola, while a third dove turned in the longest mileage reported to date by flying 425 miles to Lower Matecumbe Key.

Other "Flying Oranges," which are a part of a mysterious flight of doves which appear annually in Apalachicola about October 1 and then disappear within two weeks, have been reported as sighted in Fort St. Joe, 20 miles, and Bristol and Blountstown, 50 miles.

The orange doves have brought some unusual reactions from hunters and bird-watchers all over the state, Winston said. One hunter reported that he had shot a bird that looked like a dove but was colored yellow, and then wanted to know if he could cross-breed a yellow dove with a yellow canary. The answer was, "No."

Other observers have confused the doves with every type of bird up to and including African rainbow pigeons.

"Actually," Winston said, "the doves so far reported have undoubtedly flown much farther than the airline miles between the releasing spot and the area of report, what with feeding and erratic flying."

No definite conclusions have been as yet drawn by state biologists from the novel banding program, since much more work will be needed before the flyways and migratory habits of the doves are determined, Winston stated.

Another flight of 200 doves will be banded, dyed bright red, and released in the South Florida area to help establish the northerly migration of the doves.

"In any event," Winston said, "it’s certain that dove hunters will be seeing red and orange spots before their eyes this hunting season. We hope that they will cooperate in the program by reporting all such birds sighted, and returning any bands found on doves killed."

Steinhatchee and Gulf Hammock Area

Open to Hunting

The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission conducted controlled hunts on the Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area in Levy County and the newly acquired Steinhatchee Wildlife Management Area in Dixie, Lafayette and Taylor Counties. G. E. Frye, Chief Wildlife Biologist, reported.

Purchases of a special $5.00 permit may be made on either or both areas. These permits are required in addition to the regular state or county hunting license. Persons exempt by law from buying the regular hunting license must still purchase a special permit in order to hunt on these management areas.

Permits may be purchased from the County Judge at Mayo, Cross City, or Bronson. Permits may also be purchased at Hotel Hammock at Gulf Hammock, Summer's at Inglis, and the Hines checking station entrance in Dixie County. Sale of permits begins November 16.

The season opens November 23 and continues through January 5. The first four days will be open, with Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays closed thereafter, except that migratory waterfowl may be hunted every day during the Federal regulated season. Closing day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day are open for hunting. Frye explained.

On the two management areas there is a special season's bag limit of one (1) bobwhite and two (2) turkey gobblers. Bag limits on all other game species are in accordance with rules and regulations established by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Hunters will be checked in and out of the management areas. Those desiring to camp must do so on designated camp sites. Maps furnished with the permits will show the location of checking stations, camp sites, and access roads.

This is the second year in which a controlled bobwhite hunt has been conducted on the 120,000 acre Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management area in Levy County. The Steinhatchee Area is being managed under a controlled hunt plan for the first time.

The opening of the Steinhatchee Wildlife Management Area has made possible through agreements between the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, P. C. Crapps & Son, and the Consolidated Naval Stores Company, Inc., for the establishment of controlled hunting on approximately 160,000 acres of these lands in Dixie, Lafayette and Taylor Counties. Adjoining the south side of the management area in Dixie County is the Bay Scuttle Fire Control Cutover on which no hunting will be permitted.
Fishing

**Get-together Series Initiated by Palm Beach Sportsmen**

**DELRAY BEACH**—John E. Thomsen, president of the Palm Beach County Sportmans Club, initiated a series of get-together meetings with other county Sportmans Clubs recently. The meet was held recently at the Boca Raton Road Clubhouse, according to Dr. C. W. Vogler, hunting chairman.

Mr. Thomsen and other members of the Broward County Rod and Gun Club and the Palm Beach County Sportsman’s Club, along with program chairman, introduced Carl Merckwold, president of the Palm Beach County Sportsmen Club.

Two thousand two hundred and eighty-four eggs had been collected, and it is hoped they will be released at the end of this month. The eggs were incubated and the program is being handled by the Palm Beach County Sportsmen Club.
Outdoor Writers Select Fred Jones As 1951 President

Fred W. Jones, outdoor columnist for the LAKELAND LEDGER, was recently elected president of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association during an annual meeting held at Naples. Jones succeeded Paul G. Main, outdoor columnist for the FLORIDA TIMES-UNION.

Allen Carson, MIAMI HERALD fishing editor, was re-elected vice-president, Bob Dahane, associate editor of FLORIDA WILDLIFE, former treasurer, took over the combined position of secretary-treasurer.

District directors selected by the outdoor writers included: First District—Ray Ally, TIMES fishing editor, St. Petersburg; Second District—Kenneth A. Friedman, Poster Arts Displays, Inc., Jacksonville; Third District—Charles H. Anderson, FLORIDA WILDLIFE picture editor, Tallahassee; Fourth District—Rayneville, STATION WKMV Kangaroo, Miami Beach; Fifth District—John W. Dillin, MARINE STUDIES public relations, Miami; Marine District—one post-past-president Paul Main also serves on the board of directors.

For its 1951 meetings, the Association will be host to the State Convention in Lakeland in April, Sarasota in July, and Ft. Pierce in October for the annual meeting.

Joel L. McKinnon

Appointment of Joel L. McKinnon, of Quincy, as administrative assistant in charge of the Florida Pro-Fish Commission fiscal department, was announced recently by Director Coleman Newbrough.

McKinnon succeeded Burt Pearse, whose recent resignation became effective Nov. 9. For six years McKinnon was associated in the packing field of the State Department of Agriculture. He was a member of Alpha Kappa Psi, a business fraternity.

During World War II McKinnon served more than three years with the U. S. Army Field Artillery. Nine months of this time was spent in the European theater of operations.

Florida Game Commission since 1947, resigned to accept "a more herculean task in private business."

Expert Angler

(Continued from Page 15)

down to landing size. The very fact that a light outfit is light will tend to force you to fish properly with it. The limber rod will help compensate for any shortcomings you might have as a reel handler, and the light line will make it necessary for you to keep your rod in proper compensating position—you know you must keep it up, or else!

If there is ever a situation requiring greater skill than handling a heavy fish with light tackle, the problem of keeping the fish out of snags or other obstructions is it. This problem is common, as large, mettle-some fish are frequently contacted in weedy or snag-filled areas. Actually, though, the requirement here is for judgment rather than technique, for a fish with the contrary notwithstanding, a fish is a fairly dim-witted creature. When he runs for a pile of brush or a weed-bed, he's not trying to foul the line; he's looking for a place to hide. If there's deep open water near, there's a good chance that he'd rather hide there than in the brush. This is where the judgment comes in. If at any time during the fight he starts for deep water, let him go. Once in the deep water, he'll probably fight himself out of there. If your fish does manage to break cover, release all tension from him immediately. You'll be amazed at the way he'll swim out from the obstruction of his own line and head for deep water. Sure, you'll be giving him a slack line, but what do you think they put harpoons on hooks for? Oh, you can horse a fish away from snags more efficiently with heavy gear than you can with light, but the light stuff will do a beautiful job of letting the fish swim the line clear of his own power. Give this a bit of thought. Is it not a fact that a hooked fish is less likely to go over the edge if the force is pulling at him in the purely instinctive manner of pulling away from it? Take the pressure away from him and he'll no longer feel anything to pull away from. Any big-game game angler experienced with light tackle will understand if there is a three-thread work will confirm this.

Landing a fish with lightweight casting tackle takes more time than it does with heavy stuff. Why won't you mind this; you're fishing mainly for the pleasure of playing a fish, aren't you? And when the prolonged pleasure of having a fish on, there is a very definite advantage to the longer fight. Fewer fish will be brought to the boat "green", and with bait, live-ditch, boatside struggle (where many big ones gain their freedom) will be largely eliminated. You'll have to play your fish down to a state of exhaustion, and landing him will be a lot easier with it. With heavy gear, the tendency is to rush a large fish, very strong, and it's all too easy to tell-them-when you attempt to land him.

Wherever you rely on the strength of your tackle for playing a fish, you're taking a chance on tearing the hooks out of his mouth. Most fish-fish learn easily, and a large percentage of the "big ones that got away" have scars to prove it. For this reason alone, light tackle casting would make a better job of holding fish than would heavy. The advantages such as better casting and lure manipulation, ability to increase line capacity are gravy. Light tackle makes angling easier, not more difficult, large fish, not fewer. Try it, and you will discover how many it is to be an "angle-bay". And some body asks you how in the world you landed that big fish with such light line, don't tell him!

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY FISHING

We Have Baby-Sitters and Fenced Playgrounds for the Children

Modern Housekeeping Cottages Right on the Lake with Electric Refrigerators, Gas Stoves and Hotel Beds.

You'll enjoy the best fishing in Florida. . . . Your wife will be pleased, your children happy and safe.

GRIFFIN'S PRO-FISH

New Plywood Boats . . . New Motors . . . . and Boy What Bass!!

We also have a huge Deep Freeze in which to store your catch!

On Famous Lake Tsala Apopka, Citrus County, between Inverness and Floral City, on U. S. Highway 41

Write: J. J. Griffls, Floral City, Florida

DECEMBER, 1950

Please mention FLORIDA WILDLIFE when answering ads.
**Withlacoochee Game Reserve To Be Restocked for 1953**

DADE CITY—Delegates from Pasco, Hernando, and Sunner Counties, along with representatives of the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and Soil Conservation Service, have agreed to a 5-year restocking program for the portion of the Withlacoochee Land Use Project which lies east of U. S. 301—after which time the area will be opened to all hunters.

This area has been closed to hunting for the past 17 years, but was scheduled to be opened to controlled hunting this season, after State Representative Brooks Favre had supported the inclusion of the hunting area in the Soil Conservation Service. The State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission agreed to the request last summer, but left the decision to the Soil Conservation Service.

The Soil Conservation Service said that the only game in the area that would stand hunting—although the area has been closed for 17 years—was quail, and held a series of public meetings in the three counties to determine what the individual counties wanted done about the reserve.

The first meeting was held in Pasco County October 24, and local sportmen voted overwhelmingly for the opening of the area not only to quail, but several years ago, the county wisely selected a place to vote at a meeting in Hernando County.

Recently, Sunner County, at the meeting, voted against opening the area, which state representatives of Hernando County voted to open the area for hunting after the three year period, even if the area is still closed to hunting.

### FISCAL REPORT

**GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION**

**OCTOBER 31, 1950**

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### GEORGE'S FISH CAMP

**BAYCRAFT BOAT WORKS**

**LAGO, FLORIDA**

CUSTOM AND PRODUCTION BUILT OUT-BOARD, RUNABOUTS, AND CAR-TOP FISHING BOATS

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**CAUTION:** Please mention FLORIDA WILDLIFE when answering ads.
Florida Wildlife Federation Elects Officers at Welaka

WELAKA.—Porter Lansing, of Sanford, was recently elected president of the Florida Wildlife Federation during the annual meeting held here. C. W. Pace, Daytona Beach, was named treasurer, while Lincoln L. Jacobs, DeLand, was elected recording secretary and Ralph G. Cooksey, St. Petersburg, was elected executive director.


Elected as councilmen at large were C. W. Pace, Porter Lansing, and Henry Douglass of Orlando. Executive councilmen at large elected were M. F. Wooten, Cocoa; A. B. Levy, Milton, and Theodore Stevens, DeLand.

Elected as members of the general council were Clayton C. Grimes, S. L. Craft, A. D. Bailey and Hall Davis. Elected as members of the executive council were William Williams, Mrs. D. R. Bowman, Ralph G. Cooksey and Lincoln L. Jacobs.

In its three-day meeting, the group discussed the need for representatives to work through the vice-presidents of each district in helping to carry out the Federation program for the year.

Highlighting the annual meeting was the speakers slate which included Colman Newbarker, head of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission; Carl D. Shoemaker, conservation director of National Wildlife Federation; Captain Roger Rogan, executive secretary of Florida Forest and Park Association, Bad Jackes, field representative of National Wildlife Federation; Dr. W. B. Smith, Miami University Director of Marine Laboratories.

Special events on the program included a hot air, an outstanding service and a roar hunt, and various competitions, as well as fishing, as it was called.

BUCK LAW
(Continued from Page 17)

half to one-third, or less, of the actual legal kill. Therefore the estimated harvest on these restricted areas is one legal deer to every 320 acres (half a section). Under intensive deer management it is not unreasonable to anticipate a harvest of 16 or more deer where we now get one — BUT the high initial investment has so far prevented the initiation of a pilot program to demonstrate that intensive deer management is practical. Once successfully established, the selection of the areas to use the limited initial areas would cause many a sleepless night for game officials.

Get Acquainted

The success of deer management, as practiced today, depends largely on the individual hunters. What each hunter sees through his sights, determines whether or not doves, fawns, and small yearlings will survive to produce future game crops. This is a good time for the hunter and the game to be re-introduced to each other.

MR. HUNTER — "BEHOLD YOUR LEGAL BUCK DEER"

"BEHOLD YOUR LEGAL BUCK DEER," WITNESSES THE FEDERATION OF MR. HUNTER — HE ALONE KNOWS HE SEES THROUGH THOSE GUN SIGHTS!

COPPERHEAD
(Continued from Page 19)

rare, baby birds, lizards, small snakes, frogs, "smug-puppies," and snakes.

The copperhead seems a rather good natured snake, often falling to strike unless actually touched or stepped on. The bite produces severe pain and great swelling of the bitten part, but is relatively fatal to adults in good health. In the northern United States, the copperhead is often abundant on the outskirts of cities or in wooded parks; picnic areas, hunters, playing children, are sometimes bitten, while in Florida, where the species is generally less plentiful, the vast majority of bites to this snake are infrequent and there are no recorded fatalities from copperhead bite in the state.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Please mention Florida Wildlife when answering ads.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

please mention Florida Wildlife when answering ads.
Dear Sir:

I very much enjoy your splendid magazine and if I am not convinced that many in Florida—outside of the tourist trade—are interested in our beautiful and varied wildlife. There are too many discordant interests, especially in the saltwater fishing depots. With that purpose in mind I am writing to ask you if Mr. Dahne didn’t err in his very good article, "Now They Are Gone," in The Florida Sportsman, when he stated that "a large number of brown pelicans, sometimes numbering in their hundreds of thousands, rest along the coast during the winter months and are seen from the ocean as far north as the Carolinas."

Your statement concerning the snowy egret is also interesting. "I do not know if one is not convinced that many in Florida—outside of the tourist trade—are interested in our beautiful and varied wildlife. There are too many discordant interests, especially in the saltwater fishing depots. With that purpose in mind I am writing to ask you if Mr. Dahne didn’t err in his very good article, "Now They Are Gone," in The Florida Sportsman, when he stated that "a large number of brown pelicans, sometimes numbering in their hundreds of thousands, rest along the coast during the winter months and are seen from the ocean as far north as the Carolinas.""

I think that our beautiful and varied wildlife is not being given the credit it deserves. We, as a nation, should be interested in the conservation of our natural resources, especially those that are not commercially important.

J. S. HARDAY, JR.
Bonita Springs

PHILIP J. DE MONT
Biologist—Branch of Wildlife Refuge
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Dear Sir:

While I am not a field expert in snow bird behavior, I believe it is evident that the author has his facts mixed. I am the American egret and not the snowy egret. In my notes from the Florida Keys it is evident that either species has completely disappeared. But the fact still remains that the present population of egrets is not new, nor will it ever be, as abundant as it once was.

Regarding the buffalo, I am sure that Mr. Dahne will agree that the 5,000 buffalo that never existed represents an almost infinitesimal portion of the variously estimated 500 million buffalo that once roamed the face of western North America. The truth is that modern civilization had no room for wild buffalo. They were wiped out, with the exception of the few on the reservation, and the species is now protected. A few wild buffalo could hardly be called "wild buffalo." For reasons of conservation, it seems evident that we should protect our natural resources, especially those that are not commercially important.

S. M. COOPER
Miami

DECEMBER, 1950

Please mention Florida Wildlife when answering ads.

The FLORIDA HANDBOOK 1949-1950 compiled by ALLEN MORRIS

Day—900 pages crammed full with Florida Facts, History, Government, Resources, Recreation. Must for every person desiring a well-rounded knowledge of the Sunshine State. Indispensable to anyone wanting to have always at their fingertips information about our state and our citizens should possess.

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Florida's only complete reference book—$3.00 post paid
THE PENDULUM PUBLISHING CO. P.O. Box 249 Tallahassee, Fla.

STICKS AND STONES

Continued from Page 11

NOW . . . ARE THEY GONE?

The statement concerning the snowy egret seems to have been exaggerated tremendously in numbers in recent years, and is now found in all parts of Florida, as well as along the Gulf of Mexico and through the Gulf States and up the Mississippi River Valley. The snowy egret is not nearly as common in the Everglades as it was 20 years ago. The breeding range has increased in recent years and flightless birds have been seen on the Martha’s Vineyard and other parts of the State. The snowy egret has never been known to hybridize with the American egret, but the Everglades has been the habitat of the birds. The Indianola River area, which is the only place where the birds are seen, is the Krosnoo Island area, which has always been a favorite nesting ground for these birds. During the summer months they range as far north as the Carolinas.

In our appeal to the general public, and especially to the hunting public, for the protection of certain species of our wildlife, I may suggest that we confine ourselves to the facts, which are always bad enough, but we must avoid the temptation to exaggerate the facts.

J. V. KELSEY
Florida Game Management Agent (Ret.)
South Daytona

(At his recommendation for conservation of wildlife while preserving the white heron of Florida, the so-called "Florida wilderness area")

I have been avowedly a wilderness area. The white heron (Egretta thula) is a species that is welladapted to the Everglades and is one of the best known of the white herons. I find it impossible to get along with a fellow for fighting valiantly in an effort to keep our wilderness area unpolluted. I am convinced if all of us would heed the warnings that appeared between the lines of this article, our youths would have full assurance of enjoying the hunting and fishing pleasures you have been privileged with.—ED.

All of the above letters are quite correct in pointing out that the snowy and American egrets are once more fairly numerous. The article "Now They Are Gone," appearing in the October issue of your publication that I should be, corrected in the March issue, is evident that either species of the birds is completely disappeared. But the fact still remains that the present population of egrets is not new, nor will it ever be, as abundant as it once was.

Regarding the buffalo, I am sure that Mr. DuMont will agree that the 5,000 buffalo that never existed represents an almost infinitesimal portion of the variously estimated 500 million buffalo that once roamed the face of western North America. They produce a very modern civilization had no room for wild buffalo. They were wiped out, with the exception of the few on the reservation, and the species is now protected. A few wild buffalo could hardly be called "wild buffalo." For reasons of conservation, it seems evident that we should protect our natural resources, especially those that are not commercially important.

S. M. COOPER
Miami

DECEMBER, 1950

Please mention Florida Wildlife when answering ads.
WILDLIFE FILMS AVAILABLE

The following bird films, made by the late August Heidt, are available at the Small Animal Department of Miami Marine Laboratory for showing to wildlife organizations. Twelve with black and white pictures are available to clubs willing to pay postage and arrange for films to be shown. They are non-commercial, non-profit productions. Requests for any of these films should be addressed to the Small Animal Department, Assistant Director, Miami Marine Laboratory, University of Miami, 412 Anastasia Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida. There is no rental charge.

No. 1—Big Cypress Lake No. 1. 16mm, sound, colorized. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 2—Big Cypress Lake No. 2. 16mm, sound, colorized. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 3—Camp Charles 1941 (sound/mute) 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 4—Monahan Marshes (least tern) (sound/mute) 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 5—Camp Chordon, Port 1, Florida (red-headed ducks, turkey buzzard, common loon, and black duck). 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 6—Chordon, Port 1, Florida (1951-52) (common loon, African heron, boat-tail blackbird, Everglades kite, snowy owl, great white heron). 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 7—Federally protected species in the Everglades. Marquise Keys (injury, Wreathed hornbill, Wreathed hornbill, Wreathed hornbill, boat-tail blackbird, Everglades kite, snowy owl, snowy owl). 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 8—Camp Pal 1942, Glimpses of Florida Birds. (birdwatcher, landowner). Sound, 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 9—King Bee Key, American Egret (soybean field, Caesarion, egret, egrets, white pelican). 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 10—Dreymont Island 1 (Fort Jefferson). Sound, 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 11—Dreymont Island 2 (bald black-footed albatross, rays, Hatteras tern, snowy owl). Sound, 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.
No. 12—Dreymont Island 3 (bald black-footed albatross, rays, Hatteras tern, snowy owl). Sound, 16mm. 100 feet. $5.00 per showing.

For sale at 16mm and 8mm, color, sound or mute, and at $5.00 each.

WILD FOWL FOR SALE

For sale: 15 Bufflehead duck, 12 Ring-necked duck, 5 American merganser, 5 Mallard drake, 31 Shoveller drake, 12 gadwall drake.

FISHING CAMP

Vakula Sportsmen Hear Frye Discuss Game Management

CRAWFORDVILLE—Members of the Wakulla County Sportsmen’s Club and the Tallahassee Rod and Gun Club met in joint session here recently for the dual purpose of hearing Earl Frye, chief wildlife biologist of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, talk, and to discuss ways and means whereby the two counties and clubs might work together for better hunting and fishing.

The result of this meeting was that it was decided to later hold a meeting of some five, six or more of the clubs of this area, and perhaps form a loose organization, whereby the area could get together and work together for the common good of all.

Some twenty-four members of the Rod and Gun Club, together with their officers were present.

A new feature for fishing camps, focused babysitters and baby-sitters to keep the children occupied while their parents go fishing, was recently introduced by the Grim’s Moonshine Camp near Floral City.

TOM’S FLIES
P. O. BOX 9296 • TAMPA, FLA.

CAMP MACK
18 Miles South of Lake Wales on the U.S. 192 • ALWAYS GOOD FISHING • 10 Modern Cabins Equipped for Light Housekeeping • 30 Boats (5) Bay • Motors • Tackle

RATES: $2.50 TO $3.00 PER WEEK
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YOUR editor has confidently offered me this page upon which to express my views on conservation. I have no personal opinions on conservation, a subject unequivocally in the realm of public opinion. The principle obstacle to fully effective conservation today is that there are too many personal opinions—private policies of river polluters, poachers, woods burners and none-viewing political groups.

In almost any controversy, the side that agrees with public opinion wins hands down. Public opinion overwhelmingly favors conservation, but often in battles of conserving vs. a quick dollar, our natural resources take a vicious beating—and underfunded—and unmourned.

Make this test yourself: ask a hundred persons, "Do you favor conservation?" Not a man will answer anything but an emphatic "Yes!" And, you’ll find it hard to restrain most persons from querying you in return, "Boy, why do you ask foolish questions?"

Back in my school days, a teacher offered as a subject for class debate, "Conservation, Yes or No." The debate never took place. Not one member of the class (or the teacher) could find a solitary valid argument against conservation! Remember this little academic history next time you read about legislative braves over questions of conservation. Even the most selfishly-motivated anti-conservationists lose in the long run—in the reduction of original resources.

Argument is futile. The best we can do is sing hymns in praise of Nature, profess our thankfulness for all the beautiful creatures of land, wind and water God has blessed this earth and most bountifully in Florida... and pledge ourselves to defending these bounties.

Poes of conservation use the magic word "progress." Industrial progress, they say, demands pollution of streams; it is necessary to the progress of tourism that hunting seasons be lengthened; it is important to agricultural progress that millions of acres of wildlife area be plowed and planted. Progress, progress, progress! Anti-conservationists tell you that two and two make four, but don’t forget to subtract the larger number of benefits that are lost by what they call progress.

The American system of enterprise demands a fair profit. The lumberman doesn’t show a profit for society unless he plants more trees than he cuts down. The seiners of the streams are presenting society with a debit unless they support measures to put back more fish than they take. The hunter who bags the limit must help insure bigger bags for next year’s hunters or he puts society in the red. It would not be unreasonable for our Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission along with other conservation agencies to demand such a profit from the public, but they’re only asking to BREAK EVEN—EVERY ONE!

A few Florida communities have considered curtailing hunting and fishing advertising to northern tourists because they fear depletion of local wildlife resources—depletions which in many cases are already evident. However, it wasn’t the tourist who slashed down the forests, sullied the streams, netted the gamefish and burned over the quall nesting grounds. That was home talent.

Tourists appreciate Florida wildlife and are generally more careful about conservation enforcement than we sunshiners are... because where the tourists come from, the things Florida still has have largely been lost.

Too many persons will declaim, "Of course I favor conservation," but too often they’re thinking conservation is a state or federal activity concerned solely with managing wildlife preserves and government forest parks. Conservation, to be effective, must apply to every inch of land, public and private, in the nation.

Perhaps our leaders have been too altruistic in their teachings on conservation. They ask, "Save something for the other fellow." Let’s be honestly selfish. Let’s save it for ourselves!

A bird in the bush is worth two in the extinct bird collection of the Natural History Museum.

John L. Veilbrecht
Bacon, Hortman & Veilbrecht, Inc.
St. Augustine
Here's why Kyle Williams recommends Brook's baits at his Arbuckle Lake fishing camp.

Brook's No. 1

Brook's No. 2

These bass—champs even for Florida waters—were taken by Kyle Williams and Eddie Jones on Brook's Baits from Arbuckle Lake. Kyle uses Brook's Baits and recommends them to his guests. If you want trophy size bass or just more fish—Brooks are the baits for the you.

Brook's Pok Pod


At your favorite dealer, or write

RJ Industries Inc.
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SPECIAL Introductory Offer

To readers of this magazine only. We'll send postpaid for only 1.00, one of the sensational new Brook's No. 5 Topwater lures. Mail coupon at right.

R-JAY INDUSTRIES, 234 Portage Trail,
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Please send me postpaid your new Brook's No. 5 Topwater Lure. My $1.00 is enclosed.
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