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BOWLING — BILLIARDS
LUNCHEONS — DINING

at Kingsley Lake
CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

WRITE FOR INFORMATION
GEORGE LARIS, President
Starke, Florida

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"You mean hunting season's over, Boss?"
Photo by C. M. Anderson.

For the Conservation, Restoration, Protection of Our Game and Fish

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PHIL FRANCIS
The article in the December issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE by Phil Francis was a
very fine and well written article with lots of information for the amateur fisher-
man. I wish he had told us which is preferable in fish-liners, white or black? I do not
know myself. Am using white nylon lines and get no fish. Is the color of my line
the reason?

G. A. PALMER
Gainesville

SNAKES AND SNOOKS

...Your series on venomous snakes has been particularly interesting to me. If I may be
privileged as an interested reader to make a suggestion, I think that some
articles on the distribution, behavior and probable numbers of the copper and wild
toads would hold wide interest. I think
that it would also be interesting to have a
series on special salt-water game fish taken
on light tackle, such as bonefish, snook, lady-fish, etc.

With such a series, it seems to me that
it would also be possible to incorporate a
good deal of permission toward conservation, for the effectiveness of persuasion to con-
servation often rests with better understanding.

GEORGE B. HURFF, Direc.
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PHIL FRANCIS (Continued from Page 19)

"Sticks and Stones"

"You mean hunting season's over, Boss?"

Photo by C. M. Anderson.
More important than any other single factor to successful fishing is the right bait or lure. The finest casting technique and highest quality tackle in the world will not catch fish if the lure does not strike the fish's fancy. So it is with writing a fishing column. A smooth literary style and interesting presentation are important, but unless the readers find the material helpful, and in line with their interests, the column will not receive much attention. This page is for YOU, the readers of FLOIDA WILDLIFE. If there are any particular aspects of Florida fishing you'd like to be discussed here, don't hesitate to speak up. Let me know what you want, and I'll do my best to serve it up to you. (Address: Phil Francis, FLORIDA WILDLIFE, Tallahassee, Fla.)

INCOMPLETE ANGLERS? How many times have you heard well-meaning plug fishermen say something like this?

“If the bass won't take a ‘souso’ you ja’ just ain’t fishing.”

How many times have you made the same general statement yourself? I never cease to be amazed at the number of one-lure and two-lure bass-casters commenting about the “souso” or how they acquire the idea that there is such an item as an infallible bass lure I can't imagine, for even the lure manufacturers admit that certain of their products fail to pay off under some conditions, and they make recommendations accordingly.

A one-lure fisherman deprives himself of a great deal of sport by his failure to recognize the fact that bass can be choosy and frequently are.

Dissipating type of action, size, and color of a lure is present, take a look out for a difference needed for lure variety from the standpoint of depth of retrieve. The first step in getting a fish to strike consists of giving him a look at your lure. Unless your plug, spoon, or weighty streamer has a lure’s line of vision he can hardly be expected to pay any attention to it. True, it is not possible for the bass to see a plug, spoon, or weighty streamer from a distance of 100 feet, but it is only by careful observation that he may be lured.

In any event, it stands to reason that a lure traveling along the depth level at which the fish is lying or feeding is more apt to be noticed than a lure running above or below its level.

Then, you can't even be sure of displaying a lure to a fish unless you have a surface plug, a medium runner, and a deep running plug. As a minimum of three lures just to take care of various water depth requirements! I have purposely omitted the mention of a minnow-type shallow runner here because such a lure is also likely to be seen by any fish unable to spot this type.

When we consider practicalities, the need for some sort of shallow running lure is immediately evident. What we all considerand many occasions bas have occupied very shallow water and yet refuse to have any truck with surface plugs! When I join all top water addicts in looking upon this as a deplorable condition, there's no ignoring the fact that it is a situation which often bewilders the angler who wants to put fish on the stringer. Such a situation calls for a lure which must just under the surface.

When action is considered, the variation among lures becomes almost endless. There are wigglers, wobblers, darters, spinners, sunfish, surface plugs, streamers, shiners, lures, etc. With such a variety of lures to choose from it is ridiculous to assume that one particular color or action-type could be better than ALL of the others ALL of the time. If a happen to be a one-lure fisherman, you should try and talk one lure from another by your very insistence that they prefer sought. Agreeing, then, that bass do recognize different colors in lures, don’t you also agree that they might get tired of seeing the same thing all the time?

And after the bass have made a good case in point because their behavior differences are so evident to the fisherman. Among the nullities there is one lure that will always bring you to the splashes, which throw a speck of water when twitched; the poppers or plunks, which go “Koo-kee-koop” when junk, or plunks, notch-faced darters, which dive under the surface with plug, the “crips” which are equipped with red and after afters, the spinners, the wobble which provide a ridge, a smooth retrieve; and the many variations of combination of the basic types listed above. Excluding the combinations and variations of the basic types, here are five different distinct action patterns among surface lures alone. It is not possible for a fisherman, I believe, as bass may feel inclined to take a whole one day while preferring another color for the next. Fluorescent or not, it is an unfathomable thing.

Being something of a top-water nut, I am one of the few fishermen with face lures and I can assure you that each top-water action type has its moments of comparative success. Spooning yourself to only one lure will frequently lead you to believe that the fish aren’t hitting on top. Perhaps they feel, as do the bass, that they can’t make as much noise as they can near a bank. This column has only scratched the surface of that subject. Bass are, in my opinion, computers of putting all your fish in one or two lures. Color, size, and underwater action will vary with the water but will always tend toward being teasers to be reckoned with at water. Fishing, for yourself is a modest amount of lines of different style but would bring you in a step or two.

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When considering practicalities, the need for some sort of shallow running lure is immediately evident. This situation calls for a lure which must just under the surface.

Invisibility while hunting

While the past hunting season is still fresh in your memory, here are a few items that the average hunter might spend a little time in thinking over. Everyone wants to bag game, yet at the same time, avoid being mistaken for game. Here are a few facts and ideas.

Red has long been associated with hunting apparel as a safety factor. It has undoubtedly saved many lives. Now, however, we believe that changes may be in order.

According to some recent, authentic information we have received, there are about 140,000 hunters in the United States to whom the color red means nothing at all. To them, the hunter who is wearing a red cap, shirt, neckerchief, or whatever, appears just the same as a hunter wearing khaki clothing.

For these 140,000 hunters are color blind.

This in itself furnishes plenty of food for thought. And it is thought that many of these hunters might continue on and on. We ask ourselves what we should wear to attain the utmost safety. Then we wonder just how much chance we have to bag game if we become too visible.

There are several factors which appear to be obvious. The new, brilliant, “bl相亲” cats are certainly very visible to a person that is not color blind. But the dull red cats commonly worn are still blend in with the autumn colors. It is doubtful if the dull reds are really much protection even from persons who are not color blind.

On the other hand, the brilliant reds make a hunter so visible as to practically eliminate his chances of approaching within shooting range of either deer or turkey. We can put our chances of being shot by another hunter to a minimum by staying at home.

On the other hand, the brilliant reds make a hunter so visible as to practically eliminate his chances of approaching within shooting range of either deer or turkey. We can put our chances of being shot by another hunter to a minimum by staying at home. The one seen just as bad as the other. The factors which have an effect in deer hunting also apply to many other species. Therefore, we will for the sake of argument, discuss the hunting of whitetails only. The reasoning applied in this may be applied to many other species.

There are two chief methods of bagging a deer — stalking or still hunting. It is also standing on a "stand" where deer may pass. Success, in either case, demands a certain amount of "innocity." If the hunter has some sense, or is lucky enough, to have the wind in his favor, his quarry must depend on only sight and hearing since the sense of smell is useless.

Still hunters do take advantage of the wind, and most of them know how to move quietly, "innocity" is the next best thing. We have had some on a "stand" where deer may pass. Success, in either case, demands a certain amount of "innocity." If the hunter has some sense, or is lucky enough, to have the wind in his favor, his quarry must depend on only sight and hearing since the sense of smell is useless.

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CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

Write for Information

GEORGE LARIS, President

Starke, Florida

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**Crime Against the People**

**Wildlife Officer James R. Fields, was shot to death in cold blood by a game hog in Calhoun County Christmas Eve night.**

Whether the man being held was or was not the guilty one is not the concern of this editorial. It is, however, sadly significant that there are yet remaining some who cannot realize, or do not care, that we are not living during the Seminole occupation when game was plentiful and legal restrictions would have been unnecessary. The purpose of the State Corps of Wildlife Officers, under the supervision of the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, is not to prevent the judicious use of the wildlife in our hammocks and woodlands, but to curb the indiscriminate slaughter of our game animals and fish. The commission, of which Fields was agent, is an appointed body of the Governor whose purpose is to serve the needs of the citizens of Florida and any infringement of our State game laws is therefore a crime against the people. The five-man commission serves without pay and is deserving of our active and moral support.

**NEWS BULLETIN**

James R. Fields, veteran Calhoun county wildlife officer, was shot to death about 6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve in the Apalachicola River swamp, while seeking an illegal hunter on the state reservation. A Liberty county fisherman has been accused of the murder and has reportedly confessed to the crime.

In seeking to promote an interest in the conservation of wildlife in Florida, the Commission sponsors the publication of "Florida Wildlife," a monthly magazine chockfull of interesting articles and information relating strictly to Florida's game and fish resources. Bill Snyder, who has served ably on its staff since its conception some three years ago, wrote his final editorial in December, as he is taking over another job. The tenor of his "Good Will to Men" in the December "Wildlife" is tragically ironical when compared to the flagrant abuse of our game laws in Calhoun County.

The home of James R. Fields was a lonely one this Yuletide. His honorable death while in line of official duty deserves the tribute of the intelligent citizens of Florida as we try to retorse and conserve our wildlife not only for present-day use, but for the younger generation who will take our places in the years to come.

(Reprinted from the Sumter County TIMES)

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**An Editorial**
REPTILES in general are very unpopular creatures. The majority of people detest all snakes, mistrust lizards, fear crocodiles and alligators, and show little enthusiasm for turtles. All of these reptiles occur in Florida, and some are very common. The fisherman, the hunter, the farmer, even the city dweller or the casual tourist, are all likely to encounter reptiles at least occasionally. Anyone who spends much time in the woods and fields, or on the lakes and rivers, should know the poisonous or dangerous reptiles and how to avoid them, should banish from his mind the needless fear of harmless forms, and should recognize the economic value of certain kinds.

LIZARDS

To begin with, the lizards can be dismissed from consideration. Florida lizards are quite harmless. The well-known green or brown "chameleon," the spade-nosed "lizard-nose," the "scaly-back" lizard so often seen on tree-trunks, the shiny blue-tailed skinks and the little red-tailed skinks, and a number of other forms as well-known, are all completely harmless to man. A big red-headed lizard, frequently called "scorpion lizard," is often much feared in rural areas, but it, too, is entirely non-poisonous. The so-called "glass-snake" or "joint-snake," is not a snake at all, but an elongate, legless lizard, and, like other Florida lizards, it is not at all to be feared.

Our lizards feed mainly upon grasshoppers, roaches, caterpillars, beetles, grub-worms, flies, ants, termites, and plantlice; thus, from an economic standpoint, they may be considered helpful.

TURTLES

Turtles are common in Florida. It is well-known that large turtles of certain species can administer a very severe bite, and even some small ones can pinch unpleasantly. The soft-shelled snapping turtles may unhinge their powerful jaws very quickly and vigorously. A snapping turtle could be called active, and "turtle-bite" is as frequent as to require but brief mention here. More important, however, is the frequent charge that turtles are destructive to game fish; this accusation merits consideration.

First, it should be noted that there are many kinds of turtles in Florida, each with its own characteristic habits. Thus, the gopher turtle inhabits dry, sandy places, and feeds mostly upon leaves and grass. The box turtles dwell in fairly moist woods and fields, feeding upon turtles, berries, grubworms, etc. The diamond-backed terrapins are confined to salt-marsh and tidal flats, where they subsist mostly upon snails. The little musk and mud turtles, of several species, inhabit the bottoms of ponds, lakes, or streams, eating many kinds of plant and animal life, including carrion. The fresh-water terrapins (several species of large, aquatic turtles with striped limbs and neck) feed upon water plants, snails, crawfish, and insect larvae; sometimes they eat small fish, especially the slow-moving and small or injured ones.

Obviously, it is foolish to state flatly that turtles are harmful, or that turtles are helpful; the individual kind must be considered. Of all our Florida species, only the snapping turtle and the alligator snapping turtle feed on fish to any great extent; the soft-shelled turtles, and the musk and mud turtles, may also catch occasional minnows. The various Florida terrapins—yellow-bellied, Bowfinn, Mobilean, red-bellied, and others, all of which are slaughtered in great numbers by fishermen, are not destructive to game fish populations.

ALLIGATORS

Alligators occur throughout Florida, while a species of crocodile inhabits the southern portion of the state, from the Keys northward to Cape Sable. Neither form is very likely to attack man, under ordinary circumstances, unless greatly provoked. However, nesting females, and old males that have grown to maturity in areas remote from molestation, are often afraid of man, and should be let alone.

There have been a few recent instances in which big alligators became over-bold, apparently through familiarity with people, and have made unprovoked attacks. No chances should be taken with large alligators or crocodiles, especially in close quarters; and the practice of feeding alligators from boats or docks should be discouraged, for the reptiles, thus fed, may become contemptuous of man. Nevertheless, alligators are an important asset to Florida, for reasons too numerous to mention here. At the present writing (December, 1950) both alligators and crocodiles are protected by law at all times; it is illegal to molest the nates.

\[\text{Only especially-constructed "snake-proof" boats can provide ample protection from poisonous snakes, although ordinary boats or heavy loggins are better than nothing.}\]
Several species of harmless water snakes, common in Florida, superficially resemble the cottonmouth; but in the harmless forms, the tail is long and tapering, the pupil of the eye is round, and the head does not bear a pit.

The copperhead, like the cottonmouth, has a relatively stout body, wide head, vertical pupils, and a pit on each side of the head between the eye and nostril. It is seldom more than 3 feet long, and is pretty marked with brownish bands on a pinkish ground color. It is rare in Florida, being known only from a few counties in the northwestern portion of the state.

The coral snake is a small and slender species, with a relatively narrow head, a round pupil like that of most harmless snakes, and no facial pit. It is easily recognized by its unusual color pattern, being marked with rings of red, black, and yellow. The body along its entire length. The red rings are lacking on the tail, which is marked only with black and yellow; the tip of the snout is black. The scales have a glossy appearance, which, together with the bright markings, make the snake somewhat resemble a colorful necklace. (All the poisonous snakes of Florida have been described and figured in a series of articles that appeared in FLORIDA WILDLIFE, July through December, 1950.)

All other Florida snakes are quite harmless, if they bite at all, they do no more than inflict a few superficial scratches that quickly heal. No snake will "whip" a person; and the "hoop snake" does not exist, being merely superstition. There is absolutely no reason to fear black snakes, coachwhips, "gopher snakes," "chicken

(Continued on Page 20)

The violent rippling in the water is caused by sound vibrations resulting from the prolonged mating bellow of the bull alligator in the foreground. (Photo by J. Carver Harris, taken at St. Augustine Alligator Farm.)

Alligator Love Call

I

in the great swamps of south Florida during the late spring, and particularly in May, the dramatic call of the bull alligator may still be heard. Time was when the marshy sub-soil of the Everglades trembled with the fervor of a small earthquake to the resounding bellow of great herds of wild 'gators signaling their mates. Nowadays the alligators are fewer and bull calls are nearly always heard in plaintive singleness, amid terrifying lonely echoes. Research subjects for the report which follows were captive specimens at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm.

The American alligator is a voiceless beast 11 months of the year. As his bodily movements are restricted to situations of extreme practicality (he is semi-dormant about 95% of the time), so are his utterances reserved for a few unquestionably important social occasions—during the annual event of seeking mates.

by

John L. Vollbrecht

(Continued on Page 19)
Some people do the craziest things when they take to the woods! The result is that tall tales often turn out to be true tales, as this newspaper columnist has discovered during years of verifying strange outdoor stories.

by FRED W. JONES

Tall Tales CAN BE TRUE!

THERE is an old saying to the effect that truth is stranger than fiction, and during my years of hunting and fishing—and writing about it—I have found this to be very true indeed.

Sometimes people stop me on the street and ask “Do you really believe that yarn you had in yesterday’s newspaper column?” But ninety percent of the time, I am able to answer definitely in the affirmative. Of course, I, like any other writer, do sometimes run a tall tale, but they are always so labeled and sometimes I run a story that I say is vouched for by so-and-so, but which I haven’t verified myself.

But I have heard so many that I have checked on and found true that I am no longer very skeptical. No matter how wild a yarn may sound at first hearing, I have found that it is, in all probability, true after all, for in hunting and fishing, anything can happen.

Take such a common aliment as “buck fever” (orague) for instance. Many and lurid are the stories that are told about what has happened to hunters when they first see a deer. Very often, to a person who has never seen what can happen, these things sound incredible. Having seen a few cases myself, however, I can readily believe anything I may hear.

I well remember one time up in northern Maine, when a New Yorker, who enjoyed a wide reputation as a banker and financial expert and who, therefore, must have been reasonably intelligent, was hunting buck in a remote and unpromising territory, his hands in the grooming the hardwood ridges to the north. In the northwest corner of the field there was a large thicket which must have been some 10 or 20 feet high, and some 200 yards from the edge of the woods. I had been in camp for lunch and was headed back across the field for the woods again when I spotted this guy sitting up on top of the rock, obviously watching for deer.

Since he was dressed in the conventional red cap and shirt, he was about as conspicuous as a light house. This, combined with the fact that a deer should have been absolutely devoid of intelligence to walk out into the open near him, gave me quite a hearty chuckle.

I forgot to chuckle a moment later when out of the woods walked a big buck on a path that would take him right by the rock and the hunter. Nor did the deer see the man either, to my further astonishment. It kept right on going until it was abreast the rock, then, finally spotting the man, took off into the woods in full flight. As it approached the rock, the hunter raised and shot, and the man climbed up the hill, apparently not seeing what had happened. He had some 100 yards to the road and followed the same path, while the hunter turned back to walk on down the road.

As he was about to get within hearing distance he started shouting at me. He was excited as a boy may get. “Did you see that?” exclaimed. “Seven shots! And every time the blank thing misfired! Such a blank, blank gun!” Such a blank, blank, and this-and-that kind of luck! Such blank, blank shots! You bet that double-blank cartridge did the job. And on and on he raved.

Well, I walked over and started picking up the cartridges that he had pumped through the rifle. Not a single one had a firing pin mark. After a little argument, I got him to put them back in the gun and to fire at a tree. Not a single one misfired. Red faced, he finally admitted that he must have forgotten to pull the trigger.

But this kind of an experience doesn’t always happen to a man on his first hunt, or first sight of a deer. My Dad, who has hunted for some 50 or more years, and who has killed several deer as well as other game, pulled a similar stunt not too many years ago.

In Dad’s case, surprise caused confusion. He was riding in the back of a pickup truck on the way home from a deer hunt when suddenly a big buck broke out of a fringe of trees and started running across a field parallel with the road and right in front of the truck. Dad, of course, had been riding with an unloaded rifle. On sighting the deer, he started fighting to load the rifle. But try as he would, with the deer running right alongside within thirty yards, he couldn’t get a cartridge to stay put. Actually, each time he shoved a cartridge into the rotary magazine of the Model 99 Savage, he was working the lever and jacking it right out again. On another occasion some young lads who lived near me borrowed a couple of 99’s to do a little hunting close to home. The boys scoured the neighborhood for a half day and finally stopped to eat their lunch on a sunny ledge overlooking a cranberry bog. While eating they spotted a small deer which had come out of the berries and down to the bog for a drink. They started shooting, even though the deer was well out of range. However, by the time they had used up all their shells, one shot had taken effect and the deer dropped at the edge of the woods.

Wildly, the boys slid down the ledge and started playing across the bog. The water was waist deep and covered with a thin skim of ice, but this they heeded not at all. As they approached the deer it struggled wildly in its effort to escape. Grabbing his rifle by the barrel, one of the lads dealt it a finishing blow.

He finished both the deer and the rifle—he spent weeks working after school to pay for the gun. He could have cut the deer’s throat just as well, for it couldn’t get up, but he never thought of that!

Then there was the hunter in the Ocala National Forest last year who emptied his shotgun into the ground because it almost at his feet as a big buck ran across the road 30 or 40 yards away. One of my friends watched this performance and showed me the man’s tracks, the deer’s tracks, and the hole blasted in the road.

It was last year too, that an acquaintance of mine, not long after a top of a big buck. Although he had been hunting before, he had never seen this to be the top. He had a tree armed with a 230-300 Savage equipped with a scope sight. With the deer well off to the side and hiding calmly, he watched the deer approach. But when he finally got ready to shoot, he was so excited that he forgot where he was and just stepped back right out of the tree top. Luckily, the branches helped break his fall and he was only badly shaken, but otherwise, thoroughly disgusted at himself.

This loss of balance, or of muscular control, is not all buck fever on some men. I once watched a man in the Deerfield who lost his seat from the side of a clay road as a buck walked from the woods and across the road. The hunter didn’t shoot though, but just stopped, slid back, and, as the deer disappeared (Continued on Page 24)
One of the most important parts of the wildlife conservation pattern is

The Role of Organized Sportsmen

The role of organized sportsmen in the formulation of regulations for the conservation of game and the control of hunting in North America is of the greatest importance. It is in fact not possible to separate the responsibility and activity of sportsmen, landowners, legislators, administrators, biologists or technical personnel, and educators in the formulation of regulations and in administration affecting wildlife conservation. In addition to the above noted groups, all citizens, especially those organized into service groups as garden, wildness, nature clubs, and outdoor writers, have joint responsibility in the field of Conservation.

It is most important that wildlife administrators always take cognizance of the many and important conditions relating to this multiple interest and responsibility.

Throughout most of the European-speaking world the administration of wildlife resources is based on the principle that all wildlife belongs to the State whether it be found on public or private lands. When it is viewed as a resource or as a true to be preserved and managed as the responsibility for its preservation and management is vested in the State.

This principle was early established in the Forest Laws of William the Conqueror, amended and codified by his successors, and has been inherited by modern states whose legal systems have their origin in Britain.

The English common law long ago established the principle of Royal ownership of game, based fundamentally on the fact that game is a produce of the land and cannot be managed separately from the land. We are coming to recognize this fact in North America, though it remains to be seen whether our recognition of it will ever affect our concept of the ownership of wildlife.

The activities of the State in preserving and managing wildlife derive authority from legislation by our various popular assemblies, whatever we may call them.

In wildlife preservation the legislation and regulations may be based largely on a provision of penalties, whereas management involves the authorization of expenditures to implement a work program. Sportsmen, whose activities involve the exploitation of natural resources belonging to all the people of the State, are subject to licensing for their privileges, and to numerous restrictive enactments designed to preserve the resource from depletion. They also have an interest in all management enterprises as ultimate beneficiaries.

Participation in some degree in the exploitation of wildlife resources affects a large portion of our population. The degree varies. The great body of sportsmen accept without question the condition that they find. Those who are more keenly interested have banded themselves together. Some of our sportsmen’s groups arose because of the desire of their founders to influence or initiate legislation. Others were originally organized to work together for participation in sport and later became interested in rules and regulations affecting their interest.

It is not enough to say that organized sportsmen characterize their overruling interest in legislation affecting wildlife. Such legislation quite generally came into being because the interested group generally hesitated to impose fees and restrictions on the people where its own immediate security was not involved. Legislators generally, being elected, hesitate to do anything irre- sone to the electorate. It remained for the organized sportsmen to convince them that the restrictions that they were asked to impose were in the public interest, and, as such, not inherently unpopular.

Once a restrictive measure was passed by any legislative body and accepted, as most of them are, without ado more ado, the sportsmen who proposed it became recognized interpreters of public opinion, a position they have to hold. Actually few groups of sportsmen really have a right to claim to represent the public. Sometimes their spokesmen do not even represent their own membership.

As long as restrictive laws alone were required, the organized sportsmen were at the forefront of the conservation movement. As a result, they strengthened the pioneer economy. In time, land use became more important than hunting, and those who had passed through the pioneer stages and was settling down to civilized courtesy, the natural laws governing animal populations proved more important than those passed by legislatures. In due course, let us say, the pressures being neither fast nor easy, the legislature, still at the instigation of the sportsmen, set up establishments for the management of wildlife resources by experts, scientists if you will, who could understand what was going on.

All went well until the experts found that some of the most cherished ideas of sportsmen were fallacious. Anyone can name examples. Expensive fish hatcheries flourish where the natural crop is not half harvested. Vegetables destroy species that are relatively harmless, or fail to affect the populations of pests. Restrictions, whose passage was hailed as a conservation triumph, turn out to be doing more harm than good. It looks at times as though somebody has to lose face for every advance the experts make, in many cases reversing former practices supported by earlier beliefs.

Bit by bit we can see that advances in management are never permanently (Continued on Page 21)
Blackwater Fish Management Station, near Holt, is typical of the fisheries maintained by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

By Charles A. Anderson

After being placed in holding tanks (below), fingerlings are carefully maintained in a healthy condition.

Fish cans are transported in special trucks (above) which are equipped to keep fingerlings alive for 24 hours without damage. Dumping fingerlings into their new homes (below) is always a pleasure to hatchery men. It costs $2.00 per 1,000 to raise and distribute fingerlings.

Carefully handled, fingerlings are placed in carrying cans for transport to their destinations.

A step to stock approved waters is raising fishy pond for annual crop of fingerlings.
ALLIGATOR LOVE CALL
(Continued from Page 9)
jects as much of his head and neck from the water as may be possible, and slowly and methodically raises and lowers himself during the duration of the bulls.
Before sounding off, the alligator inflates himself tightly, then releases a great store of breath in a prolonged pulmonary roar.
It is worthwhile to note that bull 'gators do not go ashore for their mates. Females, hearing (and feeling) the call, make their way to his side. The male is always stationary in the mating picture. One bull may serve as many as six or seven females in a season.
"Feeling" the bellow is mentioned because, although alligators have proper ears under two flaps behind the eyes, they are most sensitive to ground vibrations. While alligators do not always sound off, the caller mates.
A. Florida WILDLIFE cannot recommend individual dog kennels, owners, handlers or breeders, or any other type of business firm. There are, however, many reliable dog handlers in Florida who should be able to fill your order and quote a reasonable price.
Q. What state has the most wild turkeys?
J. N. Jacksonville.
A. Florida has more wild turkeys than any other state except Texas.
Q. Why isn't there a greater number of fur trappers and a larger fur business in Florida? B. A. L., Sarasota.
A. Due to the extremely warm climate, the type of fur produced in Florida has always brought a low market price, and our fur resources have never been developed. Warm-climate animals do not usually produce prime heavy coats of fur, which accounts for the low market demand for Florida furs.
Q. Have a clipping from a northern newspaper which says two men caught 153 speckled trout in one afternoon, while fishing near Penascola. Is this legal? M. H. M., Pensacola.
A. State Board of Conservation, which is responsible for salt-water conservation, advises that only legal limit on speckled sea trout (weakfish) is that they must be over 12 inches in length. No bag limit.
Q. Have heard and seen Florida doves described as "mourning," "mooring," "turtle," and "grounded" doves. Are these all the same birds, or four different birds, or what? D. K., Miami.
A. In Florida, the mourning dove and the turtle dove are one and the same bird. A smaller dove is commonly called morning dove in Florida, but is properly known as the ground dove.
A. "Turtles and Allied Reptiles," by H. L. Stoddard, is considered to be one of the best reference books. Available from most public or school libraries, or from Charles Scribner's Sons, New York City.
Q. Is the size of a buck deer's antlers an indication of its age? S. A., Miami.
A. No. Antler size is usually a criterion of how vigorous the buck is after a buck passes his prime, his antlers usually tend to become smaller.
Q. How much do baby panthers weigh at birth and when do they open their eyes? J. A. D., Orlando.
A. Baby panthers weigh about 1 1/2 pounds at birth, and open their eyes at the age of 8 or 9 days.
Q. Where can I get data on raising goldfish for profit, also how to catch and keep alive shrimp? Mrs. F. D., Micanopy.
A. Use of goldfish or carp minnows for bait in Florida is prohibited by law. However, if you are interested in raising goldfish for aquarium use, write Division of Information, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C., for information. Information on shiners can be found in bulletins entitled "Propagation of Minnows and Other Bait Species" available from Suppt. of Documents, Washington 25, D. C., for 35c.
THE 10 COMMANDMENTS TO TREAT SNAKEBITES

1. Apply constricting band above bite.
2. Clean vicinity of bite with antiseptic.
3. Make cross-shaped cuts in flesh over each puncture.
4. Apply suction to cuts, drawing out poison.
5. Be careful constricting band is not too tight.
6. Keep patient in quiet, warm room.
7. Use antivenin if available.
8. Keep calm at all times after being bitten.
9. DO NOT run or use alcohol stimulants.
10. Seek medical aid by competent physician.

lower leg; obviously one should use care in going through brushy places where the ground is not visible. A palmetto clump or a tangle of weeds and vines may harbor a colubrid (snake) in the thick vegetation beside a lake or stream, a cottonmouth may lurk unseen. The poisonous snakes of Florida will not go out of their way just to bite a person, but will strike when their place of concealment until nearly stepped on, and then strike without warning. This is true even of the rattlesnakes, which do not always rattle before striking.

A person who often walks through brushy areas should be prepared to defend himself against all snakes, even the harmless kind. If bitten by a poisonous snake he should, of course, immediately seek the nearest doctor or hospital. The first thing to do is to apply a tourniquet just above the bite. This should be a strip of cloth or a rubber band. If there is no tourniquet, then a piece of cloth or bandage can be used. Then, if possible, the area around the bite should be washed with soap and water. The patient should be taken to a hospital or medical facility as soon as possible. If the patient is bleeding, then serious bleeding should be stopped by applying direct pressure to the wound.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS TO PREVENT SNAKEBITES

1. Wear heavy leggins or boots while outdoors.
2. Watch your step at all times while outdoors.
3. Use care while walking through brushy areas.
4. Never go barefoot or on a leg; step ON it first.
5. Be careful where you sit, kneel or squat.
6. Don't put your hand into cracks or crevices.
7. Don't handle live venomous snakes.
8. Be careful when handling dead venomous snakes.
9. Do not become panic-stricken when a snake is seen.
10. Do not clean fish in water occupied by snakes.

The capture of venomous snakes should be left to the experts. Many boys keep collections of living snakes; it is not recommended that poisonous species be among them.

There is a widespread belief that "snakes can't bite under water." This is absolutely false; poisonous snakes can bite under water, and one species, the dangerous cottonmouth moccasin, often hunts on the bottom of a shallow pond or stream, capturing and poisoning its prey beneath the surface. A snake can sometimes even dive for a fairly well-directed strike while floating in the water. In any event, a poisonous snake with a strike to be dangerous; the mere bite is sufficient to inject the venom.

In Florida snakebites are not as common as they once were; many people have been bitten by a poisonous snake, and most of them do, at least occasionally. Many snakes are able to swim any great distance, however; and most any swimming snake is very apt to swim up or down the bank of a nearby pond or river. If you are sure of the identity of a dangerous "nearby object," in order to get a bite, you should keep your feet in the water. There is always a possibility of being bitten by a poisonous snake.

SNAKEBITE TREATMENT

What should one do if bitten by a venomous snake? The purpose of this section is to keep the poison from spreading rapidly into the general circulation. This is done by placing a constricting band around the bitten limb, above the bite; that is, between the bite and the heart. It is generally recommended that the constricting band be placed for ten minutes, and then it should be loosened for fifteen minutes. After this, the constricting band should be reapplied for another ten minutes. If the symptoms do not improve, then the patient should be taken to a hospital or medical facility as soon as possible. If the patient is bleeding, then serious bleeding should be stopped by applying direct pressure to the wound.

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The Wonderful of Native Wade, Weed, Reptiles, Strange Animals, etc.

Over 2000 Live Specimens in Natural Tropical Surroundings

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BERNARDI, FLORIDA

BAY - BARGAIN RATES - CUBED - "Fishing the rails each fall," one of the finest

21
ing hand should be released for a minute
every fifteen minutes. As the swelling
increases, it will be necessary to
retie the hand higher, just above the
swelling. Care should be taken not to
cut a large blood vessel; those near
the base of the fingers should be
populated to should be applied to
all incisions, if possible. Try to remain
calm; if the other hand makes the
swelling naturally takes several hours
to several days before producing really
serious symptoms; remember, too, that
only a very small percentage of snake-bite
victims die, and these deaths mainly
casue they failed to follow the sim-
ple rules outlined above. Further med-
ication will be administered by a
person who is frequently exposed
to such snakebite should certainly
provide himself with a snake-bite kit.
Such a kit usually contains a fabric
and rubber band for constraining, a
vial of antivenin, a sharp blade for
making incisions, a syringe, or one or two
medication caps or similar devices for
drawing out en-
venom blood. Most kits also contain a
leaflet or first-aid instructions and a
guide for physicians who may be
called upon to give later medical at-
tention.

TREATMENT FOR DOGS
Many valuable dogs are killed by
snake-bite. Most of these could have
been saved by proper first-aid meas-
ures. The following treatment is ef-
fective: If the bite is on the leg, tie
a constricting band above the wound.
Loosen the band for a minute every
15 minutes to prevent infection. Make
many small cuts, each an inch long
and a quarter inch deep, drawing out
around fang marks. If the bite is on
head or body, as is usual, a constric-
ting band should be used. It is neces-
sary to cut out the flesh around each
fang puncture. This is not as difficult,
as the dog's skin is loose; and a bitten ani-
mal is in such pain that he scarcely
notices the cutting. The depth of the
cut should equal half the distance be-
tween the fang marks. Then make
small cuts, as described above, around the
bite and wherever there is swell-
ing. Use a sterilized blade for cutting;
keep wounds clean. Encourage ble-
eding by bathing cuts with warm salt
solution; do not squeeze swollen areas.
Keep the dog quiet; provide all the
water he will drink. A veterinarian
will apply suction and administer anti-
venin, varying the kind and amount
according to the size and kind of
dog responsible for the bite. A trans-
fusion is often essential to replace
lost blood. An anti-venom shot should
be given.

SUMMARY
In summary, it may be stated that
most Florida's residents are not
man. A few species of snakes are
dangerous, but these can generally be
avoided if the following points are
remembered:

- Keep children under the age of
- Do not attempt to pick up or
- Always look before going near
- If a bite occurs, follow the

FISCAL REPORT
GAMES AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
DECEMBER 31, 1950
Debit Credit
Cash with State Treasurer $237,382.41
Discounts and Interest
Salaries 339,439.38
Miscellaneous
Adjustment Account 365,312.50
County Judges Account 118.75

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- Always look before going near
- If a bite occurs, follow the
**TALL TALES**

(Continued from Page 11)

again, crumpled to the ground as though shot.

I hurried to the man fearing a heart attack or something of the sort. But there was nothing wrong. Highly embarrassed, the hunter told me that he just couldn't seem to move a muscle.

And that all the hard-to-credit stories about hunting and fishing don't originate because of buck fever—far from it. I take the case of the turkey hunter who worked his yelper so convincingly that the buck was attracted a hungry bocobet. Not only did the hunter attract the body, but fooled the cat so completely that it pounced on the unsuspecting hunter's exposed foot. This one happened in Florida's Gulf Hammock, and, although I didn't actually see the occurrence, I did hear the hunter's cry of alarm, hear the shot which followed almost immediately, and see the dead cat.

Two years in the same area, the time, I heard shouts for help. Upon arriving at the scene, I found a hunter who had driven a turkey gobbler by the leg. The hunter was on one side of a big down tree and the gobbler on the other. The hunter had been hiding behind the log and working his yelper. The turkey had approached silently on the other side. The roots and branches of the down tree had kept the trunk some five or six inches above the ground. The crouched hunter had spotted the turkey's legs and had reached under and grabbed them. The tree was too big around for him to reach over, and, of course, with the turkey fighting to get away, the hunter couldn't pull it through. The result had been the cries for help.

It was the first turkey the man had ever seen in the woods, and he got it alive without firing a shot.

Wild turkeys are justly famous for their sagacity, and ability to elude man, but sometimes they too pull out stunts. Any old timer well knows that a yelper must be worked just right to attract a gobbler. One false note, one squeak, and your Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner is good for the pot.

Yet, one of my friends once spotted a gobbler across a palmetto flat and called within shooting range just by simply whistling as you would to a dog. The turkey was running away when my friend spotted him. Not knowing what else to do, probably without even thinking, my friend whistled shrilly. The turkey turned at once, and, gobbling loudly, came running straight back. My friend killed it with one shot.

One of the most amusing stories concerning hunting that I ever had any connection with, though, was so unusual or unbelievable. It was just the coolness and smoothness with which the stunt was pulled that made it so amusing and hard to believe.

An old man whom I knew slightly met a young friend of mine on a trail in the Hammock one day and they stopped to chat a bit, as hunters will even though they are strangers. While they were talking, the young fellow suddenly spotted a deer standing in the trail back of the old man. He threw up his gun to shoot, but before he could pull the trigger the old man laid a restraining hand on his shoulder and said calmly, "No, No. Not like that!"

And still calmly, he shouldered my young friend's gun, took careful aim and dropped the buck in its tracks. Turning to my friend, who was in the woods for deer for the first time in his life, the old man said, "That's the right way to do it." And in spite of my friend's more or less feeble protests, the old man proceeded to dress the deer and then to cart it off to his camp. It was all done so nicely that it was more than an hour later in camp before my friend finally realized that he had been "rooked" and became indignant.

So many "unusual" and "unbelievable" things happen in fishing that they are no longer either unusual or unbelievable to me. A story like the one I recently ran in a column concerning an angler who had caught a 10-pound bass and a three-quarter pound bream without getting a bite or a strike, are questioned only by the inexperienced. In this case the angler found a big bass which had caught a bream too big for him to handle. The bream had lodged crossways in the bass's gills. After a bit of effort, the angler pulled the fish with his bare hands. Many experienced fishermen have had a similar experience.

A lady friend of mine recently picked up alive, a bass weighing a pound and a half which had attempted to swallow, head first, a pound and a quarter catfish. Both fish were stuck fast, and both were still alive.

And the Associated Press carried a story about a man who caught a 55-pound sailfish bare-handed on a 10-foot line, giving a full view of hundreds of bathers off Miami Beach.

And Florida, bass and other species of fish jump into boats often enough to provide real credibility of "unbelievability." In fact it is only when the fish are unusually large that such an episode rates column space.

Actually, both in fishing and in hunting, quite a few years in the woods and on the waters, and several years of writing of hunting and fishing, have convinced me that there is little that is "unbelievable." As I said before, sometimes, almost anything can, and often does, happen.

—END—

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DEVING ROOM AND COCKTAIL LOUNGE

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ENRICHED WITH PERFECTION

(Where All Good Sportmen Gather)

"I suppose you'd rather have them screaming their heads off!"

**FLORIDA WILDLIFE**

**FEBRUARY, 1950**

Conservation Work Slated for Boy Scouts of America

Conservation education activities will receive major emphasis in a national program of the Boy Scouts of America during 1951, the kick-off coming during Scout Anniversary Week, February 8-15, according to the Wildlife Management Institute.

Scout troops and explorer units will be encouraged to develop a conservation program beginning with an exhibit, demonstration, and display in a school assembly program.

This may be an exhibit in a store window, a demonstration before a civic club, sportsman's group or other adult gathering, or a conservation display in a school assembly program.

The purpose of the demonstration set to be point out some local conservation problem, suggest a remedy that may be undertaken by anyone in the community, and to announce a conservation program that will be carried out during the balance of the year.

The aims of the Scout conservation program are to focus the attention of the entire membership—boy and adult—on local problems, to foster practical methods and techniques for helping to solve those problems, and to make Scout camp properties on "conservation laboratories" where boys and adults may learn methods which may be applied in their home communities. To back up the program, a carefully selected set of suggested activities is being sent to each professional Scout for distribution among units in his Council.
Three Sentenced For Illegal Hunt In National Park

HOME SEAT—Three men convicted of illegal hunting in Everglades National Park were sentenced by Federal Judge C. D. Davis Jr., 24, of Miami, was fined $75 by County Judge O. Frank Stroffold when he entered a plea of guilty to shooting a doe deer on Christmas Day.

Young Davis was hunting near Legion Pond, south of Everglades, Christmas morning and was startled when the doe made its appearance. He became excited, never having shot a deer before, and fired with-not making certain that it was legal game.

Davis began searching for someone to whom he could report the incident, and a short distance from the scene met up with Wildlife Officer Willard Breville who was investigating the shooting. A trip to see the county judge followed.

Big Coon Outbluffs Young Tormentors

HOLLYWOOD—Digging a treed coon proved too big a problem for a group of Hollywood youngsters recently. The coon clung to the tree and made his escape during the hours of darkness. The coon, curled in the upper branches of a large mahogany tree on 15th Avenue between Jefferson and Madison streets, was spotted in the late afternoon by the youngsters.

They shook the tree with ropes, poked at the animal with poles, and threw sticks at him. But the coon, a large one, clung to his perch, marling defiance, until the group left him as he was not their idea of a game animal.

LINES FOR FISHERMEN

Florida's new lures that were named for its stringer-limn's ability. Big fish just can't resist it. Blanks like work the spots like a shadow. Retrieves either shallow or deep. And that trailer hook hidden in the boattail sure cures short strikes. Better get one from your dealer now.

Miamian Draws $75 Fine For Shooting Doe By Mistake

CITRUS COUNTY—C. D. Davis Jr., 24, of Miami, was fined $75 by County Judge O. Frank Stroffold when he entered a plea of guilty to shooting a doe deer on Christmas Day.

Young Davis was hunting near Legion Pond, south of Everglades, Christmas morning and was startled when the doe made its appearance. He became excited, never having shot a deer before, and fired without making certain that it was legal game.

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DOGS AND HUNTING

(Continued from Page 15)

We figured they couldn't shoot us if they didn't see us, but it seems that, of course, a hunter cannot always be motionless. He must get to and from his stand if he is using one. After finding out the possibilities, the chances of being mistakes for game is great. When moving through brush and woods, it is a good idea to always make plenty of noise for then it shall be the greatest danger of being shot. Do not depend on the other hunter's eyesight. Do not count on him to look! Take your shot when you should, but not at your enemy, because he is not motionless.

LINES FOR FISHERMEN

(Continued from Page 14)

The single action fly reel is a beautifully simple thing, and is therefore considerably less subject to mechanical failure than the automatic. The better grades of single action are available in sizes large enough to accommodate lengths of backing line sufficient to handle runs of fish of any size and fighting ability. These reels generally have adjustable drag mechanisms which enable the angler to play his fish directly from the reel. . . a must for fast running, powerful finnters like musk, tarpon, jacks, bonito, ladyfish, and others which inhabit Florida's salt and brackish waters. Also in the single action reel is a fairly light weight as compared to the weight of the automatic reel.

In short, if you expect to confine your fly fishing to bass and bream, and if you like the convenience of line control, then automatic reels are for you. Fishing. With or without a fish.
Wildlife Trading Post

The Wildlife Trading Post is especially designed for SWAPMING, BUYING or SELLING outdoor open-season equipment, services, etc. Classified advertisements in a word or insertion, payable in advance. Minimum advertisement 15 words at $1.00. Display advertisements and groups of display ads are accepted. Good space and rates to: Wildlife Trading Post, Florida, Tallahassee, Fla.

TAXIDERMY
HI-GRADE TAXIDERMY, most modern processes. Guaranty work. Fish a specialty. 311 RANCH, 311 College St. N. at 48th Ave., St. Petersburg, Fla.

COFFEE
BRAND'S COFFEE, 366 S. 9th St., Fort Myers, Fla. Phone 2473.

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WATERFRONT HOME with income 3 cottages, 1 duplex, completely furnished, 15 miles from Pennsylvania on Perdido Bay. Gulf fishing $14.50, 00. $2.50 cash balance $100.00 monthly. Homestead Tax Exemption. Jewel Glumacs Owner. 522 N. De'Villier, Pensacola, Florida.

ST. JOHN'S RIVERFIGHT Lot, Cabin, North of Palatka, $5,000.00. Dr. Gage, 241 W. Ashley Street, Jacksonville, Fla.

FISH BAIT FOR SALE
LIVE BAIT FOR SALE—GILBERT'S HAPPY CONTENT WIGGLING RED WATER WORMS, 500 Worms, $5.95; 2,000 Worms, $11.50. Worms packed 100 to a can, shipped prepaid for $5.00. GRAY CRICKETS, 500 for $7.50; 1,000 for $13.50. Orders shipped same day received. Prepaid—GILBERT'S FARMS, CHIPLEY, FLORIDA.


FISHING TACKLE
FISHING PLUGS—Fresh and salt water plugs, Beautiful colors and models that fish will hit. $6.00 per dozen. Complete tackle repairs and supplies. Mail orders to GULF STREAM TACKLE SHOP, 475 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, Fla.—Phone 5-4835.

WILD FOWL FOR SALE

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

J. R. Fields Passes

James R. Fields, Sr., of Blountstown, veteran Calhoun County wildlife officer with the Game and Fresh Water Commission, died in the line of duty at 6:30 p.m. December 24, 1956. His death resulted from shotgun wounds received while trying to arrest an illegal hunter on the Brown Lake State Game reservation along the banks of the Apalachicola river.

Married, and father of three children, Fields first served with the Commission on a part-time status beginning in 1936, and entered regular service on September 1, 1938. He was born in Doxey County, Georgia, and was a former schoolteacher for 12 years.

Funeral services were held in Blountstown.

STICKS AND STONES

(Continued from Page 3)

OPEN LETTER TO MR. SMITH

The following letter is in answer to Mr. W. J. Smith's letter of December 30, issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE. I truly hope you can spare the space to publish this letter not only for my Smith's benefit, but for that of many others.

Dear Mr. Smith,

After reading your letter in the December issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE, criticizing the biologists and the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, I would like to tell you and all sportmen of your kind a few scientific facts that you don't seem to know.

Our rivers and lakes with river connections contain every kind of Florida fresh-water fish. Two-thirds of these are worth- less fish to only one-third, bass, perch and perch.

Research has proved beyond any doubt that water will only support a limited pondage of fish—catfish, gar, mudfish and suckers can live and thrive in water where a game fish cannot live at all. As a matter of fact, when all fish are given equal protection, the rough fish have advantage of the game fish to begin with, then each succeeding winter season places the odds more in favor of the game fish.

Our lakes and rivers have all the fish their water area can support, but Nature has worked them down to where they are mostly roughfish that are worthless to sportmen. The sportmen can take out the good and leave the bad, but if the waters could be properly sorted, the commercial men would dump out and destroy more roughfish than good ones, which would give the gamelover a better chance to survive.

Research has been the cause of all advancement, as well as the security of our nation down through the ages. Still you and many other sportmen don't give it even a slight consideration in fish and game conservation. So, having been a Florida fish and wildlife biologist myself for over 50 years, I think the least you could do is to write a letter to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission biologists and this valuable little magazine for your outback of temerity and tell them that never again will you be guilty of prejudice action like the rest of the scientific facts.

TOM MORRISON
Cross Creek, Hawthorne

MIDNIGHT OIL

Many thanks, too, for forwarding the requested year's birthday of FLORIDA WILDLIFE. I am not quite convinced, however, that the entire hatch bunch with me, and then sit up till 1 a.m. reading them through. And the next day was one of the heaviest of the week. What's more, I had a tough time getting my vistums on time ever since. Mother, who used to spend her winters in our state, is very much interested in the matter and is writing to the agency which created the publication. My congratulations.

GLEN A. BORSONEAULT
Outdoor Editor
THE SAGINAW NEWS
Saginaw, Mich.

BARTRAM

Dear Sir,

May I suggest that the book "Travels of William Bartram" contains many exciting des- criptions of Florida wildlife (in 1774) that might be used effectively in your magazine to point out the need for better conservation in our State.

G. R. OHMES
Ancilla

GEORGE W. McCALL, Panama City police sergeant, shot his 30-06, caliber rifle with a .22-caliber rifle, breaking the bird's neck.

CHAIN PICKEREL (jackfish), 15 inches in length, tried to bite off more than it could chew by attempting to swallow a bulky 12-inch black bass. When picked up in a Mount Stora lake by Morgan Mosford, the pickerel was dying from its efforts while the bass was still struggling to free itself.

USING HAND-MIKE, Chief Wildlife Officer Curtis E. Wright, Fourth District, Okeechobee, talks to Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission pilots Eugene Wright and Louis L. Courad, Jr., in plane while George Tumblin stands by in an attempt to locate illegal door hunters reported in Big Cypress Swamp area southwest of Clewiston. (Photo by Stan Wayman.)

A BUM SUCK—"Bambi," an 8-weeks-old duck known how to his daily chores from the commissioner at Whiting Field north of Milton. He demands attention. Penalty at the door whenever he is hungry. "Bambi" has never been penned, and is still wild.

Guineville's Hibiscus Park Pond afforded a merry time for 200 kids who caught 169 fish in first annual Children's Fish Rodeo sponsored by the Alachua County Sportsman's Assoc.
CONSERVATION AND HUMAN NATURE

Effective conservation of fish and wildlife in Florida and other states is being hindered immeasurably by that intangible something called human nature. Human nature at its best manifests itself in the children behavior of people. The same human nature which makes the brown trout want to keep up with the fomnies. The human nature which causes (or is it allows?) people to nullify their misdeeds by pointing out the wrongdoings of others.

Human nature? What is it anyway? Are we born with it? Or do we gradually acquire it, with the subconscious realization that it will give us an "in"—something on which to blame our petty faults? The term, "human nature"—it seems—is nothing more than a heading under which to classify the emotions of our animal instinct.

What has this to do with conservation problems? Everything! Without human nature there would be no conservation problems. If folks would grow up emotionally they'd practice conservation automatically. No breathing, eating, sleeping.

Little children are prone to eat their cake and then cry because it is gone. This is a childish form of human nature. Hunters squawk loud and bug because the hunting isn't what it used to be. "There's no game anymore," they whine. "A few years ago I could go out any afternoon and get 100 quail here, a couple of deer there, or 50 ducks over yonder." This is an adult form of human nature.

As children, we sneek a cockle out of the jar. If mother finds out about it, we say, "Johnny took one, too." We grew up—grow older at any rate. We violate conservation laws. We attempt to justify these violations by proclaiming that everybody else breaks the laws too. We implicate others, they implicate us. Vicious circle. We figure that we'd better get our share before someone else does, and someone else finds that he'd better get his share before we do. That's human nature.

Human nature, it seems, is prejudiced against cops. Funny, isn't it? Yeah, like a broken leg! It's human nature to resent a cop's authority—anyone's authority, for that matter. So what can we do to give vent to this resentment? Not sb a hank, too risky. Not refuse to pay our taxes, couldn't get away with it. There aren't many wildlife officers. The woods are wild, the waters wild... So we snub the conservation laws.

As small kids in school we develop our dislike for authority. We do things we're not supposed to do—throw spitballs, shoot rubber bands, or thumb our noses at the teacher while her back is turned. "The old battle-axe," we say, "I'm not scared of her."

As adults we kill game out of season or keep several limits of fish. "I'm not scared of no damn game warden," we proudly proclaim.

Folks don't even consider game wardens real cops, resenting their authority without even respecting their purpose. Sad situation. The same folks who would scream to high heaven if thieves were allowed to run rampant through their homes and around their towns without police interference. Yet wildlife officers, who try to protect the fish and game which belong to the people, are looked upon as useless nuisances. Human nature? Sure. A guy who demands police protection may not want wardens interfering. A guy who demands rob banks or burglary houses—may nevertheless like to kill an extra deer or turkey now and then. Even a citizen who obeys the game laws feels he keeps personal loss when some method he never heard of kills a doe deer he never saw. Not like the warden ramrodding the old human.

Now if humans could just learn to look at it this way... Say you plan a big deer hunting trip. You spend a lot of dough on shells, equipment, provisions, and the like. You vacate your job for a couple of weeks during deer season and take off for the woods. You hunt, and hunt, and hunt, but you can't find a deer. Your vacation ends, deer season is over, but you've got no venison. Remember that doe some guy killed a couple of years ago? The unborn fawn of that dead doe might have grown into the buck you didn't get? Letting your human nature have its way, WHO DO YOU RESENT NOW?
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