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FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Published monthly by the
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
Tallahassee, Florida

* For The Conservation, Restoration, Protection of Our Game and Fish

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Boys...Gals...and Guns

By EDMUND McLaurin

Two teen-age boys, walking a railroad track, .22 caliber rifles tucked under arm, in quest of something to shoot, thoughtlessly surrendered to the fascination of the potential targets suggested by the glass insulators on telephone poles lining the railroad right-of-way. The resulting damage disrupted important telephone and telegraph communication lines for hours!

"No Hunting Allowed" signs appeared on farm land, long recognized as good hunting territory, when an irate farmer found his two barn cats, guardians of his corn crib, dead—shot by two boys he had seen enter his land boundaries, presumably hunting squirrels.

Complete loss of sight in one eye was the fate of a young boy hit by a pellet carelessly fired from an air rifle.

Another teen-ager was killed instantly by a shot fired from a gun held by a companion, in one of those "I didn't know it was loaded!" accidents. Similarly, a young nimrod crippled himself for life when he disregarded a cardinal rule of firearms safety and carried a loaded shotgun in his car. It fired when the youngster reached his chosen hunting spot and fumbled for his gun lying on the rear seat.

Adults, reading of such unfortunate accidents, or perhaps having been victims of youthful mishandling of guns, can be expected to react with strongly expressed emotion and opposition to the boy-gun idea.

"I won't let my boy have a gun!" says the parent.

"I'll introduce a Bill that will prohibit possession of air rifles and .22 caliber rifles by anyone under 16 years of age!" is the cry of the lawmaker.

As one who has examined the matter from many angles—first as a boy and shooter, and later as a boys' work leader—I have grave doubts as to the working logic of such snap-judgment decisions by both parents and legislators. The problem demands a different approach.

First of all, adults should remember that it is natural for a youngster to want to shoot, to own a firearm. In almost every instance, boyhood heroes of history and exploration are associated in mind with firearms. Every school boy knows the role that the rifle played in building America from a wilderness. He has likewise read and knows that the privilege of owning and bearing arms is a Constitutional Right. Youngsters, therefore, can be said to come by their love of guns naturally.

Secondly, if they cannot have their own, then they will use those of playmates or, surreptitiously and sometimes tragically, borrow firearms belonging to elders. Shooting safety does not lie in denying a youngster ownership of a gun, nor in passing legislation making him a law violator when he wishes to shoot one—as most boys do in the normal process of growing up.

Finally, although we all hope it may never come to pass, the present generation of youngsters may one day find it necessary to take up arms in retaliation for a sneak attack on the United States proper. It is only common-sense to be prepared, too, in warfare chances of survival and eventual victory are best for those who can shoot fast and straight! During World Wars I and II, our casualty rate was highest among those men who had entered the Armed Services without previous basic firearms knowledge and training.

For these reasons, most assuredly do I believe in boys owning and enjoying firearms and air rifles. But I think it is decidedly wrong to simply permit a boy to have any kind of gun without contemporary education in its safe and practical use, and before he has evinced the sense of responsibility that is a requisite of safe gun handling at any age. One does not give a youngster the keys to the family car and say, "You can drive the car now, Bill. Just be careful." Before you surrender those car keys, you, as a parent, feel entitled to know that your kid has at least a basic knowledge of the mechanical functions of driving. In the same vein, it is expecting too much of a boy to merely give him a gun, with blessing and admonition to be careful, it is like giving him the car keys without his knowing how to drive to the minimum degree required by drivers' license tests and ordinary road safety.

It is specifically the adult's responsibility to ground a youngster in the basic fundamentals of firearms safety.
By BILL SNYDER

SEVENTY-THREE years ago a slavik delivered a babbling baby to a clay-floored, humble log cabin near Albany, Kentucky. Little did the slavik realize that this red-faced infant 60 years later would be responsible for planning and manufacturing an artificial fish bait that was destined to attract the fancy of more than a million fishermen throughout the United States, Canada, and numerous foreign countries.

But, that is exactly what happened. The infant was christened Philip Porter Dalton. Today, his bait, the Dalton Special, is a by-word with nearly every fresh water rod and reeler regardless of where he lives.

And don't get the mistaken idea that Dalton, now 73-years-old, has slowed up a bit in his interest in producing gadgets that are dynamite so far as Florida's famed black bass are concerned. Not by a jug full! As a matter of fact, on the very day I talked with him last month, the first "Baby Dalton," a one-quarter ounce bait designed for spinning reels, started coming off the production line. What's more, this writer, had the distinct honor of being presented with the No. 1 new wooden fish.

Dalton evidently was born with fishin' in his soul. At the age of six he started his fishing career with a crooked tree branch, a piece of store string, and a bent pin. A few years later he had graduated to the cane pole class and was swing manufactured fishing line and hooks. By 1918 he was a professional rod-and-reeler, but wasn't exactly satisfied with the artificial bait he was buying over the counters of many a store. So he did what might have been expected. He started whittling fish lures from blocks of wood for his own use. Today, he admits that "some of 'em worked and a lot of 'em didn't." Nevertheless, it didn't take him long to convince himself that it wasn't the color of the bait that attracted fish -- it was the action that led them to ultimate suicide.

To this day, he hasn't changed his mind on the color contention. However, with a sly wink he admits that his famous Dalton Special is being manufactured in three sizes and 27 different colors.

"You see," he explained, "you have to satisfy the whim of the fishermen. But still and all, it's the action of the plug that does the business." Florida, as a matter of fact, has always taken an extremely important role in the development of Dalton's artificial lures. During six consecutive winters he fished Florida's fresh waters before he finally decided to move permanently from Bowling Green, Ky., and call this state his "home base."

March 13, 1938 was the day destined to introduce Dalton's plugs to their first popularity. It was on this day that Dalton accompanied a group of Tampa sportmen on a fishing and camping trip at Lake Okeechobee. During the first half of the day, the group, fishing from three rented boats, took a proverbial snaking.

"They just ain't bitin' today," Dalton's guide explained.

Somewhat apologetically, Dalton produced three of his own lures from his tackle box. They were handmade and handpainted.

Looking the lures over suspiciously, the guide turned thumbs down on their use. "First of all they wouldn't catch nothin' and in the second place they'd bunch up in the grass because they ain't needless," he predicted.

Dalton agreed to cut his line if he snagged in the grass. Even as he talked to the guide, he was preparing to cast out one of his handmade lures.

The guide scowled with displeasure.

An instant later, the plug landed squarely in the middle of a grassy patch in Lake Okeechobee.

"Well, I'm a son-of-a-gun," was the bewildered guide's sole remark.

Dalton made two more casts and ended up with a five and a six pounder. From there on out, each of his fishing companions in the three boats tried a hand with the new baits. In slightly less than two hours, 55 bass had been placed in the live wells.

When the boats headed back to camp, "Doc" Smoak, who had landed a 12-pounder, wakefully christened the plugs with a name that was destined to become famous.

"Let's name 'em the Dalton Special," suggested Doc.

And, Dalton Special it has remained henceforth. One year later... (Continued on Page 10)
Hernando county boasts of something that likely would be worth a million dollars to the sophisticated City of New York! For that matter, it has something that’s merely a remembrance to most sections of the United States. Yes, Hernando county possesses something that is too valuable to reckon in the tens of dollars and cents—it has one of our few remaining wildlife functions.

Although it’s true that timber activities of the past with doubt caused many thousands of acres of top-notch wildlife habitat, Hernando county’s 700 square miles still contain many miles of practically inaccessible swamps that teem with fine-tuned whitetails, various hares, and conspicious wildcats. It also boasts of more than 900 ponds, of varying sizes; due to the remote location of many of them, it is likely that the county has thousands of fighting fish that have never seen a baited hook or artificial lure. And don’t overlook the fact that it has its portion of the Withlacoochee River, famous for its fresh water fishing. Then too, it offers splendid salt water fishing on its very doorstep.

Aside from its top-notch hunting and fishing, Hernando county and Brooksville, its live-wire county seat, is offering something else that’s harder and harder to find in this highly competitive age. I refer to the downright spontaneous friendliness and interest that Hernando residents offer to out-of-state or out-of-county visitors. Without pulling any punches, they’ll truthfully tell you where the hunting or fishing is best. What’s more, the home-like atmosphere that prevails throughout the county leaves you with a determination to come back again. That alone is an aspect that could well be studied by many a community that, in these competitive days, is inclined to give visitors the "brush off", rather than an earnest, helping hand.

During the writer’s visit in Brooksville, he listened to many a story of the past, as well as optimistic predictions for the future from some of the county’s veteran sportsmen.

All of this are agreed that Hernando’s hunting and fishing is vastly improved over conditions of eight or nine years ago. Two factors, they pointed out, have resulted in the build-up—an improved conservation education program, and added respect for wildlife officers and their gigantic law enforcement program. That condition, in itself, should be recognized as a milestone in the progress of the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in Hernando county.

George Mountain, 4-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Mountain, Brooksville, to my mind is a glowing example of what can be accomplished by impressing Floridians with the necessity of strict adherence to our game and fish laws if we are to expect to retain our national reputation as a fishing paradise.

On August 18, little George stubbornly refused his father’s invitation to accompany him on a fresh water fishing trip. "I can’t go because I haven’t got a fishing license," the four-year-old told his amused father.

"Little fellows like you don’t need a fishing license," Mountain told his son.

"I won’t go without one," George declared, "a game warden would catch me and I’d be in trouble."

To appease the youngster, his father took him to the nearest license bureau.

After an explanation of the purpose of the visit, and a series of winks between the license clerk and the father, George proudly received the following "license." It was addressed to "Dear Game Garden."

By JACK WALTERS

"Little George Mountain, 4 years, blue eyes, sandy hair, height 54 inches, the sole right to fish whenever he pleases and when he pleases providing he does not catch over his legal limit." The "license" was signed by the clerk and, satisfied at last, George was fishing with his daddy.

Although this is an amusing example, it also is conclusive proof that Florida’s wildlife of the future will be placed in safe hands if and when we educate today’s young generation properly.

A visit with Walter Hope, Brooksville druggist, proved that he is a veritable census taker when it comes to keeping track of wild game in Hernando county. His father, the late J. D. Hope, was recognized as one of the county’s top-notch hunters. Evidently Walter inherited his father’s love for hunting.

"Our deer crop is on the upgrade," he told me. "I figure we have better than 400 head in the county today."

The conversation eventually turned to fishing, and Hope named a few of Hernando’s most likely fresh water fishing spots. The list included Hunter’s Lake, Mountain Lake, Neff Lake, Weekwater, Tisbe Lake, Broadwater, and Brookside Lake, all of which are situated in Hernando county.

"They’re full of bass, bream, crappie, blue gill, etc. They’re all prime fishing spots, and if you’re going to fish, you should go to one of these lakes," advised Hope.

Harry C. Mickle, of Brooksville, is a "walking dictionary" when it comes to tracing hunting history in Hernando county.

"Before Prohibition, hunting in Hernando county was a social event," Harry Mickle told me. "Today, however, the Game Commission is keeping close watch on our white-tailed deer."
Advice of a Wayside Sage

By J. L. Kirkland

And as we waved a last good-by, he raised his voice and called: "If you be going to the South, tell them, also, to quit burning the woods!"
Florida Ambassador

By WILLIAM CARL

Peaslee Streets, mayor of Lake Park, is an outstanding Florida ambassador. Although he's an ambassador without portfolio, he has been responsible for a single-handed publicity campaign in strategic northern cities that has likely resulted in more actual good will for the state and attracted more sportmen and prospective residents than would have come from a无名bluff at 42nd street and Broadway.

Mayor Streets' interest in publicizing Florida started several years ago after he decided that "the State of Florida has, without a doubt, the most to sell of any State in the Union but we are guilty of doing the least selling." Upon arriving at that belief, he started doing something about it.

As a result, in 1950 he loaded a trained alligator into his car along with fresh coconuts, a supply of mangos, and a stuffed sailfish, and headed to the International Lion's Convention at Chicago. During the next few days he appeared on five half-hour television shows in the Windy City. Not only did he exhibit the trained alligator to his admiring audiences, but he also handed out coconuts and smoked sailfish while expounding his Florida sales talk. During "off-hours," he devoted his time to showing movies depicting the thrills of fresh and salt water fishing in Florida. Candidly, he admits that the Chicago venture likely resulted in thousands of dollars worth of free and valuable publicity for the State of Florida.

Last June, Mayor Streets decided to stage another campaign for Florida at the International Lion's Club convention held at Atlantic City, June 24-28. This time he was accompanied by a staff of co-workers and set Atlantic City somewhat ajar when he arrived with two Brahman steers, Buddy and Charlie by name, and weighing 2,200 pounds each. In addition, the Mayor was provided with 2,600 coconuts which日后 were distributed as Florida souvenirs at the Lion's convention. Despite the interest displayed by thousands over the strength of the two Brahman steers, it fell to the lot of three Florida alligators to actually steal the show.

Each day and night, the crowds demanded an opportunity to see Napoleon and Elsie Alligator and their mounts, Jumbo Alligator. As a matter of fact, the mayor met with so much public acclaim that Joseph Altmann, Mayor of Atlantic City, finally made them honorary members of the Honeymoon Club of Atlantic City, and the Ambassador Hotel provided them with the Honeymoon suite, where the "bride and groom," Elsie and Napoleon spent a portion of their honeymoon splashing in a shark bath tub. This single stunt attracted the interest of many a newspaper reporter with the result that the story was carried by a roster of newspapers throughout the eastern area.

During the Atlantic City visit, Mayor Streets and his colleagues preached the importance of flood control in Florida.

"Flood control is very closely related with all types of recreation," the Mayor told me recently, "Without flood control in southern Florida, it would only be a matter of time until our fish and game, the cattle industry, farming, and all natural resources would be eliminated. Eighty-five per cent of our flood control fund is furnished by the federal government, therefore, I felt it was important to acquaint northern law-makers with our great need."

During the convention parade a police guard had to be summoned to move the crowds away from the coconut truck in order for the parade to proceed. Thousands screamed with excitement over seeing their first alligators, while others in the throng marveled at the size of the Florida steers. Great interest was displayed also when the gala crowd viewed a tremendous trailer exhibiting all types of Florida gardens, the growth of which was made possible by flood control.

After Mayor Streets and his party left Atlantic City, they pulled a final publicity stunt when they turned the alligators and steers loose on the spacious lawn of the national Capital.

Upon his return to Florida, the Mayor expressed the opinion that the success of his strange cavalcade resulted primarily from "the engineers and officials of the Central and Southern Flood Control District, who showed the greatest cooperation made the cavalcade possible."

Even now, Mayor Streets is cooking up Florida WILDLIFE

This certificate, issued by the mayor of Atlantic City, officially made Elsie and Napoleon Alligator members of the Honeymoon Club. This is an event that...
Don't Choke On a Bone

By Doc Howe

Be Meticulous! Filet your fish and get ALL of the bones out of the filets before serving to your friends, or relatives, including In-Laws. Make your broiled, baked, or fried fish filets really delectable.

There is nothing more displeasing, or embarrassing, when you are "on your dignity" than to find yourself with an unexpected mouthful of fish bones, or what is more likely, one elusive fish bone that you do not dare to take a chance and swallow. Personally, I wipe that so-called friend, who allowed me to get into that predicament, off my list of desirables and avoid him as I would a drunken driver.

When I say "unexpected", that is exactly what I mean. Some fish, for example the trout family, are nearly always prepared with the bones in. Then, your behavior at the table will not show lack of refinement if you remove a bone from your dentures. But, darn a person who will permit any fish of the sunfish or perch family to be served with a single bone concealed in a filet!

Should there be any doubt in your mind as to what fish belong to the sunfish and perch family and can be fileted perfectly, here are a few: smallmouth, largemouth bass, crappies, rock bass, sunfish, bluegill or bream. Perch, walleyes, saugers belong to the perch family. The bony structure of both families differs only in their dorsal fins. The fileting process is identical for both the sunfish and perch.

I

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Much Maligned

By FRED W. JONES

It is likely that hounds are much more often maligned by non-enthusiasts than are any of the other breeds of dogs. The expression, " beasts as hounds," is heard frequently.

And of course, there are always the folks who berate both the dogs and men who enjoy running "varmints" and game on the grounds that such "sport" is cruel and non-sporting.

But if the non-enthusiasts are violent in their defamating of the character of scent running dogs, the followers of the breed are equally violent in their defense of both the hounds and the sport.

Hound enthusiasts are quick to point out that rather than being cruel, the breed is actually so intelligent as to be capable of complete relaxation between pursuing "race." They say that a hound, on an average, cat, fox, or even a human, shows an incredible amount of ground, and that in order to collect their quarry they must be in top condition, and often in complete rest between "jobs.

The enthusiasts are also quick to point out that hounds are usually not "bloodthirsty" animals at all. On the contrary, they are interested usually only in the "race." If their quarry is caught, they will rarely attack it, unless it is a "tough" one. In general conditions (hobbit, coon, fox, possum, etc.)

The argument that runs round most of the statements that the use of hounds on deer is non-sporting and true. They point out that a hound trailing a deer is essentially the same thing as a man following such a trail through the snow in the northern states. They want to know why such trailing (with hounds) is any more cruel or non-sporting, than man-trailing in snow, or the common northern practice of using beaten or drunk deer hunts.

And they also point out that the more extensive use of dogs for trailing deer, especially in the south where hunting is done on bare ground, would result in the saving of much game which would otherwise be lost. They claim that thousands of wounded deer die in the woods and are wasted every year that could be recovered by the proper use of trailing dogs.

The hound enthusiasts, in their claims of better conservation through the use of dogs, have the backing of none less than the Game biologist of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, O. Earle Frye, who says that the use of hounds is only helps in recovering animals which would otherwise be lost, but aids in a more complete harvest of the AVAILABLE HARVESTABLE CROP.

Frye says that under existing rules and regulations, at least 75 percent of the legal bucks could be killed by hunters each year without causing any loss in the future productivity of the deer herd.

This is in effect, that through the use of dogs, more hunters may bag their deer much earlier in the season, without any decrease in the supply that will be available the next year or in the years that follow. He also makes the fact that when and if we ever realize the potentiality in our deer populations, through the use of dogs, their numbers need not reach higher than would be possible otherwise.

All in all, it is admitted that the use of dogs is detrimental to deer populations to some extent, but the beneficial effects more than counteract this.

True hound men also are quick to admit that there are any number of unfortunate ways of using hounds is detrimental, but they contend that the dogs could not be blamed for this.

This argument has not been true in every instance, for there are tournaments where the use of hunting hounds is not considered a sport.

It is well established, however, that the use of hunting hounds is not considered a sport and that the game is being done by the hounds.

Hounds Much Maligned

SPORTSMEN ANNOUNCE

By PHIL FRANCIS

Introduction to Spinning:

No single fishing outfit can do everything, and even if one could, it would be pleasant to change over to a different style of fishing now and then for variety's sake. I love fly fishing, and I love fly fishing, and I have no intention of giving up either of them, for each has its place.

Fishing in rod around heavy objects or ranges in much more efficiently accomplished with a standard half-casting rod, reel, and line, than with light spinning lines. Surface current, casting, underwater bag, coffee, good for me, and missed being one of the drivers of the spinning board which has sped across the country during the past couple of years.

Well, I'm on the backswing now that has grown to tremendous proportions, but I'll never be able to refrain from bidding myself mentally for the half-casting line which during me of almost 10 years of fishing for brown behind a spinning net. A word to the wise, dear reader, is sufficient. I'm going to try to tell you a bill of spinning goods, but don't expect me to say that it will be precisely in interest to you.

I've no desire to take away anything aided from other casting or fly fishing, and I'll never have so much fun out of fishing as the use of spinning tackle has afforded me. Numerous jokes about the spin-out and spin-out, and I do a good job of it! An experiment, I am practically a tyro at spinning-case inclusive casts of 50 feet or better with a dozen different lures ranging from 1/6 to 1/5 ounce with the same rod, reel, and line! Try me on fishing or fly out. Such a large variety of lures, and I have never had so much fun out of fishing as the use of spinning tackle has afforded me.

Like practically allays (and gals) who fiddle around with fishing tackle, I find that after a fishing session, I'll never have so much fun out of fishing as the use of spinning tackle has afford me. Numerous jokes about the spin-out and spin-out, and I do a good job of it! An experiment, I am practically a tyro at spinning-case inclusive casts of 50 feet or better with a dozen different lures ranging from 1/6 to 1/5 ounce with the same rod, reel, and line! Try me on spinning or fly out. Such a large variety of lures, and I have never had so much fun out of fishing as the use of spinning tackle has afforded me.
"Please, Ma'am, may we ask you some questions?"

There was quiet urgency in the tone. Mrs. Puckett recognized a state of emergency.

"Why, sure!" she said and invited them in. "Now what's on your mind?"

"I'm Bobby McCarry, Ma'am. These fellows are my friends, Dick Teeter and Neil Buuard. We like to fish and we want to learn to hunt with bows and arrows. We started a club at the junior high school, but we couldn't meet there this summer, so we asked the fellow at the Y to help."

"Yeah, we meet down at the Y sometimes," said Dick. "But we can't have a regular meeting night there, and there's no one to help us learn like we want to. Golly! You must have some real sportsmen! Look at all the skins—and fish—gosh!"

"That's sure a swell club house!" the third boy added. "Wish we could have one like it."

"What would you do with it?" Mrs. Puckett asked.

"Just what you folks do," was the answer. "We'd ask some of the fellows, and we'd learn about hunting and fishing—how to handle boats—and even guns—maybe?" the young voice slowed, then halted.

Mrs. Puckett cleared her throat. "Well now, boys," she said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll talk to the club president and tell him what you've said. If he thinks it's okay, we'll put it up to the members. But don't be too hopeful—" she paused, as lips began to grin and eyes to gleam.

"I don't know what he'll say. Maybe he'll think you've done too much damage here. After all, many women have spent a lot of money building this club house, and they're proud of it, and I can't say what they'll say, but I'll let you know. Here's my telephone number."

Then she added, "Any of you boys sons of members here?"

"No, Ma'am," said Bobby, "but one of the fellows in our club had been down here, and he told us about it. He said maybe I would ask you about it, but we thought—u—weren't we supposed to do it?" he hesitated, "We're going to be calling you—"

Mrs. Puckett watched the three lads beat a precipitate retreat, evidently overcome by the effect of their courage. But within her was the beginning of a mighty determination—the determination to help those boys get what they wanted.

She took her problem to Al N. Tabler, president of the Rod and Gun Club. He, too, thought something should be done about it and at the next business meeting the members voted to give the boys a six-weeks trial at the club house—provided Mrs. Puckett would be foster mother to the club—and underwrite any damage to houses, grounds or boats.

That was in March, 1951. By August the junior conservation club had 102 members, $104 in its treasury; three boats of its own; a $50 archery outfit and range—and no bills.

The first meeting brought out 16 boys. They were told that in order to secure use of the club house Mrs. Puckett had promised to pay for any damage they might do. In four months there has been none, either to building or equipment.

And encourage the boys as they practice at skeet or with bows and arrows, or go out in their boats to fish.

Mrs. Puckett's campaign to round up used tackle for the boys who have none has been partially successful, but the rapidly growing club can use much more, and donations are always needed. Many of the boys are good fishermen, bringing in good catches of bass and smelt with their three boats.

The tackle donated to the boys nearly always needs cleaning, mending or rebuilding. Bob McCarty and Rafford Smith, both of whom have been members of the Florida Junior Conservation Club, take over the job of cleaning and repairing.

(Continued on Page 31)
A LETTER FROM PHIL

Dere Kids:
If you want to have real fun, start right now talking real polite an' stuff to your daddy. I tried it out and my daddy up by inviting me and my sister Jeannette to go fishing with him. Of course, I'm pretty much grown up now that I'm nine years old, so of course I knew a lot about fishing. Jeannette is a lot younger—she's only 11—but she had a lot of fun on the trip. I even broke up some pictures during the trip, and I hope you like them. Remember, you have as much fun as we did if you get your daddy to take you with him next fishing trip. Jeannette and I hope we have a lot of fun like we did on our fishing trip.

Warren, Jr.

1. Jeannette and I were willing to give up our comic books when Daddy invited us to go fishing with him on the Caloosahatchee River.

2. We were so anxious to get started on the trip that we told Daddy to rest while we loaded the fishing gear into the car.

3. Daddy unloaded all the gear from the car but Jeannette and I did our share in getting everything ready in the boat.

4. At noon time, Daddy and I ate more'n a dozen toasted w's.

5. Then we started out again and while I tightened my reel handle, Jeannette ran out of board motor—and was she ever scared!

6. All at once Jeannette hooked a big 'un. She screamed for help, but he was so dog-gone big that Daddy finally had to land him.

7. On the way home, Jeannette and I sang while Daddy whistled. We were all mighty happy and daddy acted mighty proud of the fish.
Brooksville & Hernando County

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25

OCTOBER, 1951
and expert gun handling; to advise and encourage him to take his shooting in such forms as will make for safety to self and community; for conservation, and the fullest enjoyment of this sport as a sport. The parent is to blame, I'd say, if a boy is permitted to have a gun without the initial adult supervision needed to learn how to use it safely and expertly when he gets into trouble.

When is a boy old enough to have his first gun? It varies with individuals. Some boys develop a sense of responsibility at an earlier age than others. Briefly, the sensible rule is to permit a boy to have his first gun when, in the course of everyday living, he gives evidence of being able to accept and fulfill responsibility. Youth leaders and firearms authorities, who are in a position to back up their opinions with facts, are of accord that if a youngster is dependable enough to take a $20 bill to the grocery store and bring back the correct change, or handle responsible duties at the home or at school, then he is potentially ready to have his first gun, with the donor obligated to provide the adult supervision and training needed until the youngster is thoroughly familiar with its safe and skillful use.

Behind every hunting accident, or mishandling of a gun by a teen-ager, there is a definite cause. Gun accidents don’t “just happen”; they occur through a combination of factors that exist, though not always obviously. Consequently, to reduce shooting accidents among all ages, considerable field research has been necessary. Game Commission officials, doctors, gun editors, Boy Scout leaders, law enforcement agencies, and others have generously donated time and services during recent years to an enlightening study of firearms accidents and their causes. It was first necessary to compile accurate records in order to learn something about gun accidents—the total number of similar type, when they started and how caused, to name a few things the investigators used as a starting curriculum.

To obtain the needed information a “Uniform Hunter Casualty Report,” to be used by all state agencies, and forwarded to the National Rifle Association, Washington, D. C., as the logical “clearing house” for the compiled data, was adopted and forms have since been furnished to Game Commissions in 43 states, including Florida, and Five Canadian Provinces. Right now, reports of last season’s hunting accidents are being analyzed.

In reviewing the accident records, one thing has stood out markedly—the accident group has been comprised almost entirely of individuals who lacked a basic knowledge of firearms safety and gun handling.

An inspiring example of combined constructive thinking and action is the case of New York State, where the accident rate among young marksmen was once appalling.

In New York, established senior shooting clubs, especially those chartered under the National Rifle Association program, took over the job of instructing teen-aged hunters in firearms safety. In the very first year of operation, over 3,000 boys signed up for the special classes that resulted? Not a single one of these boys has since involved in a hunting accident!

Now, there are over forty NRA-sponsored clubs, especially those organized here in Florida at this writing, and perhaps half again that number of small and trap shooting clubs. Many of them, like those in New York State and elsewhere, make a point of sponsoring junior marksmanship training and of welcoming serious-minded youngsters to firing lines. Then, why do you ask, does Florida have the boys’ gun problem? The trouble is that comparatively few of the thousands of teen-aged shooters living in Florida, and owning firearms, know of these intra-state activities and of the additional free shooting assistance to be had, without obligation, from various national sources— notably, the National Rifle Association, 1600 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington; and the Sporting Arms & Ammunition Manufacturers’ Institute, 545 Lexington Ave., New York City, the two major organizations in the firearms safety field. Both organizations, headed by sportsmen interested in boys and girls and the great sport of shooting, sponsor combined educational and shooting programs open to every junior marksmen in Florida. Even the air rifle shooting boys have not been forgotten; there has been worked out a special air rifle firing program to be carried out right at home. Give a youngster proper supervision and training, and...
A suggested variety of targets at which to shoot, and he will develop into a safe shooter, the NRA and the Manufacturers’ Institute say.

To reduce gun accidents in Florida, our boys and girls need to be told how, annually in other states, over half of the young men of both sexes, many of whom have never been permitted to handle a gun before, and the amount of safety to themselves and others, while the older 100,000 or so adult-shooters, may be obtained directly from Mr. Mehmet at his Cincinnati address.

The open composite marksmanship contests offer, in addition to firearms safety education, cash awards ranging from $250 to $1,500 to the winner, and the popular, home-fired pocket rifle, which is open to all Florida boys of the age groups from 12 to 22 years old, are being the subject of a vigorous campaign by the legionnaires and other organizations for the benefit of the public, and the parents and children of the young people, and are expected to have a beneficial effect on the use of firearms by the public.

When my friend, Mr. W. C. Stewart of the Sporting Arms & Ammunition Manufacturers’ Institute, learned that I intended to present this article for FLORIDA WILDLIFE, he generously authorized me to offer his personal and organizational services to every parent and. The issue includes the free mailing of a number of available publications on how to handle firearms safely and expertly, along with ideas for shooting variety that will appeal to experienced shooters as well.

AIMING FOR SPORT, one of several free publications Mr. Comeaux will send to any reader requesting a copy, covers 50 caliber rifle shooting, range shooting, spotting, proper sight pictures, home firing and club organization, and is available at the National Rifle Association for 25 cents, postpaid. It contains some 50 percent of the information contained in the manual on the same subject.

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MIGHTY OAKS

(Continued from Page 19)

refurbishing, and have been mightily successful.

In addition to cleaning and bailing out all the boats, including those of the senior members, the boys keep a sharp watch on potential poachers.

When they see netters setting minnows for bait, they issue a warning. If that doesn’t work, they go to the clubhouse and call the police.

When the St. Petersburg city council proposed to close certain city lakes to fishing on complaint of nearby residents, a delegation from the junior club attended a council meeting to enter a protest. Their evident sincerity, and that of the senior club president, won them a reprieve in the shape of a compromise ordinance which will allow children under 16 to fish with cane pole, or rod and reel.

When the Florida legislature proposed to bar boys under 16 from shooting rifles or BB guns, the boys passed a resolution against the proposal.

During the first month, Mrs. Puckett, wracking her mind for means of entertainment, suggested that the boys invite their girl friends and have a square dance as the senior club does on Saturdays. The suggestion met with a thumbs-down—then smorks of disgust. "What do you think we are—are-sissies? This is a sportsmen's club!"

Although Mrs. Puckett never had been on a hunt, she soon learned certain things about boys that she understands. A place of their own to play to learn their colleges, and the responsibilities they bring, and the ever-present appetite which dominates all boys. At least once a month a Mrs. Puckett dips up a treat; it may be a watermelon feast on Saturday afternoon, or cake and ice cream or a weiner roast after a business meeting. Twice a month a picnic is planned for outdoor subjects. The boys may buy cokes from the club machine, or pop. From the club's debt, the boys keep their share, profit from which goes back into the club treasury.

Four or five meetings after formation of the club, the boys were planning a dinner dance, which afforded them the opportunity to buy materials to build their own skiff and boat dock in front of the clubhouse. They propose to build their own dock, although they will ask their mothers to donate food for the dinner.

The age limit for junior members is from 16 to 18, though there are a few who are "just going on 16" but look more like a hopeful eight! Already some of them are adjusting to the bow and arrow. Three of them went hunting recently, bringing in three rabbits. One scored a direct hit through the head with his arrow.

Boys are anxious to get on practice. They have had extensive instruction in gun cleaning and handling. The St. Petersburg police department has promised its cooperation in giving the boys actual shooting practice on its rifle range. After a recent business meeting of the club, several boys were clustered about a table on which were piled hunting and fishing and outdoor magazines.

"When are we going to shoot guns?" one lad replied.

"Not until the police call us another lad replied.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

"They can't get the ammunition now, just now," said Mrs. Puckett.

"That's because of Korea," said Bobby McCarty. His lowered, serious tone and the instant sobering of young faces about the table was like a solemn warning. They had been full of thought in those young minds—the thought of the future they feared. However, in just a few short years they hope, too, to face the realities of a world in chaos. Mrs. Puckett, turning to an adult nearby, spoke softly.

"Do you see, why we must do all we can for them—now?"

Almost at the start of the junior rook and gun club, Mrs. Puckett real-

ized that the boys needed an all-round education. She called on Dick Bryant to take over the work of training them in handling guns, rods, and bows.

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Bradenton, Florida
BOYS...GALS...GUNS
(Continued from Page 29)

organize a local air rifle club, with
"Y" official or Boy Scout leader, or one of the parents, as "supervisor," so that kids can be set up almost anywhere, and all sorts of targets can be provided. Some of the best shots in the nation today did their first shooting with air rifles. I know I did. I started at age eleven.

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YIELD CREEK ORANGE GROVE

FLORIDA HOME OF THE ORANGE GROVE

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

DON'T CHOKE
(Continued from Page 14)
To keep the record straight when speaking of fish, a family or species has certain characteristics. A genus, is a major subdivision of a family and is usually a group of related species; and a species, is a single group of fish that live in the same body of water—the gentle art of fishing—and many other things which contribute sporting value.

The boys of the St. Petersburg Junior Rod and Gun Club will be eternally grateful that little Dick Bryant, an old-time outdoorsman like Dick Bryant, as their mentor during the last two months of the club's existence.

Born and raised in backwoods country, Bryant has walked a 20-mile trap line; hiked to a one-room country school; hunted and fished and virtually lived in the outdoors. While still a boy he began to recognize the need of conserving our natural resources of fish and forest and wildlife.

Now 45, Bryant has put in 30 years of conservation work, first in his native state, later in Florida. He has a wide knowledge of Florida woods, lakes and streams, and of its coastal waters once teeming with countless species of salt-water fish. Serving in the law-enforcement division of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, he has worked tirelessly and constantly for the Florida conservation cause.

Last year, with aid of two other Pinellas County agencies, he organized the Pinellas County Conservation Council with the express purpose of obtaining a license wherever it will preserve our salt water fish through control of illegal sealing.

When the new director of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Ben Allen, came from Tallahassee to see for himself the club he had heard about, he called Bryant and the firemen's service, gave him the responsibility of encouraging the statewide formation of junior conservation clubs wherever there are elder sportsmen to sponsor them.

No better spark plug could be chosen for the youth conservation club program in Florida, says Dick Bryant, Sisneros, and tremendously earnest in his avowed purpose of conserving Florida's wildlife, is holding the most interesting position wherever he speaks. He is a member of the Sportsmen's Club of America; Tampa Anglers' Association; Pinellas County Conservation Council, and served as chairman of the conservation committee of the St. Petersburg Rod and Gun Club.

As the plan now stands, Bryant will contact Wildlife officers in every Florida county; select those who may be able to aid in organizing and supervision of boys' conservation clubs and get them underway. Already he has written a manual for junior clubs which will aid those who must train and supervise our junior sportsmen.

St. Petersburg will miss Dick Bryant; but St. Petersburg's loss will be Florida's gain. At last there is light on the conservation horizon, and if all Florida sportsmen and citizens who want their state to remain in the ranks of 100 per cent of states who are taking positive steps to preserve their natural resources will join their efforts in aiding the Game Commission's program, we predict Florida will again hold its own as a sportman's paradise.

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municipalities, then, especially, should the utmost care be taken in the fletting of their arrows.

Have you a jackknife or a penknife? Either will do a good job and the latter will be a lot sharper.
The following routine may take you five minutes, or so, longer than the usual household but I think it pays dividends in not wasting good food and in not sticking someone's throat with a fish bone. You may vary the following routine if you wish.

1. Sift the belly of the bass, from


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You are here: Home Page > Florida > Fishing & Hunting > Boating, Fishing & Hunting > Fishing

See your Local Dealer for your Fishing Tackle

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

October, 1951
DON'T CHOKES (Continued from Page 12)

the vent to the pelvic fins, and cut back the head down through the back of the pelvic fins.

2. Cut down one side, back of the gill, or the pelvic fin, then cut down behind the pelvic fin and forward through a small bone later (in the bone later), to form a "V" or pinch of meat between the pelvic fin and pelvic fin, then cut down back of the pelvic to the pelvic fin.

3. Follow the same procedure on the opposite side of the fish.
4. Grasp both sides of the anal fin, from the head to the tip of the fin.
5. Insert the knife under the posterior part of the anal fin and cut the fin completely out.
6. Skirt the skin on both sides of the dorsal fin from the head to the caudal fin.
7. Stamp the blade of the knife under the posterior part of the anal fin and cut the fin completely out.
8. Insert the blade of the knife under the posterior part of the anal fin and cut the fin completely out.
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Director Defends State's Non-Resident Fishing License

Florida's new $10 non-resident fresh water fishing license fee drew a strong defense recently from Director L. Malcolm Luschen of the state Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

"The law shows that in a typical fishing year, 1947-48, the average annual catch of black bass by each licensed fisherman in Florida was 78.4 pounds," said Mr. Luschen. "Any sport fishermen who knows Florida's fishing black bass will probably agree that 78 pounds of top-notch gusheen is worth far more than the new $10 fee." 

Mr. Luschen's statement was prompted by reports that sport fishermen in Colquitt County, Ga., planned to boycott Florida fishing spots because the $10 fee is non-resident.

The director pointed out that the increase in fees was in line with that charged by other states, including Georgia. Other states are charged as charging $10 or more for non-resident licenses included California, Oregon, South Carolina, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and others.

"Considering the fact that money derived from the increased licenses will be used to maintain and improve state fish and game resources, such as eradication of water hyacinth which now plentiful in Florida's fresh water lakes, we don't believe out-of-state anglers are getting such a bad bargain. This is our first step of many to get the same fee for this south for the non-resident fishermen in a place anywhere there is a 90-100 mile difference in cost. 

Wild turkeys often feed in a circular pattern and return to the same general roosting area at night. In Kelly country, they like to feed upland, but in flats they may feed as they like and often cover ground as rapidly as one mile per hour.

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Florida Wildlife Starts Hunting-Fishing Survey

The first of a series of surveys concerning hunting and fishing carried on in Florida was started last month by the FLORIDA WILDLIFE magazine with the mailing of questionnaires to 2,000 of its subscribers who were selected at random from its list.

The first postal quiz asks sportsmen to answer two questions in how many days and amount of money spent annually on these pastimes and requests information on the magazine itself, which is published by the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Eventually, practically all 25,000 subscribers will be contacted by the magazine in an effort to get an accurate account of all information affecting the two outdoor sports of hunting and fishing and other allied fields in the state.

Sportsmen May Obtain Copies of Pamphlets

Copies of two popular pamphlets published by the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission are available for distribution to sportsmen throughout the country. Fred W. Jones, director of the Information and Education division of the commission, made the announcement.

The two brochures are “Wildlife of Florida,” authored by O. Earle Frese, chief wildlife specialist; and “Fish and Turkey Habits and Populations of Florida,” written by Coleman Newman and Edward Griffin.

Sportsmen desiring copies of each pamphlet may obtain them by writing to the Information and Education Division, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee. There is no charge for the pamphlets.

Florida ducks, permanent residents of the state, are common on both fresh and salt water south of Gainesville and appear to be particularly abundant in the Kinnsman River Valley.

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HUNTING RULES AND REGULATIONS 1951-52

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Open Season</th>
<th>Day's Bag</th>
<th>Season's Bag</th>
<th>Possession Limit</th>
<th>Daily Shooting Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Marsh Hens       | Sept. 15-Nov. 13 | 15        | 15           | 15               | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours.
| (Rabbits)        |             |           |              |                  |                     |
| Ducks            | Nov. 22-Jan. 5 | 4 (1)     | 15           | 15               | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours.
| Goose            | Nov. 22-Jan. 5 | 2 Canada 3 Blue | 2 Canada 3 Blue |                  |                     |
| Coots            | Nov. 22-Jan. 5 | 10        | 10           | 10               | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours.
| Dove             | Dec. 15-Jan. 13 | 8         | 8            | 8                | 12 noon until sunset each day. |
| Deer             | Nov. 20-Jan. 6 | 1         | 1            | 1                | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours. |
| Squirrel         | Nov. 20-Feb. 1 | 10 Grey 3 Fox | 20 Grey 6 Fox |                  |                     |
| Turkey           | Nov. 20-Feb. 1 | 2         | 3            | 3                | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours. |
| Gobblers Only    | Nov. 20-Jan. 6 | No Limit  No Limit | No Limit No Limit |                  |                     |
| Panther          | Nov. 20-Jan. 6 | No Limit  No Limit | No Limit No Limit |                  |                     |
| Bear             | Nov. 20-Jan. 6 | No Limit  No Limit | No Limit No Limit |                  |                     |
| Quail            | Nov. 20-Feb. 1 | 10        | 20           |                  | One-half hour before sunrise to 1000 hours. |

Duck Stamps required for taking ducks and geese. Use of rifles prohibited when taking migratory birds. Use of .22 rim fire rifles prohibited when taking doves.

Editor, Florida Wildlife Magazine

Another in a series prepared by members of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association.

October, 1951
- Put Paradise Point on your list now. Come soon!

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