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1953

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Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission



FLORIDA CITRUS EXPOSITION

WINTER HAVEN
FLORIDA

6—Days and Nights—6

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FEBRUARY 21

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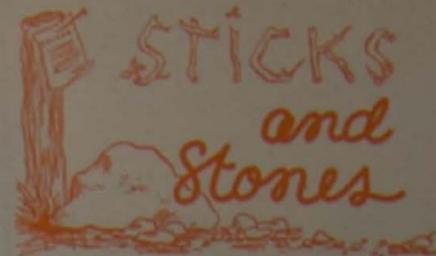
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LETTER FROM SPAIN

Two months ago, I go to Berga, and see and speak in it with the Sergeant I had when I was a Soldier in the Army. (I was furloughed at July 1949.) He said me, they had some mail for me, and we go to the Barracks, and give me it, and they had not send me it because don't know my address. I had some letters from different friends, and all the copies you send from the time I left the Army till now. I give it all them for the Soldiers which enjoyed it very much. For this motive, I will ask you if, please, you send from now, the copy to the Soldados de la Compania de Armas, 40 Batallon, Berga as ever, and if you will send one extra copy to the *Biblioteca Popular de Sallent*, Barcelona (Spain), this is the Public Library, I don't ask for nothing for me.

Hoping that you will do this for the Soldiers of Berga and for the people of Sallent in which I live, and, please, don't mention my name in your magazine if you send it to these addresses, and if publish this letter.

I wish for The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, a happy New Year and a Very Merry Christmas, with all my heart.

Sallent, Barcelona, Spain

The above letter, written on a Spanish Christmas card in the broken English of a Spanish ex-soldier, will long be cherished as one of our most priceless "letters to the editor." We will be proud to assist this "big" little man in his thoughtful desire to give pleasure to his neighbors and friends. We humbly hope that the good people of Sallent will enjoy reading about Florida in the future issues of *FLORIDA WILDLIFE*.

"— GIRL OF 1953"

Dear Elsa:

Since reading the October issue of *Florida Wildlife*, we feel free to call you Elsa. Do you mind? The "we" which we are talking about are the Radio Operators of "D" Btry 773d AAA Gun Bn, Korea.

Since viewing your picture in the *Florida Wildlife*, we have compared your picture with others and have decided that you are to be our "Dot-Dash Girl of 1953." We would appreciate it very much if you would accept this title as a token of our esteem.

If you wouldn't mind, could you please send us an autographed picture of yourself. The only one we have is the one we acquired from the October issue of the

FEBRUARY, 1953

Florida Wildlife. It would be appreciated very much if you could do so. We would also like to hear from someone in Florida, since two of us are from Florida.

CPL. THOMAS W. STIMSON
Radio Opr. "D" 773d
(of Avon Park, Florida)
CPL. GERALD G. WALDRON
(of Arcadia, Florida)

The above letter was received by Miss Elsa Kessler, of Leesburg, who was featured as our "Miss Florida Wildlife for October." Miss Kessler told us that "it was awfully nice of the boys in Korea to select me as their 'Dot-Dash Girl of 1953.' I am going to write the Florida boys and thank them." We can just see those two Cracker boys braggin' to the rest of the outfit about Florida's beautiful gals, especially after they receive Elsa's autographed picture.

TRANSPLANTED FLORIDIAN

I have just seen my first issue of *Florida Wildlife*, and being a transplanted Floridian, and one who still returns for fishing and hunting, would like to have you enter my subscription. I would also particularly like to have the October issue for the article on fly lines recommended for various rods, and the November issue for the articles, "The Florida Fly Fisherman" and "Florida's Public Hunting Program."

. . . You have such a splendid publication, I think it should also be published in annual, bound form for preservation and reference. Is it?

R. WERDEN
Montgomery, Alabama

Yes, we do keep a bound volume of each year's 12 issues of *FLORIDA WILDLIFE*. From the number of letters commenting on "The Florida Fly Fisherman" it is apparent that "Doc" Wade has made a hit with our sportsmen with his informative column on fly-fishing. Take a bow, Doc . . . the boys are interested. Wonder if the tackle shops are doing any extra business since Doc started telling us about the secrets of successful fly-fishing.

(Continued on Page 3)

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Florida WILDLIFE

VOL. 6, NO. 9

FEBRUARY, 1953



Published monthly by the FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION, Tallahassee, Florida, and DEDICATED to the CONSERVATION, RESTORATION, PROTECTION OF OUR GAME AND FISH.

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EDITORIAL OFFICES—LEESBURG, FLORIDA

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ROSE TALLAHASSEE

STICKS AND STONES

(Continued from Page 1)

VANISHING?

I wish to express surprise at the title of the article by Osmond P. Breland. (Ed: "The Vanishing Manatee," December *Florida Wildlife*.) In this area at least, the manatee is far from vanishing. Not long ago I found myself in the midst of a herd numbering well over a dozen. Several have been regularly sighted along the waterfront bordering the city limits of Green Cove Springs. This great increase has occurred since the hyacinths have been brought under control, thus allowing grass and moss to grow in large areas formerly shaded by the floating plants.

Due to recall to active naval duty, my address should be changed to . . .

JOHN M. MALONE, M.D.
 Green Cove Springs

Perhaps, literally, the manatee may not be vanishing, as the species may never become extinct. In this article, Prof. Breland stated that at one time these mammals were fairly common in some areas, but indiscriminate killing by man had caused them to be in great danger of being exterminated in the United States. He also stated that the manatee now is found in this country only in certain rivers and estuaries of Florida (such as the St. Johns near Green Cove Springs). He further states that, with the aid of protective laws, manatees seem to be holding their own in some regions.

WHAT IS A LUNKER?

Mr. Ernest Lyons:

I recently read your article in *Florida Wildlife* and was much intrigued by your word LUNKER. What does it mean? Some kind of a fish? Is it a good English word, or did you invent it, or maybe just slang? It reminds me of the word Spelunker, also, the one I coined myself: CROTALUNKER.

Other parts of your article were interesting, too. I'm no fish-hunter, but do you know of any of those out-of-the-way places in Florida where you can still find those big Diamond Back Rattlers? That is what I like to hunt for. If you will tell me where I can find them, I'll not bother your fish. And please explain that word LUNKER.

ALBERT E. BALL
 Los Angeles, California

The above letter to the author of an article in the April, 1952, *FLORIDA WILDLIFE* was received by the editor and forwarded to Ernest Lyons, of Stuart. Ernie's reply, as follows, should also be interesting to any of our other readers who may not be familiar with the word "lunker." Dear Mr. Ball:

LUNKER as used in my article "LUNKERS OF LITTLE WATERS" is a colloquialism derived from LUNKHEAD, which

Webster defines as meaning "a clumsy, stupid, odious person," but has no relation to SPELUNKER, referring to persons who explore caves and other holes in the ground before inevitably necessary.

Through an interesting semantic accident, LUNKER is now taken to mean large fish, although I suspect that was not its original intent, fish being widely recognized as agile, intelligent, and polite. After exhaustive research, I do find that Dr. Henshall, in one of the notebooks in which he compiled material for "The Book of the Black Bass," notes that "on July 6, 1892, a goodly company of native Floridians was gathered on the bank of the St. Johns to observe my use of the rod and reel, which they had never seen before. I hooked a good one, fell backward in the boat, upset my tackle box, broke my rod and one oar, lost my hat—but landed the fish. As I proudly held up the beautiful bass, one of the natives exclaimed 'What a lunker!' Ever since then, bass fishermen and fishing writers have assumed that the word referred to the fish.

Your word CROTALUNKER, referring to persons who hunt, step on or sit down by member of the family Crotalidae, doubtless had similar origin. I suggest that you write Ross Allen at Silver Springs, who is now recovering from being bitten in the calf of the leg by a diamondback of the species. As one CROTALUNKER to another, he should be glad to tell you where they are and will send along a price list.

ERNEST LYONS
 Stuart

NOT ABLE TO GO

I am receiving the *Florida Wildlife* magazine, which I love to read very much. I think it is the most outstanding sports magazine I ever read. I am an old man, 85 years old, and not able to go hunting and fishing, but I enjoy reading about hunting and fishing very much. I thank my son, Roy Dennis, for getting *Wildlife* for me.

H. C. DENNIS
 Shreveport, Louisiana

Thanks, Old Timer. Hope we can "take" you on a lot more trips through Florida's fields, lakes, and streams.

POSTPONED

The editors regretfully announce the postponement of a feature article on the Mikasuki Tribe of Florida's Seminole Indians, by Jack Grant, originally planned for this issue. Since the article reveals the intimate religious beliefs, customs, and ceremonial rites of these people, the Mikasukis have requested the finished product be given their approval before publication. The first installment will appear in the March issue of *Florida Wildlife*.

Former Florida Wildlife Editor Joins Jungle Gardens Staff

VERO BEACH—Appointment of Robert A. Dahne as public relations director and general assistant at McKee Jungle Gardens was announced recently by Dr. David C. Fairburn, Director.

Dahne was formerly director of the Information and Education Division of the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, prior to his resignation May 15, 1952. He also served as editor of the Commission-published magazine, "Florida Wildlife."

Before joining the state agency in 1950, Dahne was city and sports editor of the Vero Beach "Press-Journal", and is the author of a book on salt-water fishing, as well as many magazine articles.

He is presently serving as president of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association, and has maintained residence in Vero Beach for the past six years.

Dahne's appointment was effective January 1.

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OLD UNCLE RUFUS has found out some more dope for you kids who have been asking about that summer camp for the Jr. Conservation club members. The location of this permanent summer camp had to be changed, when it was found that the original grounds in the Gulf Hammock section of the west coast of Florida could not adequately take care of the large number of kids who now belong to the various clubs over the state.

Several other locations have been inspected, and some ideal places have been found in the Ocala National Forest. It shouldn't be long now before we'll get the word about where the camp will be located and when construction will be started. Uncle Rufus will try to get some pictures of the camp as soon as possible.

It has been decided that you kids are going to have to earn your chance to go camping next summer. But it's easy, and every club member will get a chance to go. All you have to do to earn your camping

trip, is to sell 10 subscriptions to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's monthly publication, *Florida Wildlife Magazine*. There will be no charge for the week's camping trip, and all expenses will be taken care of by the Commission.

The camp will be supervised by a staff of wildlife officers and other instructors, who will conduct classes in Safety, Conservation, Wildlife Study, Camping, Outdoor Living, and many other interesting subjects. The daily program will be similar to that of the summer camp held at Lake Juliana, near Auburndale, last year, and will include a lot of fishing, swimming, boating, and outdoor games. If the camp is located in the Ocala Forest, there will be good opportunity for hikes into the woods for observation and study of animals, birds, and plant life.

According to present plans, each club in the state will get one week at camp for all of its members who sell 10 subscriptions to *Florida Wildlife*. It won't be long, now, before school's out and camping season is

here. Now is the time to tell Dad and Mother that you want to go, and to get your subscriptions sold, so you won't miss out on this week of fun with the other kids.

Director Ben McLaughlin has asked each wildlife officer in the state to take an active interest in the Jr. Conservation club nearest his home. The Commission will try to give every school in Florida an opportunity to have a club, and many new groups are expected to be organized before school is out.

The South Florida Division has reported four new clubs recently—one in Zephyrhills, one in Plant City, and two in Tampa, where there are now three clubs. A recent change, moving Charlotte County to the South Florida Division, also adds the Jr. Conservation Club at Punta Gorda to the group in this Division.

Bob Revels, Education Officer in charge of the South Florida Division, reports that these clubs are planning to take part in the fairs held around the state, by having exhibits wherever possible. It is planned to place an interesting exhibit of education in wildlife conservation at as many fairs as possible. The clubs have been helped on this project by the cooperation of various zoos and game farms, which are letting the boys have animals for their exhibits. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission will furnish movies, wildlife pamphlets, and other educational data.

The Clearwater-Dunedin Jr. Rod and Gun Club has attracted much interest from the grown-ups of that community. Mayor Herbert Brown, of Clearwater, recently attended a club meeting, and pledged his support to the boys, and promised to help in every way possible in getting them the full support of the city of Clearwater.

It's been a long time since old

Uncle Rufus was a boy, and he'd almost forgotten how many questions one small kid could ask about a subject he was interested in—until you kids started popping questions about Jr. Conservation in Florida. Uncle Rufus has tried to answer all your letters and questions. In the future he's going to discuss one subject on conservation, fishing, hunting, wildlife, etc., each month in this column.

First, let's talk about our wildlife officers . . .

The Wildlife Officer

Like other states in our country, Florida has a group of men whose job it is to guard our birds, animals, and fish so that thoughtless people won't destroy them completely. In most other states, these men are called game wardens, but here in Florida we call them wildlife officers.

Every county in our state has at least two of these officers, while in some counties, where special conservation projects are being carried out, you will find several wildlife officers. Every club member should make friends with the officers in his county or city, for these men, more than anyone else, are the ones who can best help you with your training in conservation, hunting and fishing.

The wildlife officer is a man who spends practically all of his time in the outdoors—in the forests and fields, and up and down the streams and lakes. He knows the different animals, birds, and fish—and he can tell you about their habits, descriptions, and the part they play in outdoor life. The wildlife officer knows where the different species live, what they feed on, and how they protect themselves from other species who prey on them for food.

The wildlife officer has many duties, all pertaining to his one big job—to see that the wildlife families of Florida are increased to the ca-



Frank La Rosa, secretary of the Jr. Fish and Wildlife Club, Edward L. Constance Jr. High, North Miami, shows Paul Buyuma (Hawaiiian, and a new member of the club) identification card for the club members.

capacity of Florida's available forests, fields, and waters, and that there is never any danger of any one of these wildlife families becoming entirely destroyed.

One of the wildlife officer's duties is similar to that of a policeman. He has the authority to arrest people who break the game laws of Florida. If everyone could, and did, go out and kill all the deer they could find—doe, buck, or fawn—any day of the year, the deer wouldn't have a chance, and in a short time there wouldn't be ANY deer for ANYONE to hunt. The same would be true for all of our game species. Therefore, we must have laws to protect the game. We must always leave enough of each species to raise

even more game for the following year, for each year there are more hunters. To do this, we must have laws limiting the amount of game each hunter can kill and the amount of time he is permitted to hunt.

However, there are some people who want more than their share of game, people who don't care what happens to our wildlife as long as they get to kill all the game they want. The wildlife officer has to watch for these people, catch them breaking the laws, arrest them, and help prosecute them in our courts. Many times the wildlife officer has to go out at night to catch some of the more cagey violators.

Another duty of the wildlife officer is the checking of fishing and hunting licenses. The sport of hunting and fishing is a luxury that must be paid for by the sportsmen. It is only fair that those who hunt and fish should pay for the cost of producing and protecting the surplus supply of game and fish that makes these sports possible. Children under 15 years of age, and residents of Florida who are 65 or over, do not have to have licenses. Also, anyone who is a resident can fish non-commercially with as many as three poles in the county of his legal residence without license. All others must buy licenses to hunt and fish. The wildlife officer spends much of his time checking hunters and fishermen to see that nobody gets a free ride at the expense of the other sportsmen.

Along with the above, and other, law enforcement duties, the wildlife officer also participates in the program of increasing our supply of wildlife in Florida. He helps our game biologists and management directors record the number of game killed and the number of sportsmen hunting. Following each season, he helps take a survey of the amount

(Continued on Page 49)



Members of the girls' auxiliary of the Naples Jr. Nimrods. This is the second girls' club to be organized under the Jr. Conservation program. Miss Lena Wolfe is the club advisor.



Shown above are officers of the girls' auxiliary of the Jr. Fish and Wildlife Club of North Miami, the first club of this kind in Florida. Mrs. Margaret Johnston is the club advisor.



Boys of Miami Edison Jr. Conservation Club enjoyed refreshments with their fathers at "Dads' Nite" meeting.



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The Red Rat Snake

By ROSS ALLEN and WILFRED T. NEILL

IN *Florida Wildlife* for January, 1953, we discussed five closely related kinds of rat snakes—big, rodent-eating reptiles found in various parts of Florida. The present article deals with yet another species of rat snake, also common in the state. This is the red rat snake, shown in the photograph above. It is one of the most brightly colored serpents in the United States. The ground color is gray or tan, and the blotches are dark red, bordered with black. Often there are small flecks of yellow or orange on the sides, and the belly resembles a checkerboard with alternating squares of black and white.

This harmless creature is sometimes confused with the poisonous coral snake. The two are easily distinguished, however, for the coral snake is marked with red, yellow, and black rings that encircle the body (see *Florida Wildlife* for October, 1950).

The red rat snake is often called corn snake, mouse snake, or house snake. It truly merits these names, for it feeds mainly on mice, and commonly lives about

houses, corn cribs, and old barns where plenty of these rodents are to be had. This snake carefully stalks a mouse, strikes at it, and instantly throws two or three coils about the animal's body. In a few moments the mouse succumbs, being unable to breathe. It is then swallowed head-first.

The red rat snake is more of a burrower than other rat snakes, and frequently lives beneath the ground, in the tunnels of rats and mice. In many parts of the Southeast, red rat snakes are actually more common in cities than in the surrounding woods. They have been known to dwell beneath concrete foundations, in water meters, little-used cellars, storm sewers, etc.—anywhere that rodents are abundant. In such places they perform a valuable service, for they not only devour great numbers of adult rats and mice, but also seek out the baby rodents in the nests.

Although essentially burrowing or ground-dwelling creatures, red rat snakes can also climb, and sometimes take up residence in hollow trees or among the

rafters of old barns. In such places they may catch a few sparrows or other small birds, and occasionally they raid birds' nests, devouring the eggs or young.

The red rat snake is another egg-laying reptile. Its eggs, usually 20 to 30 in number, are soft-shelled, as indeed are all snake eggs. They are more elongate than most birds' eggs, and yellowish in color. They are deposited in the ground or in the pulpy wood of a decaying tree, and hatch in about three months. The babies look much like the adults, but are not as brightly colored. For a time the little ones are too small to catch rodents; indeed, they themselves would make a meal for a hungry rat. So at first they hunt lizards, small frogs, and perhaps insects. Very soon, however, they seek out a mouse nest, and make a meal of the baby rodents. Thereafter, they concentrate all their efforts on warm-blooded prey, and no longer will they eat frogs or lizards. Growth is very rapid, about 12 to 18 inches a year. A maximum of six feet is reached, although most specimens are smaller than this, about four or five feet.

In extreme southern Florida, the red rat snakes begin to lose their black markings, and on the Keys

many specimens have no black in the pattern at all. These Key serpents are called rosy rat snakes, and at one time were thought to represent a distinct species. Formerly, rosy rat snakes lived about abandoned buildings, under bridges, and in piles of logs and brush. In recent years, however, the Keys have been so built up that there are few hiding-places left for these snakes. Probably the rosy rat snake will soon become extinct on the Keys, although its mainland relative, the red rat snake, has adapted itself to civilization and shows no signs of decreasing in numbers.

Both the red and the rosy rat snakes are non-poisonous and harmless to man. When disturbed, they

will vibrate their tail against the ground to produce a buzzing sound; and if further annoyed they will coil and strike. The tiny teeth can inflict only small scratches, however.

The accompanying photograph was made by Tony Stevens. END

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KNOW YOUR REPTILES

The Florida Fly Fisherman



By STAN B. (DOC) WADE

Called "brim"—(bream)—by all Floridians, and found in every fresh-water river, lake, and pond that does not dry up in a drought, these members of the sunfish family, closely related to the basses, are undoubtedly taken in greater numbers than any other Florida fresh-water fish. Since they compete with bass, it is desirable to take still more of them. The cane-pole brigade take great numbers on worms and all manner of live "bugs," but seldom does one see a fly-fisherman out for a mess of brim. This is especially true of our northern winter guests; our bass fishing has been plugged so much everybody fishes bass and passes up the—to me, at least—much better tasting brim. Bass for fun and put them back; brim for fun and the best eating in Florida.

The brim is a sucker for almost any kind of a fly, provided it be small. Wet flies, dry flies, hair bugs, cork and balsa bugs, all will take brim. By and large, the better specimens are likely to be taken on sunken flies fished fairly deep. There are two general types of flies that

large brim favor; a minnow-like streamer and a worm-like fly. Large brim are minnow feeders when they can get them, the pot-bellied minnows being especially favored. Examples of these two types of flies are shown above. Any amateur fly-tier can tie them, especially the worm, as the cruder and more amateurish it looks, the more beat-up it becomes with use, the better it takes fish! Brim are far from smart

and have had no education in the field of artificial flies.

These two general styles of flies are fished quite differently. Remembering that the streamer is intended to represent a minnow and should look like one, make it act like one. Let the fly sink from one to four feet before starting the retrieve. Then bring it back slowly in short, but quick, eccentric jerks, just as minnows move.

Brim are sometimes most exasperating; they will strike short, and just tweak the tail of the fly. When this happens it takes some figuring. Perhaps the fly is being fished too slow or too fast; try fishing it faster or slower. If neither works, try a fly with less length, or one with a "stinger" in the tail—a small second hook buried in the tail of the fly. There are days when brim seem to be filled up and fussy about what they take, although such days are rarer with brim than most kinds of fish—generally they seem ravenous. In very hot weather one might better find a deep hole in the shade and teach some worms to swim—deep—and get a mess of brim anyhow.

The worm-like type of fly is fished almost "dead in the water"—with very little action imparted to it by the angler. Worms of all kinds are always falling into brim water from grasses, trees, etc., and all kinds of larvae and nymphs are present in all waters. Brim know that while worms cannot get away from them, some other brim may beat them to the free lunch, and usually hit running away and hook themselves. Being school fish, they must compete to live, and generally hit first and taste afterwards. If you will find brim where you can watch how they act, you'll see one brim grab something and then eject it; more often than not, another will then grab it and it may be passed along

"BRIM" FLIES

SQUIRREL TAIL STREAMER



Hook #8 or #10 4X long
Tail—few strands red calf tail
Body—tapered, silver tinsel
Wing—gray squirrel tail with dark tips ending over bend of hook
Head—black and full-yellow eye
Overall length—1 1/2 inches

WORM



Hook—#8 or #10 2X long
Tail—few strands red calf tail
Body—green chenille
Hackle—2 turns bright yellow long enough to reach back to bend of hook. Soft hen hackle; fluorescent is best
Overall length—1 in.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE



The unique scene pictured above shows a young buck deer feeding from the same bowl with a dog and cat. Mrs. Dana Mapes, St. Cloud, says that her pets often play together. Her husband found the deer in a nearby woods when it was but a few weeks old.

several times before it is destroyed. Some "bugs" seem not to taste good, but brim hit them anyhow. Brim do the same thing with worm-like flies; one may hit and discard the fly before you can hook it, but another may grab it as soon as you strike and it seems to be getting away. Let the fly sink from a few inches to a few feet, then twitch it an inch or two and let it settle back. Retrieve it very slowly, using the hand-twist retrieve or slow stripping.

Once you have a school located and taking, keep them busy. Do not dally in removing caught fish lest the school move on out of reach. Watch for surface breaks when seeking a school of feeding brim, and, having gotten into them, take all you can as fast as you can. There are times when brim will hang around all day in one place, such as a sunken brush pile or old tree-top, but they are usually on the move seeking to fill their almost always hungry stomachs. Large brim move around more than small ones, and may take some locating, but, once located, the fun is on. What we want are the old he-ones, those from half a pound up. We want to scale them, roll them in fine corn meal, and plunk them into a kettle of smoking-hot fat. Then we want to eat them while they are so hot we burn our fingers—and call them the tastiest fish in Florida—and I have eaten pompano! Tight lines!

END

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After five years of research work by the Whitmire Laboratories of St. Louis, a low pressure bomb was developed to "impregnate" the shoes and outer clothing to avoid picking up ticks, chiggers, and similar pests. This product, "Ticks-Off," was proved in the heart of the South where the livelihood of foresters and lumbermen depend on overall protection. "Ticks-Off" retails at \$1.85 per 12 Fl. ounces. One 8-second treatment



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cents a dozen, large shiners for tarpon fishing usually are furnished by guide boat captains or may be obtained at the weigh stations. Party boats charge \$3.50 a day a passenger. Twenty to 60 a day may sail on any of a dozen or more Diesel-powered craft. They leave the docks at St. Petersburg, at Gulfport, Blind John's Pass and Clearwater daily when the fishing weather is good, at eight in the morning and return about five. Fishermen on these boats may keep their catch.

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Where, What, and How Much

ST. PETERSBURG—Starting at St. Petersburg's waterfront, and completely encircling the peninsula on which the city is built are all the necessary ingredients to bring complete realization of the fishermen's fondest dreams.

For St. Petersburg is the deep-sea fishing paradise of Florida's west coast. It is from the many docks that line the waterfront on the Gulf of Mexico and Tampa Bay that literally thousands of boats, both large and small, fare forth in the mornings, and return in the afternoon, their fish boxes loaded with fighting gamesters, each one a happy memory and a joyful experience.

Ichthyologists (fish specialists to you) say that 600 species of fish inhabit the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. But let's do a little specializing ourselves, on the particular fish you would catch should you be so lucky as to fish at St. Petersburg.

The fighting kingfish, of which there are two distinct seasons for fishing each year, have been praised by many experts as the royalty of their class. Starting in late October and continuing until mid-December, the fall run of Kingfish, or king mackerel, takes precedence over all deep-sea fishing. Again in the spring from April to May the schools of mackerel put in an appearance.

In mid-winter, the amberjack schools appear, and fishing boats hunt them out over coral reefs. Grouper are caught all year, al-

though there are seasons when they are caught in greater or less abundance.

Other fish caught in quantity are redfish, sea trout, Spanish mackerel, red snapper, robalo, sheepshead, mangrove snapper, pompano, ladyfish, bonefish, grunts, balloon fish, angelfish, cobia, bluefish, flounders, catfish and devilfish.

John's Pass bridge, equipped with catwalks for fishing, is said to be the best fishing grounds in the state when ebb and flow of the tides bring in reef fish to feed in the bays. Mackerel, grouper, flounder, pompano and snook are caught from the bridges; whiting and mackerel may be taken by surf casters along the beaches.

Most popular with the fishing fraternity are the thirty-two or more fish camps renting more than 500 row boats and cruisers scattered about the peninsula. There are trout camps near Pinellas airport and at Gandy Bridge, where tarpon and other varieties are caught at various times of the year.

Other fish camps are located at Shore Acres Bridge, Mermaid Point, Maximo and Pinellas Points, Gulfport, and clustered thick at the passes from Boca Ciega Bay into the Gulf of Mexico, all the way from Pass-a-Grille in the South to Tarpon Springs in the North.

Rowboats at all these points are usually a dollar a day; with motor, \$5 to \$6. Shrimp bait are 35c a dozen; minnows and shiners fifty



He loved his sport and he loved his swamp

MY UNCLE JOHN

by Francis M. Weston

BACK IN THE days when all shotgun shells were loaded with black powder, the wood duck wasn't on the restricted list, and I was still a little shaver, I had an old uncle who liked nothing better than to hunt ducks alone in the "lakes" of our river swamp. The old man was no young buck—and he was as blind as a bat without his "specs"—but he loved his sport and he loved his swamp. He was my Uncle John. Let me tell you about him. . . .

Uncle John paddled a cypress dugout. Not one of those where you had to part your hair in the middle to keep from tipping over, but an honest-to-goodness duck boat that you could stand erect in, if you were careful. He carried a 12-gauge double-barrel with high, curving hammers and 32-inch barrels.

A wood duck is pretty quick on the get-away. You wouldn't think that a paddler would ever get a good shot, but the old man's answer was to carry two paddles. When the duck jumped, he'd drop the one he was using and grab the gun—then use the other paddle to go back and recover the one he'd dropped. He figured it was the second or two he saved that made all the difference . . . and he'd come back with a duck or two every time he went out.

That was my Uncle John. Pretty smooth.

Now, those "lakes" of ours aren't really lakes—not

like the ones most of us think of, anyway. They're really submerged creeks or backwaters that wind among the cypress trees, away from the main river. Since there's almost no current, the wood ducks favor this area for feeding and resting places. Before the big cypress had been cut, there were few snags and no underbrush; you could paddle a boat almost anywhere you wanted, especially if the river was up a bit.

It was quiet in there, too—so quiet, that the splash of a fish or the tapping of a woodpecker could be heard a long way off. I think the old man liked the stillness of the swamp as much as he did the duck hunting, and I've always suspected that he jumped a lot of ducks that he never tried to shoot.

But when he did shoot, he seldom missed. The BOOM! of that heavy black-powder charge would echo up and down the swamp for half-a-minute or more, and the folks would know that Uncle John was in there.

He'd always head up-river from our landing. "I like to do my work while I'm fresh, so's I can drift back home on the river current when I'm tired," he'd say. Uncle John knew that swamp, I'm telling you, and he made it work for him.

But, what I remember best about old Uncle John,

is what happened one chilly winter afternoon when he decided he'd try a few hours in the swamp "for a little huntin' and a little meditat-in'." Show you what a man my Uncle John was . . .

He figured on paddling his way through the swamp 'way on up to Williams' Lake—almost at the other end—before sundown, and then letting the current take him home. I watched him as he laid his eyeglasses on the mantle, hooked his steel-rimmed "huntin' specs" over his ears, fumbled in his hunting bag for a handful of shells, and headed for the landing.

I can even remember the brand of shells he was using—a dark blue paper shell called "New Club." They were among the first of the waterproof shells, which meant only that, in case you dropped them in the bottom of the boat, if you picked them up real quick and wiped them dry, it didn't hurt them a bit—but, if they ever really got soaked, they swelled up so you couldn't shove them in the breech of your gun.

It was along about sunset when we heard the heavy BOOM! of the old gun echo its way from up the river. We knew the old man had made it to Williams' Lake and was now busy "huntin' and meditat-in'." We went about our chores, forgetting about Uncle John out there in the swamp.

Then it was full dark, the only light coming from the moon and the wood fire in the big room. We got scared . . . Uncle John had not come home.

The river current, swashing into the swamp, was too strong now for anyone to try to make it up the river with our big boat, so we just waited. And worried. Maybe, even Uncle John could be beaten by the swamp.

It had been night for a few hours when we heard the rattle of the boat chain at the landing dock and the sound of weary feet dragging up the walk. We knew that Uncle John had come home. He was dripping wet and as near done in as any man I have ever seen. But he had come home.

Uncle John had gone as far as

Williams' Lake, alright, and that blast we'd heard earlier was the old man getting a couple of ducks out of a small flock. It was when he'd headed for home that he ran into trouble.

The river was swifter than usual when he came out of one of the small "lakes" to pick up the main current and a free ride home. The strong current swept his dugout sideways under an overhanging branch and turned both the old man and the boat upside down . . . and gun, hat, "specs," and paddles sank swiftly to the murky bottom.

The old man kept his head, though, and grabbed the boat as he came up. So, there he was, neck-deep in the cold water, night closing in on him, no glasses to help him see, no paddles to help him get home, and an upside-down cypress dugout. That might have worried you and me—but not my Uncle John!

He knew that swamp like he knew the palm of his hand; every inch of that area was familiar to him. Hanging onto the overturned boat, he drifted downstream for about a quarter of a mile until he reached a small island with a clear sandy beach. He pushed the boat onto the shore, and, while rapidly swirling waters tossed the small dugout this way and that, and soft sand under his feet threatened to engulf him, he managed to right the boat.

From then on it was easy. Ripping the seat out of the dugout, he got back into the boat, and using the seat as a paddle, made that river take him home on the fast-moving current!

That swamp may have thought it was going to get the best of my Uncle John, but I guess it just didn't know what a man Uncle John really was.

But the swamp had taken the old man's gun. And that worried Uncle John. So, the next day, he went back into the swamp, up to Williams' Lake, with me in the dugout with him. I guess he was trying to give me a lesson in Man's conquest of the elements, or something, but for me it was a good ride and a chance to be with my Uncle John, now somewhat of a hero in our neck

of the woods. We carried with us a long-handled rake and a pole.

We stopped out in the quiet water, back from the river, for about ten minutes while he pointed out the tree branch that had upset him and reckoned how far the current would have carried the gun on its way down to the muddy bottom. He spliced the rake and the pole together, and we edged out into the river.

"Right here!" said Uncle John, and I held the boat steady as I could, working the paddle furiously, while he lowered the pole into the water.

He caught the gun almost immediately—hooking a prong right through the trigger-guard! The gun had gone down barrel-first, of course, and had probably stuck up in the mud at a slant. When the gun was lifted out of the water, my uncle held it the same way—muzzle down—until he had felt up into each barrel as far as his little finger could reach, making sure there was no plug of mud in the end of either barrel.

I knew as well as he did that both those waterproof shells, after 17 hours under water, had swelled tight in the chambers. And, if he did the natural thing, and breeched the gun, the extractor would snatch off both shell bases and spill the powder down into the wet lock mechanism. If you've ever had to clean up wet black powder, you know it's the messiest job there is!

So Uncle John had recovered the gun, but the old swamp was having its revenge. It was giving up the gun, but it wasn't giving it up easily.

But Uncle John knew just what to do. He didn't hesitate but a moment or two. Calmly, he cocked both hammers, raised the gun to his shoulder, and fired both barrels!

The hot blast dried the paper cases, the jolt shook both shells loose from their tight seat in the breech, and when he broke the gun the extractor threw both shells clear out!

Uncle John had beaten the swamp again. END

A Florida Wildlife story contest entry that was rated second in the hunting category . . . a story about an old Cracker duck hunter and the tricks he used to come out on top in a battle with a tough old foe . . . the "swamp."

fishing...

JUST FOR FUN

By J. GARRETT



YOU DON'T have to go hundreds of miles out on the road, hire one of those ultra-swanky yachts, or plan an all-day safari into the wilds of the interior to find a good day of fishing. . . .

Of course, you may be the kind of guy who can only get a thrill from wading in the cold streams of Colorado or fishing in an icy-blue lake up in Canada. But, for me, I'm just as happy stepping out of my front door and taking the shortest route to the nearest body of water—lake, river, or gulf—fish or no fish!

No matter how big or little the fish are, I always get the same thrill, the same tingling of anticipation, when that cork starts to bobble around out there in the water. I just naturally get excited as I watch the line move, sometimes slowly, sometimes racing through the water, and it really doesn't make a bit of difference to me what's on the hook . . . so long as I land the fish, that is.

Now, of course, the bigger the fish, the bigger the tale and the more to talk about. But, although I've never done any bragging about a minnow, still, it was fun catching him.

You see, for me, just fishing is fun!

It's always been that way for me. I remember, back in 1932, during the depression, when work wasn't too plentiful and things were tough all over. Even then, we'd get out of bed at four in the morning, and head for a nearby creek to lose our worries sitting on the bank fishing for bream and bass . . . and catching mud-fish and gars!

Sure, reading in the magazines about the whoppers caught in other places by hard-working fishermen made us a little ashamed of our efforts. But, I've always figured that fishing is kind of like money—it's not only how much, but what there is being ours. And that means more than the big fortunes of others.

My kids figure like I do when it comes to fishing. I guess fishing is like that for most kids—just fun—

until some grown-up comes along and makes them feel like they have to catch lots of big fish to be really fishing!

The summer I took my young'uns out to a shallow stream near home for their baptism in fishing taught me about this fishing for fun business. The stream was so shallow there wasn't a place in it where you couldn't see bottom, and it was the last place in the world you'd expect to catch anything. But the kids went about their business like professionals. Out came their No. 8 sewing thread and hooks barely large enough to hold. No lead and small cracker poles. They baited up with worms, and started fishing.

And darned if they didn't come home with a mess of catfish, two bream, an eel, and a turtle! Plus the best day of their lives.

Remember the days when you went barefoot to the creek for a day of fishing with a bent pin? You can't tell me you're having any more fun today, taking your fishing as seriously as you do, always trying to get the big ones or bring home a big catch! Admit it. I have.

The way I look at it, fishing is the next best thing to religion for relaxing folks and taking away the tension of everyday living.

I'm living these days in one of the big resort cities on the East Coast, where sports fishing in the Atlantic is more than a sport—it's a big business. But you'll never catch me out on one of those luxury cruises. Now, I'm not trying to put anybody out of business. You may like that sort of fishing, or maybe that's the way you make your living. To each his own.

But, for me, I'll take family fishing . . . the wife and the kids in an old boat and kicker and a day on the St. Johns, or down Blue Creek, just south of Lake George.

Catch anything? Who cares? It's fun I'm after.

END.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Game Management Pays Off



Wildlife Officer James Parker Johnson inspects "big three" kill—bear, deer, and turkey—made by one of the hunters in Collier County the past season.

THEY SAY that figures speak louder than words—but, in the case of the past hunting season, we would have to call it a draw. The 1952-53 season has been proclaimed loud and long as the biggest and best in many a year. Now come the figures to prove what everyone believed all along—that it was the most successful season in recent times.

The figures—compiled by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission—include only those gathered from 14 of the 15 Wildlife Management Areas (there has been no report from the Avon Park Bombing Range). In these areas, 773 ducks, 867 deer, 1,479 turkeys, 11,762 quail, 307 doves, 11,245 squirrels, and 11 bears were killed the past season. Also, 1,500 deer were killed in Eglin Field. The breakdown, by areas, shows:

APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST—12 deer and 6 bears.

OSCEOLA NATIONAL FOREST—28 deer, 316 squirrels, and 1 bear.

OCALA NATIONAL FOREST—501 deer, 370 quail, 32 doves, 2,408 squirrels, and 4 bears.

GULF HAMMOCK—439 ducks, 64 deer, 115 turkeys, 76 quail, and 3,511 squirrels.

TOMOKA—29 deer, 16 turkeys, 8 quail, and 109 squirrels.

FEBRUARY, 1953

Final reports on the tabulation of game kills in Florida's public hunting grounds—the state's Wildlife Management Areas—by Edward B. Chamberlain, Federal Aid Wildlife Coordinator of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, bear out earlier predictions that the 1952-53 hunting season would be the biggest and most successful in many years.

FARMTON—37 deer, 85 turkeys, 128 quail, and 645 squirrels.

STEINHATCHEE—82 ducks, 77 deer, 21 turkeys, 76 quail, 2 doves, and 1,500 squirrels

J. W. CORBETT—4 ducks, 8 deer, 1,156 quail, and 4 doves.

HENDRY—36 ducks, 17 deer, 283 turkeys, 226 quail, 1 dove, and 186 squirrels.

COLLIER—2 ducks, 87 deer, 679 turkeys, 1,021 quail, 140 doves, and 258 squirrels.

FISHEATING CREEK—157 ducks, 5 deer, 268 turkeys, 5,307 quail, 128 doves, and 638 squirrels.

SUMTER—2 deer, 12 turkeys, 94 quail, and 1,674 squirrels.

CHARLOTTE—3,300 quail.

In comparison, this year's game kill was much better than that of the 1951-52 season, when 12 Wildlife Management Areas reported a kill of 527 deer, 740 turkeys, 4,782 quail, and 6 bears.

Although there were no accurate figures on private lands, and grounds leased by private hunting clubs, data received from wildlife officers and game technicians indicates that better than average shooting was enjoyed all over the state.



Florida's youth is taking an active part in conservation. Boys of the Leesburg and Eustis Jr. Conservation clubs recently launched a quail feeding program for the propagation of these birds in Lake County. This project, sponsored by these clubs and the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, will be carried out on a 700-acre tract near Tavares.

past experiments with the Scruggs Quail Feeder, see "A Million More Quail", an article by Jack Grant appearing in the August *Florida Wildlife*.)

The present program on the Blanton tract only calls for the feeding and propagation of the present supply of birds, but there is also a strong possibility that an extensive re-stocking program will be added later. Obviously there is a saturation point for the number of birds that can be successfully raised on any given acreage. Therefore, if the present project is successful, there will be a surplus of quail each year that can be trapped and released on areas open to hunting. It is not improbable that at some future date this one small breeding ground may be responsible for excellent quail hunting in all open areas of Lake County.

Whether they were thinking in terms of future benefits or not, a large number of sportsmen and Lake County officials were on hand for the dedication ceremonies for this project, held at the Lake Harris experimental station, January 10. Karl Lehmann, secretary of the Lake County Chamber of Commerce, served as master of ceremonies and introduced the county officials, Commission personnel, and distinguished visiting guests. Wildlife Officer Archer outlined the project, which he dedicated to Dr. I. N. Kennedy, of Eustis, one of Florida's pioneers in conservation and a former director of the Game Commission. The dedication came as a surprise to

Dr. Kennedy, who was among those present.

Cecil M. Webb, of Tampa, former Commission Chairman, whose term expired recently, gave a short talk on the Jr. Conservation and quail feeder programs sponsored by the Game Commission, and also thanked the Blanton family for donating the use of their land for this project.

Following the ceremony, a motorcade was formed for an inspection tour of the quail breeding grounds. Eighteen members of the Leesburg Jr. Wildlife Club and 10 members of the Eustis Jr. Conservation Club participated in the placing of metal feeders, under the supervision of Wildlife Officer Archer. The feeders were filled with grain, some of which was also scattered along the ground to attract birds to the feeders. The boys were also given instructions on the care of the feeders and the work involved in carrying out this program.

This is only one of many projects over the state in which young boys are taking an active part. The youth program is off to a flying start. Each project is a lesson in the education of conservation. As additional knowledge is acquired, these young conservationists will play a more important role. It is hardly conceivable that any of these boys, trained in conservation, could become game violators.

Who knows? Maybe Florida's conservation ills one day in the future will be cured by the "shot in the arm" that is being given now. END

LEFT: Wildlife Officer Chick Archer helps Freddie Parker, Leesburg, (left) and Billy Taylor, Eustis, fill quail feeder that has been placed in natural cover.

BELOW: Boys of the Leesburg and Eustis Jr. Conservation clubs scatter grain to attract quail to the vicinity of the metal feeders, which they will keep filled with feed.

BOYS AND BIRDS

By GENE GRUBER

CONSERVATION in Florida is getting a shot in the arm that may result in far-reaching curative effects in the not too distant future. The "vitamin" being injected is the enthusiasm of youth.

The eagerness of young boys and girls to participate in projects for the improvement of the state of our wildlife species has been a revelation. In just one year, the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has reaped many unexpected benefits, in the way of assistance in field work, from a youth program that was instituted primarily for its educational potentialities.

One of the most recent examples of furthering conservation through the cooperative efforts of the Commission and Florida's youth can be found in Lake County, where a large-scale quail feeding and propagation project was launched on January 10. The program is sponsored by the Commission and the Jr. Conservation clubs of Leesburg and Eustis. The cooperative deal is simple: the Commission furnishes materials and supervision, the boys do most of the work.

The Lake County quail feeding project will be conducted on a 700-acre tract of land owned by Mr. and Mrs. Lane Blanton. The quail preserve lies south of Highway 446, between the Dora Canal and Dead River, near Tavares. The project was conceived by Wildlife Officer Chick Archer, stationed at the Fisheries Experimental Station on Lake Harris, who enlisted the aid of Commissioner Walter Warren, of Leesburg. The two men contacted Blanton, acquired the use of the Blanton tract, and laid the groundwork for the launching of the project.

The area is already stocked with several coveys of birds, and this program is expected to develop into one of the most extensive of its kind in Central Florida. Commission game technicians have definitely proved, through past experiments, that supplement-feeding programs will produce additional coveys of quail and a larger average number of birds per covey. Metal feeders are placed near, or concealed within, natural cover and are kept supplied with grain the year around. (For more detailed information about



FEBRUARY, 1953



Huge electric-powered draglines like the one above, used in strip-mining for phosphate, are converting a large chunk of Polk County into a virtual land of pits.

LAND O' PITS

How'd you like to cast your pet plug, fly, or bug into a pool filled with bass that never heard tell of an artificial lure . . . or drag a pork rind past the nose of a big ol' lunker that was too dumb to know that this wiggling tidbit had a "joker" attached?

Well there's places like this, plenty of them, but—yes, there's a catch to it—there's also big signs that say you aren't supposed to trespass. Don't leave yet, son, for there's a good chance that some day before long you will be able to get to these pools.

The pools are down in Polk County, and they're the large pits dug into the earth by the phosphate industry. And the reason you can't get at 'em—at least some of the best,

unfished ones—is because they're back away from the roads, on private mining company property, and because a lot of "dopes" have abused their fishing privileges in the past.

From Lakeland south to Bartow, and from Plant City east to Winter Haven, there's a huge area, some 20 by 30 miles, that's virtually covered

with phosphate pits. Seven strip-mining companies are operating in this area, which produces more than two-thirds of the total phosphate output in the United States.

Huge electric-powered drag lines, with 200-foot booms and scoops capable of removing tons of earth at a bite, are used in digging the strip-mines. The pits created by these mechanical monsters are long and narrow, with high banks formed by the removed overburden (the top soil covering the phosphate deposits). Many of the pits are parallel, and the in-between ridges of piled up earth create a miniature mountain-and-stream effect that is ideal for secluded fishing.

In practically every instance, the strip-mining breaks open a vein of

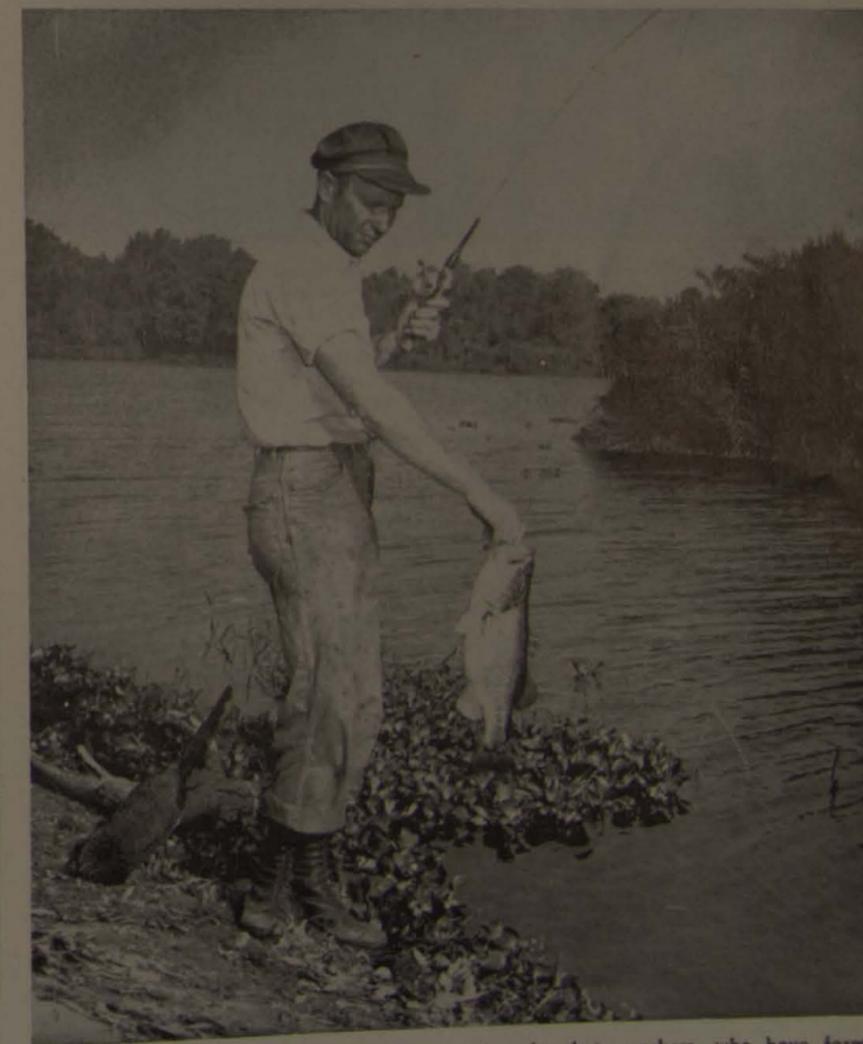
All the anglers in Polk County couldn't put a dent in the great fish families of the "pits" . . . and the phosphate industry is digging out new fishing holes by the dozens.

the vast fresh water reservoir that lies beneath most all of Florida. Mechanical pumps and drainage systems prevent flooding while mining is in progress, but after a pit is abandoned it soon becomes filled with water. Due to the varying depths of the overburden and phosphate deposits the water in these holes runs from 20 to 60 feet deep. Any angler knows that this makes for some good fishing, and good eating.

How the fish families got started in these pits is somewhat of a mystery, for they have not been stocked by man. Several theories have been expounded, and you can take your choice, but the undeniable fact is that the fish are there—scads of bass, bream, crappies, and others—so they did get a start. The most popular theory is that different species of wading birds carry roe and very small fry from one pool to another, the roe clinging to the feet and legs or passing, undigested, through the intrals of the birds. Another belief is that the fish have



An air view of a mined-out section shows how the pits become filled with water from a gigantic natural reservoir underlying a ledge of rock and sandy soil.



Fishing in the pits is a favorite pastime of the phosphate workers, who have formed company-sponsored conservation clubs to expand their hunting and fishing opportunities.



Within a few years, the abandoned pits become beautiful and fertile fishing holes, rimmed by new greenery and filled with game fish.

FEBRUARY, 1953



"Miss America" can tell you about the good fishing in the phosphate pits. Lovely Miss Neva Jane Langley caught this 10 1/4 pound "buster" near Lakeland while home from college during the Thanksgiving holidays last fall. The "faked-up" appearance (due to the peculiarly-looking tummy of the bass) of the above pose is misleading. Miss Langley actually caught the fish just before dark one evening, but the picture, posed on the shores of a local lake and snapped by a Lakeland LEDGER photographer, was not taken until the following morning—after the bass had been partially cleaned and iced.



access to underground passageways from one body of water to the next.

However, the biggest puzzler of all is the presence of tarpon in these pits which are some 30 miles inland from the nearest salt water. A small tarpon was taken from one of the pits a couple of years ago, and since that time Fred Jones, director of the South Florida Division of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has reported seeing tarpon in these waters that were estimated to weigh 20 pounds or better.

Recently, experimental projects have been launched for the reclaiming and beautification of worked-over phosphate lands. In some instances, the ridges are being leveled with bulldozers, and seedling pines

planted to cover the barren areas.

Eventually, when trees and tropical plant life cover the man-made earth scars, this land will have a scenic attraction not found anywhere else in Florida. The pits also provide another "exclusive" that simplifies fishing for the average angler. In most cases the steep banks provide deep water right at the shore line, and almost any pit can be fished from the bank, without the necessity of a boat. This may not be attractive to all of the fishing brotherhood, and some may even deplore the impossibility of transporting boats to many of the isolated pits, but it is a rare opportunity for extensive bank-fishing, not usually found in the natural, shallow lakes that are invariably

surrounded by weeds.

With or without boats, these waters are potentially the finest fishing grounds that any fresh-water addict could desire. The fish are there . . . all that is lacking is the fishermen to harvest the crop.

Now . . . back to YOUR chances of getting in on some of this bit of fishing paradise. In defense of the posting of some of this property, it can be said that some anglers, by their actions, don't deserve the privilege of fishing anywhere. But what about the others . . . the majority . . . who also must pay for the unkind acts of the few? There is little doubt that if the problems of eliminating interference with mining operations and tampering of mining equipment are successfully worked out, the public would once again be welcome to fish these pits.

This is an important problem and many interested people—Game Commission personnel, sportsmen, the city fathers of Lakeland and Bartow, and the mining companies themselves—are striving for a successful solution. The final decision rests with the property owners. At present there are some pools adjacent to public roads where fishing is permitted . . . and it's good fishing too.

A good percentage of the phosphate workers—some 4,000 employ-



A "Believe It Or Not" feat . . . a baby tarpon caught in a phosphate pool near Lakeland, 30 miles inland from the nearest salt water!

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

ees of the seven operating companies—belong to company-sponsored sportsman clubs, and enjoy hunting and fishing privileges. These clubs are at present working closely with the Game Commission on proposed projects for better game management and increased hunting opportunities. The "pit" country, especially the older mined-over sections, is exceptionally good cat-hunting grounds. Quail hunting is very good, and large flocks of ducks and an occasional wild goose can be found on the larger pools. Rabbits, otter, foxes, raccoons, and opossums are common.

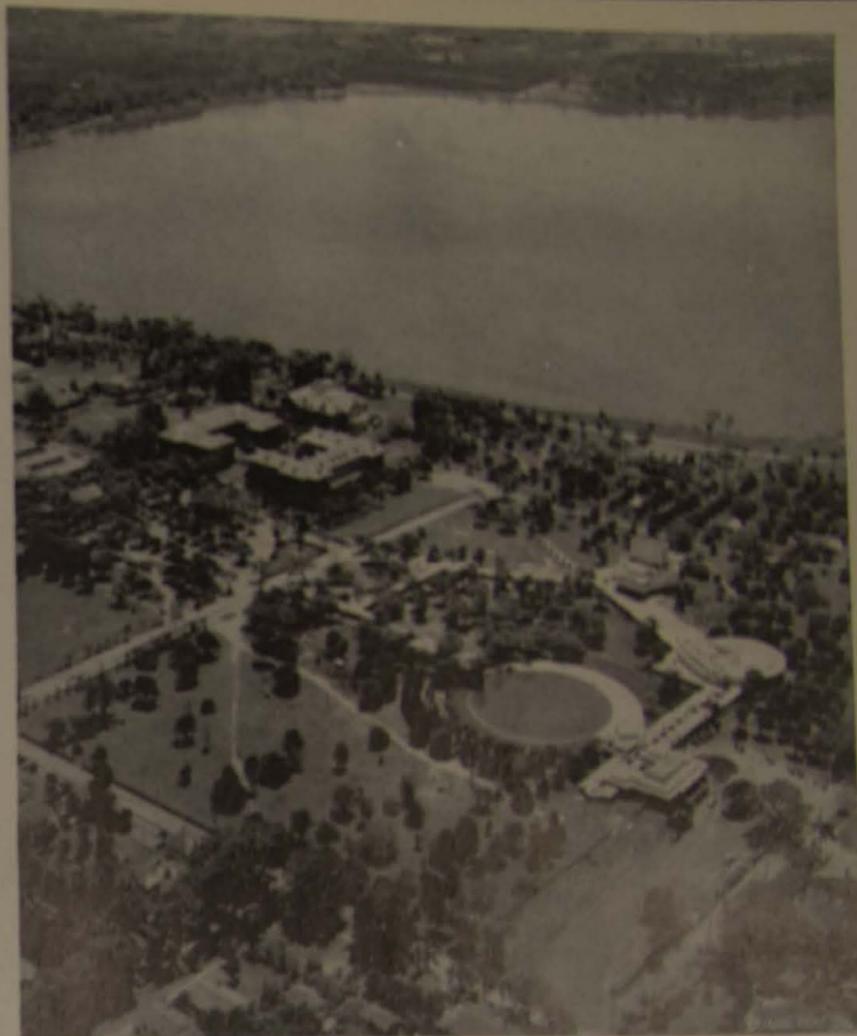
Many of the phosphate workers live in Lakeland, a city of approximately 35,000 population, situated on the northern boundary of the pit lands. Headquarters for the South Florida Division of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, the city is probably the foremost in the country in modern fish management in connection with its 12 lakes containing more than 3,000 acres of water.

Lake Wire, whose 25 acres are set aside for the exclusive use of children, or adults accompanied by children under 15 years of age, is the largest body of water in the state to have been completely reworked in order to obtain maximum fishing results.



The rough country surrounding the pits is ideal for wildcats, and offers great sport for the "chase" hunters and their dogs

FEBRUARY, 1953



A view of the campus at Florida Southern College, located on the shores of Lake Hollingsworth, one of a dozen beautiful lakes within the city limits of Lakeland.



With the cooperation of the Game Commission, and under the direct supervision of the Commission's chief fisheries biologist, John F. Dequine, the city put into effect a program of management in its "kids' lake" which included: the killing of the weed, Alodea, the complete elimination of the fish population, restocking the water with a balanced number of bass and bream, and a follow-up program of fertilization.

The city has also rid Lake Morton of its weeds, and Lakes Parker, Bonny, and Hollingsworth were seined, under Commission supervision, for the removal of rough-fish. During this seining operation, hundreds of whopping big bass, from eight to 15 pounds were taken from, and returned to, these lakes—ample proof that Lakeland is a fisherman's paradise.

Fishing is THE sport in Lakeland, but there are also other major sport attractions. The city is the permanent spring training home of the Detroit Tigers, who play several games here during March with other major league clubs training in the state. Lake Hollingsworth is the scene of the Annual Orange Cup Regatta, which has established many world records in inboard and outboard motor racing. Other popular winter sport attractions are the Imperial Polk Rodeo and the annual Santa Claus Bowl, sponsored by the National Pop Warner Midget Football Conference.

Sports-minded too is Florida Southern College, located on the shores of beautiful Lake Hollingsworth. Six varsity sports and 15 intramural sports are emphasized, providing a full slate of athletic en-



By MARY BETHELL ALFRIEND

FOR YEARS, living in the mountain country of Virginia, and later, spending summer vacations in the Virginia and Carolina mountains, our family has made a sort of game of "collecting" mountains. Each summer we have tried to find and climb new ones.

Since we have come to live in Florida (some twenty-odd years ago) we have another game, "collecting" lakes and rivers. Lake Bradford near Tallahassee was our first. A cypress water, from a distance the surface appears as black as obsidian and, on a calm day, as smoothly polished. Actually, the water is clear, often having a brownish tinge. Encircled by cypress, and the largest of a chain of lakes, Lake Bradford appears circular in shape. This chain of lakes is a mysterious and winding waterway, leading into secret places overhung by towering cypresses, into deep pools half filled with water-lily pads or buds or starlike flowers. One lovely secret place has been called "The Cathedral"; here the cypress trees grow very tall and their branches lift and meet in semblance of Gothic arches. Patterns of arching branch and drifting moss create fantastic shapes, reflected upon the clear cool water.

Perhaps next in importance in our discovery of lakes was Lake Jackson, a place of fascinating surprises, of irregular shape and great expanse. Around the lake are wooded bluffs where grow tall pines and giant live oaks bearded with gray moss; on one side stretch marsh lands, lush and green. At the deepest portion

of the lake, at times the water disappears into some subterranean channel, leaving dead fish and mollusks to decompose in the slimy mud. As rapidly and as suddenly as the water disappears, it returns and refills the lake-bed. Each such occurrence is as amazing as though it were the first. Throughout the lake are small green islands or sargasso seas of grass, and here the heron, white or blue, disport themselves. In fall and early spring the surface of the water is alive with wild ducks and geese. The lake is a fisherman's paradise, abounding in bass and bream.

Far back in the scrub near the coast, concealed in unexpected places, are many lakes and pools. One afternoon, returning to Tallahassee from St. Teresa, my husband and I turned aside from the highway into a winding road which led to a small lake as round as a cup rim. The lake lay in a basin surrounded by scrub oak and straggling pines. Not a soul was in sight, although one boat was anchored at the landing. We had brought our own small skiff. When we had pulled it into the water, we were embarked in a small world of our own: ourselves, our boat, sky, wind, and water. The wind ruffled the surface of the lake, and because the sky was overcast and the bottom overgrown with weeds, the water was quite dark. Near the edges, the lake was clearer. On one shoreside, high reeds and grasses grew in luxuriance. In reflection they became wavering and distorted, and the surface of the water was a deeper green than were the grasses.

Opposite, where pine and bay and willow and clumps of giant fern grew close and thick along the bank, a fantastic woodland was mirrored, deep green and strange in shape and form. From the thick and tangled growth arose sweet scents of tall grasses and wild grapes. Above the lake three fish hawks circled. Two darted down and swooped upon fish breaking the surface of the water.

On a windy Saturday last spring, when the sun was brilliant but the air brisk and tangy, we took our boat and our fishing tackle to try our luck at Lake Lafayette, which lies within the boundaries of a friend's plantation. The lake had done a recent disappearing act; only a small body of water had been left. Over the area whence the water had receded grew a bluish-purple flowering grass. Thus the lakebed was at one end a cup of purpled grass and at the other a pool of clear water, which, so rumor ran, teemed with fish. Thickets of pine and oak and willow flourish on the surrounding bluffs.

Of approximately fifty persons fishing upon or around the lake, only my husband and I were whites. The Negroes—men, women and children—wore every variety of garment: jeans and greatcoats; caps, flapping straw hats; dresses, sweaters, rubber boots. Sitting or standing upon the banks or sitting in their dinghies crouched over their poles, they fished with long bamboo poles baited with worms or minnows.

Soft faded blue of jeans, red and blue and orange sweaters, a rust-red coat worn by a regular Napoleon of a fisherwoman upon the bank—all blended into the green spring foliage upon the bluffs and were reflected in the water and repeated in strange patterns, wavering and grotesque. Those Negroes fishing upon the banks sat upon upturned boxes or buckets, their bodies bent forward, completely concentrated upon the poles, the water, and the hope of fish. Some of those standing wore high rubber boots, among them the fisherwoman of the rust-red coat. Of great circumference, so great that she could fasten her coat by only one button at mid-waist, she wore a flopping felt hat set well back on her head. Her coat met her knee-length boots. Standing in the same position and the same spot for hours, her patience and persistence were rewarded. The string of fish which she kept in the water near her feet grew in numbers slowly and surely.

Across the lake water, from boat to boat, from bank to bank, sounded the deep rich laughter, the full soft voices: "Ain' caught nothin' yit!" "Go'n' git me er good mess er fish fo' I leaves dis place!" "Ketch me one good ole bream, I be satisfy!"

The lakes are mirrors of sky and woodland, haunts of bird and fowl, and usually good fishing waters. But for mystery and adventure, with good fishing too, the rivers offer more variety. Those nearest Tallahassee are the Wakulla, the St. Marks, and the Ocklocknee.

Those "long in city pent," confined in office or in study, may discover a new life and a new world upon the rivers. On a clear brilliant Saturday afternoon in March, after a week of desk and paper work, we drove down to Newport. After we crossed the bridge, we put the boat over on the St. Marks River, to the left of the bridge on the side away from the village. Since we were going against the current, we used our motor. A brisk breeze was blowing, the river was swift, and we had to watch for snags. Spring foliage and flowering were at the height of luxuriant growth. From the black cypress water, quite clear, and shallow in places, emerged islands of matted star-shaped grasses with tiny, creamy blossoms. Around a curve we came upon

an island of wild iris in full perfection of purple bloom. Bay and beech and magnolia, red-leaved maple, pine and palm grew thick along the banks, and beyond the taller growth palms grew in ranks as regular as planted hedges. Tender green of young leaves mingled with pink wild honeysuckle and lacy white ash and buck-eye dripping crimson clusters. In the wake of the boat the water was black, but when we rounded a curve we saw it shimmering green. Here at the bend, the stream grew narrower, and branches of willow swept the water. The brilliant sun shining on fresh green growth was reflecting the green into the surface of the river.

A garfish jumped close to the boat; a big terrapin swam leisurely past; three smaller turtles stuck their heads up over a floating log.

Yes, an afternoon upon the river is a fine thing. On a hot day we can drive twenty miles to the fishing village of St. Marks and escape down the St. Marks River as it flows toward the Gulf of Mexico. We like to anchor near the old fort site where the land juts out into a small peninsula and the Wakulla River joins the St. Marks in a wide expanse of fresh water. Here we can anchor and fish for bass or redfish, or watch the trim swift yachts or the commercial fishing boats go past us on their way into the Gulf. The sea breezes blow in from the marshes. Far ahead, on the point overlooking the flats, we can see the lighthouse, its white tower clear against the blue sky. A tangle of cedar and palmetto comes almost to the water's edge; reeds and rushes outline the banks. Drifting here in this quiet place we dream a little of how once Spanish galleons or English ships, or American, once came with great sails bellying in the wind through the narrow twisting channel from the Gulf into the river; of how they came to aid or further fortify or to destroy the fort San Marcos, which stood upon the point at the conjunction of the rivers. All left of the fort today are a few crumbling bricks and scarcely perceptible foundations.

The flats lie where the fresh water merges into the salt Gulf water, opposite the lighthouse, a mile or so out from the junction of the rivers. There is good trout fishing on the flats, and, though the water is so sheltered that small boats may float at anchor here, even on a calm hot day there are gulf breezes and choppy little waves and one may enjoy the taste and tang of salt water. This widening of the waters between the lighthouse and opposite shore is a gateway to many lands and places. One could embark here for Mobile, Biloxi, New Orleans; Tampa or Key West; Galveston or Corpus Christi; for Mexican or Central American ports; even for South America.

The lighthouse is within the St. Marks game preserve; here in the preserve lovers of outdoor life find endless variety of plants and animals and birds and fish. In midwinter, driving along the white shell road built high above the swamps and ponds, one sees ducks and geese by thousands, feeding or flying or swimming upon the pools and ponds. Always there are heron, white and blue, and white sea gulls flying. In the spring, when many ducks and all geese have flown northward, some ducks remain; the heron take arrogant postures around the swamps and quiet waters, posing on gaunt pines or limbs of dead trees, as flat and motionless, white against green, as though cut from white paper and pasted there.

Last spring, when the fishing season opened, we had permission to put our boat on any of the ponds in the

(Continued on Page 54)



Squirrels I Have Missed—

By WM. H. TURNLEY, M. D.

MOST FOLK tell tales about what a good shot they are . . . how they outwitted their quarry . . . how they caught the biggest fish . . . nailed the largest buck or brought home the prettiest bird—but not me.

I want to tell you about squirrels—squirrels I didn't shoot!

First, there was that time at the University of Florida when a cat squirrel and a hawk made me the talk of the fraternity house—and put my veracity to question, too.

In those days, every moment I could get away from school and the chemistry lab was spent in the woods, at a favorite water hole on the edge of the hammock that I'd staked out for my own. I'd even rigged my bike so I could lash my gun across the handle bars, to get to the woods in the fastest possible time.

The squirrel was feeding on roots and acorns on the ground when I first spotted him. He swiftly ran up a water oak tree, about 20 feet high, and hid somewhere on the other side. Ready to shoot, I tossed a pine knot into the palmetto fans on the other side, hoping to scare the squirrel around and to give me at least one fast shot. But it didn't work. The squirrel was there alright, but he wasn't scaring around to my side. I tried again—with no results.

Suddenly, with a swish of wings, a large red-shouldered hawk swooped from a nearby magnolia tree. Shooting down, straight as an arrow, he struck the squirrel a terrific blow, and sailed just over my head without slackening his speed! He had the squirrel!

Then I knew why the squirrel hadn't been scared by the pine knot. He was already scared! He'd evidently seen the hawk and figured he was between the devil and a dose of lead poison.

For a moment I stood dazed, wondering just what had happened. Then I fired—and both hawk and squirrel fell to the ground!

The hawk had a broken wing and I had to tap him on the head to put him away. The squirrel was so stunned that he was hardly able to move, so I tapped him, too, although I couldn't figure out what had actually happened to the squirrel. I don't think the fall stunned him for I have seen squirrels miss their jump and fall from much greater heights, without any discomfort.

I examined the squirrel closely—but I could find no shot holes in him, or any break in the skin!

Of course, that night at the fraternity house, when I told the story

of how I had shot a squirrel flying—and without really shooting him—I received skeptical appraisals. No one believed me and they voted me into a newly-formed "Lions Club." A squirrel did that to me!

BUT THE SQUIRREL, that really got the best of me lived further up-country, in Virginia, where I went to medical school. It wasn't only one squirrel, either—there were three of them. And not only did they get the best of me, but one of them just about gave me the "Bronx cheer" to rub it in!

My friend, Webb, and I had skipped clinic that afternoon to go quail hunting. We were having poor luck without a dog, and so we figured we were lucky, when, as we crossed a little knoll of hardwood trees, we spotted several squirrels running up a dead snag. They disappeared into the hollow top.

Thinking it would be easy to get them out, we walked up to the tree, our guns ready, and started beating on the hollow trunk, expecting several squirrels to come jumping out at the same time. But nothing happened!

Knowing that there were at least three squirrels in that hollow, we felt sure we could get them, if we could just run them out. We flipped a coin to see who would climb the tree. I lost, and started to climb.

I had a long stick in my hand, dangling from a cord. I inserted it in the hollow and jiggled it up and down noisily to scare the squirrels out so Webb could nail them. Well, sir, those squirrels weren't ready to come out.

There weren't any limbs on the tree so my position was precarious—holding onto the tree with one arm and jiggling the stick with the other. I held and I jiggled. But no squirrels.

While I struggled, Webb waited impatiently below, yelling to me for more action, so that he could pop off those squirrels as they ran for safety. These looked like sure shots, and Webb was anxious. But the weather was chilly, and Webb set his gun aside to reach for his pipe and a little inner warmth. It was then that it happened!

I was giving a few last jabs before I came down for a little rest, myself—when all three squirrels, like a flash of furry gray, came shooting out of the tree and over my head in a spray of scampering little feet and bushy tails.

One even landed on Webb's shoulder—flipped a tail in his face—and

(Continued on Page 54)





By MRS. TOM C. HAWKINS

DEAR SIS:

You've probably heard from Mother all about the two wonderful weeks Tom and I spent with her down on Bradenton Beach, but I want to tell you myself about my first experience deep-sea fishing. It's something to remember!

Tom had been fishing all week, while I just took it easy. But you know how husbands are . . . he insisted that I go fishing with him at least one time. He had caught a tarpon earlier in the week, and I guessed that he wanted to show me what a good fisherman he was. So, like a good wife, I went—(although not without some misgivings).

I wish you could have seen us walking down to the dock early in the morning, feeling cocky and exhilarated with the prospect of a full day out on the Gulf. I was ready for excitement and thrills. But I can't say that that's exactly what I got, although I did bring back an experience to remember.

There weren't very many in the party which boarded the Clipper. There was one old-timer who goes out almost every day with the Captain and the crew. There was a rather plump little man, with his rather plump wife and a chubby daughter. He was puffing a big cigar at the time, and that cigar plays an important role in my trip, Sis, an important role. There were two young fellows, who wanted to know if they could bring

some beer along, and an assortment of other "characters." (And, of course, there were the Hawkins', me and Tom.)

Tom and I put our folding chairs near the bow of the boat where a rather weather-beaten old gentleman soon opened a snack bar. At the time, I was glad to see signs of refreshments as I figured we'd be starved with all that sea air and exercise ahead of us. (Little did I know.)

It was thrilling to me, as the boat started across the bay and then stopped on the other side for ice, bait, and gas. I learned something about fishermen from a conversation which took place there.

One of our crew yelled to a man working on a motorboat docked nearby. "How're you and your boat getting along?" he asked.

"You know," answered the boat-owner, a little sadly, I think, "If you really want revenge on your worst enemy—give him a boat. Used to be I was able to come down here anytime I took the notion, and for a few dollars I'd rent me a nice boat and spend the day fishing. Now that I own my own boat, I spend all my time working on this (I've left out some descriptive words, Sis) boat. Heck, not only don't I have any time for fishing—I don't even have time to work in my plumbing shop to earn money to run this thing." He made sense, Sis.

The spray, so nice before, was getting bothersome as we rode the choppy sea, so we moved away from the rail. However, when the man across from me turned an ugly incredible green, and was sick, I decided suddenly that I preferred the heavy spray. . . . MRS. HAWKINS GOES DEEP-SEA FISHING!

Then, with the pounding of the Clipper's motor, we headed for the open sea. The ship nosed its way through the pass, where, you remember, land had been only a few years ago. Now, the channel here has such a strong current that they are unable to connect the two islands. You have to go all the way down to Sarasota and through the keys to get to the opposite island. The water was very choppy and, at first, the spray felt good.

The snack bar man collected the fees and also made up the pool for the day, to be given to the person who caught the largest fish. I was wishing. My secret hope, Sis, was that I would have beginners' luck and win the prize. How proud Tom would be of his tenderfoot wife! I could almost hear him boasting about how I didn't know port from bow or starboard from stern, but that I was a real fisherman (or is it fisherwoman?).

Looking down at the heavy rod in my hand, I rather wished that he had not paid so much for it . . . the tackle of only a hook and line looked much easier to handle, but, of course, I would find out differently as soon as I started pulling them in.

The spray, so nice before, was getting bothersome as we rode the choppy sea, so we all moved to two long benches facing each other. However, when the man across from me turned an ugly, incredible green, and was sick, I decided suddenly that I preferred the heavy spray, after all. Tom soon joined me with comforting remarks. I guess my face must have reflected some of the sympathy my stomach was feeling for the sick man.

Finally, the anchor was lowered and we were given the signal to let down the lines with the huge chunks of fish one of the crew had placed on the hooks. Sis, the chunks were as large as some of the trout Tom used to bring home for me to fry, up in Pennsylvania. Soon, all the group were pulling them in—groupers and red snappers, besides all the unwanted inhabitants of the deep. A little crewman named the different fish for us.

I was the last to catch my first fish, a grouper. And, as I lowered the line again—it happened. I admitted to myself that all was not well within. I told Tom about my trouble, reeled in my line, and staggered to the bow. Meeting the Captain there, I told him of my predicament—and what do I do now? He pointed to the side, I handed him my glasses, and over the side I leaned.

The little crewman standing nearby went calmly on with his fishing, while offering me such sage comments as: "You go right ahead, and then you'll be feeling fine," and so on. Not very helpful, I'll admit, but at least I knew that somebody cared.

That ordeal over, I found my place beside Tom and started to enjoy the fishing once more. It didn't last, Sis. The smoke from a friendly cigar sent me to the side again! (My crewman friend was wrong—I didn't feel fine.)

But then, neither did anyone else. For by this time the whole party began to show a new color . . . green! Husband Tom had a drawn look around the mouth, but he kept fishing, grim and determined. I stretched

out on one end of the long bench and hoped it would all come to an early end. I had had it, Sis, I had had it.

But Fate hadn't finished with me yet. Tom caught a shark and I lifted my head just in time to hear the Captain instruct one of the men to "Slit that shark's throat and put him with the bait!" and before I could turn away, his orders had been carried out. (I made my way to the side again.)

While I lay there on the bench, my eyes now closed and my lips tight, I could hear the little crewman yell, "That's a dandee, that's a dandee," when one of the few of our party still fishing brought in a fish. I wondered what a "dandee" looked like, but I didn't lift my head to see. The one time I did raise my head to look . . . there in front of me was one of the boys on the crew contentedly eating a nice juicy frankfurter with ketchup and mustard oozing over the sides. (You know what that did to me!)

It was around nine-thirty when I had given up fishing and started looking for a deserted island that they could put me on, so I could die quietly, but it was almost four-thirty before the Captain headed for land and home. I went up to the bow of the boat (to help the Captain hurry the ship along, of course).

Tom had a nice string of fish which he had caught, and the Captain gave me the fish he had caught with my rod, so I had a good catch in my hand when we reached the dock. All I could think of, though, was how quickly I could get back home and back to bed, a bed which I intended never to leave again.

However, when I saw the crowd at the dock, the crowd which always gathers to see the boats come in, and I saw the look of respect they gave the fish I was holding, a change came over me.

You know, Sis, I didn't feel bad any more. I even forgot how green I'd been and how long the day had seemed. All I could think of was the fish in my hand and the people looking and admiring. I felt good again and I fairly strutted down the dock, taking bows as I walked!

Why, even dinner that night tasted fine, although it took a few hours before any of us could muster the courage to clean the fish (which I had to do, of course, being the kitchen-half of the Hawkins family).

Sitting at the table, basking in the sunshine of my fishing success, however not-earned, I remembered the little crewman saying, "That's a dandee," and asked Tom what kind of fish "dandeeds" were. Had we caught any?

Tom doubled over with laughter and my ego was swiftly deflated when Tom explained that "dandeeds" weren't fish at all. The crewman was just saying that the fish were "dandy." Shows you how much I know!

They tell me that there are pills that you can take to avert seasickness—(now they tell me!)—so if I can ever get fortified again I may try this deep-sea fishing one more time. Next year, maybe. (Maybe.)

That's all for now. Love to all.

Your sister,
Ann

P. S. Let me know when you're coming to Florida and we'll go fishing together. Deep-sea, of course. (I'll bring the sea-sick pills!)

END

A
FLORIDA WILDLIFE
 Contest Entry by
R. CRUM
 Who Says It Really
 Happened!



BUCK FEVER

I NEVER really cared much for hunting. Fishing was my dish. With the coming of summer, my spare time was always taken up roaming the woods in the area around "the creek" . . . not hunting, though, but fishing. A great battle could always be had with the 3 to 5 inch denizens of the deep—the bream, perch, and catfish that lurked in the deeper holes of the creek, ready to bite anything from grasshoppers to dough. I loved it.

It wasn't until I was discharged from the army that hunting became a real pastime with me. Like other fellows, I guess, the army made me gun-conscious. It all began with squirrels and birds . . . and then hunting became too much a part of me to quit. I began dreaming of getting in on a deer hunt.

As time went by, I acquired a few firearms, ranging from a 32" full choke, 12 gauge, single shot, to an old army 45-70 in excellent condition. Once becoming the owner of a "high powered" rifle, the desire to get in on one of the annual deer hunts became more and more demanding.

In the latter part of the '50 season, I finally got my chance to fight the Ocala scrub on a deer hunt. Call me lucky, if you want, but on my first venture I brought down a beautiful nine-pointer. A converted 8mm Mauser felled the four-footed creature at about 60 yards on the first shot!

THAT put the deer-fever into my blood—a fever that no medicine can cure, except more deer hunting! Which brings me to my tale of what happened to me the following season, a true story, incidentally, which actually took place.

After five fruitless hunts, I located a natural, almost perfect stand deep within the Ocala scrub. It was an L-shaped clearing, with each leg about 200 yards in length and 75 to 100 yards across. In order to have a commanding view of both legs of the "L", I took a stand in the elbow about 20 yards from the roughly defined edge of the woods. Then I waited.

About mid-morning, I heard a crashing in the dense woods about 100 yards from my stand. Suddenly, a bounding deer burst forth, heading across one of the "legs" of the clearing. It was not being pressed, but probably was on the move, fleeing the baying hounds I could hear in the distance. The deer had covered about two-thirds of the distance across the clearing, and I had not been able to determine whether it was buck or doe.

Then an old story came to mind. I'd heard once that whistling at game sometimes causes them to stop. In desperation, I whistled. At the sound of the whistle, the deer halted abruptly and froze. The head was hidden by a bush, though, and I still couldn't tell what kind of deer I had.

After minutes that seemed like hours, waiting and looking for the eagerly anticipated "rack," I whistled once more. Hearing the second whistle, the deer turned and began walking directly toward my stand, and continued on that course until it passed about 10 yards from me . . . a doe!

That didn't stop me, though. I was in a good spot in the scrub, and I was determined to wait until a buck came along. I mean *determined*.

AFTER another hour or so passed—and still hardly able to believe my own whistling experience with the doe—my ears picked up the sound of movement in the thicket directly upwind from my stand.

I peered for the possible appearance of a "legal" buck.

What I saw next made me think my vision was failing me. I could hardly believe my own eyes. There, moving in front of me, in single file, were three deer.

The thought rushed through my head that certainly one of these would be a "shootable" buck. Hardly had this thought come and gone before two more deer came into view, moving in the same manner of the first group. Five deer! I froze, hardly daring to breathe in fear that I would scare this "herd" away.

Moving downwind, they came directly toward my stand and stopped about 15 yards from me. My heart was doing flip-flops. But hard as I might try to visualize a "rack"—or even a four and three-quarter inch spike on one of these split-hoof residents of the great outdoors—the most that could be seen was one buck with fuzzy knobs and another sprouting about one-inch spikes.

There was a hunter's dream right in front of me . . . except that none of them were legal game. Had all of them been legal buck, I could have taken my choice of the field. Hoping to observe them as long as possible, I remained motionless. They stayed upwind from me for about five minutes, playing and browsing. Never realizing my presence, they began nipping at each other and then moved off—leaving me with the knowledge that I had witnessed an incident which occurs only once, at the most, in the average hunter's lifetime!

BUT my faith in that stand was now stronger and I decided to return there for my last chance of the season. Unable to talk anyone into spending the night out, in order to be on the stand at daybreak, I camped alone the night preceding my last day's hunt. At daybreak, I was on my stand awaiting the success that I now felt certain would be mine.

Mid-morning rolled around with no evidence of activity. It was about 10:30 when I heard a slight rustling to my right. I turned quickly. There, standing motionless, upwind from my stand, about 15 yards away, was one of the most beautiful bucks I had ever seen!

Slowly raising my 30-30 and taking careful aim at the broadside shot that presented itself—I fired! I missed. The buck flew off, traveling straight away from me on a dead run. I threw one more shot at him on the dead away, and at about 75 yards out he swung to the left, presenting a running broadside shot. I shot again but my shot only kicked up the dust behind him!

Taking corrective action (subconsciously I suppose because I don't recall doing so) I fired once more, just as he plowed into a clump of bushes.

CERTAIN that I had missed altogether, I waited for his reappearance when he came out of the brush.

Much to my surprise, he made no such appearance! I knew that he couldn't have come out of the thicket without my seeing him. I waited for about 10 minutes, then I moved off to the side about 30 yards and then downwind to a point below and to the side of the brush thicket. Crossing to a point directly downwind from the position where I'd last seen the buck, I began cautiously moving toward the thicket, ready for a tired or a wounded deer. Then, as I rounded a clump of palmettos . . . stretched on its side lay the buck, a 150-pound, nine-point trophy—drilled through his lung area by my last shot!

I'd finally made it. If I never see another deer in the many hunts ahead of me—I've had sufficient thrills for a lifetime! Fishing? Not me, brother. I'm a deer hunter!

END

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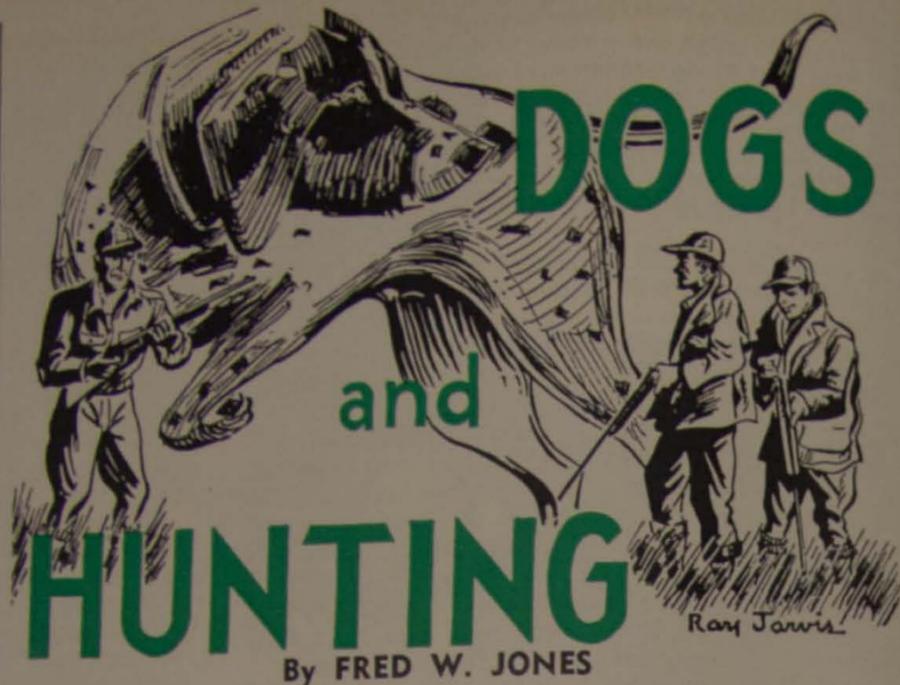
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By FRED W. JONES

THE WEIMARANER

We had a visit this winter from Henry P. Davis, and, naturally, since he is one of the top writers of the country on the subject of dogs, we asked for a guest column.

Henry obliged, and we run the result below. But first, we'd like to tell you that Henry has the dog column in *Sports Afield*; the national radio dog program sponsored by Purina; is editor of the *Modern Dog Encyclopedia*, the biggest and most complete dog book we've ever seen; and so on and so forth.

He is in great demand as a judge for dogs in field trials, both running dogs and bird dogs. In other words, Henry covers the nation, dogwise—and he is really dog wise! It is with pleasure that we present his thoughts and pointers on a breed that is comparatively new to this country.

What is the most widely discussed dog in America? The answer is simple, for he is the most recent addition to the American sporting dog kennel... The Weimaraner. Labeled the "Gray Ghost" because of his silver-gray coat and lithesome action, the Weimaraner is a utility type of gun dog that has captured the fancy of many American sportsmen, who swear by the dog's outstanding intelligence and exceptional nose.

The Weimaraner originated at the German court of Weimar a little more than 125 years ago. The noblemen of that province wanted an all-around hunting dog that would do everything: point, retrieve, trail, work in all sorts of weather and cover... and, also, be a loyal, lov-

ing companion and house dog. This was a rather large order, but those who have had much experience with the breed say the Weimaraner fills it.

How long it took the Germans to establish the breed is not a matter of exact record, but probably the heaviest contributor to the Weimaraner's hunting ability was the old red Schweisshunde, a sort of super-bloodhound that provided the background for most of Germany's sporting dog breeds. Once the breed was established and bred true to type, it was carefully guarded in Germany. Ownership was restricted to a comparatively few of the "worthy," and no exploitation was allowed. In fact, it is said that there never have been more than 1500 Weimaraners in Germany at one time.

It was not until 1929 that Howard Knight, a Providence, R. I., sportsman, succeeded in obtaining and bringing to this country a pair of these dogs. Subsequent importations were made, but it has been only in recent years that interest in the breed has reached a somewhat feverish stage. This interest has been stirred to considerable degree by rather spectacular publicity to which the breed has been the "victim." I say "victim" because these claims set the Weimaraner up as a super-dog capable of doing most anything from answering the phone and washing dishes to shooting a shotgun.

Some rather naive people bought these dogs on the basis of these claims and were disappointed. Naturally enough, because no breed could live up to such a fantastic buildup.

I have shot over these dogs in the field, and last year acted as a judge at the National Field Trials of the Weimaraner Club of America. In my opinion, the Weimaraner is not a super-dog. Those seriously interested in the breed do not claim him to be such. He is, however, a good serviceable hunting dog with a well developed pointing instinct, a splendid nose, remarkable intelligence, and unusual tractability.

Those fanciers who are backing the breed for the love of it, and not for its commercial possibilities, are regretful of the fanciful publicity given the Weimaraner, and are perfectly willing to let the dog stand on his own feet for what he is... a multipurpose hunting dog with a loyal disposition and an unusually striking appearance.

The Weimaraner has a place in the American gun dog kennel. He is a close worker, with the gun of his master constantly in mind. That he is here to stay is attested by the fact that the Weimaraner Club of America now boasts the largest membership of any dog organization in the world, some 3,500 fanciers. The secretary is Jack Denton Scott, New Milford, Conn., from whom further information concerning the breed may be obtained. END

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A Florida Wildlife True Story Complete on this Page



TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

By RALPH F. BOWES

... ONE CLOSE CALL IS BAD ENOUGH — BUT THREE IS MORE THAN A MAN CAN TAKE ...

I DON'T guess that there's a hunter alive who hasn't had at least one close call in his lifetime—one of those near-accidents where, in just a matter of seconds or inches, his life hung in the balance. And if you're like me, just one of those close calls is enough.

But, I've been hunting in Florida a long time, now—since way back in 1894 and '95, back in the days before game wardens, conservation, and sensible hunting—and, in my 70 years, I've had more than my share of those close calls and near misses, Brother . . . more than my share.

Three times I've flirted with the old Grim Reaper and three times the old boy reached down for me with his scythe . . . and three times I got away just in time.

It was back in 1922, when I had my first bad experience—one of those close calls that's made many a man give up hunting.

We were on a dove hunt and were gathered around the fire, eating lunch. While we all sat cross-legged on the ground, munching away contentedly, one of the party looked up and then yelled, "Look, Bowes, here comes a dove!"

I jumped up like a shot. At the same time, my friend John, sitting behind me, reacted with the same quick, reflex action. He reached for his gun and prepared to shoot.

Before we realized it, my head and his gun were on a line; I was looking into the barrel of his gun, and my face was square in his sights!

I'm here to tell you this story today, so you know he didn't pull that trigger. But, we didn't get any more hunting done that day, either, and

neither of us could eat any more lunch.

You'd think that one close call like that would be enough—and it was for me—but, apparently Fate hadn't finished with Old Man Bowes.

The next swipe wasn't aimed at me, although I was so close that I figure it happened to me, anyway.

One of our hunting group had taken too much of the bottle to keep him warm, and we were worried about him . . . and about us, too. There's nothing more dangerous on a hunting trip than a hunter with a "glow on."

So, we were kind of relieved when we noticed that he'd had so much he couldn't keep his eyes open. He finally curled up in a corn row and went asleep . . . and we soon forgot he was there.

He was wearing a coon-skin cap, and as he slept, he nodded his head, up and down, to and fro, like he was dreaming or talking to himself. As we turned in his direction, the moving coon-skin cap looked like as pretty a rabbit as I've ever seen, and we got ready to add the rabbit to our day's take.

But just as my buddy prepared to let him have it, our coon-skin-cap-inebriated-friend shook himself and grunted, and we put down our guns with shaking hands. We had been seconds from murder!

That close call taught us a lesson, though. There's no drinking out in the woods when I'm around. We'd been lucky that time—but how long can luck last?

In the closest call I ever had, however, I actually did get shot,

although the situation did have some comic aspects.

Like my first near-miss, we were out on a dove hunt, and I was standing behind a fence when the first dove flew overhead. I aimed, shot, and winged him. As the bird fell, my companion shot at the falling bird just at the time that it was directly in line with me, and buck-shot came hurtling my way.

I was lucky again. For I was standing behind a fence, and the wood posts took most of the shot. They were perforated with holes. But, I was hit. One No. 8 bird shot entered my right wrist, and scattered shot peppered my body, luckily though, without damage.

That fence saved my life that day, and if I'd thought of it, I'd taken a piece back home with me as a souvenir to remind me to be careful. But I've had a constant reminder.

. . . For, 10 years later, after I'd forgotten all about my close call, I was at the dentist, having some teeth fixed and being x-rayed. As the dentist studied the x-ray picture in the light by the window, he looked perturbed, and I became worried. He looked at the picture, looked at me, and looked at the picture again.

Then he came back and probed in my mouth until he found what he was looking for. He showed it to me.

There in his hand, after it had lain for 10 years at the roots of one of my teeth, was a No. 8 bird shot—one of the shot which had almost spelled the end of my hunting career a decade ago!

C. D. Shoemaker Retires From Wildlife Conservation

Carl D. Shoemaker voluntarily retired as Conservation Director of the National Wildlife Federation on December 31. Along with "Ding" Darling, famous cartoonist, and others, he organized the Federation in 1936. He first became identified with the wildlife conservation movement when on July 1, 1915, he became head of the Oregon Fish and Game Commission. In 1928 and 1929, he represented the states of Oregon and Washington in the national capital in the interest of wildlife legislation. Among these bills was the Norbeck-Andresen refuge program act. In 1930, upon establishment of the Special Committee on Conservation of Wildlife Resources in the United States Senate, he was made its special investigator. Two years later he was selected as secretary and retained this position until the committee was abolished under the Congressional Reorganization Act in 1948.

He prepared and followed through Congress the Duck Stamp Act, which has earmarked more than \$31,000,000 for the waterfowl restoration program; the Pittman-Robertson Act, which earmarks the excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition, and under the terms of the Act has allocated to the states nearly \$100,000,000 for wildlife restoration projects; the Dingell-Johnson Act, earmarking the excise tax on sport fishing tackle, which has granted to the states for fishery programs about \$5,000,000, and innumerable other conservation measures designed for the betterment and advancement of the wildlife movement in the United States.

Mr. Shoemaker is a member of the federal Water Pollution Control Advisory Board, having been appointed by President Truman when the Act first went into effect four years ago. In 1951, he received from the Wildlife Society the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award and Medal, conservation's most prized honor. He is a member of more than thirty societies and organizations whose objectives are concerned with the conservation of water, soil, trees and wildlife. He will be succeeded as Conservation Director by Charles H. Callison, whom he selected two years ago as his assistant.

He will continue as editor of the Conservation News Service for the Natural Resources Council of America and will carry out his term of office as General Counsel for the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners, as well as continuing as a conservation consultant for the National Federation.

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BY PHIL FRANCIS

The Case for a Full Reel Spool

Although fishing writers for years have tried to impress upon their readers the fact that a reel filled with line casts better than a partially filled reel, many fishermen still try to do a decent job of casting with their reel spools only half full. Just why casters will spend from ten to twenty dollars for a rod and up to thirty-five dollars for a reel, and then handicap the whole outfit by stinting on line, is beyond me. There is certainly no economy involved in saving a couple of bucks at the expense of backlash-plagued casting as well as excessive wear and tear on a good reel.

A reel filled to capacity with line is, in effect, equipped with an overdrive. Just as overdrive in an automobile cuts down the number of engine revolutions necessary for a given traveling distance, so does a full reel spool revolve a fewer number of times than a half full one for a given casting distance.

For example, line wound on the spool to a diameter of one inch will travel off the reel a distance of about three inches per revolution. A two-inch diameter of line, on the other hand, will leave the reel in six-inch lengths per spool revolution. It doesn't take an engineer or mathematician to figure out which will cast better.

Elementary principles of mechanics, the principles of the wheel-and-axle and gearing, point out another advantage of a full reel spool. As spool diameter decreases, the force necessary to pull line from the spool increases. A familiar example of this is the braking effect of low and second gears on an automobile going down hill. Low gear has a very marked braking effect, second has a noticeable effect, while high may allow the car to reach excessive

speed. The larger the diameter of line on your reel spool, the higher the effective gearing of your reel. Therefore, a half-filled reel spool will require a harder casting force to pull off a given number of revolutions than a completely filled spool. If you do not understand gearing principles, you can nevertheless prove this to yourself if you have a reel equipped with a star drag. Set the drag so that a weight—say one pound—will just pull line from the reel while the spool is full. Now run off about half the line, and you'll find that the same weight will not turn the spool.

Still another good reason for filling your reel spool with line is that the line itself will roll off a large-diameter coil more readily than it will a small one. The smaller the diameter of a line coil, the greater the tendency for the line to stay coiled. Undoubtedly, you have noticed this if you've ever removed an old line from a reel. When you get down near the hub of the spool, the line sticks, and it comes off the spool in kinky loops.

These three effects of a small diameter of line on the reel spool are additive, so that the practical difference in casting qualities between a completely-filled and a half-filled spool is very noticeable. It is plain foolishness to impose on yourself the casting handicap of a partially-filled reel spool.

Perhaps you may think I've just been theorizing and that the above discourse is a lot of malarky. Cynics (cynics are rare among fishermen, but they do exist) may insist that I've been paid off by the line manufacturers. Those who don't take their fishin' seriously may merely shrug a "so-what." If you ARE skeptical, sneak a look at a tournament

caster's reel next time you get a chance. That spool ain't filled by coincidence, brother.

Better still, try putting enough line on YOUR reel to fill the spool. Use an arbor, or filler line, or simply fill your reel with the casting line of your choice. Just be careful not to get the spool so full that the line scrapes the reel pillars. Now make a few easy practice casts to get used to the feel of a full spool, and when it feels right, heave away. If your casting doesn't improve, I'll eat 100 yards of 15-pound test nylon, any make. END

**Latest Series of
Wildlife Conservation
Stamps Available**

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The sixteenth annual wildlife conservation stamps published by the National Wildlife Federation were revealed to the public January 7 at Federation headquarters in Washington.

The 36 stamps in the 1953 issue include full-color illustrations of 15 species of American birds, five mammals, five fishes, ten trees and wild flowers, the sulphur butterfly and the plumose sea anemone. They were painted by three noted nature artists—Roger Tory Peterson, who is the Federation's art director; Francis Lee Jaques and Leslie Ragan.

Peterson, best known for his illustrated "Field Guide to the Birds" and more recently as author of "Wildlife in Color," contributed the birds, the butterfly and the sea anemone. Jaques, for many years staff artist of the American Museum of Natural History, did the mammals, fishes and trees. Ragan, noted for his travel-poster art, painted the flowers.

The issue includes a portrait of the scarce prairie chicken, which has been selected to symbolize National Wildlife Week in 1953. Wildlife Week, sponsored annually by the Federation and state affiliates since 1938, will be observed March



"Really, dear, I wish you didn't feel you had to share all my interests."

15-21. Charles H. Callison, the Federation's conservation director, has described the prairie chicken as typical of natural resources which through neglect or abuse Americans have almost lost, but which may yet be saved or restored.

In addition to the prairie chicken, the 1953 stamp subjects range from the patriarchal bison and grizzly bear to the little brown bat, from the strange hammerhead shark to the friendly crappie, and from the Ohio buckeye to the delicate Alaska fleabane.

Reproduced by a six-color printing process, the wildlife stamps recently won first prize for excellence in color lithography in competition sponsored by the Lithographers National Association, Inc., of New York.

More than 400 species of American wildlife have been portrayed by leading artists in the National Wildlife Federation stamps since the series was started in 1938. The stamps are the means by which the non-profit Federation not only finances its own activities, but lends financial aid for conservation projects sponsored by affiliated state organizations. Wildlife stamp receipts also are being used to support college fellowships and to supply conservation teaching aids to schools.

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Good Hunting at Tomoka

By SARAH ALBERSON

GAME CLOSE to home is just as fat and worthwhile as that in distant forests. Hap and I found this out on Opening Day, when we decided to hunt in our own bailiwick instead of exploring distant woods in quest of deer and turkey. Sunrise found us still snug in our rug. We left home only fifteen minutes before shooting time and arrived at the DeLand gate of the Tomoka Management Area, thinking how nice it was to be near such good hunting grounds.

A number of other hunters in Volusia County had the same idea, so we had to stand in line and wait our turn at the Checking Station. The genial guards, Wildlife Officers J. T. Newton and Joe Harrison, were kept on their toes; they had been up most of the night checking licenses and selling special permit stamps for hunting in the Management Area.

Officer Newton proffered the information that some of the anxious hunters had been inside, camping, since the 16th of November. Others had come in the night before Opening Day. These included a number of couples—Murray Jones and his wife, Mittie; Cecil Powell and Nancy Lee; J. W. McCormick and wife, and many others.

One interesting hunting party consisted of Ira and Walter Girvin, Wardie Carter, and J. Marvin Clark, all of DeLand. The Girvin boy's dad, Bob, brought his horse by trailer and the party boasted eight registered walker hounds. They brought down three bucks before noon . . . a six-prong deer weighing 118 pounds; eight-point deer weighing 126 pounds; and a four-pointer tipping the scales at 96 pounds.

Murray Jones brought out a big eight-prong buck

and Harry W. Holdridge and his brother, Wilbur, weighed in a four-point Wisconsin deer, weighing 114 pounds.

Richard Harlow, likable hunting director for the Fifth District, was on the job, examining game for tags, weighing in, and giving out information.

We were thrilled when young Larry Fagin, student at DeLand High School, got his first wild turkey. His father, H. L. Fagin, is agriculture teacher in the high school and heads the DeLand Future Farmers of America. He had hoped his son would kill a gobbler that day—and sure enough he was lucky.

Harry Carter, hunting with Jack Smith, of DeLand, also killed a nice gobbler with a 10¼-inch beard.

D. L. Carter, brother of Wardie, was visiting Florida for a few days from his home in Hemingway, South Carolina, and he experienced the thrill of being in the party that killed three bucks Tuesday. He said he hunts near the Francis Marion Preserve in South Carolina, but hasn't shot a turkey in two years or more, so he was after gobblers.

All in all everyone had a wonderful day of hunting. The first 11 days of the season there were 12 deer and seven turkeys checked out at the DeLand gate (one of four in the area). The game was all in excellent condition. Officer Patterson said there are plenty of live oak acorns, palmetto berries, and other delicacies for the game.

Yes, it is nice to have game in our own back yard . . . but it didn't come easy. We are reminded that CONSERVATION today, means plenty of GAME tomorrow. END



Ira and Walter Girvin and Wardie Carter with one of the three deer which their party brought down Opening Day at Tomoka Management Area.



Harry Carter and Jack Smith, of DeLand, share their laurels on Opening Day of the Tomoka hunting season.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE



THEY'RE NOT SO DUMB!

By FRANK J. TAYLOR

I'VE DONE quite a lot of hunting in my time and I've traveled just about all over Florida on foot, "shooting" with my camera and studying the wild animal life native to our state. I've watched animals in times of danger and have been amazed by their apparent shrewdness and calculating intelligence. I've seen animals outwit other animals and make complete fools out of smart hunters, as they dug down into their bag of lifesaving tricks in the fight for survival.

And, brother, take it from me (if you haven't already learned the lesson yourself by experience), there's not very much "dumb" about dumb animals.

Take, for instance, the idea many folks have that wild creatures, when suddenly startled, will run or fly at full tilt, depending on speed as their means of escape. Many animals *do* rely on speed—but they're just

as apt not to, if the opportunity arises.

I remember when, one morning not so long ago during the open season, I came upon a party of deer hunters on the trail. Along the road there was an old wire fence that was no longer effective and consisted merely of a single wire, running from post to post, about four feet above the ground. Standing guard at the other side of the road was one of the hunters, his gun aimed over the fence at the woods behind.

We could hear the hounds coming and in a few moments a beautiful ten-point buck came slipping out of the woods toward the wire fence and the hunter, who was ready for the kill. The deer stood firm at the edge of the woods, where the underbrush thinned toward the road, and looked around. The barking of

Continued on Page 47

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Your GUNS and Mine



By **DON COOK**

Well, fellows, it has been here and gone. I sincerely hope that your season was as nice as mine—not necessarily in the amount of game bagged, but in the memories of the hunt and the fellowship with your buddies. It was nice.

Now, our job is to be ready for the next season, which I hope will be even better than the one just passed. And may I suggest, in passing, that just a note of thanks or a post card addressed to Ben McLauchlin, director of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, expressing your appreciation of a job well done, would be appropriate at this time. These boys, with their limited resources and personnel, have done one of the outstanding jobs in the South . . . and a little word of praise most certainly would boost their morale. I, personally, wish to take this opportunity to say, "Thanks, Ben, you and your boys have done a swell job."

And now, let's think of the future—specifically the long months between seasons. In what shape did you put away your guns and equipment? Just remember, hunting equipment will not improve with age, and if not properly cared for now, may not be usable when you need it next season. This is especially true of your guns, knives, boots, canvas camp equipment, etc.

Right now is the most advisable time to turn over your guns to the most reliable gunsmith in your locality for a complete cleaning. By this, I don't mean the ordinary field strip-

cleaning a gun gets after each trip. This field cleaning accomplishes much during the season, but it is *not thorough enough at this time.*

A complete disassembly is advisable at this time for several reasons—worn parts are easily spotted and immediately replaced; moisture that has collected in stock inletting is allowed to evaporate, preventing deterioration of the wood; all sand, grit, and metal filings are removed; every part is oiled or greased; then gun is reassembled, shot in, and ready for next season. . . . All this, without the necessity of undue worry and expense incurred a week before next season opens.

This thorough cleaning is not nearly as expensive as you would think . . . and certainly is cheaper than replacing a ruined gun. By taking in, or sending in, your gun now you will allow your gunsmith to give your gun more attention and better workmanship than that which is possible during the last-minute, pre-season rush.

Regardless of what we tell our wives (God bless 'em), hunting is an expensive sport. Don't make yours more expensive, or ruin it altogether, by having your gun break down and then laid up for most of the season due to your neglect of its care now.

For those of you who do not have a reputable gunsmith in your vicinity, here are a few necessary things you should do to insure out-of-season protection for your guns. First, remove all the wood possible

with what tools you have. In doing this, be very careful not to chip or split the wood. If the inletting is oil-soaked, wash out as much of the oil as possible by using a brush and some clear white gas. Allow it to dry thoroughly before reassembling.

Now comes the real job. With a small paint brush and a can of gasoline or kerosene, carefully clean all of the grit, sand, and grease from the action and trigger assembly. It is always good policy to run this through a second cleaning—in a clean solution—to insure every part being perfectly clean. If possible, take the action to your local filling station, and borrow an air hose long enough to blow out the remaining dirt and cleaning solution. If you can not do this, then set the parts upright so that the solution will drain out. When all of the cleaning solution has evaporated, take any good light-weight acid-free grease and, with your paint brush, work a light film into the entire action and trigger assembly. Be careful not to put too much grease on the brush, as you won't want to have to clean it out before the gun can be used again. Reassemble the action, and replace the wood.

Probably the next most important step is a thorough cleaning of the magazine. Too many of us are prone to clean the rest of the gun and forget the non-functional parts. The magazine should be swabbed out as clean as the barrel, and then thoroughly greased. Check the spring and follower, dry out the plug, and reassemble.

Now we are ready for the barrel. Before cleaning it, assemble the entire gun, and then take it out and test-fire at least three rounds, more if possible. This is to make sure that you have reassembled it correctly, and that it functions properly. Then clean the barrel until it shines, and put a heavy coat of grease in it. NEVER PLUG THE END OF THE BARREL, as the air (which you would lock inside) has moisture in it, and with temperature changes this moisture will condense and produce rust.

Next put a heavy coat of grease on the outside (heavy enough to keep visitors from touching the gun without getting their hands greasy). Hang the gun on pegs . . . and your job is finished. Now your gun is ready to be taken down and used next season. You know that it will shoot, and you know that you have stopped all deterioration for another year.

A word of caution—Do not store your fine gun in a case of any kind. Leave it where the air can circulate around it. Keep your fingers off it, and it positively will not have a rust spot on it opening day of next season.

All of this sounds like a lot of work . . . and it is. But you will enjoy it when you get the hang of it. It really isn't too complicated, once you get started . . . and you have saved a gunsmith's cleaning charge.

☆
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J. B. L.

Dear Mr. J.B.L.:
I shall try to answer your inquiry twofold. As an investment your gun is probably worth about \$10.00; the work which you wish done on it would all be hand work, by any gunsmith, and would still be unsafe to use as a weapon as lethal as a shotgun. I am surprised that any man upon being advised that he owned an unsafe gun should even consider repairing same, let alone increasing the danger by using larger, more powerful shells. Does this answer your question? END

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By ELENA K. MEAD

So you've fished all day—and all you've caught is one old cat. . . . Night's coming on, and you pick up your gear and head for home, dreading what the Little Woman will say when she sees you coming in—empty-handed.

But brace up. All is not lost. Don't throw that fat ol' cat overboard or cut him up for bait. Take him home; enter your castle with a great big smile on your face, exclaiming loudly, "Mamie! Look! A nice big catfish! Now we can have some chowder!"

And to prove that this much-scorned vertebrate animal of river and stream can be elevated to the realms of cuisine respectability, here's a time-tested recipe assembled and eaten only by the best chowder-eating families.

Listen while we recite the list of simple ingredients:

Catfish Chowder

- 1 sizable catfish
- 3 or 4 strips of bacon
- 2 medium-sized potatoes
- 1 small carrot
- 1 small onion
- 1 quart whole milk

Now, while you are cleaning the fish, have Mamie dice and cook the vegetables until tender. Cook the fish in boiling, lightly-salted water until you can pull the meat from the bones. Shred or cut it into small pieces, and add to the vegetables. Fry the bacon real crisp, break into small pieces, and add it (and the fat that fried out of it) to the fish and vegetables. Lastly, add the milk, and thicken all with a couple of tablespoonfuls of flour moistened with a little water. Season with salt

and pepper to taste. And serve it HOT, with plenty of fresh crackers.

This is one of those recipes so easy to follow that you can cook it right at the campsite. A couple of cans of milk, diluted half, will take the place of the whole milk.

You might be interested to know that the word "chowder" comes from the French word *chaudiere*, meaning caldron. It seems the neighbors used to get together and make a sort of "community fish stew," one neighbor contributing the fish, another the vegetables, another the milk, and still another the crackers.

Polish Carp

Here's a recipe that will assist another member of the fish family up the social ladder. We're referring to the lowly carp. Known for its strongly-flavored meat, it, unfortunately, is avoided by most gourmets. But in Austria, from whence this recipe comes, carp is served on religious holidays—especially at Christmas-time—and housewives vie for the finest way to serve it.

This one is straight from Vienna. (You may have to have Mamie help you a little with it.)

- 4 pounds carp
- 3 tablespoonfuls of fat (butter or oleomargarine)
- 3 tablespoonfuls flour
- 1 small onion, finely chopped

Cut the fish into serving-sized pieces, and boil in salted water until tender. Melt the fat in a deep iron skillet. Add the flour and onion, and brown slightly. Then add:

- 1 pint bottle of dark beer
- 1 or 2 pieces of gingerbread, crumbled

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1 medium-sized onion (this one coarsely-sliced)
 a handful of raisins
 3 or 4 almonds, sliced thin
 sugar, salt, and pepper to taste

Just before removing from the fire, add a bit of red wine.

Place the fish on a heated platter, pour the mixture over it, and serve immediately. Any other fresh-water fish may be substituted for the carp.

Hushpuppies

Already we have had a request for hushpuppies. George Baylor, up in Paxton, Illinois, writes for the recipe for that delectable accompaniment to fried fish, and as common to a Southerner as the salt and pepper with which he seasons it.

But to folks "Up Nawth," hushpuppies sound like something mysterious. One might even think they were related to the hot dog. So to clarify the situation, and particularly for Mr. Baylor's sake, we're publishing herewith our standard recipe for hushpuppies:

- 1½ cups corn meal (either white or yellow)
- ¾ cups white flour
- 1 small onion, chopped fine (this is optional)
- 1 to 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder
- 1 teaspoonful salt

Mix meal, flour, baking powder, and salt together, and add enough skimmed milk or water to make a thick batter. Add chopped onion. Drop by spoonfuls into the hot fat in which the fish is being fried.

How did hushpuppies get their name? Well, they tell us the hounds what went fishing with the folks used to howl like crazy and carry on when they'd smell the fish a-fryin', anxious to get their share when it was done. To quiet them, the cook would fix a little meal mixture and fry it for them. And one day, somebody found they were pretty good eating.

You see, folks down South don't holler harsh things like, "Shut up!" or "Pipe down!" They use that lovely word, "Hush!" It means the same thing, but it doesn't break the eardrums. So it was "Hush, puppies," to the hounds that gave the little meal cake its unusual name. END

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By JAMES P. GILL

THE COMMON SNOOK
(*Centropomus Undecimalis*)

"Hello, fellows. Before everybody gets confused about my real name, let's settle the matter right here. Many of you probably know me as the 'robalo,' which is also correct, since it is my family name. Robalo actually comes closer to identifying us correctly since, in various parts of the world, the name 'snook' is used in reference to the barracuda, cobia, and the gar. To add to the confusion, the name 'snoek,' with its similarity of spelling, is often used interchangeably with snook—when what is meant is robalo. Now that everybody is thoroughly bewildered, I will tell you a little bit about myself.

"We snook are a bass-like fish with a greatly elongated body, an elevated back, a straight ventral surface, and an angular anal fin base. We are fully scaled with rough or ctenoid scales. We also have a very conspicuous lateral line extending onto the tail, small teeth, and a very bony mouth. We are colored a deep green above, silvery-yellow on the sides, and our underparts are white. The black-colored lateral stripe contrasts sharply with the rest of our bodies. All our fins, except the black dorsals, are colored white. We reach a fairly large size, and specimens 4½ feet long and weighing over 50 pounds have been taken. The world record rod and reel catch for our species was taken in the Chagris River, Canal Zone, in January, 1944.

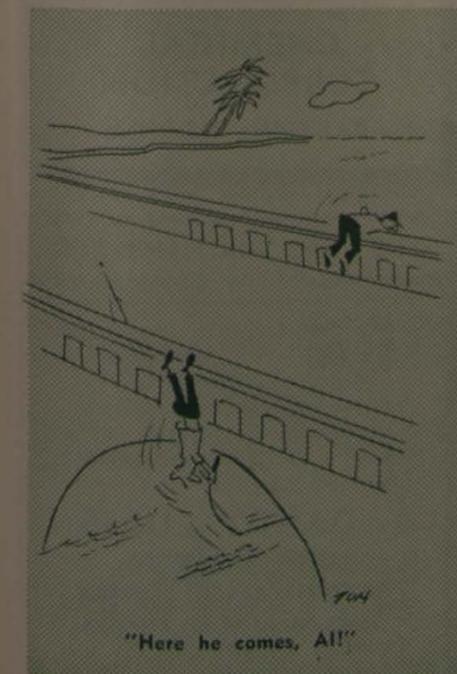
This big boy weighed 50 pounds and eight ounces, and was 55 inches long. Snook larger than this have been taken by commercial fishermen using nets. These 'fish-for-money' boys, incidentally, take millions of pounds of snook annually, since we are a highly-valued food fish.

"You fellows here in Florida don't have to go very far to find us snook, especially if you live near the coast. We can be found anywhere along the Florida coastline, and our range extends through the Tropical zone from Florida to Brazil. We like to hang around docks and bridges, and many people go gigging for us at night by using a light, shining it around the barnacle-incrusted pilings. During most any time of the year you can find us up the freshwater rivers and canals of Florida, where we come to feed on the abundant small fishes, crabs, and other large invertebrates. Also, many times we come up in these rivers to escape rough weather, and during the winter months we often come in to lie in the deep holes found in most of them.

"As for fishing techniques, there are many different methods used by Florida fishermen. We are often taken by trolling a spoon, jig, or plug in close to shore, especially around the mangrove trees where we like to lie in ambush for some unsuspecting fish to swim by. Many of us are taken by bait-fishermen using live shrimp, shedder crab, small mullet, or pinfish. The pet places for these fishermen are in

deep water around bridges and docks. Both of these techniques are very productive, but the favorite method among Florida fishermen for taking us snook is plug-casting with regulation bass tackle. This method—along with spinning and fly-casting—offers by far the most sport, and often is far more productive than bait-fishing. We will hit most any of the popular plugs and jigs, but the Dillinger, Dalton Special, Upperman's Bucktails, Heddon's River Runt Spooks, and the Roesler Jigs hold a certain peerage over the hundreds of other good lures on the market. Worked along the bottom with a slow, jerky retrieve, these underwater lures will produce plenty of action. The top water plugs, for best results, should be worked with plenty of noisy action. Most all snook fishermen (at least all smart snook fishermen) use a wire leader between their line and the lure. When we are hooked we nearly always come out of the water in a high, shaking jump, and we have a sharp gill cover with which we can sever a nylon leader or line with the ease of a barber splitting a hair with a straight razor.

"If you're a fisherman and you've never tried snook fishing, then brother, let me tell you—you're missing something. Not many fishermen that have tried it will argue with a snook fisherman when he claims us to be the fightingest fish that swims. I'll guarantee you that once you have tangled with one of us, you'll be a confirmed snook fisherman. A word of warning before you try it—hold your hat, and bring along a bottle of liniment for your sore arm." END



**THEY'RE NOT SO
DUMB**
Continued from Page 41

the dogs grew louder. There was now nothing separating the deer from the hunter but that thin wire fence just four feet from the ground. And, with the dogs on his heels, the deer could only come forward, into the range of the hunter.

Figuring that this deer was as good as his, our hunter casually and confidentially aimed his piece just above the wire, in readiness for the jump the deer would have to make in his break for freedom. This was going to be an easy shot!

Then the deer came into the clearing. On and on he came. Closer and closer. Nearer and nearer. Now!

But then he suddenly bounded into the air, came down just a few inches from the wire, and plunged swiftly UNDER the thin strand, as the hunter's gun exploded into blue sky and nothingness. Another so-called "dumb" animal had outwitted one of us "smart" hunters.

A few years ago, in South Florida, I was walking through a field in which I had seen a pheasant, in hopes of getting close enough to take a picture. But I wasn't doing any good and no pheasant was to be seen. I was about to give up and call it a day.

Returning home, I passed under a bush, heavy with berries, almost touching the ground in my path. I stooped under the overhanging limb to avoid lifting it or detouring around it. I had taken about five more steps when I heard a slight noise, whirled around to see what made the sound, and then stood there dumbfounded as a pheasant casually took off in flight from the overhanging berry bush under which I had just stooped. There's one bird that didn't take to speed. In fact, he fooled me by standing still!

The fox and the hound are considered natural enemies in nature and we've all heard stories about how the clever fox eluded the hounds. Well, I witnessed one of these exhibitions just recently, and this fox not only fooled the hounds, but used me in his maneuver.

I was sitting on a stump, one early morning, just a few feet from a small stream over which had been placed a large pine log for quick crossing, when I heard the hounds. They were coming this way. In a few moments I was startled to see a fluffy gray tail bobbing along and then the fox

standing on the other end of the log, looking my way. I don't know for sure if he saw me, but with the wind blowing from the fox toward me I decided to sit perfectly still and watch what happened next. By this time the hound was no more than 200 yards off and coming closer all the time. The hound had the scent, alright.

The fox walked out on the log, and taking his merry time, sat down to think things over. The log on which he stood was about five feet above the water and just below the log was a small grassy plot and neither was more than a few feet from where I sat. Making his decision, the fox leaped down to this small island in front of me and then sprang from the island back to the other bank from which he had come, and turning, followed the stream out of sight, without an apparent care in the world.

The hound came into sight moments later. Following the scent, he leaped on the log and crossed over. Then he stopped. Returning back to the other shore again over the log, he turned again, and crossed the log another time. And stopped again. Then he saw me. He sniffed. And, then, apparently thinking that what he had smelled all along wasn't a fox at all—but me—he gave up the chase and loped off into the woods behind me!

But perhaps the cleverest trick I ever saw an animal do, happened between a buck and a hound.

This buck was in trouble and the hounds were close. But along about the same time that the buck came into sight from out of the woods, a farmer came around the road bend leading about 20 hogs to the pens a few yards down the road. The buck casually dropped into the trail left by the pigs, followed them until the farm buildings were in sight, and then bounded into the woods. The hound came soon after, was completely perplexed by the scent of the pigs, and gave up the chase as a lost cause. And another "dumb" animal proved he's not so dumb after all.

But I've always wondered what would have happened if the hound had been closer and had come into sight while the buck was still following the hogs. You know, it wouldn't have surprised me one bit if the deer had settled himself in the middle of those hogs and let the farmer lead him toward the pens, and if the hound had looked at the deer and decided it was just another well-fed over-grown hog and not a deer at all!

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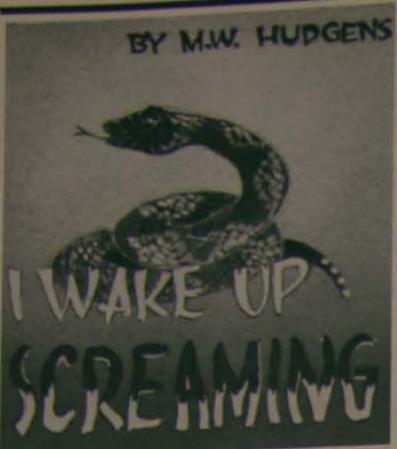


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MOST every woodsman has had his share of close calls, and any old-timer can tell exciting stories about how the biggest snake he ever saw did this or that or the other thing . . . and how close it came to getting him . . . and how he's lucky to be alive telling this tale today. And so on.

But what happened to me was different. At least, I think it was different. But I know this for sure—I don't want it to happen again!

Bill Smith and I were at our usual hunting grounds, expecting a good day, when Spot made his stand.

But Spot didn't hold. Instead, he lunged . . . and came running back with his tail between his legs, quail feathers in his mouth, and shaking like a leaf in a hurricane.

We walked to where Spot had made his stand. There on the ground was an old diamondback, buzzing like a saw, busily swallowing a quail. From the looks of him, he'd eaten well lately, all six feet of him. One shot ended this rattler's feast.

. . . But it was only minutes later when a step in the underbrush put me face to face, almost eye to eye, with another rattler, smaller than the first, but just as well-fed and just as dangerous.

Did I say "face to face"? Brother, my right foot was on this baby's neck—closer than I ever hoped to be. I froze, and held fast. Quick thinking? No! I was too scared to move.

With the rattler desperately struggling to free himself, lashing my legs until they hurt, I finally managed to yell for Bill. He came quickly, and one carefully-aimed shot freed me.

What makes this story different is this—I've never boasted about how close I came to cashing in my chips or about how smart I was to fool that old rattler, like some of these old-timers.

I'll admit it . . . I was so scared that even now I wake up late at night and can feel that diamondback lashing at my legs, and I shake with fright and don't get back to sleep until morning. And hunting? Brother, I'm mighty careful where I walk these days.

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Outdoor - Reviewer
 By JACK SHOEMAKER

COMPLETE GUIDE TO FLORIDA,
 By Andrew Hepburn, Published by Travel Enterprises, Inc., 444 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y., Distributed to the Book Trade by Garden City Books, Garden City, N. Y., \$2.00.

Several hundred thousand Florida residents and visitors are the real authors of the revised and enlarged edition of the *Complete Guide to Florida*. The first edition came out about three years ago, and was an attempt to provide in one low-priced volume a truly complete and impartial handbook on Florida travel, that would be both interesting to read and practical to use.

Since that time it has been expanded and brought up to date in an unusual pattern, for it involves an association of maps, text, and pictures in a manner never before attempted, and it carries NO ADVERTISING.

More than 500,000 persons have used this guide, and many thousands have written in their suggestions on improving it, hence the first state-

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FEBRUARY, 1953

ment of this review that many persons have worked on this book. But perhaps of most interest to the readers of *Florida Wildlife* is that section on fishing, one of the best concise and clear pictures on both salt- and fresh-water fishing that has ever been undertaken. You'll see beautiful pictures of fishing spots that make Florida an angler's paradise, and you'll read about the "when's," "where's," and "how's" to catch many of the finny fighters that dwell in our millions of acres of water, both inland and out in the shallows and deep waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

The fishing section is supplemented by a unique map which shows graphically all fishing opportunities of this state. The text also takes one section of the state at a time and attempts to show you what you can catch where.

For many of the tourists contemplating a trip to the Sunshine State, it will become quite a travel bible, for it will give you any information that you might be interested in regarding: what to see, where to stay, where to eat, what fun you can have, plus an interesting special section on every aspect of retirement opportunities. It's a natural for anyone seeking data and information about any phase of Florida living. A quality product at a very low price. **END**

UNCLE RUFUS
 (Continued from Page 5)

of game that is left, and later reports the number of new families of various wildlife species that he observes during his daily trips through forest and field. He also participates in roughfish control, restocking, and other fish management programs.

Another duty of the wildlife officer is to keep a check on the condition of the wildlife in his area. He observes the size and health of many species, the amount of predatory animals, the amount of available feed, etc., and makes recommendations to management directors of any help that is needed in his area.

Yes, the wildlife officer has a lot of duties that keep him busy. Uncle Rufus recommends the wildlife officer as a friend that each club member should know. He will help you to become a true sportsman, a good conservationist, and a skilled hunter and fisherman. **END**

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WHAT'S NEW IN TACKLE THE SHOPS

Each month, in this column, the editors will present new products, or new models of established lines of equipment, pertaining to hunting, fishing, and boating. Manufacturers distributing new equipment of this type in Florida are welcome to send in descriptive data, photographs, etc., for use in this column.

THE WOOLFIE LURE



An all-purpose bait—one that could be used on light tackle for trolling, plugcasting, spinning, or flycasting in both salt and fresh water—has been the dream of many amateur inventors and most tackle company experts. The result of their ambition is a market flooded with ingenious concoctions—some simple, some complicated, a few on the fantastic side—but this competition has provided the angler with a wide selection of good artificial baits that will increase his fishing success.

One of the most popular all-purpose baits is the Woolfie Lure, the brainchild of Ernie Woolfe, well known Miami Beach sportsman. It was devised from the simplest of materials, and the idea resulted from a friendly argument between Woolfe and the late Louis "Red" Snedigar, who was also an ardent Dade County angler, about which could design the better lure for taking both salt- and fresh-water fish under all weather conditions. Ernie won the argument, after both men had spent much time and money trying to out-do each other.

A study of a Vinyl hair curler, belonging to his oldest daughter, fostered his idea for a lure that would fool all species of fish into mistaking it for a live and succulent shrimp. In his first model, the plastic hair curler provided a body that would be impervious to water, salty or otherwise. Tiny holes were made in the sides to emit bubbles on the retrieve, adding to the "live" appearance of the lure. Reversing the curler, he added the hook and the

head, in which a pair of eyes were inserted. The master stroke was the use of the curler's two plastic strands (for locking in the hair) to simulate the antennae found on shrimp or crawfish. The waving movement of these two "feelers" plus the air bubbles streaming from the perforated sides gave the lure a very lifelike appearance. The waving antennae also prevented the hook from fouling on weeds and grass.

Naturally, the first models were not perfect—but on its first test, in Indian Creek back of Woolfe's home, it hooked a 2½ pound jack, and another 10-pounder a few moments later. Later a friend hauled in over 160 trout on the Woolfe Wonder, which was incentive enough for the work which was to follow in developing the lure for market. During an 18-month period, various models were perfected and given rigid tests for durability and practical use under all types of fishing conditions. A nylon jig was added on some models to make the lure even more active, and an English-made hook was found that would resist the corrosion of salt water and fresh water.

A group of outdoor writers, representing every state in the Union have successfully used the Woolfie Lure in both fresh and salt waters—the cold mountain lakes and streams, the warmer fresh waters of Florida, both oceans, and the Gulf. In every instance the Woolfie Lure has proved its worth.

Exclusive manufacture of the va-

rious models is done by the Tip Top Products, Omaha, Nebraska. A package of Woolfie Lures will give you every kind of fishing: the skimmer can be used in shallow water; the lure without the tail is designed for fresh-water trolling or casting with pork rind or strip-bait; others are perfect for spinning or plugcasting; and the one with the long jig is to be used in offshore salt-water trolling, or muskie fishing. The lures are handmade, and, so far, the tedious construction has made it impossible for production to keep up with demand.

A package of Woolfie Lures will enable you to hook any species you may desire, as few, if any, will pass it up. It can be recommended as a worthwhile investment for fishing success.

Silver Sailfish Derby Opens At West Palm Beach

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.—The sixteenth annual edition of the Silver Sailfish Derby of the Palm Beaches, a free-for-all individual sailfishing championship, rolled into high gear here Saturday, January 17, and runs for four straight weeks, to February 13.

Hailed as the sportiest event staged throughout the entire fishing world, unique feature of the annual Silver Sailfish Derby of the Palm Beaches is that less than 30 per cent of the hundreds of sails registered every year in this blue-ribbon event actually are brought back to the boat docks.

Of the 569 sailfish registered in last year's contest by anglers from 36 states and several Canadian provinces and foreign countries, 315 fighting sails were released alive by conservation-minded anglers, novices and veteran fishermen alike. Seven out of every ten battling sails brought alongside fishing cruisers by anglers are promptly released at the end of the fight—alive and free to fight again another day—which stamps this popular angling feature as the sportiest of all fishing contests.

There is no entry fee for individual anglers, regardless of whether they fish a single day or compete frequently throughout the four-week run of the contest. Sailfishing enthusiasts competing in the event, both local anglers and winter visitors to Palm Beach County, troll the nearby Gulf Stream on charter and private fishing cruisers properly registered in the event. More than 70 cruisers fly the official Silver Sailfish Derby pennant.

This annual event waged on the famous sailfish grounds off the Palm Beaches first was sponsored in 1935 by the West Palm Beach Fishing Club which again will conduct this year's contest.

A clear picture of the spectacular action enjoyed on the exciting sailfish front off the Palm Beaches is revealed by the records amassed during several past Derbies when an average of two to four sails per boat per trip were recorded. An average of one sailfish per boat trip here is considered commonplace.

Eight major trophies posted in the Silver Sailfish Derby of the Palm Beaches are awarded on the basis of longest and heaviest sails entered, light tackle catches, most sails released, and angling sportsmanship. There also is a valuable prize presented to some individual angler daily throughout the 28-day contest.

It generally takes a sail well over the 8-foot mark to write the angler's name on the famous Silver Sailfish Trophy, perpetual award presented by Mrs. Henry R. Rea, and to receive the miniature replica presented by Henry Oliver Rea, Sewickley, Pa., son of the original trophy donor. (Last year Fred Grundy of Savannah, Ga., turned the trick with an 8-foot 4-inch sail, a gold-button fish, on the second trip he ever made off the Palm Beaches.)

The Widener trophy is presented by P. A. B. Widener III, Lexington, Ky., to the angler boating the heaviest sailfish, (and last year was nailed down by Emanuel Rosenfeld, Philadelphia, Pa., who caught a 75-pounder.) The Henry Chanin trophy is presented by the Atlanta sportsman to the angler boating the sailfish scoring the greatest number of points by length and weight combined.

The hottest angling race, however, almost invariably develops in the competition for the Aksel C. P. Wichfeld trophy presented to the angler releasing the greatest number of sails during the Derby.

Intense interest also centers in the George A. Bass, Detroit, trophy for the outstanding individual one-day angling achievement, (won last year by an angler releasing six sails in one day while also boating a beautiful little 4-footer retained for a trophy mount). (Also considered for the Bass trophy last year was Mrs. B. Davis Crowninshield, Manchester, Mass., who whipped a 157½-pound blue marlin she hooked on light sailfish tackle. Anything can happen in a Silver Sailfish Derby!)

FEBRUARY, 1953

A HIGH PRICE FOR A DEER (Some Pay, Some Don't)

Three Columbia County residents, and especially one of them, have learned the hard way that it doesn't pay to hunt Florida deer out of season and at night. The trio was arrested on October 28 by Wildlife Officers John Crast, Wallace Kirby, and Kendon Bush.

Recently, in Jacksonville, all three of the violators pleaded guilty before U. S. Commissioner T. V. Cashen to unlawfully hunting deer out of season and at night in the Osceola National Forest. One of the men drew a 90-day sentence, while the other two received 90-day suspended sentences and were placed on probation for six months. Commissioner Cashen explained that he required the one sentence to be served because the man had a prior record of several violations of game laws.

Two additional charges against the trio—unlawful possession of a

gun and light in a national forest and unlawful possession of a gun within a game preservation area at night—were dismissed on motion of Assistant U. S. District Attorney Mark Hulsey Jr.

In the above case, one man is paying for his violation of a major game law. All three pleaded guilty. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has advocated a change in the state laws to make it mandatory that time be served as punishment for violations considered major crimes, such as killing deer out of season.

The theft of a deer is no different from the theft of a cow or horse. It is hoped that we will soon have laws with teeth in them—laws demanding the punishment of each and every person found guilty of major violations—that will put an end to the indiscriminate killing of our wildlife species.

Archery Tournament Feb. 28 and March 1

This year, for the second time, the Florida Field Archery Championship Tournament will be held at Jensen Beach.

The tournament consists of shooting 56 targets on a regulation field course approved by the National Field Archery Assn. There will also be novelty shoots such as the wand shoot, clout, moving deer target, etc. Prizes will be awarded to the winners of the novelty shoots, and, of course, trophies, medals, and ribbons will go to the champions as well as to the runner-ups.

Resident and Non-Resident, Free Style, and Instinctive Archers are all welcome. There will be champions in the Free Style and the Instinctive divisions. Non-residents cannot compete for the State Championships, but they will receive awards for high scores.

Tournament fees will be \$2.00 for Seniors and \$1.00 for Juniors. All archers who wish to enter the tournament must be a member of the Florida Field Archery Assn. Archers can join same when registering for shoot. Registration will take place from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 noon, February 28. No applications after this time will be accepted.

Allen F. Kendall, Secy.
Fla. Field Archery Assn.
Jensen Beach, Florida



"Maybe we'd better reel in Bill, I suspect the girls are ready to start home."

FLORIDA'S MOST POPULAR GAME FISH



It is strings like the one shown above that keep the bass angler coming to Florida. These lunkers, ranging in weight from 3 1/2 pounds to 10 pounds 2 ounces were taken from Lake Dora this winter by Stan Wareing of the Mount Dora Hotel and Dr. Jesse Feagler, a guest there.

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TALLAHASSEE—More money is spent in the pursuit of the large-mouth black bass in Florida than for any other single species found in fresh or salt water according to John F. Dequine, Chief Fisheries Biologist of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Dequine said that records taken and surveys made throughout recent years have convinced him, without a doubt, that more fishing sportsmen spend more of their time and money attempting to catch that king of fresh water fishes, the black bass, than for tarpon or sailfish, often considered the flashy sportsters of the high seas.

The bass, often called "trout" here in the state, is a worthy foe for any fisherman, mainly because of its hard fighting qualities, its abundant

numbers and its big size, and it attains a weight of 10 to 15 pounds, and often goes upward to 20 pounds.

Accounting for a large portion of the state's sporting catch, powerful southern bigmouths may be found in any sort of fresh water, from the largest lake and river to the smallest drainage canal. Fishermen have been known to park their cars at the side of the highway, sit on the front fender, flip a bait into the roadside canal, and quickly pull out an eight-to-ten pound bass, but not without a hard-fought battle.

Almost any method of fishing may be used to entice the black bass into striking, but bait or plug casting is probably the favorite, with most sport fishermen using the surface lure because they enjoy seeing a monstrous bronzeback explode from



A rare Florida hunting feat was chalked up by John Thieme, of Delray Beach, shown above after returning from a quail hunt with a pheasant he never dreamed of bagging. Wildlife Officer Vernon Hays, who examined the bird, said its presence was a mystery, as there were no wild species known to frequent this area. He suggested, in the way of an explanation for Thieme's lucky find, that the pheasant may have escaped from some private preserve. There is no law in Florida preventing the shooting of non-resident game birds, such as pheasant. The Delray Beach hunter's two pointers, Doll and Hans, were as surprised as their master when the 2 1/2 pound "strange quail" hit the ground.

from the visitors is "Where can we catch some big bass?"

It is always interesting to note that the State of Florida possesses the largest black bass in the Union, and it is the only state that rates an entirely separate division in national game-fishing contests.

Since Florida's largemouth bass is a top-ranking fresh water game fish, and because it attains such a large size, is so extremely plentiful and is also a dynamic fighter under the spur of a goading hook, it is without doubt strictly a top-quality entry in the nation's fishing frolics.

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the water in a burst of spray, smashing the plug high in the air.

Still other anglers prefer the underwater spoons, with the fly-rod and spinning outfits coming into favor in many sections of the state. But Dequine says that the live-bait fishermen, most of whom use shiners, will catch the bigger bass oftener than sportsmen who use any other types of baits.

The largemouth bass does most of its spawning and family raising in shallow water early in the spring of the year, although some bass have been known to spawn during almost every month of the year. From 5,000 to 20,000 eggs may be laid by a single female fish. Being adhesive, they stick to roots, stones, and other materials in the nest, which is guarded by the male parent.

After hatching, the young fish remain with the parents until they

learn to fend for themselves. Then the papa seems to lose interest, and the school disperses into the shallow grassy areas to feed on tiny shrimp, insects and small fish.

The bigmouth is very plentiful in Florida. According to estimates, the poundage of black bass taken by licensed fishermen during a typical year (June 1947 to June 1948) totaled 22,226,629, with an average catch of 78.1 pounds of bass for each licensed fisherman in the state. These figures do not take into consideration the large number of unlicensed fresh-water anglers in Florida.

Such figures give only a slight inkling of the tremendous value of the largemouth black bass to the economics of Florida. According to the managers of gas stations, motels, restaurants, stores, etc., who are the persons most in contact with tourists, one of the most-asked questions

SQUIRRELS I HAVE MISSED

(Continued from Page 29)

was gone before either of us knew what had happened!

All of which resulted, of course, in a string of epithets that up till that time even I didn't know I knew, and a reminder of the old proverb that Confucius say "he who kill squirrel must keep vigilance eternal." If he didn't say it—he should have!

BUT I'VE ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE with squirrels . . . as much as I love 'em.

I remember, in my boyhood days, when I roamed the woods with a single-barrel that was taller than I was, squirrels usually got the best of me. For a long time I used to think they could dodge the shot, when they'd vanish behind the smokescreen made by those old two-for-a-nickel black powder shells I used. Still others wrapped themselves up in a bunch of Spanish moss when they saw me coming. Or they'd squat in a bunch of pine needles at the top of a tree, remaining motionless while I got a crick in my neck looking for them. Some just flattened themselves on a limb in full view, and dared me to find them.

The worst rebuff I've ever had from squirrels, though, came about from what the "other kid" caught.

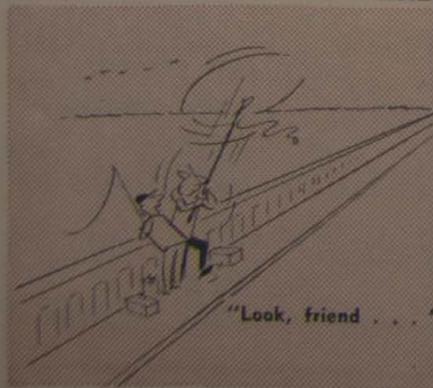
I'd been hunting all day, without any luck as usual, when I saw him coming toward me with a couple of squirrels by the tail—and no gun. I asked him how he got them.

"Killed 'em with rocks, of course."

"You don't mean to tell me you killed those squirrels by throwing rocks?"

"Sure I did," he answered. Holding up one old buck, he added, with a sheepish grin, "An' you know, by gosh! I had to throw at this fellow twice!"

END



"Look, friend . . ."



By CHARLES JOHNSON

IT WAS ON my first bird-hunting trip in the scrub near the Ocala National Forest when my dog jumped a rabbit and took off into the palmetto . . . so off we went—the rabbit, my dog, and me.

The rabbit made the palmetto leaps ahead and disappeared in the scrub, with my dog close behind. But as the dog started under the palmetto in pursuit, he yelped, leaped up, and then fell backwards. He rose to his feet and came trembling toward me. I looked for a snake bite, but could find nothing. So I approached the palmettos to see for myself what the trouble was.

There, lying coiled under the palmetto, was a big diamondback, vicious, dangerous, and ready.

As I looked around for a stick with which to kill the rattler, I noticed a tall, skinny old man casually watching the proceedings. I found a large branch, but when I turned toward the snake, the man spoke, and his voice stopped me.

"I wouldn't kill that snake if I was you, Bud," he said.

"You wouldn't?" I was perplexed.

"Well, now," he said easily, "that might be old Betsy, and you wouldn't want to kill old Betsy, would you?"

"Old Betsy?"

"Old Betsy," he said, and coming closer, he leaned over and took a long hard look at the rattler coiled under the palmetto. "I think that's old Betsy, but I better make sure."

With that, he came up with a long pole with a noose at the end, dropped it over the snake's head, and pulled her out.

"Yep," he said, "this is Betsy. She's blind, and I keep her teeth pulled so she's harmless. Feed her a rabbit now and then, so she stays in this field. And then when other snakes come a-calling, I catch them and sell them over to Ross Allen's place at Silver Springs."

"Yep, I think a heap of old Betsy," he added. "She's worth lots of money to me."

SKY, WIND AND WATER

(Continued from Page 27)

preserve. One day we discovered a circular pool, the water clear and calm, fringed on one side by reed and tall grasses, on the other bordered by bay and pine and palm. In town it had been very hot, but here a delightful breeze was blowing. The odors of fresh green growing shrubs and grasses mingled with sea smells from the gulf. We had good luck with our fishing, pulling in several fine black bass. Above us, near and around us in the reeds and high bushes on the shore and in the swamps flew or poised red-winged blackbirds and blackish-purple grackle, fearless and undisturbed by our intrusion.

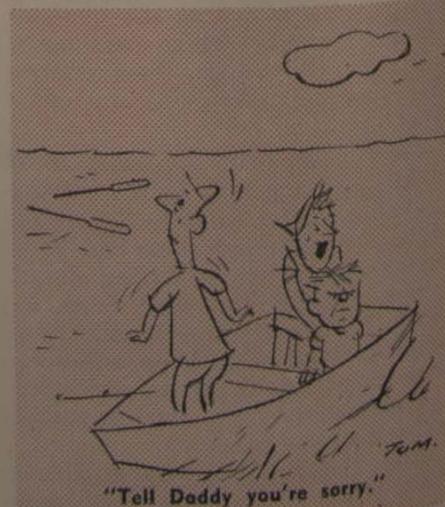
At one time or another we have seen many birds and animals in the refuge. Several times we have seen an eagle poised upon the tip of a tall, gaunt tree ruin or sitting there upon a giant nest. Once when we were driving home at sunset, a wildcat ran across the road in front of us. His eyes were wide and shining. Another evening, just at dusk, we saw an otter in the roadway.

In the swamps of the game refuge and along the Wakulla River as it flows from mirror-clear Wakulla Springs, we have seen the strange water turkey with its fan-shaped tail and long twisting neck and the limpkin, darting and questing, both birds of brownish color with white markings.

The fishing tales? I'll let my husband tell them: of bass caught in the pool in the refuge; of bream and bass in Lake Jackson; of perch and redbass in the Ocklocknee River.

Me, I'm writing about sky, wind, and water.

END



"Tell Daddy you're sorry."

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

DANGER . . .

He May Bite!



By GINGER TEESE

The innocent-looking little fox, which many hunters consider harmless, is actually one of the most dangerous animals of the woods due to the fact that the fox is very susceptible to the dread disease, rabies. The bite of an animal infested with rabies can easily prove fatal, and all wounds inflicted by a fox should be treated by a doctor without delay.

Shown above is W. M. Hill, 77, of Lady Lake, with a fox that he killed while it was attacking the two boys, Elijah Givens, 10, and Ezell Givens, 7. The fox tracked the old Negro for a quarter mile, up to his house. After he went inside, it turned on Elijah, who was playing in the yard with Ezell. The older boy ran into the house for help, and the animal went after Ezell. Hill came out, picked up a stick, and got between the boy and the fox. The crazed fox abandoned all sign of caution in circling Hill to get at the boy, and the old man beat it on the head with the stick until it was dead.

The head of the fox was sent to Jacksonville for examination, as all indications pointed to an advanced stage of rabies. A report of the examination had not been received as this was written.

END

A good sportsman understands the reason for conservation laws and gives the local wildlife officer all the assistance he can.

FEBRUARY, 1953

ESTHER WILLIAMS GOES FISHING

(Continued from Page 25)

Not only is the shape of the Map of Florida Pool outstanding, the fact that it is built in a lake at a depth of twelve feet lifts it far out of the class of standard. In order to locate the pool out in Lake Eloise, a special island had to be built. The site was carefully picked to take advantage of the shoreline and off shore cypress trees that form a pictorial background. A sizable island was built and the outline of Florida placed thereon.

The outline is no haphazard affair. It was carefully drawn to scale by Engineer Gerald Emory of Winter Haven who laid it out on graph

paper, accounting for each irregularity of the Florida coast line.

One of the biggest problems of the entire construction was a certain means of keeping the pool in place. Normal construction methods would have resulted in a pool that displaced more than its own weight in water. In that event, the entire structure would have floated off across the lake at the slightest breeze. Naturally, the pool would have been of little use if search parties had to be sent out every morning to find it.

The completed structure is a masterpiece of technical ingenuity and is safe from lake water intrusion as well as the danger of floating away. The pool will be a permanent fixture at the Gardens and will be used in the future for promoting everything in the state from individual cities to oranges.



Construction of Map of Florida Pool at Cypress Gardens.



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COTTAGES

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FISH WORMS—Jumbo Reds, hand picked. Live delivery and count guaranteed. \$5.50 per 1,000 in gallon container, \$5.00 per 1,000 in cartons of 100. Prepaid. No C.O.D. orders.—BASS CAPITAL WORM FARM, San Mateo, Florida.

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REAL ESTATE—LAKE COUNTY PROPERTY

5 acres campsite on a secluded 2-mile-long fishing lake. \$750.00. South Lake Realty Co., Groveland, Florida.

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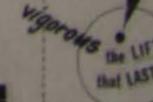
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