CONTEST RULES
1. The contest period is from September 1, 1954, through November 30, 1954.
2. All essays must be mailed first class prepaid to FLORIDA WILDLIFE, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.
3. Each entry must contain a minimum of 500 words.
4. Each entry must bear the following information on the first page of the essay: name, sex, age, grade, school, school, county, and teacher.
5. Students of all Florida schools, grades 5 through 8 inclusive, will be eligible to enter division one of this contest.
6. Students of all Florida schools, grades 9 through 12 inclusive, will be eligible to enter division two of this contest.
7. The subject students in division one will write about "what will conservation mean to me."
8. The subject students in division two will write about "the value of wildlife in Florida's economy."
9. No papers will be returned and the decision of the judges will be final.

PRIZES

FIRST DIVISION — GRADES 5 TO 8

FIRST PRIZE — $75.00 Value
PFLUEGER SUPREME CASTING REEL
South Bend Glass Casting Rod
2 Assorted Lures and Spoons
Manning Shrimp Lures
L & S MIR-0-Lures
Clark Spoon
Chair Spin Dilly
Barracuda Spark-A-Lure
South Bend Super Duper
Deity Fish Gripper
HOW TO BE A CRACK SHOT (book)
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
SECOND PRIZE — $40.00 Value
Phantom Waterscope
Assorted Lucky 7 Hooks and Leaders
11 Assorted Lures and Spoons
Manning Shrimp Lures
L & S MIR-0-Lures
Clark Spoon
Chair Spin Dilly
Barracuda Spark-A-Lure
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

SECOND DIVISION — GRADES 9 TO 12

FIRST PRIZE — $75.00 Value
PFLUEGER PELICAN SPINNING REEL
South Bend Glass Spinning Rod
12 Assorted Lures and Spoons
Manning Shrimp Lures
L & S MIR-0-Lures
Clark Spoon
Chair Spin Dilly
Barracuda Spark-A-Lure
South Bend Super Duper
Deity Fish Gripper
HOW TO BE A CRACK SHOT (book)
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE
SECOND PRIZE — $40.00 Value
Bar-n-Grill
Assorted Lucky 7 Hooks and Leaders
11 Assorted Lures and Spoons
Manning Shrimp Lures
L & S MIR-0-Lures
Chair Spin Dilly
Barracuda Spark-A-Lure
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

PRIZES

FIRST DIVISION — GRADES 5 TO 8
THIRD PRIZE — $25.00 Value
Large Kedding Perpetual Minnow Bucket
Assorted Lucky 7 Hooks and Leaders
10 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

FOURTH PRIZE — $15.00 Value
Small Kedding Perpetual Minnow Bucket
4 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

FIFTH PRIZE — $12.00 Value
PISHERMANS FISHING BOOK
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
3 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

SECOND DIVISION — GRADES 9 TO 12
THIRD PRIZE — $25.00 Value
PFLUEGER CHAMPION REEL
Assorted Lucky 7 Hooks and Leaders
9 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

FOURTH PRIZE — $15.00 Value
MIN-O-PUMP
4 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

FIFTH PRIZE — $12.00 Value
SALT WATER FISHING (book)
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
3 Assorted Lures and Spoon
Manning Shrimp Lures
Clark Spoon
South Bend Super Duper
PISHERMANS HANDBOOK
DICTIONARY OF FISHES
1 Year Subscription PISHERMANS MAGAZINE
1 Year Subscription FLORIDA WILDLIFE

BONUS PRIZE — To best essay by eleven-year-old boy and eleven-year-old girl a complete set of TRUE-TO-LIFE books (10) about fish and game.

SEPTEMBER, 1954
Dear Editor,

We notice that the regulations on three hunting areas at the Miami meeting of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission on July 15, met with some disfavor from sportsmen in Hialeah, Hialeah Park, and the West Palm Beach Districts. Most of the objections came from the 5th District, where an early Dove season in October, for the past two seasons, has been severely criticized.

The sportsmen contend, and with some evidence, that early shooting permits game law violators to prey more easily on quail and turkey. The biologist agree's that the large number of Dove killed in these districts during October are only half-grown birds. Due to the scarcity of adequate protection in the field, the situation poses a critical problem, and it is the popular belief that the Dove situation must soon be clarified. Either the State will have to be zoned, as in Texas, permitting two different seasons; Dove hunting curtained entirely; or enact local laws prohibiting hunting in the woods prior to the opening of the general hunting season, with certain exceptions.

Being from Clay County throughout the State, with the exception of the 4th District, show a big majority object to an early Dove Season.

DON SOUTHWELL
Florida Wildlife Federation

Dear Sir:

I enclose herewith a subscription to your excellent magazine for my brother who, though born and raised a Florida Cracker, has forsaken this fine state to live for the past ten years in California. However, he hasn't forsaken his love of hunting and fishing and I will find your magazine such excellent reading and a fine companion for a quiet evening. I thought I would also enjoy receiving a copy each month to remind him of his happy days in Florida and just for its general interesting contents to any sportsman anywhere.

I have read and subscribed to numerous sporting magazines at various times, but have found none to compare with FLORIDA WILDLIFE and trust you will maintain the same standard of quality in the future.

I am writing for entering this subscription for my brother and looking forward to my next copy of FLORIDA WILDLIFE, I remain,

Very truly yours,

RUDOLPH L. CARPENTER,
Gualala, Florida

Dear Editor:

We enjoyed reading the July issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE, not just part of it but all of it. We were especially interested in the article on rough fish caught at Newnan's Lake due to the fact that years ago we lived on a large lake in Winter Haven when one day we were able to clean out the gas, etc, etc. A large number of people gathered to watch the proceedings and my wife and another did not even go out in a row boat. The man was in a bathing suit.

The natives were throwing back some large size bass. One particular bass, which must have weighed 10 pounds, was evidently stoned. He was slow about taking off after being thrown back and back, the 2nd time he came up, caught the bass by the gills, swam back to the boat, threw the bass in and took hishooks.

I went down to the local hotel where the Legion gang hung out and told them all how Sam catching a bass with his bare hands. They just gave me the horse laugh.

Best wishes,

LLOYD CLEMMER,
West Palm Beach.

Unfortunately, the text is not legible enough to be transcribed accurately. It appears to be a letter regarding hunting regulations and a personal account of fishing experiences.
Hi Gang! Welcome back from your many vacations. And here's hoping that this September finds you in the best of health for your school term.

Many of you, no doubt, will be remembering all of those pleasurable happenings during your vacations these past three months. I wish I could wave a sort of magic wand over the land and be able to see into these personalized vacations, but I can't.

I can, however, tell you—that is tell those of you who didn't come to our summer camp—about the wonderful times had by all those who attended any one week of our four-week schedules.

Yes sir, many happy moments will be revisited by 240 Jr. Conservationists this year.

Yep, 240 youngsters strong tended to our new summer camp at Lake Eaton in the heart of the Ocala National Forest just about 20 miles from the city by the same name.

I would venture to say that all of it was a wonderful experience, returned home with many experiences to relate and not all KP.

It was our camp this year, for we had our own camp for the first time in three years. Remember, our former two years we camped at Camp Rotary at Auburndale. Our Camp with 57 acres. Of course we didn't use all of those acres every year, but they were there and we knew it. It was a wonderful feeling for all to take a hike either in the day or night and know that it was camp property the hike was being taken on.

There are really so many things to tell you about I hardly know where to start. But then, thinking it over I would say the biggest week from all aspects was the last week (July 25-31). It was the biggest week for many reasons.

The first being: it was the week of the 3rd Annual Conference of the State League of Clubs. Delegates from 16 clubs convened for this meeting to elect their new state officers for the coming year 1954-55.

State officers elected were as follows:

President—Charles Scruggs, Jr., 6508 River Blvd., Tampa.
Vice President—Walter Krueger, Box 279, Route No.1, Leesburg.
Secretary—Cathlyn McClain, 321 West 12th St., Panama City.
Treasurer—Johnny Coleman, Box 279, Wildwood.

Director (North)—Charline Pledger, 11604 W. Indian River Rd., Fort Lauderdale.
Director (South)—Colin McLaughlin, 558 NW 51st St., Miami 37.

Standing committees appointed by the newly elected Board of Directors:

Resolutions Committee—Chairman Charline Pledger, Panama City
Philanthropic Committee—Co-chairman Cathlyn McClain, Panama City (others to be appointed at a later date by chairman).

Projects Committee—Chairman Lynn Ward, Miami; Dave Kelley, Ft. Lauderdale; Bobby Anderson, Wauchula; Richard Dieferender, Hialeah; Richard Ryal, Pahokee.

Budget & Finance Committee—Chairman Johnny Coleman, Wildwood; Co-chairman Sunny Kirkland, 4333 S. Beach Blvd., St. Petersburg.

Summer Activities—Chairman Walter Kreuger, Leesburg; Tommy Wetherbee, 4338 North Howard, Bartow; Benny Candill, 5311 Palm Beach; Wilf flooding, West Palm Beach.

Other special committees will be appointed later at the next Board of Director's meeting.

The Assembly of Delegates for the Third Annual Conference of the State League of Clubs convened for the purpose of electing new officers for the coming year, July 25, 1954. The Jr. Conservation Club was located at Lake Eaton, Ocala National Forest.

The second Assembly of Delegates convened at 2:55 p.m., Friday, July 30, 1954, to consist of the business before the assembly and adjournment for the next year.

The directors of the board had a busy schedule. First meeting of the board was at 12:00 p.m., July 28, Thursday and last meeting of the board was held as late as 10:00 a.m. Saturday morning, July 31, 1954.

Many issues were decided both at the General Assemblies and the Board of Directors meetings.

Among those were:

That next year one week will be exclusively set aside as the Conference Week. That the conference week will contain many clinics and meetings. The purpose of developing and improving club standards and for the mutual benefit of the members and officers. That it would be a good idea for the state officers to continue a system of conservation of our natural resources.

That all delegates elected from clubs in good standing will attend the entire week of the conference. And that any delegate wishing to become a candidate or potential nominee will be in attendance from the first day of the conference and remain in attendance during the entire conference.

That no club shall have more than two proxy votes to be carried by a delegate.

That the Secretary of the League will become the editor of the official bulletin of the League. The complete information of interest shall be sent to the League Secretary and the bulletin was prepared for the Conservation Club League.

That a copy of the new merit point system for individual achievement and future camp eligibility shall be given to each club in good standing as soon as possible.

That the board of directors at their next meeting approve the total amount of points for future eligibility.

That the board approve a summer camp application form at their next meeting.

That each club in good standing receive a copy of the approved Conservation Club application form and a club to a supplement to The Chronicle.

That all clubs in good standing receive a copy of the State League Constitution and By-Laws.

That all clubs will receive the new material project approved by the board.

That a system be instituted whereby a bar of some color (to be decided at a later date) will be issued to each camp signer indicating his seniority at attendance of annual camps.

That all clubs will see more get-togethers for division clubs in a community single division.

That all clubs not chartered in the League be given until the 31st of December for chartering. And that such acceptance into the League for charter membership shall be a presentation of an organization with a constitution and by-laws for examination with the presented officers and state constitution and state emblems.

That all clubs must strive to attain a good standing in the League to be eligible for all of its activities.

That members have necessary information to complete a directory of all active clubs in good standing in the State League.

A complete summary of the minutes will be presented at a later date.

The Board of Directors voted on having their next meeting at Marathon Nov, 5, 6 and 7, 1954.

So you see it follows that the Colleagues and your new members of the State League and Board of Directors were very busy during the week known as the Conference Week.

Another reason for the last week being most outstanding was the fact that we had 803 young members attended camp.

And still another reason was the fact that two long-time members to the Conference were girls—young ladies. Yes sir, fellows, we set history for this meeting and that is the only one All Girls clubs in the state and that is at Panama City. The name of the club is the Misses of the Bay County Girls Jr. Conservation Club.

One hundred three campers for our last week in camp established an all-time record. Our other best record for one week was 87 last year.

I know too, that all of you are interested in our weekly reports from camp given at camp at the end of each week.

But before I do that I would like to present in this column the Best Conservationist Camper of the Year, 1954.

He was voted on by the staff at the Annual Summer Camp.

And here is his name: Lynn Ward from the Alachua Options Jr. Conservation Club in Miami. Our congratulations to you Lynn Ward. For this honor Lynn Ward has received a beautiful spun rod and reel with line.

Our first week of camp July 4-10 lists these winners:

Best Camper—Walter Krueger.
Best Most Cooperative Camper—John Beatty.
Best Cabin—Mike Jones.
Best Softball Team—Oldest with Walter Krueger, captain.
Hard luck boy of the week—Tommie Dempsey.
For the only fish caught—Michael Jones.
Camp mascot—Richard Niles and Robert Swift.
Best KP—Open.
Best singles horse—Johnny Coleman.
For the week of July 11-17:
Best Camper—Lynn Ward.
Most cooperative camper—I. Janison.
Longest fish—Billie Christopher.
Best Conservationist—Art Brandtwood.
Best tent—Tent No. 2.

best tent captain—Lynn Ward.
Best softball team—Stinkers with Lynn Ward, captain of the team.
Best KP's—Bruce Johnston and Bob Wadrey.
Best lobbyist—Robert Greenburg.
Camp mascot—Douglas Anderson and Benny Jones.
Handy boy for the week—Bob
Best horseshoe doubles—Sr., Bob Greenburg and Bob Polk Jr., Jerry Hill and Gene Stiles.
Best all-around boy—Colin McLaughlin.
For the week of July 18-24:
Best Camper of the week—Steve Hudson.
Most cooperative camper—Jack Beatty.
Best conservationist of the week—Mike Kachuski.
Most typical boy—Johnny Ludmame, champ howl—Lawrence Machine.
Best all-around champion for the week—Gordon Chase.
Horses singles—John Gurry.
Horses doubles—Philip Ryals and John Gurry.
Best KP's for the week—Johnny Colon.
Best mascot—Charles Davis and Bobby Anderson.
Handy boy of the week—Donald Johnson.
Best tent—Tent No. 3 captained by Colin McLaughlin.
Best Colleagues—The KP Kids captained by Art Brandtwood.
For the week of July 23-31:
Best camper—Kenneth Kable.
Most cooperative camper—Johnie Colon.
Most efficient fish—Billie Christopher.
Best Conservationist—Art Brandtwood.

Walter Whitehead, Game Commission Wildlife Officer and other aides are striving hard trying to place the Alachua Junior Conservation Club on the map. They have only one All Girls Club in the state and that is at Panama City. The name of the club is the Misses of the Bay County Girls Jr. Conservation Club.

SEPTEMBER, 1954
On July 1st your Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission initiated a new Federal Aid project in fish management with the dual purpose of providing information of interest and value to both the scientist and the technical worker. The new Lake and Stream Survey project is similar in scope to the surveys now being conducted by many of the other progressive state conservation organizations throughout the country. The plan calls for an all-out effort, with no lake being made of all lakes over 150 acres in size and of all the major streams in Florida. It is expected that the program will require some three years to complete.

For the purpose of discussing our new program with you, the study may be divided into four phases. The first of these, we will term the general ecology and capabilities section. Working under this phase will include the preparation of an outline map showing water depths for all those bodies of water coming under the study. The respective lakes will be studied as to their biological and ecological type, the vegetative characteristics recorded, and the physical and chemical characteristics of the water studied. The above data will provide basic information which can be used in the determination of a long-range program. This portion of the survey may be compared with the work done by the agricultural specialist who, in preparing a recently cleared piece of land, he must make certain basic tests to determine which crops will be most productive, where and how they should be grown, and what yield may be expected. Our fish management program would need similar information if a high quality and productive industry is to be maintained for the angling public.

The second phase of the program involves sampling techniques to determine the kinds of fish present, their relative abundance and distribution, the size and growth rate of the game fish. Spot cressus and interviews with local fishermen should serve as a basis for calculating populations and yields of fish. These factors, of course, will vary from lake to lake, and accurate information will, however, serve as a reliable indication of the relative importance and utility by sports fishermen of the various regions and of particular sections within those regions in addition to pin pointing major current management problems.

The third phase of the survey will be of special interest to the fishermen. The attention is to the location of each fish camp on the various bodies of water on the State map and the facilities available at these camps. Such items as the number of boats available for rent, rental fees, accommodations, bait, tackle, and refreshments provided will be of value to the sportman planning a trip. Each lake and stream will be evaluated for fishing, best seasons, particular "hot spots" and the most productive methods and types of fishing.

Recommendations for the future management of the fishery resource on the individual bodies of water will be encompassed by the fourth phase of the program.

The Lake and Stream Survey will be conducted in a county basis. Upon completion of the work in each county, a report will be issued summarizing the findings. A map showing the depth contours of each lake studied will also be issued. The publication will be made available to interested sportmen and will provide an accurate guide to fishing in the various lakes.

As I mentioned previously, the Lake and Stream Survey idea is not a particularly unusual study. More and more states are beginning to realize that a comprehensive fishery management program must be preceded by a comprehensive survey of the resource. The publication of complete information directed toward the sportman, on the physical makeup and available facilities of the lake, is rather unique in such surveys. We believe this service will be of great benefit to our anglers.

The electronic Echo-Sounder obtained for use by the survey crew is a new, small, sensitive type of instrument never before used on the market. The highly mobile and sensitive device is especially useful for the comparatively shallow depths common to many of our lakes. I am sure Florida sportsmen will hail this latest fish management program as a big step toward our objectives of providing maximum of service to the outdoorsmen and the continued wise use of a valuable resource. END.

September 9th is New Year’s Day; not the New Year’s Day of the ordinary man on the street who marks the passage of years from one January 1st to the next, nor for the citizen of the United States as he turns the annual cycle from the July 1st beginning of the fiscal year. This, rather, is a New Year of special significance only to Florida’s anew and growing sportfishery. For this date, the Sunshine State’s minnows will have their initial opportunity to turn the favorite smoothbow, consigned to the rack since old Sol dipped below the horizon on the last day of February, last. M. Day, 1954 will be ushered in with a magnificent two-hour period of sport before sunrise on September 9th for that at the time the marsh hen becomes legal game, the first item on the agenda of Florida’s varied hunting season.

Most enthusiastic wild fowlers have delved more or less deeply into the private lives and loves of their quarry, and with very good reason. The better the hunter comprehends the habits of his game, the greater the object of his gunning efforts, the more enjoyable, and incidentally the more successful, the pursuit of his quarry he will experience.

The complete and up-to-date inventory of information available to the pursuer of the widely distributed and ever popular black, goose, down, woodcock, grouse, turtley, and bobwhite. Sportsmen’s handbooks, and miscellaneous literature have presented the varied aspects of the natural histories, habits, and hunting techniques of these forms in an infinite variety of styles. However, there seemingly has been a dearth of readily available material on the marsh hens.

The term “marsh hen” is a good example of one of those locally applied names that, because of its descriptive qualities comes into such wide usage that the original name of the creature concerned is all but forgotten. The term is used to designate one of the various marsh inhabiting birds of the genus Rallus (the rails), although most often, and especially in Florida, the name refers specifically to the Clapper Rail.

Along the Atlantic coast of Uncle Sam’s domain, several species of rails find things to their liking. Among the most prominent of these are the King Rail, Rallus elegans; the Clapper Rail, Rallus longirostris; and the Virginia Rail, Rallus virginianus; the Sora Rail, Porzana carolina and the Black Rail, Ovurnis jamiensis.

Although all of these forms have been spotted to Florida, it is the Clapper Rail or Marsh Hen that is of most interest to our hunters because of the goodly numbers which seek certain favored marshes along both coasts of the state. The marsh hen, with his long, slightly decurved bill, long legs, and drab coloring, is far from a Beast of Brahma of the marsh lands. In size, the clapper averages 18 to 20 inches in length with a wing spread of around 18 to 20 inches. The overall grayish coloration which darkens into almost black on the underparts, has a somewhat distinctive face. The sides are barred and the wing coverts are olive-brown or buffy brown in hue. The breast commonly tends toward a cinnamon or olive-brown color. The long, slightly decurved bill is dark grayish-black to black with an orange tinge or with a fleshy tip in the younger birds. The legs are somewhat flesh colored in adults and blackish in younger birds. Although all varieties of the marsh hen class are dabb in general coloration, there are significant variations in plumage as the result of differences in climate and local surroundings. As far as the waterfowl hunter is concerned, the geographical variations are so obscure as to be scarcely noticeable.

The marsh hen has some pretty definite ideas about the sort of place it likes to call home, being definitely partial to salt, or at least brackish marshes near the sea coast. Along the lower reaches of some of the larger streams they may be found nesting. As the vegetation several miles inland is still well within the areas affected by the Clapper Rail or Marsh Hen, they are characterized by the presence of dense stands of arrowhead. It is for cover under this that the birds have been known to be shy. As the vegetation reaches that of the marsh hens, their range is extended.
The marsh hen is an able diver and can remain under water for some minutes. If hard pressed, it will dive and sink below the surface and may remain there for a considerable period with only the bill and eye showing above the surface. When caught in the open, the bird will swim rapidly over the ground or cover submerged or floating weed beds.

At the first threat of danger, the marsh hen covers its head, stretches out its neck, and rushes dashing its body above the surface, makes for cover. The rail’s method of escape is similar, a seemingly impenetrable mass of rankly growing vegetation is a feat which seems to confound all observers.

The nesting season of the clapper rail varies with the locality, and therefore with the climate. In the southern parts of the bird’s range, clapper rails begin nesting about the end of March or in early April. Most nesting has occurred as early as February or as late as July. In the northeastern United States, the clapper’s range, the nesting period begins in early or mid-June. The males are very pugnacious during the mating season, and many a pair will pursue its mate continually, day after day. Not infrequently will a clapper hen sit to one finally takes flight with the victor in hot pursuit.

The nest is constructed of dry rushes or marsh grasses with an inner lining of finer material. The nest is usually built on an elevation of similar material and is usually fastened to and supported by the surrounding vegetation. The height of the nest above the marsh level is determined by the observer, the nest is often left unattended.

The marsh hen is able to swim with considerable ease, although the bird is by no means a swift nor graceful aquatic performer. In swimming, the neck is extended and the bird strikes the water with its feet. As it is only a very superficial action that it is able to propel itself forward. The feet of the bird are not lobed, therefore, they are not well adapted for swimming, and gilllines, both forms which, as might be expected, are much more suitable for this purpose.

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The nest is constructed of dry rushes or marsh grasses with an inner lining of finer material. The nest is usually built on an elevation of similar material and is usually fastened to and supported by the surrounding vegetation. The height of the nest above the marsh level is determined by the observer, the nest is often left unattended.

The marsh hen is able to swim with considerable ease, although the bird is by no means a swift nor graceful aquatic performer. In swimming, the neck is extended and the bird strikes the water with its feet. As it is only a very superficial action that it is able to propel itself forward. The feet of the bird are not lobed, therefore, they are not well adapted for swimming, and gilllines, both forms which, as might be expected, are much more suitable for this purpose.

The marsh hen is an able diver and can remain under water for some minutes. If hard pressed, it will dive and sink below the surface and may remain there for a considerable period with only the bill and eye showing above the surface. When caught in the open, the bird will swim rapidly over the ground or cover submerged or floating weed beds.

At the first threat of danger, the marsh hen covers its head, stretches out its neck, and rushes dashing its body above the surface, makes for cover. The rail’s method of escape is similar, a seemingly impenetrable mass of rankly growing vegetation is a feat which seems to confound all observers.

The nesting season of the clapper rail varies with the locality, and therefore with the climate. In the southern parts of the bird’s range, clapper rails begin nesting about the end of March or in early April. Most nesting has occurred as early as February or as late as July. In the northeastern United States, the clapper’s range, the nesting period begins in early or mid-June. The males are very pugnacious during the mating season, and many a pair will pursue its mate continually, day after day. Not infrequently will a clapper hen sit to one finally takes flight with the victor in hot pursuit.
Bear and panther have been declared to be game animals and they may be taken only during the open season for the taking of deer and during managed bear hunts. The season's bag on both species is limited to 1. Possession of bear and panther limitless. Bear and panther may be taken under permit from the Director when they are found damaging personal property. Cub bear protected at all times.

DOVE

The dove season again this year is split into two parts of 20 days each beginning at 12 o'clock noon on October 11th and ending at sunset October 30th, 1954. The second part of the dove season begins December 11th at 12:00 noon and ends December 30, 1954 at sunset. Only afternoon shooting is permitted during dove season. The shooting hours are from 12 o'clock noon until sunset. The daily bag limit is 15.

ALLIGATOR

The regulations governing alligator have been revised this year with the size reduced from eight feet to six feet. Effective August 25, 1954, the open season for the taking of alligator will be from June 1, 1954 until January 31, 1955. The ten southernmost counties and Escambia remain closed to the taking of alligators. Hunters are required to have a special hunting permit available at the division director's office at no cost.

RABBIT

Rabbits, both cotton tail and swamp, have been declared to be game animals. Season—12 months in the year. No bag limit. Possession limit is 5 per season. License required to take rabbit during the regular open season for game animals, game birds, and migratory birds. Rabbits may be taken under permit from the Director when they are found damaging personal property.

OSCEOLA AND APALACHICOLA BEAR HUNT

Hunt Area: Portions of the Apalachicola and Osceola Wildlife Management Areas not closed to hunting.

1954-1955 RULES AND REGULATIONS

Management Areas not closed to hunting.

Open Season: October 3 to October 31.

Three days per week arranged at option of the hunters shall constitute one hunt.

Legal Gear: Bear and one panther; no limit on fox, skunk, opossum, bobcat, civet, cat, rabbit.

Permit: A special permit is required of each hunter to participate in the bear hunts. The fee for this permit is $5.00 per hunt. License is required in addition to the special permit. Persons 17 years of age and over must have license. No person is allowed to hunt unless accompanied by a permitted hunter.

ALLIGATOR

Hunt Area: Portions of the Apalachicola and Osceola Wildlife Management Areas not closed to hunting.

Legal Gear: One bear and one panther; no limit on fox, skunk, opossum, bobcat, civet, cat, rabbit.

Permit: A special permit is required of each hunter to participate in the alligator hunt. Each alligator season begins June 1, 1954 and continues until January 31, 1955. The ten southernmost counties and Escambia remain closed to the taking of alligators. Hunters are required to have a special hunting permit available at the division director's office at no cost.

Legal Gear: One bear and one panther; no limit on fox, skunk, opossum, bobcat, civet, cat, rabbit. No person is allowed to hunt unless accompanied by a permitted hunter.

ELGIN AND OSCAL ARCHERY HUNTS

Hunt Area: The northern portion of the Osceola Wildlife Management Area bounded by the West by Forest Road No. 17, north by the South Fork of the St. Johns River, east by Forest Road No. 65, and south by the South Fork Road No. 19.

Open Season: October 3 to October 31, hunting permitted every day.

Special Hunts: 1. Shooting hours will be one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Hunting days in any one week may be changed by approval of the Hunt Director. No Trespassing.

2. A qualified hunt director will accompany each hunting party.

3. At least one shouldered weapon (shotgun, rifle or pistol) is required. Each hunter must have a valid hunting license.

4. The take of any animal or bird on or off the hunting area may be enforced at the discretion of the hunt director.

EAGLE FIELD

Hunt Area: North and South of Okeechobee, Eustis, and Leesburg on Antelope and Seminole Roads.

Open Season: October 3 and November 8, hunting permitted every day.

EAGLE FIELD

Hunt Area: South of the Okeechobee, Eustis, and Leesburg on Antelope and Seminole Roads.

Open Season: October 3 and November 8, hunting permitted every day.

Legal Gear: Two buck deer with one or more 6-inch antlers, and other parts of the deer. Deer taken under this permit will be considered part of the hunting club's bag and must be tagged as provided in state regulations, with Air Force tag (APF Form 3272); deer removing deer from hunt area.

Permit: A special Archery Hunt Permit consisting of $5.00 will be required in addition to the regular license requirements. Application of this permit will be handled by the Air Force through the Florida Aviation Office, Okeechobee, at the Okeechobee Guard Station, Okeechobee, Fla.

GENERAL RULES

HUNTING REGULATIONS 1954-55 SEASON

All dates shown are inclusive. Opening day, closing day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day are open to hunting. Should any of the above holidays fall on a Sunday, the Monday following such holiday will be open to hunting. Bow and arrow and crossbows permitted for taking of game animals and game birds. Shot gun must be limited to 3-shells capacity (magazine and shells combined). Sale of native game prohibited. No open season on doe deer, fawn deer, spotted deer, buck deer with antlers of less than 5 inches in length, cub deer, doe goose, mule, swan, and non-game birds. Unprotected and untagged sparrows, skinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, great horned owl, crow, jackdaw, buzzard, weasel, skunk, flying squirrel, opposum, red and grey fox, bobcat, raccoon.
As the date nears for the appearance of the full moon in April, there is an expectant stirring in the ranks of Florida’s army of cane pole trotters. Many an apprehensive eye is cast skyward. The rise and fall of the mercury assumes a major role in conversations, and for a very good reason: for upon the vagaries of the spring weather depends the beginning of the high point in the pan fish angler’s year.

After a winter of only fair to middlin’ worm dunking, the rising water temperatures of the veritable season usher onto the scene a period of near-fabulous angling. It is in the spring that anglers from far and near descend upon certain well known and traditional bedding areas for the annual get together of the Shelleracker Bedders Association, a most informal, loose-knit organization, without officers, dues, or by-laws. There is no restriction whatever on eligibility, the billionaire industrialist and the ten bucks a month pinney woods farmer rub elbows in camaraderie when the magical word goes out, “The shellerackers are bedding.”

The shelleracker, Lepomis microlophus, belongs to the family Centrarchidae, one of the most important groups of game fishes in the United States, for it includes the largemouth bass, the crappies, and the sunfishes. The Centrarchids are also known as the sunrayed fishes, the name referring to the structure of the fins.

The shelleracker, or red-ear as the species is known in some sections, occurs in the Rio Grande River, in the Mississippi River drainage of Iowa and Illinois from southern Indiana southward into Florida. The species has been introduced into other widely scattered localities throughout the country. The Centrarchids in general are considered fishes of warm waters and it is in the streams and lakes of the warmest portions of the country that they find optimum conditions for growth and reproduction. It is in the deep, dark waters that they attain record size. The average weight of shellerackers taken by sports fishermen throughout the country would probably be something like a half pound, but a good many will go two or three times that weight. The largest “crackers” weighed by Lake Harris, a noted hot spot for the species, tip the scales at 19 pounds. Considerably larger specimens have been taken but these super sized specimens are definitely in the minority.

During most of the year, shellerackers are generally distributed throughout a particular lake or stream although certain spots may attract a congregation of the finny gamesters because of a concentration of favored food items or particularly suitable water temperatures. Molasses comprise an important part of the diet of the shelleracker and the species is particularly adapted for feeding on such forms. In the back of the mouth a pair of rough honey structures are to be found. It is between these hard plates that the molluscs are crushed and ground, thus the shelleracker is well named.

With the approach of spring, rising water temperatures and the gradual lengthening of the period of daylight brings about a speed up in the maturation of the eggs of the female. When water temperatures remain in the vicinity of 68 to 70 degrees, spawning activities begin. In common with the Centrarchids, the shellerackers are nest builders. To the male falls the task of constructing the nest, a U-shaped depression on the bottom of the lake or stream.

Males appear in the bedding area several days before the females arrive. Although April, May, and June are the high points of spawning activities, the “crackers” may be bred as early as February and the time of the bedding may take place as late as October. As might be expected, there tends to be variation in bedding dates depending on the relative coolness of the spring weather and the lateness of arrival of cooler fall temperatures.

There is a wide variety of nesting or bedding sites. Sometimes beds may be located in water only inches deep, at other times spawning may take place in depths of several feet. Beds may be located in open water, as in a Lake George or they may be located close to shore in heavy stands of cypress as has been noted in the Dead Lakes section.

The majority of the males appear to arrive in the chosen vicinity within a day or two of one another. After someaccounting, the male settles on a particular spot and begins fanning out a depression on the bottom with his tail. Certain favored locations are selected by spawning-minded shellerackers year after year although changes of major spawning sites are not unusual. Upon completion of the nest, the female departs. The spawning activity may be spread over from three to five days or perhaps longer, depending upon the degree of ripeness of the female. At the conclusion of the spawning activity, the female leaves the locality, her duties to the future generation having been discharged. To the male falls the task of defending the eggs and young from the inroads of the numerous natural enemies. The time required for these hatch depends upon the temperature of the water. In Florida, this period generally requires from six to seven days. During their early life, the young are under the guardianship of the male. The young shortly become independent and are fair game for all the fish of the lake which so recently guarded the brood with such zeal.

A body of water that is all but deserted by the angling public for the one day each week, the next, when the excited and happy banter of literally hundreds of eager shelleracker fishermen, drawn together by their mutual appreciation of the sporting qualities of their quarry.

The cane pole has long been accepted as standard shelleracker gear, but the days are beginning to discover the increased sport that results from the use of a rod. A six-foot, two-handed cane pole offers plenty of argument on the end of a light rod. Earthworms are the indicated bait for bed fishing. A lively worm hooked amidships and pulled slowly through the bedding area is sure fire stuff. There is some diversity of opinion regarding the reason for the shellerackerailing the proffered worm. One school of thought holds that the “crackers” do not feed while bedding and grab the bait merely to remove it from the cleanly fanned bed. The other side holds that the fish considers the worm a tasty and readily available tidbit. Whatever the facts of the case may be, it is certain that the fish are eager to grab a worm-laden hook. Most shelleracker devotees are little concerned with the reason behind the fish’s action, it is sufficient to know that the earthworm is the best bait and let it go at that.

If you have yet to discover the sport of shelleracker bed fishing, there is a unique and enjoyable experience awaiting you. But be forewarned: an angler bitten by the shelleracker bug is a lost soul. Come spring, your business will suffer, your family go neglected. For the badly stricken, the affairs of the world come to a halt when the electrifying cry goes up, “The Shellerackers are bedding.”

THE SHLLCRACKERS ARE BEDDING’

Above: Shelleracker bed fishing is not for the angler who requires solitude for enjoyment. The excitement of the scene on a newly located bed in the Dead Lakes near Wewahitchka.

Right: Many anglers are discovering the added thrill of fishing the bed with a light fly rod. This limits of the “cracker” mount sport angling for the lucky flyrodder.
JUNIOR CONSERVATION CAMP

Another first for Florida is this camp on Lake Eaton in the midst of beautiful Ocala National Forest.

Once again the Ocala National Forest has advanced in importance to the sportmen of Florida. This time it is the numerous youthful outdoor lovers of the Sunshine State who benefit directly, although the older sportmen will also benefit through the improved attitude of the coming generation of outdoorsmen toward the wildlife of the state.

The opening of the new Junior Conservation Camp on beautiful Lake Eaton has opened a new era for the youth of our increasingly wildlife-conscious state. Housed in a temporary set-up of tents, some 250 youngsters representing Junior Wildlife Clubs throughout the state enjoyed one or more of the four week-long sessions held during July.

Experts in their respective lines gave talks and demonstrations concerned with boating, first aid, swimming, fishing, firearm safety, archery, and conservation. The campers

(Continued on Page 18)

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Junior Conservationist Thornton of Miami marks aces on his guitar for the enjoyment of fellow campers. Individual performances, group singing, music, and camp fire became an important part of each day’s full schedule of varied and interesting outdoor activities.

Below: The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission’s wildlife trailer visited each weekly session of the camp. The representative collection of Florida’s wildlife including deer, bear, panther, wildcat, coon, turkey, ducks, and various species of fish and reptiles were viewed with a great deal of interest.

With Lake Eaton in their front yard, fishing was one of the favorite recreational activities of the campers. Representatives of various tackle companies visited the camp and demonstrated their skills for the enjoyment and education of the junior wildlife. That the lesson was well received is illustrated by the photo at the right showing the results of a foamy against the finny inhabitants of the lake.

"Open wider, please." Specialists from Russ Aller’s Reptile Institute at Silver Springs gave a series of interesting and informative talks to the Junior Conservation campers. Making the lectures ever more vivid and impressive were the very much alive subjects the specialists brought with them from the world renowned Reptile Institute collection.
learned about Florida’s fish, game, birds, and reptiles. From dawn to dusk the boys were kept busy. They managed to include softball, horse shoe pitching, fishing, hiking, boating, and movies in their daily vigorous schedule.

Outdoor space was contributed to many of the meals when such savory morsels as frog legs, bear meat, rat-tailed snake, alligator tails, and other game items were listed on the menu. K.P. and area clean up assignments, ordinarily onerous duties of the camper, were tackled with vigor and outbursts of gaiety.

For the enthusiastic campers, the allotted one week session slipped by all too quickly. Some of the boys were fortunate enough to be able to stay for an additional week. Many of the plans that were made to attend next year’s session.

Permanent cabins and additional recreational and educational facilities are being planned for the 1955 season. The camp will be open all of July and August.

The new era has opened in the Ocala Forest. Before long, one of the finest camps of its kind will be contributing immensely towards the appreciation and conservation of our natural resources.

END.

The importance of boating in connection with Florida’s varied outdoor pursuits can scarcely be over-emphasized. Recognized experts in the boating field give talks and demonstrations dealing with water safety, maintenance, and operation of water craft.

The boating sessions were attended with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm on the part of the rising generation of Florida outdoorsmen.

Softball, ever a favorite form of recreation with the youth of the country, was only one of the various off-time activities enjoyed by the campers. Hiking, swimming, horse shoe pitching and other forms of outdoor sports were entered into with vigorous pleasure.

The bird shown in the accompanying photograph is a screech owl. This common name is inappropriate, for the bird’s call is not a screech but a prolonged quaver, rather mournful but not unpleasant. The folk name of “shivering owl” gives a better idea of its voice. This small owl is abundant throughout most of Florida, and its call is often heard by night, especially in the live-oak hammocks.

The screech owl is about ten inches long when full-grown and has two color phases: one grayish and the other reddish. Both red and gray specimens may turn up in the same nest. This owl has two small tufts of feathers on its head. From a distance these resemble ears, for which they are sometimes mistaken; they give the owl’s face a cat-like appearance.

The screech owl, like most of its relatives, is nocturnal. It spends the day hidden in a hollow tree or behind a drapery of Spanish moss, and ventures forth at night to hunt. Owls catch their prey with their feet, which terminate in long, curved claws. If the prey is not too large, it is swallowed whole, and the bones or other indigestible parts are later disgorged in the form of large pellets. Some times great numbers of pellets are found on the ground below an owl’s nest, and examination of them reveals conclusively the nature of the bird’s prey. The screech owl feeds mainly upon rats, mice, crawfishes, frogs, scorpions, grasshoppers, mole-crickets, cutworms, beetles, and other insects. It catches a few small birds, most of them sparrows, as well as an occasional flying squirrel. Minnows are also captured at times. Nearly three-quarters of the screech owl’s diet consists of harmful rodents and insects, however. Thus wildlife authorities agree that this bird is very valuable and beneficial to man’s interests.

Owls have many structural peculiarities that set them apart from most birds. Their eyes are directed forward, whereas those of most other birds are directed to the side. An owl’s plumage is often very soft and fluffy; this seems to make for noiseless flight. When the bird alights upon its prey, there is no whir of wind through stiff feathers. In most owls, even the legs and toes are thickly covered with fluffy down, and a keen-earred mouse catches no sound of danger until he is struck from above. Owls are also characterized by a sort of feather ruff around the face, and this, together with the large eyes, seems to give them a quizzical expression.

Screech owls often nest in hollow trees, and especially in abandoned woodpecker holes. Occasionally they will nest in a little-used barn or abandoned building, and sometimes they take up residence in bird boxes erected by man. The nest is little more than a few twigs, leaves, bits of grass, and feathers. On this nest the female lays four or five eggs. The eggs are white in color, as is true of owl eggs generally.

The owl most frequently heard in Florida is the barred owl, also called hoot owl or swamp owl. Its usual call is four loud hoots in rapid succession, followed almost immediately by four more. However, it has many other strange cries; and when two barred owls begin hooting at each other in the depths of the river swamp, the variety of sounds is astonishing. The greenhorn who does not recognize the weird voice is apt to imagine all sorts of creatures in the brush!

The barred owl is about twenty inches long, from head to tip of tail. As the name suggests, the plumage (Continued on Page 18.)
AROUND

Shown above are the principals in a recent move to present Bradford County sportsmen with plenty of fishing. On the left is an entrance to Rowell Lake, showing how effectively the hyacinths have done their job of blocking off the lake’s legendary “bluegill breaks” from today’s anglers. On the right is the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission hyacinth control plane that is playing the leading role in returning the lake to the sportsmen. Pictured in front of the plane are Jack Trevor, county sanitarian who is after mosquito larvae; Dick Connor, who is sponsoring the spraying of the hyacinths; and Dean Peters and Vernon Myers, who are members of the Commission’s hyacinth control program.—Photo: Bradford County Telegraph.

Here is E. T. Heinen, director of the South Florida Division, doing his part in donating blood that will be used or be available to be used by some of the Commission men or their families.

This is no easy process as everything has to be just right. Here Commissioner A. E. Hall of the first district and Ronnie Godwin, area supervisor, are getting the preliminary check up before donating blood to the division’s credit.

State

The importance of blood banks has become a proven and important item in our present mode of living and the South Florida Division of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has utilized this plan to further the efficiency of their vast activities.

E. T. Heinen, director of the division, originated this plan in order to have the blood at a minimum of expense when needed. Personnel of the division have donated and will continue to donate so that a reserve will be available in case of emergencies.

For quick delivery of blood when it is needed in different parts of the state, the highway patrol and the planes of the Commission are pressed into service to get blood to the patient as soon as possible. Above is Highway Patrolman Bill McCreary of the Lakeland office of the patrol delivering blood to the Commission Pilot George Longford at the Lakeland airport.

Availability of blood in emergencies like this is often the difference between life and death.

The Northeast Division of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission now has a full time fisheries technicin to assist the public with pond and lake problems. He is Ralph J. Lookey and is shown watching fingerling bass being placed in Cedar River in a supplementary stocking program.

SEPTEMBER, 1954
GRANDPA AND THE TAGALONG

By C. W. ROBERTS, Jr.

These Apachecilloca Forest hunters thought they had seen some big bucks—then along came Grandpa.

Even in the half light of early morning, it was easy to locate the crossing Mr. Charley had described. Numerous sets of pointed hoofs had torn up the sandy ground in a table top sized plot on both sides of the fence where deer had jumped the wire. Whips of white belly hair hung on some of the top bars. I knelted and carefully examined the spot. The old tiger skipped a beat or two as I beheld, clearly and deeply impressed, the fresh tracks of a huge whitetail. The best part of it was that they were headed in the right direction out of the posted area. Chances were good that someone in our party, located at strategic intervals along a mile long reach of the enclosure boundary, would get a chance at the jumbo track maker this morning.

Earlier in the season, I had been in on several rounds of peek-a-boo with an excellent whitetail buck. Some of the boys who glimpsed him swore he toted at least 12 points, others claimed he had ten. My own impression glimpsed over the wildly gyrating barrel of a Winchester carbine, was of a tawny draft horse sized creature running along under a set of multi-branched tree trunks.

It was the consensus of opinion in our neck of the woods that the big oscillate was one of the northern whitetails the game department had brought in from Wisconsin. Since it seemed likely that a buck of such proportions had seen more than just a few moths, someone had tagged him with the name Grandpa. The moniker seemed appropriate, so it stuck.

At any rate, that galloping chunk of venison owned a trophy sized set of antlers that would look just right in the vacant space above my fireplace. On this last morning of the season, that reserved spot was just that, reserved and waiting for a trophy that somehow had failed to materialize.

My rosy pre-season prognostications were beginning to appear somewhat silly. The explanations for the non-appearance of venison fell on slightly credulous ears around the room. People were talking of the old boy that the 14 year old kid down the street had bowled over not one but two respectable bucks the first week of the season did my stock as a nimrod no good.

After confounding the early season efforts of the best deer hunters in this section of the piney woods, it was assumed that he had moved out under his own power, probably into the heart of the big river swamps. It was hard to imagine that a braying buck like the regal whitetail would be tooted off without plenty of fanfare by the lucky nimrod. Feed would be short in the dense river swamps but the only old veteran would be relatively safe for the duration.

If the big fellow had actually sought refuge in the swamp, the weather man had done him wrong. Unusually heavy December rains had the Apachecillos far over its banks. Even the highest of the big swamp ridges were under water. It seemed a logical conclusion that any deer in that section would be forced to higher ground.

At any rate, the track at which I glimpsed in open mouthed wonder was so much larger than the average run of the mill buck that I felt certain that it was my old game manager. A venerable mossy horn had slipped back into his old haunts in time for one more go-round before the season closed.

I stood up and moved to a position a few feet down the fence. Dead weeds and grass grew knee high along the outside of the wire making a natural blind into which I hunkered with my back against a post. With a soft metallic click, the Silvertip slid into the chamber of the lever action 30-30. In spite of the fact that on this last day of the season both of my deer tags still reposed unused in my hip pocket, the thought of those jumbo sized hoof prints spurred fading hope.

Hardly had I settled into position when, from somewhere off to the right approached the opening bars of that pulse stirring theme song of every real Dixie buck hunter: the tense, excited bawl of a good strike dog with a nose full of hot deer smell. Slim, Joe Ed’s eager beaver young black and tan had made the strike. After the first enthusiastic outburst in confirmation of Slim’s find, the pack settled down to the task of working out the twisted, rambling trail laid down by a feeding whitetail. I hoped that it was the track of the old king buck that occasioned the excitement.

Now and again one or another of the dogs would bawl out the intelligence that the deer had gone this-a-way. The voices of the hounds, already muffled by the intervening timber, gradually grew fainter and finally faded away as the trail led them toward the north.

I relaxed a bit and leaned back against the morning fence post to savor the beauty of the cloudless morning. After the clamor of the dogs, the stillness seemed even deeper than before.

Across the twisting, deeply rutted sand road directly in front of my stand was a funnel shaped basin tapering away to the edge of a cypress bay. The clearing was perhaps an acre in extent and was nearly surrounded by a double line of growth of young slash pine, palmetto, gallberry, and laurel.

The sun poked up over the flatlands, flooding the scene with its golden light and bringing welcome warmth. A big piledated woodpecker lit on the side of a pine sap and hammered noisily with early morning exuberance. A cat squirrel rustled busily about in the dead leaves at the base of a giant oak, then scurried up the rough trunk to bask rustily at some real or imagined foe. In a roadbed weed patch, redheaded bulrush rustled incessantly as if in annoyance at its noisy neighbors.

Then it came, at first dear and sweet like the clarinet notes of a distant flock of geese. The sound swelled rapidly in volume until the individual voices of the hounds were distinguishable. They had jumped the deer, they had seen it, and they were eager for the world to get the word. From the sound of the hounds, they were running parallel to the line of standing hunters, as yet without a shot. The clamor increased in volume as the chase progressed ever closer to my stand. I sneaked a quick check of the carbine through its ungraysed peep sight into the chamber.

The roar of a 12 gauge from the neighboring stand echoed through the timber. There were sounds of momentary commotion among the hounds, then the excited baying broke out again. The dogs were still driving straight toward my stand.

With every bellow I strained, I strained for a glimpse of the buck. Suddenly a twain streak shot out of a laurel thicket at the far end of the clearing and barged toward the crossing at full throttle. I caught the glint of sunlight on antler. Even as I rushed off the fir flakes I kept a sharp winging whip of a target. As the second shot roared through the piney woods, the buck disappeared as though he had dropped down a trap door. Hastily throwing another cartridge into the chamber, I kept my eyes glued to the spot where the buck had disappeared.

In a moment the hounds came charging out of the scene. Two of the younger dogs began whooling the buck but Dewey, Mr. Charley’s veteran black and tan, soon put a stop to such foolishness with a few strategic snips and threatening growls.

"Just as I crossed the road and started toward the deer, a jeep came tearing around the turn. I waited until it drove alongside me," Dewey told me.

"He’s down right over there," I told him, indicating the brush way beyond the clearing over the bay.

"Good deal. Hop on," Joe enthused.

As we joined into sight of the vanquished buck, Joe and Max tossed the little one. Max said succinctly: "Which way did Grandpa go?"

"No other deer came through here," I told them. They looked at me dubiously. After a quick dressing job on the limp carcass, we all trudged over to the buck’s back trail in an attempt to unravel the mystery. In the sandy soil the signs were plainly visible. The hounds had been all along until either by accident or design, the midget-by-comparison that I dozed had been pulled into the back of the larger buck directly to the scene. The tracks of the larger buck led directly to the site of the clearing where the smaller deer had been bedded in a grove of cypresses. The big deer ran together, with Grandpa in the lead, when Max snapped off a hurried and futile shot at the old boy. In the same bounds both had separated. The smaller deer was bringing up the rear when the larger had given both the dogs and the tag along the slip. The hounds had continued pushing the smaller deer.

Well I have to wear my mantel is still empty, but come a certain day next November I have a good idea where I can score. Max mustn’t forget that Grandpas doesn’t suddenly remember that he has a previous engagement elsewhere.

END.
A hunter who buys a new rifle, or installs new sights on an old one, and then goes hunting without first sighting in his new acquisition for both his individual eyegroup and a practical point blank range is due for a surprise— an unpleasant surprise. Most likely it will be in game killed.

Fact is, as firearms editors have tried to point out from decade to decade, very few firearms come from the makers correctly sighted in for the marksmen who will use them. The best the factories can do is to "bore sight" their products, by aligning sights in relation to gun bores, and then give their adjustments a final check by firing a few shots at a paper target. Beyond that stage, gun makers consider final sight adjustments a personal matter.

As a rule, .22 caliber rifles come to you with their factory sights adjusted to hit a small black dot at 25 yards, and the big bores for targets at 100 and 200 yards. But these sincere attempts to give you a ready-to-use and truly accurate rifle are cancelled out by the peculiarities that exist in human eyegroup. What might be a perfect setting sight for a factory sight aligner and tester may easily be incorrect for your eyegroup, due to individual differences of vision. Too, you might want to use the firearm for point blank shooting at an altogether different range than that for which the sights were adjusted by the factory. Finally, the factory may have sighted in the rifle with a certain brand of ammunition of just to hit a small black dot at a practical range and velocity, whereas your hunting ammunition may be entirely different. Any of these influencing factors, grossly bypassed by the consumer-hunter, can be fatal to true accuracy.

As regards sights alone, variation

By EDMUND MCLAURIN

Cardinal rule for adjusting a rifle’s sights is to move the rear sight in the direction your bullet hits or misses. In Fig. 1, the bullet hits the target. In Fig. II, the rear sight needed to be moved to the left 3/4 of an inch through your rear sight'. In Fig. II the rear sight should be lowered to bring the shot to center. In Fig. III, these changes need to be made. That is, this sight movement is all the left as regards windage, and lowered in respect to elevation— a bullet clusters to dead center.

Lay your rifle across the sand bag rest so that the center of its forearm, or barrel, and the center of your rifle's sight and height adjustment, and make sure that the rifle is steady and pointed naturally at your target. Check the entire setup for readiness and shooting comfort before you fire any live ammunition.

FIG. I

FIG. II

FIG. III

Cardinal rule for adjusting a rifle’s sights is to move the rear sight in the direction your bullet hits or misses. In Fig. I, the bullet hits the target. In Fig. II, the rear sight needed to be moved to the left 3/4 of an inch through your rear sight'. In Fig. II the rear sight should be lowered to bring the shot to center. In Fig. III, these changes need to be made. That is, this sight movement is all the left as regards windage, and lowered in respect to elevation— a bullet clusters to dead center.

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IT HELPS IF YOU'RE A LITTLE CRAZY

"YOU DON'T HAVE to be crazy to catch fish nowadays," the Florida Cracker livebait dealer confided, "but I reckon it helps... Things sure have changed. When I first started selling bait thirty-eight years ago, fishermen in general were a pretty sensible lot. But look at 'em now!"

The old man excused himself to wait on a customer seeking live shiners for tarpon fishing, but soon resumed his seat in the questionable shade provided by a battered awning overhanging one side of his pier shed. "Twas like I just said," he continued. "The old-time fishermen were mostly a sensible lot, but now fishermen will do anything, or try the craziest ideas, if they think there is any chance at all of catching a fish.... But, of course, there's more competition for the uncaught fish than ever before."

I nodded more or less in solemn agreement, and the old man paused to cut a plug of tobacco.

"Just look around on your field trips and you'll see some of the crazy lures they're now using to catch fish... Some aren't worth a dime, too," he admitted. "Maybe with today's heavy fishing competition it helps if you're a little crazy."

The conversation remained vivid in my memory. I took the old man's advice and, in making the rounds of the Florida fishing spots, I have since been more interested in some of the seemingly zany baits and methods and, having become familiar with the contents of countless opened tackle boxes. Some of the lures and ideas gathered to the fold have been both amusing and downright amazing. The amazement has been further enhanced by the fact that most of them actually catch fish, or contribute in some manner to more practical fishing.

The variety discovered has been as inclusive as the 57 varieties represented by a nationally adver-
tised brand of food products, and some of the ideas being used by Florida anglers have taken my fancy to the extent that I have adopted them, too. Ideas for enticing fish to bite have predominated, naturally.

While fishing the waters of the Withlacoochee River, I noticed a nearby caster taking bass after bass while a companion and I, enviously watching his performance, took only an occasional fish. Investigation disclosed his lure to be a brand-name item that looked anything but a fish-gutter, a lure shaped like a narrow strip of metal folded almost in half and painted red on one side and yellow on the other. I've taken 348 bass since last October, and hundreds of other fish—31 different species in all—in this lake," the prodi-
gent little man then lowered his voice with unusual reverence and declared, "For Trout," "For Channel Bass" and "For Snook." The idea was to catch small baits in order to prepare live bait, or artificial, to be used to tempt the particular species of fish sought... I decided I better play safe and just had a little box."

Just outside Tallahassee, my attention was captured by a car ahead of me that slid to a stop alongside a bridge. I looked to see what he was doing, and saw a man holding a cane pole and carrying a can... "Worm fishing! The place looked good... I pulled my own car up and got my tackle surface and parked. But the guy with the cane pole didn't begin fishing; neither did he start digital. Instead, he filled his can with water from the creek. Then removing a paper from his pocket he carefully unfolded the sec-
tions and selected two dark-colored tablets which he promptly dropped in the can of water. "Worm reaper!" he explained, noticing my puzzled glance. "Watch!" He watched the worm move its way up the creek's bank, kicked aside the accumulated leaves and brush and poured the contents of the can over the cleared area. Within minutes the fishers were gone. You could see the sperm surface appearance!... I scribbled the brand-name of the preparation on a stick and stuck the pencil I finally found in one of my pockets. I recalled the old man's words. Fishermen crazy? Not all of 'em, anyway. For me, some of them are just plain nuts."

Like the fellow at Lake Apopka who was catching live grasshoppers and making them more durable and attractive by painting them with fast-drying finger- nail polish, "emulating" his natural bait supply for either immediate or future use. And the bass fisherman at Lake Harris who, unable to legally use goldfish for bait, ingeniously applied a fast-drying, water-settling dye to color his minnows an attractive leg. Crazy? Well, I'm sure that in some instances it is. But I've learned from the stories of the old-timers that there were many instances, old or new, in which the tricks of the trade were prously using worms for bait. But when I engaged them in conversation I learned that their worms were artificial creations of soft plastic, natural even to their drag on a hook and a surprisingly lifelike wiggle, the last obtained from either the movement of the fish in the stream or the most twisted of the held pole! They had brought the artificial down to them from Ohio, they said, bought them from the stock of a certain store in Akron... Yes, I could order some, they were reasonably...

At John's Pass, near St. Petersburg, a Gulf cruising skipper ducked with a catch of nine kingfish that had a total weight of 213 pounds. In answer to my question, "What'd you catch 'em with?" he held out to me a giant sized pyramid sinker made of perforated copper, to which was attached a four foot leader having an orthodox spoon bait at the business end. When I took the rig from the charter boat skipper I was surprised at its lightness. From the appearance of the over-sized sinker, I expected it to weigh pounds. "A charm," the man explained. "It's a metal shell built around a small lead sinker, and filled with cotton. I soak it in mineral oil before I put the rig overide. Makes 'em 'click' when trolled." I made one that night."

Perhaps the most intriguing to have been ad-
sidered practical additions to a cast or trolled lure, but if you are an average angler you're usually just out of pork rind at the appointments store to afford it for use. At Lake Harney, I saw a bait caster suc-
scessfully use imitation pork rind strips cut from an old tattered and frayed feed bag... You'll now find some in my tackle box."

Off Panama City, during one of the periodic cobia runs, I shared a charter with a likeable chap who (Continued on Next Page)
began catching fish right away, using a strange-looking metal lure strongly suggestive of either a Manta ray or a mini-horse. I think it was described as being out of stock at its birth in California, he said. .. Fortunately, he remembered the address of his source of supply. Now, I can catch those colts, too.

One June night while fishing for tarpon from an outboard boat docked at the Briar Patch Bridge, the six-mile span connecting St. Petersburg with Tampa, I was puzzled by an intermittent flashing of a tiny light in the water. It was a vinefish, a small shrimp-like bananishaped eight feet away. The mystery cleared itself later when we pulled alongside each other to exchange fish stories. The vinefish in the neighboring boat had been using an artificial lure hollowed out to house a pen-size flashlight battery and tiny bulb! Two small tarpon were already boated with the lure... If I specified Special Handling and Air Parcel Post, I should have mine inside of a week, I figured.

That Florida fisherman’s superstitions has been pointedly indicated by my meeting of both freshwater anglers and coastal fishermen using baits associated with their belief that fishing is largely luck. These try-anything-ones have been seen fishing with what they have described to me as so-called “bucky-lures” -a real rabit’s-foot, its fur waterproofed and with diving lip and hook attached; a mermaid lure, supposedly representing Father Neptune’s favorite daughter, and, therefore, lucky; and a metal spoon shaped like the numeral 7; a number long considered to be favored more than average, as it brings no harm in trying them, anyway, I’ve decided. Maybe they’ll be especially lucky for me.

From one of the piers at Vero Beach I watched an elderly angler’s fishing float with amused interest. It attracted my eye because it wasn’t an ordinary oval cork float. But one shaped like an unclotted gloam gill and bobbing at an attractive level. “That’s a pretty salty float you’re using,” I commented. “Well, I’m tireed, with nothing to do except fish every day. I figure that if I have to watch a bobber all day, it might as well be one shaped like a pretty girl!” was his matter-of-fact reply... Crazy? They’re not, but, more appropriately, let’s credit him with being young at heart.

Keeping Florida’s live bait supply alive between source and place of use has long been a common problem, and some of the coastal anglers have developed to overcome this difficulty have been only a bit short of astonishing. Near Inverness, I met a fellow who had rigged up a baitcutter that utilized the air hose of his windshield wiper to pump a continuous air supply to the wiper’s air hose, inserted a T-shaped connection with a removable wing screw in one branch, and mit occasional attachment of a hose running up from the bait bucket. Worked, too!

At Naples, I talked with a tarpon fisherman who used a commercially-made, miniature, metal, windmill-type air compressor to keep his live bait cool. The device was first attached and used in his car window, and later transferred to his boat. The windmill operated on the slipstream of air provided by the moving car and boat, pumping needed oxygen through a tube into the live bait container. His unit cost only $.95 he said. Luckily, I found one in a nearby tackle shop.

While camping and fishing at Lake Marion, I found a successful live bait angler using a ten gallon depression bait container divided into two compartments—the lower one a metal reservoir for compressed air and capable of taking a pressure up to 200 pounds on any roadside service station’s tire hose. A valve-controlled trolley was used to transport the compartment to the upper section, holding stream water and live bait. By careful adjustment of the air release valve, the angler could control the living rate. On filling of the air compartment lasted hours.

(Continued on Page 39)

Who says fish are dumb? The fish in Florida at least have proven that they can outsmart many as anglers. Bass in particular have shown that the fisherman or woman had better look to their ways in order to be successful. This is very fortunate for the fishing tackle people because as the fish change their diets, the bait people sell more lures. Practically all over Central Florida, a few years back, fishermen were using a lure called the Bass Master. This lure when trolled rapidly behind a boat produced record catches of Bass. A couple of years later the fish began to get wise to the action of the plug, and quit hitting them as well as did they did at first. Then came the Spoon Plug, and once again people were catching lots of Bass on one type of bait. This year the Lazy Ike has taken over the Central Florida Lakes, and the Bass have been going for them in a big way. Next year or the year after the picture will change and the fish will have a new taste in lures. There is no doubt that a large Bass gets used to seeing a lure, and so loses his curiosity for that bait. There are times when even live bait fished in the usual cork and casting rod man- ner holds no appeal to Mr. Bass. A slight variation to this rig will sure the change off the day from poor to good. There are many variations, but one that has worked for me is as follows: Put your spinner or heavy shot on the end of the line, tie the leader under a foot and a half up the line, then a small cork, one that will sink with the weight of the sinker, and place it about a foot above the hook and leader. When you cast out this rig the cork will keep the minnow about a foot off the bottom, and the fish will pos- sibly become more interested as it is a different approach to his dinner or supper.

September, 1954

If you are a spin fisherman, and luck hasn’t been too promising, try using live bass for your spinning rig. Use a light hook, fasten the spinner through the Cast it as close to the shore as possible, and then hold your rod high enough so that the spinner works along the bottom of the surface. The com- motion that the bait makes will attract a Bass out of the grass. If you wish to fish deeper holes or the bottom with your spin you may have to work your bait through the mouth, and he will do the rest. In live baits, the fast spinning will give you a good chance to fish shallower waters than the angler with heavy tackle. Many times Bass will be feeding between the grass beds and shore. I remember one time last this Spring when we caught limit catches of Bass using a spinning rig, Sand Roller minnows, and casting from almost on shore to the edge of the weeds. The person that thinks that all he has to do is to take a plug and a casting outfit and then work shore for fish has another think coming. It is true that many bass do feed on shore, but in Florida lakes he is just as likely to be feeding on crawfish or shrimp in one of the deep holes a long way from shore. He might be chasing Shad in the middle of the lake or at the mouth of some creek.

In order to be smarter than the fish you have to analyze the wind, the temperature, and the water level. If you have a certain feeling of something going on if that stream is sluggish except in high water, you might find that when the wind is from that shore there is a water movement from the outlet of that stream, and a congregation of Bass and bait fish. Don’t fish it every time there is wind. To hold feed on the bottom. If your lake has a sandstone formation you will find the bass will lie between the cracks in the rocks, and feast on sand rollers, and crawfish. High water will sometimes find bass feeding on bass. A large ditch leading from a vegetable farm will sometime have a location where the bass will feed for food to be washed into the stream from the ditch. For the main part give Mr. Bass credit for a lot of success. You will give him away by telling him he will be tempted. Try all kinds of places, and any new tricks that you will be able to think up. A large Bass is big because he is smart, and if you want to catch him you have to understood and be on your own with the fisherman. It is true that when they are bedding it is no trick to pick the right place to fish. I have found on a bed the Shellerack is a wary fish. I have watched the bonnet heads of the barren fisherman run his outfit too close to the bed and disturbed the Shellerackers working on. Many times they can smell beds of Shellerackers and Bream, but can’t find any trace of them. The reason that it is because they know that I have them in,
Most people think of the "poor" fish as a moronic creature that flounders about using a rock for a brain. The fish does all right. All in all he's amazingly well equipped to take care of a fish's needs — often with a competence beyond the comprehension of man. True, on appearances he may look like nature's stepchild: He has no ears, no eyelids, no movable tongue for taste (only a fish cartilaginous and gritty projection from the floor of the mouth without muscles), and for a nose only two tiny holes in the top of his snout. He has no lungs and therefore no vocal equipment in the conventional sense, and his sense of feeling is so dull that you could possibly skin him alive without causing pain.

But by strange processes of circumvention Mother Nature has done wonders for the fish. Because the fish has no ears, it was supposed until recently that it could not hear. The hammer, anvil, and stirrup —hearing equipment of mammals—is still used by the fish to eat with. But the fish hears quite well. A catfish responds to vibrations up to 13,000 per second —about as many vibrations per second as a human (20,000). Goldfish respond to vibrations from 43 to 2,752. A minnow can distinguish half tones—which is considerably better than many people can do. Strange that fish should so long have been considered deaf. What would fish of the deep make noises for unless they were for other fish to hear? Nature's trick here has been to provide the fish with an air bladder that acts as a kind of resonance box amplifying and transmitting vibrations to the fish's inner ear. The fish's gill-fins, immovable tongue is actually quite sensitive. Fishing reports indicate that a fish has the most finicky taste known, that it can taste a bait at a distance —no chewing possible or necessary. This is probable. A catfish can taste with his tail. In fact it has taste buds all over its body and is capable of feeling and adjusting to eggs by passing its fins over them. It is thought that it "tastes" its way about in muddy water.

Don't underrate the two pin holes a fish uses for a nose. He doesn't have to use them for breathing, so he can concentrate them for use as organs of smell. Smelling is possibly the highest developed sense in a fish, as we understand senses. Fishermen

By ROSS PHARES

are learning to cater to a fish's sense of smell more and more. Certain fishermen in South Texas lure catfish with "stink bait," a concoction made of decaying fish mixed with lint. It is believed that fish such as salmon find their native river mainly by the sense of touch. Fish have been trained to come for food when water from a certain river was let in an aquarium. When water from other rivers was let in no food was given. Within a short time the fish learned to distinguish between the waters of the different rivers. The fish has no extensive network of nerve endings near the body surfaces, but by pressure it feels adequately for its needs. In fact, this sensory dullness is a blessing to the animal world. A fish can be quite discriminating in matters of color. The experienced fisherman goes to the water with a rope of various hues. No one has completely understood the temperament of fish in their seemingly fickle choice of colors. Well, possibly fish wouldn't understand us. One day a man chooses a red tie, the next, his most definitely calls for blue.

Fish are able to see some colors that human beings can't see. They can see ultra-violet, which is black to us.

A fish has no lungs, and consequently no vocal equipment in his throat. By use of muscles about the air-bladder, to change pressure mainly, fish are able to make an incredible variety of sounds. Some produce sounds with the bases of their spines which form part of their fins. Their fins are made to vibrate. During the recent war the Navy experimented with these sounds. The Navy developed a sensitive instrument for detecting noise of submarines under water. But the fish made this noise almost continuously. So much noise the instrument lied to be made useless. Hence the development of the "poor" fish's sense of sound.

Fish have been sent to school to determine their "Q." And their report cards turned out quite well for "rock brain" pupils. In the rudiments of education, such as figures and the alphabet they were far from being dunces. Fish have learned quickly the difference between an oval and a circle. The pupils were shown that their pool was not of equal depth toward a circle. They could not get it if they swam toward an oval. In like manner they learned to read alphabetical directions. The oval and certain letters became as meaningful symbol to them as the crossbones or the word "spoolied" is to human beings.

In music school the fish did surprisingly well with their notes and scales (no pun intended). Their tone distinction, on the whole, proved not as good as ours. But the memory of the fish for tunes was the joy of the professors. Though limited in repertoire, the length of time they retained good absolute memory of tone was longer than that of some virtuosos who must read their notes to perform.

You may have heard people pity the "poor" fish because it is so dim-sighted. The fish has no eyelids, and therefore it never closes its eyes. But it has been proven that the fish relaxes and rests—with its eyes wide open. Doubtless the fish has an advantage not enjoyed by people in that it does not have to pass out for extended periods to replenish its energy. Fish, it is thought, cat nap in the fashion of cats. It is sometimes said of a heavy inquirer that "he drinks like a fish." This misrepresents the fish. Drinking is the last thing a fresh water fish would do—or could do. A fish takes on body liquid by osmosis—water continually seeping in through its semi-permeable skin.

Fish are strangely equipped for emergencies and their organs of defense are peculiar. There are perch that climb trees, by gripping the bark with their fins. The lung fish can only live out of water; it, in a sense, hibernates on dry land. When drought comes, and the water habitat starts drying up, this fish burrows into the moist dirt and curls up in a cocoon of mud. As the moisture evaporates and the air dries out, the fish is alive in the hard, dry ball of mud. Here it remains in a state of nearly suspended animation until the rains come again to dissolve the clay shell and free the lung fish to replenish its energy. Fish, it is thought, has some of the mechanisms of true hibernation.

A fish never has to bother with such inconveniences as shedding or molting. The original suit of a scale fish fits it perfectly for life and never wears out. Each individual scale grows larger as the fish grows.

Age has its compensations with a fish. In the fish family, grandpa is not a shrunken up, decrepit dependent. A fish grows as long as it lives. The big fish in each species are the old fish.

From infancy to old age, fish are on intimate terms with Mother Nature. She has provided strangely but adequately for her creatures of the underwater kingdom. END.

By EDIE FINLAY

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE

The dove is a pretty little bird that weighs about five ounces and flies 20 miles an hour per ounce. Some people call it the morning dove because you see most of them in the morning when it is illegal to shoot them. However, the correct name is mourning dove because so many hunters mourn over the way they can't hit them. If you want to be really technical you can refer to them as Zenaidura macroura but it

OUTDOOR SPORTS—DOVE HUNTING

will not make them any easier to hit. Some doves migrate long distances in flocks. Some dove hunters travel long distances in station wagons. The doves make better time because they don't stop at every station. There are two schools of thought in dove hunting. Some hunters like to hide in cover so that the dove can't see them. You get more shots this way but your gun is always being pumped. Others prefer to sit on a shell box out in the field. This is more com-
They are
Willford Chioto—West Palm Beach
Johnny Ludlum—P. T. Pierce
Art Brantwood—Miami
Skip Bogert—St. Petersburg
Dave Kelly—Clearwater
Tom Jenkins—Palmdale
Steve Hudson—Ocala
Walter Krueger—Leesburg
Larry Rosenblatt—Wildwood
Our many thanks to Roy Allen and representatives who so ably assisted in our summer camp. To Mr. Jack Raymond, Mr. Warren Prince and Mr. Ross Allen: Our sincere thanks.

About charters: The charter for the Jr. Everglades Conservation Club was processed in the courts, and the Jr. Everglades Conservation Club was awarded its charter by the Court's Order on May 9, 1953, and the Jr. Everglades Conservation Club was awarded its charter on June 25, 1953.

Top ten clubs for the month of July, 1954:
Many of these clubs rated previously, have discontinued meetings during the summer months. For this reason, few of them are still active in June, with the exception of those that are best known by us. There are some interesting and attractive clubs in this list, such as the Jr. Everglades Conservation Club, which has continued to hold its meetings regularly. There are also some smaller clubs, such as the Jr. Everglades Conservation Club, which have continued to hold their meetings, and which are worthy of mention.

By CHUCK SCHILLING

The PLUG landed on the water along side the boat, with a splash. It had come down the river, and it was now at the mouth of the river. It was a small fish, but it was a healthy one. The eyes of the fisherman were fixed on it, and he was waiting for it to move. He was wearing a wading outfit, and he was ready to strike when the fish made a move. He picked up his rod, and he cast it out. The line went taut, and he knew that the fish was hooked. He started to reel in the line, and the fish pulled hard. It was a good fight, and the fisherman was determined to get it on his hook.

FISHING

By CHUCK SCHILLING

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yelled, as three tarpon suddenly showed only 60 feet beneath you. "You take them," he yelled back at me. "I can't get this thing tied on.

"No, it's your turn," I said. "Go on, get that bug out there."

He finally got the lure tied on and dropped it three feet in front of the fish, gave it a slight pop, then let it rest still on the surface. The one of the tarpon zoomed up under it but didn't take. He sank down a foot and eyed the bug a little longer, gave it another slight pop. This time the tarpon leaped out and bit it a couple of inches into the air. When it came down ormerly silver key it knocked it kicking again.

"Hey!" I shouted. "It's Sharkey the trained seal!"

"Acts like it, but he don't!" cried Ted.

But this time when the bug came down, the tarpon backed out and then charged it. Mad now, it took fast, swallowing the bug whole and then releasing it after a few seconds to throw it out through his gills.

Ted scooped the barb home and the bug was hauling out of the bright sun, showing 70 or 80 pounds of silver and power. Ted fought that fish for half an hour. When he finally brought the bug back to the rod, he yanked back with a mighty effort which should have been an inverted V. Somehow the rod held, and when the tarpon finally threw its head back and came up straight as it had ever been, a wonderful thing to see, no sets like in the days of old. This glass could take it, but we'd land any big ones that day. But we must have jumped a couple of dozen fish over 100 pounds and all of them looked 200 to me. When a tarpon big enough to take the air right in front of you—he grows! The next morning Ted showed up with a streamer he had especially prepared.

"I tied it last night," he said. "And I polished the hook till it's like a needle.

"They'll like that fly," I said, looking at the 5 inch long saddle hackle feathers.

There were three on either side of the hook, flared outwards so when you made a retrieve a tarpon would bite. He tied them together with

shocked Ted. "Pulled it right out of his mouth."

Ted knew what he meant. When a tarpon comes up, mouth wide open, and sucks a fly bellows, you hold your strike until it has started downwards or sideways, otherwise you strike and pull the fly right out of his mouth.

Ted got that fly back there before the tarpon had time to figure anything was wrong. This time he inhaled it and Ted waited until he had turned. Then he struck, and struck and struck. Out came that slender bolt of silver lightning, splitting the sky, twisting his body sideways, doing a hula with his peduncle, his great tall being the ozone. His gill rakers rattled out a rumba beat, like well worked castanets.

"TARPOM!" yelled Ted. "TARPOM!"

"Thirty-five pounds," I said. "A little one."
OWLS OF FLORIDA
(Continued from Page 19)

is barred with brown and whitish. The belly is consistently streaked with dark brown and white. The barred owl lives in woods or forests, with heavy blazes.

The great horned owl is one of our native owls that is not regarded to be particularly helpful to man. It feeds upon large prey, including bats, rodents, rabbits, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. It has a distinctive voice and is easily recognized.

It seldom if ever builds a nest of its own, and often lays in the abandoned nest of a crow, crow or rook.

Largest of Florida owls is the great horned owl. It is about two feet in length, with a wingspread close to five feet. Its hoot is said to be the deepest and most musical of any bird. It is mostly unicolor, brown, and white, and has very conspicuous ear-tufts which can turn or fold over at will.

As a matter of fact, the great horned owl is the only one of our native owls that is not specifically mentioned to be beneficial to man. It feeds upon large prey, including bats, rodents, rabbits, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. It has a distinctive voice and is easily recognized.

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Largest of Florida owls is the great horned owl. It is about two

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE

IT HELPS IF YOU'RE A LITTLE CRAZY
(Continued from Page 30)

For the information of interested anglers, a number of baitcaster devices can be greatly im-
proved by putting a ten cent whiting in the bottom of the end of the air discharge tube. This addition will make the end of the emanat-
ing stream of large bubbles into many small ones and will distribute them throughout the baitcaster box. While at Lake Tarpon, I talked with a fisherman who had placed a small, live frog as bait. He had a novel method of fastening them to the hook. He first riveted to the body a small but strongly con-
structed small rubber bands, snap-

tightly fitting a cavity or hole. From a bridge near Marco Island, just off of the Tamiami Trail, an in-
viting snook fishermen put a light-
ning flashlight in a clear plastic bag; twisted the top and tied it in a knot, and lowered it into the water. The large glass jar containing water and swimming minnows. He then screwed-

ed on the jar's top to a watertight seal and suspended the improvised underwater observation tower from a length of stout cord. For the next two hours he enjoyed good fishing, catching a number of large snook alongside the underwater attraction! During the winter season, the Florida Keys are open to tuna and sailfish, which are still "on the boil." During the winter season, the Florida Keys are open to tuna and sailfish, which are still "on the boil." During the winter season, the Florida Keys are open to tuna and sailfish, which are still "on the boil." During the winter season, the Florida Keys are open to tuna and sailfish, which are still "on the boil.

Hunting Rules

(Continued from Page 13)

Check the Stations: Hunters must check in and out of the hunting

camp each day through Jackson Guard Station, Niceville, Fla.

SPECIAL ARCHERY HUNT RULES

A. Guns, pistols, other firearms, will not be permitted on the hunt.

B. Only a bow of at least 40 lbs. draw shall be used. Arrows may be of any material, but must have an unperforated broadhead, of not less than 1/2 inch in diameter.

C. No person shall have with him in any vehicle a bow which is in the unstrung condition, nor shall he use or shoot a bow from any automobile, or other vehicle, moving or station-

ary.

D. Game showing evidence of having been shot with a firearm, will not be considered as a legal kill.

E. Legal game can be transported only during the special archery sea-

son and shall be in a killed condition immediately following.

F. No person shall have in his possession or under his control any
type of poisoned arrow or any arrow poisoned with poison.

G. No dogs allowed on the hunt during the special archery sea-

son.

H. Any rule or regulation that governs the operation of hunts on the Florida Keys, is applicable to the special archery hunt.

I. No person shall participate in any special archery hunt.

J. No dogs allowed on the hunt area during the special archery sea-

son.
BANDSHELL PROGRAM

The Halifax Hunting and Fishing Club recently entertained approximately 1,200 tourists and residents at Daytona Beach's famous Bands- shell on the beach. The Daytona Beach Board of Trade had an archery exhibition showing many phases of hunting and target shooting.

Dr. R. R. Wilber, President of the Florida Wildlife Federation gave an address on Conservation as it affects Florida tourists. Appropriate wildlife movies rounded out the program. This is an annual affair and has been staged for many years by the local Club.

STATE PARK VACATIONS

Picnicking time is here again and we get that urge to put on our lawn chair and head for Nature's Tonic in the wide open places.

So need to get "recreation-famished" within easy driving distance of a Florida State Park. Your food and beverages, if you keep your picnic feast piping hot or icy cold, your ventilated boxes are just the thing for sandwiches, fruits, pickles, olives, canned meats. There are outdoor fireplaces at the State Parks where you can cook up a batch of bacon, hamburgers, coffee, or what have you.

A listing of Florida's State Parks, showing facilities and accommodations in each, will be sent free on request by the Information Section, Florida State Park Service, Center Building, Tallahassee, Florida. Florida's State Parks belong to you. You have facilities for large or small picnicking parties. Enjoy them.

EVEGLADES FROM THE AIR

Members of the Florida Wildlife Federation, personnel of the Game Commission, and news photographers, recently went on a flight over the Everglades to get a look at the controversial 48-mile-bend region, an area reputed to be one of the last remaining hunting grounds in south Florida.

Through the cooperation of the Dade County Conservation Council and the courtesy of Eastern Air Lines, many persons who attended the Game Commission meeting in Miami saw the Everglades from the air. Also on the flight were parts of the new impoundment area and 100-mile dike on the southern edge of the 800,000 acre Flood Control District, now under the jurisdiction of the Game and Fish Water Fish Commission.

CONTROVERSIAL FISHING WATERS

From the air, these waters were seen to be close to one of the last remaining hunting grounds along the streams. From the air, these waters were seen to be close to one of the last remaining hunting grounds along the streams.

Two proposals were discussed. One involving the possible purchase of land in the bend region and the other involving a limited deer hunting permit.

The ruling stated that not only sportsmen boat through out waters and fish, but that he might waste, tie up his boat for the necessary purposes usually associated with such trips and otherwise use the stream bed, bars, and clearly recognizable areas over which the stream normally flows, subject to the usual respect for landowner rights against damages.

(Might this not apply to the upper St. Johns River?)

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P. O. Box 854, Ormond Beach

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Treasurer

Fred W. Gill, Zephyrhills

Don Southwell, Ormond Beach

The Florida Wildlife Federation recently revisited the Everglades from the air. This flight photo made possible through the cooperation of the Dade County Conservation Council and the courtesy of Eastern Air Lines.

THE S. J. Halifax Huntin~ Fishing Club recently entertained approximately 2,500 tourists and residents at Daytona Beach's famous Bands- shell on the beach. The Daytona Beach Board of Trade had an archery exhibition showing many phases of hunting and target shooting.

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FLORIDA SPORTSMAN GUIDE

The Florida Sportman Guide is a new section devoted to hunting and fishing camps, boat and tackle dealers and especially those
sportsmen in Florida. Considerable space will be available to such establishments at a special "Guide" advertising rate.

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S
FISHING CITATION

YOU HAVE TO BE SMARTER THAN THE FISH

(Continued from Page 2)

are bedding in deep water and the wind is blowing the scent to you.
The water is so deep that the smell is diffused by the time it reaches the
surface and it is quite a distance

from the bed. Another factor is that probably the fish aren’t feeding at the
time that you find the bed. If this is the case try along around sun
down, and you will usually find them in a feeding mood. Bream are
finicky about what they like to eat. One day they might be feeding
on earth worms, and you can

catch your limit in short order. The next day you don’t have any luck,
still you know the fish are there.

If this happens to you, experiment with varied different types of bait
as such as: Bonnet Worms that are found on the stalks of the Bonnets,
or take a fine mesh dip net and

catch some fresh water shrimp off the shallow grass beds. Lately there
have been several Cricket farms estab-

lished in Florida, and the use of Cricket

for bass has become very popular.
Bream are partial to Cricket, and sometimes Shellracker

will hit them with gusto. If you

find Shellracker, look for floating

concentrations of snail shells; if
the water is calm sometimes you

can hear them crunching the shells when they are feeding. Sniff

fishing

is very productive in fishing for

both Shellracker, and Bream.

All you need is hunger sense and a good

sense of smell. Travel along slowly

close to the grass or in the bountes.

Soon you will detect a fishy odor. Figure out which direction it is

coming from and start to fish up

wind, moving along slowly. Past

soon you should run into a Bream can be caught almost all year round, but after the Summer fishing

during period they are scattered.

A good fly fisherman with small

flies or pan fish flies can usually
catch a good mess of fish by working along the grass shores.

After the weather gets colder and the water cools off in the middle of

Dec. perch start to make their appearance.

The early fish are readily caught by trolling in the water set from the grass—using a small plug or spoon. Later they

are similar to Bream, and can be

found in much the same manner by sniff fishing.

Their chief bait is minnows, but

some can be caught by using

a small streamer-spinner combination and working the edge of the weed with a fly rod.

In trying to be smarter than the fish use a trial and error method.
You might think that it is a waste of time, but once the proportion
and style of casting fish are found the situation usually remains the

same for some time.

Travel along slowly, watch the fish, and

as you do start to get a Bream, you

probably have another good fish also in the same area. You have to be smarter than the fish, too.

LEGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be alive at time of taking, filleted, spinning, or bait-casting tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The fish must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

Application for a Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation must be made within 10 days of the date fish was caught. Application must be made on the prescribed form as shown on this page. Requests for reprinted forms should be addressed to: Florida Wildlife, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.

Citation, showing recorded data of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

The receipt of any and all photographs pertaining to the registered catch, including the applicant and the fish, will be appreciated by the editor for use in Florida Wildlife Magazine.
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