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FEBRUARY 1963
V. 16 No. 9
ALSO CALLED SPIKETAIL AND DIP-TAIL DIVER
DARK STRIPE ACROSS WHITE CHEEKS
BLACKISH-BROWN BODY WHITISH BREAST
BLACK AND RUSTY Patches ON WING

FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

RUDDY DUCK

A SMALL, STUBBY DIVING DUCK THE SIZE OF A TEAL • INHABITS LAKES, PONDS AND BAYES OF NORTH FLORIDA SOUTH TO LAKE OKEECHOBEE FROM NOVEMBER TO MARCH • WEIGHT 1.4 TO 1.75 LB • LENGTH 14 TO 17 INCHES • NOT A GOOD TABLE BIRD

FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

WALLACE HUGHES, Art Director

In This Issue

Sound Conservation Philosophy
Dabbling Ducks
Wallace Hughes
Spotlight On Stripers
Art Hutt
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Published monthly by the
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
Tallahassee, Florida

Dedicated to the
Conservation, Restoration, and Protection of our Game and Fish

BILL HANSEN, Editor

WALLACE HUGHES, Art Director

C. L. SATTERFIELD, Circulation

Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission
Tallahassee, Florida

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ROSE TALLAHASSEE

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Conservation Scene

Outdoor Recreation Heads

Wildlife Federation Meeting.

V.C. released 88,000 largemouth bass fingerlings in the river in mid-June when the Florida State Board of Health declared the river to be free of harmful discharge from V.C.'s extensive plant operations, and dismission a suit filed in August, 1961, in which the firm was charged with pollution of the river.

Another 412,000 bass fingerlings and 250,000 additional shad and shellerscracker will be released in the stream in March-April-May this year, Curtis A. Cox, vice-president in charge of V.C.'s Florida operations, has revealed.

A water neutralization plant, completed in February last year, now handles all liquid effluent discharged by V.C.'s plant on Guy Branch Creek near Nichols.

The suit against the firm was dismissed after the Board of Health declared that V.C. is now effectively controlling all stream pollution to the satisfaction of our engineers.

C. V. O. Hughes, manager of Virginia-Carolina Chemical Corporation's Nichols Plant, near Mulberry, donated Santa's River above Riverview Lithia, Florida, which is the winding Alafia.

Sanford's chief, diving ducks third, and mergansers fourth. Among artists. Geese were second species for this year's contest.

According to Clayton L. Phillip,

V.C.'s fish biologist of the Fish and Wildlife Service, has revealed.

Fish and Wildlife Service

New emblem adopted by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, loss of 10 per cent of smaller fingerlings used in most restocking programs.

New Federal Emblem

A new eye-catching emblem has been adopted by the Government agency responsible for Federal conservation of aquatic and fisheries activities, the Department of the Interior announced today. In the near future, motor vehicles, boats, fish hatcheries, wildlife refuges, and other equipment and installations of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in the Department's Fish and Wildlife Service will be identified by the new emblem.

The emblem is in the form of a shield. Printed across the top are the words "U.S. Department of the Interior" while "Fish and Wildlife Service" appears across the bottom.

Phillip said that the bluegill and shellerscracker released weighed five pounds per thousand, as compared with one-pound-per-thousand generally used in restocking programs. He predicted that all of the fish will survive, in contrast to an average loss of 10 per cent of smaller fingerlings used in most restocking programs.

By the late Ding Darling: "Any attempt to restrict or limit obvious abuse is about as easy as trying to take a jar of honey from a grizzly bear."

By Sam Ordway: We are famishing to consume the natural environment, not asserting the individual prerogatives to work with nature as they wish.

By Will Durant: "... a nation is born stic and dies epicurean."

By Rachel Carson: "It is ironic to think that man may determine his own future by something so seemingly trivial as the choice of his insect spray."

By General Omar Bradley: "If we are not careful we shall leave our children a legacy of billion dollar roads leading nowhere except to other congested places like those left behind. We are building our roads on asphalt tarmacadam and allowing the green areas of our nation to disappear."

By Aldo Leopold: "Now we face the question, whether a still 'higher standard' of living is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free. For us of the twentieth century, it is a demand that we see green is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasqueflower is a right as inalienable as free speech."

By Benjamin Franklin: "... of oft-repeated platitudes and dogmas. There is a great deal of wisdom, and even more so, a great deal of work ahead of us."

By George Washington: "... to the advancement of civilization, and science and humanity, and making to his or her understanding and an attitude of the devil take it."

By Sound Philosophies, believes in the advancement of civilization and sound resource management, has ethics as a basic ingredient.

By Albert Schweitzer: "Man can hardly recognize the devils of his own creation."

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A bit of oft-repeated philosophy
FISHING

It takes considerable skill, and fish know-how, to make a good trophy mounting.

Visiting the taxidermy shop of Jimmy Houssner at DeLand the other day I was reminded of the vague ideas of taxidermy held by most sportmen. The double quest of the taxidermist—that of making a trophy look like a fish and that of making a trophy look like what a customer thinks it should look like—is enough to give a "fish-stuffer," before his time.

As I said once before in these pages, pleasing everyone with taxidermy is completely impossible but the critics might be less valuable if they knew just what is involved in "stuffing" a fish.

To begin with, the fish is skinned and a 10-pound black bass in no way resembles the process of yanking the hide off a broiler-bound grey squirrel.

Then, the skin is placed over a body form which has the general shape of the original fish and, of course, must have the same size. The process of peeling and painting an artificial body, which is a little like a loaf of bread, would in endeavoring to mount a fish would be completely abandoned when you examine one of the tailored forms which is a little like a fish-shaped dressmaker's dummy. The head must be given special treatment, of course, appropriate eyes provided and artificial gills installed.

The fins are "carded" so that of them looked beautiful. When I came up with a slab pose the poor guy just couldn't cut 'er and, frankly, didn't believe a tarpon ever took that position anyway.

The resulting mount resembled a malnourished catfish and probably scared every cat on the city dump. I learned my lesson. Let him practice his specialty without too much coaching.

One northern sporting goods dealer, Dan Bailey of Montana, has established a "wall of fame" on which are hung outlines of large fly-caught trout. The outlines are simply painted on plaques—an inexpensive way of recording the size and shape of a prize. Such outlines are interesting as mementos but don't fit in a living room although they make a showplace out of Bailey's store. Taxidermy is better in the home.

Yet another fish stunt is the mounting of a carefully painted "side" of the fish's skin on a panel. It doesn't have the depth of a mounted fish but if an inexperienced individual wanted to try it, he'd probably do better than he would in endeavoring to mount a fish himself.

For example, a central Florida taxidermist who has done a lot of that particular kind of work. For example, a central Florida taxidermist like Houssner should be a specialist at bass. Perhaps a Newfoundland taxidermist might be better on tuna.

Field Vehicles

Four-wheel-drive vehicles have become remarkably efficient rough-terrain hunting and fishing. For about a year I have been using an International Scout for hunting and fishing and have carried both aluminum and rubber boats on it.

The little 4-cylinder motor (just one bank of cylinders from a big, V8 International truck engine) has given me pretty good highway economy and it cruises along very nicely at 55. I have crossed the continent with it twice and have steered it over a lot of mountains and through quite a few swamps with great satisfaction. The riding qualities aren't bad at all and cause no discomfort in day-long travel.

Before that, I had a big GMC 4-wheel-drive carryall that was good for sleeping aboard and had power to burn in its 4-speed transmission. After crossing the U.S. five times in it and using it on all sorts of hunting and fishing trips, I traded it off in search of something a bit lighter to move in case I DID get stuck far from the highways. Before the GMC, I had a little Universal Jeep, still a tough one although a bit short-coupled for cross-country highway travel. The Jeep station wagons are better, of course, if you want to do a lot of highway going.

Four-wheel drives are now available on Ford, Chevrolet and Dodge vehicles and there are a number of imports, some of which are very appealing indeed. South Florida sees a lot of the British Land Rover, which comes in two sizes and is the long-favor.
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Then, the skin is placed over a body form which has the general shape of the original fish and, of course, must have the same size. Any ideas that sawdust or rags are "stuffed" into the empty skin will be abandoned when you examine one of the tailored forms which is a little like a fish-shaped dressmaker's dummy. The head must be given special treatment, of course, appropriate eyes provided and artificial gills installed. The fins are "carded" so that they will assume natural positions and the fish then goes through a series of painting and preserving processes.

I'm not trying to tell you how to mount a fish. I'm simply explaining why you don't get one-day service and why experience with stuffing stuffed will not qualify you as a taxidermist.

All of this is culminated by the choice of colors for the finished product and it is here that the customer shrieks his loudest, apparently unaware that black bass come in more tones than the 1963 Plymouths.

For example, I've caught Lake George bass that were perfectly healthy and full of spirit and the color of Lake George mud. Even the most conscientious taxidermist would be tempted to add a little more color and most fishermen would welcome it.

I've caught bass from a South Florida creek that were a beautiful iridescent shade of green. Duplicating that would be well-nigh impossible as it disappears when the fish dries off and is so delicate it would be completely lost under room lighting. The bellies of bass vary from muddy yellow to gleaming white and the characteristic mottled side stripe of the largemouth is largely obscured by the dark hues of Florida swamp bass.

Without a carefully-made color photograph to go by, no taxidermist knows what your fish actually looked like unless he's familiar with the waters from which it came.

Will the size be true?

Well, not necessarily. A little stretching of fish is possible and a bit of size-reduction could be practiced.

Head-size will be pretty exact.

It is true that in some mass-production taxidermy studios the fish you get might not even be the one you caught. That, however, is seldom true so don't get all your suspensions up.

In some cases, fins of certain exotic species of fish, such as sailfish, might be artificial when they come from the shop. The chances are the artificial will look a lot more real than the preserved original.

I have found to my sorrow that you can be too demanding in instructions to a taxidermist. I once viewed with horror a small tarpon that a taxidermist had sadly formed to my specifications.

He had certain stock poses in which he mounted tarpon and all the specimens looked beautiful. When I came up with a new pose the poor guy just couldn't cut 'er and, frankly, didn't believe a tarpon ever took that position anyway. The resulting mount resembled a malnourished catfish and probably scared every cat on the city dump. I learned my lesson.

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If you have any trophy you want mounted, be careful to take it to a taxidermist who has done a lot of that particular kind of work. For example, a central Florida taxidermist like Housend should be a specialist at bass.

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The Jeep station wagons are better, of course, if you want to do a lot of highway going.

Four-wheel drives are now available on Ford, Chevrolet and Dodge vehicles and there are a number of imports, some of which are very appealing indeed. South Florida sees a lot of the British Land Rover, which comes in two sizes and is the long-favored Carib craft.
As the care and training of hunting dogs is an important and year-round task

By JIM FLOYD

It is not sound thinking to allow a dog which has served his owner faithfully during the hunting season to roam the streets during the closed season. I visited my son's school one day and noted a total of two labradors, two pointers, one setter, a beagle and a mixture of other dogs and pets on the school grounds. My first impression was one of alarm at seeing these days gathered at a school where even the best trained dog might become unpredictable under certain circumstances. My second thought, of what are these hunting dogs doing in this pack, led me to believe that either they were not really good hunting dogs or if they were they happened to be owned by individuals who were completely absent of the duty and responsibility of owning a good dog.

I do not hold with the theory that a good hunting dog should not also be a pet, but on the other hand this is no excuse to allow a good dog to roam the streets. The dangers of the dog becoming a nuisance by fighting other dogs, raiding garbage cans, or possibly biting someone, is great and could place the owner in an embarrassing situation. The possibility of the dog being killed or crippled by some automobile would certainly deprive the owner of a good hunting dog.

Of course, it might well be that these dogs I noted on this single occasion were not classified as good hunting dogs. It might be that the dogs were pets and not hunters. However, even a pet should not be allowed to follow the children to school or to roam the streets. It all boils down to the old philosophy "if a dog is worth owning, it is worth taking care of."

I know of one group of deer hunters that visit every dog owned in the surrounding country just prior to deer season and securely every conceivable means they can lay their hands on. This group operates on the theory that out of fifty dogs there will be at least ten that will chase a deer or a hog or whatever they may be hunting. The remaining dogs are left in the woods to provide for themselves. This, of course, is a task that requires individuals who are able to recognize the different uses for which hunting dogs are trained.
The "Dabbling Ducks" are usually found in fresh water habitats of Florida, such as lakes, ponds, roadside ditches, marshes and streams, from late September to mid-June. The word "dabbling" refers to their habit of dipping or splashing the water with their bills while feeding. "Baldpate" and "Godwell" are appropriate names shown in typical dabbling posture. Another characteristic of these species feeding ducks is to tip over, tail up and heads under water, when searching for food. Mostly vegetable diet usually renders their flesh highly palatable. When alarmed, dabbling ducks fly vertically into the air from the water. The Mallard (left) is perhaps the best known of all ducks. Green head, white neck ring and redly breast identify the drake. Only the mottled brown, orange-billed hen "quacks." The reedy-voiced male says "yee-yeeh."

The small-sized Blue-winged Teal (left, male) drake seems to like sunny Florida, arriving from the north in August and staying until mid-November. Both sexes have blue wing patches. White crescent-shaped face marks identify the drake.

No other duck has a bill like the Shovel-ler. Both the drake (left) and the mottled brown hen (right) have over-size spoon-shaped bills. The huge bill fitted with comb-like lamellae or "teeth" is ideally made for sifting food from mud and water. The colorful drake has a green head, white breast and reddish sides and belly.

White feathers of the lorehead and crown of the drake Baldpate bright give this duck its name. The goose-like Fulvous tree duck below is rare in Florida. Its normal range being Texas, Mexico and California. These birds were photographed at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge in northwest Florida during the fall of 1962.

The best identification mark of the gray-brown Gadwall (shown, hen left and drake right), is a square white patch on the hind edge of each wing, which shows only when in flight. The drake Pintail (far left, though not brightly colored, is just an elegant and handsome as any of our ducks. With brown head and long white neck and breast, he looks as if he would be at home at a formal-dress party. Long, sharp-pointed tail feathers give the Pintail its name.
Spaw

ID

Fresh

Water

Pat

Florida. Striped Bass prefer fresh water, or the brackish water around the mouths of rivers and creeks. They have never been found in pure salt water in this state.

SPOTLIGHT ON STRIPPERS

By ART HUTT

He's unpredictable, temperamental, and can make you out a liar right quick," says Jimmy Barkuloo, speaking out on his favorite subject, the striped bass, and the prospects of hooking into one.

And Barkuloo should know. For he's been nurseraising, investigating, and promoting Florida's mostly-natural striped bass population for the past five years in an effort to increase their range and numbers in our state to a point where they can become established as a leading game fish.

A Federal Aid project sponsored by Dugell-Jolston money, Barkuloo's work centers on the fish in Florida which are anadromous. These are the fish which normally spend their life in salt water but which come into freshwater streams and rivers to spawn. Like the sturgeon, or the American or Alabama shad. Or the striped bass.

Currently the emphasis is on the striped bass, for it is a fish worth patronizing. It grows big, is tough and as hard-hitting as a pro football lineman. It has the speed, dash, and stamina of a college miler, plus the maneuverability of a varsity basketball forward.

For table use, it's highly prized, especially those fish under five or six pounds. Over that, with dark side vein removed, and baked, or steaked and fried, the table isn't a fish to ignore either.

Before we focus down on Florida and the striped's prospects here, let's take a broader view of the fish and his occurrence and habits in the other areas of the USA.

Taxonomically, the striped bass fits into the family called Serranidae, the group to which most sea basses belong. Roccus saxatilis, as the fellows with the microscopes know him, is found from the Gulf of St. Lawrence down the east coast but diminishes in Florida. They reappear in West Florida and extend over into Mobile Bay, Alabama.

That they were once extremely abundant along the east coast is a matter of record. Back in the 1890's, Captain John Smith saw "such multitudes pass out of the Florida Sound, Massachusetts, back in 1913.

In Florida, it is doubtful if we will ever see them as thick as Captain Smith's "drishod" report, or as big as Church's catch. Investigators, like Barkuloo and others, realize our state is at the extreme end of this fish's range, yet they're hopeful that the versatility displayed will help offset the temperature.

Working in their favor is the fact that there are two established varieties of stripers in Florida. Neither have ever been found in pure salt water as preferred by their northern cousins. Instead, the southern fish, when they are not in fresh water, hang around the mouths of the creeks and rivers in brackish water. So far, none have been taken in pure salt.

The Florida striped reaches its greatest abundance in the Apalachicola River Drainage. Its southernmost range on that side of the state seems to be the mouth of the Suwannee River.

The east coast striped works down the St. Johns, sometimes as far as Sanford, but the most famous fishing area for them is the Croaker Hole just south of We- laka. Silver Run, formed by the famous springs, has a fairly substantial population of them, too.

Of our two stripers, you'd assume that the St. Johns' stripers would be similar to the northern fish, but it isn't so. Our Apalachicola stripers more closely resemble their northern cousins. Why? Barkuloo subscribes to the unique distribution by the "stream capture" theory in which the fish worked westward across southern Georgia and northern Florida through drainage systems, these drainage systems being disrupted through upheavals of one sort or another which forced the water to flow into the next drainage system. As stripers were blocked from returning to the sea, they worked themselves over into the new drainage system. It took millions of years, but it is supporting evidence of why these groups are similar.

See FLORIDA'S STRIPED BASS. May 1960 FLORIDA WILDLIFE

It takes a trained eye like Barkuloo's to distinguish one from the other in the Apalachi cola and St. Johns varieties. Actually, the stripes along this fish's sides are sometimes give-away.
female lays close to the surface, engaged in what the natives call a "rock fight." When a suitable area is found, the fish head up into the current, but heavy enough to settle in still water. Once settled, they become covered with silt and don't develop. Egg-laden females have been taken. No young were observed. But since 1959, the area has played host to sturdy, healthy specimens—with both young and adults being taken in number. Researchers are scratching their heads, but happily, over the turn-a-boat. Barkuloo suggests that the low water level at that time may have created the lean years and sickly fish.

Research has shown that our stripers have good years and bad years regarding their spawning efforts. In a given year, the hatch may be extremely successful. The result is a lot of fish in that age class in the following years. Conversely, if the hatch is poor, as it frequently is, there will be blanks or skips in the ages and sizes of fish caught later.

Other factors which have not yet been isolated enter into the complexity also. In 1954, a previous researcher, Dr. William McLane, concentrated on the Black Creek area of the St. Johns and netted some of the saddest specimens—with both young and adults being taken in number. Researchers are scratching their heads, but happily, over the turn-a-boat. Barkuloo suggests that the low water level at that time may have created the lean years and sickly fish.

Young stripers, in general, eat micro-organisms and shad-fry, then graduate to such delicacies as shad, the river redhorse, mullet, spotted sucker, croakers, and eels. They'll eat a shiner or two, also. Their growth rate is fairly rapid in Florida—up to 8" in one year; up to 14" the second; and even faster when older. According to Barkuloo, a three-year-old could weigh about five pounds.

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Best bait here is a threadfin shad or a head-hooked, live redfish close to the bottom. Standard catwalk tackle is a salt-water spinning reel with 20- or 30-pound-test line or a service reel loaded with 50-pound-test line. Boat fishermen get away with slightly lighter stuff. Stripers here will run up to 40 pounds with the biggest to date a 52-pounder caught back in 1957. At the dam, there are two seasonal runs; the spawning run in the spring; and a fall feeding run. Pin-pointing times, May and October are usually the best months.

The biggest stripers are usually caught in the Intracoastal Waterway near White City during the spawning run. But since 1959, the area has played host to sturdy, healthy specimens—with both young and adults being taken in number. Researchers are scratching their heads, but happily, over the turn-a-boat. Barkuloo suggests that the low water level at that time may have created the lean years and sickly fish.

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(continued from preceding page) winter months or at the mouths of creeks in brackish water. In general, Apalachicola stripers head downstream towards salt water in cold weather and head back upstream again in the spring to spend the summer in fresh water. They are partial to swift currents and deep holes.

Mouth-of-the-creek fishing can be sporting. With regular bass tackle, stripers can be enticed into hitting artificial, such as plastic eels, jigs and some of the "old standard" wobbling plugs in red-and-white. When stripers are in a shad-chasing mood, they'll sometimes slam into a surface lure.

There's no set retrieve that always works on stripers. They're inconsistent, sometimes high-tailing it after a rapidly moving lure, then again, pussy-footing after a slow mover. And, unfortunately, there are times when they'll ignore every lure and every type retrieve.

Some anglers outsmart stripers by trolling; they've worked out a slow-trolling system using an underwater lure with a jig trailing behind. The double outfit attracts; usually the jig connects.

While I doubt if it could be called a "hotspot," Barkuloo has found a good supply of stripers in North Central Florida in addition to the Croomer Hole population. Taking a census this past summer in Silver Run, tributary of the Oklawaha, Barkuloo and crew counted 400 stripers from the springs to a point 4 1/2 miles below the springs. Most of the fish were in the 1 1/2- to 3-pound bracket, but others ranged up to 30 pounds.

Fishing is prohibited in the run itself but the area below the bridge on Rt. 40 down to its junction with the Oklawaha could be a choice summertime spot. Where the spring water joins the main river would be one of the better places to give them a try.

Even more recently, another sizeable population of stripers has been discovered near Green Cove Springs. These are big ones—up to 30 and 40 pounds—and well worth getting acquainted with.

In addition to adding to the sportfishing, stripers could serve a valuable function in keeping rough fish, such as the gizzard shad and threadfin shads, in check. In impoundments where stripers have taken hold, they have heavily reduced the shad population.

Fish, as are shad, so it is doubtful if the stripers would ever harm the population of desirable fish. These stripers, by the way, are not expected to spawn as the lakes lack the current and type bottom needed for a successful hatch. Rather, the stripers will be utilized on a put-and-take basis.

Much of Barkuloo's effort is involved with catching stripers to tag them and to record other data such as length and weight. The tagged fish, caught again at a later date, supply valuable information regarding growth rate and migration activities.

The research team employ various methods to catch stripers—including SCUBA gear. At Silver Run, for example, they worked at night, herding stripers into a gill net placed across a small spring-fed tributary which flowed into the run. Using powerful lights and their underwater gear, they'd herd two or three stripers at a time into the net, then would pass the trapped fish up to another helper in a boat who quickly tagged, weighed, measured, and released the fish on the other side of the net—all in a matter of seconds.

Except in situations as above, Barkuloo has just about discarded the use of gill nets, for, unless instantly removed, a striker injures and wears itself out trying to get untangled. Barkuloo has switched to a haul seine for all sizes of stripers, although frequently they can easily collect smaller ones by hook and line methods. For bigger stripers they've tried to buy an underwater gun that shoots tranquilizers, but so far have not been able to get the equipment released to them.

Collecting is not without its hazards. The power the striker has in its body was demonstrated in an incident at Selman's Ditch, a small tributary of the Apalachicola River about 20 miles south of the Jim Woodruff Dam when a worker, a non-swimmer, was holding a net in which an aggravated 45-pound striker was contained. Wanting out, the striker lunged against the mesh and yanked the worker into the deep water. Fortunately help was nearby, otherwise it could have ended in tragedy.

Private organizations have an interest in stripers, too. This past September, the Izak Walton League of Stuart financed a project in which Barkuloo brought a load of stripers from Chesapeake Bay down to the St. Lucie River (not without its problems—the first load died en route) where they freed them north of Stuart. The project is being watched with interest and with hope that the majority of the stripers will survive and become established. If they get off a successful spawn once in ten years, the project will be labeled a success.

Meanwhile, the fish are protected by special legislation in Martin and St. Lucie counties for at least four years. This fish is definitely worth promoting, and, thanks to your tackle and license purchases which help supply the Federal money for the research, it looks as though striper fishing in Florida will be an ever-increasing reality.

Barkuloo releases a tagged Striped Bass. When caught at a later date it will supply such information as migration activities, and rate of growth.

The numbered disc-shaped tags are fastened at the base of the soft dorsal fin. Recovery of bands indicates success or failure of stocking programs.
SOME FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE-

MULTIPLE-USE PROGRAM

ON THE CITRUS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

BY J. E. MOORE
Chief, Information - Education
Florida Wildlife Service

From a hunter's viewpoint, a stand of scrub oak timber is a fine habitat for wildlife.

From a forester's viewpoint, a stand of scrub oak timber is as economically worthless as last week's newspaper.

Plenty of sound arguments can be found for both sides. Hunters contend that wildlife need food and shelter; mast-bearing oaks are a favorite source of food for game, and as such justify their existence. Foresters agree with this, but point out that the owner has a right to expect some financial return for his investment in land; worthless trees should be cleared out so that merchantable trees can be planted to provide a good wildlife habitat.

Can these divergent interests be resolved to the satisfaction of both hunter and forester? Testing ground for this issue, which has become a hot contro-

versy, is the Citrus Wildlife Management Area, a 41,090 acre segment of the 114,000 acre Withlacoochee State Forest, between Brooksville and Inverness.

The Citrus Wildlife Management Area is the home of one of the largest deer herds in Florida. Probably every deer hunter in Florida has heard of the deer hunts held there during the past five years; and few wildlife management areas have been the subject of so much controversy.

"A lot of the controversy is clearly a lack of understanding and lack of information as to why this clearing is being done," said R. A. Bonninghausen, Chief of Forest Management for the Florida Forest Service. "Actually, this clearing of scrub oak land is part of a carefully controlled study, under the direction of the Forest Service, the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, and the University of Florida. If sportsmen understand the background, and the history of this project, then we feel that the reason for controversy will be eliminated."

The Citrus Wildlife Management Area has been open for hunting for only five years. Prior to that it was part of an old federal land-use project, acquired by the Resettlement Administration during Franklin D. Roosevelt's first term as president in the early 1930's. When acquired, much of the land had been severely logged and burned repeatedly by uncontrolled wildfires. Originally, the intent of the Resettlement Administration was to bring the land back into productivity and to provide full use of it for public benefit. In 1939, the Resettlement Administration was virtually abandoned and the citrus industry in the area was closed. McKethan Lake, Silver Lake, and the Withlacoochee River could be developed into excellent recreation areas. In addition, the entire forest was located in central Florida, near enough to the concentration of population in the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area to attract thousands of visitors. Clearly, it would be an excellent acquisition for the benefit of all Floridians.

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The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission was interested in acquiring the land—but had no way of paying the $6,063,328 which represented 79% of the assessed value. The Florida Forest Service was also interested in the tract, and felt sure that with good forest management, the price could be paid from the sale of forest products over the 15-year period allowed by the U.S. Forest Service. Final agreement was reached and the FFS purchased the land in 1939.

The Florida Forest Service was faced immediately with two monumental tasks, building up the (continued on next page)
The purchase price is only part of the cost," Bonninghausen said. "In addition to this, 15% of the gross receipts from the forest have to be paid to the counties in which it is located, in lieu of taxes, and interest on the principal will amount to over a million dollars, even though the property was acquired at a very favorable rate of interest. The hard, cold fact is that income must average almost $3 per acre per year to pay these debts, and this does not include the cost of maintaining roads, protecting the forest from wildfire, maintenance of recreational facilities, and overall forest management expenses."

In September of 1959, a five year study was started to learn the effect on white-tailed deer of pine site preparation in the deep sands of central Florida. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, the School of Forestry of the University of Florida, and the Forest Service agreed to cooperate in the study, to be made on the Citrus Wildlife Management Area. Three objectives were outlined: 1) To study the effect on deer of varying degrees of site preparation for pine plantations; 2) To investigate those factors responsible for any observed fluctuations in deer populations; and 3) To devise some means of preparing sites for pine plantations that would have a minimum detrimental effect on existing deer populations.

When completed, four plots, each covering one square mile (640 acres) will be given different treatments. One plot will be completely cleared; 25% of the second plot will be left untouched; on the third 50% will be left in its natural state; and on the fourth plot no clearing will be done, to serve as a "control" plot. The clearing will be done with a double-tandem chopper pulled by a heavy tractor, followed by planting of pine seedlings. Three series of these four plots will be located throughout the Citrus area to test the findings. A total of 7,880 acres will be involved in the experiment.

Game biologists will study the effect of these various treatments on the deer population by making track counts, browse studies, and periodic inspection of pine plantations and other vegetation.

"This is where the controversy reached the boiling point," Bonninghausen said. "When a hunter sees a square mile completely cleared and planted in seedlings, he understandably gets the impression that the entire area is being ruined for hunting. But the fact is that the cleared area represents only 10 per cent—some 4,000 acres—of the entire Citrus Wildlife Management Area."

Final results of this study will not be known for some time, but some encouraging observations have already been made. In a recent newspaper interview, Dr. S. L. Beckwith, University of Florida wildlife specialist directing the research said, "Our tentative results show the clearing has increased some forms of wildlife and has not caused a decrease in the deer population."

Beckwith said one benefit the clearing will have is providing the "edge effect" desired by many game animals. "Animals are able to stay near the border of several vegetation types to find their needs, he said.

The need for additional income from the forest, while at the same time preserving the deer population, makes the need for answers from the study will have been realized. One study can produce guidelines as to how much scrub oak must be left to maintain a deer herd, then there is no doubt that the recommendations will be followed in many parts of Florida.

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**THE UNDESIRABLES**

They are ugly to the eye—true rough fish ruffians—and scorned by most Florida anglers.

If there hadn’t been a couple of unsophisticated wildlife officers on the bank when we launched our boats, I’d have felt guilty all evening. Nocturnal operations with a headlight and gig are often viewed with suspicion but this time it was all right. It was just the Sportsman’s Club of West Volusia County staging a gar sticking with the blessings of law and order.

By good dark the boats had dispersed and there were headlights moving furtively all over the lake. It looked like professional Everglades frog hunting without the airboat noise.

For the most part it was two men to a skill—one to row and one taking a heroic pose in the bow with the gig.

Fearing I might end up either in the lake or the gar tub if I tried gigging, I ran the boat with Buddy Nordmann up forward giving me a blow-by-blow of what went on. Jack Gowdy was running Wimpy Stearns’ boat for him 50 yards away.

Finally, Buddy announced he had a contact and we approached the foot-long garlet with all the stealth that can be mustered by two men with big feet and an aluminum boat. Buddy speared his target with a 6-inch stab and we had No. 1 in the tub.

There’s a little knack to gigging gar as the tally usually shows at the end of such an evening.

First, you have to figure where he really is in the water and not just where he seems to be. Second, it is bad form to attempt a javelin throw.

Easy does it. You turn your headlight full on the unsuspecting gar who is lying still or finning slowly a few inches under the surface and wondering what the heck made the sun come up again so soon. Then you ease your gig as close as you think you can without spooking your quarry. This may be a matter of scant inches.

You need a heavy handle on your gig—not because you’re going to tangle with such a gosh-awfully big fish—but because it takes weight to drive the spear through water and gar.

There weren’t many gar that night but gar-sticking is a social activity with conservation overtones and I don’t know how such an expedition could fail.

A number of sportsmen’s clubs are engaging in gar spearing or bow-hunting under the supervision of the Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission. Sometimes an evening’s kill runs into the hundreds. Gar can’t be eliminated by such activity but they can be controlled to some extent.

How much harm can gar do?

Well, the biologists say they don’t hurt anything when they’re present in moderate numbers. In fact, it’s probable they are part of nature’s balance. But an overpopulation is something else again and they take up space, food and oxygen needed by more valued fish.

In most Florida waters, a 2-foot gar is a big one. There are several varieties of gar, best known being the big alligator gars fished for in Arkansas, Missouri and some other Southern states. Those big ones aren’t our problem, although some large ‘gator gars are occasionally taken from the main rivers of extreme northwest Florida.

The most awesome congregations of small garfish appear in some of South Florida’s canals and creeks. Running from 10 inches to two feet in length, they sometimes get so thick you can’t see the bottom in shallow water and I’ve casually laddied up dozens of them with a landing net while idling along in an outboard boat. That means they’re too danged thick.

When it gets chilly, they school up in immense bells in deep pockets—so close together that when one moves several hundred have to move. When we have low water in, say the Tamiami Trail Canal in South Florida, the gars compete with bass and panfish for oxygen and the Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission sometimes clears out a crowded section to give game fish a fresh start.

Spearing or bow hunting is about the only sport to be had from Florida gar as far as I can see. It’s true they will take bait or strike a lure but they don’t put up much fight in the smaller sizes and the big ones lurch on too rarely to be worth fishing for.

The occasional four or 5-foot gar will give you a bad time with your light tackle but it’s generally a turtle-type battle.

For the most part, a deceased gar is just so much fertilizer although Seminole Indians have long used them for food. We have another fresh water (continued on next page.)

Although not a problem in Florida, some big alligator gars are found in the main rivers of northwest Florida.
nearly aboard. Cheers when a "mud" comes piece. He believe he has a bass for the mantle edged and his mamve swirl, paebls JOU get your kicks from and closes, plassP in the shallow mud bays or B's in the shallow mud bays or llml7 QIIIJm me fooled by the blasting strike. maaain swirl and jump al ... -.Mah when hooked. The cheen tum to jeen when they find a.i,,,,.111.:ii.:r'-llli:..a' rush. A big bowfin had me all over that canal before I finally got off. A 30-pounder nabbed the fly with a good-sized bass I could see plainly when something I took for a 10-pounder yanked the paddle away. Big boats unhooked and simply threw the fish back to normal. It was weedy and he hadn't jumped. Mushfish can take over a lake and they're hard to get out of there without killing everything else in the place. In rivers, they seem to operate in cycles. This year the fishermen were lucky that NO fresh water fish has become popular unless he is good to eat. Perhaps the nearest to an exception was the alligator gulf for in some Southern rivers but it's a tug-of-war sort of thing. He has a bad habit of rolling up in the dirt and his spines are just as bad as other catfish. I've eaten bonefish and I doubt if there are many avid devotees. Where the fresh water meets the salt in Florida, there are a couple of odd-ball. The tarpon, selene concinna, this one is just as big but, human nature being what it is, fishermen tend toward proficiency instead of chase when a "mud" comes aboard. Not many folks actually fish for musfish, I've seen them caught on nearly every cast in some deep water lakes once the fisherman established the depth. A small sinking plug or a jll will do the business if worked slowly. In my experience, musfish are fond of scooping up a lure while it is sinking just—generally just before it reaches the bottom. I've certainly had my moments with musfish. Last summer I was fishing a streamer over some good-sized bass I could see plainly when something I took for a 30-pounder nabbed the fly with a rush. A big bowfin had me all over that canal before I finally got off. A 30-pounder nabbed the fly with a.

not many...
FLORIDA BOATING ADVENTURE

Part I — Stuart, St. Lucie Canal, Lake Okeechobee, Cross State Canal, Caloosahatchee River to Ft. Myers

By Elgin White

Take a boat cruise across Florida's mid-section, east to west, and you'll cruise into America's last frontier.

It's a journey that can be made in small boat, medium sized boat, or big boat, with the end result being one of the most fascinating water tours ever made.

You'll actually go from ultra-modern civilization into the depths of wilderness, where man seldom is seen.

It's the fascinating trip from Stuart, on the east coast, through the Lee County canal, across Lake Okeechobee, down the Caloosahatchee River to Ft. Myers, and from there into the Gulf to Naples. Then you go into the winding waters of the Ten Thousand Islands to Everglades City, out into the Gulf to Little Shark River, and back into the wilderness stretch of Whitewater Bay to Flamingo, at the very tip of the Florida peninsula.

If you're in a hurry, you can do it in two days and nights. If you're not, take a week. The scenery is well worth it.

Johnny Johnson (the old cronny who makes these boating jaunts with me you've read about before in Florida Wildlife) was ready to go again, so we planned this trip in earnest.

As usual, however, we didn't have a boat. Not the kind we wanted. For this cruise, I wanted a little lumber underfoot, 'cause I have been on the Okeechobee and in the Gulf before when they were both in nasty moods, and an outboard is sorta "corky" to me.

To get the craft in mind, I called my good friend Lee Evans, manager of the City of Miami News Bureau. Said Lee, "Got just the guy for you... Charlie Miller. He's a dentist, but would rather push a boat than pull teeth. He's a good friend Lee Evans, manager of the City of Miami News Bureau. Said Lee, "Got just the guy for you... Charlie Miller. He's a dentist, but would rather push a boat than pull teeth. He has a 37-foot Constellation that should be just your size. Let's call him.'"

Lee called Charlie and asked him how he'd like to make a boat trip. That's like asking a thirsty man if he'd like to have a drink. Before the excited dentist could answer, Lee whipped the phone over to me and said, "He's booked... give him the word."

I introduced myself, and the immediate reply was, "When do we leave?" With this show of enthusiasm, half my problem in setting up the trip was licked.

Like many south Florida boatmen, Charlie Miller and his wife, Sarita, spend most of their cruising time in adjacent waters, from the Florida Keys to the Bahamas. I explained to him about our planned cruise, and Charlie's interest was whetted even more. "I have never even thought of that trip," he remarked. "I think it would be fascinating. Count me in all the way."

Miller's enthusiasm was understandable. Florida's Everglades country is actually America's last frontier that can be explored by boat. There are thousands of square miles of wild country, many in the protected environs of the Everglades National Park, where man's civilized invasion has not touched. And now that the Park is there, the wildlife and the country will survive and grow in their natural state.

Johnny and I met Charlie and Sarita at Stuart on a Monday evening, and while at dinner we went over the charts for the journey. Should you anticipate this trip—and it's one you should certainly make—here are the Coast and Geodetic charts you should have:

473—The Caloosahatchee River, Ft. Myers, and San Carlos Bay
398-599—Shark River, Lont'sman's Bay, Whitewater Bay, Flamingo
1247—Stuart and the St. Lucie Canal
1289—Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee River
1255—Ft. Myers area
1254—Chatham River to Clam Pass

About seven miles from our start we encountered the first of a series of locks between Stuart and Ft. Myers. This lock was under repair and we made certain to be there between 8-9 am. That is the only hour of the morning when traffic is permitted through as long as construction is going on. We missed the hour; we would have had to wait until four o'clock in the afternoon for the next opening. By the time you read this, however, repairs should have been completed and the locks will be available for traffic throughout the day.

Just past the locks we came upon a bridge with a 7 foot clearance. We needed 9 1/2 feet so we rounded the horn for clearance.

We passed through and made a quick run through the canal to Indiantown, some 20 miles from Stuart. There we encountered a brand new marina on the starboard side of the canal. This marina had the latest equipment and supplies, and while there Charlie gassed up.

Dr. Miller is a lot of a worrier on a boat. This in itself is good, as Charlie made sure he ran the blower at least five minutes before starting the engines each (continued on next page)
(continued from preceding page) time, he opened all the hatches for good ventilation to the engine room; he made sure Sarita didn't fire the alcohol stove to start cooking; the smoking lamp was definitely out; and Charlie made a personal inspection of the bilges prior to each start.

This all seemed to be overdoin' it a bit to me, but I'll almost guarantee that Charlie Miller will never have a fire on board his boat.

Following our stop at the Indianstown marina, we passed under two more bridges (the first one had plenty of clearance, the second, a railroad bridge, had to get the horn) and on into Lake Okeechobee.

There are two routes that can be taken across Okeechobee. One is a direct compass bearing run, the second largest fresh water lake entirely within the boundaries of the United States, can cut an unruly rug at times. The wind was kicking up a few line squalls from the southwest, and Okeechobee was full of whitecaps. It's more of a chop than a roll, though, because the lake is quite shallow in most places, making it necessary to keep close to channels.

We followed the shore line quite closely and got a good look at the graceful Australian pines that lined the dikes. These dikes were built after the disastrous hurricane of 1926, and play an important part in the flood control program that is now underway throughout south Florida. The level of Lake Okeechobee is bit above the surrounding land, and the dikes and pines are all around the eastern, southern, and western perimeters.

When we reached red beacon 84-A, we cut across the lake on a reading of 273 degrees to red beacon 14, which put us on a course into Clewiston. As we neared the channel leading into Clewiston, we learned, the hard way, that you must stay in the middle of the channel. We veered slightly to starboard near marker 10 and we experienced a rugged "crunch" and bump that signalled we were having an argument with some pretty large rocks. Charlie quickly threw the engines into neutral and backed off, but we felt a slight vibration as we again went forward.

The vibrations weren't teeth shattering by any means, and we continued on into Clewiston, passing through the storm gates on the dike.

Since we had made good time, we decided to continue on. We proceeded again along the shore route, and from Clewiston to Moore Haven, where we encountered the locks into the Caloosahatchee River, the 13-mile run was absolutely beautiful. We could almost reach out and touch the thickly planted Australian pines on the port side, and the silk-smooth canal offered good running room.

Charlie, good ol' worryin' Charlie, decided he'd better gas up again before trying to go all the way to Fort Myers, so we pulled in at a small dock on the right about a mile past Moore Haven. This dock (and its proprietor) were quite weather beaten, but it was an oasis in the wilderness to Dr. Miller. We filled the tanks and moved on. We went through the third and final locks about 30 miles from Ft. Myers. The change in scenery as we neared the west coast city was remarkable. When we departed Moore Haven, the Caloosahatchee was bounded by rather flat, grassy lands. But as we got within 15 miles of Fort Myers, the surrounding countryside blossomed into deep green foliage, studded with Royal palm trees, meandering kudzu vines that appeared to be smothering the life out of everything from magnolia tree to telephone pole, and the lush tropical setting of hibiscus and flow&

We pulled through the locks at Clewiston into Johnson's Fish Camp for a brief respite. Charlie had a loose prop!
I THINK COST-FREE hunters who like to blast away at ducks, any kind of ducks, think "species management" is a new form of harassment, they are mistaken. For according to the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, species management is not new; it is harassed. It may be a challenge to the responsible hunter, but not to the irresponsible numskull. It is a distinctive turn in the road.

But what is species management anyway and when did it start? Species management is a positive approach to better hunting. Take the waterfowl situation over the years. All duck populations were down from the late 1930's and some dangerously low. The dusky ducks, however, maintained itself at a reasonably high level. When the Fish and Wildlife Service announced the "Bonus" season, it provided protection for a species of ducks in very short supply but a "bonus" of two scapu in the bag limit was added. A "no hunting" tag on a given species one year may mean that a season on that species comes around that much sooner. Without knowing it, the first cawman probably practiced some form of species management. Only following the practical course of hunting in areas where game was relatively abundant, he allowed wildlife populations in other areas to build up until they also proved too great an attraction for his thronging stock.

When the Federal Government was given the responsibility of protecting and managing migratory birds in 1918, through enactment of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the first set of Federal hunting regulations prohibited the shooting of wood ducks and eiders. As early as 1922, there were limitations on the total of canvas-back, redhead, scaup, ringneck, teal, shoveller and gadwall ducks that could be included in the daily bag. Obviously, species management is not new to the American hunting scene.

Neither is species management something that the Federal Wildlife people have dreamed up just to harass the American sportman. At least as far as waterfowl are concerned, it is probably one of the most effective tools for providing additional hunting opportunity. This is evidenced by the fact that not one of the 48 species of migratory waterfowl known to occur naturally in the United States has been lost since the Migratory Bird Treaty Act became effective, despite droughts, freezes, uppers, and other vagaries of nature. Let us see how it works.

Back in the late 1930's, drought in the prairie pothole breeding grounds reduced the population of canvas-back and redhead ducks to a point where additional protection was needed. In 1936 and 1937, hunting of these birds and some other species was prohibited. Under this complete protection, canvasback and redhead populations bounced back to a point where such special restrictions were no longer needed. This was a case of successful application of species management.

It species management is to meet the pryming problems of the future as it has helped meet the problems of the past, the hunting must be able to identify the birds before they start blasting away at them. This is not imposing a hardship on him. It is simply one of the obligations he accepts when he decides to go duck hunting. It is one of his contributions to his grandchildren. Or, if you look at it another way, it is his alternative to no duck hunting at all.

Suppose that the population of a certain kind of duck drops to a precariously low level, while populations of other ducks stay up. There are two reasons that such endangered species of ducks could be saved. Either restrict the season on the species—this would be species management—or restrict the season on all ducks.

Most duck hunters would rather learn how to identify ducks than to face a closed season. Learning to identify ducks can bring a lot of pleasure and requiring positive identification before pulling the trigger allows the birds to come in close. This reduces crippling losses. Hunters who are not sure of their ability to identify "bonus" birds should not try for these "bonus" birds.

While restricting the harvesting of a species is the thing which directly affects the hunter, it is not the only kind of species management. Management of habitat or living conditions for a particular kind of animal seems to hold even greater possibilities for better hunting. For example, Canada geese have been redistributed to a number of areas where they had once been abundant. These birds are so numerous when it comes to selecting a place to stop over for a rest or to spend the winter. National Wildlife refuges, by providing suitable Canada goose accommodation in the four Flyways, hunting within reach of sportsmen who otherwise might never have had a chance to take a goose.

For years, wood ducks were fully protected throughout the country. This past year, two wood ducks were included in the daily bag in each of the four Flyways. Nest boxes probably have not been completely responsible for the improved status of wood ducks. Actually, the combination of protective legislation and improved status of wood ducks has been a "first, come, first-served" basis. Quota for each hunting season will be limited to 100 campers. Only those applications received with completed health forms will be considered for reservations.

Our Animal "Fun" Compound will be overly active this coming summer. We have many promises of animals to occupy our clean cages. There is a possibility, that our nature tent will be moved and erected in the compound area.

Club News

We understand that just recently the Barrow Girls' Conservation Club were the recipients of a new American flag for their clubhouse. The donor was America Legion Post 83 of Bartow. The clubhouse has just recently been painted and broken windows replaced. When the flag is complete, the girls will have a clubhouse they can well be proud. Mrs. W. S. Miller is their leader.

Over Stuart way, we understand that the club was honored as the outstanding boy's group in the state for 1963. The honors bestowed upon them by the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the Youth Conservation Club League. The Stuart Club has the distinction of having two state officers. Mr. Jack Cowdor, Jr. is the president of the Youth Conservation Club League; Jack Samack is one of the directors; and Ralph Coffman is the treasurer.

Other awards presented at the same time were: Outstanding Girls Club—Palm Beach County Girls' Conservation Club. Meritorious achievement was earned by three young men: Robert Crowder, Jr., of Stuart; Frank Muscutt of Ocala; and Bill Dunaway of Hialeah.

For outstanding adult performances: the teacher, Mrs. Brenda Whitaker of West Palm Beach and Mrs. W. S. Miller of Bartow, were awarded certificates.


Nominations are made by the executive secretary of the League and are presented to the Advisory Council for study and (continued on page 37).

WILDLIFE BALANCE WHEEL

Summer Camping Schedules

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

FEBRUARY, 1963

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**MUZZLE FLASHES**

This season's experiences can mean much towards improved hunting success next season

*By EDMUND McLaurin*

Every hunting season is characterized by something in the way of added experience and woods wisdom. I seldom ring the curtain down on a season's activity without being respectful of the observed ways of wildlife and other being especially appreciative of some item of field used equipment or bemoaning my oversight in not providing an actually needed one. From such knowledge gained, the way is paved for better enjoyment of next year's hunting season.

Looking back on the season now closing, I attribute the success of several hunting trips to advance preparation. I took to the field with a gun that fitted me, that shot where it was aimed and which received contributory aid from some observed ways of wildlife, and either being especially appreciated accessories was the adjustable, leather gunning on my big-game rifle.

It is said that the average hunter, I could aim him with two hands for time's two week every minute he is engaged in actual firing. Most assuredly many heavy rifles, no matter how handled, become a somewhat awkward burden after being carried for hours. With a sling-strap, the hunter can shift the rifle to his good, strong back muscles while on hike, being able to handle swing rifle to shoulder for aimed fire should opportunity arise once he enters hunting country.

In related manner, the steady influence of the gusling, leaped "hasty" style or shape with 1-inch wide bows, that will accept the Whelen style sling. I even use a detachable carrying sling on some of my shotguns.

If you didn't know the comfort of a glove while using a pair of binoculars is a great advantage, my scope sight or binoculars is a great advantage, and I wear gloves I keep in my box when they're not needed. A pair of wool gloves or intermittent hand warmer. Battery operated, it fastens alongside the receiver of your gun and accommodates one finger only—your all-important trigger finger. Personally, I'd rather depend on warm, flexible wool gloves or intermittent hand warming by occasionally palming a pocket-carded Jon-e warmer.

If you didn't know the comfort of a glove while using a pair of binoculars is a great advantage, my scope sight or binoculars is a great advantage, and I wear gloves I keep in my box when they're not needed. A pair of wool gloves or intermittent hand warmer. Battery operated, it fastens alongside the receiver of your gun and accommodates one finger only—your all-important trigger finger. Personally, I'd rather depend on warm, flexible wool gloves or intermittent hand warming by occasionally palming a pocket-carded Jon-e warmer.

When a hunting season ends, gun owners should be advised to clean their guns and binoculars and truly expect to use them again next year. Also, sew a pair of binoculars into your hunting coat to hang them on when they're not needed. I remove the lenses from hunting boots and surface crevices free of accumulated sand. Leathers are given a good cleaning with saddle soap and subsequently treated with neatsfoot oil and bandages, to restore natural oils and suppleness. If I happen to be currently using combination hiking boots, with rubber feet and attached leather uppers, like the L. L. Bean and Converse brands.

**FLORIDA WILDLIFE**

February, 1963

The better guns now come filled with various nitrogen, which is supposed to make instruments resistant to fogging or the penetration of moisture. However, when sealing paints get old or the factory sealing compound used on the joints eventually deteriorates, the nitrogen slowly leaks out and the instrument becomes subject to inflation of moisture.

Few shooters realize that the internal pressure of a scope sight or a pair of binoculars is seldom482. Due to the influence of outside temperature changes. Keep a scope sighted rifle close to a heat source during your sleeping hours, then abruptly take it into cold air as you begin a new hunting day, and moisture will be driven out of the optical system as the metal scope tube cools. A slow growth of fungus can also play havoc with optical equipment.

Besides giving attention to rifle, shotgun and optical equipment, I also inspect and over-boot boots, clothing and other hard-used items, once a season has ended. The big 200-grain, heavy, blunt-nosed bullet of the .35 refused to be slanted from course by intervening brush, hits hard yet does not waste meat, and is plenty accurate at what constitutes maximum practical shooting range in typical Florida deer country. Developed recoil is moderate.

For open plains' shooting—say, Wyoming and points West—I'd put my faith in a scope sighted 270, 30-06, 243 or 280. One of the most useful and appreciated accessories was the adjustable, leather gunning on my big-game rifle.

When packing-in my gear to remote regions, my gunning was a wonderful aid. The rifle was simply slung over one shoulder, out of the way, thereby freeing my hands for more comfortable carrying of other equipment.

Looking back on the season now closing, I attribute the success of several hunting trips to advance preparation. I took to the field with a gun that fitted me, that shot where it was aimed and which received contributory aid from some observed ways of wildlife, and either being especially appreciated accessories was the adjustable, leather gunning on my big-game rifle.

When packing-in my gear to remote regions, my gunning was a wonderful aid. The rifle was simply slung over one shoulder, out of the way, thereby freeing my hands for more comfortable carrying of other equipment.

Climbing in and out of tree stands, it permitted my un­rembered hands to find more positive and safer hands-holds. In instances where tree branches would not allow me to shoot without freely climb with the rifle slung over shoulder, the gunning was fastened in the closed clasp of a metal shutter curtain cord that trailed behind me as I climbed, and the rifle pulled up after I was safely ensconced in my tree perch.

When I did kill my buck and was faced with a long carry to camp, the gunning was again a friend, by freeing my hands for the main job.

No matter what the model of your rifle, you can get sling swivels to fit most any rifle with 1-inch wide bows, that will accept the Whelen style sling. I even use a detachable carrying sling on some of my shotguns.

I've found that an absorbent wool glove far out-values a bandana hankiechief buried in a back pocket when you experience a runny nose or sneeze, while occupying a cold tree stand in the low temperature hours.

Incidentally, I recall reading somewhere several years ago that cold and dry cold of higher temperature must be, temperature hours! That other shooters are aware of added experience and the experience of others, now is the time to order parts or have replacements installed by a competent gunsmith.

The repair departments of the various gun companies have been swamped with work during recent months, but now that the hunting season is past or on the wane in most states, pressures have been greatly relieved. They can now hand your work on a fairly prompt basis.

At the end of each hunting season I make what is virtually a ritual of examining and over­hauling my equipment in preparation for use next year. Items I know won't be used until then are grouped, and packed in a special outside labeled box.

Gun actions are at least partially damaged, washed clean with mineral spirits, then closely examined for worn or likely to break parts. Any needed parts are ordered and installed.

If my scope sight or binoculars needed cleaning or adjustment, as can happen with the best instruments when used hard, they are sent to the factory for inspection and overhaul.

For reasons too technical to explain in detail here, scopes and binoculars tend to develop a slight haze in their optical systems after being subjected to several years of active service in our humid Florida climate.
and Natural Resources Conferences are sponsored each year in a major city by the Wildlife Management Institute. Many of the nation's foremost conservation leaders, biologists, sportsmen, and outdoor writers regularly attend three-day sessions. All sections of the conference are open to the public and interested persons may register and attend without charge. "Conservation's Common Frontiers" is the overall theme of this year's conference.

Wildlife Federation Meeting

Concern over the need for a unified effort on the part of conservationists to assure that future generations of Americans will have adequate outdoor recreation opportunities was the underlying theme of the Ninth Annual Conference on National Conservation Issues, held at the headquarters of the National Wildlife Federation in Washington on December 5.

Federation Executive Director Thomas L. Kimball summed up the day-long session with the affirmation that outdoor enthusiasts "must arrive at a unanimity, even if only a tolerance, of their objectives" and then implement this unanimity with concerted efforts to see that public lands are protected, public waters are cleaned up, and wilderness areas are preserved.

Kimball said it was imperative that a sound, over-all program of national recreational area acquisition and development, water pollution abatement, and wilderness preservation be developed and implemented "before it is too late." He suggested that such a program can be developed most effectively through the new Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and a Land Conservation Fund.

Speakers from 13 organizations addressed the 70 delegates to the Federation-sponsored conference on many significant conservation issues including chemical pesticides, the preservation and management of public lands and waters, wilderness preservation, national forests and private industry, the use of wilderness, and the"Conservation's Common Frontiers" theme of the opening session on Monday morning, March 4. Sessions on "Conservation's Common Frontiers" are the overall theme of this year's conference.

SOUND PHILOSOPHY

The sound philosophy of people, who have defied time have been tested in the crucible of the ages. So it is with the care and management in deep water, diving as much as 30 feet or more for their food. The puddle or dabbling ducks feed in shallow water, merely "tip up" to glean their food from the bottom. Downdraughts allow marsh plants to grow down to the edge of the low water. Refocusing the area then makes these plants readily available as duck food.

Conservationists have succeeded in the human soul, can be inspiring or act as a prod to the experience. Of resource management, its husbandry must be gained on the land, even though temporarily transferred to the classroom and laboratory. All resources and opportunities was the underlying theme of the Eighth Congress of the Bureau.

Joseph W. Penfold of the Izaak Walton League of America reported that Administration-sponsored legislation to create a Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, which would promote cooperation on outdoor recreation between Federal and State resource agencies, probably will be introduced in the 85th Congress. The Bureau also would administer a proposed Land and Water Conservation Fund, designed to assist the Federal agencies with meeting outdoor recreation needs. The fund would be financed by a number of Federal and State agencies, some of which are controversial.

Dr. Clarence Cotman of the Welder Wildlife Foundation and National Parks Association said that there is a profound and widespread outburst of public interest and concern about chemical pesticides which has extended to the President's level and investigation is underway. Despite some progress toward coordination and use of more selective methods, however, there are still many people, should be philosophers. Those who are not, often demand regimentation of their pupils and stifle youthful imagination and initiative.

Philosophy, if ever achieved, must come from experience, trial and error, profound observation coupled with tolerance and an analytical mind. The analytical mind needs must encompass more than the intellectual, Manchester. It is not profit from them they are worthless.

If a person graduated as a lawyer, doctor, engineer, biologist, forester or agriculturist does not practice his profession, he soon loses what he has learned. It is application and experience which makes him proficient, and may possibly develop some philosophy. Each of us sees the world through our own experiences and because of them develop a good, bad, or shallow philosophy on many things.

Phil 3d education emphasizes technical training, but it is supposed to develop original thinking, this aspect is often an orphan. Teachers should not be role models. All people, should be philosophers. Those who are not, often demand regimentation of their pupils and stifle youthful imagination and initiative. Philosophy, if ever achieved, must come from experience, trial and error, profound observation.
Fishing (continued from page 9)

This happens very visibly on bonefish flats where numerous fish are plainly visible. You scare one fish and he puts the run on another fish. Not only is there the pursuit of one fish by another but there is an amazing how much added pleasure this advance preparation contributes to a hunting season. I urge you to try my method.

Hunting Regulations

It is customary to "pig-out" or partially dress out deer kills before they are removed from the woods. Once internal organs are removed prior to weighing of the kill, the true "live weight" of an animal can only be surmised. If you killed a deer this past season, time itself and the following months will provide you with this necessary data. The "live weight" of the deer should be recorded for the next year's hunt.

Dogs - Hunting

(continued from page 5)

course, goes without saying, is a cruel practice for the dogs and detrimental to the wildlife population and surely a practice that no responsible hunter or sportsman would ever advocate.
FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S FISHING CITATION

is available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the fresh-water game fish of the prescribed species and size requirements. Citation, showing recorded date of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of the full-wing application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE Date:----------

Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the listed data listed below:

Name (please print) _________________ 

Address-__________ City----- State---

Species Weight Length Type of Tackle -----------------

Bait or Lure Used------------------

County Where Caught----------- in-----

Date Caught ____ Catch Witnessed BY.--------

Registered, Weighed By.-----------------

I (Signature of Applicant)

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS .......................... 8 pounds or larger

CHAIN PICKEREL .......................... 4 pounds or larger

BLUEGILL (BREAM) ....................... 1½ pounds or larger

SHELLCRACKER ........................... 2 pounds or larger

BLACK CRAPPIE .......................... 2 pounds or larger

RED BREAST .............................. 1 pound or larger

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 caught on conventional fishing tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness. The catch 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 enterprise establishment.
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