A POWERFUL FISHER WHEN CURBED OR PICKLED.

NO FELT HOOKS, OXYGEN, OR POISON PLEASURES.

DIFFERENT FLAVORFUL WHEN FRIED, SMOKED, OR PICKLED. DRESS THEM BY PEELING OFF SKIN.

FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

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CONSERVATION SCENE

Tagged fish brings cash prizes
to Florida anglers

Of the total fish tagged, 8,600 were released in inland waters through the Schlitz plant in Tampa. By April 1, when the 1963 Schlitz $500,000 Florida Fishing Derby opened for a four-month period in 34 Northern counties—Zone 4. Awards from $25 up to $10,000 await anglers catching Schlitz-tagged fish, and a new harvest of research data will be reapplied by fish biologists of the state.

Going into its third consecutive year, the derby is conducted with the cooperation of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the Florida State Board of Conservation, with all costs being defrayed by the Jos. Schlitz Brewing Company.

Statewide, some 10,000 fish, both fresh and salt water species, have been tagged by teams of the two cooperating state agencies. Of the total fish tagged, 8,600 were released in Gulf and Atlantic Coast waters. As a result, the state is divided into four zones. Reports on all tagged catches, giving information regarding date of catch, sex, species, length, and weight, are returned to the state agencies for research purposes.

The minimum award for 1963 Schlitz fish is $25. Other tags carry values of $50, $100, $1,000, and $10,000. There is one $10,000 award for tagged fish in each zone. Values are determined by an impartial drawing of duplicate tag numbers, the numbers being kept in secrecy at the Schlitz plant in Tampa.

Interestingly, innovations were introduced in the 1963 derby—interesting to fishermen because new monetary incentives are offered, and interesting to fish biologists because the innovations promise additional data for fish research. Many fish from the 1961 and 1962 derbies have never been reported caught. Because fish biologists are particularly interested in information on fish that have been at liberty a long time, the value of all the 1961 and 1962 fish caught during the current derby has been upped to at least $25 each, instead of the $3 award previously offered for “old” fish. In addition, a substantial number of unreported tags from the previous derbies have been assigned Special Conservation awards of $500, as determined in a special drawing of old tag numbers.

Also, the length of the derby was extended in each zone to four months (instead of three as in previous years). Schlitz officials pointed out that this feature will help compensate for any unfavorable fishing weather that may occur.

Finally, dates of the derby in the different zones have been adjusted to take advantage of periods of greater fishing pressures and to coincide as much as possible with tourist seasons in the different areas.

The word “Schlitz” is embossed on all tags. Each zone has tags distinguished by identifying prefixes.

Tag designations for Zone 4 are as follows:

Fresh water fish: prefix H and tag number
Salt water fish: prefix number 34 and tag number


Schlitz officials emphasized that all tagged fish catches must be brought in to a Schlitz wholesaler. It is essential that every fish be delivered to the wholesaler with tag intact in order to be eligible for a cash award.

After contacting the Schlitz Tampa brewery to learn the tag value, the wholesaler must forward all salt water fish (the entire fish) to the State Board of Conservation for their special research work. However, fresh water fish may be kept by the fishermen after the wholesaler has removed the tag and has recorded data required for the research program of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Types of fresh water fish tagged for the 1963 derby are black bass; catfish; crappie; creek, (including bluegill, shad, and other pan fish). Attempts will be made to tag all the following varieties of salt water fish: trout (speckled and silver); mangrove snapper; sheephead; saltwater catfish; drum; snook; bone fish; redfish; flounder; barracuda; reef fish (including red snapper and grouper), and mullet. In a special tagging operation in the Florida Keys this year, 200 king mackerel were tagged for the derby. All fish eligible must be caught on hook and line.

While the exact places where tagged fish are released are not disclosed, a fisherman’s report of where any significant popular fishing areas in each zone are.

The derby is open to both Florida residents and visitors alike. Good catches of fresh water and salt water fishing regulations are required.

Any 1963 tagged fish caught after the end of the 1963 contest in each zone will be redeemed by the Jos. Schlitz Brewing Company for the benefit of the Florida State Board of Conservation and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission at $3 each through December 31, 1964. “Old” fish revert to $3 value, also, at the close of the derby in a particular zone.

During last year’s derby, Schlitz paid approximately $84,000 in awards, statewide, for tagged fish. Zone 4 fishermen reaped $15,726 for 540 fish and $9 for “old” fish. There was one $1,000 fish caught in Zone 4 last year, 100 $50 fish, 20 $30 fish, and 120 fish worth $25 each. In other zones last year, two $10,000 catches were made.

And the astonishing number of professional fishermen who have suddenly løomed over the horizon, and more or less by definition represent the pursuit point-of-view, should take time out to (Continued on page 38)
CONSERVATION SCENE

Tagged fish brings cash prizes to Florida anglers

recorded data required for the research program of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Types of fresh water fish tagged for the 1963 derby are black bass, channel catfish, crappie, bream (including bluegill, shellebacker, and other pan fish). Attempts were made to tag all the following varieties of salt water fish: trout (speckled and silver); mangrove snapper; sheepshead; saltwater catfish; drum; yellowtail; pompano; red fish; pompano. (A full tagging operation in the Florida Keys this year, 200 king mackerel were tagged for the derby.

All fish except mullet must be caught on hook and line. While the places where tagged fish are released are not disclosed, tagging teams cover popular fishing areas including red snapper and grouper, and mullet. In a special tagging period in the Florida Keys last year, 100 king mackerel were tagged for the derby.

Water Fish Commission. The “American Heritage” and Our Creature Comforts

THE COVER

River cruising and fishing along Florida’s west coast rivers supplies year-round outdoor recreation. The Homosassa River, on the cover, is one of four rivers traveled in “Florida Boating Adventure.” Page 25.

Cover Photo by Florida State News Bureau

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

JULY, 1963
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RIVER CRUISING and fishing along Florida’s west coast rivers supplies year-round outdoor recreation. The Homosassa River, on the cover, is one of four rivers traveled in “Florida Fishing Adventure,” Page 56.

Cover Photo by Florida State News Bureau

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

JULY, 1962

MALICIOUS WOODS BURNERS ROB US ALL!

The “American Heritage” and Our Creature Comforts

IF THE NUMBER of conservation laws passed by the States in the past 130 years, and more recently by the Federal Government, were an index to resource and game abundances, America would surely be the paradise as in the days of Columbus, but such is not the case.

The many bills introduced into Congress on these matters should be a criterion to people’s awareness of many issues now facing the nation. It is axiomatic that laws, regulations and professional personal increase in ratio to the impact on resources and their decline. At least this is true of a nation aware of what it must do to survive.

But legislation manifests opposing philosophies, many confusing philosophies, and at times a lack of any profound philosophy as a guiding beacon. The rapidly increasing amount of legislation admits to a dismal lack of self-discipline and responsibility by the citizenry, regardless of what their particular interest might be. One-track interests are not conducive to comprehensive resource management.

Do the people of the United States really understand what is at stake, what they need more than what they want, and where they are heading?

Do they have a future for “the great American heritage”—so fondly spoken of in attempting to save a tattered bit of our primitive resources or wildlife—to compete with the Herculean image of “progress”? Under our present ideologies it is possible for these two philosophies of human desires to sleep in the same bed.

Groups and organizations attack big, bad business, but fail to realize that they are a party to any bad habits or practices which the industries pursue. Industrial pollution, for example, assists an individual insist on buying the products whose manufacture caused the pollution. These people cut corporation coupons and use their leisure time to condemn the source of their income. If people would refuse to purchase products from industries which contribute to pollution, the issue would soon be settled.

Super-highways are condemned, but the accusers use them to reach hunting and fishing grounds. One man wants the road to stop a mile from his favorite lakeshore, another argues it should be a half-mile, while a third demands a parking lot at the water’s edge. Some want roads to the edge of the wilderness but not beyond, others believe that nature will not be defiled if they sneak in part way with a jeep.

The people use articles whose manufacture contributes to the depollution of resources which they profess they want saved, then they are a party to the crime and equally guilty. Do the purist of the pure have hypocritical tendencies which they conveniently overlook or do people lack that sense of introspection necessary to see the contribution they make to the destruction of resources they profess to protect? I have yet to hear one purist confess his sins against nature.

The astonishing number of professional recreationalists who have suddenly looked over the horizon, and more or less by definition considered the purist point-of-view, should take time out to

(Continued on page 8)
Muzzle Flashes

Main objective of this gun manufacturer has been to market improved versions of practical and value-packed guns

By EDMUND McLAURIN

Meanwhile, the Mossbergs, father and sons, furthered their technical education and continued their firearms designing.

In 1919 they opened for business in New Haven, Connecticut, under the family name and partnership, O. F. Mossberg & Sons. Here they designed and produced the 4-shot .22 caliber "Brownie" model pocket pistol, an improved and more natural looking version of the original "Novelty." Besides the three Mossbergs, there were three employees.

But working as a team, they made progress! Between the years 1919 and 1932, they produced around 37,000 "Brownies," simultaneously with other experiments.

Oscar F. Mossberg was literally a dynamo of contagious energy. Those who knew him intimately, and who worked with him until his death in 1957, say he was ever active as a firearms designer and research technician and that, somehow, he never did get around to acquiring a desk and attendant ties.

The nearest thing to a desk he ever had, associates say, was a beloved workbench in a corner of his shop, where he constantly designed and experimented. Perhaps his demonstrated mechanical skill was never destined to rival the genius of John M. Browning, but Oscar F. Mossberg developed some very practical guns—and made them at prices shooters could afford to pay.

The first Mossberg rifle was the Model "K" .22 caliber pump-action repeater, introduced in 1922. It was followed by many other models.

Unlike certain blue-nose rivals of their early business years, the Mossbergs never hesitated to modify or discontinue a model if in doing so a better one could be marketed. From the time the first production of the 4-shot .22 caliber pocket pistols were offered the public back in 1919, the firm has introduced and subsequently discontinued some 130 catalog listings to date! The objective, throughout the series of changes, has been to keep a step ahead of competitors by marketing improved versions of practical, value-packed guns and shooting accessories. The latter category includes scope sights and various styles of metallic sights.

From the first days of the firm, sons Iver and Harold Mossberg worked closely with their father. They continued to expand the business after his death, both being creative and mechanically minded, like their father. Iver Mossberg passed away in 1945.

The firm, which changed in 1926 from a partnership to a corporation, is now headed by Harold F. Mossberg, Chairman of the Board; Raymond R. Sawin, President; Walter L. Pierson, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Alan Iver Mossberg (only grandson of Oscar F. Mossberg), Assistant Treasurer, and Paul Jacobson, Secretary.

Besides taking care to manufacture quality products and stand behind them, the Mossberg firm has long been an acknowledged leader in the field of mechanical product merchandising. Currently, good looking Walter Pierson, Exec. V.P., one of the most genial personalities in the firearms manufacturing field, is the hot wire of the now world renowned firm.

The hammerless, short-throw lever-action of the "Palomino" is fast of operation. Double extractors assure positive ejection of fired cases, and a removable side plate gives quick access to operating parts. Top of the receiver is grooved for slip-on style scope mount. Williams Gun Sight Company, Davison, Michigan, can furnish a receiver mounting peep sight for this particular rifle model, for those desiring the best in metallic sights.

The .22 caliber "Palomino" features a 20-inch tapered barrel, good looking pistol grip style walnut stock and checkered fore-end, sing waffles and a balanced overall length of 36¾ inches. Total gun weight is about 4½ pounds. An under-barrel tubular magazine holds 20 short, 15 long or 13 long rifle cartridges. The judicious user will stick to one cartridge—preferably the highly developed, accurate 22 long rifle cartridge.

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A little about 1936, I purchased a Mossberg Model 463 bolt-action 22 caliber repeater. Slightly muzzle heavy, it proved to be one of the most accurate plinking rifles I have ever owned, especially for long shots offhand. The rifle is still in service.

Not caring too much for the adjustable and locking features of the initial Mossberg rear peep sight, I replaced it with a Redfield 70 receiver sight, and also smoothed the rifle's trigger mechanism a bit. Over the years, I have had to replace two small springs and an ejector. Otherwise, the rifle functions as dependably as in its youth.

If my memory is correct, Mossberg made this model for Montgomery Ward under MW's "Western Field" trade name. Both of the original versions have been discontinued, but if I had need of another I would seriously consider the much similar Model 346B of present day manufacture.

Current sensations of the long line of Mossberg guns are the Model 402 "Palomino" 22 caliber lever-action carbine, and the Model 500 pump-action repeating shotgun made in shooter's choice of 12, 16 or 20 gauge. The 22 caliber "Palomino" features a 20-inch tapered barrel, good looking pistol grip style walnut stock and checkered fore-end, sing waffles and a balanced overall length of 36¾ inches. Total gun weight is about 4½ pounds. An under-barrel tubular magazine holds 20 short, 15 long or 13 long rifle cartridges. The judicious user will stick to one cartridge—preferably the highly developed, accurate 22 long rifle cartridge. The hammerless, short-throw lever-action of the "Palomino" is fast of operation. Double extractors assure positive ejection of fired cases, and a removable side plate gives quick access to operating parts. Top of the receiver is grooved for slip-on style scope mount. Williams Gun Sight Company, Davison, Michigan, can furnish a receiver mounting peep sight for this particular rifle model, for those desiring the best in metallic sights.

Dollar-wise, and mechanically, the new Mossberg Model 500 shotgun also is quite a gun. Light and perfectly balanced, it is remarkably pointing—a valuable trait in a shotgun. The Model 500 comes with choice of seven barrel lengths and choke bores in 12 gauge, five in 16 gauge and five in 20 gauge. There is a 26-inch length barrel, available in all gauges, fitted with a C-Lock choke control device. The 12 gauge can be had chambered to accept either 3-inch Magnum or standard 2½ inch shells. Special barrels

(Continued on page 33)
FISHING
A fly fishing system for quick casting to suddenly appearing fish is made easier with the new short-head forward taper lines

CHARLES WATERMAN

HAVING CAUGHT quite a few fish in my lifetime (mainly because I took a lot of time at it), having showed off my skill on a few occasions and having been outdone by more adept practitioners lots of times I figure the world is simply squirming to hear what I like most about fishing.

What I am supposed to say goes something like this:

"My greatest joy now is in going fishing with a rank beginner and seeing that flush of joy that comes to his face when he first makes a perfect cast—or hooks his first fish.—Baloney! I don’t feel that way at all.

Here’s what I like best:

Give me a really good fish like, say a big Florida bass, a snook or a bonefish. Now, Lord, give me a really good fisherman—a top-notch caster who has been at it a good long time and knows how hard fish can be to catch and how much effort can go into a fishing trip and who has saved his dough and slept some sleep to get to the lair of one of these high-powered exotic species he’s heard about all his life.

Now let me row or pole the boat and let me ease this guy into the right spot and, being an expert, tell him his fly has to fly just right and sooner or later a bucket-mouthed Florida bass or a nickelplated tarpon or a snook or a bonefish will take that lure and head away from there.

And then this guy will look like he’s just won the Irish sweepstakes and will say, ‘Did you see that?’

And that’s what I like best about fishing and you can take the beginners in your boat.

Secret Weapons

Three times in the past few days I have been induced to a secret fishing weapon—each time with all the drama you’d expect to accompany the unveiling of a successful perpetual motion machine, in each case the weapon turned out to be a Rapala, Finnish imported lure which received a million bucks worth of national publicity through a big picture magazine story. The glamor that surrounds the Rapala is enhanced by a scarcity of them and a lot of orders have been left unfilled.

National ads that were running in April took the form of thanks to the American fishermen who have bought the lures and urged them to be patient because manufacturing facilities are being increased in an effort to supply them.

By now there are imitations on the market since imitation of fishing lures is impossible to prevent. Some of the imitations may be just as good as the original.

If I sound blase about the Rapala I don’t mean to because it is an exceptional plug and I have watched it in use in both fresh and salt water. However, it is an outstanding example of a “hit” lure that sweeps into the tackle boxes with a rush and may soon settle back into a position as just another good bait.

All of the elements of a world-beater are present: fish-catch ing ability, importation, unique appearance, scarcity, high price, advance publicity and fragility.

The Rapala, which costs up to three bucks a copy, is constructed by a family-operated concern in Finland, is very light for its size and is cigar-shaped with a plastic lip. It has a unique wiggle, especially as it is started on the retrieve and does look something like some sort of injured bait fish. Already it has caught a lot of big Florida bass in the few months it has been around.

The lure, itself, is brittle compared to most mass produced American plugs. It’s made principally of balsa and I saw one badly knocked out of plumb by a single tarpon strike. That doesn’t mean the hooks won’t hold. They’re fastened together and you can land your fish even with a frazzled plug.

I’m not selling Rapalas but I am going to watch their progress with great interest. These things will catch fish and I am anxious to see just how the American fisherman is going to react to a killer that comes apart after a few good fish—and costs up to three bucks.

Main secret of the lure’s effectiveness is its extreme buoyancy—hard to achieve without balsa and expensive construction. Let’s see what the American competition will come up with.

Possibly the most deadly panfish artificial of all is a rather commonplace-appearing spinning lure made up of a tiny spinner, one of those sponge rubber bugs with rubber legs and a small sinker as casting weight.

Small spinner-fly combinations have always been tops for bream and the rubber legs seem to add something.

When fishing the darned things you can feel the little varmints yanking on those rubber legs, even when they don’t get the hook. Maybe they do it just for kicks.

Lots of fishermen have never noticed the minia ture aquatic show put on by needlefish, apparently for lack of anything better to do.

Generally it’s a little fellow about the size of a short lead pencil. He’ll locate a floating leaf, stick or scrap of water hyacinth and jump clear over it all in a flash. The resultantsplash isn’t much more than the flick of a few drops so it’s easy to miss the performance. Small people, small pleasures.

(JULY, 1963)

(Continued on page 36)
A trained dog is the mark of a well-trained and not a difficult goal to achieve. While this presents little problem with most dogs, there is always the individual that will insist on dropping the dummy a few feet from the handler. Perhaps equally as important are the months and years spent in training one finished dog. There is one thing for sure, when you view the finished product, you know your time was not wasted.

At the conclusion of last month's column, your pup was bouncing out to play at the new game of fetch and dummy. If you have followed the previous lessons and your pup is not a problem child, he should be snapping up the simple single retrieve with no difficulty. If this is your situation, the time has arrived to advance the training.

**HOLD IT:** Delivery to hand is the mark of a well-trained dog and not a difficult goal to achieve. While this presents little problem with most dogs, there is always the individual that will insist on dropping the dummy a few feet from the handler. When this happens, it is time to impress upon your dog that his duty is not done and that you insist the dummy be delivered all the way, not just part. If your dog drops the dummy, go immediately and retrieve. If your dog is following the pattern of most normal, healthy retrievers, he is not paying too much attention to your command of **STAY** when you toss a dummy. He has probably left your side and is half way to the fall before it hits the ground. It is important that your dog be steady in both the hunting field and in field trials. Breaking at shot is automatic elimination in field trial competition and will ruin many good shots in the hunting field.

Again it is a matter of repetition in training, but this time you can make use of a little training aid that is used by many trainers in steadying a young dog to shot. A piece of line several yards long or a good leather boot lace that can be slipped through the choke collar can serve as a retention device. Tie a loop on one end of the line and slip it around your wrist. Slip the other end through the collar and hold it in your hand. In many respects you have your puppy to identify. Once your dog has become familiar with the bird on water should present no problem for training some dogs but is not necessary for the dummy, it is his meat. It is now time to teach your companion to use his nose in locating downed game, or in this instance, a downed dummy. To accomplish this select a field that contains heavier growth than your lawn. Have your bird boy toss a dummy into cover that will hide it from the dog's sight, being sure the dummy is thrown high into the air so the dog might mark the fall. Once the dummy hits the ground send your dog to retrieve.

**LONG SINGLE:** Place your bird boy at about the same distance your dummies were falling and your dog in the **SIT** position at your side. With a command of **STAY** to the dog, signal the bird boy. The bird boy should, upon your signal, toss a dummy high in the air so that it can be easily seen by the dog. The dummy should fall ten to fifteen yards past the thrower. To be sure the dog's attention is directed toward the bird boy and the thrown dummy, the thrower should shout, or by other methods, attract the dog's attention. I utilize the words "Bang-Bang," in order to escape the possibility of shouting a word that might sound like the dog's name.

Once your dog has become familiar with the bird boy tossing a dummy it is time to stretch out the distance.

**STEADY:** If your dog is following the pattern of most normal, healthy retrievers, he is not paying too much attention to your command of **STAY** when you toss a dummy. He has probably left your side and is half way to the fall before it hits the ground. It is important that your dog be steady in both the hunting field and in field trials. Breaking at shot is automatic elimination in field trial competition and will ruin many good shots in the hunting field.

To train a retriever or any dog demands constant repetition, but this repetition should never be allowed to enter the realm of boredom on the part of the dog or exasperation on the part of the trainer. Remember that six training sessions of ten minutes each over a period of six days will accomplish more than one sixty minute session on the same lesson.

**HUNTING:** At this point your dog has been retrieving by sight. It is now time to teach your companion to use his nose in locating downed game, or in this instance, a downed dummy. To accomplish this select a field that contains heavier growth than your lawn. Have your bird boy toss a dummy into cover that will hide it from the dog's sight, being sure the dummy is thrown high into the air so the dog might mark the fall. Once the dummy hits the ground send your dog to retrieve.

You will probably be amazed to find your dog going to the exact location of the fall even though you are sure he cannot see the dummy. Should the dog not immediately locate the dummy he will in all probability begin looking for the hidden object. When his eyes fail to reveal its presence, mother nature will step in and open up that wonderful choke bore nose of the retriever and, once your dog passes down-wind and gathers one whiff of the dummy, it is his meat.

Use of prepared training scents may be useful in training some dogs but is not necessary for training retrievers. It is amazing the scent that a training dummy can acquire, and I have seen retrievers wade a dummy as far as fifty feet away. I know one little retriever trainer of the opposite sex that used to carry a dummy under her blouse. I think the objective was to give the dummy a familiar scent for her puppy to identify.

(Continued on page 36)
A coppery sun peered over the dark treetops of the St. Johns Marsh. Streamers of mist rose from the black water. The brazen roar of an airboat shattered the vast silence.

We churned through a reedy pond, crashed through a fringe of bay bushes and sped across an undated prairie of pine and palmetto. A cypress graveyard flashed past. Then the world pressed open again. Dead ahead, sawgrass. Chaff sprayed from the whirling prop. I hoped guide Neil could see where he was going.

At last we emerged into the open again. Desd ahead was a solid wall of tall cypress. Neil, perched high on the driver's seat, clamped his cigar stub tighter and squeezed the airboat into a narrow, curvy track between the cypress knees.

When a cluster of ponds showed through the trees, he cut the motor. Neil, Gerry Clontz and I grabbed our tackle. We split up to work different arms of a pond shaped like a clover leaf. With the motor silenced, the slosh of our wading seemed thunderous. A limpkin cried mournfully close by. Another airboat buzzed faintly in the distance.

Making as little commotion as possible, I paused often to look and listen. Several tiny bass hit on random casts and were turned loose.

A big bass gives final Junge but can't quite clear the water.

A long cast ahead a bruiser struck noisily near a grassy point. To my right and maybe 70 feet behind me, another dandy exploded in a patch of thick pepper grass. An easy cast to the left a third husky bigmouth rolled, leaving a tubsize boil near the shoreline.

What to do in an enviable spot like that? My answer is to cast at the largest fish I see, hoping the others will wait. That meant the bass at the point was first.

Quickly, I slid wader-clumsy feet closer. The ponds are lightly fished. But big bass are spooky in that clear, shallow water. A noisy fisherman is likely to catch only unsophisticated 12-inchers.

I tossed the weedless spoon and rind combo 10 feet beyond the spot where the largemouth had showed himself. Just before it touched down I hauled back on the spin rod to soften the splash. I started the spoon back fast enough to make it gurgle as it squirmed between the grass stems.

Before it traveled four feet, a bow wave moved out to intercept. I didn't alter the pace as the wake bore down. The bass grabbed the spoon in a foamy boil. I lowered the rod tip and snapped it back up swiftly.

An angry hunk of bass came thrashing out, mouth yawning and gills flapping. He landed in an open spot, saw his mistake and pulled out by. Another airboat buzzed right under my feet. He startled me so I nearly jumped out of my waders.

We gave that two-acre pond the quick once-over in less than 30-casts. (Continued on next page)
Newspaper man Irv Deibert shows a beauty that gobbled up a plastic worm.

Some ponds are so thick you can fish for 30 minutes without getting spoon wet.
Modern day progress is bringing about many changes to the natural environment of Florida’s beautiful aquatic environment of the river. Fish camps and dwellings are built on the shores. Wilderness subdivisions and estates are built to accommodate the growing populations. Agriculture, sewage, and industrial waste are rapidly expanding populations. The result is that the current flows in a leisured manner northward. Nor is it only because the river is affected by winds and tides which on many occasions reverse the current flow along half its length, or that in its waters are mingled freshwater fishes and all types of marine and salt-tolerant species.

Inland from the eastern coast of Florida, the three hundred miles of river invites residents and visitors to fishing and boating adventures. The unique charm of this river does not lie only in its size, or in the fact that the current flows in a leisurely manner northward. Nor is it only because the river is affected by winds and tides which on many occasions reverse the current flow along half its length, or that in its waters are mingled freshwater fishes and all types of marine and salt-tolerant species.

In the happy combination of all these and of many other circumstances that the river has an almost irresistible appeal. Flowing through a sparsely settled watershed, the St. Johns River provides some of the best freshwater fishing that Florida can offer. The angler can find wide expanses of water, or cozy coves and channels protected from the wind, as suits his mood or convenience.

By HAROLD MOODY
Fisheries Division

ST. JOHNS RIVER

The outdoorsman and nature-lover cannot fail to find pastoral beauty along its shores, almost wherever he goes. In springtime acres of watery bordering marshes gaily flutter their multitudinous pennants of wild blue iris, but deep in damp cathedral-like cypress swamps where the wind never seems to blow, the world is timeless, changeless and majestic.

Early and Recent Studies

Studies of the St. Johns River fishery by personnel of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission’s Fishery Division date back at least 15 years. A University of Florida student, William M. McLane, who later became a member of the Fishery Division, was then working on a synoptic study of the fishes of the river which culminated in his doctoral dissertation 10 years later.

About that time (in late 1948) a large-scale study was launched by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission’s Fishery Division of the catch from commercial haul seines in the St. Johns River and the effects of such work on sportfishing success. Additional work included the tagging and release of 4,298 largemouth bass caught in the nets operating on Lake George.

These studies continued until 1953, when they were terminated.

Several years ago, a detailed analysis and evaluation of this data was made through a Federal-Aid supported project (F-11-B) of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Compilations and statistical analyses of these data were performed through automated machine methods. Although this information is now ten years old the general conclusions derived from it are still valid.

The more recent Federal-Aid-supported Lake and Stream project F-6-R began field work in July 1962 toward preparation of a fisherman’s map of the St. Johns River. Activities included interviews with operators of public fishing camps and with anglers to determine current sportfishing pressure and success, the locations of the fishing camps, the accommodations available for public use, and other information preliminary to preparation of the map and formulation of plans for intelligent management of the fishery.

A Unique River

The river has a sluggish flow because the waters at its source (300 miles south from the mouth at Jacksonville) lie less than 28 feet above sea-level. The St. Johns is dependent upon rainfall for its flow. It is navigable nearly to its source except in times of drought when the upper section (south of Lake Harney) often goes nearly dry.

Flooding is rare. Low water usually occurs between the months of March and June, and high water from October to December. Levels vary seasonally from low at, or slightly below, sea-level to highs, after storms or hurricanes, of about six feet above sea-level in the DeLand area.

(Continued on next page)
The Upper River

The river rises from the level, wide, marshy, treeless plains in southern Brevard County near Lake Helen Blazes. This lake is the first of the St. Johns chain of lakes. It varies greatly in size, overflowing its ill-defined banks in times of flooding, and going nearly, if not completely dry when rains are scant.

The shore and bottom here and in Lake Sawgrass, immediately downstream from it, are of a fibrous peat, the remains of thick marsh vegetation which formerly flourished, and still does, all through the upper river regions. Often this material breaks loose from the shore and forms large floating islands which support a heavy growth of plants.

The character of Lake Washington, a body of water larger than the two previously mentioned lakes, is physically similar. These lakes, and Lake Winder just below Lake Washington, are related to the river as beads on a chain. The connecting channel is relatively long but the low banks are not well-defined. They are sometimes narrow and not over 20 feet across, and sometimes nearly as wide as the surrounding plain itself, depending on the amount of current rain fall.

As it passes through Lake Winder the river channel becomes more distinct and is choked with fewer plants, and firm sandy bottoms become evident. Cypress islands begin to appear. From Lake Winder northward the river flows through Lake George and into the Puzzle Lakes. Here the channel meanders into a confusing maze of branches and dead-end sloughs. In times of drought this portion goes nearly dry.

An unusual set of shallow, prairie type lakes; South, Loughman and Salt Lakes, connect with the northern part of the Puzzle Lakes. They receive drainage from a large marshy area to the northeast which contains old marine deposits of salt left over from the time when this section was part of the sea.

A number of characteristically marine and salt-tolerant plants and animals are found here. Although freshwater fishes are present, brackish-water and marine forms are very much in evidence. They represent permanent breeding populations rather than migrants from the sea.

Central River Area

North of Puzzle Lakes the river enters Lake Harney with its gently sloping, wide sandy beaches.

From Lake Harney northward to Lake Monroe, river banks are definite and high, and waters are broadened frequently into sloughs, and the tree stands are chiefly live-oak and cabbage palm hammocks.

The Mullet Lake area in this section is a shallow slough which in time of low water shrinks up into a series of small pools. Salinities in the Mullet Lake region, as in the Salt Lake chain, are high, and marine and salt-tolerant species of animals and plants are likewise present.

North of Lake Harney the river curves westward and across the eastern end of Lake Jessup, and through Lake Monroe at Sanford. The section of the St. Johns between Lake Harney and Monroe supports an important and growing sportfishery for the anadromous American shad during the winter months when the fish enter the river from the sea on their annual spawning run. North of Lake Monroe the Wekiva River enters from the west.

From Lake Monroe to Lake George the river is connected with four lakes entering from the east: Lakes Beresford, Woodruff, Dexter and Spring Garden. Several springs discharge their flow into the river in this area; Blue Springs, DeLeon Springs and Alexander Springs.

Lake George is the largest and widest lake formed by the St. Johns River. It is remarkably uniform in depth, averaging about 10 feet. It is predominantly sandy-bottomed, bordered on the west shore by high ancient dunes, and on the eastern by relatively lower, sometimes seasonally flooded land.

Three springs discharge their flow into Lake George from the west; Salt, Silver Glen and Juniper. The waters of all three of these springs have appreciable salt contents derived from the old marine deposits through which they pass.

Degrees of salinity of the waters of these springs vary with their flow conditions. As would be expected, the waters of Lake George are slightly brackish in nature. Greater or lesser amounts of dissolved salt are evident dependent on flow conditions of the river, of the springs, and of the ocean tides which, under favoring wind conditions, are felt twice daily 120 miles upstream from the mouth of the St. Johns River. In recent years the amounts of salt present in the waters of the region from Lake George southwards appear to be increasing.

The Lower River

From Lake George, on its journey to the sea, the river narrows somewhat until it reaches Little Lake George where it widens again. A submerged spring, Croaker Hole, adds its flow here, containing some dissolved salt, to the river water.

A large volume of fresh water, however, dilutes the salt content of the St. Johns just north of this area. It comes from the Oklawaha River, the St. Johns River chain of lakes.

Photo by Florida State News Bureau
The St. Johns River

SPORT FISHING ECONOMIC VALUE

In spite of the low degree of utilization of the fishing waters of the St. Johns, the value of its sportfishery is astonishingly high. The Lake and Stream team interviewed public fishing camp owners and asked how many boats had been rented during 1962. To these figures were added the estimated number of private boats fishing on the river during the year.

This sum was multiplied by the average number of fishermen observed per boat. A theoretical value of two dollars per fisherman-trip, the minimum amount believed fishermen would be willing to pay if a charge were made for fishing privileges, would then give an estimate of the recreational value of the sportfishery. This figure amounted to more than 2.3 million dollars last year.

It excluded, of course, all other expenses a fisherman normally incurs, such as cost of fishing tackle, bait, fuel, meals, lodging and transportation. It is estimated that each angler spends, on an average, at least ten dollars a day on such items. The value of the St. Johns River sportfishery in terms of money businesses receive from fishing trips alone, was calculated to be at least ten million dollars during 1962.
Freshwater game fishes, such as the Largemouth Black Bass, are abundant throughout the drainage area of the St. Johns. Lunker size specimens often decorate the angler's stringer.

(Continued from page 19) Johns largest tributary, 125 miles in length, which enters the river at this point from the west. From this region north to Palatka the river is narrow, with well-defined shores, and sometimes divides into several channels as it flows around islands. It has greater depths here. Dunn's Creek enters the river in the Seven Sisters Islands area. The creek drains from Lakes Crescent and Disston, which lie in a large depression east of and parallel to the axis of the St. Johns.

From Palatka to Jacksonville the river undergoes a dramatic change in character. It assumes a very wide, lagoon-like aspect, with a basin as much as three miles across. The shores are mainly sandy and high, and are bordered by beautiful live-oak and magnolia hammocks in many places.

Rice Creek, with steep gradient swamp-stream tributaries, enters just north of Palatka from the west. From the west also enters Black Creek, a tributary of some size and of unusual depth—up to 90 feet in its vicinity of Green Cove Springs.

Doctor's Lake, a large inlet of the St. Johns, is located near the town of Orange Park. At Jacksonville the channel constricts and flows eastward into the Atlantic. Nearly all the tributaries here are tidal salt marsh streams.

The Big Nets

An important commercial fishery for freshwater as well as other edible species has existed from the 1870's on into 1945. It was centered about Lake George for the past 50 years. Catfishes, largemouth bass, bream and crappie were the principal food and game fishes exploited. Capture was mainly by netting. In the days of sailing vessels the nets were small, not over several hundred feet in length. They were put out and pulled by rowboats and by hand labor in relatively small water areas adjacent to the shore. With the advent of the gasoline engine the area of the gasoline engine the area of water which could be surrounded with a net was so greatly increased that nets two and three thousand yards in length were finally put to use in Lake George.

Conservationists eventually became deeply concerned over such exploitation of fishes, and a series of acts were passed, at both State and Federal levels, prohibiting sale of largemouth bass, bream (bluegill, shellcracker, redbreast, and other species of sunfishes), and crappie. Other studies made by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's Fishery Division on the river included creel census of sportfishermen and observations of the catch from small, two to three hundred yard long nets which operated in the river near Palatka. These seine were allowed under permit from the State Board of Conservation to catch American shad and herring from November to March of each year. Such seine has been done in this part of the river for more than 70 years. The Fishery Division's observations of the shad nets and of sportfisherman catch date back to 1949.

The Fishes

The seineing studies in Doctor's Lake, Lake Crescent, and in Lakes Monroe, Jessup and Harney showed that the principal species of fresh water fishes were distributed in much the same proportions throughout the river. Somewhat larger quantities of marine-type species were found in the lower river, and in localized area of higher salt concentrations. Fewer saltwater fishes were found in Lakes Harney, Jessup and Monroe than in Lakes George and Crescent.

Freshwater Finshes

Freshwater game fishes abundantly distributed throughout the drainage system are black croppie, bluegill, largemouth bass, and redbreast sunfish (shellcracker). They represent 16, 11, 7, and 6 percent, respectively, of the total weight of all adult species found in Lake George.

Common freshwater gamefishes include spotted sunfish (stumpknocker), redbreast sunfish, and warwoman. These fishes are usually partial to grassy shoreline habitats or flowing water. They are found near the mouth of springs in Lake George.

Freshwater gamefishes occasionally found include dollar sunfish, flier, and chain pickerel.

Post 2—Next Month
Florida's Oldest Fossil

By STANLEY OLSEN
Florida Geological Survey

Florida is one of the few states that attracts tourists who desire to spend a good deal of their time collecting fossils. This is due partially to the accessibility to a number of fossil beds which are located on Florida's beaches and are constantly being eroded by the ever present surf action. Here the fossil hunter can comb ocean beach and fossil collecting, picking up the animal bones and teeth that are being exposed on the beaches with every rise and fall of the tide.

For the most part these eroded teeth and bones are fragmentary and represent mammals, reptiles and fish that were residents of the area during Pleistocene times, some ten thousand years ago.

It is only natural that the majority of these visiting fossil collectors wish to know what animals are represented by these fragments and many of the fossils find their way to my office, being either mailed in or brought in by the tourist on his way north. After looking over thousands of these specimens each year it is no trick to predict that the bulk of these forms will be readily identified as belonging to common, well known animals. It is rare indeed when a new creature appears among the numerous fragments of mastodon, tapir or horse. Nevertheless it is this search for the rare and unexpected that prevents the task of determining these fossils from becoming too routine or uninteresting.

Once in a very great while an unusual occurrence of a fossil will be brought to my attention. It was through a most uncommon stroke of luck that Florida’s oldest fossil vertebrate was discovered.

During the summer of 1955 the Amerada Petroleum Corporation drilled an exploratory well approximately 12 miles northwest of Okeechobee. In a well core that was recovered from a depth of 9,210 feet were the remains of an aquatic turtle of Cretaceous Age. The drill bit just happened to be in a position to penetrate the spot in which the bones of a fossil turtle were embedded. The recovered core, of gray argillaceous dolomite, was only 4½ inches in diameter but enough of the turtle's skeleton was recovered to establish that it was a

Florida’s oldest fossil vertebrate was recovered in a well core from a depth of 9,210 feet.

Florida is not uncommon to receive large bones of Pleistocene animals (mostly those of mastodon or mammoths) that are sent to the Florida Geological Survey with a request for additional information on these “dinosaur bones.”

Dinosaurs did not survive beyond Upper Cretaceous times (120 million years ago) and of course their remains are not found in rocks that are younger than the Cretaceous. Since formations of the correct age, to contain dinosaur bones, are only found many thousands of feet below the surface of Florida it is not likely that any dinosaur bones will ever be recovered from this state. The closest surface formations of Cretaceous Age lie beyond the north Florida border, some 100 airline miles.

It is possible, but not probable, that a well core (as in the case of the turtle and trilobite) could penetrate a dinosaur if all other conditions for its preservation were met beforehand.
FLORIDA BOATING ADVENTURE

Gulf Coast River Cruising—the Wacasassa,
the Withlacoochee, Crystal River and the Homosassa

By ELGIN WHITE

I have seen the Wacasassa and the Homosassa and the Withlacoochee and the Crystal Rivers. But most of those sights were from bridges as I hauled across U. S. 19 headin' north or south. Matter of fact, where U. S. 19 crosses the Wacasassa it’s hardly wider than a creek you’d wade. The Crystal and Homosassa Rivers aren’t even crossed by U. S. 19, and the Withlacoochee is just a shade wider than the Wacasassa when viewed from a car. Even if these rivers weren’t navigable, just the names would lift enough curiosity to make a fellas wonder what’s up them thar waters. They are all Seminole Indian names, except, of course, the Crystal. Wacasassa means, unenchantingly enough, “cow range.” Withlacoochee has a somewhat more romantic name, meaning “little river.” And Homosassa has a commercial tinge to it, translating into “land of peppers.”

But the interesting thing about these rivers is that they are navigable. And when we found out they were accessible to one another by boat, then we felt this is a journey that had to be made. A good friend of mine, E. T. Bales, sports editor of the Chattanooga (Tenn.) News-Free Press, is about the boatingest bug I ever saw. Last time I voiced with him long distance he said, “You be sure and call me when you plan another boat cruise down that way. I want to go.” E. T. had made a cruise with us before, and he had such a ball that I knew I had a hooked pigeon when it came to boating on Florida waters. So, I called. “E. T.,” I said, “You ever heard of the Wacacassa, Withlacoochee and Homosassa?” I thought I’d get an amazing “Gosh, No!” for an answer, but of “E. T. said, “Sure, I have. Best redfishing water I know of! But I thought you wanted to go boatin’? Can we cruise those rivers without pulling the boats out and trailerin’ ‘em between rivers?” I assured him we could, though I was not absolutely certain myself at the time. “Then I’ll be there!” was E. T.’s affirmative reply after we talked time and date.

In order not to leave E. T. as well as myself hanging on a non-navigable hope, I called Harold Parr of the Florida State Board of Conservation and queried him about the navigation of those rivers. “Sure you can boat ‘em,” Harold advised me. “It isn’t easy, especially for a novice, but they are navigable.”

Parr evidently cleared us in the novice division, as he offered the services of two of his agents, Marion Oliver and Dick Moody, to guide us in our adventure on the W W and H. We certainly didn’t take issue with that offer, ‘cause we knew these Conservation agents plied these waters daily carrying out their numerous duties, and if anyone knew the routes, they would. We had E. T.’s boat, a beautiful new Glaspar with 75 hp. Johnson, and the Conservation Department boat, but I wanted one more to go along on the trip. Just in case we all got botched up and had to walk back.

I called Lester Walker of Perry, Florida, and asked him if he wouldn’t like to christen one of his new Sportcraft models on this river and Gulf of Mexico jaunt. “Sure,” Lester drawled. “Matter of fact, we’re just puttin’ the finishing touches on one of our ‘63 models, and you can take it along.”

Lester’s generosity solved one part of the problem, and I called Bill Prentiss of Johnson Motors, Topeka, to solve the other part—propulsion! As usual, Prentiss came through like Mickey Mantle in the last of the ninth, and we were in business with another ‘63 Johnson 75.

The stage was now set for our great adventure. We decided on December 7 as a starting date. Not in droves if we had a bit of a real spell, and wanting a chance to redfish in front of E. T. Bales’ home like waving a red flag in front of a bull.

Photographer Johnny Johnson and I met E. T., Marion and Dick, the night of the 7th at Chiefland, a small community on U. S. 19 & 98 about 15 miles north of the Wacacassa, where we were to launch the boats. Chiefland is also Dick Moody’s home.

We discussed launching plans and ideas at length at supper that night, and we discovered from Marion and Dick that we would have to make part of this journey in the Gulf of Mexico.

“Look,” said Marion, pointing to a chart, “when we come to the mouth of the Wacacassa, we’ll have to move about four-five miles out into the Gulf in order to move around oyster bars. There’s some shallow water around there, and with these boats dragging a pretty heavy motor, we’re gonna need pretty good water. We can cut back after about four miles and head southeast to the Withlacoochee.” That sounded reasonable enough. After all, for the most part the Gulf of Mexico is rather smooth, particularly in this “big bend” section of the Florida Gulf Coast, where flats and oyster bars extend for miles along the way.

Next morning bright and early we took the boats down to Williams’ Landing, a fishing camp on (Continued on next page)
The Wacasassa near the hamlet of Gulf Hammock. The morning we got there was pretty nippy, and when we pulled up to the launching ramp you would think there was a convention of trailer manufacturers. Never saw so many cars and trailers in one spot!

There was just one answer. And the camp operator at Williams' Landing blurted out the good news before we even asked for it. "Redfish!" he chortled. "Man, they're in here by the millions! Bet they've seen so many cars and trailers in one spot!

"No good at all!" But the huddled angler at the other end of the boat poked his hand out from under his jacket, grinned, and held up five gnarled fingers.

By the time we got out to the mouth of the river leading into the Gulf of Mexico, we were met by another Conservation agent, "Capt." Henry Gibson. This old timer is one of those you read about. He knows every rock, pebble, fish scale, and grain of sand on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico from Cedar Key, where he lives, all the way over to the Yucatan Peninsula. "Capt." Henry is 75 years old, but he hauls and whips his outboard around like a 20-year-old cowboy, and neither sleet, rain, hurricane, or water spout can keep him off the water. Seems he was born to it.

"Capt." Henry rapped his hunger for redfishi... and so up, which it is liable to be doing during winter months. In the spring and summer, weather conditions should be ideal for this run, as most wind movement comes from easterlies, and the Gulf of Mexico is as smooth as silk.

"Capt." Henry left us as we entered the channel of the Witchesaco River. Seems he had to go back to Cedar Key to investigate the loss of a fisherman's lobster trap that occurred the night before. All I know is, if I were a culprit that had lifted someone's lobster trap, I'd sure hate to have "Capt." Henry Gibson on my tail!

As we moved into the Witchesaco River, we were again greeted by the sight of hundreds of fishing boats going for redfish and sea trout. E. T.'s fishing finger started itching again, but with a tremendous show of restraint, he didn't pick up his gear. He knew we were planning to make the Izaak Walton Lodge at Yankeetown by night, so he merely satisfied his hunger for redfishing with the usual queries as we passed the myriad of boats. The answers to his queries were about the same as those we received on the Wacasassa.

The Witchesaco is really a beautiful river, fringed with palm hammocks and deep, lush tropical greenery on all sides. A twisting, four-mile run took us past a small shrimp fleet on into the Izaak Walton Lodge at Yankeetown, where we were greeted on the dock by Bud and Gayle Finley, owners of the Lodge.

The Izaak Walton Lodge is one of those places you often read about. With a rustic setting of brown wood structure, trimmed in native stone the Lodge is the last word in fishing comfort for an outdoorsman. The Finleys have been here for quite a few years, and you couldn't budge 'em from this rural, easy-gain life with a twenty-mule team. Yankeetown itself, in spite of its name, is not overly loaded with Yankees, though it was started many years ago by a fella named Knots who looked upon his tropic paradise as a perfect spot for Yankees to get away from other Yankees. So, he named it Yankeetown, and even laid the more than 35 square miles that comprise Yankeetown into regular lots with streets and intersections. As a matter of fact, the Izaak Walton Lodge is on the corner of Paradise Road and 63rd Street. Across the street is the post office, a store and a garage, and that's the heart of Yankeetown. But the citizens have visions of growth, as did Knots, so perhaps it was a good idea to have 63rd Street pretty far uptown.

We were treated to a magnificent lunch by the Finleys, and the meals at the Izaak Walton Lodge are some of the reasons why fishermen from all over the nation come to this place for their angling enjoyment. We grouped around a huge fireplace that felt good after the slight chill on the water, and I knew if we didn't move on in a hurry, we'd lose E. T. What with that magnificent lodge, the redfishing, the outstanding cuisine, the beautiful scenery, and the wonderful hospitality of the Finleys, I was afraid of E. T. Would just as soon "camp out" right here.

It was with real reluctance that we had to leave the Izaak Walton and the Finleys, but the wind was (Continued on next page)
As we moved away from the Crystal Lodge Motel, we passed a small island, right in the middle of the river, with a beautiful home sitting right in the middle of it. The island was called "Christmas Island," and it must have seemed like Christmas for the petticoats and stockings that was floating on the water. We moved on to see the beautiful scenery.

Before leaving, Knox Purcell advised us that we could move through the maze of islands that lined that route south. However, since Marion wasn't sure of the waters along that way, and since we had these fairly large sized boats, we figured discretion was the better part of valor and moved on back outside in the Gulf.

Fortunately, the water was somewhat smoother than the previous day, and it took us but a short run to the markers leading into the Homosassa.

We were met at Marker 28 by an old friend of E T.'s who had joined us at the dinner the night before. He is Paul Willbanks, one of Chattanooga's most enthusiastic sportsmen.

Willbanks could hardly wait for our arrival. As soon as we got within shouting distance of his boat, his guide hauled out the most magnificent string of redfish we had yet seen. "Been out here last night, just waiting for you to show up." Willbanks grinned.

Stately Cypress trees lined the waters' edge as we moved away from the island. We passed the entrance to this fantastic attraction many times while driving on U. S. 19, but never suspected the surprise that would indicate its holiday tag.

As we turned into the river, however, the hospitality of the folks in Crystal River just wouldn't let us come in without a greeting party, and a large cruiser with Aubrey Allen and Knox Purcell of the Crystal River Chamber of Commerce on board came churning our way to meet us.

They took us in hand, so to speak, and led us through another maze of fishing boats, fishing for you know what, up the five-mile run of Crystal River to the docks of the Crystal Lodge Motel, where we were royally entertained by Charles Miller, our enthusiastic host.

The convenience of the Crystal Lodge Motel to the water is what makes modern day boating around here such a pleasure. You just haul up to the dock, tie'er up, and walk across the lawn to a plush motel room. More, what the pioneers must have missed!

That night, after a refreshing warm shower that eliminated some of the salt spray we picked up on our little jaunt with the Gulf, we were kicking up the Chamber of Commerce folks in the area at Hinson's famous restaurant at Homosassa Springs, about seven miles south of Crystal River. This cuisine palace is well known to the thousands of tourists who travel U. S. 19-98 to the St. Petersburg, Tampa area, and of course, we were treated to the specialty of the season — guess what? — that's right, broiled redfish!

But don't laugh ... that broiled redfish was the tastiest fish meal these every-day folks ever tasted. It was absolutely delicious prepared with lemon butter, and I can readily understand why those hundreds of fishermen bang and push each other in little boats to get at these reds in the rivers! If you make a run in this area, demand broiled redfish ... you may never leave!

The next morning, I talked with Aubrey Allen at length about Crystal River and its surroundings, and he responded with typical Chamber of Commerce enthusiasm. He elatedly advised me that Crystal River is so named because of the clarity of the water, which we could easily see, and that the river has no tributary but is fed entirely by clear water springs that boil into being all around the area.

It really is a river full of charm. The Crystal River offers a waterfront version of Florida that is not altogether typical of the state itself. Many see here a blending of modern real estate development and fine homes — some luxurious — without basically disturbing the natural surroundings.

Cruising this Crystal River area, it would be wise to obtain from the Chamber of Commerce a large cruise map showing the waters, the danger areas, the shallows, and the beautiful attractions of this really fascinating water wonderland.

We left around noon to make our 20-mile run south to Homosassa, where we were to wind up our journey with a visit to Nature's Giant Fish Bowl.

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Stately Cypress trees lined the waters' edge as we cruised leisurely up the Homosassa River.
Muzzle Flashes (Continued from page 7)

For accurate shooting of rifled slugs can be had in all gauges. Barrels can be interchanged instantly, without factory servicing. When designing the Model 500, the Mossberg engineers sensibly put the gun's safety on the top curve of the receiver, right under your thumb, where a safety naturally belongs. Also, inclusion of a disconnecting trigger, that requires complete release of trigger pressure between shots, automatically eliminates any chance of unintentional "doubles" during moments of fast action. Initial loading is accomplished by turning the gun over and dropping shells onto a loading platform in the bottom of the receiver, pushing each indexed into the magazine until it catches. Feeding is automatic and straight-line thereafter, each time the gun's slide-action is worked.

Good walnut and metallic finishing, set off by a hand-filling fore-end and gray rubber recoil pad, give the slightly less than seven pound gun attractive appearance.

For the past several weeks I have been putting the Mossberg Model 500 in 12 gauge, through its paces. I have shot the gun privately and unhurriedly, and again in public service firearms education exhibition shooting. To state it simply, the new shotgun has left its mark on me—mentally and physically.

Right away I liked the manner in which the gun balanced, shouldered and functioned for both single and multiple shots. Shooting at clay pigeons whizzed from a fast trap, I not only found my targets quickly being invariably pulverized them in a black puff of powdered pitch, a tangible indication of a well centered shot charge. In fact, I have been mightily impressed with the Mossberg 500 every time I've shot it. Scorewise, it has delivered on a par with the most expensive of pump-action shotguns. A dream gun, as far as I'm concerned.

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One day I had to hold practice sessions with a friend of mine, who is not a great shot. I've had to hold practice sessions with you likely need some alteration the gun over and dropping shells onto a loading platform in the bottom of the receiver, pushing each indexed into the magazine until it catches. Feeding is automatic and straight-line thereafter, each time the gun's slide-action is worked.

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Dogs: Hunting

(Continued from page 11)

Should your dog fail to locate the dummy in the heavy cover and, should he leave the vicinity of the fall, don't pick it up for him but rather hoot it out to the area of the fall, call the dog, and show him the dummy. Don’t laugh when he acts as though he found it all by himself but allow him to pick it up, then have him return to his original position before you accept the dummy. On the next try shorten the distance between the dog and the fall, but allow him the privilege of hunting and locating the dummy.

I have found on occasions, when a heavy schedule slowed my training routine, I could toss a few dummies at night to help develop the dog and the gun. Since then send him in the direction of dummies at night to help develop the dog and the gun with the dog's greatest pleasure, that of retrieving. Have your bird boy use a toy cap pistol as he cooks these sessions and with the dog in his mouth.

A few sessions and your dog will decide that this water bit is as much fun as land retrieving, and a whole heck of a lot cooler.

Birds: By now your dog is developing into a retriever that you don’t mind showing off to a few close hunting buddies. He is pretty steady to the gun, shows good use of his nose and hunting instinct, delivers to hand, and doesn’t shake water until after delivery. So hunting season is in the near future and you begin to wonder about actual game birds. It is time to introduce your dog to feathers.

You can take chicken wings and tie them to a training dummy. Don’t laugh if he cannot see the gun, he cannot see the dummy. Don’t laugh when he acts as though he found this dummy. Don’t laugh if he leaves the vicinity of the dummy. Don’t laugh. He is probably doing his best. If you think your dog is joyriding dummies, just wait until you put him on live game. Once the pigeon, grade dog has developed into a good helper, he takes a good grip, and delivers without dropping the bird. It is time for ducks and water. Locate a domestic mallard, tie its wings behind its back, cross and tie the feet, then toss it into the water. Command your dog to retrieve and hold on to your vest buttons as they are bound to pop with pride when the pop of a few minutes ago delivers his first duck.

The words “Hard Mouth” are often over-employed by many old buddy dubbies and are seldom of real concern to retriever owners. Of course, your dog may displace a feather, or on occasion tear the skin of a bird, but this is not hard mouth and should cause you no great concern. Proper introduction to feathers can go a long way toward preventing hard mouth.

Turning to the dog, he probably known the sound. It is the duty of a trained retriever to deliver each bird to the hand of the handler.

Giving the dog a line is nothing more than a system of pointing location of downed quack.

Airboat Bass

(Continued from page 15)

That’s when the old busters venture out of the heavy growth that makes them unapproachable the rest of the year. You can find them fishing their beds in wide-open water. On a calm day with the sun behind you, it’s a cinch to spot them through polaroid glasses.

Stalking these big bass is tremendous sport. (Some people consider that this is painful. Big ologists think differently.) It may even be beneficial to weed out some of the spanners. And there’s no law against releasing a few of your ownatch.

This fishing takes even more stealth than blind casting. And here your throw has to be on the money.

Usually it’s best to cast a few feet past an occupied bed and work your lure back across. The bass probably will smash at it angrily. Sometimes repeated cast ing will stir up a bass that refused to hit at first. If he shies away, you’ve scared him. Better to rest him while you go on to the next one.

Many bass from seven pounds up to 12 and 13 have been caught this way during the bedding season. That’s the time to be there if you want a lunker.

The wild beauty of the marsh is sure to delight outdoorsmen. Wildlife abounds. There are birds of every description, deer, raccoon, otters, muskrats, squirrels, rabbits and bobcats. A few wading birds and bald eagles still survive here. And a cottontail may try to help himself to your strawberries.

But the main thing is the fishing. And you might find that pond full of eight-pounders.
FISHING
(Continued from page 9)

I can't believe the "running line" won't be heavy enough to turn over the "snock" and your back-cast will tend to drop down on the water behind you.

Of course, Scientific Anglers make the other types of line too.

By the way, need for extreme distance is very rare in Florida fishing. The short tapere will suit me for about 98 percent of my casting.

The Scientific Anglers concern also "squaked up" the lines a light cream color and I have always been a chump for a line you could see working through the air. I think it's purty.

Reel Repairing

Fishing reel repair has become a complicated trade. With American manufacturers turning out new models almost daily, with a flood of imports ranging from premium quality to junk and with occasional changes in the old favorites, a reel repairman needs a shopfull of parts.

This situation is complicated by the activities of cut-rate stores, many of which make no effort at servicing. In a lot of cases they've run the little guy out of the reel business, thus doing away with the fellow who used to do the repair work.

And some concerns blantly advise you to return the reel to the factory if it needs servicing, even though you need is a 9-cent spring. In some cases you can get old waiting for factory service.

Fortunately for the serious reel repairman the better-known models have well-established weak points and the manufacturer can stock plenty of the most frequently needed parts without getting too far out on a financial limb. For example, hard-wood casting reels have expendable worms and paws and many spinning reels are expected to need ball attention from time to time.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

BOATING ADVENTURE
(Continued from page 21)

for different varieties) by the thousands. If you think

We went underwater in the "walk-under" tank built expressly for the purpose and could look out at the wandering fish at their own level. There is one place called "Snook Harbor," where the snook seem to congregate as a fraternity, and I could see E.'s "smooth,"literally as he thought how nice it would be to toss a lure among that crowd. No such luck, though—fishing, naturally, is quite "verbotten."

The top of the water at Nature's Giant Fish Bowl was filled with beautifully colored wood ducks, and visitors to the place are handed a pack of peanuts with which to feed these ducks and the hundreds of squirls all agog on the pathways that scamper right up your trousers just to get a peanun.

We asked why the fish were there. The quality to do duty said no one knows. I think E. T. came up with a pretty good observation, though. He said, "I bet there is something I don't go along with."

Confused?

Two errors in last month's issue of Florida Wildlife, June 1963, may have caused some confusion. The first mistake appeared on page 19, in the upper photo caption, naming the fish in the photo as "grouper"—should have been shellersheller. The second major error was on page 23—the photo appeared upside down.

I have been trying some Stren fluorocarbon and the results were some minor content in this water that attracts them, just as warm springs attract human beings for different purposes. Maybe these fish are not up to par and come into this spring to get rejuvenated.

I could see Johnny wasn't buying that, nor did I, but no one had a better reason.

The fellow who left the Fish Bowl, for this is truly a fascinating thing to see. It was started many years ago by Dassy Vance, former Miami fishing star with the Brooklyn Dodgers, after Dassy had retired to Homosassa. The old mascot died last year and is greatly missed by the natives of this region.

We got back in the boats and chummed to the beat of the "Horizon of the Sun,"" and headed for Duncan's bait house where we pulled 'em out at his fine ramp. We planned to trailer the Sport-craft back to Perry, 'cause Lester wanted to "get all the marks and scratches off," he said, before the season. He have it for another cruise. E. T. planned to move on south to do some redfishing (naturally) and the Conservation boys, Marion and Dick, had to get back to their duties.

It was a wonderfui cruise. It's a long one, and it has some rough spots, like running through the Gulf when the wind is kicking up, but it gave us an opportunity to record this trip for those who would like to make a run in a section of Florida that is off the beaten path.

I'm really just that. But the Seminoles were smart when they hung around and nussed these places. It might have been "Little River,""Good Range,"" and "Land of Peppers" to the Indians, but to us, as I know it to be to you, it was a wonderful land of alone place.

Summer is at hand. Now's the time to go.

For further information write Captain Edward J. Duncan, Seminole or Florida Development Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.
Burning? Beware!

Fire is a dangerous tool... but if you must burn, take every precaution. Wait until wind is low and humidity is high. Clear a wide firebreak around area to be burned. Have plenty of help and equipment available, and don't leave until the last spark is out. Help Smokey Bear Preserve Forest Fires in the South!

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 following application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

Only fishing citation applications received within 90 days from date of catch will be honored.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

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

Name (please print)__________________________ __________________________

Address__________________________ City State__________________________

Species__________________________ Weight Length__________________________

Type of Tackle__________________________

Bait or Lure Used__________________________ Where Caught__________________________

When Caught__________________________ in County__________________________

Date Caught__________________________ Caught Witnessed By__________________________

Registered, Weighed By__________________________ At__________________________

(Signature of Applicant)

Cut Out and Save This Application Blank

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

For That Big One...

That Didn’t Get Away

Eligibility Requirements

Species

Largemouth Bass

8 pounds or larger

Chain pickerel

4 pounds or larger

Bluegill (bream)

1 1/2 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 respective establishment.

Our Creature Comforts

(Continued from page 3)

Read Conservation Esthetic, a chapter in Aldo Leopold’s Sando County Almanac. It should be compulsory reading every morning before they begin to shuffle papers and commence their daily tasks of improving nature. The philosophers, the words of caution and gentle sarcasms in Conservation Esthetic, are much more needed today than when written.

Leopold stated long ago that few enterprises are undertaken with such abandon as in the promotion of outdoor recreation. And he further remarks: “It is, by common consent, a good thing for people to get back to nature. But wherein lies the goodness, and what can be done to carry its pursuit?... only the most critical minds are free from doubt.”

His dissertation is poetically eloquent on how more automobiles, roads, cottages and resorts become “a self-destructive process of seeking but not quite finding...a major frustration of mechanized society.” He always maintained that public agencies and money are not panaceas for the fundamental objectives which should be sought, and that resources must be manipulated with the delicacy of a fine instrument, much less bulldozers. Leopold also had a fine scorn for overdoses of gadgets.

Lessons which have long been learned in other facets of resource management are being ignored in this mad rush to create or recreate an outdoor image for a great mass of people not quite sure of what they are seeking and often unappreciative of what they find.

Possibly we have arrived at a point where people should prove their standards of appreciation before being allowed to utilize the out-of-doors. Let the standards of appreciation be raised; let quality correspond more with participation instead of reducing all of nature to the level of our synthetic civilization.

Let us not continue to try and create an outdoor recreation of a fine instrument; to be assiduously sought after; but today always sought after in conjunction with modern creature comforts. In demanding both they see no inconsistencies, no need for compromise.

The dream of primitive simplicity is a cabin in the woods; but when the dream becomes a reality, they want a black top road to the back door, electric lights and indoor plumbing, TV, mosquito eradication, and a 75-h.p. outboard motor. The great outdoor silence becomes a burden of dread if there are no neighbors within shouting distance. They would starve to death if they had to cut their own wood, and become the victim of a coronary if they had to pack in their plunder.

The recreationists of today can easily be as destructive to those elements of nature which they seek as is industry; in some instances, more so. They utilize all the technologies produced by industry to gain their objectives, and in their single-minded pursuit, destroy what is sought. They gain their livelihood from some form of industry, and so industry makes possible their recreation. Whatever sins industry may be guilty of, they are the sins of all.

Today’s generation will never see yesterday’s heritage, and many have no conception of what it was like. Laws may slow down the retreat, but the American heritage will never be saved or reconstructed until the greed and grossness of the human mind has been overcome.
I. Vacation Fun - Favorite pastime while camping at Juniper Springs in Florida's Ocala National Forest is swimming. In the spring, the springs and falls are beautiful. The forest retreat has ideal facilities for tent and trailer camping, plus cabins for rent. - P.S.B. / Photo

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