This Florida Wildlife Magazine Digital Preservation Project is developed with financial assistance provided by the: William H. Flowers, Jr. Foundation and the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida, Inc. through the Conserve Wildlife Tag grant program.
While federal and state laws protect both bald and golden eagles, their numbers are decreasing due to disturbance of nesting birds, loss of habitat to development, illegal shooting, and possibly reduced reproduction as a result of pesticides. In excess of 1,000 southern bald eagles are estimated to exist. According to zoo spokesmen, the breeding potential in captivity for the nation's symbol is minimal.

**The Cover**

Florida's most common woodpecker, the Red-bellied Woodpecker, gets its name from hard-to-see red tinted belly feathers but is recognized by the black and white "ladder back" and red nape and top of head.

Photograph by Wallace Hughes
How To Outwit GUN THIEVES

By George X. Sand

Bill Hogan, one of my hunting buddies, was building mud as he related what had happened to him. Hogan (not his real name) had driven from his ranch to a nearby Florida town, as was his habit, to purchase supplies. He had parked his pickup truck at the curb before a store, then disappeared inside.

In plain sight through the locked truck's rear window were a couple of nice guns—an autoloading shotgun and a lever action 30-30 saddle rifle—that hung from a rack behind the seat.

When Bill returned, a few minutes later, he found the rear window broken and both guns gone. "I'll find the 'thieves'—who did that and tear his jowls out!" Bill Hogan roared helplessly, clenching his big fists at the memory of his frustrating experience.

"I hope he does recover his firearms. But I will be surprised if he ever sees them again—so widespread and efficient has gun thievery become. Never in American history have there been so many firearm thefts. I know from bitter personal experience whereof I speak. My home has been picked clean by gun thieves—twice, in fact, in one 13 month period. More on that shortly.

Ever since a misguided bunch of loudly fanatic legislators at the national level rammed into law the asinine Gun Control Act of 1968, law-abiding sportsmen like Bill Hogan have been increasingly victimized by political activists, holdup artists, and similar distasteful types. The ill-advised Gun Control Act was intended to keep firearms out of the hands of such criminals. Joko, Crime has since increased greatly, despite the repeated assurance by our legislators and the anti-gun lobbyists that it would decrease. Criminals laugh at the requirement that gun dealers not sell them weapons, because of their record. They simply steal the firearms from sportsmen, instead.

Because our Congressmen have chosen to needlessly burden us thus, our only hope is to try and outwit the thieves. A good start in this direction is to train yourself to think (I didn't say act) in the manner of a burglar.

I learned that trick from veteran gunsmith Bill Davis, who sells and repairs firearms in his shop at Fort Myers, and who has repeatedly helped police nab firearm thieves in that city.

"Keep in mind that when this guy breaks into your home or apartment he has to move fast," Bill points out. "He's jittery, because he knows he may be discovered at any moment.

"So...unless he's certain that you are away on vacation, he's not going to take time to make a thorough search. It's not likely, for example, that he will squeeze through a trapdoor to check your attic. In fact, there's not even much chance he will bother to pull a divan away from your living room wall. You would be fairly safe, therefore, in having a couple of long guns hidden behind that divan, hanging from a rack put there for that purpose."

You can find other hiding places like that. Even better ones. (Don't use a divan if you have youngsters who are apt to handle guns hidden there.) Just remember to put yourself in the position of the hurrying gun thief as you walk about your premises.

I wish I had done that before I was robbed. Instead, I had been keeping my choice long guns—those I used most often—in the corner of the master bedroom closet. My 9mm pistol was in the drawer of my bedside table where I could reach for it fast if necessary.

I couldn't have chosen two worse places. Gun thieves have admitted to police that those are the spots they inspect first.

I recall the shocked disbelief my wife and I felt when we returned from a party one night to find our 3-level home ransacked on all floors. The back door has been savagely jimmed. Inside, closet doors were thrown wide. Dresser drawers had been jerked open and the contents strewn inconsiderately in all directions. An expensive pair of embossed riding boots lay at the bottom of the upper level stairs—dropped there, perhaps, by some wild-eyed drug addict who had intended to make off with them, too, to help support his expensive habit.

My wife and I ran helplessly from one room to the next, hoping desperately that we would find certain irreplaceable possessions that had been overlooked—only to cry out in rage when we discovered they had not. Short guns, long guns, spare ammo, jewelry, a complete scuba diving outfit, several thousand dollars worth of professional camera equipment—the scum had gotten it all.

One of the missing long guns was a brand-new Browning 20 gauge over-and-under I had just gotten for my wife to use. Another shotgun, an engraved L.C. Smith double—my first good gun—had been given me as a boy by my since deceased mother. It was of priceless sentimental value to me.

When the police arrived they asked if I had kept serial numbers of the various stolen items. I sure had. The officers assured me they would immediately flash this information throughout the national police network. We never saw any of our lost things again, however.

Our insurance company proceeded to make good a part of our loss—then promptly increased our policy to a part of our loss—then promptly increased our policy to the field, they're also open invitations to gun thieves.
something that hadn’t been our fault at all—and whom we had dealt for years. As I see it, insurance premium. I resented being penalized thus—for of taking a calculated risk... not to pick up the thieves, I proceeded to track the burglars for a signed that nothing could be done to apprehend the left an identifying mark in the earth.) I found car, and then ate sandwiches and drank coffee through the screen to unlock the door by turning the knob. Florida breaking and entering records prone to mount them on the walls and otherwise systems. A good watchdog, or even an alert neighbor’s animal, is probably still the best deterrent although gun thieves have been known to toss poisoned food to dogs, too.

Because we love our guns, we sportmen are prone to mount them on the walls and otherwise show them off. Face it, those days are over. Today, if you own a good gun—any gun, for that matter—you will do well to hide it from prying eyes.

And use caution when you have a firearm for sale. Another acquaintance of mine, I’ll call him Smith, learned the need for this recently. Smith had a fine magnum handgun that he wanted to sell. He had bought it for protection while traveling, but it had proven to be handier to handle conveniently. So Smith, an otherwise knowledgeable gun buff, foolishly ran an ad in the newspaper. The following evening a man called in response to the ad. The caller was friendly and soon the two were chatting amiably: one gun enthusiast sharing firearm experiences with another. When the stranger “collected” guns, Smith foolishly confirmed that he, too, had a rather nice weapon collection.

Before he hung up, the innocent-sounding stranger managed to learn where Smith lived, what were his working hours, that he was not married. He promised to stop by and look at the guns. He kept his word—but on a night when Smith was away bowling. Not a single firearm remained when the owner returned.

If you have a gun for sale tell friends about it first. Or pin up a notice on the bulletin board of a sportman’s club. If you must advertise, arrange to meet a prospective buyer at such a public place, or even in your car.

By now, if you have read this far, you should be getting the message that gun snatching has become big business. You better believe it. No longer is there safety in numbers. Today small groups of highly organized thieves descend upon shooting ranges, hunting camps, other places where it can be expected firearms are concentrated.

These well-trained jerks need only seconds to break into the trunk of a car in a skeet club parking lot, to snatch the owner thought he could safely leave there. It is common practice for such firearm thieves to dress in the uniforms of gun club attendants, shooting instructors, or what have you. They have been known to drive their “service” truck slowly through congested campgrounds, making mental note of likely places to be visited the next night. They should be absent. They will brazenly carry off guns and other lost, often random belongings of other campers, who do not suspect a robbery is taking place because the service truck is lettered in a manner to imply that the driver is there to service empty butane tanks, or change a tire, and so on.

These fast-moving thieves are well aware that, even should they be apprehended, they face only a light fine, since they purposely carry no weapons, and inflict no physical injury. Of course, should you catch one of these birds in the act, you have no way of telling he is not armed—or even that he won’t attack you. And, should you tangle with him, perhaps even shoot him in the excitement of the moment as you try to defend yourself and your property, you can risk that some liberal judge will send you to jail, instead! It has happened repeatedly.

The misdirected Gun Control Act of 1968 continues to provide loopholes for firearms thieves at the expense of honest home- and federally licensed gun dealers. In the case of the last, for example, should a licensed dealer visit a gun show and try to sell a firearm, he will be subject to arrest for violating the federal law. Yet any criminal can attend such a gun show (not to be confused with a collectors’ show), or the equally popular “flea markets,” and set up a table and sell stolen guns with no questions asked. The criminal needs no license, no record need be kept of what he sells, no taxes are paid, and so on. Gun shows and flea markets remain one of the biggest outlets for illegal guns in this country.

In conclusion, you can buy insurance for your firearms—if you are lucky enough to find a company who will still write you a separate policy. (These used to cost about two dollars per $100 of gun valuation; if you have a standard Homeowner’s policy you will automatically have some coverage, but I suggest you check with your agent how much it is.) You can provide your own insurance, however, as has been said, by hiding your firearms where a thief will be least encouraged to look for them.

It is a good idea, whenever possible, to partly disassemble the gun before hiding it. A thief is least apt to make off with a rifle, for example, if the bolt has been removed and is hidden separately, elsewhere.

If you must be away from your home for an extended period don’t advertise that fact to thieves by drawing the curtains, or by allowing uncancelled newspapers to accumulate on the front lawn. Under such conditions a burglar can break in and take his time to pick your premises clean. Leaving lights on, or a radio playing, is suggested by police—provided the lights come on only at night, and then preferably in an alternating manner, in different parts of the home, as would be the case were occupants present. (An inexpensive timing device can be used to do this.)

When I intend to be away on vacation I move my firearms and other expensive sporting equipment to places of even deeper security. During extended absence I have even stored such things in the vault of my bank. It’s not as expensive as you might think.

Do I hear you asking what are some of the good hiding places I use while at home? I’m just not saying, pardon. Gun thieves read this magazine, too, I suspect.

Many people store their guns in closets and dresser drawers—right where burglars expect them to be.

Photo by Wallace Hughes
In the January-February issue, an unusual set of tracks observed by Jim Bruce of Tallahassee on the Ed Ball Wildlife Management Area in Gulf County was reported, accompanied by an on-the-scene sketch by Bruce. There was considerable reader response, a sampling of which follows:

Richard J. Griffin, Valrico, Florida, reports running into tracks like those seen on the Ed Ball area and advances a suggestion to explain some of the wild campfire talk he's been hearing over the years. He says: "In the spring of 1973 and again in 1974, I studied at length the identical prints in Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area. I was born and raised in Florida, and think my first pair of shoes at the age of 10 was more from my dad's reticence because of my preference for the swamps than us being poor. Anyway, in all my 40 years tromping through Florida woods, I have not for the life of me been able to figure out for sure what made those tracks. The tracks crossed a tidal stream that emptied into a favorite fishing hole. They did not wander, rather indicated a deliberate course, inasmuch as there were older tracks mixed with very fresh tracks not more than a day old. Edges of fresh tracks were crisp and embedded in firm mud and all tracks were headed in one direction only. "Comparing my own footprints at the same spot, I concluded whatever made the tracks must weigh at least 125 lbs., and if a quadruped, I could not distinguish between front and rear prints.

"And now an opinion, probably as good as the next person's guess. Wildlife habitat has become more and more restricted, resulting in forced inbreeding, as indicated in the mule-hoofed wild hog (a single hoof as opposed to split hoof). Is it possible that this restricted habitat has brought about inbreeding in bears resulting in this weird footprint? I would certainly hope you indicate in FLORIDA WILDLIFE other people's opinions. Anyway, it has served to lend validity to some scary campfire stories told to several groups of Cub Scouts while camping in Gulf Hammock." W. O. Unruh, Clearwater, came right to the point with his opinion. "Ostrich, obviously!" read his two-word communication. Alex W. Browning, Sarasota, agreed: "Your mystery footprint is that of an ostrich." Paul Kolish, Iron City, Georgia, in a few more words, went along with the big bird idea: "I have seen that print a lot in the Jacksonville Zoo. It's the old bird that doesn't fly. That's right, the old ostrich or its family cousin, the emu."

(continued on next page)

Those Mystery Tracks

Fred E. Lohrer, Archbold Biological Station, Lake Placid, advised us (with much scientific reserve) to consider the ostrich. He said, "Most birds have four toes. Some large flightless running birds, like the rhin of South America and the emu and cassowary of Australia, have only three large toes. Only the ostrich among living birds has two toes. This trend to loss of toes in large running birds parallels a similar trend in mammals. For example, the horse. It started out as an animal, Eohippus, which was about the size of a fox and had four toes on the front and three on the hind foot. Evolutionary development down through the ages has resulted in today's horse which has only one toe."

Tom M. Carr, Palm Harbor, Florida, held out for the ostrich theory and offered his assistance to help round the critter up. He says, in part: "Members of this species have only two toes, armed with short, blunt nails. The rest of the family have three toes bearing large claws. "Somehow, one of these birds has escaped to the wilds of the Ed Ball Area. At least, hopefully one bird. With no natural enemies, there could be a handful of ostriches in all of northern Florida's wilderness. This handful could cause an unbalanced link in the ecosystem. "If Jim Bruce is willing to make an attempt to capture this non-flying bird, I would be happy to assist. The ostrich can run at speeds up to 60 miles per hour in a short burst, and can kill a man with one blow of his powerful legs. Still, the ostrich, like all other wildlife, can be captured."

(continued on next page)
worth the northward trek. You should ask Jim Bruce to verify that all of these tracks he saw were proceeding toward the State of Georgia. This exodus of the p. e.'s should not pose any real problem, for the reason that for the past 20-30 years the only peanuts the split-toes have been able to consume in their Everglades retreat, was the discarded peanut brittle, chocolate-covered peanuts, and unfinished candy bars. As a result of this dietary evolution, the p. e. much prefers chocolate-covered peanuts or a sugared variety rather than the plain ordinary peanut.

"Based on my vast experience with the creature, I'd say the State of Georgia's peanut crop would not be in any great danger from the peanut eater. There may, however, be something of a problem for the individual farmer from the constant nagging of the p. e. requesting his peanuts be chocolate-covered or artificially sweetened.

"The split-toes are usually a timid lot, and can easily be dissuaded from their desires by curt treatment. I am sure the Georgia farmers will not cater to these split-toes whims and will demand their return to the 'glades forthwith.

Gary Bishop, woodsman and black powder aficionado of Tallahassee observed: "This reminds me of an animal or thing that I heard about while growing up in northeastern Tennessee. Men of the mountains often talked about a mysterious two-toed track that was frequently found in the woods. When found, the track would always be going away from the person who found it, hence the name "two-toed go-yonder." Although many people saw the go-yonder, no one could describe it. When asked what it looked like they would always say, 'words just won’t describe it.'"

"The go-yonder is not to be confused with another animal of the Tennessee mountains and this is the elusive Arshquack. The cry of the Arshquack would make dogs cower and brave men quiver. Its cry could be heard on most winter nights. I have heard the Arshquack myself, but like others have never seen one. One trait of the Arshquack is that it could travel a great distance almost instantly.

"But back to Jim Bruce's tracks—what you have here, I believe, is a relative or sub-species of the East Tennessee Two-Toed Go-Yonder."

In discussing some of the correspondence triggered by the publication of his mystery track sketch (FLORIDA WILDLIFE, January-February 1977), Jim Bruce commented: "If it was an ostrich that made those tracks, it must push the scales at close to 500 pounds, judging by how deep the tracks were sunken into firm but moist ground." Hunting partner Jeff Easley, who also saw the tracks, agreed the creature had to be a hefty one. The two Tallahassee outdoorsmen are not at all convinced the track was made by an ostrich.

"Based on my vast experience with the creature, I'd say the State of Georgia's peanut crop would not be in any great danger from the peanut eater. There may, however, be something of a problem for the individual farmer from the constant nagging of the p. e. requesting his peanuts be chocolate-covered or artificially sweetened.

"The split-toes are usually a timid lot, and can easily be dissuaded from their desires by curt treatment. I am sure the Georgia farmers will not cater to these split-toes whims and will demand their return to the 'glades forthwith.

Gary Bishop, woodsman and black powder aficionado of Tallahassee observed: "This reminds me of an animal or thing that I heard about while growing up in northeastern Tennessee. Men of the mountains often talked about a mysterious two-toed track that was frequently found in the woods. When found, the track would always be going away from the person who found it, hence the name "two-toed go-yonder." Although many people saw the go-yonder, no one could describe it. When asked what it looked like they would always say, 'words just won’t describe it.'"

"The go-yonder is not to be confused with another animal of the Tennessee mountains and this is the elusive Arshquack. The cry of the Arshquack would make dogs cower and brave men quiver. Its cry could be heard on most winter nights. I have heard the Arshquack myself, but like everyone have never seen one. One trait of the Arshquack is that it could travel a great distance almost instantly.

"But back to Jim Bruce's tracks—what you have here, I believe, is a relative or sub-species of the East Tennessee Two-Toed Go-Yonder."

In discussing some of the correspondence triggered by the publication of his mystery track sketch (FLORIDA WILDLIFE, January-February 1977), Jim Bruce commented: "If it was an ostrich that made those tracks, it must push the scales at close to 500 pounds, judging by how deep the tracks were sunken into firm but moist ground." Hunting partner Jeff Easley, who also saw the tracks, agreed the creature had to be a hefty one. The two Tallahassee outdoorsmen are not at all convinced the track was made by an ostrich.

Fishing

Heavy-weight enjoyment on a light-weight rig

By Charles Waterman

It's hard to find 2-pound test spinning line in the tackle stores for not many of the light tackle addicts go that far. Most fishermen figure such thread-line is purely for the purpose of setting weird records nobody cares about. But don't go away; it has other purposes.

"Come to me time I get to go fishing with Bob Budd, the former casting champion, who has virtually abandoned all kinds of fishing except light spinning, and specializes in bluegills and crappie despite a history of big bass and saltwater species. He uses 2-pound line, not because it makes a drawn-out process of landing a fish, but because it's capable of casting tiny lures that may weigh as little as 1/30 of an ounce.

Most of the lures Buddy uses (he's a manufacturer) will work fine on 4-pound and that's what I've always used when I've gone with him, but occasionally I've come upon hard times. Last winter I was fishing with him for crappie (speckled perch) and found the fish had quit hitting what we had been using. Bud made a change and started catching them again, then handed me the line and moored me with a small fly on a number 10 hook with a single metal bead for a weight. He called it a jig.

With 4-pound line I simply couldn't cast it well enough to be efficient so I had to go back to something heavier, which caught an odd fish or two but failed to compete with the little jig.

Through the years I've concluded that ultra-light spinning gear gets more panfish than any other form of tackle the year around, although for me the fly rod is better on bluegills when they're near the surface. It's proved no contest on crappie in chilly water. Oh you can catch them with a fly rod and a sinking line but I've never worked out a technique quite as handy as the spinning outfit.

Most panfish lures weigh around 1/8 ounce and can be handled with 6-pound line if your rod is soft enough—but go to 4-pound and the difference is encouraging. Try 2-pound and you can cast nearly anything small, even some lures built for fly rods.

Use these little do-dads for panfish and eventually you're going to hook something heavy—probably a bass. In open water there's no reason why you can't handle a 5-pound fish on 2-pound line with a little practice. In the kind of cover where panfish are often caught, a 2-pounder is a pretty good challenge. He's likely to simply swim under or through something, (continued on next page)

Heavy panfish, at left, turn to reel tackle busters on ultralight tackle.
because every time I do someone comes up with an old
simply don't know and the situation is so fluid nobody
and after it's been dragged across a few wee d s and
over a log or two chances are yo ur 2-pound line won't
rod or reel and wants to know what it's worth. I
valuable gear (maybe they did ) and wanted it ap ­
collector about whom I had written in the first place. I
queries from people who thought they had highly
absorbing jerks from the fish's end as well as for
a reel drag. Budd uses a closed face, below-the-hand
reel and a fingering device of his own design which
for fingering. I like the feature , but some fishermen
didn't have enough drag to be of much use and most
fishing. There are so many thousands of them
absorbing jerks from the fish's end as well as for
Good built-in drags for freshwater fishing really
got started with spinning reels. When the free­
spooling baitcast reel became popular, it was easy to
put on a drag that didn't hamper the casting.
the old "cub" type drag as installed on the handle
of a reel that didn't freespool was extra weight that
held back your cast. In other words, the reel handle
spun when you cast anyway and the added drag
gadget went around and around with it.
I am not going to climb on the boat seat and announce
that we old timers have such educated
hands that we don't need drags, but it is nice to be
able to apply a little more or less without tampering
with the adjustment. It takes practice and when a fish
is running in a bed to learn.
With a freespooling baitcasting reel you can set the
drag a mite light and then run your thumb on the
turning spool when your judgement (mine is usually
wrong) tells you that you need a little more pressure.
I don't know how many users of open spooling reels
ever apply a finger to the edge of the spool when a fish
is running. It is a simple thing on most models, but
only a little pressure can make a heck of a difference.
Most of the old single-action freshwater fly reels
didn't have enough drag to be of much use and most
fishermen would just run the line through their
hands to increase pressure. That was fine for a bass
but didn't work so well on big saltwater fish bent on
evacuating an area. If you wanted to curb the turning
spool, you had to insert a finger between the pillars
to press the spooled line as the thing whirled—a deli­
cate operation unless practiced.
Some fly reels are constructed so that you can play
a finger on the side of the spool without getting
whacked by the handle. Of course the handle doesn't
turn on the heavy-duty freespoolers. On some of the
others the handle is installed so it won't bat your
fingertip when you turn it. With the centerpin reel
and with a smooth outside rim on the spool especially
for fingering. I like the feature, but some fishermen
say they never bother with it.
(continued from preceding page)
and after it's been dragged across a few weeds and
over a log or two chances are your 2-pound line won't
really test that much.
I hesitate to mention historical fishing tackle again
because every time I do someone comes up with an old
rod or reel and wants to know what it's worth. I
simply don't know and the situation is so fluid nobody
can make more than a guess.
I do know that when I wrote an article for another
magazine concerning antique tackle I got the informa­
tion from a serious collector I had some plaintive
queries from people who thought they had highly
valuable gear (maybe they did) and wanted it ap ­
icted operation unless you'd practiced.
Taking fishing seriously is a simple thing on most models, but
only a little pressure can make a heck of a difference.
most fishermen would just run the line through their
hands to increase pressure. That was fine for a bass
but didn't work so well on big saltwater fish bent on
-evacuating an area. If you wanted to curb the turning
spool, you had to insert a finger between the pillars
to press the spooled line as the thing whirled—a deli­
cate operation unless practiced.
Some fly reels are constructed so that you can play
a finger on the side of the spool without getting
whacked by the handle. Of course the handle doesn't
turn on the heavy-duty freespoolers. On some of the
others the handle is installed so it won't bat your
fingertip when you turn it. With the centerpin reel
and with a smooth outside rim on the spool especially
for fingering. I like the feature, but some fishermen
say they never bother with it.
"Finger brake" applied to fly reel which is
designed so that the finger can be pressed against
rim without interfering with turning handle.
There's a pretty cute arrangement on a "Minicast"
Daiwa spincasting reel. There is a fingering wheel
located on the handle shaft and if you prefer to leave
the drag set light and use your thumb as a brake, you
can just lay it against the wheel as it turns.
At first it seems likely that there is more chance of
making an error with finger application than with
changing drag adjustment, but I don't worked out
that way for me. Several times I have noted the drag
was just a little too light and tried to change it while a
fish was heading for the brush or open sea. I twisted a
little too much and broke him off, and I have seen the
same thing happen to others.
The reason is that only by testing can you learn just
how much you're increasing the drag adjustment and
when a fish is leaving is no time for experimentation.
A place to drag a thumb or finger is pretty nice.
Fishermen are often instructed to "set the drag
correctly and then leave it alone."
The problem is that what's a correct drag setting at
one time isn't right at another. A wildly running
green fish that is hopping all over the water doesn't
need much drag because you aren't stopping him anyway. Once he begins to slow down and you
won't make any more sudden lunges, you can use
much more pressure. And of course there's the occa­
sion when he heads for a stump or the end of your
line and you must hold him tighter even when it's risky.
A fingering spot is nice.
The British are not in search of delicate trout fishing. Americans are admittedly the best bass anglers.
Those who have attacked big casting meets tell me that the Australians as a group are the
topnotchers in surf casting and the records would
tend to prove it. Australia isn't famed for freshwater
fishing.
Fishermen and hunters are still paying most of the
bill for water quality and wildlife management, but a
few years back there was some criticism on the part
of preservation and conservation organizations not
primarily concerned with fishing and hunting. They
felt the sportsmen were getting more than their
share of attention in fish and wildlife planning.
Some of their spokesmen stated that if they were
allowed to contribute financially to the cause they
might get some of the attention that had been going
to the government.
Now that's been tried and hasn't met with great
success. In 1974 Colorado inaugurated a $5 stamp
program in the hope that hikers, birdwatchers and other
"non-consumptive" nature lovers would sink in
from the goodness of their hearts. The stamps have
been bought mainly by hunters and fishermen. This
takes nothing away from some individual clubs
which bought numbers of them. But it's still up to the
hunters and fishermen. Similar programs are being tried
in other states.
We have more than our share of water vegetation
problems in Florida. Hydrilla, the latest pest, simply
isn't understood by casual observers who can't see
anything wrong with a lake in wintertime. Hydrilla
doesn't die in cold weather; it simply sinks and waits
in good health for warmer water. Thus the lake that
appears wide open in winter looks like a pasture
when summer comes.

"Finger brake" applied to fly reel which is
designed so that the finger can be pressed against
rim without interfering with turning handle.
The bright green tropics, it's said, produce more critters per acre than anywhere else. Florida isn't in the tropics—but it almost is.

One of our ranger families—the Coxs—here at Cape Florida State Park near Miami, had the habit of leaving their trailer door open summer nights if the mosquitoes weren't too bad. One evening Mrs. Cox saw that a loaf of bread was gone from its place. She looked toward the doorway just in time to glimpse a raccoon scampering out with it. Mrs. Cox gave chase. The loaf was nearly as big as the coon, which hampered his escape somewhat. She caught up with the culprit in the woods. But the furry bandit stood over his loot and put up such a determined defense that the lady relinquished her claim!

It isn't only the families of resident rangers who are raided. One day a visitor complained that her picnic hamburger meat was missing. She exclaimed, "A raccoon?"

One of our Cape Florida rangers annoyed by the police finding coon tracks in the yards.

"Do something," he shouted to his wife, "I'm going to do something!

By Dean Morgan

FLORIDA GREMLINS

The ringtailed prowlers are mostly nocturnal but they're not fanatics about it. In my four years with the Florida Park Service, I came to know these masked sniffers as prime suspects in this kind of robbery. Yet they're not the only Florida critters with taking ways.

Once when a crew of us were clearing dead trees from near the beach at Cape Florida, I tossed my work gloves onto the sand to let my hands "breathe" a little. Returning to the spot soon after, I found only one glove remaining! My bare hand was badly blistered and splinter-stuck by the end of the day.

A determined and thorough search the next day turned up the missing glove. Badly wadded, it had been pulled as far as it would go into a tiny crab hole.

The town of Key Biscayne is just north of Cape Florida. It's not uncommon there for hysterical matrons to report seeing masked prowlers peering into their windows. Such cases are usually resolved by the police finding coon tracks in the yards.

Most Key Biscayne residents like their furry neighbors; but as Florida campers know, the unexpected crashing of garbage cans in the wee hours can be a shattering experience. And of course, the resultant mess often looks like debris from a miniature hurricane.

One fellow who liked animals and didn't want to hurt the raccoons, was nonetheless determined that these unsettling raids must cease. He fixed up an ingenious system of wires, strings, bells, and tin cans to raise a racket when the garbage can lid was removed. In addition, a flash camera was rigged to go off and provide a visual scare.

It was early morning when the crashing of the tiny alarm jerked the booby-trapper awake. He consoled himself with the hope that his raccoons had been spooked off for good. The photo from the flash camera, however, revealed no prowling raccoon but a terrified garbage man, wild-eyed and set to flee the scene. The well-intentioned homeowner knocked it over.
For more than a quarter of a century, young men and women have been literally and figuratively learning to paddle their own canoe at the Youth Conservation Camps operated by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Today, many of the conservation leaders of Florida can identify the roots of their environmental concern with a summer of outdoor fun and learning at one of the two youth camps.

A Youth Conservation Camp is a unique place and a unique opportunity for boys and girls to explore the things that go bump in the night and learn to identify not only the call of the chuck-will's-widow but also the habits of the bird and its place in the environmental balance of nature. The doors at the Youth Conservation Camps are open for fun and fellowship, swimming, boating, fishing, archery, shooting, hiking and other related outdoor recreations. The same doors also open for learning about nature and wildlife and eventually learning that wild lands and wildlife also have human values.

The Youth Conservation Camps serve to introduce young people to the outdoor world not through classroom lectures but through participation in outdoor learning experiences under the guidance of trained camp personnel. Many of the camp personnel started their conservation careers as campers and have graduated from campers to staff and instructional levels, and have the ability to relate to the inquiring mind of the youthful camper.

Youth Conservation Camp time is here. It's time to make plans to attend—write for application and get camp reservations nailed down. Youngsters between the ages of 8 and 14 have their choice of two camps to attend.

The Everglades Youth Camp, located on Hungryland Slough in the Corbett Wildlife Area near West Palm Beach, offers the opportunity to become acquainted with the unique Everglades type environment. At the Everglades Camp, boys and girls will explore the wildlife and habitat of the savannas, marshes and hammocks and learn to better appreciate the vast open beauty of the Everglades.

At the Ocala Youth Camp, located on the shore of Lake Eaton in the Ocala National Forest near Ocala, the environment is one of trees and forest and lakes and streams. Here, campers will experience the famous "mud hikes," overnight canoe voyages and forest environment.

The 1977 camping exploration will begin July 3 and run through August 13. Both camps will maintain one-week sessions; however, campers wishing to remain more than one week may do so with advance registration. Campers remaining more than one week will not repeat experiences but will take part in advanced exploration. All sessions at both camps are coeducational.

Reservations for the Youth Conservation Camps are made on a first-come, first-served basis and campers without reservations may be accepted only on a space-available basis. The fee for the summer camps is $60 per camper week. A two-week exploration costs $120 (no tax applicable).

The camp schedule is as follows:

- July 3—July 9
- July 10—July 16
- July 17—July 23
- July 24—July 30
- July 31—Aug. 6
- Aug. 7—Aug. 13

For additional information and camp registration forms, write:

Everglades Youth Camp
Ocala Youth Camp
551 N. Military Trail
1230 S.W. 10th Street
West Palm Beach, FL 33406
Ocala, FL 32670

FLORIDA WILDLIFE
MAY-JUNE 1977
We were on hands and knees digging out the wheels of the Ford stuck axle-deep in Ocala Scrub "sugar sand." Sitting up to rest my back, I wiped sweat and sand from my eyes and found myself nearly face to face with a seemingly fearless scrub jay sitting in the lower branches of a blue-jack oak.

Although I'd seen scrub jays before, this was my first real encounter with one of these inquisitive birds and I was amazed at its tameness.

An unusual aspect of the scrub jay is its range. While found in suitable habitat throughout peninsular Florida, it is separated by more than 1,000 miles from its nearest scrub jay neighbors in Texas, Mexico, the Rockies states, California and Oregon.

Although they are opportunistic feeders, eating acorns, moths, grasshoppers, larvae and even lizards, they are rarely seen outside the scrub habitat from which they get their name. Because of their stay-at-home habit and affinity for oak and sand pine scrub, these birds are relatively easy to locate, even though you may have to drive for some distance to find them.

Their long brown-tail, giving a broken-backed appearance, and their lack of crest make the scrub jay easily identifiable from its cousin, the blue jay. Their call, too, is different and the scrub jay's markings are less distinct than the blue jay's, giving a softer, grey-blue appearance.

Although described as wary by some and as tame by others, you'll find, above all, that scrub jays are curious. The noise and clatter of several people getting out of a car in scrub jay habitat is apt to bring them near to see what all the fuss is about. Perching atop a nearby scrub oak, they'll check you out, slipping into the safety of the tree's foliage if you get too close. Don't be surprised, however, if one lands on your hat, looking for a handout.

A Unique Floridian...

The SCRUB JAY

By Michael Miller

scrub (scrub) n, a Florida ecological system characterized by deep, well-drained sand with plant species such as rosemary, sand pine, sand live oak, "deer moss" lichen, and other flora tolerant of prolonged dry conditions. Perhaps due to continual forest water shortage, the plants grow in a stunted, gnarled, scruffy manner, hence the name.
Fishing For The
WHITE BASS

Back a few decades, before the damming of every bit of running water Uncle Sugar would shell out the bucks for, the white bass wasn’t anywhere near as widely known as it is now. In general, distribution of the species in an earlier day was spotted here and there about that portion of the country from the Great Lakes southward and from west of the Allegheny Mountains into the Mississippi River system.

By inclination, the species is a fish of large lakes and sizeable streams. Rather extensive expanses of water more than 10-feet deep, reasonably clear, and with clean gravel for spawning, are among the characteristics of the best white bass areas.

With development of the big impoundments, much new white bass habitat was created and in many places where it was formerly unknown, the fish soon became one of the leading contenders in the piscatorial popularity contest.

The white has a lot going for it. It is, generally speaking, a most willing hitter, taking a variety of baits and small lures. It moves about in large schools, and it takes a back seat to few other fish as the center of interest on the dinner table.

For most Florida rod and reelers, however, unless they’ve fished some of the big out-of-state impoundments, the white is pretty much a stranger. There is an exception, for in west Florida, in the Lake Seminole country near Chattahoochee, there are a considerable number of fishermen who have discovered the white. From one half to one pound is the size of most of these Apalachicola River whites but larger ones, up to two pounds or a bit more, are not at all uncommon.

A small jig—white, or white with a bit of red—such as commonly used for shad and speckled perch, is one of the favored artificials for white bass. It may sound a bit off-beat, but rigging a float some 18 inches above the jig seems to keep the lure working at about the right depth. Various small spoons and spinner baits are also popular and productive. But most of the locals who have the white’s number, bait fish with very small crawdads an inch or so in length. A twist-on sinker of one half to one ounce located 12 to 18 inches above the hook is the ticket. Cast out, let the bait hit the bottom, then reel in with a super-slow retrieve.

Even though the white bass is an obscure sort of gamester as far as most Floridians are concerned, it is making a substantial contribution to the state’s new and increasingly popular sport fishery for sunshine bass. The reason is simple enough, for the species is half of the striped-white bass couplet from which springs the hybrid sunshine bass.

In the May 1975 issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE there was a rundown of the hybrid development project. It was pointed out that the Commission was trying out two white bass-striper crosses. One used striped bass eggs fertilized by white bass milt to produce what the fisheries workers were calling the original hybrid. The other cross, identified by the name reciprocal hybrid, was produced by fertilizing white bass eggs with striped bass milt.

As was pointed out in this progress report, even though it appears logical that the offspring of crossbreeding efforts would be the same whether the parents were a male white bass and a female striped bass, or a male striped bass and a female white bass, such apparently is not necessarily the case. There appeared to be some differences, although difficult for most of us to detect. Biologist Forrest Ware, in charge of the striped-hybrid program, says, "Until recently, anglers were often confused as to which hybrid was which. To end the confusion, the Commission adopted the name "sunshine bass" for both hybrids and the name is now common in many fishing circles.

(continued on next page)
The Apalachicola River below Jim Woodruff Dam is a favored white bass fishing spot. U. S. 90 bridge shows in background. A bait bucket to hold favored live bait, small crawdads, is an essential piece of gear to white bass fishermen. Whites seem to hit artificials best in the evening when the sun is not shining directly on the water. Much of the Commission’s hatchery requirement for eggs used in producing sunshine bass is filled by rod and reel caught whites.

Potent white bass medicine are small crawdads. They’re usually dredged up from weedy ditch or pond as prelude to fishing trip. Artificials are also white bass takers, with a colored body, hackled hook, and flashing spinner blade being the common components of some of the more popular ones. Striped bass and whites look a great deal alike, as shown in the photo, opposite. The striper is the fish at the top of the photo, the other two are whites. Note the fainter, more irregular stripes and the relatively deeper body of white.
FLORA of the Flatwoods

The ST JOHN’S WORT (Hypericum perforatum), right, was used medicinally by the Indians. Flat-topped flowers of the tall YELLOW MILKWORT (Polygala cymosa), below, often blanket low areas in the piney flatwoods. The insectivorous BUTTERWORT (Pinguicula pumila), below right, sends up a fragile flower from its prostrate position on the forest floor.

When unappreciative eyes glance across stretches of the typically low, flat evergreen forest in the Southeastern portion of our land, a less-than-ecstatic moan is usually heard. Accompanying this moaning sound are comments such as, “What a monotonous forest!” or “What I wouldn’t give to see a hill around here!” The object of all this mockery is what I like to respectfully call the piney flatwoods.

At first glance these lowlands do seem to lack diversity but nothing could be further from the truth. These ancient ocean bottoms which comprise the coastal areas of our Southeastern-most states contain a tremendous assortment of flora. A mingling of subtropical and northern species, plus a growing season approaching two-thirds of a year, insures such a richness of plant form.

Since these woods are often underlain by an impervious hardpan, poor drainage results. As one walks through the piney woods, it is quickly seen that a change in elevation of a few inches may signal the development of completely new plant associations. A matter of a few inches can determine a forest or a swamp.

Fire is a respected phenomenon in the piney flatwoods. Not only are the inhabitants resistant to fire, but they are, in fact, maintained by periodic fires. Regeneration after a fire seems to take place.

Photographs & Text by Phillip Petersen

Erect, solitary flowers of the RED LILY (Lilium catesbaei), below, pop up in the piney woods during late summer and fall. Three spreading sepals distinguish the solitary flower of the ROSE POGONIA (Cleistes divaricata), below right.
overnight. The removal of fire from these areas will allow hardwoods, which are less resistant to fire than the pines, to gain a foothold. Eventually they will out-compete the pines and a deciduous forest will result.

That there is a lack of seasonal change in the southern woods is another frequent misconception. It is certain that you will never see a seasonal effect here to rival the fall splendor of the New England forest, but the changes are there nonetheless. Seasons in the piney woods cannot be seen from the car window and that is good. An appreciation for the intricacies of nature can only be gained through an intimate relationship.

Spring, in the floral sense, begins in February. While freezes still threaten, the high climbing yellow jessamine spreads itself over the trees and shrubs, bursting forth in fragrant blossoms. The droopy, cream-colored flowers of the pawpaw appear as well, often emerging before the leaves can be seen. The nearly tasteless fruit of the pawpaw is said to have been an important part of the food supply of early American settlers.

March and April bring a whole array of flowers. The violets seem everywhere underfoot. The rose-like flowers of the dewberry rule the woods, especially when an unsuspecting observer becomes entangled in their prickly nets. However, the thought of ripe berries in future months is consolation enough.

Often the piney woods seem to become carpeted in yellow from the bright flowers of the St. John’s wort. This family is steeped in superstition. The red liquid which seeps from the crushed roots of certain members apparently was associated with the story of St. John. Another tale has it that the hanging of St. John’s wort from a window on the Day of St. John would ward off evil spirits. Medicinally, the crushed parts of the family have been used by our native Indians to treat tumors, ulcers, and glandular swellings of all sorts.

Huddling near the floor of the pine woods are the thimble-like flowers of the milkwort. While fighting for appearances all year, the orange or yellow flowered milkworts make their grand entrance in spring. Members of this family have been credited with curing snakebite, typhoid fever, croup, pneumonia, and pleurisy. As if this were insufficient, the milkworts were also believed to stimulate the production of milk in animals which fed on them, and thus the name.

Many of the inhabitants of the piney flatwoods have strange habits. The custom of devouring insects by many members of the community is one case in point. One unique mechanism for the entrapment of insects has been adopted by the butterwort, a prostrate plant with greasy leaves. If a small insect happens across a butterwort leaf it may find itself stuck in the buttery leaf secretion as the edges of the leaf slowly curl around it. The
sect is then slowly digested by enzymes and the nutrients are absorbed into the plant. It is surprising to note that the flowers of this deceptive plant have a delicate beauty all their own.

In the case of the pitcher plant, another insectivorous species, the insect is lured into its hollow leaf by an enticing aroma. Encouraged to descend further into the trap by translucent windows on the back of the leaf, the victim flies around in dismay until exhausted. If the insect attempts to crawl out, it finds that the interior of the leaf is coated with hairs which make ascent to the top almost impossible. Eventually falling into a rich soup of enzymes, the insect adds its body to the mass of carcasses already at the base of the leaf and is then digested.

It is thought that the carnivorous habits of the plant permit it to inhabit soils lacking in nitrogen.

Bordering the low areas in the piney flatwoods is a tall, slender tree known as the loblolly bay. William Bartram best described this plant in the eighteenth century: "Its thick foliage, of dark green colour, isflowered over with large milk-white fragrant blossoms, on long slender elastic peduncles, at the extremities of its numerous branches, from the bosom of the leaves, and renewed every morning; and that in such incredible profusion; that the tree appears silvered over with them and the ground beneath covered with the fallen flowers."

The piney flatwoods is also favored by orchids of many forms, by lilies with their six-parted flowers, and by laurels which remind one of the mountain variety. The list goes on and on, each plant having its charm, its habits, and its differences. As one discovers, day by day, the secrets of these woods, an appreciation of its worth evolves.

The piney flatwoods is a great place to be.

**Flowers of the OBEIDENT PLANT** *(Dracoccephalum purpureum)*, above, can actually be moved into various positions by just a touch of the hand. The carnivorous **PITCHER PLANT** *(Sarracenia minor)*, right, is easily spotted by its hollow, tubelike leaves and drooping yellow flowers.

---

**NIGHT SOUNDS**

Strange noises rang through the forest, cries like those of wild beasts, but such as we had never heard before. Often as we passed the night in the woods I recollected what I had read of the puma, the dreaded southern tiger, and realized the fact that against him number 4 duck shot would be a feeble defence. The noises grew louder and louder, the forests fairly reverberated with the unearthly screams till, when one more than usually horrible burst upon our ears, Mr. Green inquired with a composture, which seemed slightly assumed:

"What sort of an animal do you think it is that makes a noise like that?"

I had never heard anything so appalling in my life before, not to be outdone by my associate in coolness, I replied in a hollow mockery of jest:

"That? Oh, that is a limkin. There can be no doubt of that."

To this reply, Mr. Green made no direct response though his face intimated that jokes on some occasions were out of place.

Robert Barnwell Roosevelt

**FLORIDA WATER AND GAME BIRDS**

1884
Managing The Coastal Zone: It's Our Turn To Speak Up

Like a thumb jutting out from the North American continent, Florida has greater contact with the sea than any other of the lower 48 states. The warm seas and the general reluctance of water to change temperature have given us our climate, the basis of bumper crops of both snowbirds and winter vegetables. Along with the climate, we have one of the world's greatest water-oriented recreation areas. We also have a productive and profitable commercial fishery located along or dependent upon the coastal area and nearshore waters.

With these attributes, it is only to be expected that most people, if given the choice, would choose to live near the sea. And we have. At the present time, more than three-quarters of Florida's millions live within the so-called coastal zone. Another 25 million or so of our northern brethren visit each year and most of these, too, crowd up to the water's edge.

At the present rate of growth, we've been told to expect up to 10 million permanent residents and many times the present number of tourists to jam into the coastal area in the next 20 years.

Undeveloped beach (left), a rarity in many parts of Florida. Red mangroves (below) provide nest sites for the threatened brown pelican and other birds. The mangrove leaves drop into the water and are fed upon by bacteria and invertebrates, forming the basis of a food chain which supports Florida's sport and commercial marine fishery.

“services” is a cold term, popular with bureaucrats and institutionalized activity, it has a meaning here, too. The coastal area is a natural provider of goods and services infinitely more efficient and productive than any of our well designed factories and institutions. Powered by solar and tidal energies, this coastal “plant” utilizes the raw materials of water coupled with organic and inorganic nutrients and minerals to produce the most varied product line of any factory known to man. It's a self-sustaining factory; it cleans and refuels itself and even transports most of its own products.

The natural vegetation in the coastal zone even acts as a treatment plant for man-made wastes, helping to maintain water quality. Plants growing in or near the water capture, store and even utilize much of the refuse generated by our domestic and industrial activities.

Our coastal zone plant is the original “clean industry.” The only sounds of its engine are the (continued on next page)
cords grass. Rather than smoke, it gives off fog and crashing of surf and the wind blowing through the sea. The seascape itself.

Perhaps the greatest, yet most immeasurable, byproduct is the soul-healing peace and quiet of the seascapes. But let’s not forget its economic assets. Along with the harps and violins, the music of the coastal zone is also in the ringing of the cash register. According to figures provided by the Department of Natural Resources’ Bureau of Coastal Zone Planning:

- Florida’s commercial fish landing has a yearly value of $200 million.
- Saltwater sportfishermen spend roughly $500 million each year.
- Coastal zone industry is worth approximately $6 billion.
- Tourism, most of which is coastal zone dependent, is worth $9 billion.

The Bureau left out one figure than should be mentioned; the worth of the coastal area to each individual. Although this amount is incalculable, it is perhaps the most important value to consider.

While you’re reading this, you—we—are losing the most priceless natural resource we have. Somebody, somewhere, thinks that marsh where you hunted rails last fall would make a great site for a condominium—with the right amount of fill, of course. The fill is easily obtainable—it can be dredged from the tidal creeks where the redfish come in the winter. The sandy shoreline where least terns nest might soon be bulkheaded and paved—if not already. And those Apalachicola oysters with which we stuff ourselves during “R” months won’t be available much longer unless the St. George Islanders figure out a safe way to dispose of their waste water.

Ironically, the very attractions which brought most of us to the coastal zone in the first place are being lost as the result of our coming. While most of us mean well, our numbers, and often our ignorance of the way this natural system should be managed, are contributing to its demise.

Fortunately, a number of local, state and federal agencies have jurisdiction over the numerous regulations governing land and water use along the coast. The result, however, is often a confusing mish-mash of interwoven and sometimes conflicting authorities. The point which should be made, however, is that there will have been proposed, by the time you read this, a coastal zone management policy which, reviewed by the Cabinet, will be available for public comment this summer and fall. The proposal is designed to establish a statewide land and water use policy for the coastal zone, setting aside areas and priorities for preservation, conservation and development. All of us who enjoy the feeling of being near the sea without the clutter of high-rise buildings already know the value of a sound development plan for the coast. Others who enjoy flounder, scallops, speckled trout, shrimp and many other types of seafood, whether they know it or not, are indebted to the coastal zone.

This summer we get our say. Public workshops will be held throughout the state to explain the plan locally. Later, public hearings will be announced to gather citizen views on how the coastal zone should be managed. For those of us who think of the coast in terms of mullet and marsh bens, blue crabs or a flock of pin-tail in the cold December dawn, it may be our last chance.

After several years of preparation, the Bureau of Coastal Zone Planning (formerly the Coastal Coordinating Council) has drafted a proposal to be considered by the Governor and Cabinet. The Florida Coastal Zone Management Program Status Report to the Governor and Cabinet essentially summarizes the coastal management program which has taken place to date and builds a case for a management policy to be adopted by the state.

The report does not seek a “no-growth” policy. In fact, the report has already drawn some criticism for not going far enough toward protecting the coastline from further development. The final version, however, will be determined by the legislature after the public has had the opportunity to review and comment on the proposal.

As of this writing, the report has not been reviewed by either the Cabinet or the legislature. Undoubtedly, changes will have taken place after press time which will render obsolete previous descriptions of the plan. For example, the legislature could make the decision to place the bureau under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Regulation, removing it from the Department of Natural Resources. Such a move would possibly delay further action for several months.

The point which should be made, however, is that there will have been proposed, by the time you read this, a coastal zone management policy which, reviewed by the Cabinet, will be available for public comment this summer and fall. The proposal is designed to establish a statewide land and water use policy for the coastal zone, setting aside areas and priorities for preservation, conservation and development. All of us who enjoy the feeling of being near the sea without the clutter of high-rise buildings already know the value of a sound development plan for the coast. Others who enjoy flounder, scallops, speckled trout, shrimp and many other types of seafood, whether they know it or not, are indebted to the coastal zone.

This summer we get our say. Public workshops will be held throughout the state to explain the plan locally. Later, public hearings will be announced to gather citizen views on how the coastal zone should be managed. For those of us who think of the coast in terms of mullet and marsh bens, blue crabs or a flock of pin-tail in the cold December dawn, it may be our last chance.

The shrimp (facing page) and the sportfisherman (left) both owe their catches to the coastal area where many types of commercial and game fish spend all or part of their life cycle. Much of Florida’s seafood-producing coastal marshes and mangroves have been replaced by waterfront development (above) which might have been located inland without loss of the fishery resource.
A 30th-century began, it was a common-place experience, when the color-splashed days of fall arrived, to see massive numbers of ducks and geese literally blanketing the sky as they winged southward to their traditional wintering grounds, pulled by the mysterious magnet of their migratory instinct.

This breathtaking vision of seemingly endless flocks of waterfowl in flight was a noble heritage graciously endowed upon man by nature—a heritage for him to enjoy, to protect, and to hand down as a legacy for the generations to follow. Those who thrilled at the awesome sight of these countless thousands of wildfowl gave little thought to any possibility of the skies ever becoming almost devoid of ducks. Yet, fantastic as the possibility seemed, within a few fleeting years such grim prospects came dangerously close to reality.

Shortly after World War I, civilization rapidly sprawled westward across the North American continent, like a huge wave, encompassing the prairie areas of both Canada and the U. S. Among conservationists there soon arose a disturbing observation—the vast, sky-darkening flocks of ducks were rapidly disappearing. As the waterfowl populations continued their downward plunge toward oblivion, the concern mounted into full scale alarm—giving rise to dire predictions of the death of our waterfowl heritage.

So it was, in this black hour, that the solid foundation for Ducks Unlimited was carved, with the formation of the "More Game Birds in America Foundation" in 1929. Searching for the answers to the problems responsible for the tragic decrease of continental waterfowl populations, the Foundation launched an intensive study, lasting several years. Among the survey’s conclusions: (1) over 65% of the continent’s waterfowl begin life in the three rich Canadian Prairie Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba; (2) the irresistible onslaught of civilization, through draining and cultivation, was steadily ravishing the prime breeding grounds; (3) natural droughts and floods were becoming increasingly critical as a limiting factor in waterfowl production. Finally, the study concluded that if the duck and geese populations were to be maintained and restored, immediate efforts must begin in the gigantic task of rehabilitating and preserving the primary nesting areas of Canada.

Since this extraordinary conservation movement was initiated three and a half decades ago, Ducks Unlimited has led the way in the perpetuation of waterfowl, utilizing all facilities at its command to restore, preserve, and create nesting habitat for ducks and geese. DU has expended over 32 million dollars to plan, build and develop nearly 1,300 "duck factories" as its projects are appropriately called. All told, since work first began in 1938, water control structures such as dams, dikes and levees have been constructed. Today, Ducks Unlimited has under lease, 2.2 million acres of prime wetland habitat, with total shoreline (a vital ingredient of quality production) measuring over 12,000 miles.

DU’s water control projects range from valuable small units of less than 50 acres to huge marshland complexes of over a half-million acres in area. Construction is currently in high gear on one of the largest and most ambitious programs ever tackled—the 512,000-acre Mawesley Wildlife Development, called the Del-Mar Project, near The Pas in Manitoba.

While the majority of projects are built in the rich Prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, Ducks Unlimited production units stretch across Canada, from the Serpentine River Plats Project in southwest British Columbia to the prime 6,000-acre Delaware State Project at Missaquash Marsh, on the border between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Many of DU’s project units have been named to honor conservation leaders while others, financed by conservationists and DU Committees, bear the names of states, cities and individuals. Across the breadth of the Dominion, these “Donor Lake” projects are readily identified by sturdy commemorative caisns, bearing bronze plaques noting the names of donors.

In conjunction with the wide-ranging construction programs, hundreds of miles of fencing have been erected to protect nesting areas; many miles of fire lanes are maintained to thwart devastating marsh fires. DU (Canada)’s highly trained biologists and engineers regularly inspect projects, evaluating production, supervising planting of aquatic (continued on next page)

Photo by Walter Hughes

Laser scope over Lake Tadouin in northwest Florida. Two-thirds of North America’s waterfowl begin their lives in the potholes of Canada’s prairie provinces, many being on DU-leased land.
food plants, and directing the numerous other tasks essential to ensuring top utilization of the areas. Field crews have banded over 160,000 ducks and geese as part of the continuing wildfowl research studies.

During early 1970, Ducks Unlimited's programs became continental in scope, with the launching of Ducks Unlimited de Mexico. The new organization, composed of Mexican conservationists, is raising funds within that nation which will be dedicated to waterfowl conservation and management programs in Mexico. A new affiliate was also recently formed in the island nation of New Zealand.

During nearly 40 years of progressive achievements, Ducks Unlimited has raised a total of over $43 million in contributions from concerned sportsmen and organizations in the U. S. and Cana-d. Needless to say DU is justly proud of the fact that, since its founding, 80 cents of every contributed dollar has gone directly to Canada for use in active development programs.

The distinguished record compiled by Ducks Unlimited over the years stands as a concrete tribute to the efforts of the devoted sportmen-conservationists who, in reality, are DU. Among its officers and trustees (now and over past years) are leaders in business, industry, the professions, and most of all, conservation. Well over 165,000 persons are members of DU, yet millions enjoy the benefits of this valuable natural resource. Every hunter who treasures his sport, every person who shares the thrills of watching waterfowl, owes a real vote of gratitude to those who have borne the responsibilities of helping perpetuate the continent's ducks and geese. 7,500 new members have been gained since 1973 through DU's Greenwing Program. This program was developed so that people 16 years old and under could participate as active members of Ducks Unlimited.

A look at DU's outstanding history of conservation achievement makes it easy to understand the great pride each Ducks Unlimited member takes in his association. This impressive record is most deserving of full support from every conservation-concerned American.

DU has illustrated that the rehabilitation of prime nesting grounds across Canada is a vital factor in the preservation of our waterfowl; and in the process has achieved the equally important goal of instilling a solid awareness among citizens and government agencies (on both sides of the border) of the urgent need for wise conservation programs.

With the return of abundant water to the primary breeding regions, Ducks Unlimited is faced with a highly unusual opportunity and challenge. By initiating a well-planned program of project construction now, we will be able to provide and protect much valuable habitat from future floods and drought.

According to Canadian biologists, 6 million acres of habitat are needed to better stabilize the continent's waterfowl population. It is felt that this acreage must be secured prior to 1980, or it may be lost to other purposes. By setting a corporate goal of increasing our income by 20% annually, DU is making an effort to spearhead this race against the calendar.

The funds which are so necessary to accomplish this long-range goal must, in large part, come from here in the United States. American outdoorsmen are not prone to sidestep their responsibilities in matters involving conservation, as witnessed by longtime support of DU and other worthy programs designed to protect natural resources. Several states have passed legislation setting aside a portion of hunting license fees for waterfowl conservation and, noting DU's fine record for making every donated dollar count, have granted these funds to Ducks Unlimited. There is bright optimism that several other states may follow in the progressive footsteps of such states as Louisiana, Ohio, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Tennessee, Arkansas, Iowa, California and South Carolina. There is also confidence that sportsmen of the U. S. and Canada will continue to recognize the critical need for their support of Ducks Unlimited's ever expanding efforts.

Through generous contributions of time, service and money to their local and state committees, DU members are doing their part in enlarging their own memorable enjoyment of a day in their favorite marsh, while at the same time aiding the preservation of our priceless waterfowl heritage for their children and grandchildren.
In Florida the purpose of fisheries research is to find answers to the questions asked by the fishermen and the fish managers. It is not research for research's sake, but research for the fisherman's sake. We attempt to find solutions to problems which will directly benefit the angler. After all, that is why we're in business. We subscribe to the motto and purpose of the Sport Fishing Institute: "Dedicated to Shortening the Time Between Bites."

As a bass fisherman, wouldn't you like the answers to questions such as:
- Do stocked bass fingerlings survive?
- What type of lures are most effective?
- Do bass grow faster in some lakes?
- Are bass easier to catch in some lakes?
- Why do bass sometimes fail to spawn?
- How does a bass have to be to spawn?
- Can you produce a bass artificially?
- Where do the big bass go after spawning?
- How much do bass move?
- Do bass migrate with the seasons?
- How long do bass live in Florida?

In future articles we will answer these and other questions. We will examine past, present and future bass research and its effect on the bass fisherman. Our aim is to inform you, the bass fisherman, about what we are doing for you and your sport and, maybe, just maybe, in the process teach you something you didn't know about the Florida largemouth bass.

As a bass fisherman you might be surprised at the interest and emphasis being placed on bass research. In February 1974, 475 scientists and fishermen representing 42 states and the District of Columbia, two Canadian provinces, and England, gathered in Tulsa, Oklahoma for a four day conference. They had only one thing in common—an interest in the black basses of America. The occasion was the first National Symposium on the Biology and Management of the Centrarchid Basses, better known as the National Bass Symposium, sponsored by the Sport Fishing Institute. The publication resulting from this gathering contains 56 papers by the most knowledgeable fisheries scientists in this country and is already accepted as the Bible for black bass biology.

I was there, making a small contribution but mainly to learn what I could about the state-of-the-art of black bass research and management. Having taken over the reins of Florida's Large Mouth Bass Investigations Project only six months previously, I was anxious to learn all I could.

Bass research was not that new to Florida, however. Gray Bass, GFC biologist and the recognized authority on the Suwannee bass, was there as one of the contributors. Two former project leaders of the Florida bass project were also there having moved to jobs in other states. You see, the Florida Largemouth Bass Investigations Project was already well into its eighth year, establishing Florida as one of the leaders in bass research and management.

Much of the research in former years had gone unnoticed by the general public, but the results of much of this work have not. Florida's bass fishermen have for the most part unknowingly, benefited from the advanced management techniques resulting from this research.

At the close of the symposium Dr. Willis King, retired after 40 years of fishery work with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, summarized the symposium and listed nine broad areas of needed research on black bass. These are: (1) bass genetics, (2) behavior studies, (3) the role of the larger and older fish, (4) reservoir research, (5) large river and estuary research, (6) increasing productivity, (7) new uses of chemicals in fish management, (8) research on the angler, and (9) research on negative influences on bass populations. Florida has been, or is currently, involved in research in seven of these nine areas. You see, bass research in Florida doesn't go on only on the bass project. All seven of Florida's fishery research projects are in some way working on aspects of bass research and management. After all, the largemouth bass is the number one sportfish in Florida's fresh waters!
It was a dark and stormy night in Atlanta in December of 1945. The bad weather forced a layover for a young Navy lieutenant and changed the course of conservation in Florida.

That young officer was Ozro Earle Frye, Jr., stationed in the Georgia city as he was taking a Navy Wildcat fighter plane to Oklahoma. During the spare time he had in the city, the looked up a friend of a friend, who he hoped Frye had a masters degree in wildlife management, suggested he check into a job possibility in Florida. Frye, soon to be released from active duty with the Navy, did look into a possible job there.

He walked into the offices of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission just three years after the agency was formed and, on June 30,1977 will walk out, 31 years later.

Frye is retiring as director of the Commission, a post he assumed in 1965. It was a long road from his first task with the Commission when, as the first wildlife biologist the agency hired, he was told to “find out about the quail in south Florida.”

The director still jokes he was issued a surplus military ambulance, a bag of scratch feed and some chicken wire and shipped off to Charlotte County and what is now known as the Webb Wildlife Management Area. “Back then,” he said, “the state of the art was such that we thought poor quail populations were frequently due to lack of breeding stock.”

Frye organized a statewide quail trapping program throughout the state and released in the wild. The idea worked and was adopted by the Commission for study.

As knowledge about quail became more sophisticated, it became more evident that proper feed and habitat were much more important. Convinced that the way to quail abundance lay in the direction other than stock, the biologist began to search for a simpler way of providing food for quail in the shady-too wet or too dry-flatwoods of south Florida.

“The first quail feeder was tested in my back yard in December of 1945. The bad weather forced the idea worked and was adopted by the Commission for study. The first to go into use went into the Webb area and the first private quail feeder project was implemented by Cecil Web, at that time chairman of the Commission.

Today, the quail feeder is accepted as a practical tool for producing quail—just one of the contributions to the management of this important game bird for which this dedicated biologist is recognized.

As the solitary biologist for the agency, it didn’t take Frye long to realize that more information was going to be required for the management of Florida’s wildlife if this valuable resource were to prosper.

“I remember going to a state meeting of the Florida Wildlife Federation shortly after joining the Commission,” Frye said. “I was acting as a representative of the Charlotte County Sportsman’s Club.”

He recommended the Federation endorse the hiring of a turkey biologist and a deer biologist by the Commission.

“They laughed and said, ‘But we already have one biologist.’”

It was not long after, though, that the staff of technically trained personnel for the Commission began to grow with turkey, deer and fish biologists joining the agency. Today, the Commission employs 66 biologists working throughout the state. These well-qualified staff members are involved in many varied areas of work including endangered species, exotic species as well as research on diseases.

Frye developed his deep appreciation of Florida’s natural resources during his childhood in Winter Haven. He saw land available for hunting, stretch for miles as a youth. But he returned as an adult to see more and more lands either closed to hunting or in some other use.

Opening up more private lands to public hunting was one of the goals of the Commission. Frye was appointed chief wildlife biologist in charge of a statewide game management program and carried this charge with him.

“Much of the private lands were being held by large timber and cattle companies,” he explained. “These companies were interested in improving public relations with the communities around them.”

Using this as one of his selling points, Frye started talks with many of the companies, presenting a new idea in wildlife management.

His work bore fruit in 1948 when W. B. Patterson of the Robinson Land and Lumber Company shocked hands on a deal to open 120,000 acres in Gulf Hammock to public hunting.

“We had a 25-year lease and agreed to fence the land and provide certain protection through wildlife officers. At that time, we didn’t pay the landowner anything, but the cost of building the fence ran to about two cents an acre per year.”

This established the price which the landowner received and persisted until 1974 when a $200,000 appropriation was first made available for distribution to private landowners whose lands were leased to the Commission for public hunting.

The first land, called the Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area, provided the basis of the future land areas which began to open up across the state. All together, approximately 2.5 million acres of privately owned lands have been opened up under this program for the hunter, augmenting an additional 2.5 million acres of publicly owned land.

Just two years ago, Frye put his hands on another program which had the potential to open up still more lands for the hunters. Utilizing part of the principles of the original wildlife management areas, Type II management areas were created.

“Under this system, the landowner rather than the Commission collects a fee from the sportman commensurate with the fee normally charged by the Commission, and we enforce mutually acceptable regulations. The landowner is also primarily responsible for the habitat improvement, fencing, etc., on the lands. Whether the Commission or the landowner received the fees for hunting was not our major consideration. Our concern is that the land remains open to the public at a fee that average sportsman can afford to pay.”

In 1951, Frye was selected as assistant director of the Commission. Here, although he kept extremely active in wildlife work, he began working on improving another area of the Commission—its staff.

Since the Commission is a constitutional agency, its employees were not covered under the state merit system. The new assistant director wanted to change that.

“I wanted to get away from the old political patronage system—change ‘who you know’ to ‘what do you know and how can you help the Commission.’”

Getting a merit system adopted was not easy. The agency was going through the turmoil of the entire state government was experiencing with the election and early death of Governor Dan McCarty. Frye weathered the stormy administrative battles and succeeded in 1954 with getting the merit system adopted.

1954 also marked the year he completed his requirements and received a Ph.D. in wildlife management, with his old friend, the bobwhite quail, providing the basis for this work.

As assistant director, Frye became better known throughout the state and the country for his sincere concern for wildlife. He was not content to sit back and watch irresponsible development destroy the natural resources of his state.

During his administrative term, the Commission took stands on many very urgent issues such as the use of hard pesticides like DDT, stream channelization and the destruction of wetlands. At the time the Cross Florida Barge Canal was temporarily halted by then President Nixon, the only state agency which offered any adverse comments on the project, and this only in the area of damage to fish and wildlife resources, was the Commission.

The wildlife expert has served on numerous committees throughout his career including many with the Wildlife Society, the International and Southeastern Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Atlantic Waterfowl Council, the Florida Academy of Sciences and many others.

In 1956, shortly after being appointed to the (continued on next page)
cold storage methods and animal stress determine venison table quality

There's been a great deal written about field care of shot deer. There must be hundreds of recipes floating around. But you don't hear much about the two factors which most influence the quality of white-tailed deer meat. These are the stress of the animal immediately before and after shooting and cold-storage aging. Of course, some hunters age their meat and some have found from experience that a buck chased by dogs has a stronger taste than an unalerted deer instantly killed.

There's a welcome scientific study out now which gives us the facts on handling deer for the table. In the past, I depended on experienced hunters. The trouble in talking to hunters is that you don't always know if you're getting facts or opinions. Some hunters would rather give you fiction which sounds good than say they don't know for sure.

One year ago, since Aline Hosch completed her thesis for a master of science degree at Texas A&M University, the title was "The Quality of White-tailed Deer Meat as Influenced by Slaughtering and Handling Practices." It was a practical and needed study because in 1973 Texas hunters harvested about 16,775,100 pounds of venison.

Hoch set up elaborate controls to make the study as scientific as possible under field conditions. Under special permit after the deer season, most of the study deer were taken at night from a small group that was being fed 500,000 units of vitamin A daily. It has been found that a vitamin A deficiency produces muscles that have less tenderness. And vitamin A deficiency has been noted in a number of men and women who have eaten meat taken from the animal's heart and other internal organs.

Hoch's study also showed that stressed animals were detrimental to tenderness. Her definition of stress for the study was, "Shot through the gut so that death was delayed. Animals in this group would often run 50-75 yards before death.'
ever, the skin is much easier removed from a fresh ly

tenderness. It's not critical whether the skin is

moved or not, as far as tenderness is concerned.

One week is the ideal aging time, but not over a week.

This study. It is possible that these conditions were

tends to increase the water holding capacity. About

killed deer than one which has been hanging a week.

A happy medium would be from five to seven days.

dressing with the last heartbeat. I've been with

staffed that some reasonable delays may be

not exaggerated enough to affect quality. This

indicates that some reasonable delays may be tolerated."

I like this statement. Most of what I've heard and

read about field dressing implied that you had to start

dressing with the last heartbeat. I've been with

hunters who did not even want to wait long enough to

give me time to take a couple of pictures or have someone snap my picture while I proudly possed. They could already visualize the bacteria working so fast they were foaming at the mouth.

It has been my experience that deer are seldom

killed in convenient places for dressing. Sometimes, with a short delay, it's easier to move them and then get into the bloody work. All Hosch is saying is that "some reasonable delays may be tolerated." I like to take a reasonable delay to see if I can talk someone into field dressing the deer. I want to give them a chance to practice their outdoor skills.

The study also showed that bucks taste stronger than does killed and processed the same way. The "stronger" does not necessarily imply that the buck flavor was undesirable. There was just more of it.

Hunters, and to a greater degree the public, tend to

compare venison with beef. It's like comparing apples and oranges. The main reason beef is tender and juicy is that the animal is fed grain so that its muscle tissue is marbled with fat. Beef cattle have been selectively bred to enhance this factor. Deer, and most other wild game, do not have their muscles interlarded with fat. They may carry fat but it's not inside the meat.

Without intramusculat fat, venison has to be dryer than beef. In fact, the outside fat should not be used in cooking because it becomes rancid when cooked.

Age, sex, season, range conditions and other fac- tors influence the quality of deer meat but Hosch did not get into them. There's not much need to. We go hunting when the season is open, cannot age the bucks before we shoot them and don't have any say about what the deer have recently fed on. We're usually grateful to get one good shot at a fair-sized buck.

You'll be glad to know that juiciness of cooked venison is influenced by the cook. I guess that means we can all continue to scream at the cook at deer camp if the venison is on the dry side.

To give the cook a break, we ought to first shoot a deer under non-stress conditions and age it for five to seven days.

Daisy, the largest and oldest manufacturer of non-powder guns and ammunition, is always coming up with something new. One of their latest promotional programs helps the entire shooting sports fraternity.

They're using a lot of national sports figures such as former Baltimore Colts quarterback Johnny Unitas and his son, Ken, and hockey star Bobby Hull and his sons to sell recreational shooting. Daisy must have hand picked the jocks because they're all the clean-cut type.

Most new products in the sporting world are intro- duced each February at the National Sporting Goods Association's annual show in Chicago or Houston. The show is mostly for dealers, jobbers and manufacturers and then the products are released into trade channels.

At this year's show, Daisy introduced its Model 1200 CO2 gas-operated handgun which shoots .177 caliber BB's. It's designed for adults who want to practice shooting the convenient and easy way.

It's styled with a hefty custom target design and molded grip and fore-end with wood grain and checkering. The barrel is seamless, smooth-bore steel with glare-free ribbing on the casing. It has a Patridge-type sight, which is adjustable, and the front sights are blade and ramp.

The muzzle velocity of the shot is about 450 fps. The magazine is filled by gravity from a 50 BB shot reservoir. The Model 1200 has much of the feel of a regular semi-automatic handgun.

A companion piece is the new pellet target trap which eliminates the need for range facilities. The Model 578, with heavy steel front, catches BB's and pellets. It's a little over 9 inches wide, 10 inches tall and 10 inches deep. The trap is easy to move, set up and store. It makes a great backstop for indoor shoot- ing.

A friend of mine plans to get one and put it on top of his television set. He says he will practice shooting during commercials. Sounds like a good idea and I'd like to try it except that I'd need a larger backstop.

If you're interested in any of Daisy's shooting prod- ucts, you can get free information by writing to Jack Powers, Daisy, Rogers, Arkansas 72756.
For many years, as a token of appreciation to subscribers, FLORIDA WILDLIFE has offered a certificate of recognition for landing trophy-sized specimens of certain popular sport species. Long-time subscribers will remember the full-page notice of the citation program carried in most issues of the magazine until recently. This was fine, as far as it went. Judging by the number of inquiries, however, the matter of really BIG fish, as compared with the usual "nice one," is of more than casual interest to many rod and reelers. The problem was that the mechanics of receiving and recording big fish information had never been set up. To remedy this situation, the Commission's Fish Management Division, assisted by FLORIDA WILDLIFE, initiated a State Record Fish program to keep tabs on the lunkers. A set of rules, to which prospective record holders must strictly adhere, was drawn up. The details of the program appeared in the June 1976 issue of the magazine. Through particular circumstances, some fish caught prior to the initiation of the program were accepted as records. For most of the species commonly taken on hook and line, however, no record was recognized. The committee set up a minimum qualifying weight for these species as a starting point. In many cases there have been no entries to date.

Want to hold a state freshwater fish record? Now is the time to make your play—in most categories the field is wide open! Application forms for state record fish are available from regional offices, laboratories, and the central office in Tallahassee.

RECENT RECORDS

Three fish, including the current topper, have held the limelight in the striped bass division since the state record program was initiated. Wayne F. Inlanne, Jr. 22 pounds

Ochlockonee River June 23, 1976

C. W. Padgett 23 lbs. 8 oz. Apalachicola River November 10, 1976

Albert F. Cook 31 pounds Apalachicola River Feb. 23, 1977

A bluegill record was claimed by a Tampa fisherman, Dewali Griffin, who took a 1 pound, 9.4 ounce specimen from the waters of Polk County.

An application for a Suwannee Bass record was submitted on a specimen taken from the Ochlockonee River above Lake Talquin. The fish reported—topped the 4-pound mark. The Records Committee turned down the application however, as the weight was not certified as required. A Florida gar that almost certainly would have stood for some time was also disqualified for the same reason—no certification of the weight.

This points up the absolute necessity of having the weight certified as called for on the application form.

CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING FLORIDA'S FRESHWATER FISH RECORDS

Any fish to be considered for record must have been taken in Florida waters. Application for recognition of a fish as a state record must carry the certification of a Game and Fish Commission fisheries biologist, regional manager, or other qualified Commission employee, stating that he personally identified, measured, and weighed the fish. Weighing must be done on a scale certified by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Only an unfrozen carcass will be acceptable for certification. If circumstances make it necessary to freeze the specimen before it is presented to the certifying authority, it must be thawed for weighing, measuring and detailed examination to verify that it has not been altered in any manner. Proof must be established beyond a reasonable doubt that the fish was taken by legal sport fishing methods, and a notarized statement to that effect is a part of the application for recognition of the catch. Names and addresses of witnesses must be listed on the application. In the event the fish appears to be a possible state or world record, a panel of biologists may be appointed by the Director of the Fish Management Division to consider all aspects of the application. A majority opinion will be final regarding the acceptance of the fish as the state record.

CURRENT STATE RECORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Minimum Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spotted gar</td>
<td>10 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longnose gar</td>
<td>20 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida gar</td>
<td>20 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator gar</td>
<td>70 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama shad</td>
<td>2 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American shad</td>
<td>4 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redfin pickerel</td>
<td>12 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>20 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White catfish</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel catfish</td>
<td>20 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White bass</td>
<td>2½ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine bass</td>
<td>4 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redear (shelcker)</td>
<td>2½ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted sunfish (stumpknocker)</td>
<td>1 pound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPEN—NO CURRENT RECORD LISTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Minimum Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida gar</td>
<td>5 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator gar</td>
<td>4 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White bass</td>
<td>2 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redear (shelcker)</td>
<td>2½ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted sunfish (stumpknocker)</td>
<td>1 pound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLORIDA WILDLIFE
Like it or not, those of us who are interested in the outdoors, whether we're hunters, fishermen, photographers, bird watchers or just someone who likes to become involved in efforts to preserve wild lands. And the key to becoming effective is to be well-informed.

One of the best information sources available to outdoors people is the Florida Conservation Digest, published monthly by the Florida Audubon Society.

WALKING CATFISH FREEZE

Along with the obvious and well-publicized damages resulting from January's record cold weather, at least one "plus" came about: the elimination of thousands of walking catfish.

The exotic catfish has been a source of anxiety for fisheries managers for several years because of its competition for native freshwater fish habitat. Its unique ability to move for some distance overland by "walking" on its pectoral fins has made the critter difficult to control by conventional methods.

But Mother Nature lent Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission biologists a hand by reducing water temperatures below the critical tolerance level in some areas of walking catfish infestation.

The result was a windrow of dead, nolonger-walking catfish along Alligator Alley in Collier County. Those that got cold feet and tried to walk away from the cold water were no better off, passing on to their reward in the chilly night air.

Anyone for freeze-dried catfish?

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

The new Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Wildlife Research Laboratory and office facility was formally dedicated on February 17, 1977.

The new building is located on a beautifully shaded site that was known as Oak Grove Cow Pen when it was part of the Camp Ranch, prior to being purchased by the state as Paynes Prairie State Preserve. The preserve is located just south of Gainesville.

The facility houses a multi-faceted wildlife research program with on-going projects dealing with such diverse species as deer, sandhill cranes, wild hogs, brown pelicans, panthers, Florida ducks, bald eagles and many other game and non-game species.

Formerly housed in a cluster of trailers, or "mobile homes" as they're known to the industry, (continued on next page)

<image of Walking Catfish Freeze>

MEET YOUR NEW COMMISSIONER

Ralph Bernard Parrish, Jr., 34, of Tallahassee, was appointed to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission January 6, 1977, by Governor Reubin Askew. He replaces Howard Odum whose term has expired.

Parrish, a native of Titusville, was a former special assistant to the Governor from 1970 until July 1976. He is currently a business consultant and owns a John Deere dealership.

While serving under Governor Askew, Parrish was involved in governmental appointments, acted as liaison between the Governor's Office and the Department of Business Regulation and the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, Department of Natural Resources.

But Parrish's roots lie in sportsmen's organizations, a fact that I could make some small contribution towards guaranteeing my children and my children's children the privilege of enjoying hunting and fishing as well as other outdoor recreation.

"One of the most important issues now facing the Commission is the aquatic weed program because of the unique position the Commission is in. I would hope that we can have the total program placed under the Commission's authority."

"Another vital issue I see is funding because of the duties of the Commission have expanded well beyond that of merely arresting game violators, into such areas as game and fish management, environmental protection and recreation..."
Although it covers many Pacific species, it also gives the treatment to those we commonly encounter along the Florida Gulf and Atlantic coasts. The "usual" seafood creatures, such as crabs and clams, are discussed—methods of harvesting, where to find them, how to get them ready for the kitchen, along with a variety of ways to cook them. But even to a tried and true seacoast forager, the information on gathering and preparing such off-beat fare as periwinkles, turban shells, sea urchins, and those species of fish usually considered as trashskates and rays, for example, may be eye-opening. The 228-page book, with numerous line drawings, goes for $6.95 in paper back. Publisher is Stackpole Books, Cameron and Kelker Street, P. O. Box 1831, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Dedicated to the appreciation and enjoyment of our wildlife heritage, and to a fuller understanding of efforts directed toward the protection, restoration, enhancement, and wise use of our natural resources.

COMMISSION

R. A. THOMAS, Chairman
Jacksonville
E. P. BURNETT, Vice Chairman
Tampa
DONALD G. KROES, D.B.S.
West End Drive
GEORGE D. MATTHEWS
Palm Beach
R. BERNARD PARISH, JR.
Tallahassee

ADMINISTRATION

DR. O. E. FRYE, JR., Director
206 B. Marion Ave, Tallahassee 32301
(904) 661-1660

ROBERT B. BRANTLEY
Executive Director

H. T. WALLACE
Deputy Director

JAMES F. HEATH, Director
Administrative Services Division

JOHN W. WOODS, Director
Fish Management Division

FRED W. STABBERDY, Executive Director
Wildlife Management Division

BURLINGTON LINDSAY, Director
Law Enforcement Division

JAMES T. FLOYD, Director
Information-Education Division

R. DANIEL DUNFORD, Chief
Environmental Protection Bureau

REGIONAL OFFICES

Northwest Region

LARRY MARTIN, Manager
298 Angel Drive
Panama City, Florida 32401
(904) 798-1303

Northeast Region

LARRY MARTIN, Manager
Suite 7, Box 102
Lake City, Florida 32056
(904) 752-5653

Central Region

WILLIAM H. KINGS, Manager
2208 N. H. Brown Street
Ocala, Florida 32074
(904) 820-2342

Southern Region

J. O. BROWN, Manager
2202 Lakeview Drive
Lake Worth, Florida 33461
(407) 559-3177

Bermudian Region

LOUIS F. GAYNOR, Manager
351 North Military Trail
North Palm Beach, Florida 33408
(305) 885-9740

Indian mounds are found throughout Florida, dotting the landscape like a prehistoric record in brails. Most are located in areas where a plentiful supply of food could be found—along the coast and near inland streams and lakes. By carefully excavating the mounds—mapping, photographing and analyzing every inch—professional archeologists are able to reconstruct Florida's history.

Such reconstruction is only possible on undisturbed mounds. Artifacts are meaningless unless a careful record is kept of the object's surroundings and location within the mound. A mistake of one inch can mean a difference of several hundred years.

Mounds are our best link to Florida's distant past, yet many have been lost forever. Some were inundated by rising sea level. Countless more have been destroyed or rendered useless by the indiscriminate diggings of pot-hunters, land developers and road crews.

Help protect Florida's natural resources by reporting the location of known or suspected mounds to the Division of Archives, History and Records Management, R. A. Gray Building, Tallahassee, Florida, 32304.

Indian mounds are found throughout Florida, dotting the landscape like a prehistoric record in brails. Most are located in areas where a plentiful supply of food could be found—along the coast and near inland streams and lakes. By carefully excavating the mounds—mapping, photographing and analyzing every inch—professional archeologists are able to reconstruct Florida's history.

Such reconstruction is only possible on undisturbed mounds. Artifacts are meaningless unless a careful record is kept of the object's surroundings and location within the mound. A mistake of one inch can mean a difference of several hundred years.

Mounds are our best link to Florida's distant past, yet many have been lost forever. Some were inundated by rising sea level. Countless more have been destroyed or rendered useless by the indiscriminate diggings of pot-hunters, land developers and road crews.

Help protect Florida's natural resources by reporting the location of known or suspected mounds to the Division of Archives, History and Records Management, R. A. Gray Building, Tallahassee, Florida, 32304.
In February 1864, Federal troops pushing westward from Jacksonville were confronted by a sizable force of Confederates near Olustee, some 20 miles east of Lake City. Here developed, on February 20, Florida’s major Civil War confrontation. The Battle of Olustee was contemporaneously tabbed one of the hottest actions of the War Between the States. In repulsing the Union advance, Confederate forces suffered the loss of nearly 20 percent while the Federals sustained close to 40 percent casualties. Commemorated by the state’s Olustee Battlefield Historic Memorial Park, the site is on the Osceola Wildlife Management Area in the Osceola National Forest, just off U.S. 90, east of Olustee, Baker County.