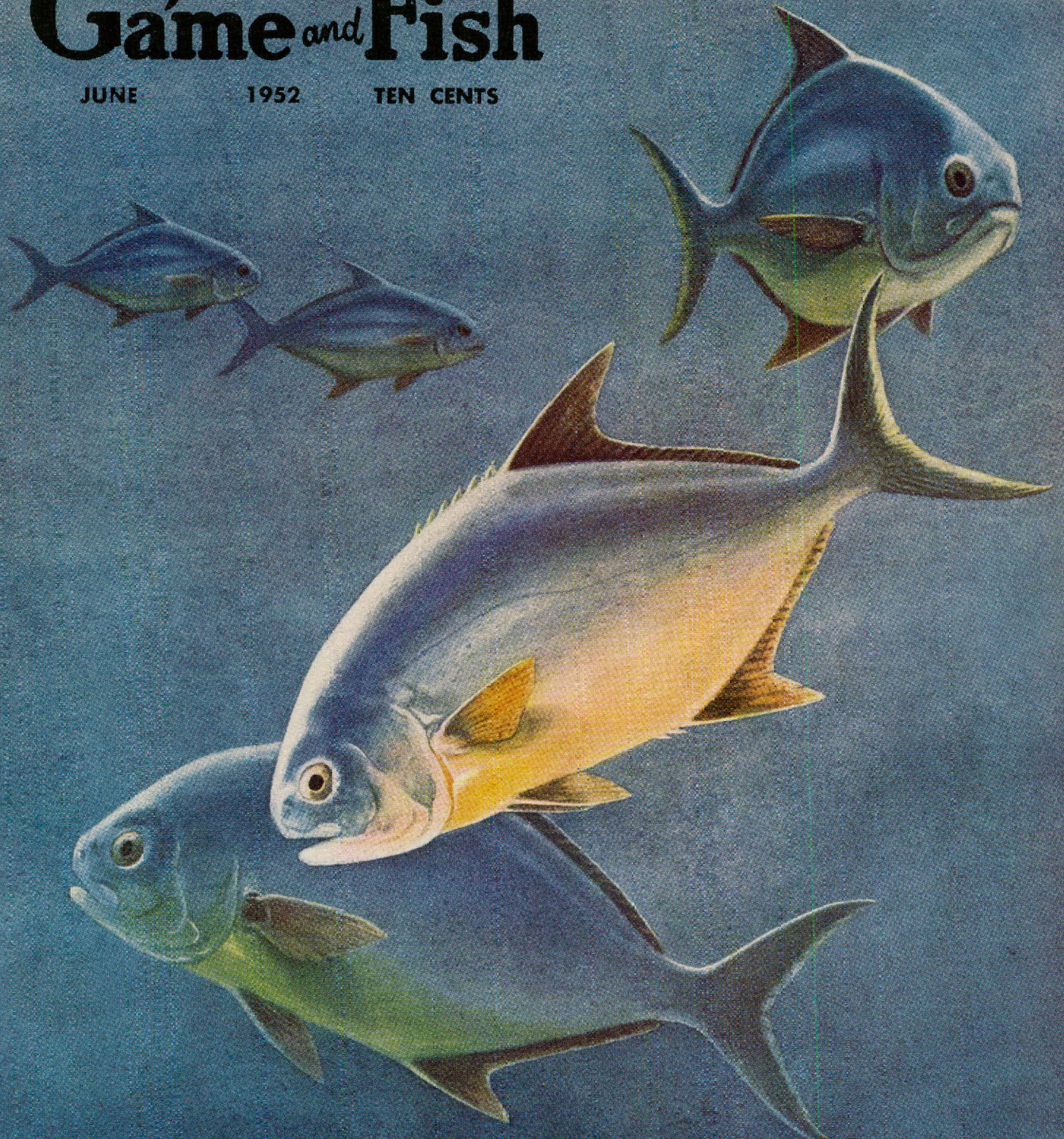


Texas Game and Fish

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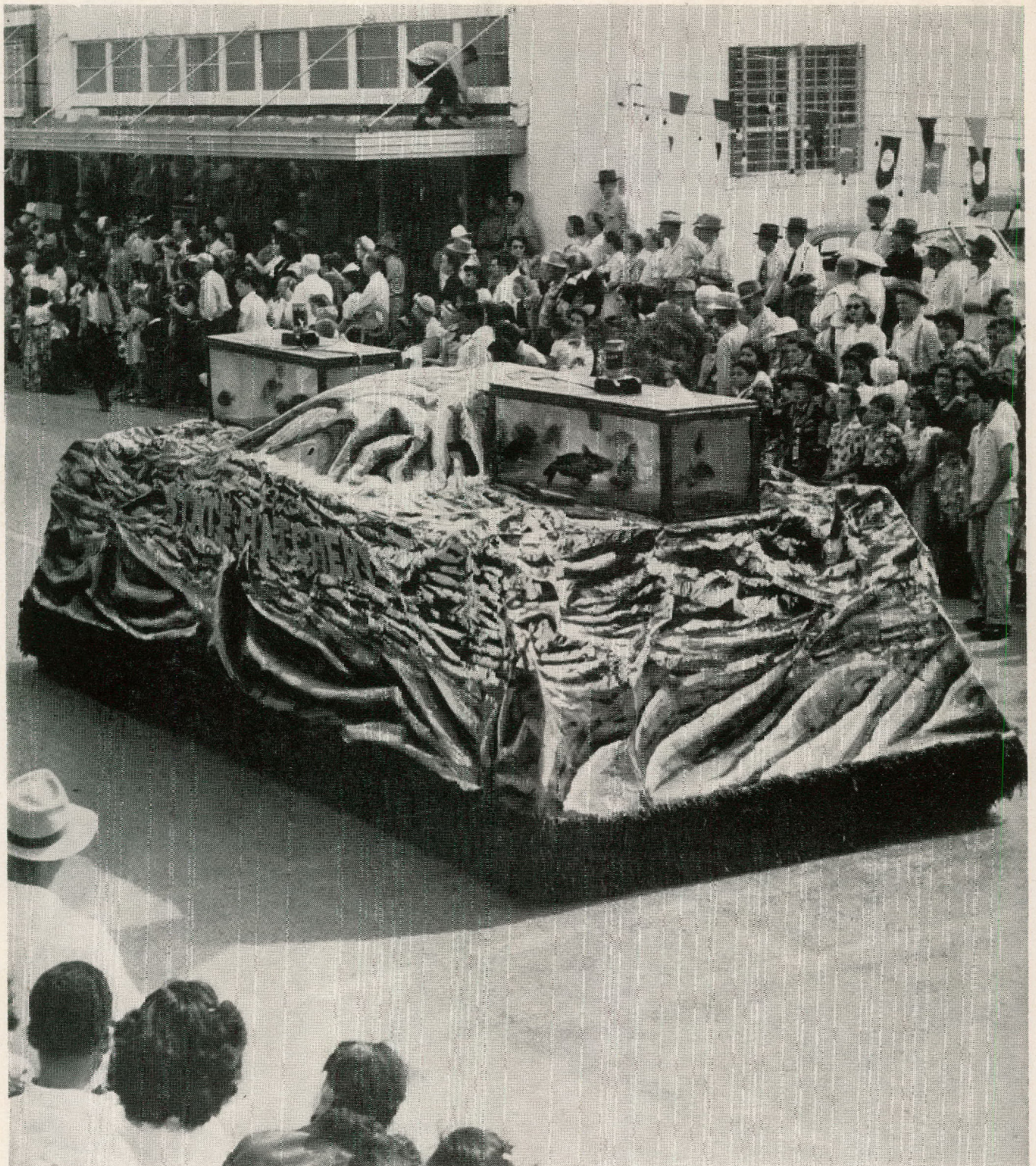


Dallas, Texas, 1952

1952

Dallas, Texas

Rice



PORTABLE FISH—Fish in a miniature natural habitat were brought to the city folks in Brownsville at the last Cinco Days' celebration. This was accomplished by two tanks mounted on a pickup truck which participated in the parade. The tanks were five feet long, two feet wide, and 20 inches high. Agitators kept the water stirred up and thus supplied the fish with oxygen. The fish included bass, catfish, crappie and goggle eye. Getting the fish into the contraption and available for the celebrants to see was not as difficult as was operating the portable contraption. It required two men to keep the truck on the parade beam. Houston Maples who is superintendent of the Olmito State Fish Hatchery on the outskirts of Brownsville, was in charge of the unique display. (Photo by D. J. Hennessy.)

Texas Game and Fish

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF OUR NATIVE GAME AND FISH; AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUNTING AND FISHING IN TEXAS.

★

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The Cover

The pompano's trim, racy build, coupled with a powerful body provide speed and endurance in abundance to delight the sporting angler. Especially on light tackle, this fish when compared pound for pound, is the equal of any game fish anywhere in the world. While usually caught in the surf on light surf-casting tackle, the pompano also provides plenty of sport for bait casters using artificial lures around piers and pilings.



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JUN 10 1952

Dallas, Texas

The Shooting Scow!

By STEVE HAMLIN

THERE was a lot of verbal hocus pokus that reminded of the old Jenny flying days before the self starter became standard for flying machines.

Then the pilot and the man twisting the prop hollered about "contact" and such.

Now in the airboat, parked at Beaumont, two men began the old routine.

Mate Lucius Robertson stepped back on the deck, behind the propeller. Skipper Clyde Renfro sat down behind the wheel and expertly raked his hands across the instrument panel.

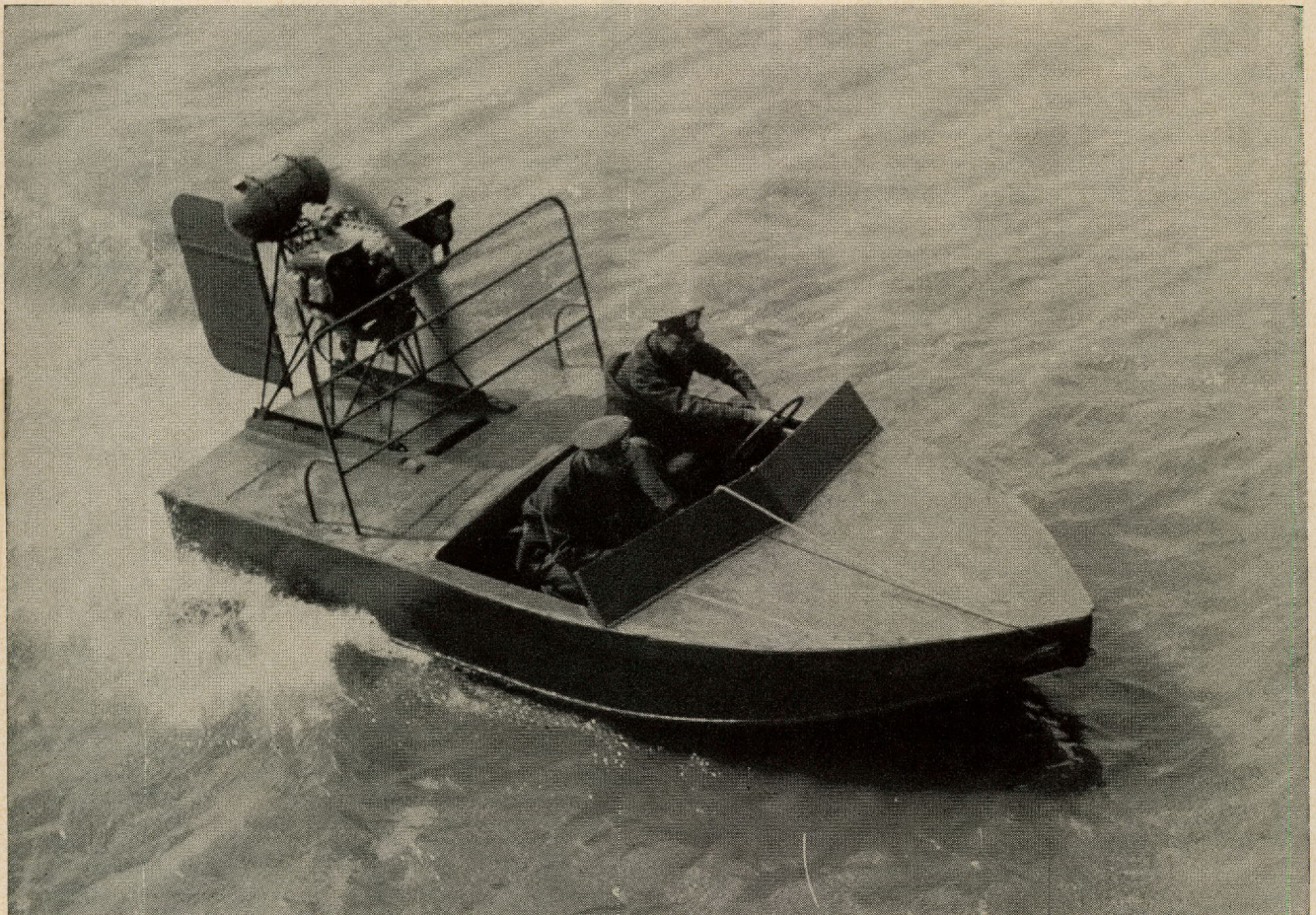
"Okay, Doc, spark on."

"Check" replied Robertson.

There was an almost imperceptible hand movement in the cockpit. Then, the six foot prop whirled. The engine coughed, and then caught.

The 15-foot long craft had been backed by hand out into the water. Now, with the power on, Skipper Renfro guided it slowly away from the landing.

From the cockpit which is nothing more than a shallow pit directly in front of the mounted motor the maneuver seemed effortless. Looking back through the wire safety



Off for the chase, the light craft begins to pick up speed. It will do 60 MPH but does not handle well in deep water. It's maximum efficiency is in the wet marsh grass. There the air rudder, shown behind the engine, takes over.

guard separating the seat from the power plant, one thought of another pusher model. That was the old trans-Atlantic Clipper.

A contrast in size, however, as this airboat is fed fuel from a five gallon can. The old Clipper, hopping to the war zone in the spring of 1942, took on a mere 11-ton load of petrol on one stop—at Gander, Newfoundland.

Renfro poked his mount out into the open water, advanced the throttle and the craft with its three occupants cruised effortlessly. Renfro stepped up the speed, demonstrating happily that it had a “dead man throttle.” That is, the throttle cuts back when the hand is removed.

Some brush was scattered through the channel. One mess of wire and limbs loomed as an unusual hazard.

Now the skipper whipped the boat around and commented: “Watch this.”

He had been talking about how the water rudder kicks up when it strikes an obstruction and how it skims over a low object.

Now he headed for the mess of wire and brush. He had mentioned the plain plywood bottom and the cypress sides; and how the boat was supposed to set up a drag in deep water at high speed. But the pilot looked like the kind of a flier who could wrap his wing over his element leader’s at 600 MPH.

The 85 horsepower Continental lunged to the demand for more power. The shallow boat began skimming over the water. It seemed to be almost airborne.

Renfro ducked his head. A challenging smile creased his wind-tanned face. Leaning low against the protective screen, Robertson sat calmly.

Now for the obstacle race showdown—the rubble dead ahead.

The nose of the boat shaved the wire and brush. So did the mid-section. Only the guard on the rudder made contact. That was almost soundless. And it had no effect whatever on the boat.

Skipper Renfro looked up. He smiled at the effective demonstration. Obviously, the crew was proud.

Renfro throttled back the engine and headed toward the landing.

“Not a good place,” he explained. “It operates best back in the marshes where there is slick grass.”

“Yeh,” interposed Mate Robertson, “then she really takes off.”

These two men should know. They spend a lot of hours in this boat, patrolling the back areas in the Gulf marshes, penetrating remote areas checking up on wildlife and on trappers and on those trying to take advantage of the inaccessible shallows. Also the boat permits a check on pollution of bay waters.

The airboat became must equipment for the Game and Fish Commission after such speedy craft became popular. Renfro estimated there are more than 50 in the Beaumont area alone.

The Commission boat also has been on errands of mercy; to help find lost waterfowl hunters. Last fall it

was used to locate the body of a duck hunter who had perished far back in the grassy wasteland.

Renfro and Robertson have spent much of their life on the water. Robertson distinguished himself with a historic five week cruise through the intercoastal canal, connecting Port Arthur with Corpus Christi. He hunted alligators the length of the waterway and killed more than 700.

It’s a sporty assignment especially when they take out after another airboat at 60 miles an hour. “We need some luck then,” said Renfro. “We can get over ordinary logs and rocks and we know where the permanent fences are. But the low lying concrete corner markers and abandoned barb wire make us sweat.”

Time skids on in the vast coastal wildlife areas.



Back in the hidden wasteland of the Gulf coast marshes, the Game and Fish Commission air patrol boat crew makes an instrument panel adjustment while pulled up at an old dock. Mate Lucius Robertson holds on to the dock. Skipper Clyde Renfro is at the wheel.

Vagabond Kings

By TOWNSEND MILLER

Assistant Director, Departmental Publications.

ONE of Texas' most colorful wild-life spectacles has just drawn to a close in the Panhandle region.

The exciting mating dance of the prairie chicken, known as "booming," once foretold the approach of spring to Texans throughout most of the state.

Today few residents have so much as heard of the booming pageant. Even fewer have witnessed the colorful ritual which in springtime was as familiar to earlier-day Texans as the budding leaves.

One of the state's original three native species, the greater prairie chicken, has disappeared from Texas completely. These once were abundant throughout the northeastern quarter of the state, but the last were seen about 1912.



A prairie chicken cock, neck feathers flared, in typical booming pose. The orange-colored air sacs at the throat are expanded, giving resonance to the fascinating mating call.

Scattered remnants of the Attwater prairie chicken still are found along the Gulf coast, restricted into an area less than 100 miles wide between the Texas-Louisiana border and Corpus Christi.

The third species, the lesser prairie chicken, is the one found in the Panhandle. They once ranged west from Wichita Falls, through the Panhandle, and south almost to the Rio Grande. Bands of these birds slowly are making a comeback in spotted regions along the New Mexico and Oklahoma borders.

It has been unlawful to hunt or kill prairie chickens since 1937.

The two species of chickens still found in Texas are very similar. Weight of a single specimen usually is just under two pounds, the Attwater being slightly the larger of the two.

Coloring in general is similar to that of the bobwhite quail. The feathers covering most of the body are brown with buff or grayish-white bars.

The cocks and hens look very much alike. However, the cock has two air sacs, one on each side of the throat, which are undeveloped in the hen. His "eyebrows"—patches of bare skin above the eyes—also are more prominent.

Both sexes have tufts of heavy feathers on each side of the head, which can be raised to resemble "horns." These tufts are longer on the cock.

The big booming show in the Panhandle has its beginning in January or February. The time schedule from the day the first cocks make their appearance on the booming grounds until the chicks are hatched some five or six months later varies throughout, depending upon the weather.

No one knows just why certain spots on the prairie are chosen by these grouse-like birds for their booming and mating activities, but they return to the same places each year, generation after generation.

Often the booming ground may be of slightly higher elevation than the surrounding territory or the vegetation there may be a little less sparse. Generally, however, the chosen spot looks very much like its surrounding territory.

At first, the visits to the booming grounds are sporadic, occurring only on fair, warm days. As spring approaches the booming becomes more regular, and soon the birds gather at dawn and again just before sundown every day.

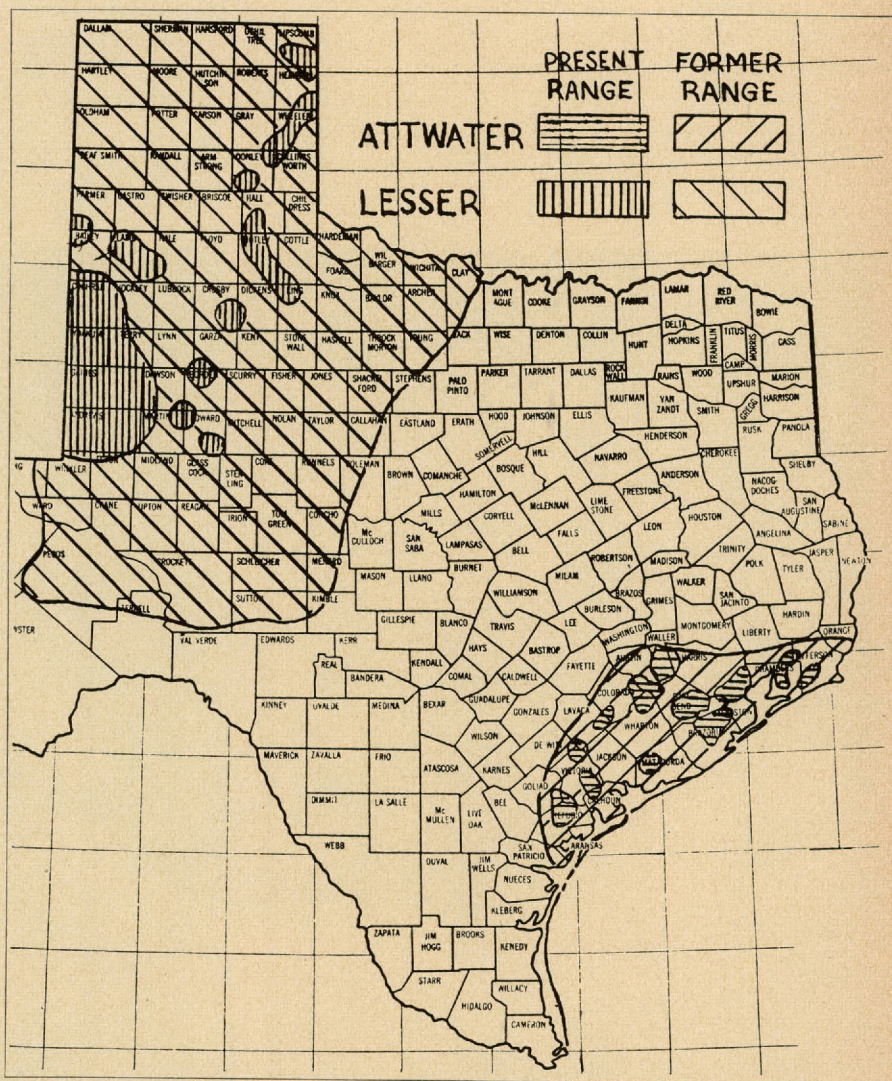
Only the cocks visit the booming sites for the first two months or so.

The booming activity is a fascinating combination of sound and motion.

The cocks prance and strut, dance and spread their wings. They raise and lower the tuft of feathers on each side of the head and expand the air sacs at their throat. The skin covering these sacs and the bare spot above each eye take on a bright orange color during this season.

The mating call of the lesser prairie chicken, which somewhat resembles the call of a turkey gobbler, is issued intermittently. The sound is amplified by resonance in the air sacs and has a peculiar carrying quality which permits it to be heard at surprising distances.

During the early days of the booming period, the cocks spar with each other frequently. They crouch, face to face, eyeing each other ferociously, but the actual fighting usually is only half-hearted. At times one or both will take to the air, attempting to pounce upon his rival from above, but he seldom strikes a blow. Often, after much "talk" and argument, the



The approximate ranges of the two species of prairie chickens remaining in Texas, the Attwater and the lesser, are shown here. A third species, the greater prairie chicken, once inhabited a major portion of the northeastern section of the state, but none have been seen in Texas since about 1912.

two cocks will turn and nonchalantly wander apart.

As the booming season wears away, each cock establishes a small territorial domain of his own on the booming grounds. At this time, he may rush to the edge of his area to challenge a nearby cock, but fighting is infrequent. The other cocks seldom wander across their own invisible borderlines.

Soon, usually in late March, the first few hens begin to visit the booming grounds. At first, the cocks all rush forward to greet each new arrival, but the hens display little interest. Later, as the number of hens on the site increases, the stampeding by the males is discontinued, and the cocks remain in their individual domains.

The hens wander among the cocks, stopping to visit here and there and to admire the courting dance and call of an individual cock.

Should a hen linger in the territory of one of the cocks, he may make

his nuptial bow, an act performed only near the time of mating.

In making the nuptial bow, the cock spreads his wings wide, sinks completely to the ground, and touches his bill to the earth in a perfect tribute of respect. The hen usually accepts him at this time.

Prairie chickens do not pair off, even for a season. Both cocks and hens may accept more than one mate during the mating period, which usually occurs about the first of April.

Soon the hens begin to disappear from the twice-daily booming ritual as they seek sheltering spots for their nests.

The nests, which are not elaborate, are located on the prairie, usually in a patch of tall grass. Laying begins in mid-April.

The eggs are almost uniformly tan, sometimes sparsely speckled with a few brown or reddish spots. The average clutch contains between 12 and 16 eggs.

The chicks, which hatch in 23 days,

are greenish-yellow in color, spotted with black. They are hardy little creatures, leaving the nest with the hen a few hours after hatching.

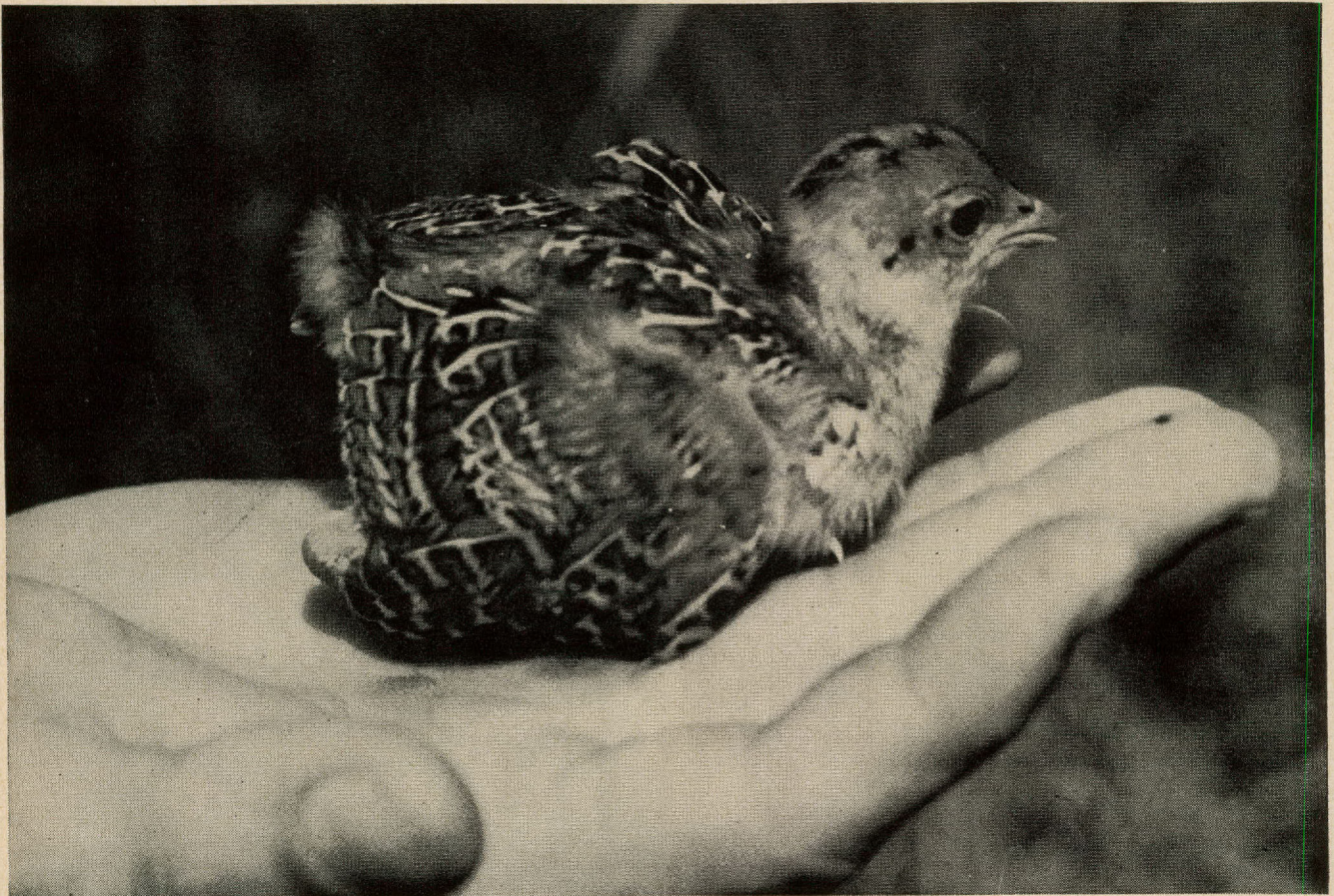
Small insects are surprisingly easy prey to the active newly-hatched youngsters. They also eat small seeds, gradually taking in larger and larger grains.

The youngsters are capable of a sustained flight of some 50 yards when three to four weeks old, and at 10 weeks the brood begins to disperse.

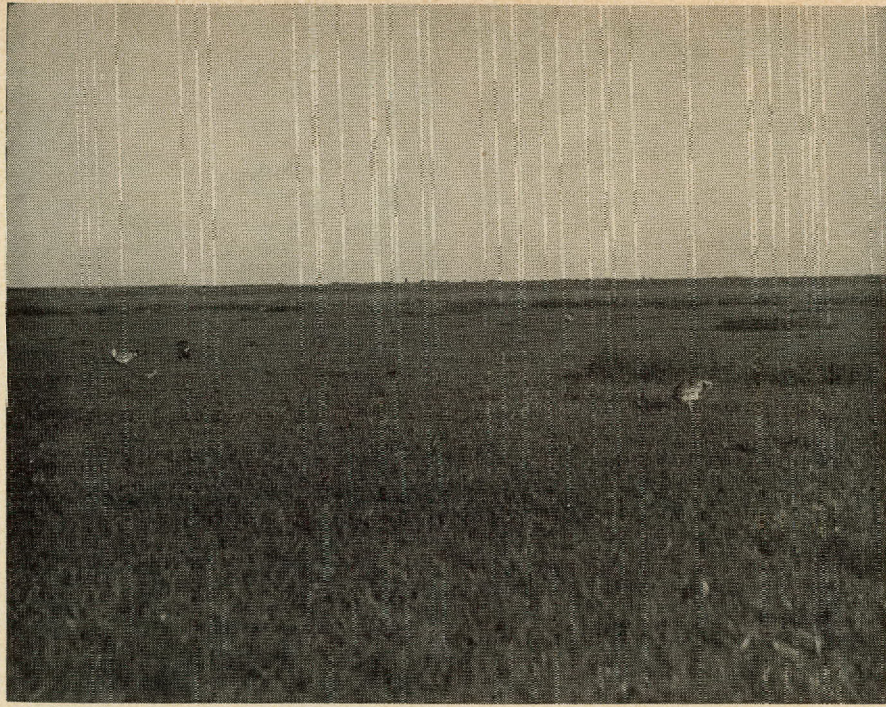
Another period of booming activity occurs in the autumn, but there is no mating. During this period the prairie chickens separate into flocks of opposite sexes when not on the booming grounds.

In winter, however, the flocks again are mixed and usually combine in groups which are the largest of the year.

The prairie chicken feeds almost entirely on seeds, grain, and plants the greatest part of the year. However, in summertime, insects, many of



This youngster is about two weeks old.



A typical prairie chicken booming ground in the Texas Panhandle region. The two cocks on the left are eyeing each other belligerently, but the battle will be relatively mild.

which are injurious to growing crops and grasses, may compose almost half the volume of food consumed.

The lesser prairie chicken of the Panhandle region requires almost no water outside that found in and on its natural foods, although his cousin, the Attwater species of the coastal regions, may require some supplemental water supply.

Both favor open prairies and tall grass. The lesser species has been able to adapt himself more readily to changing conditions, however, and has been able to survive despite the disappearance of most of the taller grasses from the Panhandle. The Attwater species still shows a tendency to inhabit those portions of the coastal prairies where the grass grows high.

Plentiful is hardly an adequate word to describe the amazing abundance of prairie chickens which once inhabited most of Texas in huge flocks that often overlapped each other.

Excessive exploitation of this regal game bird by hunters, who in the 1800's slaughtered them for "sport" and left hundreds of them in the

field to decay, wiped out a good measure of the prairie chicken population prior to 1900.

Since that time, the spread of agriculture and heavy grazing has retarded their efforts to stage a comeback. A continued shortage of adequate food and protective cover, so plentiful in the past, has left the bird tightly restricted to a bare remnant of its former range.

The future of the prairie chicken rests in the hands of the landowners. The survival of the species is dependent upon the willingness of farmers and ranchers to incorporate beneficial game management practices into their planning.

In order to stimulate recognition of the prairie chicken's value as a game bird and to encourage landowners to consider his welfare, the Texas Game and Fish Commission is now investigating the possibility of permitting a short, carefully controlled open season in some Panhandle counties this autumn.

The area under consideration is in the 28-county Panhandle region where the Commission has regulatory

power over fish and game by a special act of the legislature.

Two of the Game and Fish Commission's wildlife technicians, A. S. Jackson and Dick DeArment, are now engaged in taking a census of the lesser prairie chicken population. Their findings to a great extent will determine the advisability of staging the short open season this year.

Counts of chickens were made on the booming grounds this spring. More important are figures now being compiled on nesting and the success of hatching.

It is the number of young raised this year which will have the greatest bearing on the possibility of legal shooting.

Regardless, shooting necessarily will be extremely limited and carefully controlled. Hunting possibly would be permitted for a few days only, and each hunter probably would be limited to but two or three birds for the season.

However, if the status of the prairie chicken permits, Texas sportsmen for the first time in 15 years may get a crack at the bird which once ranked as king of the state's game birds.

Tenacious



George Howard Walker looks down the barrels of his ancient breach loading double with which he bagged great quantities of game during the lush East Texas days.

“UNCLE GEORGE” had the answer why he couldn’t be found at the murder trial over in the Angelina County courthouse.

The folks had been looking around town for “Uncle George.” He wasn’t at his favorite haunts. Somebody then suggested the current major attraction for the community—a man on trial for killing another local resident.

Before long “Uncle George” was observed ambling down the street. He was found at a grocery store conversing with a clerk.

“No,” he responded, “never have any business at murder trials, or any other trials. I knew both of those men well. Don’t want to hear about people having trouble. Always kept out of trouble myself; kept my family out of it too.”

That meant missing a lot of potential trouble because “Uncle George” is 96 years old. His real name is George Howard Walker.

George Howard Walker is a native Texan, and the main purpose of this narrative is to take the folks back to the pioneer Texas days when wildlife

was abundant. It was so abundant that market hunting was strictly legal, with dressed wild duck, for example, bringing ten cents each.

When “Uncle George” finally settled down to chat in the front of his grandson’s car, he went back to the original reference to his dislike for trouble:

“As a kid cowhand I knew about trouble—real trouble. I knew it early and it lasted me long.”

This old gentleman with the amazing vigor and equally amazing faculty for remembering dates and places, then told how, as a young cowhand, he had drunk beer with a cowpoke one evening, and next day the same fellow went berserk. He killed three men because of real or fancied trouble and then was shot down by a posse.

“Made up my mind then,” resumed “Uncle George,” “that that was enough trouble to last all of us for a lifetime.”

Later on, when Game Warden Supervisor E. M. Sprott joined in a chat about present-day wildlife, “Uncle George” reverted to his non-existent troubles, so far as the law is concerned, and was able to laugh along with Sprott.

“Got my sights on what I knew was a legal deer and pulled. When he fell, I wasn’t sure there was a legal prong; there was just a nubbin there. But I was not sure and I was scared. So I did what I could to give me time to

By JAY VESSELS

think—covered that deer over with leaves. Then I looked up and there stood you.” He playfully dug his finger into Sprott’s ribs.

It was a legal deer, too.

“Uncle George” described the times when deer were so thick, and laws so conspicuously absent, that no care had to be taken before pulling the trigger.

But he boasted that he had never killed a doe deer, in flush years or not.

He talked about himself as having shot deer since he was a kid of six years when he was so small his father had to put him on location with a forked stick for a gun rest so that he could thus hold the muzzleloader.

Walker’s count on big game reached “96 deer, skinned” through last season when he got his buck “as usual.”

He estimated “all the ducks I have killed couldn’t be pulled by a team of mules.”

“Uncle George,” as he is known by everyone around Lufkin, was particularly sharp at hunting wild turkeys. His popular box call is considered one of the deadliest in the county.

“You had to call them up close,” he explained. “Did in my day because black powder was too expensive to miss. Got them up close, so we could shoot off their heads.”

Now, Walker concentrates on fishing in the Neches River. His favorite fishing partner is his grandson, David, now 20.

Texan

Still equal to the elements, although almost a centenarian, "Uncle George" spends many a night with David, camping out on the river bank with no shelter more than a blanket.

His son, Howard Walker, is pretty

Assistant Director, Departmental Publications

busy with his real estate business, but gets an occasional fishing trip with his father.

"Has a way with the fish, too," grinned Howard. "I've seen him keep catching them even with the bait gone. Just take a cotton blossom and make 'em bite."

White perch are one of "Uncle George's" favorites.

Folks in the Lufkin country know "Uncle George" and his hunting and fishing talents. They know he was lured to the area a long time ago because game and fish, so essential to livelihood, were abundant. Then it wasn't a matter of being a game hog; it was a matter of helping one's self for daily needs.

Besides, the old-timers who took advantage of the rich natural resources of the area really are not responsible for the present decimation of wildlife. The present-day shortage is directly traceable to the coming of the car, the farm tractor, good fences, to huge cattle herds and other modern encroachments.

The men who know what conditions were like "way back when" rather serve as a reminder of the lush wildlife days and as a theoretical stimulant for current efforts to counterbalance the crush of civilization and to restore some of the lost game and fish treasure.

"Uncle George's" good memory does provide one of the links between what it was like in the primeval forests and what it is like in the ever-shrinking wilderness areas. One prac-

tical reminder, of much comfort to himself, is a 55 pound featherbed which he sleeps upon and which was made from the down of a small segment of the wild ducks he harvested.

This stalwart Texan isn't just someone sitting on the sidelines watching the world go by and talking only about the bygone days. He still makes his contributions to everyday life, even though much of it is in the form of cutting commentary.

Current trends bore "Uncle George" although he brings this up usually when he is asked. For an old-timer who "made 67 crops, all between the plow handles and walked all the

way," some of the folks take it a little easy at the moment.

Fellow townsmen were playing checkers on the courthouse square that afternoon when he chatted in the car.

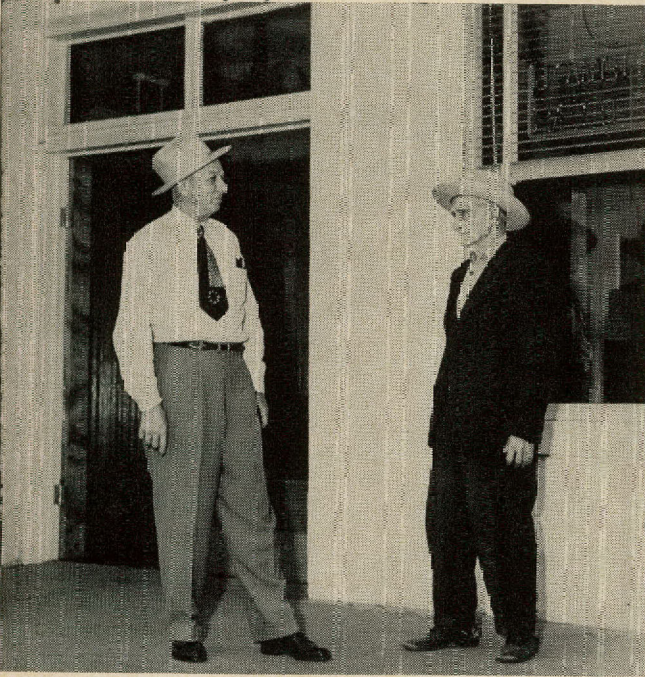
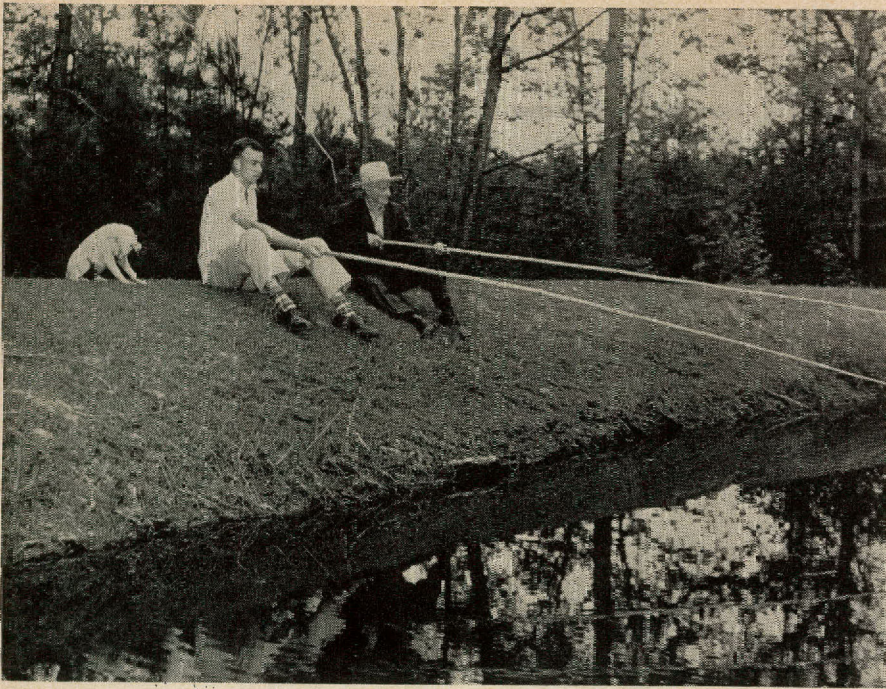
"I don't seem to have time for that," he said.

Then, three men walked across the street from the square:

"There," he began. "Those three there; they should be working. But what they are doing is eating up their pensions and I'll betcha are generally complaining about the government. . . . A while back, one of the local



Mrs. Ella Walker hulls peas from the garden which she also helps cultivate, although she majors in poultry care.



Walker, and Grandson David, his favorite fishing pal, angle for white perch. In his morning and afternoon rounds in downtown Lufkin, Walker makes his headquarters at the office of his son, Howard. (left) former superintendent of schools in Angelina county. Son Howard also is a sportsman of note.

complainers was talking hard about government . . . everything was wrong. I asked him did he vote. He hesitated. I knew he hadn't voted. Told him I'd pay him \$10 for every poll tax receipt he could show me . . . You bet, he didn't come through with a single one."

"Uncle George" spared his breath haranguing the politicians. But he backed into a favorite current subject. He was explaining that all of his folks came from Kentucky and that

his mother was a second cousin to Abraham Lincoln.

"That make you a Republican?" he was asked.

He snapped back quickly:

"No, but they're going to elect a Republican if they don't quit monkeying around." Sounded like a worried Democrat.

While "Uncle George" sat there in the car taking things apart and putting them back together again, it was noted that he hadn't smoked and that

he hadn't chewed. Finally he was asked, did he smoke.

"Sure, I smoked," he replied. "Smoked until I was 18." He didn't say how early he began. Shortly, he observed, laughingly: "I sure had the running fits for a few days after I quit tobacco."

That affliction had occurred just 78 years before, but "Uncle George" had some vivid recollections.

During the visit, he mentioned the big romance in his life—his wife, Ella. And he mentioned then that he had been compelled to cease some vices.

Mrs. Walker had come to Texas from Mississippi when she was 15 years of age. They lived near the Walker place which then was in Kaufman County. "Uncle George" said he first saw his future bride while she worked in the fields.

"But she wouldn't have anything to do with me at first," he smiled. "I was sort of the local cutup, I guess. She said if I didn't behave and didn't go to church to clinch the deal, she couldn't keep company with me . . .

Well, I went to church and began behaving . . . I've kept my word, too."

Other times he referred affectionately to his wife. Once he reckoned that maybe Mrs. Walker was to blame for his love of hunting "because she was such a good cook." Later, in reviewing his rugged days, he said: "Only person I was ever afraid of, was my wife."

"Uncle George" searched his memory for the answer to a question about exciting incidents during his wilderness life and hunting trips. He said nothing scary had ever happened. Then, he recalled the time when he and his brother were crossing a clearing at night with their two dogs and were shadowed by "something." He said the dogs wouldn't attack the beast which could be seen skulking in the moonlight. He said he hurled a large piece of brush at the animal and then outran it back home.

About his remarkably good health, Walker told how he had escaped serious illness. A favorite medicine in the old days he said was "spleen root." This, he explained, comprised herbs stuffed into a jar before the container was filled with "good whisky." "Uncle George" said it was

"mighty effective," dating back to the days when an old Indian Chief introduced it, but took pains to explain he had been very temperate throughout his life.

The Walkers live in a comfortable home in a quiet neighborhood. Mrs. Walker was found, as she said, "cleaning out the chicken house." The poultry promenaded behind a wired enclosure next to a small but adequate garden which seemed unusually well advanced for the early summer season.

When Mrs. Walker, who had explained she was only 82, was asked how the ground was broken, she picked up a rusty fork and said: "He did." After visiting with her husband, it was easy to understand that he could do the work. Especially after what he said about putting in 67 crops all between the plow handles, plus the clincher that he "never had to buy a dollar's worth of livestock feed."

That garden symbolized something mighty important to this wonderful couple. It meant fresh vegetables, including ample potatoes, grown at home. And Mrs. Walker had said, in explaining she did her own housework, that "I need to have something to do both inside and out the house."

Mrs. Walker proudly accepted partial sponsorship of the garden. After all, three years ago when her husband was indisposed for several months, she had the garden in hand and had even dug potatoes before "Uncle George" got back on his feet.

Mrs. Walker at first declined interest in the general subject matter. Before her husband arrived, she laughed; "Oh, I don't know anything about his tales." She didn't have any tales of her own, although in observing that her own health remains good that she had typhoid fever so badly when she was a child that she despaired of ever walking again.

Her husband, she commented, keeps remarkably mobile and robust in view of the fact that he is supposed to have asthma. "He gets up every morning at 4 o'clock and always has a good appetite," she reported. "Never misses his Dallas News brought to his doorstep every morning."



Walker studies the horns from the deer he killed last fall, as his close friend, Game Warden Supervisor E. M. Spratt, stands by. Below, Walker hoes the family garden which usually is well ahead of his neighbors.



The astonishing thing about this well preserved man is his eyesight, the eyes which pinned down a fabulous amount of wild game caught in his gun sights.

"Never use glasses," he explained. "Because I never abused my eyes . . . No didn't waste them on movies. Only been to about three movies in my life. Think the last time was when Non Binion gave me a ticket to 'Wilds of Africa.' And it was good."

Did he ever treat his eyes?

"Sure," said "Uncle George," "Treat them all the time. Steam them with coffee."

He cupped his hands before his mouth and blew his breath into his hands to show how he "soaks" his eyes in steam every time he has a cup of coffee.

"Makes them feel slick and good," he said proudly.

If only the wildlife wonders he had observed in a long lifetime could be equally well preserved.

Texas Tracks

By JAY VESSELS

Panama, Italy, Sweden, Holland, England, Ireland and Scotland.

NEST CHECKING DEVICE

Dove banding is expected to receive a stimulant in Texas this year because of distribution of a new gadget to check nests.

It is a 15-foot pole with a curved end and mirror attached so that a person holding up the device may determine the status of young birds,

DOVE FIRST AID

Jimmy Lingan's column in the Houston Chronicle:

"Jack Emmott (of Fairbanks) found that a storm had split a cedar tree in his front yard where a dove had her nest. He investigated, found the nest had been blown away, took a wad of grass and formed a new one which he put back in the tree. He found the two eggs that had fallen from the nest destroyed by the wind, and put them in the hand made one. While Jack worked around the tree, the mother bird fluttered about. He walked off a short distance and watched her get on the eggs in the nest he had made. During the afternoon when the bird was feeding, Emmott investigated again and found that she had rooted one egg, which was broken, from the nest."

IT FINALLY HAPPENED

Rarities are routine for the veteran, Game Warden Tom Waddell, at Eagle Lake.

Tom has seen albino ducks; he has seen doe deer with bucks' horns; he has had more than his share of thrills from wildlife.

But one of his biggest moments remained for the recent waterfowl hunting season . . .

A man actually sent in a perfect shooting preserve record book.

In his letter to H. K. Arnold of Houston, licensee for Lower Lake, Inc., Colorado County, Warden Waddell wrote:

" . . . this is the proper report and the FIRST complete record that I have ever received."

The state law requires licensees of shooting preserves to report accurately the names and license numbers of guests and the amount of game killed.

JUNCTION REPORTS!

Warden Joe Matlock of Junction, sent along this front line dispatch with great care as to details and as to the veracity of the persons concerned:

"Mr. Dee Patterson, Junction, came into the office with a story this morning that, to me at least, was certainly newsworthy.

"A couple of days ago while plug fishing for bass on the main Llano river a few miles below Junction, Mr. Patterson caught a carp that weighed in at 36½ pounds.

"This is the first time that I have ever heard of a carp hitting an artificial lure.

"Mr. Patterson is a gentleman and a sportsman and his integrity is beyond question."

BOOM! BOOM!

Reg Westmoreland, Dallas Times-Herald Outdoor Editor, reported on firearms:

"Two new sporting guns have been announced by the Remington Arms Co., an autoloading shotgun and hunting rifle, and are claimed by the manufacturers to be the first of their type. . . .

"The guns are the Models 11-48 autoloading 28-gauge shotgun and the Model 760 slide-action high-powered rifle. Remington officials say both are the first of their type ever offered American sportsmen."

TEXAS SHELL GAME

Chief Marine Biologist Jack Baughman wrote letters around the world offering to exchange Gulf Coast shell specimens with anyone from anywhere.

The returns are beginning to come in, so far from Saipan, Guam, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Ecuador,

Field Data

preliminary to banding operations.

The Game & Fish Commission is issuing it to all game wardens. It is called a nest searching rod. It is collapsible, is carried in five pieces and is made of cane.

Now, the common method is to use a ladder. This is cumbersome and hazardous to both observer and birds.

The Wildlife Restoration Division which supervises the dove banding to get vital data, hopes to greatly increase the number of birds banded this season.

An early start has been made on the banding this season because of the early spring and the fact that nesting began at a very early date.

The Division spokesman said unusual interest has been directed toward the mourning dove because of the sharply curtailed flocks last year.

GULLIBLE GUESTS

Superintendent Houston Maples of the Olmito State Fish Hatchery at Brownsville meant it when he said all kinds of folks, with all kinds of designs, visit his hatchery.

He has ranch folks, students, housewives, scouts, future farmers and all that.

Just to vary the guest list still more, Maples "received" a delegation of wetbacks a while back. His hatchery is not far from the river boundary between Mexico and Texas.

The newcomers, in surveying the land, brought along a throw net and were just about to wrap it around some of the state's choice brood bass when Maples appeared and explained where hospitality begins and ends.

FOX DISCUSSION

Upshur Vincent, Outdoor Editor of the Fort Worth Star Telegram, writes:

"While this column still is drawing censure from some quarters because of the publicity given rabid foxes here, a good many readers have been converted to the belief that rabid foxes must be eradicated—no matter how much objection is raised by the fox hunters and their organizations throughout the state. Texas is not the only state in which rabid foxes have taken their toll in livestock losses and people bitten. Pennsylvania

Game Notes

just now is suffering a plague of mad foxes described as probably the worst in history."

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE

Over in East Texas where substantial parts of the once great forests remain, coordinated community action on conservation is conspicuously stimulated.

In one wood conversion center, a visitor recently tuned in the local radio station for the evening news and noted a trailer stating that "wisely managed forests will maintain lucrative timber production."

Later, in the local daily newspaper he observed "Timber Tips" under a two-column head with lengthy advice on pruning young pine trees in both heavy stocked and light stocked areas.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT

An alert twelve-year-old farm boy, outraged because some city visitors were looting his favorite fishing hole, was credited by Game Warden Grover Simpson for helping corral four men using an illegal electric shocking device in the Colorado river.

Simpson said the lad not only pointed out the location where the raiders were setting up show at the mouth of Onion Creek, but followed through to help in the quick seizure.

Result: Not one fish for the quartet; \$244 in fines and costs to the state; one shocking device confiscated; one device heaved overboard and unlocated.

POTENT PROPAGANDA

The current crisis in the whitewing dove situation reminded Game Warden Supervisor Charles G. Jones of Weslaco of tactics he used years ago to help spare this popular game bird.

Jones said it was either 1926 or 1927 that the season on whitewings was ordered to be opened July 1, when the birds were at the peak of their nesting season.

Field men realized that the slaughter to the young, deprived of food brought by the mother birds, would be sickening.

He arranged with a newspaper friend in San Antonio to make a drawing showing a whitewing being shot at as it returned to its nest with food. The effect, he explained, was instant as well as telling.

Fish Reports

Conservationists circulated copies of the newspaper containing the pathetic sketch. Public sentiment was so powerful that the authorities were influenced to postpone the opening of the season that year until August 8, so that at least most of the young birds would be self sufficient.

HOW IT'S DONE

Far back in the Big Hill marsh area in the Port Arthur-Beaumont zone, Wardens Lucius Robertson and Clyde Renfro stopped their fast airboat to check on a father-and-son hunting team during opening day of the last duck season.

They seemed to know their way about; were far off the beaten path, where an ordinary boat could not penetrate.

"Like to check your bag," approached Warden Renfro.

The father hesitated. His nine-year old son's face was a mask of bewilderment.

The reason soon was apparent.

They had 33 ducks—23 over the legal limit for the opening day.

"Taking my boy out for the first time," explained the father, plaintively.

The wardens felt properly sorry for

the lad. No use feeling sorry for the parent though. They picked him up again within ten days still hunting and cheating although his license had been forfeited by the earlier charge.

DEADLY AIR LIFT

Nowadays a fish isn't safe even in its own fort, the Jasper State Fish Hatchery folks complain.

Fish hawks raid the ponds and nab big brood bass while they're minding their own business deep in the water.

One of the most persistent thieves is the osprey, according to the Jasper crew. This crook has been known to dive upon a six pound bass and drag it to the shore and devour its belly.

Joe Allen, Jasper hatcheryman who is air minded from his war service, says the osprey hovers over its target like a helicopter, then folds its wings and hurtles straight downward at great speed.

Hatchery men generally rate the

Press Views

water snakes as a major enemy of young bass. They consume great quantities of fingerlings.

JAVELINA IN SPOTLIGHT

Wildlife Biologist William S. Jennings, the former P-38 pilot, has been doing some low level studying of the javelina in its natural habitat in South Texas.

Jennings' studies credit this hardy woods denizen as being sensitive to the presence of dogs. And he doesn't recommend that Old Pooch get to nosing around on the javelina range unless he's ready to run or fight or both.

Jennings foresees greater emphasis on the javelina as an influence on Texas hunting.

This for the folks who don't know: javelina, although possessing many of the characteristics of the ordinary porker, do not seek low places to dig in and rest. Rather, according to Jennings, they prefer the high ground.

Game Regions of Texas*—

THE Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie regions of Texas are part of the North Central Plains Province, which extends into Texas from Kansas and Oklahoma. The three game regions which are included in the Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie are considered together here.

* Adapted from *Principal Game Birds and Mammals of Texas*, Texas Game and Fish Commission.

The East Cross Timbers is a narrow belt of land which extends south from the Red River in Cooke and Grayson counties between Fort Worth and Dallas to the southern part of Hill County. Wildlife problems here are similar to those of the Post Oak Belt but are complicated by the more intensive land use. The East Cross Timbers region provides much of the

fruit and vegetable products for Dallas and Fort Worth markets.

Rainfall in the East Cross Timbers averages several inches a year more than in the West Cross Timbers. The extra moisture produces larger timber. Post oak is the characteristic forest type. A timbered strip of sandy soil along the Red River connects the East and West Cross Timbers.

The West Cross Timbers is a large timbered belt lying west of the Grand Prairie and extending from Clay, Montague, and Cooke counties on the Oklahoma line south to San Saba County. This belt is of varying width and is bounded on the east by the Grand Prairie region and on the west by the Rolling Plains. It varies considerably in soils and vegetation. Post oak and blackjack oak are the principal tree species although there are large areas of mesquite prairie and shinnery oak.

Vegetation is closely related to soils. Post oak thrives on land which has a sandy topsoil and a subsoil which consists of a mixture of sand and clay. This type of soil absorbs water readily and conserves the moderate amount of moisture which the region receives. Post oak is associated with outcrops or deposits of sandy or gravelly soil, while live oak usually occurs wherever there are outcrops of limestone.

Virginia cedar has invaded parts of the West Cross Timbers. Seeds of this tree apparently are scattered by the cedar wax-wing and other small birds. Yaupon, Mexican cedar, and agarita are common in this part of the state.

Grasses in the Cross Timbers include grammas, buffalo, bluestems, panics, dropseed, and several other common species. Sedges occur on the wet soils. Among the flowering plants of the region are daisies, phlox, red paint-brush, goat weed, and umbrella-wort.



Water and cover (top photo) are both available to wildlife on this farm in Wise County. A typical scene in the East-West Cross Timbers is shown below. (Photo courtesy Texas Forest Service.)

CROSS TIMBERS AND GRAND PRAIRIE

Much of the West Cross Timbers region is dotted with low mountains or hills with characteristic flat tops, covered with cedar, sumac, scrub oaks, and other scrub forms. Rainfall varies from 32 inches on the east to 27 inches in Coleman County near the western border of the region. Although this is principally a livestock country, considerable diversified farming is practiced. Corn, cotton, sorghums, melons, peanuts, and fruits are grown on suitable soils that include sands, sandy clays, and clay loams. Poultry and dairy farming are important, and goats are being used increasingly to browse the timbered and brushy areas. Breckenridge, Coleman, Brownwood, Ranger, Cisco, and Eastland are the principal cities within the region.

The history of wildlife in the Cross Timbers of Texas has been much the same as in other parts of the state. Bison, antelope, deer, turkeys, and prairie chickens were formerly abundant in those parts of the region that were adapted to them. Deer and turkeys are being restored in certain sections, but quail, doves, and squirrels probably will remain the most important game species. The successful management of these latter game species will depend upon the protection afforded them by landowners and the intensity of farming practices and grazing in local areas.

White-tailed deer inhabit some of the brushlands of the West Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie. Most of the deer of the region are in Young, Jack, Palo Pinto, Stephens, Eastland, Comanche, Brown, San Saba, Parker, Hood, Somervell, Bosque, Hamilton and Wise counties.

The Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie regions are within the range of

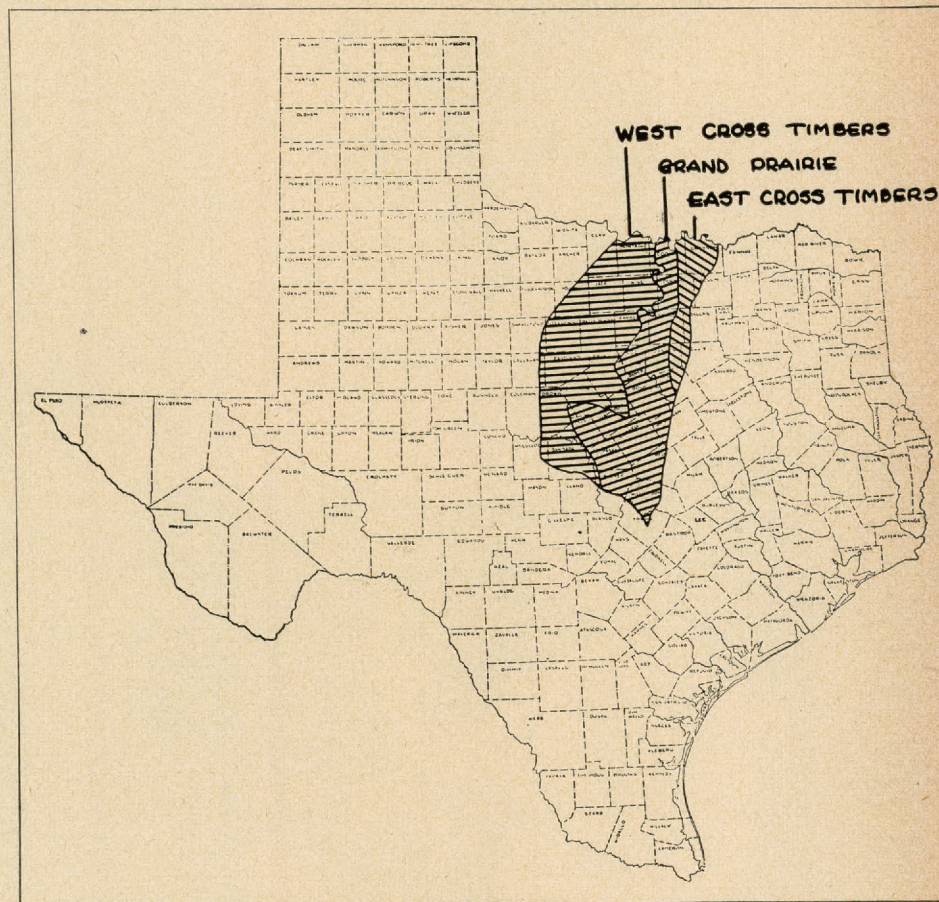
the fox squirrel, but the species is limited mainly to wooded areas along streams. Clearing of woods and overgrazing are two of the factors which have reduced the squirrel population.

Bobwhite quail inhabit these three game regions. Some of the best habitat is near watercourses where cover and food are available. The quail population probably could be increased substantially by adapting land-use practices to the needs of the species.

Jackrabbits generally prefer grasslands, while the cottontails stay close to brushy cover. The population of both species varies in different parts of the region, depending upon the quality of the habitat.

The Grand Prairie is bounded on the west by the West Cross Timbers and on the east by the East Cross Timbers and the Blackland Prairies. The southern end of the Grand Prairie lies along the northeastern edge of the Edwards Plateau. Fort Worth is the largest city in the Grand Prairie.

Limestone soils, thinner than those of the Blacklands, predominate in this typically prairie region. Wildlife problems are similar to those in the Blacklands, except that they are not complicated by the extremely large areas of intensive cultivation. Most of the Grand Prairie is used for grazing, although there is considerable farming in certain sections.





The Lunke

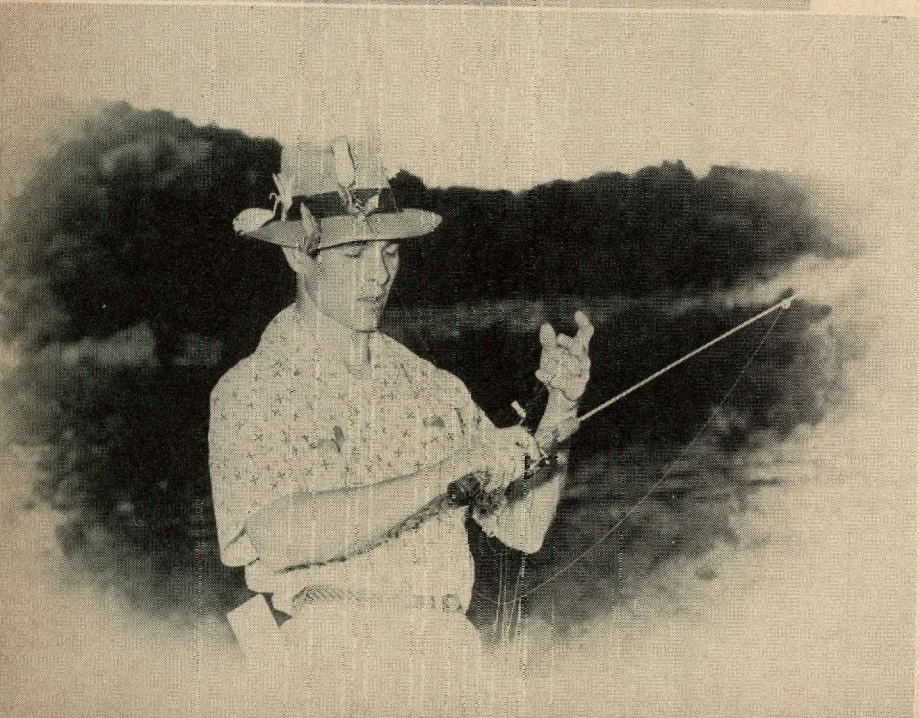
and

THERE'S a lazy lunker lying
Near the bank beneath the log.
There's a noisy lunkhead sloshing
With his hip boots in the bog.



This ol' leery lunker's wary
But he's spoiling for a fight.
And our lunkhead's really hoping
For a fish to eat tonight.

Our noisy caster flicks his wrist
To throw his plug a mile,
For casting far and reeling fast
Is Mr. Lunkhead's style.



The lure ascends in graceful arc—
Abruptly it's arrested.
Ol' lunkhead's failed to follow
through
And now his line's "crow's nested."

The floating bait has chanced to fall
Within the lunker's sight.
Ol' mossback charges, mouth agape,
He's played his odds just right.

he Lunkhead



The water swirls, the line grows taut
And lunkhead spins and flounders
Then down he goes, complaining loud
Of fate and smart six-pounders.

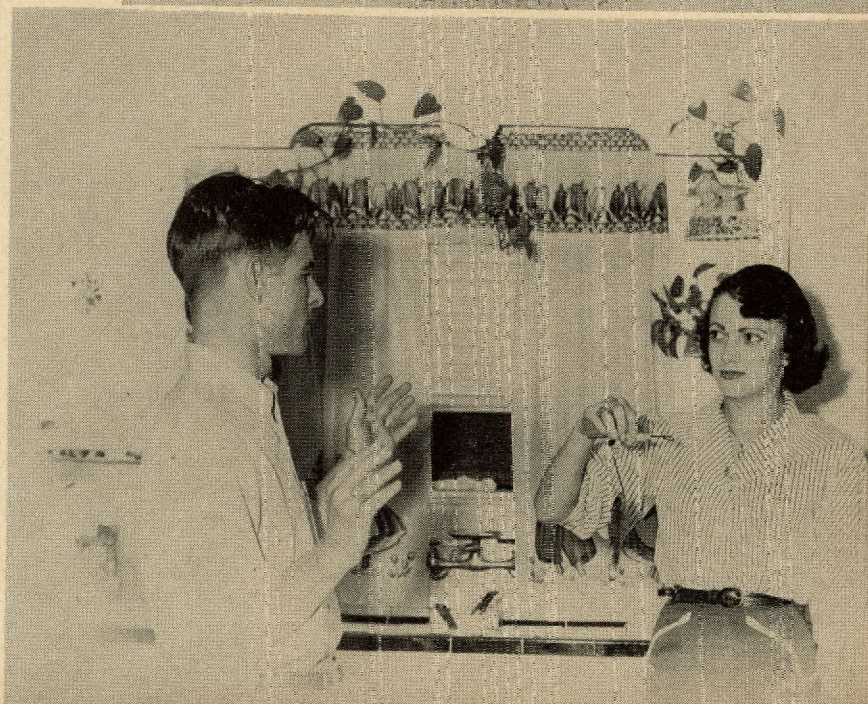
A jerk, a snap, the line goes limp
O' lunker is retreating
Our fishing friend plods up the bank
A dampened oath repeating.



A smarter lunker's lying deep
Near water-covered roots
A noisy lunkhead's wending home
The bog in his hip boots.

And while the missus listens
To the passings of the day
Ten-to-one the lunkhead's lying
'Bout the one that got away.

By Theron D. Carroll





Bobwhite Quail

EACH tract of land with its particular agricultural program is different. Programs for improving quail habitat must be tailor-made to fit each tract. The article in last month's issue on extensive types of quail food production and this month's article on intensive food production and on cover are meant to give the operator examples from which he might select one or a few that fit his needs and opportunities. The Game and Fish Commission has limited personnel for quail work but occasionally on-the-spot help can be given to those who wish to plan improvements for quail.

At present, bicolor lespedeza is the most promising planting for quail. It has been used extensively and successfully in other states. In Texas, it has been tried on a small scale since 1945 and is now ready for general distribution.

The advantages of bicolor are: it need not be replanted each year; it is drought resistant; the weather-proof seed drop over a long period; and the seed are highly palatable for quail. Also, bicolor is a good plant for erosion control.

Bicolor has the following disadvantages: it is relished by livestock; plants must be set by hand; plantings must be cultivated thoroughly for at least one year; and pocket gophers cause mortality by eating the roots.

Direct seeding of bicolor has failed in several trials in Newton County. Hand-setting plants and cultivating them a year is a cheaper method.

Also, quail can be attracted in less than a year by using plants. The success of bicolor stands in attracting quail has been well-demonstrated in eastern Texas. On one strip in Newton County, three different coveys were trapped and banded at one trap-site during the winter of 1948.

The following method of establishing a stand of bicolor is recommended. Select a strip or plot of well-drained soil within reasonable flight of cover. (Soil drainage includes the passage of water through the subsoil as well as surface drainage.) Break, fertilize, and disk the soil at least a month before the plants are set. Use balanced fertilizer, such as 5-10-5, at the rate of 800 pounds to an acre, or 100 pounds for each plot 20 x 300 feet. Fence the plot against livestock. Set four or five rows if planting a strip. Row spacing may vary to suit the type of cultivation equipment. Space the plants about two feet apart in the row, or closer if the plant quality is poor. At least four rows should be planted together.

Under favorable conditions, 500 to 750 plants in one strip or spot may be sufficient to hold one covey of quail, but setting 750 to 1000 plants in one unit is better. One thousand plants give a strip of five rows about 400 feet long, or an area of less than one-fifth acre. The best location for such strips is around the edges of fields. Because bicolor is not entirely satisfactory as cover, the location should be reasonably close to cover.

A bicolor strip may be used to break up a large field by planting across the middle of the field with one end of the strip near cover. The ideal bicolor planting is a 20-foot by 300- or 400-foot strip adjacent to woody cover with plants more than six feet high, thick enough to shade out other plants, and to thus provide open feed-

ing conditions on the ground.

After the plants start growing they should be cultivated like corn or cotton until midsummer. Most growth is made before August. For best results, a sidedressing of fertilizer should be

By D. W. LAY

applied twice during the cultivating period.

Eastern Texas is ideally suited for bicolor. How far west it can be grown has not been fully determined. Some very successful plantings are growing in Grayson County north of Dallas and in Wilson County 30 miles east of San Antonio. With good cultivation and perhaps good rainfall the first season, it is entirely possible that bicolor can be established much farther west than these two locations.

Another plant which is being tested is *Lespedeza thunbergii*. It is closely related and very similar to bicolor, but its seed are larger and the plants seem to be more vigorous. Testing will continue with the selection of promising strains.

Bullgrass (*Paspalum floridanum*) is a large-seeded grass which is found in many quail crops. Hand-picked seed have been planted with good success, and efforts are being made to develop a seed supply. The species is a perennial and does well on soils of low fertility and poor drainage. It has fairly low palatability for cattle and seeds persistently from mid-summer to frost.

The brown-seeded paspalum (*Paspalum plicatulum*) is a thick bunch grass with a fair-size seed which is taken by quail. The importance of this grass for quail is the low palatability for cattle. It grows in a variety of sandy soils over a large part of Texas

Management

and matures a heavy seed crop in mid-summer. The seed can lie on the ground for months without deteriorating. Its biggest disadvantage is that it forms such a rough that feeding is difficult for quail.

Wildlife Biologist

Every quail hunter knows the kinds of cover quail use in his locality. Timberland in any form is frequently used. Briar thickets, patches of plum and sumac, and well-developed wax myrtle bushes are favorites. Logging slash and groves of young pines are often used by coveys. No method has been devised to evaluate cover from a quail's standpoint; but some idea can be gained where birds make their own choices. It appears that clean ground for easy running is very desirable if sufficient protection is overhead, as along a fencerow of grape, blackberry, and rattan.

Planting anything for quail cover is a slow process requiring two to four years to show results. It is far better to work with existing cover where possible. East Texas is in the process of a gigantic pasture improvement program that is destroying the cover on which thousands of coveys depend. Landowners who later wish to have quail will find that replacing the cover is slow and expensive. One of the most constructive things that can be done by persons interested in quail is the prevention of the destruction of essential cover.

The pasture improvement program need not be altered appreciably to save quail cover. Leaving small spots and strips of the best native cover intact costs nothing. No more than one-tenth acre is needed in a place, and the loss of this fractional acreage

of improved grasses might have compensation for any landowner. The shade and protection of cattle from severe weather should be considered before all cover is removed from a pasture.

In almost every tract of land there are spots that are unprofitable to develop for pasture, due to soils, erosion, rocks, or seepage. In removing the last cover from these spots, the operator makes an investment that pays off only in questionable appearances. His pasture is not being improved from the standpoint of his cattle. The quail hunter has an incentive to inform landowners about the disadvantages of clean farming. The farmer who does not keep his fencerows clean can make just as much money and should be credited with deliberate wisdom, not laziness.

Pastures on new land are sometimes burned over for development purposes. A few quick turns with a plow to prevent the burning of spots of cover that birds use or could use would be cheap and highly profitable quail management. When new land is cleared, it is often possible to save spots of brush which would not interfere with farming operations. All that is needed is an operator who wants to keep his quail, or a quail-hunting friend who wants the farmer to keep them. Brush piles often can be left unburned. These are used by quail when other cover is scarce, provided the brush is piled in such a manner as to provide some openings next to the ground.

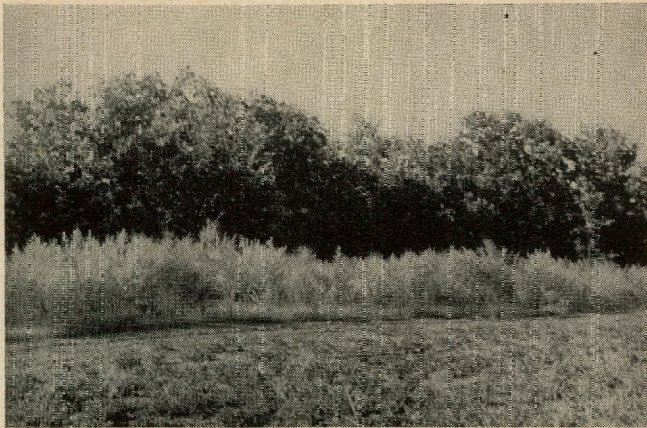
Half-cutting small trees is a quick method of increasing quail cover. In eastern Texas, almost any of the native shrubs and trees may be partially cut and bent over without killing them. Thus, they continue to grow in a prostrate form which provides excellent bird cover. Mesquite in other



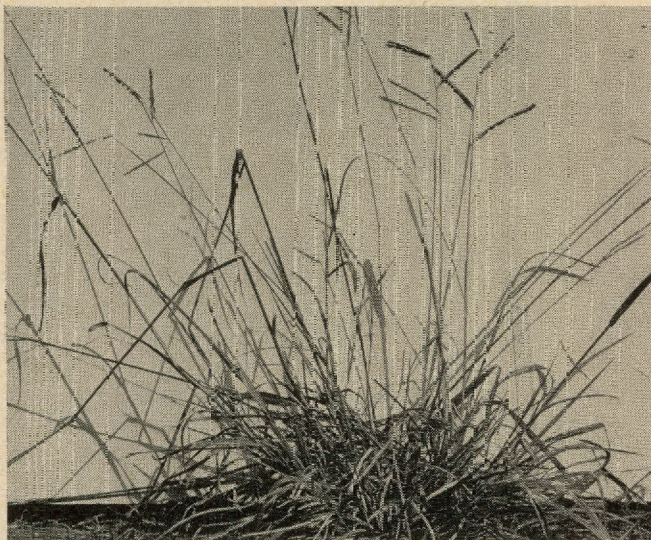
parts of Texas, as has been demonstrated by Bob Mauermann in Wilson County, is very well adapted to this type of cover construction. Trials of this work in mesquite grassland have resulted in every covey on the range using one or several of the half-cut trees.

Early trials in Newton County with transplanting native plants such as yaupon, blackberry, plum, sumac, and rattan were disappointing. They were cultivated several times the first year, but they showed low survival and after four years still have not contributed any acceptable cover. On other soils and under other conditions, the transplanting of native plants that grow locally probably would be satisfactory. On the Jackson ranch in Chambers County on the Coastal Prairie, planting of yaupon and black locust did provide suitable cover. The time required was five or six years. Also, the cost of digging and resetting such native plants is high.

Multiflora rose is the thorny strain of the species used as rootstock for most domestic roses. It develops a hedge, about eight feet high and about the same distance across, that no form of livestock, dog, or man will cross. This rose blooms with many clusters of small white single flowers, and its seed are held in small red hips throughout the winter. Multiflora does not spread from runners or seed as do some native Texas roses, and for this reason does not become a pest.



A good stand of bicolor lespedeza plants (above) are well located near woody cover. To the left is a good first-year crop of *Lespedeza thunbergii* in Newton County. Bullgrass (below) is a large-seeded perennial grass which may be developed as an important source of quail food.



Multiflora rose is a first-rate quail cover. Also, it is a cheap and permanent fence when planted in rows. Limited trial plantings have been made in Texas. Plantings made in 1948 and 1949 in Newton County have grown well. It appears that four years will be required to make a livestock-proof fence. Quail cover can be developed in two years with proper care, although the 1948 planting was not fertilized or cultivated enough for this.

Trial plantings have been made in 38 counties, but the possible range of multiflora in Texas has not been defined. In general, it appears that the species will do well where domestic roses thrive. Lack of rainfall may limit it in the western part of the state, but no part of Texas is too cold for it.

Planting procedure for roses is similar to that for bicolor, except that a single row of roses is set. A bed about six feet wide should be plowed, fertilized, and disked. Plants are set in a furrow about a foot apart, covered, and packed. Plants can be set singly with a shovel if it is impractical to plow a furrow. Tops should be pruned to about three inches to encourage low branching. The row should be located where it can be cultivated and should be protected from cattle for at least two years. The tender new shoots are very palatable to cattle. About ten per cent extra plants should be heeled in and used as replacements as soon as any young plants die.

Most failures with multiflora rose have been due to lack of cultivation. Mulching with straw is a poor substitute for cultivation. Sawdust in large amounts was tried, but rains drifted it away. Side-dressing the rows when they were cultivated greatly increased the growth on the sandy soils of Newton County. The planting of roses is useless if cultivation is not to follow.

When planting roses just for quail cover, with no regard to fencing, spacing the plants two or three feet apart in the row is acceptable. Likewise they need not be planted in long rows. Spots or strips of 100 to 200 plants should make good covey headquarters units. Growth is not satisfactory in shade.

Over-shooting probably is not often the principal cause of declines in quail numbers, yet closed seasons and restocking continue to be widely recommended. perhaps one reason is that most people fail to notice the unfavorable changes in habitat which contribute to the scarcity of quail.

Bobwhites move around a great deal in the spring and restock areas where over-shooting has occurred. Hunting success becomes so low, in eastern Texas at least, that hunting stops before breeding stock is seriously depleted on any large acreage. In this part of the state there are many coveys in woodlands that are never hunted.

Hunted and unhunted quail populations alike have a turnover of about 80 per cent each year. This means that the winter population is composed of about 20 per cent adult birds. The life span of quail is very short, even if there is no hunting. A species with a high reproductive capacity and a short life span naturally suffers high mortality.

If hunting were a major factor, closing the season could be expected to produce increases in quail; but this doesn't happen. Ohio has had a closed season for 11 years and reports fewer quail today. Many individual Texas farms and ranches have protected quail for years without having any increase. Phil D. Goodrum's recent survey of 39 states revealed that administrators in 34 states think hunting pressure is not a major factor in the decline of bobwhites.

It is undoubtedly possible to assemble enough gun pressure to damage the quail breeding stock. It is possible that this degree of hunting is being approached in parts of Texas, particularly around the cities and where there is no other game to hunt. Also, in eastern Texas we have found small areas of apparently suitable habitat with few or no birds. Perhaps such occasional blanks are normal. Restocking might be helpful if native wild-trapped birds could be available, but this is impracticable. Introducing pen-reared birds would certainly be useless.



Native fence row cover of wax myrtle and blackberry is pictured above. Partridge pea (right) is one of the best native quail foods in East Texas. Kobe lespezea planted on a fertilized burn (below) provides some food, but cover is needed to make this pine forest suitable for quail.



Tournament Casting

By TOWNSEND MILLER

Assistant Director, Department Publications

IT'S ONLY natural that Texas, which is fast becoming one of the nation's fishin'est states, should produce its share of fly and bait casting champions.

And produce them it has.

Just last year a handful of Texans lined up against the nation's best in the annual national tournament at Washington, D. C., and three of them brought back two first-place titles and shared another between them.

Lee Slaughter, Jr., of Dallas won the coveted Dry Fly Accuracy championship. He and another young Dallas expert, Bryant Black, tied as all-around champions in the Fishermen's events.

Mrs. F. M. Bonner of Houston kept Texas women in the limelight by grabbing the title in the women's division of the Fishermen's Accuracy Plug event.

In the past 15 years Texas has produced 12 individual champions. They have won a total of 29 national titles. Texas tournament casting clubs have added three team championships.

Tournament casting is a tightly-knit, well-organized sport in this state. No less than 11 clubs in nine Texas cities are now affiliated with the National Association of Angling and Casting Clubs. Most of them also are active in the Southwest Amateur Casting Association, a regional organization.

It seems that Texans just can't get enough fishing. So between fishing trips, they gather to vie with each other in the art of casting plug and fly.

Most local clubs gather once a week to "shoot" at regulation targets designed for this purpose. Several of the larger clubs hold statewide tournaments each year to which all comers are invited.

Interest in tournament casting is on the increase. There was a long gap between the time the first club

was organized at Houston in 1916 and the birth of the second at Dallas in 1932. Then in the late 1930's Fort Worth, Waco, San Antonio, and Austin joined the fold, and expansion has continued steadily since.



These two Texans, Bryant Black, left, and Lee Slaughter, Jr., won national plug and fly casting championships in 1951. The two young Dallasites have captured a total of 10 national titles in the past three years.

Last season new clubs were activated at Baytown and Marshall. This season, the two clubs at Dallas and Fort Worth each have split into two groups to make room for new enthusiasts flooding the rolls.

Fishermen many years ago found tournament casting a pleasant way to while away the hours between trips to lake or stream. The National Association of Angling and Casting Clubs, which sets up standard rules and regulations for the various events, was organized in 1906.

The Houston Club, founded 36 years ago, was one of the pioneers. It

has since been a fountainhead of tournament casting activities in this state.

A statewide open tournament has been held at Houston in each of the past 18 years, and another is planned this season under the direction of the current president, R. A. Feemster.

Dallas sponsored the first inter-city competition in Texas in 1933, the year after Otis Dorchester sparked the organization of a club there. Houston and Dallas casters competed against each other in that pioneer meet.

Under the leadership of energetic Cecil Cartwright, the Dallas Anglers Club has been one of the most active clubs in the state the last half dozen years or so.

Dallas casters meet in weekly intra-club competition throughout the entire year, casting indoors during the winter. Local merchants sponsor regular teams in six-month-long league races, similar to the bowling leagues so popular in many cities.

Members of the club teach casting in the public schools as part of the schools' recreational programs, and classes for adults are offered through the Y.M.C.A. with club members serving voluntarily as instructors.

The club sponsors casting contests at Boy Scout camps in the area and furnishes medals for the winners.

Fishing equipment is furnished by the Dallas club and its members for a fishing rodeo held for youngsters in co-operation with the Junior Chamber of Commerce each year, and equipment is furnished young anglers at the state school for boys at nearby Hutchins.

The Dallas Anglers Club this year is under the able leadership of Millard Horton, newly-elected president.

The growth of activities in Dallas has prompted the organization of a new club there this year. C. B. Shorter heads the Dallas Fly and Bait Casting

Club, which has set up, with the full co-operation of the City, casting facilities at Kidd Springs.

The Fort Worth Anglers Club, which has produced more national champions than any other in the state, likewise has expanded into two organizations.

The new offspring is the Cowtown Casting Club, with veteran Arthur Tuck as its president. D. A. Harkins heads the casting activities of the parent Anglers Club.

Fort Worth gained the honor of playing host to the annual national tournament in 1948, when over 300 of the country's top amateur casters came to Texas to vie for the coveted championships.

J. T. Ratliff served as tournament chairman for the national meet, which was the first ever held south of St. Louis.

Casting activities began in Fort Worth in 1938, and the first statewide tournament was held there in 1940.

The Marshall Anglers Club, with Elmer Sohn serving as 1952 president, held a statewide tournament in its very first year of organization last season. The meet was held on Caddo Lake in conjunction with the Caddo Lake Roundup, an annual celebration of fishing, boat racing, and dancing, which has proven so popular that Harrison county this year is building a new road to handle the overflow traffic.

The Marshall club has its second open tournament scheduled this year during the Roundup, June 21-22.

The San Antonio Anglers Club is experiencing a revival of interest in casting activities this year under the energetic leadership of Ray Bellinger. For the first time in a number of years, the club plans to hold a registered state tournament this season July 27, and it promises to be a truly outstanding event.

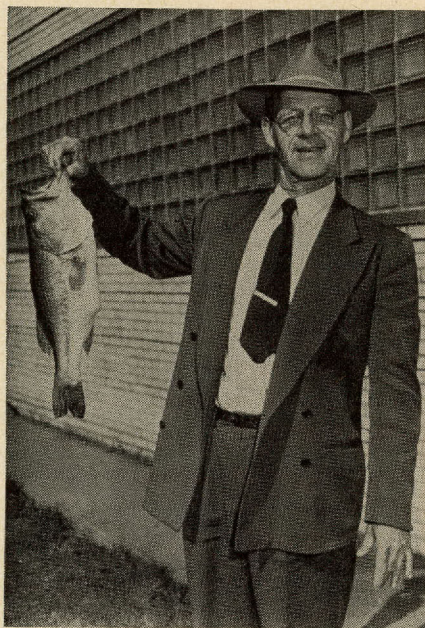
A total of seven big-time tournaments are scheduled in Texas this year. The first was held in Dallas in conjunction with the Southwest Sports and Vacation Show in April. The Cowtown Casting Club is hosting the annual meet of the Southwest Amateur Casting Association June 7-8 as this goes to press. The tournaments at Marshall June 22 and at San Antonio July 27 will be followed by

others sponsored by the Dallas Anglers Club, the Dallas Fly and Bait Casting Club, and the Houston Anglers Club.

Clubs at Waco, Baytown, Beaumont, and Belton plan local meets.

There is a possibility that the Baytown Hunting and Fishing Club, a bustling young two-year-old in the casting club family, may hold a state meet, also. Vice-president of the club and chairman of casting activities is H. H. (George) Haralson. A Baytown youngster, Roland Williams, set an unofficial national record in the Skish event two years ago.

The Gulf Coast Rod, Reel, and Gun Club at Beaumont, with Ted Davis serving as chairman of casting activities, is offering a full course in casting and the proper use of fire-



Most tournament casting enthusiasts are fishermen, seeking to improve fishing techniques. Elmer Sohn, president of the Marshall club, displays a seven-pounder, one of the largest black bass caught in East Texas this year.

arms to Beaumont youngsters this summer. Some 200 are expected to enroll in this, the fifth, annual class.

The Waco Anglers Club, with Sam Glover in charge of casting activities, meets twice a week for competition between members—the adults on Thursday nights and the juniors on Friday. A local tournament is planned later in the summer, and there is some possibility of a state tournament this year at Waco.

Binding many of these clubs to-

gether on a regional basis is the Southwest Amateur Casting Association, organized as a co-ordinating body in 1935. Jim Heller, Oklahoma City, has succeeded Roy Rowell, Houston, as president this year, and Hugh Gratsch, Dallas, is secretary-treasurer.

All of the individual state organizations are affiliated directly with the National Association.

Most of the members of tournament casting clubs are ardent fishermen, who enjoy testing their own skill with plug and fly against fellow enthusiasts.

But the lure of competition is just one of many factors which attracts anglers to the sport. Meetings provide fishermen a golden opportunity to learn from each other about rods, reels, and lines with which they may not be familiar. Members swap "trade secrets" and exchange information about where fishing is best as the seasons change.

Discoveries made by tournament casters while "tinkering" with their tackle have led to many improvements in the manufacture and design of fishing rods and reels.

The demand for accuracy has inspired many a fisherman to improve his casting techniques—and consequently his ability to take fish.

In short, tournament casting is both a proving ground for tackle and a school for fishermen. The immediate objective is hitting a target with plug or fly, but the ultimate results is a wiser use and more intelligent selection of tackle, leading to more fish on the stringer.

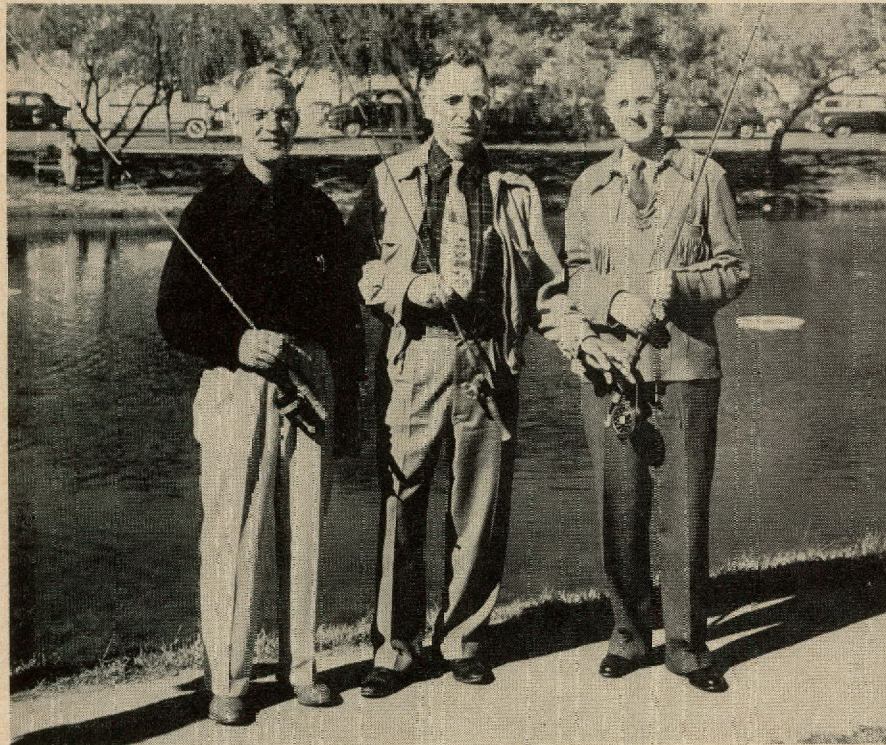
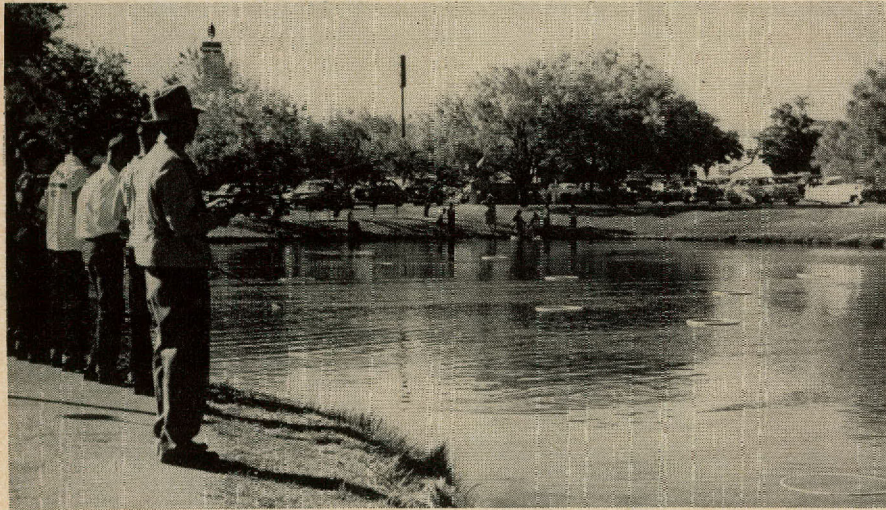
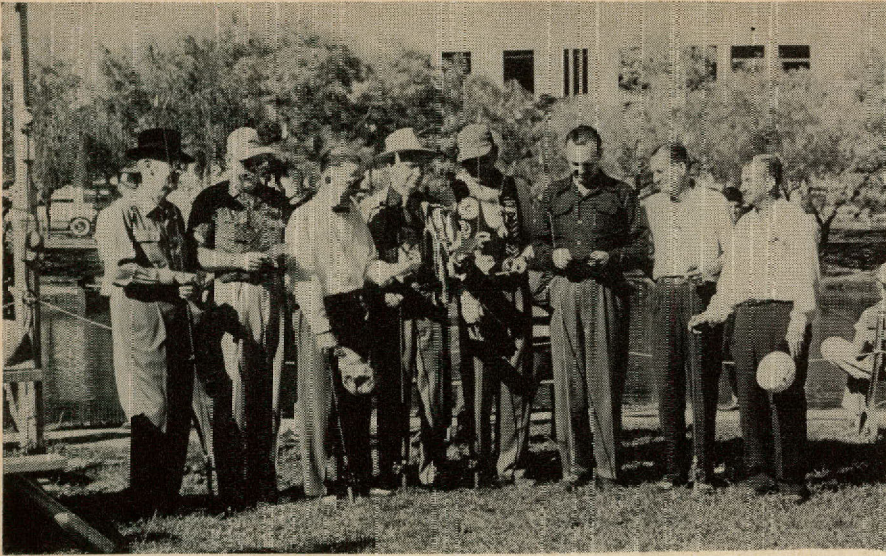
Basically, tournament events fall into four categories—plug accuracy, plug distance, fly accuracy, and fly distance. Plug accuracy events are the most popular.

Distance events are decided on an average of three casts.

Targets 30 inches in diameter are used in accuracy events. A direct hit is scored as a "perfect" and counts 10 points. A deduction of one point is made for each foot the plug or fly lands away from the target.

Ten targets constitute a round, so that ten straight hits would score 100.

The targets are placed varying distances from the caster, depending upon the event. In the plug accuracy events, the nearest target is between



40 and 45 feet away, the farthest between 75 and 80 feet. Fly targets, of course, are aligned nearer.

Slight modifications in tackle are permitted in the open events, but in Skish and Fishermen's events, standard tackle, just as that used in fishing, must be employed.

The big event of the season for casters all over the country is the national competition. It is held on the home grounds of a different member club each year. The 1952 meet is scheduled at Peoria, Ill., August 20-24.

The titles won in the national tournament at Washington last summer by Slaughter, Black, and Mrs. Bonner continued a trend established in past years by Texas casters.

Slaughter had won the national Dry Fly title previously in 1949, when he also added the All-Around Accuracy Flies and earned a berth on the All-American Fly Team.

The red-thatched Dallas expert also was on the All-American Bait (Plug) Team.

Black also had captured two national titles previously. He won the Fishermen's Distance Plug championship in 1950, setting a new record, since broken, with average casts of 222 feet and a long cast of 230 feet. Bear in mind that these casts were made with standard fishing tackle. He was winner of the Fishermen's Distance Flies event in 1949.

Jack Sparks of Waco brought Texas its first national championship in 1937 when he won the All-Accuracy Fly title. Continuing his domination

Some officers and past officers of Texas tournament casting clubs (top photo) compare scores at a recent meet. Left to right are C. B. Shorter, Dallas; Millard Horton, Dallas; S. L. Hood, Houston; Roy Rowell, Houston; Cecil Cartwright, Dallas; R. A. Feemster, Houston; Arthur Tuck, Fort Worth, and H. H. (George) Haralson, Baytown. In the center picture, casters warm up for a tournament. In plug accuracy events, the farthest target is 80 feet from the caster, the nearest 45 feet. These three veterans (left) won events in Texas' first inter-city tournament at Dallas in 1933. They are shown here when they met again at the Dallas Sports Show tournament this spring. Louis Kasmiraski, left, is now a professional. He and Roy Rowell, center, are from Houston. Bill Clerihew, right, was a charter member of the Dallas Anglers Club.

of the fly casting events, Sparks was three times All-Around Distance and Accuracy Flies champion in 1937, 1938, and 1940. In 1940 he grabbed titles in Distance Fly, Distance Salmon Fly, and All-Distance Flies.

Dallas has furnished two other champions in addition to Black and Slaughter. George Faucett won the Three-Eighths Ounce Plug Accuracy title when the National was held in Fort Worth in 1948. Young Buddy Laden took three championships in the junior divisions in 1950, winning the Three-Eighths Ounce Plug Accuracy, the Five-Eighths Ounce Plug Accuracy, and the Skish Plug events.

The long list of Fort Worth casters to win national championships was begun in 1941 when Mrs. Arthur Tuck won the Women's Skish Plug title.

Fort Worth casters hit the jackpot in 1947 at Long Beach, Calif. The club won the Team Plug championship after enlisting the help of one woman caster and a junior. Members were Arthur Tuck, J. T. Ratliff, Bob Bigley, Mrs. Tuck, and Jerry Singer, at that time a junior. Singer also captured the Junior Skish Plug title, and Charley Bigley won the Junior Five-Eighths Ounce Plug Accuracy event.

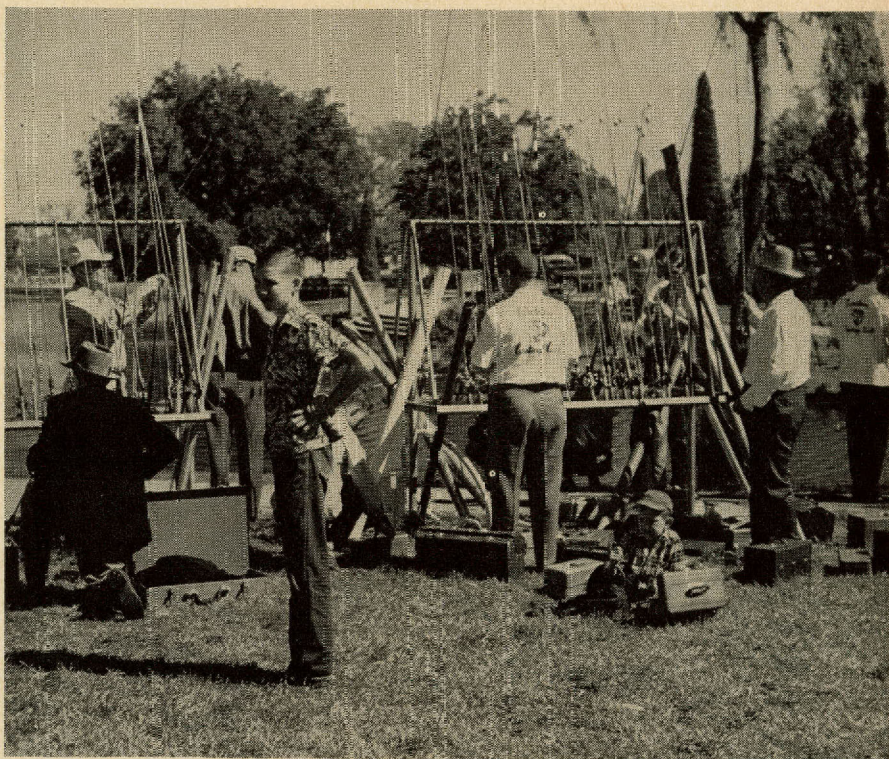
The bid by the Fort Worth Anglers Club to host the national meet the next year was accepted then and there. Fort Worth casters on their home grounds in 1948 added three more titles. Billy Lamb, Charles Bigley, Joe Jefferson, Cecil Smith, and Jimmy Lamb won the Junior Team Plug title, and Billy Lamb took the Junior Skish Plug title and tied in the Junior Three-Eighths Plug Accuracy event.

Fort Worth's junior team repeated in 1949, with Jimmy Neely replacing Joe Jefferson. Singer, now graduated to the senior level, tied for first in the Three-Eighths Ounce Plug Accuracy and won a berth on the All-American Bait Team. Charley Bigley continued his winning ways in the Junior Skish Fly, and his father, Bob Bigley, made the All-American Bait Team.

Texas IS producing champions. Increased interest in tournament casting promises more in the future.

But gold cups don't seem to be the real magnets drawing more and more Texans into the sport. The real enthusiasm seems to stem from pleasure

found in meeting with fellow anglers to talk of tackle and the one that got away—subjects dear to the heart of every honest-to-goodness fisherman.



Teaching Texas youngsters to cast is an important activity of most casting clubs. These two, Buddy Laden, left, of Dallas and Billy Lamb of Fort Worth, have won junior titles in national tournaments. The tackle racks (bottom photo) are a beehive of activity at any tournament as casters prepare rods and reels for competition.

Marine Reptiles of Texas

By J. L. BAUGHMAN

Chief Marine Biologist

RECENTLY, two fine specimens of Kemp's turtle were captured near Rockport by the Marine Laboratory boat K. T. and may now be seen in the tanks of the San Antonio Aquarium.

Oddly enough this particular species has never been adequately described and very little is known of its habits or life history.

It ranges from Texas to North Carolina, and one specimen caught off New York lived for many years in the old Aquarium on the Battery. Occasional specimens have been caught off Massachusetts. It has been found in Jamaica, and may occur in Bermuda.

Its food, as far as is known, consists mainly of the spotted lady crab,

which is found throughout Gulf and Caribbean regions.

Its close relative, the Atlantic loggerhead, is much more widely distributed, and its habits much better known.

The loggerhead (and presumably Kemp's turtle) sleeps while floating on the surface. Musk glands, probably defensive in nature, are located on the loggerhead hatchling at the forward edge of the shell.

The mother loggerhead lays her eggs on the beach, 50 or 60 feet above the water's edge.

Scooping out a circular hole with her flippers, she lays about 150 eggs the first time she nests. On other nestings during the summer, she lays fewer eggs the second time, and only

about 80 the third.

She then covers them up with sand in such a manner as to make them very difficult to locate, even when she has been watched while laying. However, hogs and raccoons have been known to destroy the nests.

The topmost eggs are about 14 inches below the surface and all of them, depending on conditions of temperature and moisture, hatch in about two months.

The young immediately head down the slope of the beach, towards the water, to begin their life in the ocean.

Pope says that these Atlantic loggerheads feed on hermit crabs, shellfish, conchs, "loggerhead" sponge, borers, fish, and that pepper-pot of the sea, the Portuguese man-of-war.



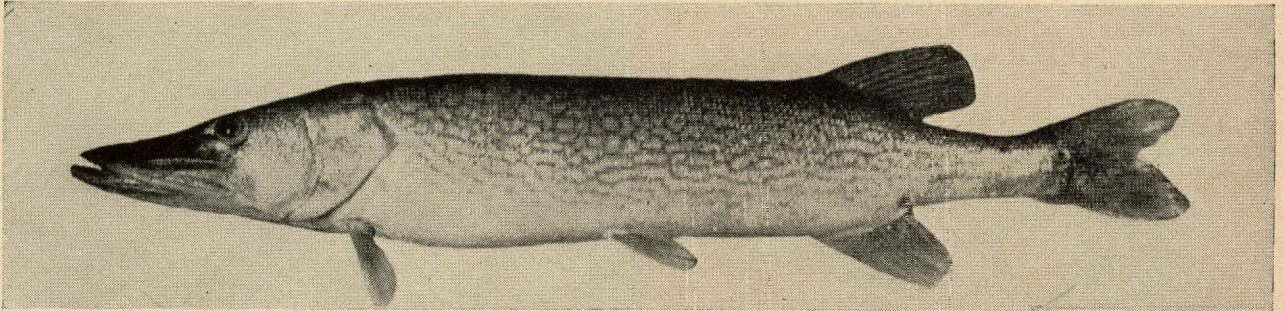
Top and bottom views of two fine specimens of Kemp's turtle, taken by the Marine Laboratory boat, K. T.

Fishes of Texas

THE PICKEREL

By ROBERT KEMP

Aquatic Biologist



Chain pickerel. (Photo courtesy Tennessee Game and Fish Commission.)

THE pike family is represented in Texas by two species, the chain pickerel (*Esox niger*) and the Mud or Grass Pickerel (*Esox vermiculatus Le Sueur*).

The chain pickerel (commonly known as jackfish or pike in East Texas) is of primary importance to the angler because of its size. It is found in extreme East Texas, Caddo Lake being the only major body of water in Texas where they are found. The chain pickerel, as are all members of the family, are distinguished from other fishes by the duck-bill shape of the front of the head when viewed from above. The body shape is generally very long and slender. The color is green to olive above, with dark chain-like reticulations on the sides, and almost white on the belly. The opercles or gill covers on the head are fully scaled, distinguishing them from the northern pike and muskellunge in which the lower halves of the opercles have no scales.

The chain pickerel prefers clear shallow water where it feeds primarily on fish. They are probably the

most predaceous fish in Texas waters. Because of their carnivorous habits, pike are used in Iowa and other northern states in an attempt to control the numbers of the more prolific and less desirable fishes.

These fish spawn in early spring, the eggs being broadcast over vegetation and left unattended. They probably reach a length of ten inches by the end of the first year. They commonly attain a length of 24 inches and occasionally are caught up to three and even four feet long.

The merits of the chain pickerel have been argued long and hard by Caddo fishermen, with some claiming they are detrimental to a lake while others claim they are beneficial. There is no argument when it comes to talking about the fighting ability of these fish, however. They are readily caught on flashy spoons, spinner baits, and even top-water lures by casting, and many are taken trolling. Pole fishermen readily take them on minnows and crayfish. Some of the old-timers simply paddle along until they spot a pike in the clear, shallow water. Nine

times out of ten the fish will hit the plug on the first cast.

The chain pickerel will combine powerful runs and flashy acrobatics to please any angler. A word of caution should be given, however, once the prize is in the boat. The pike has been endowed with the best set of long, needle-sharp teeth found in any fresh water fish. Pliers should be used in removing the hooks, for many a fisherman (the writer included) has had a finger or thumb painfully slashed by this "inland barracuda."

The mud or grass pickerel is of minor importance to the angler because of its small size, because it seldom exceeds 13 or 14 inches in length. The fisherman can distinguish a mud pickerel from a small chain pickerel by the dark vertical bands on the sides of the former, which give it a much darker appearance. The taxonomist relies on more technical characteristics. The mud pickerel is found in quiet or slow moving water in extreme East Texas.

The Burrowing Crawfish

By RENDELL RHOADES

MANY readers will recall the time when they dropped a piece of mud down a crawfish hole and heard it splash in the water at the bottom. You might not have realized it, but you were making plenty of work for the crawfish that lives in the little room at the end of that dark tunnel. Perhaps it is only a small inconvenience, for he has little else to do except to dig mud and pile it up in a chimney at the top.

These chimneys of pelleted mud are common in swampy areas throughout the state. It is doubtful if there is a square mile in any of the counties that would not have a few burrows. I supposed about every one knew that a crawfish made them, yet in talking with folks along the way, they expressed many mistaken ideas. These mysterious little holes in the center of high mud chimneys that grow up over night are attributed to snakes, spiders, and a dozen peculiar animals. Some people have been horrified when I shoved my arm down a crawfish burrow in search of the occupant. Actually, there are few other animals that will associate with the crawfish who is king of his do-

main down there at the end of his burrow. Out along the Mississippi River, a small-sized turtle occasionally enjoys the privacy of these burrows and sometimes frogs will take over after the crawfish has left.

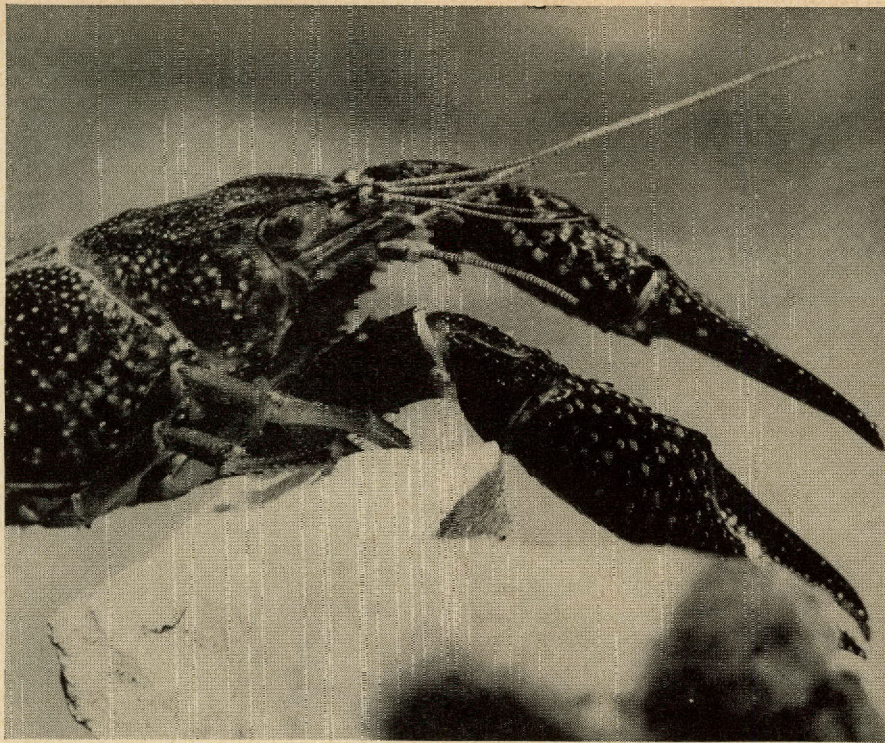
The burrow is dug in soft wet land by means of the set of heavy pincers. When the mud is loosened, the other legs work it into a ball. The ball is held against the "chest" area while the animal climbs the wall of the burrow. At the top, he plasters the mud to the rim of the chimney and drops back to the bottom to dig a second "armload."

The burrowing crawfish, even though it lives on dry land, is still an aquatic animal. It has gills, and not lungs, that must be kept moist. The object of the burrow is to allow the crawfish to lower itself to the water. As the water table drops in early summer, the crawfish digs deeper to keep pace with the receding water. Scientists think that this digging habit may have originated in some locality where the water was stagnant and temporary and this species, demanding pure cool water, tapped into the underground water re-

sources. The legend is that as the covered wagons moved west across the prairie a hundred years or so ago, pioneers found drinking water very scarce. Through a long hollow stem of prairie grass, they would drink the water from the crawfish holes. Thus, the prairie state of Illinois has been nicknamed "The Sucker State."

At times the burrowing crawfish is not content to burrow out along some shady creek bank or in a swamp at the end of a tile ditch. They may take a particular liking to your front yard, garden or the dam of your farm pond. When this happens, it is about time to call a halt. The burrowing crawfish is of great economic importance when its numbers and habits reach destructive proportions.

Years ago in the South, these crawfish had the very bad habit of working under the hills of cotton. This was the era before chemical control of pests and plantation owners would give the Negroes a barrel of flour in exchange for a barrel of crawfish picked from the land. At a later date, it was found that carbon bisulphide dropped into the burrow from an



oil can would kill the crawfish if the hole was closed with mud or a piece of sod. That is the common method of control used today though we have new and better chemicals. Almost any of the DDT compounds will work. If you do not want to bother with liquids, you can get pretty good results by dropping a couple of moth balls down each burrow and sealing the top.

If you are troubled with crawfish perforating the levee around your farm pond, you may need to do a first-class eradication job. The first step is to try to stop the flow of water through the tunnels, otherwise, the chemical will be washed away. With the flow reduced to a minimum, apply the chemicals to the upstream side of the dam so that they have a chance of being carried along by the trickle of water. Results are never 100% so be ready for a smaller second treatment in about ten days. While you are in the exterminating business, give all active burrows within 250 feet of the pond a similar dose of chemical. The burrow population migrates to the pond during the breeding season and their offspring will get notions of burrowing,

too. Chances are that they will merely clean out the old tunnels in your dam and renew your problem.

Do not get excited and figure that every crawfish in your pond is just biding his time and gaining strength to dig a hole and let the water out of your lake. The normal lake and stream species of crawfish make only short pockets in the bank or under a stone. Actually, it is very desirable to have this proper stock in your pond. Crawfish serve as food for numerous wildlife residents and visitors to your pond. A meal now and then on crawfish will make Mr. and Mrs. Bass put on a little more weight and I haven't heard of anyone ad-

vocating a reducing diet for bass!

Speaking of the burrowing crawfish as food for wildlife, the crawfish is high on the raccoon's list of delicacies. Such nocturnal animals as the raccoon have a number of opportunities to find crawfish out hunting new living quarters or at work building chimneys. The fresh set of pincers and shell parts along the creek bank in early morning are clear evidence that the old 'coon has had a midnight snack. Several birds stand and wait for these crawfish to come up. Audubon once wrote that the White Ibis drops pebbles down crawfish holes and patiently stands in wait until the crawfish comes up from curiosity or to bring the pebble to the surface.

I do not know of any predators, except man, that will pursue the burrowing crawfish to the end of its burrow. Yet, when he climbs to the mouth of the burrow to get a look at the world, his life is at stake. He is alert and quick and the slightest strange motion causes him to relax his hold and tumble like a rock into the depth of his burrow.—OHIO CONSERVATION BULLETIN.

(Editor's Note: Marion Toole, chief aquatic biologist of the Texas Game and Fish Commission, gives pond owners another method of crawfish control. He says to soak bran in a strong solution of DDT and to put the mixture out at night on the levee. Toole points out that crawfish are very susceptible to DDT.)

Duck, Dove Ballot Set

RETURNS have begun to come in on the poll being taken by the Game and Fish Commission on Texas hunters' preferences for the 1952 shooting season opening dates for migratory birds.

Howard D. Dodgen, Executive Secretary of the Commission, announced that the same poll pattern used in 1951 to determine popular sentiment for the dove hunting will be used this year for both dove and waterfowl seasons.

The seasons on doves and waterfowl are set by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service since these species are migratory. But they normally are influenced by recommendations of states acting through their game and fish departments.

Seasons on other major game in Texas such as deer, turkey and quail are set by law for most of Texas and thus are not subject to change except through legislative act.

The Executive Secretary said the decision to ask hunters for their opin-

ions was made after it became apparent that "there may be more agreement between north and south Texas sportsmen than was previously believed." He said some recent trends indicate that the bulk of Texas hunters "can be made reasonably happy without resort to a special zoning plea which thus far has brought only frustration because of Federal dissent."

He explained that a surprisingly large number of South State hunters prefer a waterfowl season opening early in November, an arrangement which presumably suits most North Texans.

The waterfowl season last year ran from November 9 through December 28. The mourning dove season ran, in the north zone, from September 1 to October 10, and, in the south zone, from November 15 to December 24.

The Executive Secretary asked that sportsmen indicate primarily the opening dates preferred since length of season as well as bag limits are set by Federal authorities on the basis

of late summer hatching data. This applies to both waterfowl and mourning doves.

He suggested that Texans state their addresses clearly so that the response may be catalogued on the basis of areas, mainly as to South Texas and North Texas. This mail should be addressed to **SPORTSMEN'S POLL**, Game and Fish Commission, Austin, Texas.

I prefer that the dove season open _____

I prefer that the waterfowl season open _____

Remarks _____

(Signed) _____

Address _____

"Freddy Fox Squirrel" Latest Eschmeyer Juvenile

One Frederick Fox Squirrel is the hero of Dr. R. W. Eschmeyer's latest juvenile book based on the life histories of game fish, birds, and mammals, according to the Wildlife Management Institute. In keeping with the unique pattern set in "Billy Bass" and "Tommy Trout," the leading character lives the exciting, danger-filled life of his kind; the books are completely devoid of the sentimental twaddle and humanization of wild animals commonly found in children's nature fiction.

Freddy is born, leaves home, in the best traditions of Horatio Alger—or of squirrels in general—to seek a living in a hard, cruel world. He runs into food shortages as the after effects of poor forest management, into hair-raising escapes from predators and accidents, and survives a hunting season to perpetuate his kind. He lives, in short, the characteristic life of a typical, average fox squirrel. As in earlier books, the dependence of the wild hero upon sound conservation programs is emphasized. In his faith-

ful recording of the response of animals to various stimuli Dr. Eschmeyer gets across to the young reader more information on the habits and management needs of the species covered

than any other writer of children's books.

The series is published by the Fisherman's Press, Oxford, Ohio. Each attractively illustrated volume is priced at \$1.25 with special discounts on quantity orders for schools and organizations. Youngsters are finding these true-to-life dramas fully as entertaining as any of the weird distortions of nature found in the usual children's book on animals, and far more instructive.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

Then please fill out the following form and send to **TEXAS GAME AND FISH**, Walton Bldg., Austin, Texas, so that you will continue to receive your copies of the magazine.

Name

Old Address

City, State

New Address

City, State

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Mature, Hand Selected
100—\$1.00; 250—\$2.00; 500—\$3.00
Postpaid in USA
Dealers Write

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Stop Wasting Texas Game. Hunt with World's Smartest Companion Dog. Puppies Now Available from 1951's Outstanding Weimaraner Stud Dog. German Import 'V' Rating. Champion Treu.

LEWIS G. HERRING

2719 CORNELL, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

...Your article in the March issue about J. B. Rackley and his slingshot interested me very much. I can verify every word you printed as true for you see, I was raised with him and went hunting with him many times.

C. C. Thornton
635 Dwight Avenue
San Antonio, Texas

Editor:

I certainly enjoyed seeing the picture of my two daughters in your March magazine...

I am from Texas and love hunting and fishing. You and everyone are doing a great job in helping to restore the wild game to our forests. I am proud to know that the people of Houston County, especially those around Shady Grove, are also working hard towards that end.

Leo E. Ferrell
Hqs. Alaska Eng. Depot
APO 942 c/o PM
Seattle, Washington

Editor:

It gave my two little girls, Rita and Lyndia, a big thrill to see their pictures in your magazine. I also am quite proud of them...

Mrs. Leo E. Ferrell
Route 1
Crockett, Texas

Editor:

...Let me mention here that I, and dozens like me, would send out many gift subscriptions if you would only make it a little easier. What better way to say thank you to any friend who has hunted or fished with you, or to any farmer or rancher who has opened his gate to you, than to present him with a subscription to your magazine?

But put yourself in my position. If I send the subscription out of a clear sky, he never knows where it came from, and I am human and want him to know. The alternative is to write him a letter that the magazine is coming. I am human again, and never get around to the job. I have a number of subscriptions waiting for you now, or whenever you arrange to show from whom the subscription was sent.

"Ham" Norton
702 Chilton St.
Marlin, Texas

(Send the subscriptions to us and we shall be happy to notify your friends that they are to receive TEXAS GAME AND FISH with your compliments. We advise them on special gift announcement cards and have been doing so for several years. However, for the benefit of those readers who are unaware of this service, we are indicating it on the subscription blank on page 32 beginning with this month's magazine.)

Editor:

Thanks for your letter reminding me that I had permitted my subscription to your valuable and interesting magazine to

expire. Enclosed find \$3.00 for a 3 year's subscription.

As an old Texan, I would like to have a large map of my home state to hang in my office by the side of the Florida map. The Department of Agriculture of the State of Florida gets out an elegant map of the state, about 4 feet square, with a stick attached to the top and bottom so that it may be hung on the wall. Now, I would like to obtain a similar map of Texas, and I would appreciate it if you would advise me from what department in Austin, or elsewhere, I may be able to obtain a similar map to the one that I have of Florida?

C. E. Jones
West Palm Beach, Florida

(The Texas Highway Department prints a travel map of our state, although the map does not come with attached sticks by which to hang it.)

Editor:

It is a real pleasure to continue my subscription to TEXAS GAME AND FISH. As your circulation grows, the problems of conservation and education should become more nearly solved.

Walter B. Mabe
17 Price St., Apt. 2
Baytown, Texas

Editor:

Just recently, I came across an issue of TEXAS GAME AND FISH. At first, I looked through it, then I went back and read through it and it certainly impressed me as being a very fine magazine indeed. I liked it so much that I am here asking

you to book me as one of your happy subscribers. Please send me your very next issue.

My check is enclosed, and I am anxiously awaiting my first copy.

S/Sgt. Otha E. Juckett
c/o Air Force Theater
Reese AFB, Texas

Editor:

If possible, don't let me miss a copy of the best hunting and fishing magazine for the sons of the old South and West.

J. R. Moore
2708 Colonial Ave.
Waco, Texas

Editor:

Butch Tubre, age seven years, has been in Germany with his parents, Capt. and Mrs. S. E. Tubre, Jr., the greater part of his life. Being there, playing with the German kids and having German servants, he naturally picked up quite a handful of the language.

The first thing he asked to do when he came back to Dallas (States side) was to be taken fishing.

I, being his Grandpa, gladly consented, 'cause I kinder like that pastime myself.

Butch, two other fellows, and I caught plenty of crappie at Texoma, and this string (below) was caught by him alone. He baits his own hook and strings his own fish. Occasionally, when he gets hold of a very large, lively minnow, he will ask me to, "Here, Doc, hold his tail 'til I can get this hook in him."

E. W. Odum
c/o Dallas News
Dallas, Texas



Ist dieses meine grenze fuer heute? Is this my limit for today?



BOOKS



PRACTICE OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION by Leonard W. Wing. 412 x pages. Illustrated with many half-tones and line drawings. Published by John Wiley and Sons, 440 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, New York; 1951. Price \$5.50.

This volume ties together between two covers the basic practices and techniques used in the management, perpetuation, and evaluation of all wild populations from the larger vertebrates down through small birds and fish. Because it covers such a wide field, it is open to criticism by specialists who may feel that their own sphere of interest is covered too sketchily. In spite of this, the comprehensive coverage makes this book very valuable to those interested largely in a survey of the various methods used in the management of wildlife and to those who desire to solve specific common problems within the scope of its coverage. Written primarily as a basic textbook in wildlife management for students majoring in such related fields as forestry, range management, and agriculture, it will have equal value as a reference for landowners, sportsmen, and others who are interested in developing larger local wildlife populations or for self-trained amateur nature students who wish to learn more about professional census, marking, survey, and cover-evaluation techniques. For all of these groups the value is greatly enhanced by the religious avoidance of technical language; the text is extremely readable and easily understood. In addition, the book is well illustrated with diagnostic photographs and drawings.

Dr. Wing is one of the first students of the late Professor Aldo Leopold to receive the doctorate degree in wildlife management. He has taught courses in wildlife management at the State College of Washington and at the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. He also has participated in numerous scientific studies and field expeditions throughout

North America and has employed or examined at first hand most of the techniques and methods described in his book. The volume is highly recommended wherever a comprehensive basic text on wildlife management is needed.

THE WISE FISHERMEN'S ENCYCLOPEDIA Edited by A. J. McClane. 1376 pages. Illustrated with 32 color plates and 700 line drawings. Published by Wm. H. Wise and Company, Inc., 50 West 47th Street, New York 19, New York; 1951. Price \$4.95.

This is a rather amazing book and not the least of a number of surprising features is the low price in relation to bulk, amount of color reproduction, and coverage. The publishers claim that it contains 750,000 words, and without means of checking this claim, we are willing to accept their word. The volume measures nearly four inches through its substantial cloth bindings and is well-filled with thousands of facts that will prove interesting and valuable to those who fish or who want to learn how. The subject matter is arranged alphabetically with complete cross-indexing. Baits, lures, tackle, boats, and accessories, fishing techniques and

methods are covered in considerable detail and a great many are supplemented either by line drawings or color plates. The beginning fisherman, for whom it makes an excellent basic reference, and experienced anglers who, at a low-investment, wish to learn more about their sport, will find this book a real bargain.

SNYDER'S BOOK OF BIG GAME HUNTING by Colonel Harry Snyder, 302 pages. Illustrated with 30 half-tones. Published by Greenberg: Publisher, 201 East 57th Street, New York 22, New York; 1950. Price \$6.00.

Colonel Harry Snyder probably is one of the most experienced of living big game hunters, having hunted and bagged nearly every known species of big game in North, South, Central America, and Africa. His trophies include a number of records, including a world record African elephant. When such a hunter writes of hunting, he speaks with authority.

In this book, Colonel Snyder has produced an unusual book devoted largely to advice to the hunter but sprinkled with interesting anecdotes from his own broad experience. The reader will find excellent information on the selection and use of hunting weapons, the care of trophies and meat, and specific instructions for hunting all species of big game either in America or in far-away lands. The reader will find excellent advice in the pages of this book whether his intended quarry be a whitetail in the farm woodlot or a lion in the African veldt.

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AN EDITORIAL

Sportsmen's Influence

Teamwork of Texas sportsmen and the acknowledged wildlife authorities is being manifested on an ever broadening front.

Several factors apparently are responsible.

Certainly wholesale sympathy for the Animal Kingdom's setback by the historic drought helped nourish the cooperative attitude.

Thus, Texans are asking each other: How can we help soften the blow to our wildlife?"

The expanding teamwork has been obvious from a law enforcement angle. Violations against the game and fish code continue to shrink, even in the face of an unprecedentedly vigorous campaign against cheaters. Of course, the files show new and revolting outlaw raids on wildlife. But that represents an irresponsible trait that even reason cannot reach.

The overwhelming law abiding forces now realize more keenly than ever that a progressive game and fish department requires versatile talents—talents that shrink into insignificance the once paramount routine of hawking hunting and fishing licenses and hauling game hogs into court.

Likewise, it soon will be shocking indeed to detect substantial ignorance of wildlife restoration and management progress.

Currently, the teamwork between sportsmen and the authorities is spotlighted again. This time it is the renewed adaptation of the sportsmen's poll as a means of determining actual public sentiment toward recommending hunting dates. The project is described in an article on page 30 of this magazine.

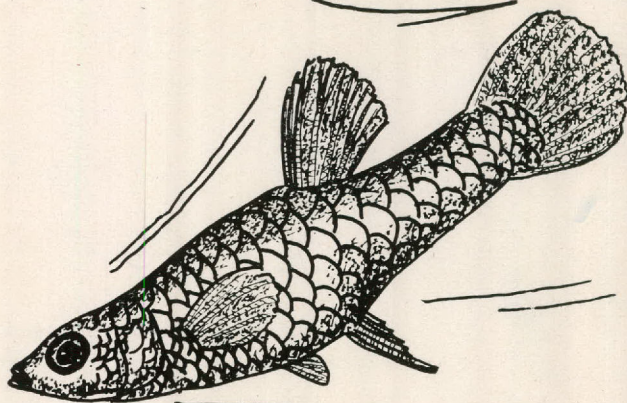
As Executive Secretary Howard D. Dodgen of the Game and Fish Commission said:

"After all, the doves and the ducks and the geese don't have anything to say about when they are shot at."

That could become the tempering thought in proclaiming details of the fall game harvest.

By JAY VESSELS,
Assistant Director, Departmental Publications

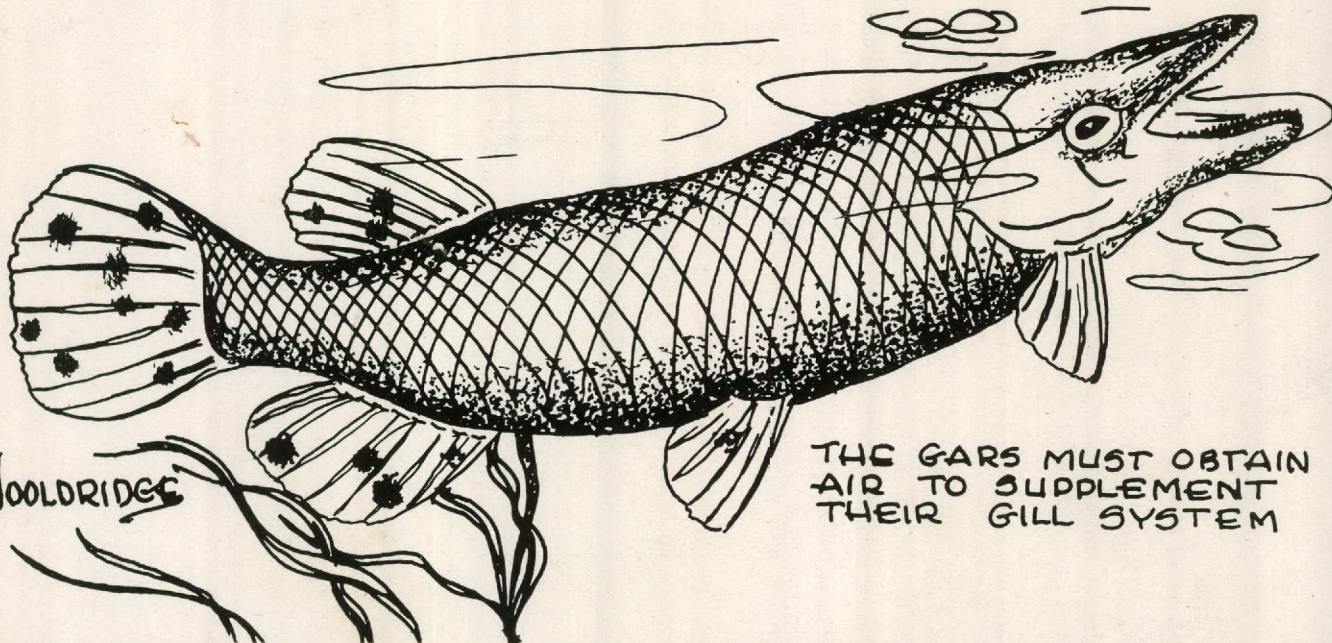
FISH ODDITIES



THE TOP MINNOWS BRING FORTH THEIR YOUNG ALIVE BEARING 20 TO 50 YOUNG IN EACH BROOD



EELS OF INLAND LAKES AND STREAMS ARE FEMALES, AS THE MALES REMAIN IN SALT WATER



THE GARS MUST OBTAIN AIR TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR GILL SYSTEM

WOOLDRIDGE