

Texas Game and Fish

NOVEMBER 1963 20 CENTS

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McCowan

This scene from the 1950's would be a hunter's dream today. While the early birds are off to the rice fields, these drowsy ones are not ready yet for a breakfast in Central Texas. Photo by E. P. Haddon.





BETTER FED THAN DEAD: A new wrinkle has been added in the battle to eradicate screwworms from the Southwest. Screwworm flies reared and sexually sterilized in a plant near Mission are now fed prior to being released from airplanes over large portions of the five-state eradication area. A small paper cup containing a cotton ball and corn syrup is placed inside each carton at the same time the box is filled with sterilized pupae. After the flies have emerged, they can feed until they are released. Entomologists have found that feeding gives the flies a better chance for survival after being released and results in larger numbers of vigorous flies available for the program.

A HOIST TO HARMONY: Leading representatives of sport and commercial fishermen along the Atlantic Coast have reached an agreement in an effort to resolve conflicts of interest that have arisen in the past between the two groups. They have adopted a code whereby fishing boats will display specific flags which clearly indicate to other fishing craft the type of activity in which they are engaged.

AWAITED BAIT: A new fire ant bait, Mirex, may be used with no hazard to wildlife. It has been tested extensively without wildlife loss. Mirex is composed of corn cobs ground to pieces about the size of turnip seeds, and treated with a vegetable oil solution of insecticide, making the bait .075 per cent poison. It is adapted for an air or ground application. The usual rate of application is 10 pounds of bait per acre, or one-eighth ounce of insecticide per acre.

BACK TO THE BOW: Archery is one of the fastest growing participant sports in the United States. Persons participating in the sport have increased from 1,700,000 in 1946 to 7,500,000 in 1963. In 1962, some 320,000 archers went bowhunting and 47 states had special bowhunting seasons.

RESOURCEFUL RULING: A way has been opened for state fish and game agencies to have a greater say in the location of federally assisted highways and roads, in order to protect streams, lakes and wildlife habitat from further unnecessary destruction. In many instances, natural streams have been destroyed by channel straightening, gravel removal and land fills. Some highways have blocked traditional big game migration routes, caused the draining and filling of wetlands and virtually isolated scenic and natural areas. Fish and game departments usually were given no opportunity to comment on road plans from the standpoint of conservation. Now, Bureau of Public Roads engineers must furnish Washington with copies of agreements between the highway and fish and game agencies in each state about construction plans which affect fish and wildlife resources. The steps proposed to overcome or lessen damage will have to be spelled out in each such report. The results will depend largely on how well state agencies can cooperate.

REPORT ON POISON: The findings of two years of research on the complex effects of chemical pesticides on wildlife and the environment are summarized in a concise and highly useful booklet recently published by the federal government. Copies of the report, "Pesticide-Wildlife Studies, Circular 167," are available from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D.C., 20240.

SAVE US A RIVER: A five-man study team has been named by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to identify streams which might be dedicated to outdoor recreation purposes. Initially, some 64 waterways in 35 states will be investigated for their wild river recreation potential. Unless some of the scenic rivers are preserved in their natural free-flowing condition, water development and control measures may cancel out their great value for fishing, swimming, canoeing, boating and other recreation for America's fast-growing population.

—Joan Pearsall

Texas Game and Fish

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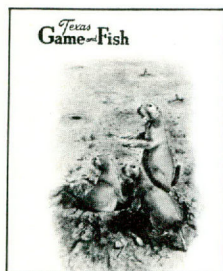
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The Cover



Prairie dogs are social animals that live in colonies called "towns." The dogs, however, are not canine at all. They are members of the rodent family, and a particular type of ground squirrel. Although prairie dogs have dwindled in numbers, a few towns of them [*Cynomys ludovicianus* (Ord)] still dot Texas terrain, especially the Panhandle. See article in this issue.
 Cover painting by Nancy McGowan.

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES; AND TO IMPROVEMENT OF HUNTING AND FISHING IN TEXAS.

NOVEMBER, 1963

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In the Field This Fall

IF MAN depended on just the hearing and smelling senses, he could still recognize one season from another. And as each new season arrives, man knows there are certain changes he must make in his daily routine.

He inhales the fragrance of blossoms, hears the cheerful little voices all about, in the trees and meadows, and he knows it's spring. The scent of scorched earth, grasses and even the odors rising from baked asphalt tell him summer has arrived. At home, the mouth-watering streams of barbeque smoke and the roar of lawnmowers assure him that summer elements direct the activities.

Fall is revealed to him by the whispering leaves as they drift slowly to the ground, and the honking overhead in the still, black night. He's sure it's fall when the aroma of chimney smoke settles over the land like fog.

One other smell, that of burnt gun powder drifting across the roads, and a sound, the roar of guns blasting in the fields and woods, indicate that fall is here.

One special group calls it the hunting season. It's a time when hunting Texans go afield and harvest the surplus of a very important resource, wild game. This group believes in the wise use of this valuable resource, rather than the foolish waste of it.

Texas is a land of outdoor-loving people, and each new season with its repetitious sounds and scents re-

minds us of a season past. They also remind us that it's a time to review the past and some of the lessons we have learned that will help us enjoy a safe and pleasant fall season.

Man may be able to know a season with just his ears and nose, but he cannot depend on just these two senses while in the brush, midst the tall pines or stumbling along some rocky ledge when hunting. Nothing is more important at this time than his sense of sight, and his common sense.

Other hunters will be placing their lives in your hands this hunting season. Use your eyes and use them well. Don't guess; be sure beyond a doubt that you're aiming at a game animal and not a man.

Common sense may save your own life or prevent some serious injury. Don't blast away at a low flying dove and pepper a friend across the way. When you cross a fence, unload your rifle or shotgun to be sure, or at least pass it through first and lay it on the ground to be safe.

Be certain that your eyesight is 20/20 or corrected thereto by visiting your eye doctor; don't discover that it isn't up to par in the field.

We can recognize a season with just two senses; no one will argue. But when it comes to hunting, we must use all the senses God provided us with, and use them unsparingly.

THE EDITOR

“DEAR Mr. Swiggett:

We are wondering if you will do a story on wildlife photography for us. Perhaps you could include the type of equipment necessary, the problems and satisfactions involved and some illustrative incidents. . . .”

When I received that letter from the editors of *Texas Game and Fish*, I didn't quite know what to think. I have been a professional photographer for more than 20 years. The last 17 plus, I've been in harness for the San Antonio *Express-News*. All my free time during many of those years has been spent photographing hunting and fishing trips of all kinds for various magazines around the country, on a free-lance basis. Naturally, some wildlife photography gets included, but I had never



A fishing partner came in handy for this Indigo snake portrait. He spotted the sleek beauty, keeping his eye on it while the author got his 4 x 5 Speed Graphic, 12 mm lens, Tri X film pack.

thought of it in those terms since to me it is just part of the job. But, I do have some ideas about the requested information.

I subscribe to the school of thought that says the best time to go fishing is when you can. The same thing applies to wildlife photography. The best time to take pictures is when you find subjects, regardless of the equipment you have. Lots of pictures are made with 300 or 400 mm lenses that could have been made with a 135 or even a 50 if the photographer had chosen to apply himself instead of his equipment.

It would take a lot of digging to

WILDLIFE



The Nighthawk found a peaceful spot to roost mid-day in San Antonio's national cemetery. (4 x 5 Speed Graphic, 127 mm lens, Tri X film pack.)

Seen along the shore while the author was fishing in South Texas, this little fellow was tamer than he would have been during hunting season. This shot was with a 4 x 5 Speed Graphic, 127 mm lens, Tri X film pack.

in the LENS

by HAL SWIGGETT
San Antonio Express-News



get exact figures, but I believe I can safely say that for every photograph of an animal I have made with a telephoto lens I have made several dozen with normal equipment. And, I believe it is safe to say that 75 per cent of those pictures were made with 35 mm cameras and 50 mm lenses. WHY? It's simply because these are the most convenient to have with me at all times. I carry the 35 mm camera right along with a shotgun or rifle. THAT is the secret, if there is one, to wildlife photography. Have your camera with you at all times. What good is a deer standing broadside at 100 feet if you don't have your film shooter? He doesn't need to be that close if you just want sausage.

What I am trying to get across here is that you should use the camera you have. Joe Doake's Super Duper Shooter Upper might be fine and even might make good pictures, but if you don't have one, why worry? Cameras are a lot like guns in more ways than one. Very few shooters are capable of handling their rifles or shotguns as well as the firearms will shoot. By the same token, very few photographers are capable of getting the most out of their present equipment.

But, since I am a professional photographer and since I never know what I might need, nor when, I carry a number of cameras in my car. The inventory follows: one 4 x 5 Speed Graphic with a normal 127 mm F4.7 lens; a 100 mm F5.6 wide angle; an 8½-inch Commercial Ektar, F6.3; a 15-inch Tele-Optar, F5.6; one 2¼ x 3¼ Speed Graphic with two-roll film backs. The normal lens on this unit is a 101 mm F4.7. I also have an 8½-inch Commercial Ektar, F6.3, in a barrel, for this camera. And one Rolleiflex with a 75 mm F3.5 lens; two Ditto 35 mm sequence cameras with 45 mm F2.8, 105 mm F6.3 and 300 mm F5.6 lenses; one Canon 35 mm camera with 35 mm wide angle F3.5, 50 mm F1.8 and 135 mm F3.5 telephoto lenses.

I have found very few pictures which couldn't be made with that equipment. But, I also have found darned few times when I needed all that stuff.

The equipment game is compli-

cated. Let's say you like 35 mm's. Any time you try to go beyond a 135 mm lens, you need a single lens reflex. So far so good. Now, to hold that long piece of glass steady you need a tripod. Did you every try to carry a tripod through dense brush and get close enough to an animal for a picture? Sure, it can be done, but I contend that if you can get to 100 yards with a tripod and still have time to set it up and focus, you could get 50 yards closer without that cumbersome equipment and get a better picture more easily. Before someone yells for my head, let me point out that these are strictly my own ideas, and I was asked for them.

Long lenses do come in handy occasionally but are far less necessary than some photographers would have you believe; in fact, many times they are a definite handicap.

Just this last summer I was in California trying to get some pheasant pictures. Each evening I started out with my Canon dutifully decked out with the 135 mm lens. On one of those sashays I found a hen with a flock of chicks. I didn't see the little ones, but I knew by watching mama's broken-wing routine that they weren't far away. Suddenly, I had baby pheasants coming out of my ears. I had walked right into the middle of them. Consequently, no pictures. I was too close for the 135 mm lens.

Also, this last summer I found a baby rock squirrel. One again, the 35 mm Canon was in my hands with the 135 mm lens. I stalked and I stalked and I stalked till I was about three and a half or four feet from the little rascal. Since the lens only focuses down to five feet, I was out of luck, photographically. I did the next best thing: I caught him.

This could go on and on. Take the time I tried to make a color picture of some buffalo. These were not wild animals but a long lens seemed like the thing to use. I put the 15-inch glass on my 4 x 5 speed graphic and got a couple of good shots of some cows and calves. Suddenly, the bull stuck his head out of the surrounding brush and started toward me. I was on one side of a fence and he was on the other so I wasn't worried. And, besides that, he didn't look mad. I

opened the back and tried to focus. He kept coming. I still tried to focus and he kept right on coming toward me. To make a 75-yard walk short, did you ever try to photograph a buffalo bull with a 15-inch lens—at 3 feet?

I mean it when I say the best equipment for a given picture is what you have. I don't care if it is a box camera or a Hasselblad; either will make good pictures. Granted, the box-camera man has to work a little harder and his subjects are a little more limited, but he can still get wildlife pictures.

If you can have only one camera, your best bet probably would be



This Texas tortoise just loved to pose, even for a box camera and 120 Verichrome Pan film.

one of the single lens reflex 35's. Be sure to make it one that takes interchangeable lenses. With it you can make color slides, use color negatives for prints or make black and white pictures. Get the best one you can afford because, like everything else, you get about what you pay for. Your first long lens, in my opinion, should be no more than 180 mm. That is about as far as you can go and be sure of good hand-held results. Even with it, slow speeds will be a problem.

When you become more interested and find a definite use for a new piece of equipment, then, and only then, add it to your inventory. Just

because you need a certain lens, or filter, or tripod once doesn't mean you will ever need it again. If you come upon a second situation where it would improve your work, you can almost be sure a third occasion will present itself, so go ahead and buy it.

Don't be misled into thinking you have to make all your pictures with color. Black and white film is much faster, for those dark, cloudy days or early or late daylight hours. Also, black and white film has far more latitude in exposure. With color, a stop either direction from right makes the picture a lost cause. Black and white, not being so finicky, can produce good prints even when you misjudge the light by as much as three stops up or down.

Probably the best single black and white film for all around use is Plus X for 35 mm users and roll film cameramen, when they can get it. Verichrome Pan will do a good job in the roll film sizes and is available everywhere. Avoid the faster films unless you have a definite need for their speed.

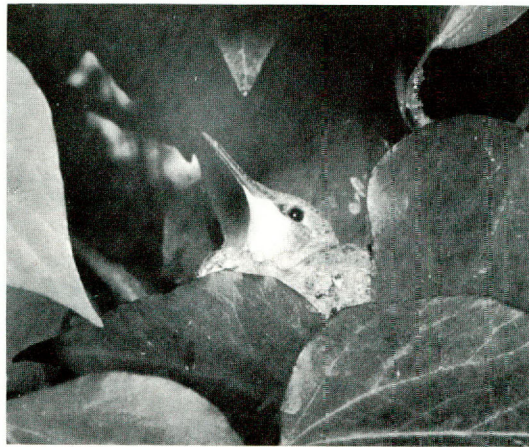
Over the years I have found it is hard to beat the manufacturers' recommendations for processing. Unless you are experienced enough to know for sure what you are looking for, stick to what they tell you. After all, they want you to get good results so you will buy more film.

Shutter speed is an important factor to consider. I find it best to use the fastest speed I can for any given situation. By that I mean if I have a choice of 125th second at F 32 or 500th at F 16, I'll take the faster

Pays to be photogenic. This photographer never kills his models. Squirrel shot in hunt with Rolleiflex, 75 mm lens, 120 Tri X film.



speed. I usually carry my 35 mm cameras set on 500th and the roll film ones set at 250th. That way if I need to shoot fast, my own movement and that of my subject are minimized.



A hummingbird peeking from a backyard nest is caught for posterity by a 4x5 Speed Graphic, with 127 mm lens, Royal Pan film.

Running animals, flying birds and windy days always call for the fastest shutter speed your light will allow. If you have 1000th of a second, use it. If you only have a 250th, don't feel you haven't a chance. Try to

catch your action at the peak of a jump or, you can pan with it. By that I mean move your camera in the same direction in which the action is going, at the same speed. Your subject can be "stopped" at a relatively slow shutter speed while everything else will be blurred from camera motion. Actually, this is a very good method to get across speed in a picture. To prove this and get in a little practice, sit on your front porch and make a few pictures of cars going past. Use 1/25th or 1/50th of a second. The secret is in panning your camera at the same speed that the subject is moving. It isn't nearly as difficult to do as it is to explain.

Some photographers go in for self portraits. A very simple setup can be made with an ordinary mouse trap, two pieces of thread and some bait. The subject tugs on the bait. This releases the trap spring which trips the shutter. The only catch here is that your camera must have a shutter release lever that pulls straight down. It won't work with modern cameras that have a push-button or built-in body release. It is a box, view or press camera trick.

An easy way to get into wildlife photography is to take a walk through most any wooded area and keep your eyes open. Bird nests many times are easily accessible and babies make excellent subjects. Harmless snakes can be handled and moved into a better spot for your camera. Terrapins don't mind posing a bit. Armadillos are very cooperative. If you spot one feeding, move around until you are in its path then stand still. It will probably come

• *Continued on Page 24*



'Possum on a post is captured during night ramble, with the 4x5 SpeedGraphic, 127mm lens, Royal Pan film.

A FEW HUNTING DON'TS

Never say anything against your hunting partner's dog. Also, don't pat it or feed it. And don't give the dog orders. If you kill a bird, tell the owner . . . not the dog.

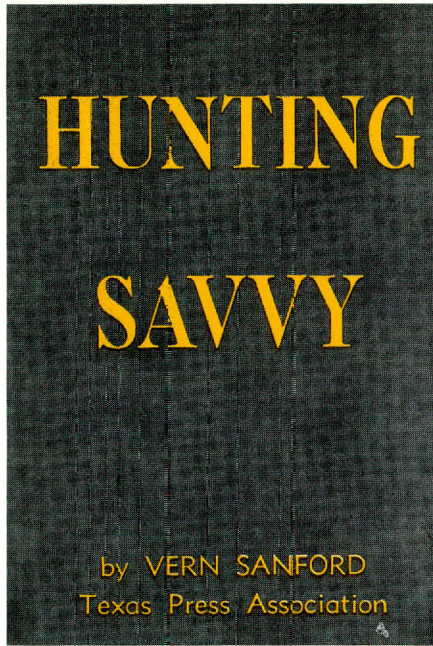
Follow these don'ts and you'll keep the respect and friendship of your partner.

DON'T CHANGE AMMUNITION

You may ridicule the idea, but experts tell us that guns are highly sensitive to ammunition change.

For instance: If you have carefully sighted-in your rifle before deer season, using Brand X, then switch to Brand Z for the actual hunt, even though Z is of equal quality, your gun is apt to shoot off-target.

So the best bet is to stick to the



BEWARE THE SAFETY BUTTON

Many a hunter has shot himself, or somebody else, simply because he relied too heavily on the safety catch on his shotgun.

Safeties on shotguns are apt to give a sportsman a false sense of security. All the safety snap does is block the triggers so they can't be pulled. It doesn't block the hammers so they can't fall and hit the firing pins. And hammers are what fire the guns!

WHEN DUCKS FLARE AWAY

When ducks flare from your blind, after showing that they want to come in, look around to find out what they don't like about the set-up.

It may be your cigarette smoke,



same brand of cartridge throughout the season—unless you intend sight-in the weapon again.

BE CAREFUL WITH BULLETS

Carrying loose ammunition around in your pocket is foolhardy. The little .22 cartridges are especially dangerous. They are small and easily lost, and they may turn up in the open fireplace with a bang—literally.

NEW USE FOR TIN SHEARS

Pack a pair of small tin shears in your duffle bag next hunting trip. They are excellent for chopping off the legs, wings, and head of game as you dress it. Saves dulling your knife on the bones.

COLD WEATHER CLOTHING

We Texans are so used to warm weather that when dressing for a winter hunting trip we either overdo it or underdo it. Then we spend the rest of the day roasting or freezing.

Try to remember, when selecting hunting clothes, that air space is very

important. It gives more warmth with less weight. Two pairs of middle-weight woolen socks will keep your feet warmer than will one pair of heavy woolies. Two lightweight wool shirts will do better than one heavy garment.

REMOVE RUST FROM GUN

After each trip in the field—especially after hunting over water—you will notice small pits of rust on your gun barrel. These are caused by sweat and other moisture.

If attended to at once, these pits can be removed by an ordinary type-writer eraser. Such an eraser won't damage gun bluing as steel wool or sandpaper will. When gun is badly rusted, soak well with rust solvent before using eraser.

"SEASONED" HUNTING CLOTHES

Smoke those new-smelling clothes over a campfire. This will prepare them for the hunting season so they won't scare off game, or evoke ribald comments from your fellow hunters.

empty shotgun shells, or scraps of luncheon paper fluttering in the wind. Pick up telltale evidence and see what happens.

SHOT SIZE IS IMPORTANT

When hunting turkeys on the wing use No. 2 shot in a modified barrel—12 gauge, or 20. The gauge makes little difference. If ground shooting, best results are obtained with No. 6 or 8 shot, aiming for the head only. Rifle hunters should use a Hornet or .22 long rifle loads. Shoot for the head, if you are confident, and save good meat.

SPOTTING DOWNED BIRDS

When you down a bird in brush or high grass and go to the place where you think it fell and it isn't there, drop a white handkerchief at the spot.

Then hunt from there in circles, until you locate your kill. Otherwise you are apt to wander away from the original area. **

IN MY BEST blue suit and my only overcoat, I wasn't dressed for hunting! Sure, I'll admit I had the hunting fever—I have an attack each year with the first fall norther—but work was pressing and free time was hard to find.

My Trans-Pecos assignment was completed, so when I made Junction late that Friday afternoon, I decided to spend the night. A telephone call to my long-time friend at Telegraph, Bill Hooks, brought an invitation, "Come on out, we'll go turkey hunting in the morning." Who could resist?

It was after nine that evening when I got to the ranch. Bill met me at the door, and June, his attractive wife, had a fresh pot of coffee ready for sampling. We visited pretty late, but when Bill knocked on the door before dawn and said, "It's about that time," the expectation of the hunt more than offset the loss of sleep.

You've heard it said that it's not the kill but the hunting that's important to the sportsman. Well, that is certainly true when you're hunting with a fellow like Bill. Here's a man—a rancher who through years of contending with drought, ring-tails and raccoons eating his pecan crop, too many deer eating his oats and other natural actions and reactions—has developed a philosophy that you have to admire. He may grumble about the deer in his oat patch, but he would be mighty rough on a night hunter or other violator who killed one of them. His general reference to the ancestry of beavers who destroy the trees and shrubs he plants for erosion control is contradicted by the twinkle in his eye as he says, "Well, guess they gotta eat, too!"

Observation and close association with nature have made Bill a student of his environment, and the influence of his family, especially that of his mother, has made him a lover of the outdoors. This, I knew, we had in common and it assured me that our venture would be rewarding.

We left the truck about 150 yards from the blind site which was about a half-mile from a well-used turkey roost on the South Fork of the Llano. Bill broke trail while I stumbled

along behind, intent on keeping my overcoat out of the tassajillo and agarita bushes. Bill had tried to fit me out with some of his clothes but, after all, I was using his 12-gauge double, his ammunition, his hospitality, his transportation—a bum's gotta have something—even if it's just pride!

"We've reached the blind," Bill declared. In the darkness, I had to take his word. He began to scatter hegari and chopped corn out through the brush while I tried to locate our hiding place.

"Over here," Bill called. I bounced off a young live oak and pirouetted in the general direction of his voice. "Take it easy or we'll have to rebuild the blind," Bill cautioned. He

in the Spanish oaks, elms and sycamores near the water's edge. "They'll go down to the river for a drink, stretch and play around a little, get a little watercress and then move out to feed." He continued, "The big toms won't associate with the hens or young, so if we're lucky, they'll come our way first. If they don't, and a bunch of hens show up, there's a good chance that a few young gobblers will be with them."

I was a novice at this turkey hunting business, but I knew that the beard was what you looked for on a turkey tom and that hens were protected. Bill answered my question before I asked it. "You won't have any trouble telling the young tom from the hens," he assured. "They'll

Turkey Farce

by T. D. CARROLL
I and E Coordinator

guided me through a short maze and said, "Sit here." I sat.

The glow from our cigarettes as we reviewed old times and the light from a timid dawn gradually revealed the layout of our ambush headquarters. It was triangular in shape, being anchored at the eastern point by a live oak about two feet in diameter. Bill had his back propped against the tree and I sat opposite him along one side of the triangle. At the base of the tree, on Bill's right, I noticed a small notch where the juniper limbs and elm brush that made the blind sides were missing. I peered through the opening, but all I could see was light brush in the distance.

The river was behind Bill; he explained the pattern the turkeys would follow as they left their roost

stand taller; be darker in color, especially on the breast; and look like an awkward teenage kid," Bill said while I filed a few mental notes.

Light had sneaked in on us. Bill looked at his watch and said, "They ought to be coming off about now." At that cue, a few faint "perts" floated from the general direction of the roost. I tightened up like a piece of wet rawhide. Bill just grinned. Suddenly, Bill gave me a look that demanded silence; I could tell he was listening intently to the "perts" that were sounding louder with a little different pitch than the first ones. "Something's got 'em stirred up. Could be a fox, coyote, dog or a poacher," growled Bill. My spirits hit bottom. "We'll find out later," Bill grinned. "All we can do now is just wait."

A twenty-minute hour later Bill

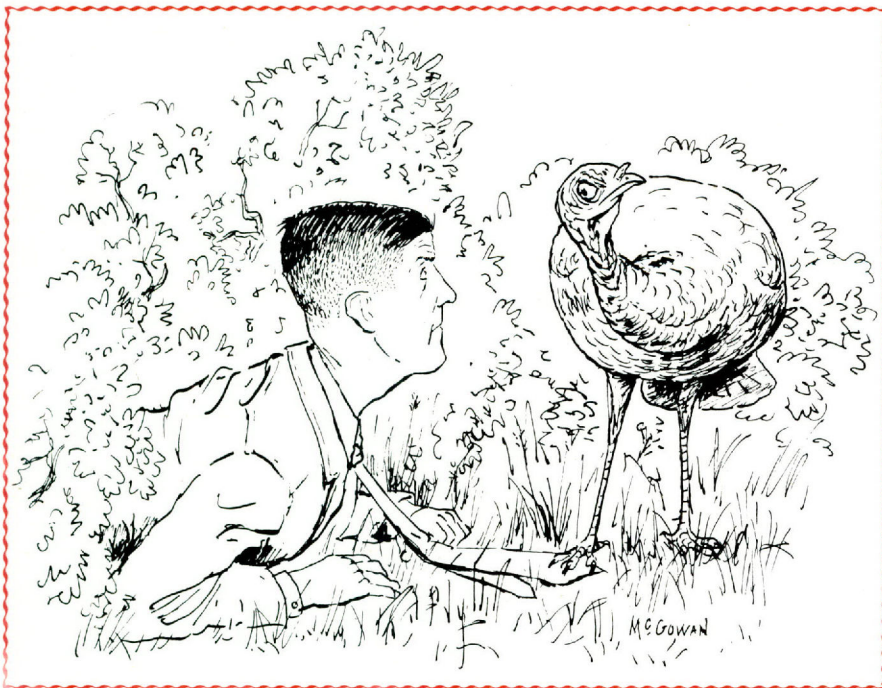
whispered, "They should have been here by now. You can usually set your watch by their movement, unless something gets 'em riled up." Bracing his back against the tree, Bill slowly inched his way up till his head was above the blind. In this semi-crouched position, he eased his head around the side of the live oak and peered toward the river bottom. Suddenly he froze, and from out of the corner of his mouth came, "Here they come."

My heart was bouncing off my Adam's apple like a yo-yo. I knew that I shouldn't move, but I just had to see. From my sitting position I stretched forward till my chin near-

the old hen turned away and then abruptly swung her head back with a real ol' slapstick "double take," I nearly burst out laughing.

Bill, with his head still exposed above the top of the blind, was stuck in his most uncomfortable position as the curious hen, finally satisfied that I was just another stump, moved off in the direction of the feed we had scattered.

I relaxed to a sitting position and got the ol' double-barrel eased up for action. By now, there were about 25 turkeys enjoying a hegari-corn breakfast, less than 20 yards away. Three of them were easily identifiable as young gobblers!



ly touched the ground. As I peeked through the opening at the base of Bill's back rest, a turkey hen rounded the tree and our eyes locked. What a predicament—me playing "stare down" with a wild turkey with our heads less than a yard apart!

I froze and stared. The old hen gave a startled "pert" and stared back. My eyes began to water and the agarita branch my chin was resting on felt like a hot stove; I couldn't blink my eyes—I couldn't move—too scared. The wary old hen would cock her left eye at me, move her head forward and then draw it back. The humor of the situation began to register and I was getting tickled. When

A young tom moved to the outer edge of our circle of feeding turkeys. I drew a bead and was squeezing the trigger when a head-bobbing hen took her position between me and my target. I eased the gun over on another young gobbler who was almost separated from the protecting hens, but I just couldn't get a clear shot.

Bill, by now, had leg cramps. He'd grit his teeth and growl, "Shoot." The turkeys would all look up, give an alert "pert" or two, while I'd try to explain to Bill with a semi-hysterical whisper that I was afraid I'd hit a hen.

The fiasco continued. I'd aim at

one young tom and then another. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed the calves of Bill's legs trembling under the tension. I glanced at his face to see his lips pulled back with his teeth clenched in the most miserable expression I'd ever seen on a human face.

I went back to aiming but by now I was laughing and the end of the 12-gauge was going through a crazy oscillation like the end of a dropped garden hose spouting under full pressure. The smallest of the three toms had moved into the clear and I was following him trying to control my laughter.

"Shoot dammit, I can't stay like this all day," Bill pleaded. I fired.

The river bottom seemed to explode. Mixed with the reverberation of the shot was the crash and clatter of thrashing turkey wings jetting skyward through the timber. A shower of dislodged mistletoe berries fell—silence followed. It was stunning.

Bill collapsed in a lump at the base of his tree with his head lolling to one side and his tongue hanging out the corner of his mouth. I fell backward through the blind—now laughing aloud. Moments later, I returned to a sitting position, brushing the juniper needles from my overcoat. Bill and I just looked at each other until a noise from the direction of the turkey feeding grounds caused us to get to our feet and head for the unfortunate tom who was thrashing out his last earthly protest.

Our victim retrieved, Bill and I headed for the ranch. We related our experience to June while we enjoyed the late breakfast she had prepared. I'm sure she'd heard hundreds of hunting stories but not many as screwball as the one we had to tell.

With my field-dressed, nine-pound, wild Thanksgiving dinner securely packed away, I exchanged adios with Bill and June and headed for home. I must have averaged a chuckle for every 20 miles I drove toward Austin.

That Thanksgiving dinner was a fine one, but the memory of that crazy hunt has brought me hours of enjoyment and pleasant reminiscence for the past 10 years—it's a fact, I'm smiling now. **

The Day It Rained Geese

by MARY K. SLOAN

FIRST we heard the distant roar. Then the horizon across the soggy Texas rice fields seemed to mushroom like clouds of atomic explosion. Presently the noise defined itself into the gabbling of waterfowl and the swishing of wings. Geese—thousands and thousands of geese—flapped skyward to form uncountable lines of flight.

We crouched farther down into our metal pit blinds, peered through the screen of rice stubble and watched the dark lines shape into V's. The air, now almost black with geese, vibrated with the loud jabbering of the birds; occasionally the hoarse honking of a Canada pierced the din. Fingers tightened on shotguns. Muffled blasts from several directions announced 7:15 a.m., the

legal shooting time.

Several months earlier our family of five had voted for a two-day goose hunt with commercial lease operator Arthur B. Hudgins, on the Lizzie-Egypt Prairie, near Houston. My husband, Sam, and I had hunted this coastal terrain with Hudgins before, but this hunt was the first wildfowling experience for our three teenage children, Dana, Ross and Parks. Since it was Christmas vacation time, Dana was on a college holiday, and the boys were free from public school in Breckenridge, our hometown.

At 3:00 a.m., December 28, our family awakened to a downpour of rain against a motel near the hunting area. "Just hear that rain! The geese should be flying low today!"

my husband said. An hour later we were eating breakfast alongside 25 other hunters at Joe's Cafe in Hungerford, the morning meeting place for hunters on the Lizzie-Egypt Prairie.

Hudgins briefed the gathering, "As you know, the 1962 season extends from October 31 to January 13. The bag limit is five geese, with not more than two Canadian subspecies nor more than one white-fronted goose included. The limit on duck is two, with only one mallard allowed."

A native of the region, Hudgins has been conducting goose hunts since 1954. He explained further that shooting was confined to a half-day basis in order to let the geese rest and to hold them in the area. His final advice was, "If you find you aren't hitting the geese, double your lead. They'll probably be farther off and faster than you figured."

Lined up behind Hudgins' pickup and those of several assistant guides, the hunters drove through darkness and intermittent rain to their individual blinds. The lease operator placed Sam, Dana, Parks and me at one spread and Ross at another, half a mile to the north. Resolved to record this trip on film, I held my camera. The others each grasped a 16-gauge Winchester, Model 12. Knowing that ammunition can disappear in a hurry when gunning for geese, the group had more than a sufficient supply of magnum loads, number two shot. A wet, shivering 30-minute wait brought us to legal shooting time.

Thirteen-year-old Parks, sitting beside his dad in the blind to the left, trembled with excitement at seeing so many birds. Suddenly a flight of 20 ducks swept in from the south, circled behind us and whished around in front, 15 feet high. Shotguns blasted; a duck plunged to the ground. Parks climbed out to retrieve his kill.

All at once a flock of snows swooped in low. The boy crouched



It's a shivering, but thrilling, 30 minutes' wait to shooting time for Ross Sloan (left) and brother, Parks.

among the decoys in indecision for a moment, then his duck unclaimed, he dived back for the blind. The air was saturated with geese. A flight of eight Canadas came in from the northeast, set wings, then abruptly flared upward over Sam and Parks. Two guns boomed and a gray bird cartwheeled to the ground. Parks dashed from the blind to lug back his second hit of the morning. Our youngest was doing all right. I wondered how all this youthful success was affecting my husband, who prides himself on his wing shooting ability.

Hard rain set in again; waterfowl activity slackened. An out-of-range bunch of snows flew over, their wings waving heavily in the deluge. I glanced at my daughter beside me, grinned and said through clenched teeth, "Isn't this fun!" Dana smiled uncertainly and nodded yes.

The cloudburst slowed to a drizzle. Behind us we spotted a couple of specklebellies angling in, flaps down. Dana swung her pump and touched the trigger. The second bird in line collapsed in mid-air, dropped straight down and splashed in the flooded flat. "This is fun!" my daughter exclaimed.

Examination of the goose proved it was a banded bird. To assist the migratory bird program, we later sent the tag number to the Fish and Wildlife Service in Washington, D. C., and were informed that the band had been attached in Saskatchewan three months prior to the kill.

Meanwhile, 16-year-old Ross, alone on his spread to the north, tried out his newly purchased goose call. He'd had quite a bit of experience at varmint calling but knew that an unskilled goose caller was likely to scare the geese into the next county. He saw two Canadas in the distance, headed his way. As the boy blew into the tube, the birds began to circle, working lower and lower. With the realization that he was actually calling in the pair, Ross froze on the call in shock, but not for long. When the two were about 30 yards off, he threw up his gun and let go a load of shot. The lead goose folded up and bounced with a plop 20 feet in front of the blind.

Ross hurriedly collected the dead

goose, then hunkered down in the blind to wait for more. Several flocks flew over, all too high. Presently, a single appeared low over a hedge-row, and the boy went to work with the call. The snow decoyed perfectly; Ross swung the pump upward. The first shot missed, but on the second try he heard pellets rattling against feathers. Veering slightly, the white bird leveled off into a long glide and alighted in an adjoining field 150 yards away.

The boy, determined not to let his first snow get away, barrelled out of the blind. When he reached a low fence, he got set to hurdle it, setting his gun down, unaware that his feet clung to the muck like glue. Momentum slung him over the fence resulting in three flips and a ripped pants leg.

Struggling to his feet, Ross saw that the goose had a broken right wing as it sped down a levee, trying to attain enough speed for flight. The boy dashed after the bird. Suddenly, disheartened, he remembered

a snow to total our spread's tally to four geese and two ducks. Ross walked up with a cocky smile, carrying five geese. No words were necessary.

Parks eyed his brother's birds and said, "Mom, tomorrow I want to share a blind with Ross. Today, every time Dad and I saw a bunch of geese coming, I got all set. Then Dad whispered, 'Easy! Easy!' and I lowered my gun a little. All at once the geese were over us, and Dad was up shooting, and I was left just sitting there."

"I just didn't want us to spook the geese off," Sam spoke up defensively.

Hudgins laughed, "You know, I've long since learned if I want my boy to have any shooting, I have to leave my gun at home."

Next morning Joe's Cafe was bursting at the seams with exuberant sportsmen. Because of the crowd, the five of us volunteered to use one spread, with Parks requesting a station behind the levee, 100 yards south of the pit blinds.



End of a good hunt. Parks, (left to right) older son, Ross, and Sam Sloan, proudly display the result of their hunting prowess. They agree this is the ideal way to vacation.

he had only one shell with him. As he closed the distance to 50 yards, Ross fired—and missed. He then lunged into the intervening water and gained yardage. Finally, with only several feet separating the two, Ross made a flying tackle. Goose and boy rolled in the mud, but the young hunter had his snow.

Thirty minutes before noon—end of the day's hunt—Sam had downed

A heavy ground fog blanketed the prairie most of the morning. It was maddening to hear thousands of geese when we could not see them. On occasion a low flock appeared through the mist, like ghosts, only to vanish quickly from sight.

Once I heard Ross, disgruntled at the lack of shooting, remark to his dad, "Don't you think Mom and

• Continued on Page 30

THE YOUNGSTER scrunched his nose, squinted his eyes and tried to keep the thumps of his fast-beating heart from shaking the rifle too much. Despite the breezy coolness of a late-November afternoon, his forehead was damp. He peered again through the magic of the rifle scope. The barrel was wavering like a wind-whipped willow, but frequently he would catch a glimpse of his target—a plump doe munching grass in one of the many pastures of the vast Y.O. Ranch near Mountain Home in the deer-rich Hill Country.

“Take it easy, son,” an older voice reassured him. “Just take your time. There are plenty more where she came from, so don’t worry. Easy does it. You can’t miss.”

But the boy had missed. A half-dozen times, in fact. Not only was this his first deer hunt, but it also

in a determined clinch and swung the rifle again on target. The split-second the scope found the doe, he closed both eyes and fired. By some miracle—which attends most boys on their first deer hunt—the slug found its mark and the doe collapsed after her first, instinctive leap, but the boy’s eyes remained tightly shut. He was afraid to look at another miss. His eyes popped open when he heard his guide holler, “See! I knew you could do it blindfolded!”

Blind-luck shots like that are rare at the Y.O., or anywhere else, but first deer hunts are commonplace at the sprawling ranch. In the past two seasons, 106 youngsters have hunted there free. For many of them, it was their first time to bag a deer. All the young hunters have scored, except one, and he got a chance to come back another day.



The youngsters are mighty proud of their does—the first deer many of them have ever killed.

A Doe for Every Kid

by CARROLL ABBOTT

was the first time he had ever fired a rifle so much. Besides deer fever, the boy was suffering from gun-shyness, too.

The afternoon had started well enough. He had been picked up at the courthouse in Kerrville with 65 other eager, young hunters by members of the local civic clubs. The 41 miles to the ranch had been a pleasant ride. He had listened attentively to the short talks—rules of the hunt, an effective lecture on gun safety. And then the boys in groups of five or six had disappeared with their volunteer guides. Everybody—even the girl—probably has his deer by now, the boy thought. As he guessed, all his companions had been successful and a mountainous pile of venison had built up in the back of the truck. Now, the shadows of the trees were getting longer; time was running out.

“Just take it easy,” the guide said. “You can’t miss.”

The youthful hunter took a deep, aching breath. He gritted his teeth

This year, the hunt is expected to be a bigger success.

On the last Sunday in November, Charles Schreiner III, owner, and Vernon Jones, ranch manager, confidently expect 100 or more youngsters to get their deer on the ranch—in a single afternoon! It probably will be the biggest and quickest free hunt for youngsters on one ranch in Texas.

The idea started in 1961 when doe hunting again became legal in Kerr County. Schreiner and Jones, who have lived all their lives in a land of dedicated buck-hunters, knew they faced a difficult chore in popularizing the new sport of shooting does. To most old-timers, there is only one kind of deer: a buck, usually one with a forest of points on his antlers and almost always killed at 250 steps while on a dead run.

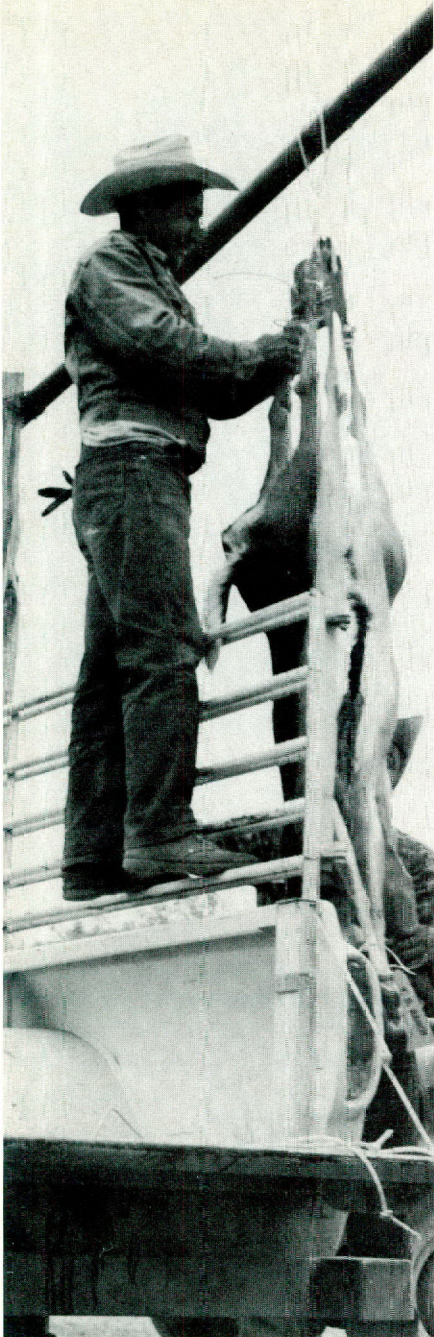
But to youngsters who had never hunted before, Schreiner and Jones reasoned, a doe was a deer. So, they decided to open the ranch to young hunters for a free hunt and grow

their own crop of doe-shooters.

To qualify for the free hunt is simple: all you have to do is want to kill a deer and be fortunate enough to live in Kerr County. The rancher enlisted the support of three civic clubs—Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary—to take applications, furnish transportation to the ranch and round up members as volunteer guides.

The first year of the free hunt attracted 41 boys. In 210 minutes, they all had bagged their does, more than a ton of venison. Last year the average of a deer every 5.12 minutes would have been better, except two boys drifted into headquarters near the end of the hunt without their game. The empty-handed sight was too much for Jones.

There was still some light, so Jones elapped the unsuccessful pair in his pick-up, raced out to a nearby pasture and was back in 20 minutes with two does and two happier hunters.



Members of civic clubs assist with the free-for-youngsters doe hunt on the Y. O. Ranch in Kerr County. More than 100 young hunters are expected on the hunt in late November this season.

Actually, that first year, the score was 40 does—and one spike buck. The guide for the unexpected boy buck-hunter was Schreiner himself, and he freely took the blame for the mistaken identity. Schreiner said he and his hunter had just seen a heavy doe vanish in a clump of oaks and were watching closely for her to return to sight.

Just then, Schreiner said, his attention was diverted by the snapping of a twig across the road. Schreiner was fascinated by the massive buck which slowly came into view, a big fellow with a rocking chair for antlers. The boy, however, kept his eyes riveted on the spot where his doe was hidden.

"There she is!" the boy whispered excitedly.

Schreiner glanced around quickly, saw a deer and told his boy to shoot it. The boy did exactly that and the noise sent the big buck scurrying off into the brush. Schreiner sighed, but his sigh turned into a silent groan when he went to field dress the downed deer. It was a spike buck.

The next year, two more spike bucks masquerading as does were killed during the free hunt—but this time Schreiner was not one of the guides responsible.

The second season, two more organizations—the Optimist Club of Kerrville and the Kerr County Wildlife Association—joined the original

dismayed by her uniqueness. She was the first to score a kill. She dropped her doe at 75 paces with her first shot, a clean kill. Her accuracy was not surprising. For two years, Miss Wehmeyer had been a member of the prize-winning Kerr County 4-H Club rifle team. She handled her weapon with practiced skill. She spent the rest of the afternoon among those ringed around a comforting outdoor fire at ranch headquarters.

For the youngster who broke the "can't miss" spell of the free hunt, it was just a plain bad day all the way around. He was one of the boys who had never fired a rifle much and, of course, this was his first deer hunt. He got nine shots and nicked three does—then the truck ran out of gas, the rifle ran out of shells and the day ran out of light, all about the same time.

The boy, naturally, was invited back to the ranch to take another crack at the skittish deer.

For the 1963 season, eight sponsors will cooperate with the ranch



A youngster watches as his deer is hung up to cool at the ranch headquarters.

trio of sponsors and participation was enlarged to 65 youngsters.

Two remarkable things happened during that second hunt: for the first time, a girl was among the hunters, and for the first time, a hunter failed to bring in his deer.

The lone girl hunter—blond, 17-year-old Shirley Wehmeyer—was not

in staging the big hunt. The newest sponsors are the Kerrville Jaycees, the Buck and Bull Club and the Hunt-Ingram Lions Club.

About 100 youngsters—boys and girls—are expected to join the hunt. The 1963 hunt ought to end with more than three tons of venison—and 100 happy hunters. **

the big ones are stirring

by CURTIS CARPENTER



Kenneth Gumm brought back a humdinger of a stringer of bass from Granite Shoals Lake.

DOWN DEEP, beneath the silt-coated boulder where the rubbish of years had settled, Booger Bass hid in the cool shadows. Suddenly, he darted out, inhaled a surprised great-grandson, flexed his right pectoral fin and then his left, arched his back, and with a few swift thrusts of his tail he was back in his dim retreat. This had been the extent of his activity in the past few months. Sluggish in the long summer, he had enjoyed idling away his time in cool isolation.

Now the water was beginning to chill near the surface, and leaves floated down lazily to settle and soak. Booger had seen this happen four times in his lifetime. He always felt new energy and sharpened appetite when the leaves began to fall.

Booger's reactions are more typical than many fishermen realize. His behavior during the different seasons has been supported by reports from divers who have frequented bass

areas during the summer season. "The little bass are brave and daring," reported one diver, "while the big ones are shy and retiring, always hiding in the shadows." Not only our weary bass, Booger, but all his kind come to life when the fall air begins to chill the water.

This is not a time to put the rod and reel on the rack and forget fishing, but a time to go for the big ones, when the days are cool, nights cold and fishing exciting. When a Texan talks about bass, he means the large-mouth or black bass, the most popular fighting fish in the fresh waters. It would take a book (and many books have been written on the subject) to tell you how to catch bass under all circumstances during the fall months. The best way to know where and when to fish for fall blacks is to know the fish and its habits.

First of all, the big black bass likes his water about 70 degrees. He'll stay in this water when it is avail-

able, and it usually is on the larger lakes, at some depth. But when the cold northerners begin to move across the waters and chill the upper layers, the blacks will move closer to the surface up the banks. The larger blacks will usually stay in deeper, near the bottom of the 70-degree water layer, even when the water cools, but not as deep as they stay when the summer sun heats the surface water.

In the early fall, topwaters pay off consistently. The insect life hasn't left the scene, so use small insect-colored lures. Work them in the early morning and late evening along the moss banks and nearer the shore than you did during the summer. The bass are more energetic and they will probably hit harder and tug harder. Plop your lure up to within a foot of the bass' hiding place, whether it be moss, stumps, fence rows, sunken logs, brush piles or boathouses.

Since the old and wise blacks, like Booger, will hang around submerged hideouts farther down, don't pass up a chance to dance a jig or some other bottom-hugging lure in the deeper water. These big boys are not as easily fooled as their nephews.

As fall slips into winter, the cold, but not frigid, days arrive. Fishermen love these days when the tem-

perature is not so extreme that the hands freeze, and yet it is extreme enough to keep the skiers and boat riders off the lakes.

Work the points and ledges. The black bass does have a mean (or fearless) character. Even the little six and eight inch bass have often challenged SCUBA divers. One diver said a small bass scared the fool out

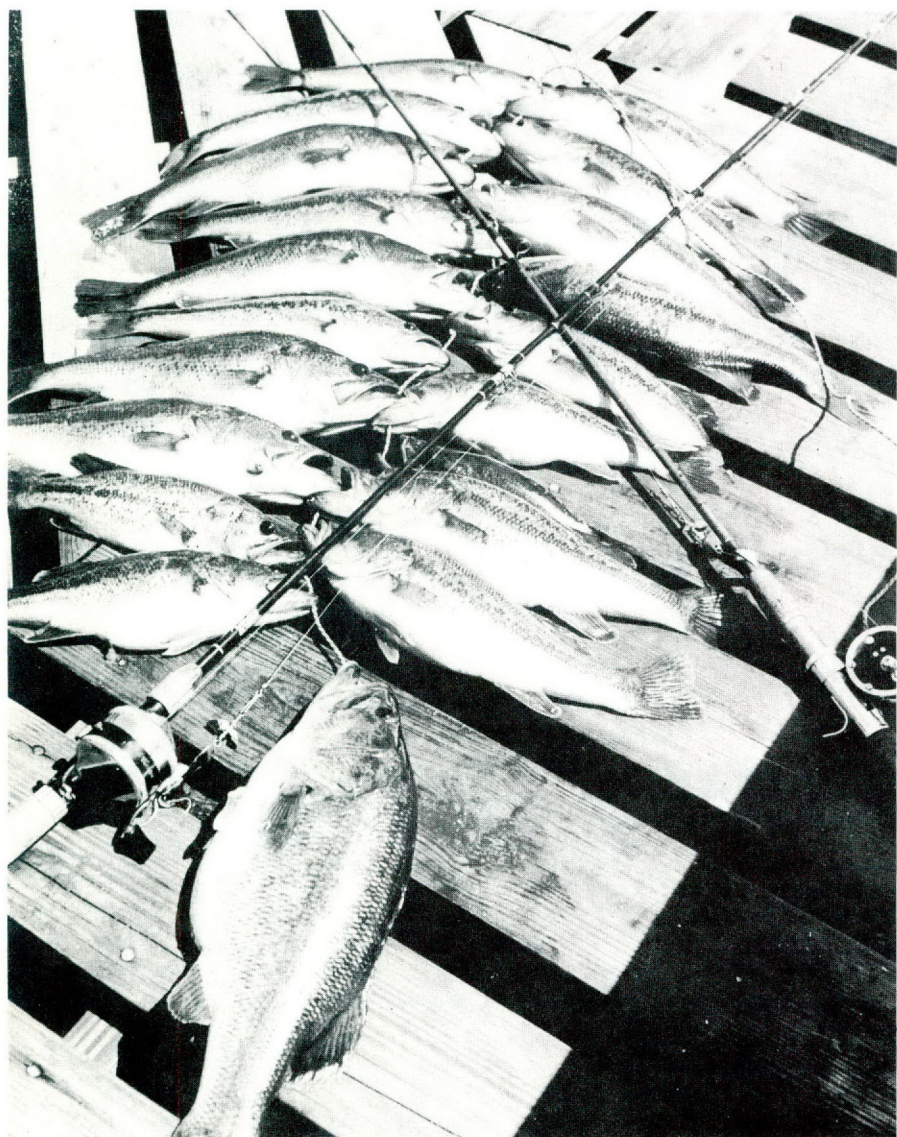
of him on one occasion. "The little rascal spotted me, came rushing in toward my face mask and threw his fins in reverse just before he struck my mask," he reported. "Then he would back off, turn from side to side, casting a fearless look my way, swim off a distance, and dash back up against my mask."

So, it's quite possible that in the fall when the cooled water renews the spirit and courage of the big black bass, your chances for catching them are increased. Cast a topwater over the points and ledges. Rough up the water with it. Make short casts so you can hit more likely spots as you drift along. If the water is extremely clear, keep low and make longer casts. Keep the noise down. Bass can feel vibrations. Don't wear light colored clothes. Keep a good grip on your reel handle at all times, and keep your lure in the water where the fish are.

Some of the favorite topwaters are chuggers, darters, spinning floaters, popping bugs and light spoons. Often people like to know the names of the manufacturers of these baits. The Heddon Company's chugging baits are some of the best topwater lures. So are PICO's and those of the Glen Evans Company (especially its poppers) and Smithwick and Son, with their devil's horse series. The Johnson Spoon and the Rex Spoon work very nicely over moss in the shallow water and so does the Herb's Dilly.

As an example of the success of topwaters in fall fishing, Glenn Hayden, Texas' representative for the World Series of Fishing to be held in Arkansas, won this position during a recent tournament held on Granite Shoals Lake using topwaters, the Rex Spoon with a pork strip or chunk, and the Herb's Dilly. Most of the fishermen in the tournament, and they represented some of the best in the State, used topwater plugs.

Don't put up your fishing tackle when the north wind flows across the land. Instead, oil it up and get it ready for some of the best fishing of the year, the fall fishing. Never can tell; you may catch Booger along some shore.



Lunkers by the dozen. No better proof needed that the fall fishing does get results.

Deer are here to



Both man and wildlife must be considered in proper deer management. Landowners, hunters, and the deer population must be provided for.

DEER, like livestock, wheat and cotton, are products of the land and, as such, they constitute a renewable resource. Deer are considered so because a harvestable crop is produced almost every year.

Used wisely, the supply will not become exhausted but will continue to be a source of pleasure and income, as well as a living heritage for future generations.

How many farmers raise wheat or cotton and then willingly allow the crop to rot in the fields? What rancher diligently tends his cows and sheep month after month, only to allow them to die in his pastures? None, of course. Neither should deer be so mismanaged. Waste is inexcusable in our modern society.

Starvation is the end product of poor deer management or of no deer management. If the range will not support the herd, and if the annual crop is not removed by hunting, starvation will remove it. This is an axiom, an unalterable rule, in deer management. The surplus must be removed or the herd will exceed its food supply. This has happened repeatedly in Texas and in other deer states.

There is no way of estimating how many thousands of Texas deer are wasted annually because of starvation. Die-offs have occurred in almost every major herd; in some herds, die-offs recur every few years. The cause, according to veterinary pathologists and wildlife biologists, is nothing more than plain starvation—or "miss-meal cramps," as one rancher labeled it.

Die-offs can be spectacular events or they can go almost unnoticed on densely populated ranges. Deer not getting enough to eat are dull and lethargic. They have none of the alert bearing and strong carriage of well-fed animals. Their coats are rough and bristly, and they may have hollow flanks, backbones that resemble knobby ridge poles, and prominent rib cages. Many are just short of death.

RESOURCE

by JAMES G. TEER

the

Department of Wildlife Biology

on

Texas A&M University

hoof

This article on the antlerless deer problem is excerpted from a Game and Fish Commission (now Parks and Wildlife Department) bulletin, "Texas Deer Herd Management," written by James G. Teer.

The 69-page bulletin, illustrated with cartoon characters by Charles Shaw, discusses the wide scope of deer management including range and herd problems faced by the rancher and biologist, which in turn affect the hunter.

The informative, yet entertaining and colorful, bulletin is available upon request to the Parks and Wildlife Department, John H. Reagan Building, Austin, Texas, 78701.—Editor.

stay. Texans will see to that.

A few die throughout the season, and the process is often continuous throughout the year. In other instances, after such inclement weather as several days of cold, an ice storm, or a light snow, scores of deer may be found lying under brush or other sheltering cover with their heads tucked into their flanks as if asleep—but dead.

Because carrying capacities of ranges differ, die-offs can and do occur on ranges where few deer are found, as well as where they are abundant. A range with a carrying capacity of 10 deer per section may just as easily be browsed out as a range with carrying capacity of 50 or 100 deer per section. Die-offs may be difficult to detect on ranges that support only a few deer. Carcasses decay quickly in our hot Texas climate and varmints and scavengers soon destroy all evidence of death causes. Careful study and checks of vegetation may be the only, or at least the best, clue to the herd's condition. It is often easier to find overbrowsed or overgrazed range plants than to find dead deer.

Removing surplus deer is a vital part of deer herd management. Deer may be wasted by starvation or other unnecessary causes, or deer may be used by hunting. This is our choice. To furnish hunting recreation and meat is the ultimate objective of deer management.

Most Texans believe that deer numbers are controlled by hunting or that most deer end their lives as targets of well-placed shots. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Buck Law

The Texas law that prohibited killing all but fork-horned bucks was passed in 1903. This law was passed to prevent excessive shooting of deer. It has been and it still is an efficient management method for encouraging and restoring deer herds. On ranges where herds are prevented from producing a surplus, or where the need is to build up the herd, the buck law must be kept in force.

But, where deer herds produce a surplus each spring, the buck law is as obsolete as the old Texas law that prohibits a person from carrying a pair of fence-cutting pliers on his person in range country.

Common sense tells us that harvesting both sexes is sound and practical on some ranges.

Selling only the bulls, the rams, or the billies from domestic herds is an impractical way to manage livestock. Harvesting only buck deer is an impossible way to manage a deer herd. Unless both sexes of livestock were marketed, our pastures soon would become so overstocked with females that the range could not produce enough forage to feed them. It works the same way with deer.

Harvesting only bucks is not enough.

Both sexes must be harvested to attain the ratio required to prevent overpopulations. Deer produce as

many females as males each year and the harvest should be divided between them.

It is good business to harvest both sexes.

As a matter of fact, from the standpoint of proper range management, it is absolutely necessary. Harvesting both sexes is the most efficient way to protect the range from overuse by deer and to prevent encroachment of deer on livestock monetary returns. In addition, selling the hunting rights to harvest antlerless deer is one way to have the deer pay for the forage they eat. Why not do this? We do the same for buck hunting.

Experiences of other states during the last two decades, and—more recently—the experience of Texas, have proved that harvesting both sexes will not destroy buck hunting.

For that matter, some states have never had a "buck law." The record shows that taking antlerless deer from overpopulated ranges has not reduced the kill of legal bucks. On the contrary, records show that by adequately harvesting the surplus of both sexes, the buck harvest can be increased. Deer have more fawns, and more fawns survive to legal status, on good range than on poor range. By removing surpluses of both sexes, the sex ratio will tend toward a 50:50 balance because the

• Continued on Page 29

Deer starvation is the only alternative to proper management of deer populations. Surpluses must be removed or excess deer will die.



A SPUNKY, fussy little guy—the prairie dog. He has to be plucky to survive the ways of the prairie—coyotes, hawks, flood and fire are just a few of his mortal enemies which threaten to strike without a moment's notice. Although he's small and not particularly fierce, he's wary and determined.

A human intruder in his arid world of rattlers, cracked earth and sparse vegetation might think that his bark is really worse than his bite. For, although he perches atop his private mound and fusses with a wheezing bark and flipping tail, he is ever quivering on the brink of trading pride and principles for safety and vanishing into the depths of his burrow.

Although he's equally ready to scurry downward to safety in the

ing to stay just out of range of the enemy's strike. One encounter between an old male guarding his young in the burrow and a writhing menace ended in a fatal draw. E. C. Cates, in a *Journal of Mammalogy* article, reported finding a dead prairie dog and a dead rattler still entwined in battle position. The rattler had been bitten several times, and

essary, to get a better view. If real danger is near, he sends out a warning cry for his fellow townsmen. It's a sharp, staccato bark that sends all dogs of the town scurrying toward their burrows where they, too, then sit and join in the warning cry.

Finally, when all the dogs are gathered at the burrow and the situation warrants, families, dog by dog, dive into dark security and leave a deserted looking town for the prowler. After danger is past, dogs begin to surface and sound an "all-clear," a song-like bark which all gradually take up.

Prairie dogs are social beings, having other community arrangements besides that of soldiers on guard for mutual protection. One study of captive prairie dogs indicates the presence of a hierarchy. Although it is

Watch

event of animal enemy invasion by hawk or coyote, when the welfare of his youngsters is in question or when, for some tactical disadvantage he can't reach his burrow, his bite becomes far worse than his bark, as many a hungry coyote has discovered. Although prairie dogs don't win all such battles, sometimes they at least worry their coyote aggressors with their sharp teeth until they get in field position for a touchdown scamper.

Rattlesnakes pose less of a threat to the prairie dog. That is not to say that they both enjoy proximity. If a rattler slides into a single prairie dog's burrow, the dog simply leaves by another door and keeps his distance for the duration of the unwelcome visit.

But, if there is some chance of warding off the visit entirely and especially if there are youngsters to protect, the prairie dog will rise to positive action, darting around in front of the threatening rattler, try-

the prairie dog appeared to have been choked or squeezed to death. The ground around the dead enemies spelled out the blows of the obviously lengthy battle.

The dog, which is actually a rodent, is ever alert to the possibility of danger in animal or human form. When he comes up to feed, he scans the horizon for a few seconds. If all is clear, he begins a meal of vegetation. But as he nibbles the grasses near his mound, he stops every few seconds to take a new safety sounding, sitting up to listen and look, even scampering to higher ground, if nec-



Dog

by ANN STREETMAN

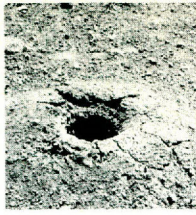
dangerous to apply without qualification facts learned about captive animals to those living in the wild, the findings do indicate a system of dominance and subordination, which probably exists in some form within the towns in natural setting.

The experiments were reported by Adam Anthony in the *Journal of Mammalogy*. A number of captive prairie dogs were divided into groups of three to five. In each group the dogs divided themselves into three categories based on their actions in feeding. The dogs which began eating immediately upon arrival of food were called alpha dogs. The ones which covered in the corner for some time, apparently in deference to the alpha dogs, were designated omega dogs. The ones whose feeding habits fell between were named beta dogs.

Dogs which appeared to dominate, mainly alpha animals, were able to move about the cage without deference to the other dogs, to begin feed-



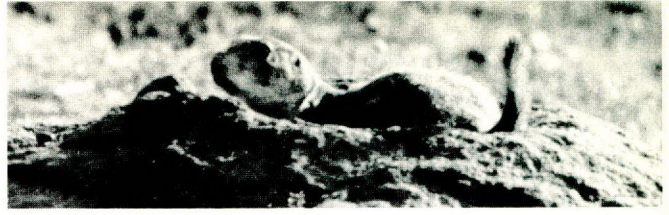
This dog chose a site which provides a patio for leisurely sunning.



A typical mound suffices as a lookout station and as a prairie flood deterrent.



Mounds can be as high as two feet and are sometimes three or four feet in width.



Crouched in pre-dive position, this little fellow is ready to submerge at a moment's notice if the intruder approaches too close.

ing immediately, to initiate mouth contacts (with head tilted a dog approaches another and places his mouth on the open mouth of the other and the second dog responds similarly), to groom the subordinate dogs (nibble and bite through fur) and to initiate the song bark, or all-clear signal.

This dominance system found in the captive dogs is similar to the peck orders of wildfowl which have been substantiated. In the prairie dog's case, the dominance does not seem to be based on violent aggression as is the case of dominance in some mammals.

Of course, the most apparent evidence of the prairie dog's sociability in the wild is the very presence of towns—aggregations of many prairie dogs living in familial or individual burrows several feet below mounded entrances.

The floor plan for these urban homes is practical and the construction is done by the individuals. The dwelling usually consists of a passageway, downward, sometimes as deep as 14 feet, and a horizontal passageway leading to a nest chamber which is as much as 14 inches high and 20 inches across. A number of escape tunnels, or passageways, provide back-door exits when a badger digs too efficiently or a rattler invites

himself in. The front door boasts a porch in the form of a dike, or mound as it is commonly called. This mound serves mainly as a device to deter prairie flood waters and as a lookout point. Sometimes the mound is as high as two feet and is three or four feet across. Occasionally, an individual digs beside a large rock, making the rock part of his protective mound.

The actual construction of the burrow is a charming sight to humans. The little homesteaders dig with their front paws and push the loose dirt to the surface with their hind paws, completing the dig and cleaning process, part by part, as they go. At intervals the little excavators pause to clean their dirt-clogged paws. Once the digging is done, the mound is built up, with the dogs artfully tamping down the earth with their muzzles.

The "streets" of prairie dog town are most crowded in morning and evening at which times the inhabitants prefer to come out to dine. They graze near their mounds and sometimes wander farther afield for blossoms or some other desirable course.

Besides feeding, the prairie dogs enjoy refreshing sand baths and some companionable conversation during the day. But, midday hours, especially during hot summer, are spent in naptaking or other leisurely un-

derground pursuits.

In winter the streets of Texas' prairie dog towns are not completely deserted for long periods as they are in towns of other subspecies dwelling in colder climates. Prairie dogs do not hibernate in the strict meaning of the term, but they do sleep through inclement periods, subsisting on stored body fat instead of the burrow's larder. But individuals of the Texas subspecies [*Cynomys ludovicianus* (Ord)] find many winter days pleasant enough to venture out for a meal.

Authorities are in some disagreement about the breeding and whelping times for prairie dogs. The majority say they mate in January and February. According to W. B. Davis, in his *Mammals of Texas*, litters of four or five rodent pups are born in March or April. A pup, quite an ugly little creature at birth, weighs about 15 grams and measures about three and one-fourth inches from tip of nose to point of tail. The mouth is large and more fully developed than the other body parts. The ears are not externally formed, and the whole pitifully premature looking body is very wrinkled and just as red.

By about his twentieth day, however, a pup has a respectable covering of hair and within 33 to 37 days of birth, he can add sight to his

Photos by Ronald Perryman





Danger past, the inhabitants surface to continue their above-ground "dog" capers.

of their mother. When they are ready, mother leads the way to the outside world where the youngsters gradually learn to feed on tender spring grasses and to heed the warning signal. They have to learn to mind their own business instead of tramping around burrows belonging to neighbors. When the little fellows do encroach on others' property, owners quickly assert their territorial rights with a special bark that a young dog can't easily ignore.

blossoming accomplishments. The youngsters remain in the security of the burrow for five or six weeks, enjoying the attention and nourishment

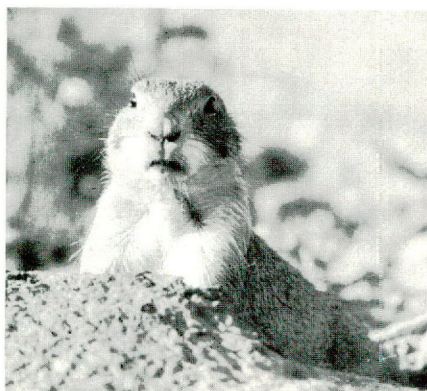
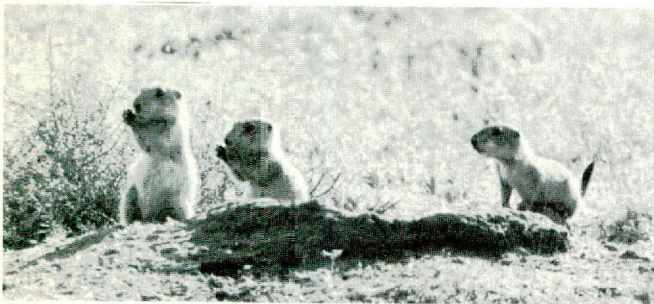
According to most authorities, the young dogs remain with the family group for two to three months, but some evidence indicates that the family stays together much longer.



But even after an all-clear signal, a fellow has to be careful.

Most dogs are found in open plains, but some inhabit mesquite country, such as in Menard County shown here (right).

And the three "mouse-keteers" come out for a refreshing nibble.



A piercing perusal to the right

Then a careful survey straight ahead

A sober check to the left



... And it is safe for him to scamper off to the green area nearby for a watchful dinner.

The youngsters do not fully mature until their second year.

At maturity, a prairie dog is an appealing animal, weighing two to three pounds and measuring about 15 inches, counting tail. Its coat is rather sleek with cinnamon and buff

upperparts and buff-to-white underparts. The tail is jauntily tipped with black.

Although the prairie dog is able enough to take care of himself, at

least in large enough numbers to procreate the species, he has almost faded from Texas. Agricultural interests have been disturbed by his presence, and hunters have been intrigued with his possibilities as a practice target. Years ago, Texas' prairie dog towns were numerous and flourishing. But that was before the poisoning and trapping campaigns. Today, only a few dog towns dot the Texas landscape, mostly in the Panhandle. That vast prairie dog towns inhibit agricultural and ranching enterprises cannot be denied. Yet, the near extermination of a species sometimes has repercussions as detrimental to the cause as the original offense. For example, ranchers now are attributing the annoying spread of prairie brush to the absence of the prairie dog. And, the

• Continued on Page 29



Because of the prairie dangers, it pays a dog to be suspicious.

When an intruder appears, a fellow shows his displeasure with furious barks and quick flicks of his tail.





Bubbles Solve Troubles

by NORREL WALLACE
I and E Officer, San Angelo

SHALLOW prairie lakes of all sizes dot the High Plains, but so far as fishing is concerned few are productive. One or a combination of adverse factors inhibits fish production.

Some prairie lakes have excessive mineral or salt content. Others are shallow and subjected to hot wind and sun, which speeds evaporation and oxygen depletion. Additionally, thousands of migrating ducks and geese use shallow prairie lakes as resting areas on their yearly migrations to the Gulf Coast. Waterfowl by the thousands saturate shore areas and lake bottoms with droppings, which boost organic content in the water so much that available dissolved oxygen, which fish must have to live, is rapidly exhausted. However, these adverse conditions do not affect some species. Bullhead catfish and salamanders thrive in oxygen-depleted waters, adding another fishery problem that must be solved.

During wet years, farmers and ranchers view prairie lakes with understandable concern as lake waters spread over valuable crops and grasslands. Consequently, only waterfowl and an occasional thirsty steer appreciate prairie lakes. But if shallow prairie lakes could provide fishing fun for plainsmen, few would resent their presence.

There is no easy solution to most shallow-lake dilemmas, but one 35-acre prairie lake—officially called Imhoff Lake—on Reese Air Force Base near Lubbock, is a rare exception to the general rule because water from a nearby sewage treatment plant helps maintain a constant water level. This factor is necessary for fish production.

When the Lubbock Air Force Base opened in the early 40's, Imhoff Lake served as nothing more than a drainage basin for surrounding farms and the base's sewage treatment plant. Although sewage water was treated before being allowed to drain into Imhoff, oxygen content could not be permanently maintained. Several attempts to stock the lake with game fish failed because hot sun caused rapid evaporation and oxygen depletion, and salamanders (waterdogs) were so abundant that game fish eggs and young were quickly devoured.

A group of concerned Reese Air Force Base person-

nel asked fishery biologists in the Game and Fish Commission (now Parks and Wildlife Department) if they could recommend ways of making Imhoff something besides a water hazard for the base golf course. After thorough study, fishery personnel presented a four-step program pointing toward a solution:

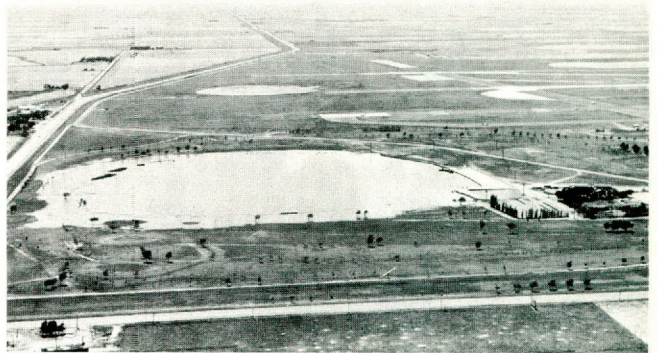
1) Existing water in Imhoff Lake should be treated

chemically to remove existing waterdog populations.

2) Two shallow aeration ponds should be constructed to further aerate water from the sewage treatment plant. To speed oxygen absorption in the water, a small air compressor should be set up to force air into the water in minute bubbles through perforated plastic tubing laid systematically on the pond bottom.

3) Ponds should be constructed so water from the sewage plant will drain into the first pond, where it will be mechanically aerated by the air hose.

• Continued on Page 30

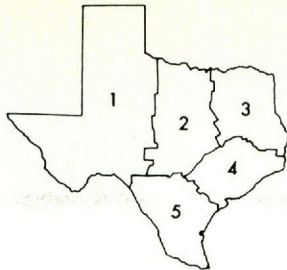


The high plains are dotted with shallow prairie lakes such as these surrounding Imhoff Lake.

Imhoff Lake will now serve fishermen as well as golfers on Reese Air Force Base near Lubbock.



Regional



Roundup

Region I — San Angelo

LUCKY TEXAS hunters whose names are drawn for wildlife management area hunts often look forward to a once-in-a-lifetime chance to hunt in a game paradise where deer, turkey, quail and other game abundantly abound. This may not be the case, as many who have hunted such areas will testify.

Surprising as it may seem, wildlife management areas provide no better hunting than many well-managed farms and ranches, as far as size and number of game are concerned. In fact, a management area is nothing more than a block of land producing money crops (livestock or farm crops) comparable to the surrounding area it typifies, and wildlife, all in balance with the land carrying capacity.

Wildlife management areas could be called demonstration areas as well as research laboratories. Farmers and ranchers may see new wildlife management practices being put to use. Livestock graze in pastures much like any ranch, but grazing is carefully kept within limits that permit good wildlife crops to be grown also. Landowners may apply similar grazing pressure if they desire management area game conditions on their property.

Region II — Waco

IN SEPTEMBER all Project Personnel, W-62-R, began intensive deer census efforts in 21 counties in the Edwards Plateau District. These deer census counts show the density of the deer population and the buck-doe ratios. Fawn-doe ratios are also determined to get an indication of breeding success and production potential of the deer herd.

The deer on these counts are tabulated as spikes, bucks, does, fawns and unknown deer which were observed but whose sex and size could not be determined. These census efforts are the basis of determining the size of the deer herd and overpopulations. And, census figures are determining factors for issuing antlerless deer permits and making areas open to antlerless harvest when applicable. Although counts were not complete at press time, partial figures indicated an increase in the deer population in all counties polled.

Region III — Tyler

THE Trinity-Brazos Game Management Survey was in high gear this past year, and is continuing to embrace the same wide scope of operations this year. In addition, new management practices have been designed.

Deer population information was collected by walking and driving surveys and quail, turkey, squirrel and

dove censuses have been taken constantly, to more effectively manage the seasons and bag limits for the area.

Game Commission biologists feel that landowners and sportsmen in the Trinity-Brazos are becoming more familiar with operational methods of regulatory responsibility and cooperation is becoming evident with more understanding.

Region IV — La Porte

CRAB production in Galveston Bay has shown a remarkably sharp increase this year. Although there has been a good, established crab fishery in Matagorda, Lavaca, Espiritu Santo, San Antonio and Aransas Bays in the past, the business in the Galveston Bay system has been more or less a sideline with fish and shrimp houses. The establishment of a crab processing plant this year on Bolivar Peninsula has furnished a firm market for commercial crabbers. During the peak season last year (January through May) only 5,000 pounds of blue crabs were reported landed at Galveston. Over 166,000 pounds were landed during the same period this year, 33 times as many as last year. Although this new production is important, it does not approach the 542,000 pounds of crabs landed at Palacios nor the 301,000 pounds at Aransas Pass this year. Marine biologists are sampling and trapping crabs in all bay areas in order to learn what is needed for sustained production.

Seine samples taken in a grass-covered nursery area of Upper Galveston Bay have produced large numbers of juvenile black drum. In May, 508 were taken which averaged 1¾ inches in length. Later collections were as follows: June, 182, 2⅞ inches; July, 54, 2½ inches; and August, 33, 3 inches. It is unusual to be able to find so many young drum in this area. Indications are for a good crop of drum for next summer's fishermen.

Region V — Rockport

MARINE biologists of Region V have made an underwater tour of the natural snapper reef, which is about 17 miles north of Port Mansfield and only 1½ miles from the beach. The reef is made up of "beach" rocks and is a series of lumps which form a crescent. In some places the rocks rise 20 feet above the bottom. Many fissures crisscross the rocks.

Fish were found there in abundance, especially large sheepshead.

The bell buoy, recently placed there by the Parks and Wildlife Department, was found to be right on target. This buoy was placed on the reef to mark it for fishermen.

right up and root around your feet, looking for insects.

If you have flash equipment, drive slowly along back roads at night. Keep your camera ready for instant use. Deer, skunks, possums, raccoons and armadillos all make good sub-

jects. If you just enjoy wildlife and want to take "pot luck," carry a camera along with your gun or fishing rod. You will be surprised how many good photographic shots present themselves while you are looking for gunpowder shots.

Next time you go to the coast and get tired of feeding fish, try throwing your bait shrimp in the air, as high as you can. In no time you will be surrounded by sea gulls. They make wonderful subjects diving and darting around, catching the shrimp. You won't need a telephoto lens, either.

Approach each trip with an open mind. Many years ago I was an ardent shark fisherman. Each week-

end found me on the pier at Port Aransas sweating out a "run." One Saturday I arrived shortly before noon and noticed an unusually large crowd on the T-head. Figuring something must be up, I grabbed my 4 x 5 speed graphic, with its 127 mm lens, and took off. Something was up, all right. The water was full of tarpon. I spent that afternoon and all day Sunday photographing fishermen fighting those big gill-rattling bruisers. When the sun went down Sunday night, I had 31 pictures of jumping tarpon (made with a normal lens) plus all the pier activity that went with it. *Sports Afield* published many of those pictures and a story in their 1956 *Fishing Annual*. My own rods never got out of my car.

But, if you really need wildlife pictures, don't try to mix your efforts with anything else. Several years ago another photographer and I made a duck hunting movie. Actually, he started making the film, but he was having trouble getting enough hunting footage. He did a good job on the clubhouse and boathouse shots. Finally, in an effort to help, I borrowed a 16 mm movie camera from

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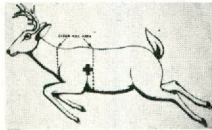
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our TV station and went hunting. I exposed 300 feet of film—all of it on decoying ducks, hunters actually shooting and the dead birds falling. He was amazed at how easily I had shot so much after he had been at it for so long. It was really no problem. You see, I left my gun at home. He always took his pet smoothbore along and when ducks started decoying, he grabbed it instead of his camera.

Now, what about the satisfactions of wildlife photography. I don't believe there is anything more personally satisfying than making a picture of a buck, or a goose or any other wild creature and then watching the subject disappear in the brush or fly off. It's thrilling to realize that you gave it a chance to live and yet you can show it to friends. If you had used a gun, it would have become just another hunk of meat on the stove. A different kind of satisfaction comes from hearing the "oh's" and "ah's" of people viewing your pictures than from hearing the praise of friends examining a trophy or savoring a venison steak.

Wildlife photography, to many people, means expensive equipment expertly handled. It means hours on

end of stalking or waiting, most of them fruitless. To be sure, that phase is included, if a photographer gets really involved. BUT, it doesn't have to start like that. Many times a person will get so wrapped up with cameras, lenses, exposure meters and other equipment that he forgets the original purpose. The final picture is what counts, not the equipment used to make it.

Whether you are a photographer turned outdoorsman or an outdoorsman turned photographer your season will last all year if you will do three things—keep whatever camera you have loaded, keep it cocked and **KEEP IT WITH YOU.** **

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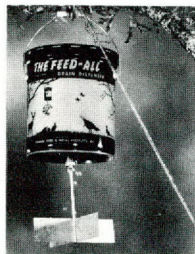


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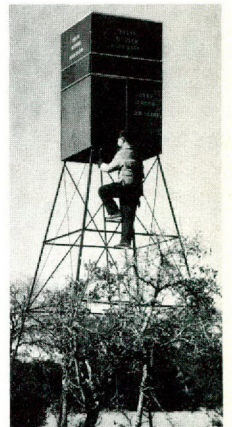
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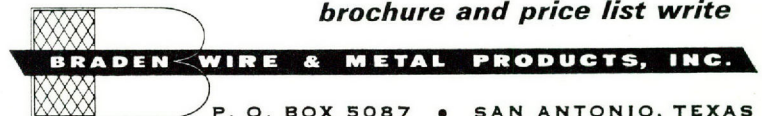
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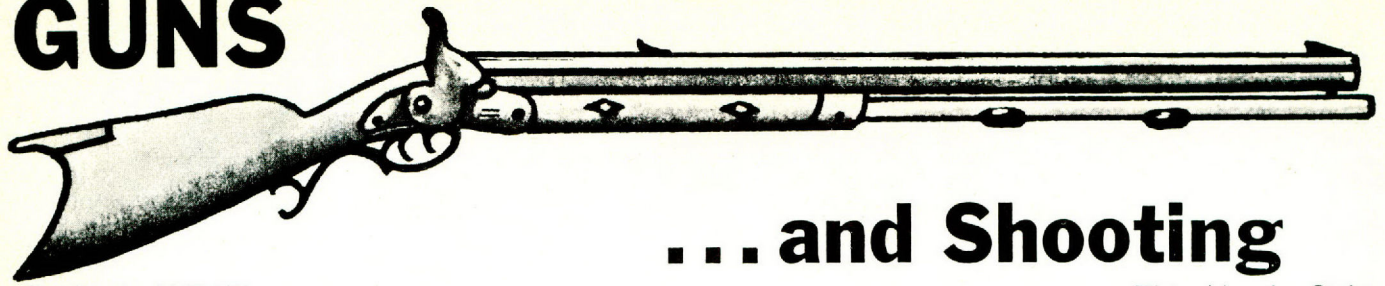
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GUNS



... and Shooting

By L. A. WILKE

This Month: Sights

MOST good hunters by now probably have their guns checked and know exactly where their shots will hit. Many others will be rushing out to rifle ranges and abandoned gravel pits within the next few days to pop a cap or two. And a few will take their guns out without the benefit of checking their sights; they will stand the chance of missing the biggest buck they ever saw.

Basically, the checking of iron sights isn't as necessary as it is for telescope sights. Iron sights usually retain their zero from one season to another. Ammunition doesn't, however, and neither does the shooter.

Sometimes his eyesight will change. For that reason, a few shots from that old thuty-thuty before the season opens may be profitable.

With telescope sights it is a different story. It is much easier for them to get off zero because they are more delicately made. A mount can get loose, or if they were put away after a rough season last year, there is a possibility that they may be shooting into the wind.

This doesn't mean that telescope sights, with proper mounts, aren't sturdy. They can take a lot of banging, but they also need a lot of care.

For instance, last season one well-known hunter shot his new .264 with a variable scope out on the range and could almost drive tacks with it.

He and a companion flew to Colorado in a four-place plane. They had a lot of gear to pack, so they put their guns on top of everything else. This particular gun wasn't in a sturdy case, just wrapped in a heavy piece of duck. They went into camp with every bit of confidence. On opening day the gun owner came face to face with the biggest buck he'd ever seen. Standing on a hillside only a little more than 100 yards away, the animal presented a perfect shot. But alas, his gun had banged around in that plane. He missed that buck so far that even the buck was surprised. His second and third shots went wild.

It's so sad to see a big man weep!

The disappointed fellow went back into camp and couldn't hunt for the remainder of the day. That evening his partner, with his buck hanging from a spruce limb, checked the gun and found it shot two feet off. The sad owner came back home with only a much smaller buck.

A good sturdy case or boot is an essential for a scope-mounted rifle.

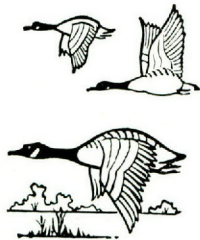
Another good bet is the installation of a pivot mount. Unfortunately, they are not made for the large-tube variables, but they are available for all the ¾- and 1-inch tubes used almost entirely by sportsmen. There isn't a great deal of difference in the price, and for a strictly hunting rifle, they are perhaps the best.

I have the Weaver pivot mount on several rifles and wouldn't think of hunting with anything else. Pivot mounts offer assurance that if anything happens to your scope sight, with merely a flip you can swing it aside and use the iron sights.

The greatest advantage of one of these sights is apparent when you find yourself shooting directly into the sun, or when your scope gets fogged in the rain. It is easy to swing the scope out of place and you can get a shot which otherwise you might miss. It also comes in handy for closeup shots.

In sighting in your big game gun, regardless of caliber, there is a simple rule-of-thumb formula. If it hits dead center at 25 yards, you can knock off a turkey's head at 200 yards with all the fast calibers. For instance, the 150-grain .308 that shoots 0 at 25 yards, hits ½-inch high at 200 yards. Even the slow .30-30 only hits 1¾ inches low at 200 yards. A very valuable trajectory chart for sighting in your rifles can be had free by writing the W. R. Weaver Co., El Paso. **

Speckle-Bellied Goose Call



The white-fronted, or Speckle-bellied, goose responds well to a good imitation of its call, and with very little practice a hunter can give a good rendition with my Eagle Lake Speckle-bellied call. These calls are all hand-made from carefully selected, well-seasoned wood. All calls have the same sound unit. Price differences depends on the kind of wood selected.

This call was originally made only for the white-fronted or speckle-bellied goose. One of my customers living in a blue quail area discovered it was also an excellent blue quail call; in fact it will call any of the topknot quail. A year-round call, it can be used for varmints and predators as well as game. Instructions are included for its use as a game call.

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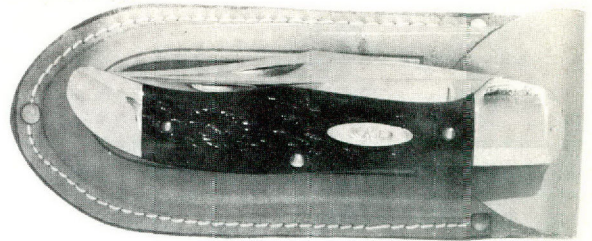
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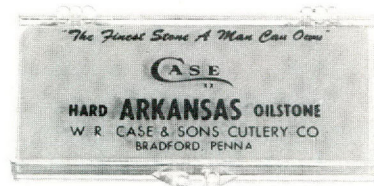
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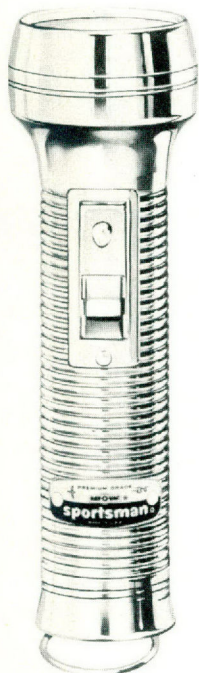


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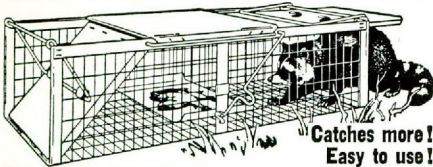
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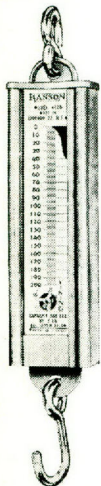
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What Others Are Doing

by JOAN PEARSALL

GALLIC ANGLERS: This year, some 2,669,233 Frenchmen and Frenchwomen paid for fishing licenses and, when those under 16 who do not have to pay for the right to fish are counted, at least four million in France—more than one in five of the total population—either fish professionally or for fun.

BIRD SERVICE: Two great horned owls, supplied by the Ohio Division of Wildlife, are being employed by the U.S. Air Force to keep flocks of pigeons and sparrows from roosting in a jet bomber maintenance hangar. In hopes that they will save the Air Force thousands of man-hours of cleaning hangar floors and aircraft per month, the owls are being held in a cage high in the hangar during an acclimatization period and then will be released to patrol the premises.

BACKLASH! Offering to share an overlimit of salmon with an off-duty fish and game warden recently netted a California resident a citation and a \$25 fine. The warden was fishing in his own boat when he was hailed and asked if he wanted some fish. "I've got too many," the angler said. He was quite surprised when the warden identified himself.

ROUNABOUT BOUNTY: "Fox rustlers" from Pennsylvania, where the state pays a \$4 bounty on foxes, have been blamed by a West Virginia rabies control trapper for the disrupted sets and missing traps he has been plagued with near the Pennsylvania border. The West Virginia employee found evidence of foxes having been present in the disturbed traps, and suggested that the animals were "bootlegged" across the state border, to be exchanged for bounty money.

FAWN AND GAMES: In 1959, live-trapped Montana antelope were introduced into Hawaii. For two years they had, as is normal in their native clime, produced fawns in May and June. Then last winter a doe got her seasons mixed and dropped a fawn in December. This indicates that the Montana stock has acclimated. In balmy Hawaii, other introduced animals—notably axis deer—have ceased seasonal breeding and taken to mating at any time of the year.

NOT GONE GOONEYS: The laysan albatross is a stubborn bird. On Midway Island, these "gooney birds" nest along aircraft runways where their take-offs and landings sometimes coincide with those of planes. The mid-air strikes being hard on both birds and planes, the Navy leveled and black-topped the nesting grounds adjacent to runways. Other nesting grounds were available 400 feet away but the dispossessed gooneys went on a standup strike and refused to nest.

SWEET IDEA: West Virginia is planning to place up to 70 colonies of honey bees in a state forest to determine how practical honey production will be in large forested areas. If the project proves successful, the opening of other state forests for use by beekeepers will be considered. Forests in southern West Virginia are expected to produce high quality honey from basswood and sourwood blooms.

WATER AWARENESS: The Nebraska Legislature this year created a special committee to study water pollution and watershed matters, including the problems caused by chemical pesticides and detergents. The committee is instructed to report to the next session of the Legislature.

Hunters shoot female squirrels, ducks, quail, and doves.
Resource on the Hoof _____ *From Page 17*

fawn drop adds to the herd in a 50:50 ratio.

These are the facts of the case for harvesting both sexes, but one obstacle still remains—prejudice and sentiment against shooting female deer.

We often forget that we shoot female quail, female squirrels, female javelina, female ducks and female doves. We bait our fish hooks with angle worms that have both sexes in the same single worm, and we catch female fish with these hermaphroditic worms. But none of these females have "big brown eyes that shine like limpid pools."

Management Progress

Although much cooperation is still needed in safeguarding the State's deer herds, Texans can be proud of many progressive accomplishments in deer management. Two management programs have become widely successful and accepted—one in the 1940's and the other

in the late 1950's. The first was the restocking program and the second was the public's acceptance of the liberalization of hunting laws which permitted larger harvests of deer of any sex, age or stage of antler development. Unquestionably, these two management programs have furnished more hunting recreation and venison than any other programs in Texas.

Of even greater importance to the future of the State's deer herds is the increasing awareness by all elements of society that deer are a crop and can be managed. Twenty years ago, few Texans accepted the fundamental concept of harvesting either sex of deer on over-browsed ranges. The public sentiment and thinking that lagged in the beginning have now taken over these basic concepts and put them to profitable use. Moreover, all conservation organizations now consider deer in their land-use programs. Wise multiple-use of our lands and resources is the keynote of most recommendations for land-use programs.

Deer are here to stay. Texans will see to that. **

Texas' black-footed ferret is now rare.
Watch Dog _____ *From Page 21*

near disappearance of Texas' handsome black-footed ferret can be traced at least in part to the scarcity of prairie dogs, the ferret's principal food.

The prairie dog situation points out one of man's dilemmas. He needs to manage wildlife and his whole environment, but he doesn't yet know all the facts of ecology which eventually judge the wisdom of his choice

of species to be controlled. But perhaps time and research will reveal the methods and desirability of con-

trolling instead of exterminating a species such as the vanishing prairie dog. **

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The once stagnant lake now supports animal life.

Bubbles Solve Troubles _____ From Page 22

When the first pond fills, overflow will run into the lake.

- 4) Once the system is operative, Imhoff Lake should be restocked with game fish. Some restocked game fish should be large enough to feed on waterdogs that escaped initial treatment, keeping waterdog numbers in check.

Not long after recommendations were made, a bulldozer was used to construct two aeration ponds near the lake shore. A small air compressor was set up on the shore and perforated plastic hose was weighted and laid in systematic patterns on the bottom. After water

from the sewage treatment plant had passed through both aeration ponds, water pouring into the lake had the five part-per-million dissolved oxygen which game fish must have to live. This system is neither expensive nor complicated in engineering.

The Reese Air Force Base installation is only a few months old, but positive results of success are already showing up. Game fish stocked by Parks and Wildlife personnel from State hatcheries are growing rapidly, and minute plant and animal life is beginning to appear in the once stagnant lake.

Fishing on Reese Air Force Base lake will be good by 1964 and excellent by 1965—thanks to good cooperation between two groups with a single goal—good fishing in Imhoff. **

The birds billowed skyward.

The Day It Rained Geese _____ From Page 11

Dana should keep their heads ducked? I wonder how their blue eyes and red lips look to the geese."

The two of us had been very careful to keep our faces down, yet I chuckled to myself when I listened to Sam's reply.

"At this stage of the game I'm more concerned about our blue lips and red eyes," he quipped.

A light wind began to blow cold from the north, while the sun stubbornly strained to push its dusky rays through the milk-like haze. With two hours of shooting time left, blue sky finally parted the clouds, and we saw that the geese were rafting in a field, half-a-mile distant. Suddenly great masses of the birds billowed skyward and rose higher and higher to break off into lofty flight. Our hope for a stiff wind to urge them downward was denied. In vain

we watched the multitudinous flocks trade back and forth, far out of range. Lured by the goose call, an infrequent single or pair dipped low over the spread. Sam and the boys downed three more geese and one duck while Dana and I snapped shutters.

There's no need to hold a family council to decide where we will spend next Christmas vacation. But if we did, the vote would be unanimous. **

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GUN DIGEST, edited by John T. Amber, with 388 pages of articles and pictures, dealing entirely with guns and shooting. Published by The Gun Digest Co., Chicago 24, Illinois. \$3.95.

If you are suffocating with TV re-runs and want to escape, get a copy of the 1964 issue of *Gun Digest*. It has almost 300 pages packed with perhaps the most interesting gun information ever put together between covers. Intended for popular readership, it also is filled with enough technical information to satisfy any shooter.

A full report on all the latest rifles and shotguns made in the United States is included in the digest. Another article deals entirely with foreign guns. You can learn about reloading, precision shooting, the care of guns and all types of ammunition.

The bonus feature is a supplement containing a 30-page catalogue of guns and ammunition sold by Sears, Roebuck & Co., back about 1907. At that time, you could get a single shot .22 rifle for \$1.98 and a double-barrel hammer shotgun for \$6.75. A field-grade Ithaca hammerless with nitro steel barrels cost only \$18.—L. A. Wilke.

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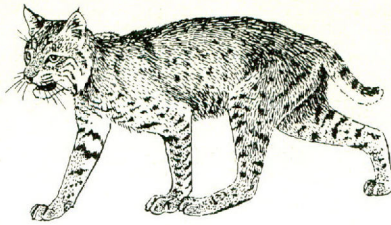


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POB Form 3526 Aug 1962

Letters



to the Editor

Cats from the Brazos



Editor:

Here is a picture of my son, David James, and myself after a night of fishing on the Brazos River in Brazos County. These fish were caught in the month of April. There is a total of 38 fish in this picture, ranging from one to eight pounds. These fish were caught on a trotline with a bait that I make myself.

I find that the Texas Game and Fish Commission has done an outstanding job in stocking the Brazos River. I make similar catches like this very often.

Frankie Nemecek, Jr.
Bryan

(You and your son make a fine advertisement for fishing on the Brazos! We like your appreciation of state fish stocking. Undoubtedly, that bait you make should take some of the credit, too—Editor)

Rough Fish Tonnage

Editor:

We feel some of your readers would be interested in these figures on the decrease in population of rough fish [due to the activity of diving clubs].

During the year 1962, members of the Southwest Council of Diving Clubs removed from the waters of the State of Texas 3,547 pounds of rough fish, consisting mostly of carp and buffalo. These 3,547 pounds was taken only in Council-sanctioned contests. There is no telling how many pounds were taken on other occasions, such as local contests. Important also is the fact that 1,220 pounds of these rough fish were taken from Lake Travis during the spawning season, thus preventing thousands of fish from hatching. Two divers have officially reported that during the same weekend the 1,220 pounds of fish were taken from Travis . . . they removed close to 4,000 pounds of carp and buffalo

from Possum Kingdom. We feel this is a service to the State and to the line fishermen, as well as a major part of our conservation program.

In the past two years, over 40 diving clubs have participated in search operations in connection with 52 drownings throughout the State. In one particular drowning, the search continued for 30 days and divers from seven clubs were on hand every day of the search. In working on these drownings, we have had the pleasure of cooperating with several of your game wardens in this area. Our operations would be practically impossible without their help. We would like to thank publicly Wardens John Shaddix, Hugh Frost, Bill Belote and all the others for their cooperation in our rescue work. This is a public service work which we, as divers, feel is very beneficial to our communities and we are proud to be a part of it.

Dick Wilgus
President, Southwest Council
of Diving Clubs
Longview

(Most people are not aware of the diverse ways divers' skills are used for the public benefit. Deep appreciation is certainly in order.—Editor)

Upset Stomach

Editor:

We were trotlining recently and caught two blue catfish that had these [piece of hard bony material enclosed]. Do not know what to call them, and we haven't found anyone that has seen them. Can you tell us what they are and where they come from? They were in the catfish's stomach.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. DeBruhl
Baytown

(These are ganoid scales which are found on garfish and are found frequently in catfish stomachs. Sometimes they are digested a little more than the scale you sent with your letter, which makes them look like little arrow points. In fact, it is my understanding that some of the coastal tribes of Indians used gar skin or scales for breast plates and shields, and the scales themselves for bird points for their arrows.—Marion Toole, Coordinator, Inland Fisheries)

A Heap of Healing

Editor:

Wish to report an incident. Game Warden Adolph Heep likes quail. While driving down the road he saw a quail on the side of the road. A car had knocked the heck out of it. Seemed to have some life, so he stopped, opened up the trunk and

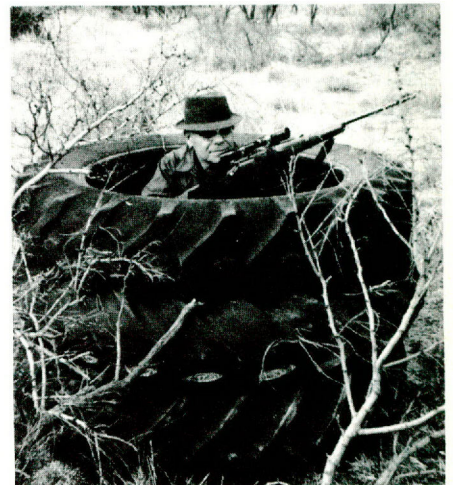
found his bowling bag, put the quail in the bag and took it home. Gave it the Heep healing treatment. Next morning, the quail was fine. Heep then put the quail back in the bowling bag, took the quail back to the location of impact. He zipped open the bowling bag and with a jet flutter the quail lit on a fence post nearby. The first thing the quail thought of was "Where is my gal?" It took just a moment and mother nature went to work. "Bob white. Bob white." And in the distance came her return, and I am sure they will live happily ever after, or something like that.

Just goes to show you what a little help in life can do. Take a little luck, Heep healing treatment, a bowling bag and mother nature, and you're back on the road of life. That's what you and I need, just a little help. With it, the world will become a first heaven; without it, hell.

Duval B. Fischer
Fredericksburg

(Thank you for this refreshing Good Samaritan story. A little brotherly concern can be of untold value for all of us, wildlife and humans alike.—Editor)

Well-Attired



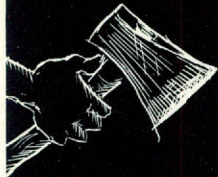
Editor:

I am enclosing a snapshot of an inexpensive and comfortable portable deer blind constructed of three 12x38 discarded tractor tires.

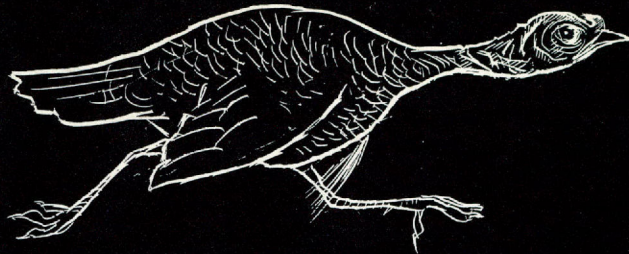
There is plenty of room inside for storage of your rifle, binoculars and other hunting equipment. This blind can also be made rainproof by placing a water resistant camouflage cover over the top.

Hugo Zetzman
Roscoe

(This tiered retired-tire blind is sure to be of interest to other hunters. Thank you for sharing this idea.—Editor)



Junior Sportsmen



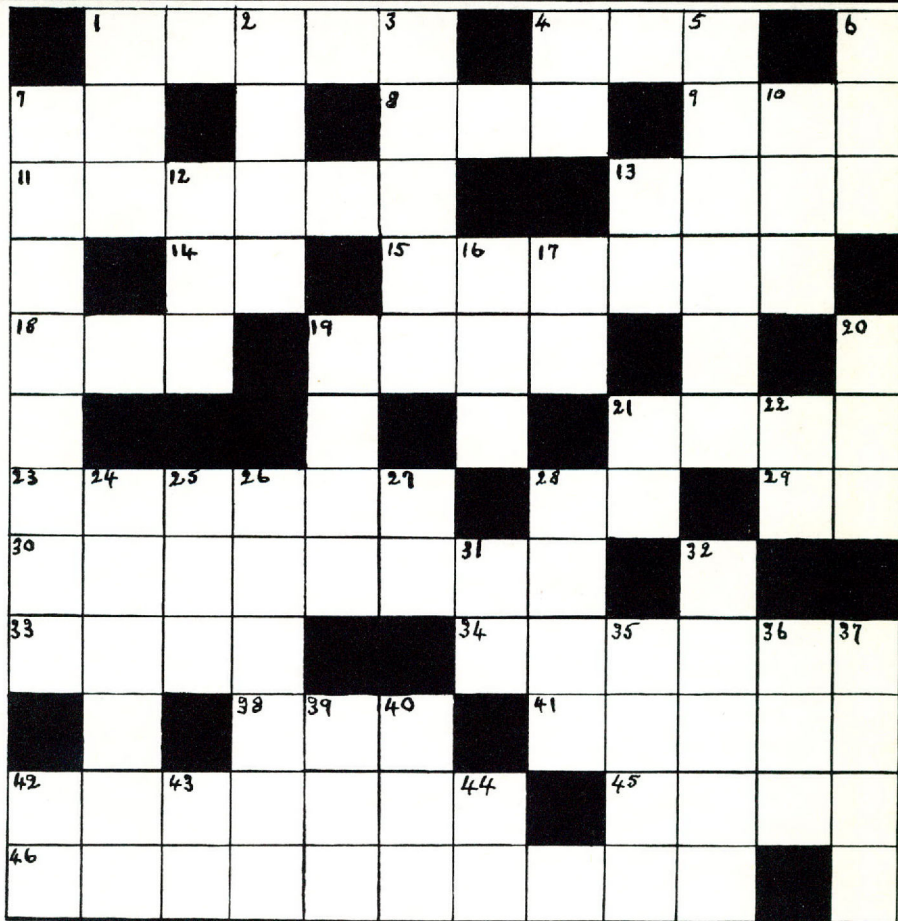
SQUARE AWAY by JOAN PEARSALL

ACROSS

1. Areas used for public recreation or pleasure.
4. Texas in summer.
7. All of us—pronoun.
8. Overwhelming feeling at beauty of nature.
9. Multiple ____ of land brings many benefits.
11. Original inhabitant of the American continent.
13. Describes much of the land during drought.
14. Upon.
15. To give this is the reason for this month's national holiday.
18. Famous insecticide.
19. When the eggs are ____, the mother bird sits on them.
21. The ____ of Texas are upon you!
23. A famous gun.
28. Street abbreviated.
29. District Attorney.
30. Last name of the man who wanted to have the turkey as a national symbol, instead of the bald eagle.
33. Everyone does this at the holiday season.
34. Large extent of ground covered with trees.
38. If your tent leaks you will get ____.
41. Historic Texas county.
42. If you shoot deer out of season, it is ____.
45. Typical in West Texas.
46. New kind of pioneer, and they now live in Texas.

DOWN

1. A small enclosure for animals.
2. Vital to the land.
3. Saint.
4. Masculine pronoun.
5. A very important bird at Thanksgiving.
6. Every creature needs to be ____ regularly.
7. All living things of the outdoors.
10. Nickname for a female who has the same parents as oneself.
12. A very small spot, or point.
13. Indefinite article.
16. Fruit of the wild rose—and a place to wear a gun.
17. Describes dates "in the year of Our Lord."



19. Place to which wild animals come for salt.
20. The country we live in.
21. East Texas abbreviated.
22. Education abbreviated.
24. Fun to follow in parks, and important in hunting.
25. In Texas you need one with a wide brim.
26. Keep trying for one when you have a problem.
27. Boy's name.
28. Stuck-up person.
31. Word that can lead to make-believe.
32. Our own State.
35. Parks are good places to ____.
36. When camping, let your tent ropes do this a little in damp weather.
37. Favorite place for a bird to nest.
39. One's sense of importance.
40. You'll get one if you are outdoors a lot.
42. Abbreviation for a state that grows a lot of corn.

43. "Light" shortened.
44. If you like your holiday pie with ice cream, it is a ____ mode.





Turkey in the Stew

ROASTED WILD TURKEY

1 turkey, 8 to 10 pounds, ready-to-cook	1 teaspoon salt
Salt and pepper	2 to 3 teaspoons sage
8 cups partially dry bread cubes	¼ teaspoon pepper
¾ cup finely chopped celery	1½ cups chopped onion
½ cup chopped walnuts	¼ cup butter or margarine
	¼ cup water

Sprinkle turkey inside and out with salt and pepper. Combine bread, celery, walnuts and seasonings. Cook onion in butter or margarine until tender, but not brown; pour over bread mixture. Add the water and toss lightly. Spoon stuffing lightly into body cavity. Put remaining dressing in a greased casserole. Cover and bake in oven with turkey during last 30 minutes of roasting time. Truss bird. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in melted bacon fat. Place turkey, breast up, on rack in roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with bacon fat and drippings in pan. Remove cheesecloth, skewers and string. Serves 8 to 10.

BARBECUED TURKEY

1 turkey, about 8 pounds
Salt and pepper
Liquid smoke, if desired
Celery leaves from 1 bunch
celery
2 coarsely chopped onions
½ to ¾ cup salad oil
1 recipe barbecue sauce

*Barbecue sauce:
1 cup catsup
1 tablespoon Worcestershire
sauce
1 cup water
¼ cup vinegar
2 or 3 dashes Tabasco sauce
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt

*Barbecue sauce: Combine ingredients. Heat to boiling and simmer 30 minutes.

Remove turkey neck if still attached, but leave skin. Rub cavity of bird with salt; brush with about 1½ teaspoons liquid smoke. Stuff with celery leaves and onion. Truss bird. Add 1 teaspoon liquid smoke to salad oil; brush on bird. Sprinkle well with salt and pepper. Place on rack in roasting pan and roast at 325° F. about 3½ hours or until tender. Brush several times during cooking with oil mixture. Thirty minutes before cooking is completed, add remaining oil mixture to hot barbecue sauce. Brush bird with sauce several times during last 30 minutes.