

Texas Game and Fish

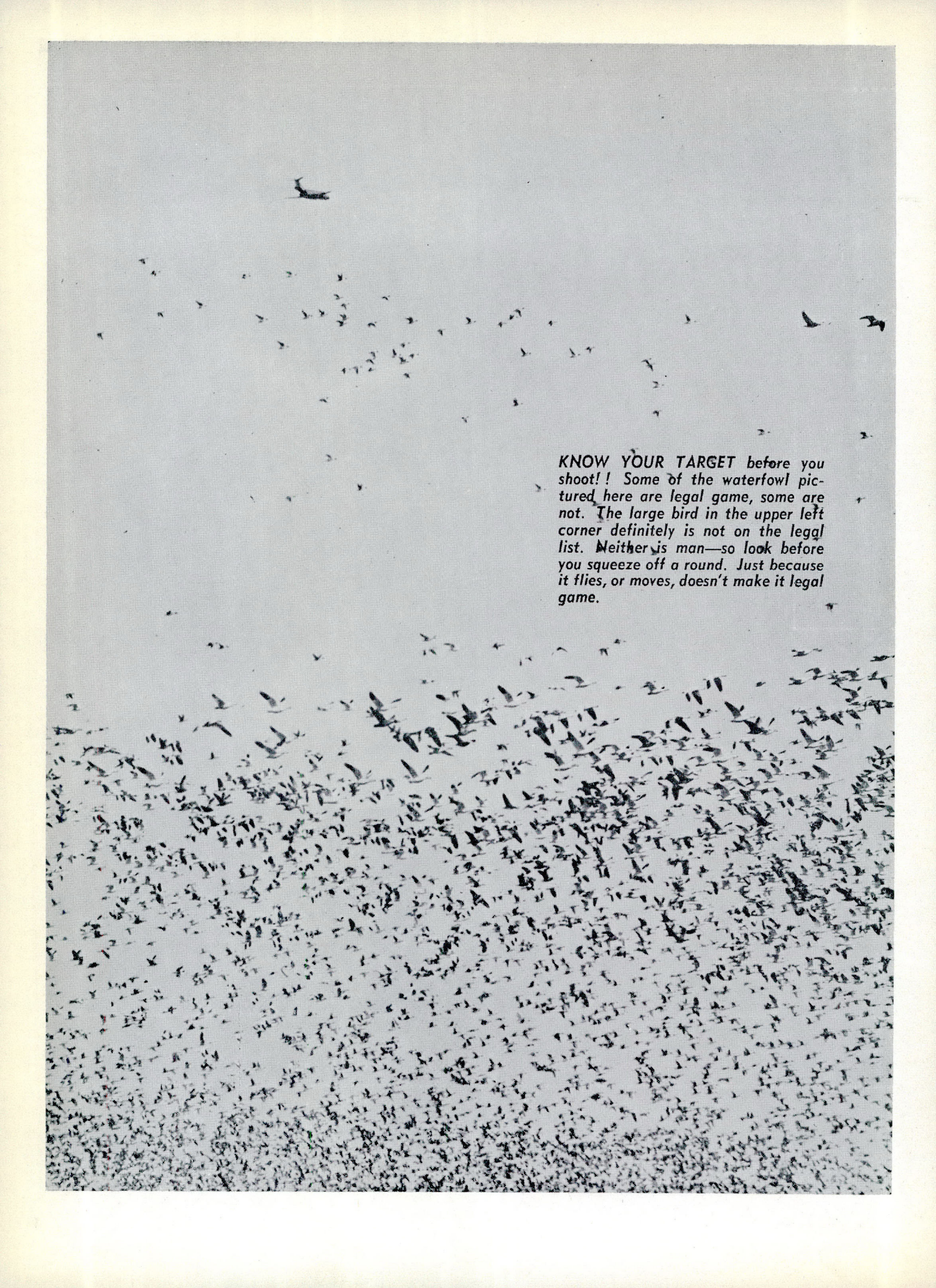
DECEMBER

1961

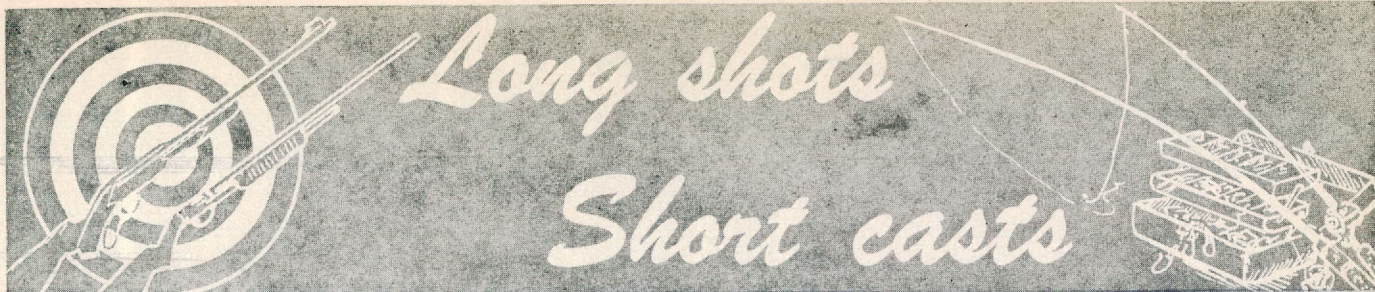
20 CENTS



W.J. MARKS

A black and white photograph showing a vast field of waterfowl, likely geese or ducks, in flight. The birds are scattered across the entire frame, from the top to the bottom, creating a dense pattern of dark shapes against a light background. The birds in the foreground are more numerous and appear smaller, while those in the distance are fewer and larger. The overall scene conveys a sense of a large-scale migration or a massive flocking event.

KNOW YOUR TARGET before you shoot!! Some of the waterfowl pictured here are legal game, some are not. The large bird in the upper left corner definitely is not on the legal list. Neither is man—so look before you squeeze off a round. Just because it flies, or moves, doesn't make it legal game.



PEACE IN THE PARKS: A general regulation has been approved, that will control use of portable motors in back country and wilderness areas of national parks and monuments, thus preserving the natural quiet atmosphere of these areas. Written permission will be required from the superintendent of the area for use of motor-driven chain saws, electric light plants, pumps, etc., prior to their use amid backwoods primeval surroundings. Increasing use of motorized portable equipment in some areas of the National Park System was causing damage to important resource values and annoyance to visitors.

DEEPER THAN YOU THINK: If you have ever fished all day without success, and wondered if the fish were just too smart for you, there might be something in that! In a recent series of studies conducted to determine why fish bite, one of the findings was that the intelligence quotient of fish varies. The fresh water game fishes studied are listed in the following order of intelligence: largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, muskellunge, northern pike, trout, bluegill, crappie, and gar.

STAMP STATISTICS: Duck stamp sales for the 1960-61 season totaled 1,727,534, almost 100,000 higher than the 1,628,365 of the previous year, but far below the record of 2,369,940 sold in 1956. This is the second year sales have totaled less than two million stamps. The decrease is attributed to the reduction in waterfowl numbers resulting from the prolonged drought in waterfowl production areas. The modest improvement in nesting ground success in 1960 is reflected in the last 100,000 increase. As most of the purchases are made by waterfowl hunters, the record of stamp sales is considered the most authentic available index of waterfowl hunters per flyway.

CAMP FIRE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Half a million Camp Fire Girls have observed their Golden Jubilee project devoted to conservation service for the past 2½ years. A brochure, GIFT TO THE NATION, has been recently released by Camp Fire Girls, Inc., 65 Worth Street, New York 13, N.Y. This report is substantial evidence that America's young women care about the world around them. They censused trees on almost a million acres of land, and planted over two million trees. They surveyed more than a million acres for recreation areas, and improved many thousands of sites. They erected thousands of bird houses and bird baths, planted over 6,000 areas to wildlife foods, and made brush piles, shelters, grouse houses, spawning boxes, and dams.

FOREST FACTS: In the United States today there are 489 million acres classed as commercial forest lands. This is land capable of growing trees as a crop and available for that purpose. These forests often provide many other benefits, including wildlife, recreation, better watersheds and soil stabilization. There are also approximately 297 million acres of forest land in the U.S. classified as "non-commercial." This means land withdrawn from timber production, or too poor to produce regular tree crops, or inaccessible land.

QUILL QUELLER: If your dog has been tangling with a porcupine, here is a good way to beat the barbs. The quills are a hollow cell with a liquid or marrow inside. Take a pair of shears, or a fingernail clipper, and cut the quills in half. The pressure on the cell is thus released, the barb will retract, and the quills can be easily pulled out with no sensation or pain to the dog.

Texas Game and Fish

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The Cover



Somewhere in Texas, at some given hour on Christmas Eve, the scene portrayed on this month's cover probably will be a reality. However, only the glittering stars and the bright moon may witness the event. Of course, the weather will play a big part. Who knows what the coyote may be saying in this particular painting? Since it is the eve of the Savior's birth, he is probably singing, "Happy Birthday Jesus." Bill Marks is the artist.

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE GAME AND FISH COMMISSION DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES; AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUNTING AND FISHING IN TEXAS.

DECEMBER, 1961

Vol. XIX, No. 12



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Wildlife Waits for Santa

ANY CHILDREN unintentionally take Santa for granted. As the trees and lights go up and the mistletoe begins to appear over the doorways, and the aroma of popcorn, candy and pine fills the air, they know it is time for the jolly little round man all decked out in his snug, red suit and trimmed with the familiar snowy white beard.

They expect him to drop down the chimney and crowd the tree with gifts and leave the stockings over the fire place bulging with candy canes, nuts, sweet fruits and an assortment of other items. Should these youngsters ever be greeted on Christmas morning by a tree that is bare and stockings hanging loose and empty, no doubt they would be shocked. And all the words known to man would not be sufficient to explain why Santa had not stopped by.

A large number of adults have this same attitude about nature: It is all around them, it always has been and always will be there for them to appreciate. What a shock it would be to wake up some morning and find it all gone. Again, words would not suffice.

Like the tradition of Santa, the abundance of the outdoors will be around only so long as we all work together to provide it.

There was a time, not too long ago, when some of our wildlife species desperately needed help, and needed it fast. The pronghorn herd was fading rapidly when man stepped in and restored it with protection and provision, but especially with interest.

The sandhill cranes are here today because of the concern shown by citizens in a number of states. Whooping cranes are still fascinating youngsters in 1961 because people cared. And now our ducks need help.

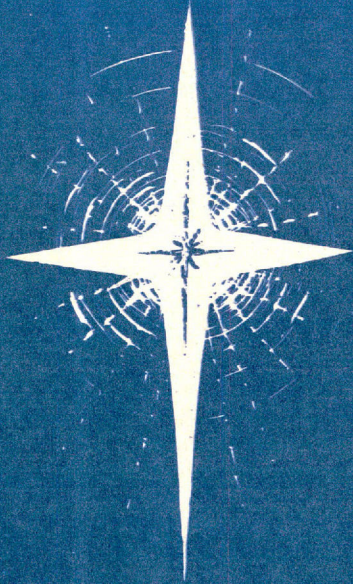
The gifts received may not come wrapped in bright colors and tied with pretty ribbons, but often mean the difference between survival and extinction for the game involved. There are so many ways to keep the stocking filled for the creatures of the field; from piling up brush for cover, to planting a little seed patch in an unused corner. Everyone can help, if only by cooperating with the scientists who are constantly searching for better ways to restore and manage wildlife, and taking a sincere interest in their work. We can do much toward keeping the stocking brimful by obeying and guarding the laws which protect wildlife. No things are more needed by animal life than sufficient food and cover, whether hardwoods in the forests or cactus along the fence rows.

When the carolers sing out on Christmas Eve about the shepherds who watched over their flocks by night, let all remember the flocks we have to guard, not only at this joyous season, but all through the year.

Each one who gives of his time, money and interest can only rejoice because he had a part in helping the helpless. In a way, he can rightfully feel like a Santa should, proud and jolly, because he put something into wildlife's stocking.

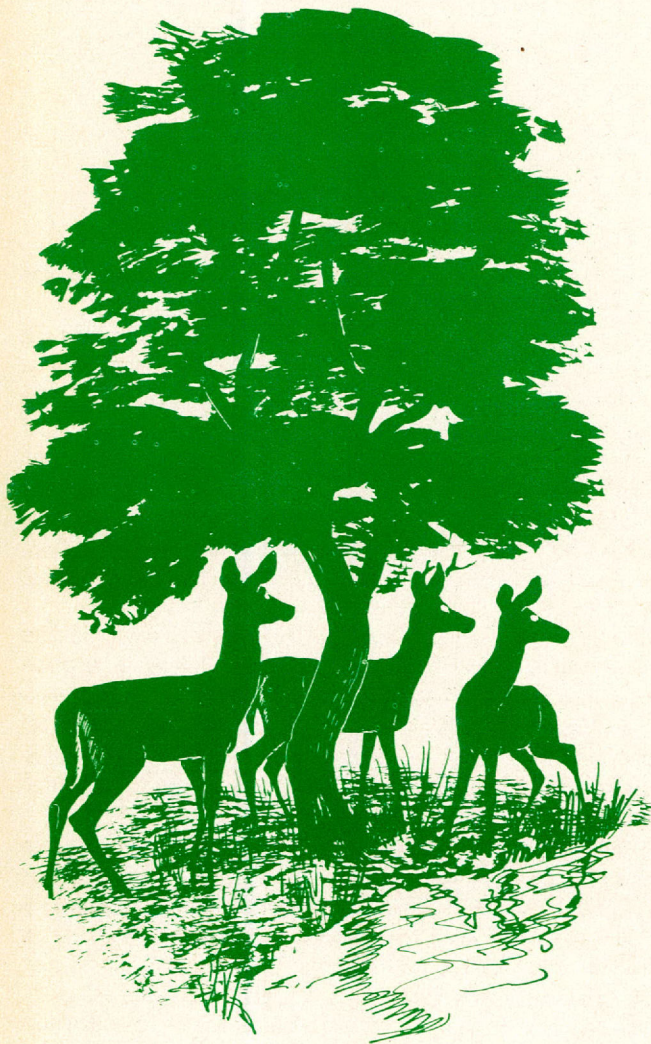
A very merry Christmas to all.

The Staff



CARETAKERS

for the MASTER



by **THE REV. JOSEPH A. McGEHEE**
Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Beeville

A LITTLE BOY and his father late one afternoon sat watching a beautiful sunset over the stillness of the lake. The fall colors of the trees were reflected, along with the sun, in the mirror-like surface. The four-year-old reached out and grasped his father's hand and said, "Daddy, let's say the blessing." Those of us who love the great out-of-doors and who have experienced such scenes in God's world also perhaps have had the same spontaneous desire to express our gratitude for the abundant natural resources around us.

Truly, the Lord has blessed our state and our nation in a wonderful way. There is still much untouched wilderness and efforts are being made to preserve it. John Lubbock has said, "All those who love nature she loves in return and will richly reward . . . not with money and title, horses and carriages, but with bright happy thoughts, contentment and peace of mind." Almighty God has given us all these wonderful natural resources. They are the gift of God; for "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1)—and all that is in the earth. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein; for He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers." (Psalm 24:1,2)

The Creator made the earth, and He made man the caretaker. He said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." (Genesis 1:28-30)

It is our responsibility to care for the natural resources that have been entrusted to us according to the laws of nature which the Almighty has provided. Each year in May, Soil Stewardship Week is observed throughout our land. The Soil Conservation Service publishes an annual brochure at this time, and in the 1960 booklet it is said:

"The spirit of a responsible people at work on the land helps in adjusting to nature. Twenty-five years ago, when the modern movement toward soil conservation was gaining its first great impetus, a wise leader felt impelled to caution some of his overly-enthusiastic colleagues against false assumptions and exaggerated claims.

"There is nothing we can do that will alter nature," he said. "We can treat the land to protect it and we can use it wisely so that we reduce the hazards of unfavorable climate. If we can sell the conservation idea, we can cut down erosion and other kinds of land damage. But we cannot alter nature. Our biggest job is to learn to cooperate with nature, as it is, and not against it."

"Now we are increasingly conscious of the power of the elements and the functioning of basic natural laws. Each year, more and more people are recognizing the inter-relationship of land, water, trees, and wildlife—

and the balance that must be maintained among them.

"Most gratifying of all, men are learning—sometimes to their surprise—that cooperating with nature is an enormous advantage, and no handicap at all. The spirit of conservation motivating a responsible people at work on the land is leading men to adjust their methods to nature."

Man has dominion over the earth and all that is in it. This dominion does not include the right to destroy. We have grown up as a nation with the idea that our natural resources were inexhaustible. It has been only within recent years that we have realized that this is not true; and that realization has not fully dawned upon us.

We can recall that in the past 20 years there were many tracts of land on which every piece of timber had been cut. One could drive by acre after acre, and the only things to be seen were pine stumps. There was very little wildlife left in those areas, and some of the topsoil was lost by erosion. Fortunately, new stands of trees have been planted, and most of the lumber companies now use selective cutting and leave enough of the trees to re-seed the area.

The misuse or overuse of any of our natural resources is not good stewardship and can result in the loss of these resources. Fire, flood, pollution and the like have caused much destruction in the past, but in our generation much progress has been made not only in controlling this destruction, but also in restoring what has been lost. Where economic profit is involved, it is easy to take from what God has placed in our care to such an extent that we destroy or use up what has taken centuries or even thousands of years to develop. The beds of oyster shells on the bottom of our bays multiplied over time. The improper dredging of great quantities of these shells from our bays can take away resources that may never be restored by natural processes.

In this great land of ours, we are most fortunate in what we have—game, fish, water, trees, gas, oil, minerals, soil—the list could go on and on. We are well aware that in some areas the supply has been depleted. In some instances, we have taken too much of our game, to the extent that some are extinct or near extinction. The soil has been overused or misused, and the valuable topsoil has been washed down our rivers or blown away. We are well aware of what happens when we break nature's laws, God's laws, and fail to leave cover, nesting grounds, and natural food for our wildlife. Our game and fish can be destroyed when the balance of nature is destroyed.

We take our natural resources for granted—until we have decreased or destroyed the supply. Surely there is a need for constant research that we may understand and cooperate with the laws of nature. We can be grateful for the progress that has been made through research in recent years. Nature has her way of replenishing the supply. There are many of our lakes which border our rivers and are subject to frequent floodings. Though some game was doubtless destroyed by Hurricane Carla, one salt water fisherman said that fishing should be improved in our bays because the



water had been changed by the storm and new passes had been temporarily opened to the gulf.

Much progress has been made in recent years in learning and applying good methods of conservation of our soil, game, fish, and water. It is interesting to note that through the efforts of our Game and Fish Commission, a deer season will be opened this year in one county in which there were no deer a few years ago. Game laws have been enacted to control the balance of nature and are constantly evaluated so we will not take more than we should. These laws are for our own guidance and protection.

It is so easy for us, like the man who received the one talent in our Lord's parable, to blame someone else for any misuse of the resources available to us. However, every citizen must recognize his individual responsibility as a steward of natural resources—we cannot leave this to someone else. What we do now will control what we will have in the future.

I hope the day will come again when my 12-year-old son can line up the sights of his 30-30 on an 11-point buck, or when my nine-year-old can catch more fish in an afternoon than his father. I want their children to have the same opportunities. If this is to be true, I have a responsibility, and a personal one, as does each citizen. As Roy L. Smith has said: "Conservation of natural resources is not merely a problem of legislation, but a stewardship in which the humblest citizen must share. The way we administer our stewardship may mean the difference between plenty and want for those who come after us. Being a good Christian means, of course, being a good citizen. It is impossible to draw any line between good religion and a wise use of God's gracious gifts."

We love the natural resources about us. We love our neighbor and want him and succeeding generations to share what is now available to us. Good stewardship will insure our continued use of them and their availability for those who come after us. **

to fool
today's goose
you have to use more



WHITE MAGIC

by RUSSELL TINSLEY

THEY FLY INTO the brisk wind, the majestic geese do, their wings beating steadily in rhythm. Sprawled belly down behind the lip of an earthen rice-field levee, white-garbed hunters wait impatiently, almost afraid to breathe for fear the wary birds will catch the unnatural movement.

On they come, oh so slow it seems. Soon they are over the stool of white decoy rags scattered over the rice stubble. They hang there, almost as if motionless, seemingly suspended by invisible wires.

Someone shouts, "Now!" Hunters jump to their feet. Shotguns war-whoop. The geese bank. One spirals away from the flock and kicks up a plume of water where it crash-lands in the rain-soaked field. The others catch the wind and quickly sail out of range.

It had looked so easy, so very easy. The birds were big and tempting. Yet all the furious shooting produced only one kill.

That's the way it is with this goose shooting. The honkers move with a deceptive speed and because of their

size often appear within easy gun-shot range when, indeed, they are not. There's nothing elementary about wing-shooting geese.

Along the rice belt of Texas, with the tidy crossroads community of Eagle Lake being the focal point, there's an everlasting battle of wits, hunters versus geese. Back years ago it started as a simple thing, a few white rags scattered haphazardly in a makeshift pattern, or perhaps pages of yesterday's newspaper.

But today . . . well, the birds have become more particular and selective. Perhaps now it will take five, maybe six hundred white rags, and the location of the decoy stool must be changed every other day or so to keep the geese from catching on.

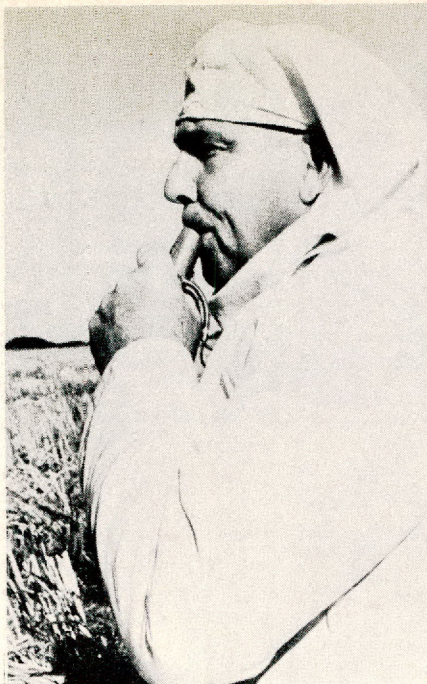
And the hunter must remain motionless, sprawled flat in the stubble to break his silhouette, not daring to move or betray his whereabouts. The geese are quick to catch the slightest hint of danger, and they can climb out of shotgun range before a hunter can jump to his knees and get his weapon to his shoulder.

On the blue-bird days when the sky overhead is faultlessly clear, the geese are but bold black dots high in the sky, the wavering V of a flock etched against the backdrop of blue. On these days the hunters must be particularly still and the decoys must look particularly inviting to bring the honkers down within killing range.

Wind is what the goose hunter prays for, preferably a brisk south wind. Biting cold weather tends to keep the honkers on their feeding grounds, but on a balmy day with a south wind the birds are in the air continuously, hedge-hopping low over the fields between their areas for feeding and watering.

Goose hunting is, at its best, a long-shot gamble. But catch the weather in a cooperative mood and it is an experience not soon to be forgotten.

Just ask a goose hunter what he feels when he sees a majestic goose banking low into the wind, coming low over his decoys, powerful wings grabbing against the wind. A sight like that does something to a hunter's emotions. Perhaps that's why so few geese tumble when hunters start on the firing line. **



Marvin Tyler, Altair, coaxes some honkers in.



An unlucky goose falls for the white rags.



Tom Haley, Smithville, adds to the decoys.



From left, Tyler, Fred Frnka of Eagle Lake, Emile Jamail of Austin, and Haley display their kill.



Randy Sutton and Bob Norris search the tall grass for grasshoppers, a top bait for youngsters.

EVERY FISHERMAN has at one time or another experienced the problem of having to put up with hordes of insects of various forms. Needless to say, it is a very disturbing problem. On the other hand, one cannot completely condemn the tiny creatures. The reason? The majority of these pesty little bugs make ideal bait for almost any kind of fresh-water fishing. When one looks at insects from this point of view, he can classify their abundance only as a fisherman's blessing, rather than a burden.

Ranking high among the insects as a form of fish bait is the humble grasshopper. I refer to him as the "humble grasshopper" because this insect is taken too much for granted by the average fisherman, who does not fully appreciate the attraction of fish to this tiny creature. Almost every form of fresh-water game fish can be caught with grasshoppers, but the old "pro" fisherman will tell you that, although bass and catfish can be snagged using grasshoppers, there are other baits which are more desirable. Still the results of fishing with grasshoppers is much better than mediocre, and for young fishermen, this bait is tops. The grasshopper shows his true talents when employed as perch or sunfish bait. Here the tiny grass insect cannot be outdone. And what could be more fun to the young fisherman than to pull in sunfish after sunfish—which is what usually occurs when a grasshopper is placed on the hook?

Of course, there are different colored grasshoppers including green,

KIDS:

Get the **JUMP** on fish



Hoppers don't sit still for someone to grab them. Filling a jar calls for fast reflexes.

by **DICK WHITE**

yellow, and brown, and a decision must be made as to which color to use. The best rule to follow, however, is to use what's there. As long as it is a grasshopper the sunfish and perch are not particular about its coloration.

Collection of grasshoppers very seldom presents a problem, simply because they seem to be everywhere during the spring, summer, and fall. The winter months seem to be the only time of the year in which the grasshopper is scarce. The first step in collecting this fish bait is to find a stretch of tall grass. More than likely, the grass will abound with grasshoppers. If not, find another



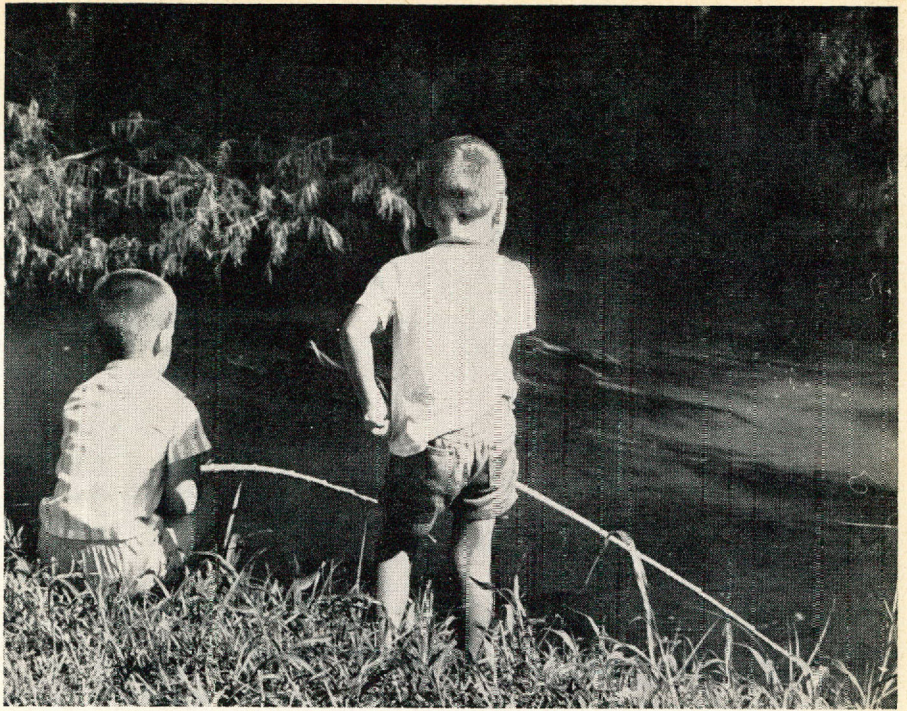
A hopper should be hooked through the hard surface of the body just in front of the wings. Here, Randy shows Bob the fine art.

stretch of grass and try again. Once a suitable bait plot is found, the catching procedure may begin. The age-old method of sneaking up on the grasshopper and catching it with your hand is as good a way as any, provided that you are quicker than the grasshopper. I employed this method and came up with more than a hundred of the little creatures in less than an hour. (I might also add that the young fishermen who used the bait pulled in 35 nice size bluegill, redear, and longear in less than two hours.) It's not hard to grab the grasshoppers once you catch on to the art.

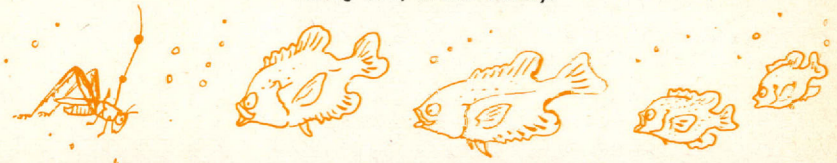
Another method is using a minnow seine. Simply pull the seine through the grass in much the same manner as you would if you were seining minnows. These are the two most successful methods of securing grasshoppers, to my knowledge, and these methods will suit the needs of most youngsters. Now the problem is where to place the bait after catching it. Well, this is the least of the youthful angler's worries. All he need do is obtain an old fruit jar from Mom and punch a few holes in the lid and he is in business with as fine a grasshopper cage as is made.

After picking up his faithful old cane pole and a jar of grasshoppers, the young sportsman may head for the river or lake, ready for business. Using a suitable hook for sunfish or perch, the fisherman need not load the hook with grasshoppers. Only one of the insects will be adequate. The grasshopper should be hooked through the hard surface of the body, just in front of the wings and about the middle of the side of the body. This allows free movement of the grasshopper to attract more fish. Now all that remains for the young outdoorsman is to "throw her in."

The sunfish and perch which the young angler may catch are not noted for their tackle-busting ability, but once a sunfish is hooked, it can provide plenty of excitement and enjoyment for the young fisherman. These same sunfish can also provide plenty of enjoyment for the whole family at the dinner table. So kids, get out and round up some grasshoppers and get the jump on the fish! **



With a supply of hoppers, Bob and Randy settle down for an exciting time at their favorite fishing hole, in the country.



Grasshoppers just naturally pay off with some fine catches of sunfish, bass, and even catfish if a gob of delicacies is used.

WHEN DOES a boy become a man? On his graduation day? When he buys his first automobile? The day he's inducted into the service? I suppose there are almost as many answers as there are boys! But one thing I know for sure, a boy at least starts to become a man when he gets his first buck! I saw the start of this transformation in my own son along about this time in the fall of 1960.

It didn't all happen with the smooth squeeze on a trigger—or with the jarring muzzle blast of a .30-06—or in that instant of the blurring lunge forward of a buck dead on his feet from a shattered neck. In reality, this was the climax of a gradual “grow-up” starting earlier in the fall on the day we first walked over the small ranch we later leased for the season.

I have hunted on numerous leases, some large, some small. Now that the boy had grown in my eyes to a point where he could hunt with me as a partner and not just as a tag along, I wanted a slice of Hill Country land large enough to safely accommodate two hunters, yet small enough to fit our pocketbook! We found, that day late in last September, 300 heavily wooded acres in the beautiful area some 40 miles north of San Antonio near the century-old German community of Kendallia. Abundant in wildlife that flourishes in the good years and still seems able to eke out an existence and reproduce itself during the drought years, this scenic area is also



Picking a spot for the stands and building the platforms are an important part of the hunt.

a retreat from the bustling, explosive life in a modern, mushrooming city.

Arranging for the lease is usually an informal understanding between landowner and hunter, sealed with a handshake, and culminated with a payment a few days before the season opens. Following a verbal contract with our landowner, my son and I walked together over the rolling acres noting the dense thickets that offered sanctuary during heavy hunting pressure, flat areas where deer trails crossed, and fenceline jumps. We marked choice trees for future seat building and searched for scrapes and rubs. But because of the warm Indian Summer days, the bucks evidently hadn't broadcast their amorous intentions.

As September's warm days wore smoothly into the cooler ones of October, we started scavenging earnestly for scraps of lumber to haul back to the lease for building blinds. Hunting methods vary from hunter to hunter and from area to area. Our area wasn't suitable for stalking or still hunting, but ideal for the pa-

tient hunter willing to take a tree stand and let his buck come to him. Prevailing winds, density of cedar thickets surrounding the flat burned-over areas, and desire to eliminate the hazard of scent dictated that we get above ground level as much as possible. Several good trees were selected in which small but sturdy seats were built and ringed with cedar bushes to allow sufficient camouflage. Seats were placed strategically over the acreage to afford some selection with regard to sun and wind conditions.

Seat construction completed and our hunting land mentally mapped, now began the hardest, yet probably the most rewarding part of the 'hunt'—the wait! Any dyed-in-the-wool, oft frustrated, thoroughly addicted deer hunter knows what I mean. The weeks just prior to opening day are filled with thoughts of past seasons,

stories of kills, and recollections of misses. The anxiety that swells within can be tempered only by the repeated sharpening of hunting knives, the cleaning of already clean gun bores, the oiling of well worn hunting boots, and the airing of mothball-laden long-handles! As great as the actual hunt is to a hunter, the pre-hunt days give their own peculiar kind of delight known only to those whose actions are looked upon with suspicion by the non-hunter!

At long last, the night before opening day arrives! It is ushered in by an afternoon dedicated to hastily setting up camp, quick glances at the northwest to detect the slightest hint of a fresh 'norther', and a brief “sit” in the chosen tree to get the feel of it and possibly meet the buck on the eve of his demise. Back in camp, man and near-man satisfy a gnawing hunger with skillet fried steak, potatoes, and onions, all cooked together on a Coleman rested on the let-down door of the station wagon. Stomachs topped off with store-bought cookies and stream-

Moment of manhood

by T. M. EDWARDS

cooled milk, fleeting energies are channeled to the remaining tasks of washing camp dishes, hanging food supplies on overhanging limbs to thwart invasion by skunks, 'coons, and 'possums. At last, turning off the gas lantern cuts the last threads with civilization and plunges us fast into the blackened, moonless night and about as close to nature as modern man wants to get! Sleeping bags are tunneled into early, but sleep comes slowly and late. One nervous, tired, dreaming body disturbs the other frequently as turning in a tight sleeping bag becomes a major maneuver.

The dulled jangle of an ancient vintage tin alarm clock shocks both into reality at precisely the pre-planned time. Wool pants are pulled on over long-handles, khakies pulled on over wools. Boots are hastily

• Continued on Page 29



Wade the shallows for

The Copper-Hued



FALL IN TEXAS was beautiful this year. From one end of the state to the other the paper-thin leaves of a fading summer slowly turned to a crisp nutty-brown carpet that colored the landscape while nature bustled about, preparing for the blanket of coolness advancing across the flatlands of the great Midwest. This was especially notable on the Gulf Coast even though the warm days of September and October still enabled wade fishermen to tangle with schools of scrappy redfish starting their annual southward migration across the tidal flats of the coast.

Wading after shallow-water redfish during the Fall months must be experienced to be fully appreciated. The jolt that comes from spotting a school of reds tailing across the flats is a thrill every fisherman should experience. The excitement extends over a prolonged period because spotting the fish is just half the job. The pay-off comes only after the fisherman has carefully inched his way alongside the school and picked out the fish he wants. Once a good red is sighted the angler must carefully calculate the distance and then . . .

But let's back track and start at

Gamesters

by GUS GETNER

the beginning with "how" and "where" before going any further. Since most of the prime redfish waters in the fall of the year are too shallow for maneuvering about in an outboard, there are two ways to operate efficiently. You travel as far as possible in a skiff and then wade the rest of the way to the fish; or you use a fishing scooter like those often seen in the southern end of Laguna Madre Bay, deep in South Texas.

The scooter, powered by a seven or 10 horse motor, is light and rides high enough to enable fishermen to skim the surface of water 18 inches deep at 25 miles per hour. With it fishermen can cover hundreds of acres in a matter of minutes while searching for a good-sized school of fish prowling the flats.

Locating a school of fish feeding on the flats is no problem provided you know what to look for. The "pros" say to watch for ripples or wakes on the surface, caused by moving fish; or discolored spots in the water, where the fish are stirring up the bottom in search of food. Often you may even see the tails of the fish as they practically stand on their heads rooting up the bottom. Find any of these signs and your casting gear is bound to get a workout.

Once a concentration of reds is located, fishermen should stalk the fish much like they would bonefish off the Florida Keys. This is necessary because noise or loud splashing will send the fish scurrying away in a helter-skelter pattern next-to-impossible to follow. Experienced autumn fishermen have found that dragging the feet while moving through the water is the best way to advance without creating a disturbance.

Work close enough to the fish to make a short, but accurate cast. This is of utmost importance in this type

of fishing since blind casting into a school also tends to spook it. Most wade-fishermen pick the fish they want and then drop a spoon two feet in front of it, retrieving it across ahead of the fish. Many fishermen learned this lesson the hard way, when they lost a good school because they were careless in their casting.

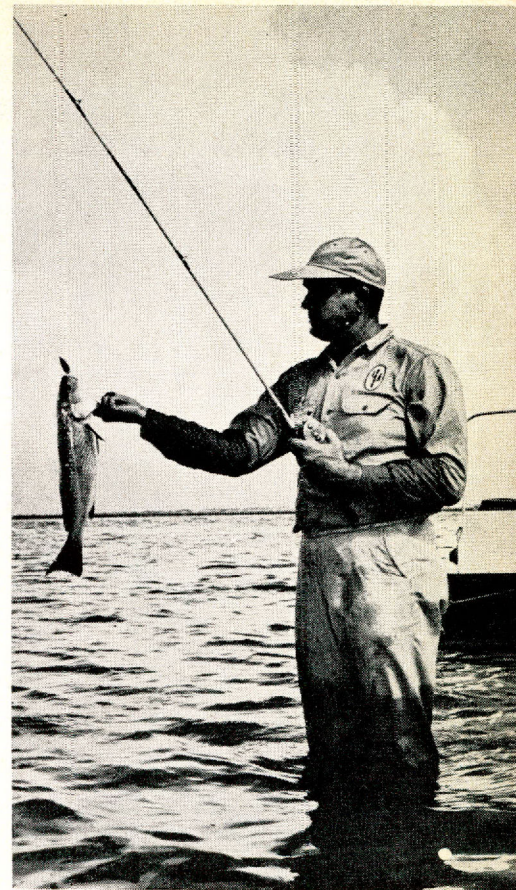
The spoon, by far the best lure at this time of the year, works best when allowed to sink a few inches below the surface of the water and then worked back with a slow, steady retrieve. When the fish hits, the hook should be set immediately. This prevents the fish from spitting it out, as often happens when the fish are acting skittish.

If all this seems like a lot of work and trouble, it is. But it only takes one of these hard-hitting copper-hued gamesters to make it worthwhile. The way reds run after being hooked is known to most fishermen. The way they act in shallow water is not. Maybe it's the time of the year plus the fact the water is shallow that makes them fight twice as hard. Whatever the cause, it's enough to make a wrist ache.

And if a fisherman is lucky enough to land a 30 pounder he's entitled to walk a bit prouder and to stand a little taller than before.

Hurricane Carla, by the way, should be given a bit of credit for the reds fishermen found all up and down the coast this fall. As the winds and high tides ripped into the mainland they also opened up a number of passes along the coast, allowing surf-run reds to enter the bays before they closed once more. These extra reds, plus the mild weather which followed the hurricane, produced the above-average, shallow-water fishing we have had so far this year.

Let's hope it lasts through the winter. **



Scooter fishermen can reach the shallow waters quickly and locate large schools of reds. A spoon in the right spot means a red like this.



It's possible to reach the fishing areas in regular boats. No matter how you get there, the results are shown here if you find the fish in a hungry mood.

A SOW TROUT?

by TERRY LEARY

SINCE MOST LARGE speckled trout are females with pig-like appetites, the name "Sow trout" graphically describes those over four pounds.

A phenomenon called sexual dimorphism is often evident in dif-

ferences in growth rate or size and shape of males and females in most animals. It is particularly evident in various fishes, including the trout.

In this case, the female of the species grows more rapidly and reaches a greater size than does the

male. The latter reaches maturity a year earlier than the female but normally succumbs within five years. The female may live 10 years.

At the end of their first year, male trout outnumber females. Both are about seven inches long and the females are slightly larger. A few males will be mature. At the end of the second year, females are about 11 inches long, and males about a half inch shorter. Most males are mature at this age, but only a few females are capable of spawning.

At the end of the third year, most of the larger and, by this time, more abundant females will be mature. They will be about 14 inches long, while the males will be only about 13 inches.

This trend continues through the sixth year, when male fish are outnumbered about eight to one. The situation worsens for males after that.

Biologist Ernest Simmons says when a trout reaches a large size it changes its diet from mostly shrimp to mostly fish, and about six per cent of those examined by Simmons had eaten smaller trout.

Thus the smaller, yet mature, male might easily serve as a honeymoon breakfast for his larger mate. Simmons has found one 21-inch trout with a 12-inch trout in its stomach.

The foregoing answers in part the question often asked by one fisherman who sees another with a catch of 100 or more fingerling trout: "Why not put a statewide size limit on the sportsman's speckled trout?" A minimum size limit of 12 inches now exists for all commercial catches and for sport catches in three lower coastal counties.

Because natural mortality of males under 12 inches is about 60 per cent, a lower size limit would automatically protect the short-lived males, doomed anyway to an early death. However, reproduction in this species is more than ample to keep the maximum population for available space and food supply. On the other hand, it would not be harmful to limit the catch to mostly females, as would be the case in keeping only fish over 12 inches in length.

Under existing conditions, however, a size limit on trout would be of no benefit, and wasteful. **



One easy way to determine the sex of a trout is the presence of a tough upper lining in the male's body cavity. The top fish is the male and is more difficult to clean.



Size difference in sexes can be seen in this group of six speckled trout. Left to right are three-year female and male, two-year female, female, male and male.

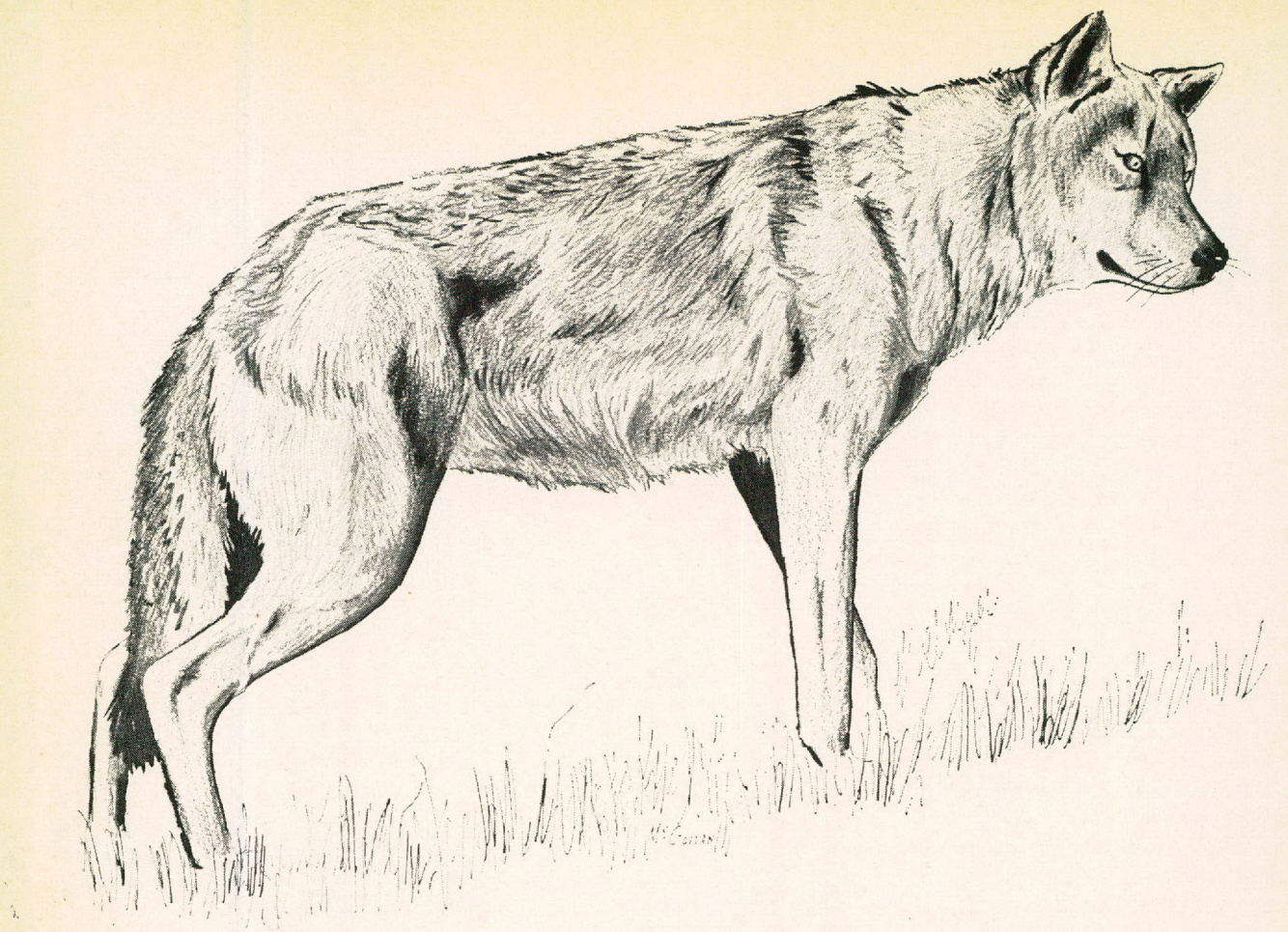
VANISHED



by DR. W. B. DAVIS
Texas A.&M. College

A commentary on the
extinct and threatened
mammals of Texas.





BISON

THE TREMENDOUS herds of bison that were so conspicuous a feature of the plains and prairies of western Texas in the mid-1800's were eliminated intentionally by the white man. When protection of the bison was under consideration by the Texas Legislature after the Civil War, General Phil Sheridan opposed it. He won his point by convincing the legislators that the sooner the bison were eliminated, the sooner the Indians who depended on them for food and clothing would be starved into submission. Sure enough, before 1880 both the bison and the Indians passed into oblivion. The big slaughter of bison took place in Texas in the 1870's. From Fort Griffin (Shackelford County) in the winter of 1877-78 more than 1,500 outfits killed in excess of 100,000 animals in the months of December and January alone. Hundreds of thousands of carcasses were strewn over the landscape. Butchery and savagery at their worst!



GREY WOLF

ASSOCIATED WITH the vast herds of bison that once roamed the plains of western Texas were considerable numbers of grey or lobo wolves which preyed upon them. This predator-prey relationship between "buffalo" wolves and bison had existed more or less in balance for eons until the arrival of the white man who destroyed the bison and populated the ranges with his cattle. Deprived of their natural prey, the lobos turned their attention to livestock and thereby incurred the wrath of the ranchers. The long-drawn battle between ranchers and lobo wolves during the next half century was more or less a draw until the advent of World War I when the great demand for increased cattle production to supply meat for our armed forces led the Federal government to back the ranchers with "government trappers." This action quickly led to the extermination of grey wolves in Texas and surrounding states, although they still occur in northern Mexico in small numbers. Thus ended the saga of another native Texan!



BLACK-FOOTED FERRET



GRIZZLY BEAR

THIS LARGE "weasel," once a resident of the high plains region of Texas, seems to have been a casualty of over-specialization. Like the closely related black-bellied weasel of Asia whose life is closely tied to another ground squirrel, the bobac marmot, the black-footed ferret's entire life seems to have been tied irrevocably to the black-tailed prairie dog on which it preyed and in whose burrows it lived. When the prairie dogs were eliminated or drastically reduced by poisoning over most of their former range in the early decades of this century, the ferret was doomed because he lacked the ability to adjust to new conditions. Apparently he disappeared from the Texas scene before 1920.

THE TEXAS GRIZZLY, *Ursus texensis*, probably was never a common animal in Texas even in its heyday. It was a close relative of the large grizzly that still exists as a relic population in the mountains of northern Chihuahua, Mexico. The last known Texas Grizzly was killed by C. O. Finley and John Z. Means in October, 1890, near the head of Limpia Creek in the Davis Mountains, west of Fort Davis. Thus passed into oblivion one of the most thrilling, yet dangerous, mammals in Texas. Perhaps this tragic end was inevitable because the grizzly's enormous strength, his ferocity and his uncompromising attitude made his continuance impossible in livestock country.



MERRIAM ELK

A HUNDRED YEARS ago this large elk was common in the mountainous areas of Arizona, New Mexico and Trans-Pecos Texas. Today, it is gone—a victim of the white man's greed, his thoughtlessness, and his overstocking of the range with livestock. The last known band was

slaughtered in the Chiricahua Mountains of Arizona about 1906.

This animal resembled the American Elk of Colorado, but it was paler and more reddish in color, with a more massive skull and more erect antlers. It once roamed in the Guadalupe Mountains, and perhaps other

forested areas, in West Texas, but it appears to have been killed off there before 1890. The elk currently occupying the Guadalupe Mountains are descendants of 44 animals from the northern Rocky Mountain region that were released in McKittrick Canyon in 1928 by the late Judge J. C. Hunter. **

VANISHING

BIGHORN

IN SPITE OF continuous protection by law since 1903, the Texas Bighorn has decreased to the point of near extinction. Even as early as 1902, ranchers in the Trans-Pecos, to which area the sheep were restricted, considered them on the verge. In 1945 the total estimated population was less than 100 and all of them

were concentrated in the Beech, Baylor and Sierra Diablo mountains north of Van Horn. Today their numbers have dwindled to some 25 to 30 individuals. Even unmolested, the total population probably was not greater than 400 to 500 individuals because suitable habitat in Texas is limited to a few isolated mountain ranges.

The big decline in the bighorn population coincides with the increase of domestic sheep in the Trans-Pecos, because bighorns succumb to diseases of the sheep. In spite of the establishment of a "preserve" for bighorns in the Sierra Diablo, it appears that we are struggling with a lost cause. The native bighorn is doomed to extinction in Texas.



KIT FOX

THE ALMOST complete elimination of the Swift or Kit Fox from its natural haunts in Texas, the high plains, has been one of the undesirable side effects of intensive

poisoning campaigns directed toward the control of coyotes. Even as early as 1902, ranchers in the Staked Plains reported that swifts were scarce because they were taking the poisoned baits before the coyotes got to them.

These small foxes prey extensively on kangaroo rats, a small seed-eating

rodent, and one result of reducing the kit fox population has been an increase in the numbers of kangaroo rats, which, when present in large numbers, can be detrimental to range vegetation. Consequently, by killing off the kit foxes the rancher in effect is cutting off his nose to spite his face.



RIVER OTTER

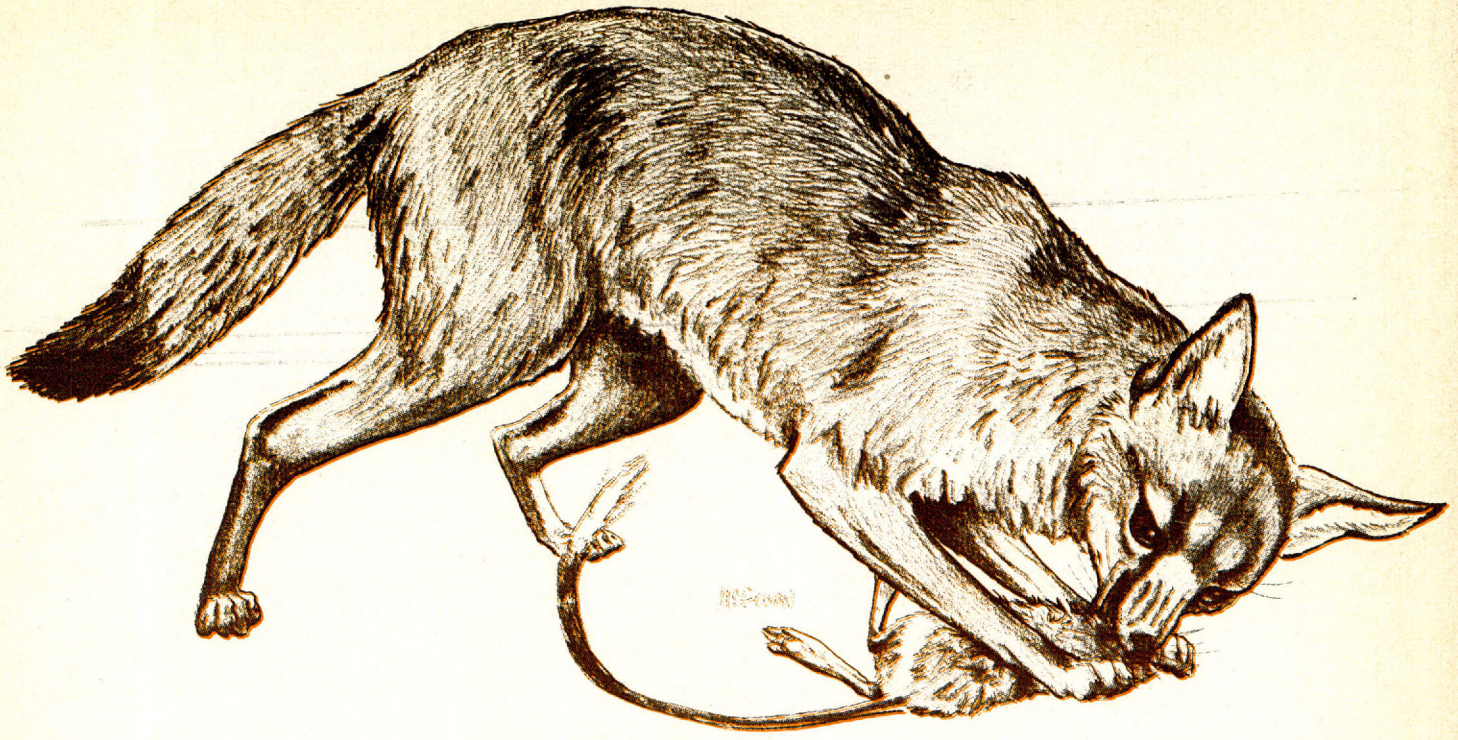
APPARENTLY river otters were never widespread or abundant in Texas. Their stronghold today is the marsh and bayou country along the Louisiana border. Although otters are protected by law, their numbers are declining. Hurricane Carla doubtless took its toll of those that occupied the coastal marshes, and occasional individuals are caught and drowned in fish traps or are killed by thoughtless hunters. Their existence in Texas is at best a precarious one.

BLACK BEAR

THE BLACK BEAR, once common throughout the wooded areas of Texas, has had to give way to cattle, sheep, goats and "piney woods roters." It is disheartening to report that in East Texas the black bear was eliminated before 1910 by hog raisers who felt that their free-ranging razorbacks had first call on

the land. The big slaughter began about 1883 when two men in Liberty County alone killed 182 bears in a two-year period! In the Hill Country of central Texas a few black bears still were to be found as late as 1902.

Today black bears occur in Texas in small numbers in the jungles of Brazoria County and in the Davis, Chisos and Guadalupe Mountains in the Trans-Pecos. But it may not be long until they, too, are eliminated because they molested some rancher's livestock.



PRAIRIE DOG

IN THE 1890's Vernon Bailey estimated that more than 800 million prairie dogs inhabited an area of 90,000 square miles in western Texas and that they were consuming as much range vegetation as would 3 million cattle. One 25,000-square-mile area just east of the Staked Plains from San Angelo to Clarendon was described as one continuous "dog" town with approximately 400,000,000 inhabitants! Such concentrations were a heavy drain on range vegetation, and ranchers enlisted the aid of the Federal government in combatting them. Using mainly strychnine-treated grain, the ranchers, along with government rodent control specialists, poisoned millions of prairie dogs and by 1940 the once overwhelming population had been reduced to scattered, small colonies. By 1960 the prairie dog had almost been eliminated from the Texas scene.

Now that the prairie dog has attained the status of a novelty, the sentiment of many ranchers has turned in his favor, and they are striving to keep the surviving remnants. Some ranchers maintain that moderate populations of prairie dogs are desirable because these rodents help prevent the spread of mesquite brush. There's some good in every bad little "dog" if one only takes the time to look for it. **



EPILOGUE

EARLY SETTLERS in Texas found the country well populated with wildlife. Interestingly enough, deer were less abundant than now, but the plains supported huge herds of bison and pronghorns. Tall-grass prairies teemed with prairie chickens. The wooded areas supported large populations of wild turkeys, black bears, raccoons, and squirrels. These animals served those early settlers mainly as a seemingly inexhaustible source of food and clothing. As the human population grew, lands in the eastern section of the state were

cleared, plowed and planted to crops. Thousands of livestock, mainly cattle, were brought in to stock the open ranges of the west, and later barbed wire fences were built. All of these events altered the original balance between wildlife and its habitat. This adjustment between wildlife and natural vegetation on the one hand and man and his use of the land on the other is still in progress, and it will continue. Only the highly adaptable species of wildlife will be able to survive; those that cannot adjust to new conditions are doomed. **

Quail Crackshots

by L. A. WILKE

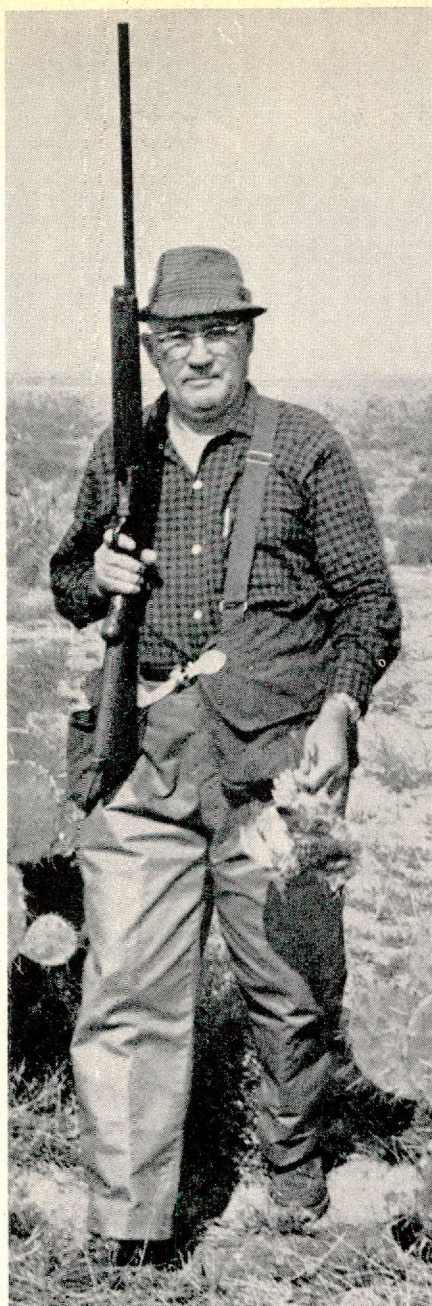
QUAIL SHOOTERS BEGAN a shooting season Nov. 1, that will last as long as Jan. 31, in some counties.

The season opened in all the area west of the Pecos River, and in a number of South Texas counties on Nov. 1. Shooting generally was reported good. The basic season opened Dec. 1, in practically all other counties of the state.

There are varying closing dates, so hunters should check on the closing dates in their own counties before going out. In most counties the closing will be Jan. 16, but some close Dec. 31, and a few will remain open until Jan. 31.

Bag limits and possession in the county where you plan to hunt also should be checked. In many counties

• *Continued on Page 27*



Steve Simmons, Austin, wears briar brush pants to hunt among the prickly pear.



Tully Garner and J. H. Ashley, Uvalde, flush blues out of the cactus patch.



Harry Hornby, Uvalde, and Wilson Southwell, San Antonio, show their birds to Warden Jim Pond of Carrizo Springs.



Dolph Briscoe Jr., Uvalde, and Herbert Petry Jr., Carrizo Springs, take time out to pick birds.

Joe Lamatia and Bradley Phair, Carrizo Springs, compare the blues and bobs, with H. H. Butler and J. H. Ashby, Uvalde, looking on.



Profile of a Skeet Champ

by DICK McCUNE
Dallas Times-Herald

A YOUNG GIRL from Dallas stood in awe at the sights and sounds of her first skeet tournament. A girlfriend was shooting in that contest at Galveston in 1948 and the Dallas girl was a wide-eyed onlooker who had only recently been introduced to the sport.

The first event was to begin in minutes when the Dallas Gun Club coach who had accompanied a group to the Coast spoke to the girl, "Gitcha gun. You're entered."

"He was the kind of man you just naturally obey," recalled Mrs. Lucretia Thomas. "The kind who speaks with authority. So I went off and got a shotgun somewhere. It was a 12 gauge. I didn't know any better. He handed me a .410 and said I should start shooting."

She had shot only three or four rounds of skeet before that memorable first tournament—and the memory of it is almost humorous to her today, although it was far from that at the time. "I was weeping with every shot by the time we finished up," she said. "I don't know if it was because I was embarrassed, exhausted or disgusted."

But that introduction to skeet competition did not discourage the Dallas girl. Five years later she became the ladies' world skeet champion—a title she reclaimed again this summer with an outstanding score at the world title contest in Reno.

"I wouldn't recommend that anyone begin skeet by shooting in competition, as I did," she said. "About the only thing you can say for it is that there's no place to go but up. I don't know, and I don't want to know, what my score was at Galveston—but it was so bad that I couldn't

have shot any worse after that."

It takes diligent practice to make a skeet champion, Mrs. Thomas believes, and a good coach.

She met her present coach soon after she had taken up skeet in the spring of 1948. Max L. Thomas had been an Air Force gunnery instructor in Texas and was not only a top shooter in the Dallas Gun Club but also served as a volunteer teacher.

They married later that year.

"Max is the only one who has coached me since," she said. "He knows more about my shooting than I do and works with me constantly. He says you learn something every time you pull the trigger."

She laughed as she went on, "It's handy, all right, to have your husband for your teacher—but sometimes it gets monotonous, being wrong ALL the time."

Mrs. Thomas, actually, does very little wrong in competition, and gives full credit to her husband's expert guidance. He takes the exact opposite stand from those who believe in pressing novices into competition.

Thomas set his sights on the championship shoot in Reno in 1953 and worked feverishly to train three women for that event. Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Trueheart Brown and Mrs. Fred L. Alford Sr. (who is still a top shooter in the nation) practiced all that summer under Thomas' tutelage.

When the last load had been fired at Reno, the three Dallasites won all five championships available to women, with Mrs. Thomas holding both the 20 gauge trophy and high-over-all honors. The ladies were naturally proud, said the coach's wife, but more than that were grate-

ful for Thomas' efforts.

The husband-wife team dropped out of skeet competition after collecting their silver that year. By 1958, however, the two decided to get back to the game again and plunged into the familiar rounds of club shooting, practice and competition.

This past year has been the best in Mrs. Thomas' career.

She not only led the ladies' small and small gauge events, but she also outshot the nation's best male gunners in the .410 event of the Pan-American Skeet Championships at her home club in June. Gusty winds tossed the clay discs on erratic flight during that meet, and hitting them with the tiny .410 was a supreme test of champions.

Mrs. Thomas missed only four birds out of 100 in that event with the little popguns. The 1960 world skeet champ, Peter Candy of Los Angeles, could come in only second-best with a 95 X 100. "First time a

• Continued on Page 27



Lucretia and Max Thomas admire foreign-made double.

What Others Are Doing

by JOAN PEARSALL

SOUNDS LIKE SYLVAN CELEBRATION: Campers and hunters in the Oregon woods this fall may hear bells ringing, and see deer with green ears. However, these will not be hallucinations, but part of a study by the research division of the Oregon Game Commission, on deer movements and migrations. Trapped deer are equipped with colored plastic or aluminum ear tags and bell and collar, and some also with colored plastic ear streamers. Observers are urged to try and determine the color of the bell, and symbol painted on it, and to report the exact location of the deer, when seen or heard.

SOUTH LEADS WITH TREES: Three states are in the five-million-acre group in land certified under the Tree Farm system sponsored by the American Forest Products Industries, Inc. All three are in the South. Latest tabulations show Florida leading in Tree Farm acreage with 5,695,660 acres; Alabama second with 5,603,115 acres, and Georgia third with 5,307,167 acres. In number of Tree Farms, Alabama leads with 1,798; Georgia follows with 1,009, and Florida is third with 523 Tree Farms.

EFFECTS OF FIRE: A rash of wildfires in eastern Oregon during what was one of the driest summers in years, caused considerable damage to many big game winter ranges, affecting the fall big game hunts and posing a serious problem to wintering deer and elk. On all the burned areas, deer and other big game will find slim pickings, and if the winter is especially hard, severe losses are expected.

MORE PHEASANTS THAN PEASANTS: "If pheasants could vote they might well take over all forms of government in South Dakota." This whimsical observation of the South Dakota Department of

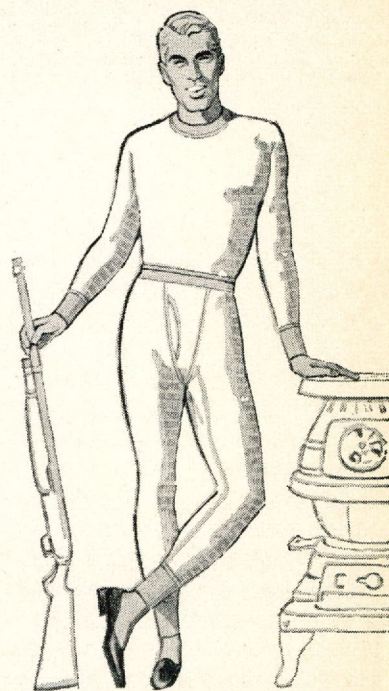
Game, Fish and Parks refers to the fact that, while there are less than 700,000 residents of the state, the pheasant population is estimated at more than 14 million birds. Thus, pheasants outnumber people by more than 20 to 1 in South Dakota. This was not known for sure until recent surveys were made by the game division.

TEEN TRAINING A MUST: New Hampshire, first state to introduce hunter training into the public school curriculum, has recently enacted legislation requiring youngsters between the ages of 16 and 19 to show certificates of competence before purchasing their first hunting licenses. To allow for pre-training, a youngster may take the Hunter Safety Course after he reaches his 14th birthday.

HOW'S THAT AGAIN?: The Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. License Section was understandably puzzled at receiving the following wire: "The money order paid you herewith is from Shirley Basin at Golden, Colorado, and included the following message. 'Shirley Basin wants antelope license in Shirley Basin, age 22, weight 175, eyes . . .'" A quick check with the telegraph office revealed the message to be in perfect order. Mr. Shirley Basin, of Golden, Colorado, was later among the nearly 4,000 sportsmen hunting antelope in Wyoming's Shirley Basin Area.

DOWN TO EARTH RULING: The use of platforms in trees is not legal in deer hunting in North Dakota. Although a hunter may sit in a tree or use natural cover as a blind, artificial platforms or blinds may not be used. It also is illegal to use a horse or vehicle as an aid in hunting big game. They may be used for transportation, but not in the actual hunting.

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GUNS



... and Shooting

This Month: **Relics of the West**

By L. A. WILKE

TODAY THERE is a tremendous traffic in old guns. To keep abreast, there is the Texas Gun Collectors Association, which holds an annual meeting for the benefit of its members and others who are interested in acquiring relics of the taming of the West.

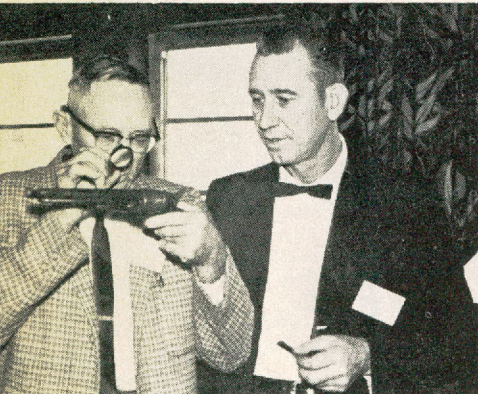
The annual meeting this year was

held in San Antonio in late October. Hundreds of old guns from the powder and pan days were on exhibit. Other models were there for appraisal and checking.

Some of the rare guns in the early days of Texas were on exhibit. Such

things as powder horns, old scabbards and even a few old Bowie knives also were on display.

Richard W. Neff Jr. is the new president of the association. Driskoll Smith, 426 Webster, Waco, is secretary-treasurer. S. P. Stevens, 239 Windsor Dr., San Antonio I, is editor of the colorful association magazine.



Victor Friedrichs, Austin, and Frank Beseda, Caldwell.



R. H. Ferguson, San Antonio, and Dr. Floyd M. Jones, Caldwell.



Women, too. Mrs. J. R. Tiller Jr., Mrs. Leon Jackson and Mrs. A. D. Hodge.



Driskoll Smith and an Old 86.



Paul M. Fulks, Wolfe City, and a 73 cutaway.



From Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Mark Furst.

woman's beaten us, and with THAT gun, in a long time," was all Candy could mutter at the time.

She went on to Reno for the big meet in August and swept the ladies high-over-all with an amazing 535 hits out of 550 targets in the four guns of a tournament. Along the way, she collected the women's crowns in both the 12 and 20 gauge events with scores of 246 X 250 and 99 X 100, respectively. Her excellent records of 98 X 100 in the 28 gauge and 92 X 100 in the .410 thus combined to give her the highest total of any woman in the shoot—as well as beating most of the men.

Charming, casual about her outstanding abilities, calm to every pressure under the gun, Lucretia Thomas will have to admit she's attained heights in skeet shooting that would have dazzled the girl at Galveston in 1948 who was handed a gun and told, "Start shooting." **

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the limit is 12 per day and 36 in possession. Other counties permit 15 birds per day, with a three-day limit.

Seasons in more than 100 counties of Texas were set under regulatory authority this year. In all other counties of Texas the season is controlled either by the general law, which allows hunting from Dec. 1 until Jan. 16, or under special laws which either open the season early or close it late.

Although most of the early opening dates this year were in typical scaled quail areas, many hunters reported bagging quite a few bob whites.

In most areas the quail crop this

year has been an improvement over that of last season. **



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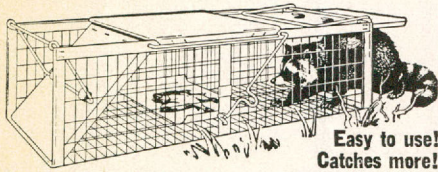
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L. O. SIKES

Box 341 Electra, Texas

THE PROVERBIAL CURIOUS cat has company, it seems, in the pronghorn antelope—or at least in one herd in the Fort Stockton area.

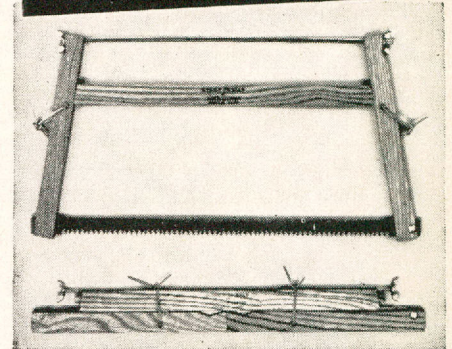
Early in October, two Houston men, Wells Stewart and T. Keith Schier, and their wives, were leaving the Elsinore Ranch with two antelope bucks in the back of their station wagon. Stewart's had a 14-inch spread and Schier's had a 13 3/4-inch pair. They spotted approximately 20 antelope some 300 yards from the narrow dirt road on which they were traveling and stopped to take pictures.

A doe in the herd suddenly stopped and sniffed the strong breeze blowing across the open-windowed station wagon and began walking slowly toward the parked vehicle. She ventured so close that Stewart actually touched her. The rest of the herd was brought by a buck to within 50 yards of the automobile.

Stewart and Schier offered an explanation for the doe's curiosity,

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Denmark, Maine

laced with missed eyelets more the rule than the exception. Sleep dried faces are splashed with icy water and searing coffee is poured down to both awaken and pacify empty stomachs until breakfast can be cooked when the morning's hunt is over.

Man leads the way through still dark morning hours down dry creek bed, up rocky incline, around ghost-like cedar stumps and a hundred yards beyond to seat where almost-man is seen to perch and take the gun handed to him. A quick, final "good luck—take your time—make the first one count" is admonished and the trek continues on up hill, over ridge, and around point of thicket to another tree which is mounted just as the first hint of light appears on the eastern horizon.

It is cold enough, the wind a little too high, but not too bad. The sequence of shallow muffled breathing starts. Straining eyes commence to water and warmed body cools quickly under the northwest gusts. Nerves are tensed in anticipation. An almost imperceptible movement causes eyes to shift and locate a doe and fawn warily emerging from the thicket into the clearing. They move under a stunted oak to scoop up acorns blown off during the night. Another doe and her twin fawns appear from the same opening. But, no buck! Not even a spike!

The eastern sky reddens as the sun emerges over a distant cloud bank. This is the coldest part! Feet begin to numb, but, "don't think about it—the successful hunter is the patient hunter." An hour in the tree seems like a half-day. Cold limbs force retreat to the bottom of the tree where a warmer earth sparingly radiates its heat. The rising sun entices a cautious walk away from the tree to a spot where a warmer stand can be taken. "There's always the chance I will scare one by the boy."

Two hundred yards away from the

tree, steps are abruptly halted by the distant silence-shattering blast of a high power rifle followed instantaneously by the 'ka-whump' as 180 grain silver-tip is heard to strike solidly. An about face and a quick drop to one knee places man in position to await developments. A minute stretches into five and the suspense is agonizing. Then—the shrill whistle that he has heard so often around the neighborhood in town echoes up

A LONGHORN OR PRONGHORN?



Opening day of antelope season proved lucky for Frank Sitterie of San Antonio. Hunting with Jax Poteet also of San Antonio, Sitterie bagged a buck with an outside spread of 22½ inches. The horns measured 14½ inches each, and it weighed 74 pounds field dressed. The current Boone and Crockett record for a pronghorn spread is 24¾ inches.

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out of the flat! It says "come—and come now!" Father starts slowly, his pace increasing with each 10 yards covered and his eyes straining for a glimpse of the hunter or the hunted! As he rounds the point of the thicket, crosses again the ridge, and stumbles down the hill, he sees there in the distant flat now bathed in bright morning sunlight, not the boy or almost-man he started the season with and left there at the beginning of this day, but a man standing over a handsome young buck, its neck cleanly broken by a well placed shot. It's not the biggest buck he has ever seen although seven healthy points crown a fat, well conditioned body—but, surely, it's the most beautiful he has ever seen, especially when it's reflected in the eyes of the boy—just turned man!

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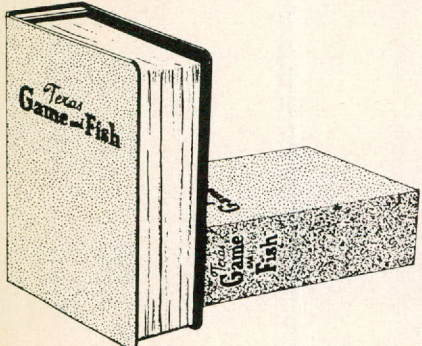
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Rattlesnakes, contrary to belief, do not seek to avenge the death of a mate. They are probably attracted to the death scene by scent.

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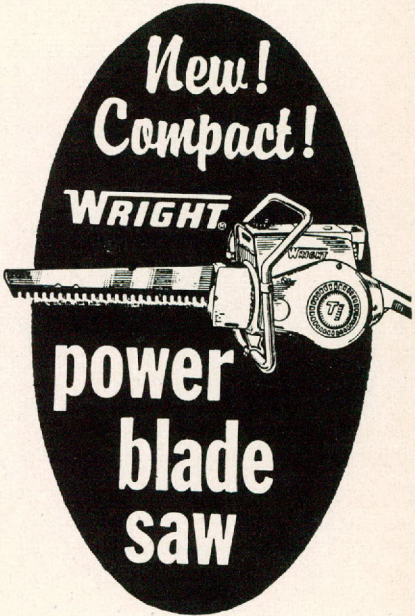
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CRUSADE FOR WILDLIFE, James B. Trefethen, 375 pages. Published by Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa. \$7.50.

This is a Boone and Crockett Club book, giving the highlights of conservation progress in America.

The author, who holds a degree in wildlife work and has been an active part of it for many years, has gone back into the history of natural resources and come up with a complete volume covering all aspects of wildlife conservation.

The book offers a series of dramatic, interlocking vignettes in recreating the history of the conservation movement. It will have a definite appeal to every wildlife enthusiast, whether he is a hunter or just simply loves the out-of-doors.—*L. A. Wilke*

HOW TO BUILD 20 BOATS, edited by Boris Lauer-Leonardi of Rudder Magazine, 128 pages. Published by Arco Publishing Co., Inc., 480 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y. \$2.50.

For the do-it-yourself fans **HOW TO BUILD 20 BOATS** is a treasure of construction plans to help him pass winter months building a craft for next summer's water sports.

The hardback manual includes detailed blueprints, photographs showing stages of progress, and step-by-step instructions for building a variety of watercraft. The boats range in size and kind from a small rowing dory to streamline runabouts to graceful sailboats.—*Ann Streetman*

DWELLERS IN DARKNESS, S. H. Skaife, 176 pages. Published by Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y. \$0.95.

Termites to most persons simply mean trouble. At the first sign of the pests, the exterminator is frantically summoned. Yet termites have something in common with man. They co-exist, even co-operate in highly organized communities. They, along with ants, bees, and wasps are social creatures.

According to Skaife, termites have a more lengthy history than man. Man's existence as a social animal dates back for less than a million years, but termites have been around for about 200 million years. In fact, "... the termitary is by far the oldest type of community to be found on the face of the globe and it is also the

one about which we know the least," says the author.

The small paperback book with new long-lasting binding gives a detailed account of the termite's habits and life span in laymen's language. Emphasis is placed on the South African black-mound termite which the author has studied extensively.

A comparison of termites to man is carried out subtly throughout the book especially through chapter headings such as "The Teeming Throng," "Slaves of the State," "Guardians of the Citadel," "The Succession to the Throne," and "The Caste Problem."

Graphic commentary is supplemented with excellent photographs and drawings depicting the stages of termite life, habits, and habitat.

The person who can't pass an ant hill without pondering the wonders of such creature colonization will enjoy Skaife's account of termitary.—*Ann Streetman*

GUN DIGEST, edited by John T. Amber, 385 pages, fully illustrated with new guns and shooting ideas. Published by Gun Digest Co., 4540 West Madison Ave., Chicago 24, Ill. \$3.95.

GUN DIGEST now has become a yearly institution. The 16th annual edition now is on the book shelves for men who are intensely interested in guns, and for the casual user who wants to get expert information. Although most of the guns now on the American market are listed and described in the current issue, it also contains many interesting articles by well-known writers.

The **GUN DIGEST** is a valuable addition to any library because of the useful information it packs.—*L. A. Wilke*

HUNTING TRAILS, edited by Raymond R. Camp, 500 pages. Published by Meredith Press, 60 E. 42nd St., New York 17. \$7.95.

In this tremendous but easy-to-hold volume outdoorsman Ray Camp has put together a collection of stories about hunters and game to offer fine reading for the winter months ahead. Many of the top writers of all time who have worked in the outdoors field are listed among the authors appearing in **HUNTING TRAILS**. Whether you are interested in big game, upland game or just about dogs or even interesting characters, it is found in this book.—*L. A. Wilke*

A PRESENT FOR BIRD LOVERS



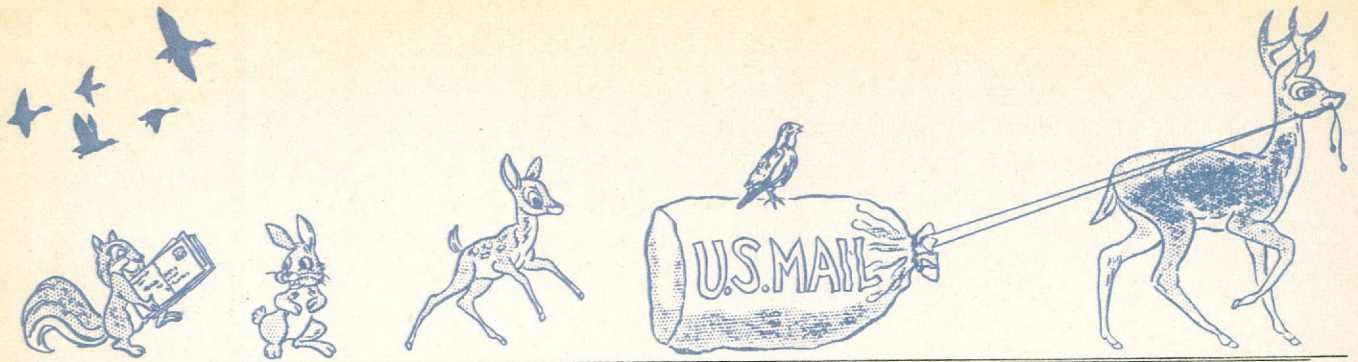
The nicest thing you can give any bird lover this Christmas is a copy of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Texas*. This beautifully prepared book, filled with color plates of most of the more than 500 different birds of Texas, is available at \$3 each, plus 6¢ state sales tax, postpaid.

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Mother Instinct in Rooster

Editor:

I am reporting an incident of a pen-raised Bobwhite rooster's mothering a brood of chicks.

This particular rooster paired with a hen which produced 11 eggs before starting the incubation period. The hen vanished after covering the eggs for about two weeks, and the rooster took over the chore. He hatched all the eggs. He was not seen for several days after leaving the nest, but he appeared approximately a week later with seven lively chicks.

The birds were released on the Terrell Ranch Shooting Resort which is the setting of this event.

The boys on the ranch report they have seen a number of small quail recently.

R. O. LaNeve
Fort Worth

Free-shrimping Catch



Editor:

Just a note to let you know how much my son and I enjoy the magazine. We feel that Texas Game and Fish is the best sporting magazine available for Texas because the articles and stories are well written and deal with familiar Texas hunting and fishing areas and Texas game.

Keep up the good work!

The above snapshot shows a string of 31 mackerel, three pompano, and a 10-pound red caught in late August at the Galveston North Jetty. The four of us (from left to right Bob Giles, Keith Alexander, Hoyt Yoakum, and Landon Alex-

ander) caught the fish free shrimping out by the old concrete ship. My son Keith, age 10, set a pretty rough pace for us "grownups" with his 10 mackerel.

Landon Alexander
Houston

to a visit to Grandpa's and believe me they catch 'em too. With kindest regards to you and your staff.

Jno. H. Adams
Tulia

Lionhearted Mantis

Editor:

Recently while I was working in my garden, I heard a rustling in a nearby vine. Upon investigating, I found a large praying mantis (about four inches long) clutching a lizard equally as large. She was holding its mouth closed tightly with one foreleg and squeezing its middle as if trying to choke and smother it with the other foreleg.

Does the mantis ordinarily attack lizards she cannot devour or was she only protecting herself? Since this is the first and only time I have seen such a thing, I have been very curious about it. I know it is customary for them to kill their mates.

Mrs. C. V. Brewer
Grapevine

(It is not likely that the mantis attacked the lizard to protect herself. It could have retreated easily from the lizard. The mantis, however, probably did not plan to eat the flesh of her prey but merely to suck the juices from the lizard's head. According to past records, the size of an animal does not seem to discourage an attacking praying mantis.—Editor)

Wife Catches Biggest Ones

Editor:

I think you are doing a wonderful job keeping the people of Texas posted on our wildlife resources. Wife and I get a lot of pleasure from reading the fine articles in the magazine. I am 74 and can still walk behind our bird dog all day and still feel good at night and thank my Maker that my shooting eye is still good. I still get a thrill on these long lead shots when I bring down the blues or bobs. Only the ones who experience it know. Also wife and I get a big kick out of fishing—only thing wrong is she usually catches the biggest ones.

We have a small fish pond in our backyard fed by a windmill. Have blue cat and several varieties of perch. We have lots of fun with it. Our grandkids look forward

Possum Kingdom Record?



Editor:

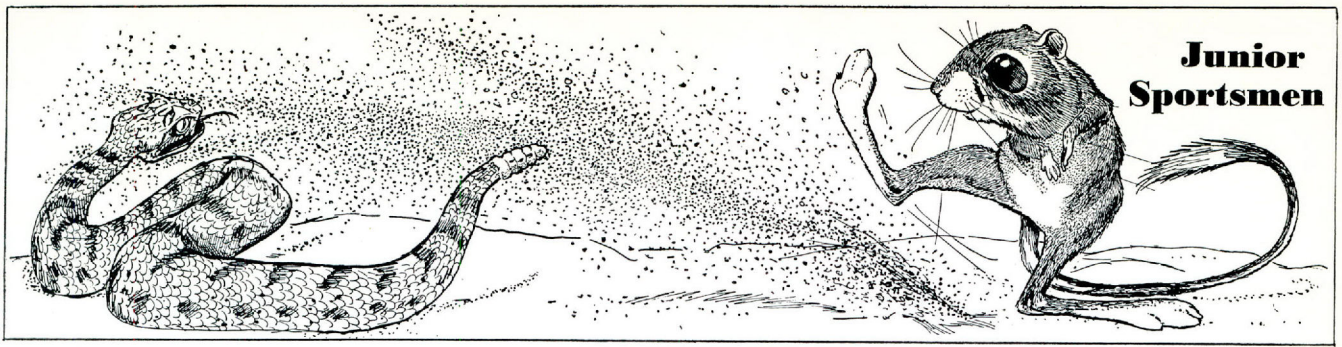
About a year ago, Mary Kay Sloane, writing in Texas Game and Fish, expressed the belief that Texas' top white-tailed deer would come from the Possum Kingdom country. She believed one scoring 140 or more Boone and Crockett points would be taken.

I took one November 26, 1960 (above picture), which scores an official 146 1/16 Boone and Crockett points.

I am attempting to initiate a drive to locate and score the larger bucks killed in this area, and I am measuring them according to Boone and Crockett standards. Until I can locate one better, I am laying claim to the record buck of the Possum Kingdom area.

At least two bucks estimated in the 150 plus class have been reported. An unidentified doctor has been quoted as having seen during last year's bow hunting season one on the Walking Cane Ranch that would go an easy 150 points. At the same time, the owners of the ranch where my buck was taken insist that I did not get the big buck.

Gilbert Webb
Graham



Junior Sportsmen

The Panhandle Rats

by ANN STREETMAN

THE LITTLE MOUSE that sends your big sister scrambling onto a chair is a member of the largest order of mammals. It is a rodent.

You have probably seen many of its kin, but perhaps you did not notice the similarity. The gopher that might have ruined your mother's flower bed last spring is also a rodent. Moles, shrews, rats, squirrels and beavers are members of the rodent order.

Regardless of size and shape of the different rodents, they have one thing in common: four large yellow or orange front teeth which continue to grow longer throughout the animal's life.

Most of the little buck-toothed rodents enjoy a diet of grasses, seeds and similar vegetation. Some, however, eat insects and other animal life.

Texas has a large variety of rodents. In the Panhandle, for example, rodent life varies from the burrowing kangaroo rat to the aquatic beaver.

The kangaroo rat is about 10 inches from nose to tip of tail. Its name comes from its bounce. Its long hind legs and strong tail help it take long kangaroo-type bounds. The little rat digs a home with many entrances and tunnels including some dead-end passages to trick any intruder. The burrow has high round rooms where the babies are protected.

The little rat stuffs seeds of many desert plants in its roomy cheek pouches and then packs them back to its home. Once safely in the burrow it can enjoy a more leisurely meal of the mesquite, sandbur, tumbleweed, Russian thistle, and sunflower seeds it has collected.

Although the long-legged rat ventures from its home only in the dark of night, it is not timid when it meets an enemy, such as a rattlesnake. The little mammal's quick cunning is often too much for a sidewinder. If the jumping rodent sees the snake before it strikes, it kicks a bit of sand into the reptile's eyes. Retreat is immediate for the attacker since it has no eyelids to guard against the smarting sand.

Sand is important to the kangaroo rat in other ways. For example, it hates water and substitutes sand for a daily bath, fluffing it through its fur, leaving the coat shining.

Very different from the kangaroo rat in size and habits is the beaver whose life depends on water. The beaver, which

grows to about 3½ feet in length and sometimes weighs as much as 80 pounds, is a busy and undaunted engineer. It fells trees and builds dams to regulate the flow of water around its home on a creek, stream, lake or river. Texas beavers burrow into cut banks of streams or lakes, but beavers in other climates make dome-shaped homes of marsh vegetation and mud.

The large, rodent engineer likes a variety of vegetation but especially enjoys the inner bark of willows and cottonwoods. In Central Texas button willow, juniper and pecan trees along with Bermuda grass and other small vegetation make a meal fit for a beaver. **

catfish, I caught a 13-pound yellow catfish in the same creek on a trot line. I used inner tubes to catch both of the fish.

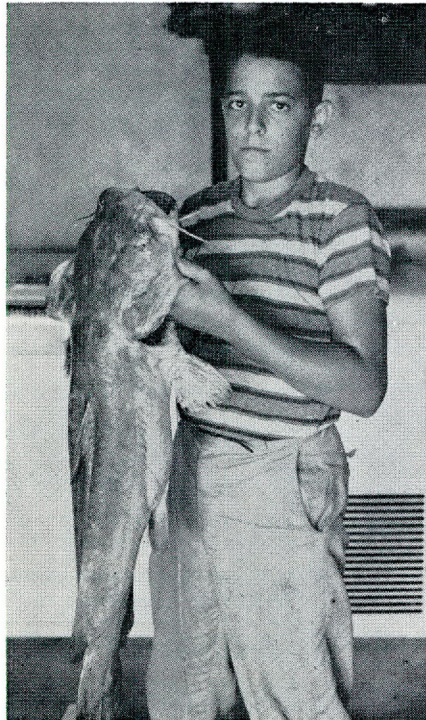
Two years ago I went to Frio County hunting on the Stevenson ranch near Dillely. I was sitting in an old stand about half mad because we had never seen deer there. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon I sighted a 6-point buck in the scope of my .243 Winchester. I took aim and shot, and I got him at 300 yards. Just after I shot, I felt something warm running down my head. I felt of it with my hand and found it to be blood. The scope had kicked a small cut in my head.

I got another deer the last day of the season. It was a 7-point one killed at 100 yards with a .243.

I am 14 years old.

Ralph Ingram, Jr.
San Antonio

Two Catfish, Two Bucks



Editor:

During the Labor Day weekend I made a fishing trip up to our ranch in Junction. I lay a trot line in the Johnson Fork Creek baited with large minnows. The next morning I had this (above) 14-pound, 31½-inch yellow catfish on the line. Just two weeks before I caught the 14-pound

Try Some Winter Reading

During December while it is too cold to tramp in the woods, you can enjoy wild-life through books. There are many nature books which will increase your wildlife knowledge and entertain you at the same time. Here are just a few.

1) THE WONDERS OF LIFE ON EARTH, by Lincoln Barnett, and editors of Life, 1960, \$12.50.

2) PETS FROM THE POND, by Margaret Waring Buck, Abingdon, 1958, \$3.

3) ALL ABOUT THE DESERT, by Sam Epstein and Beryl Epstein, Random, 1957, \$1.95.

4) THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF LIFE, by Julian Huxley, Garden City, 1959, \$2.95.

5) THE WEB OF NATURE, by Ted S. Pettit, Garden City, 1960, \$2.95.

6) WORLDS OF NATURE, by Rutherford Platt, and staff of the Walt Disney Studio, Golden, 1957, \$4.95.

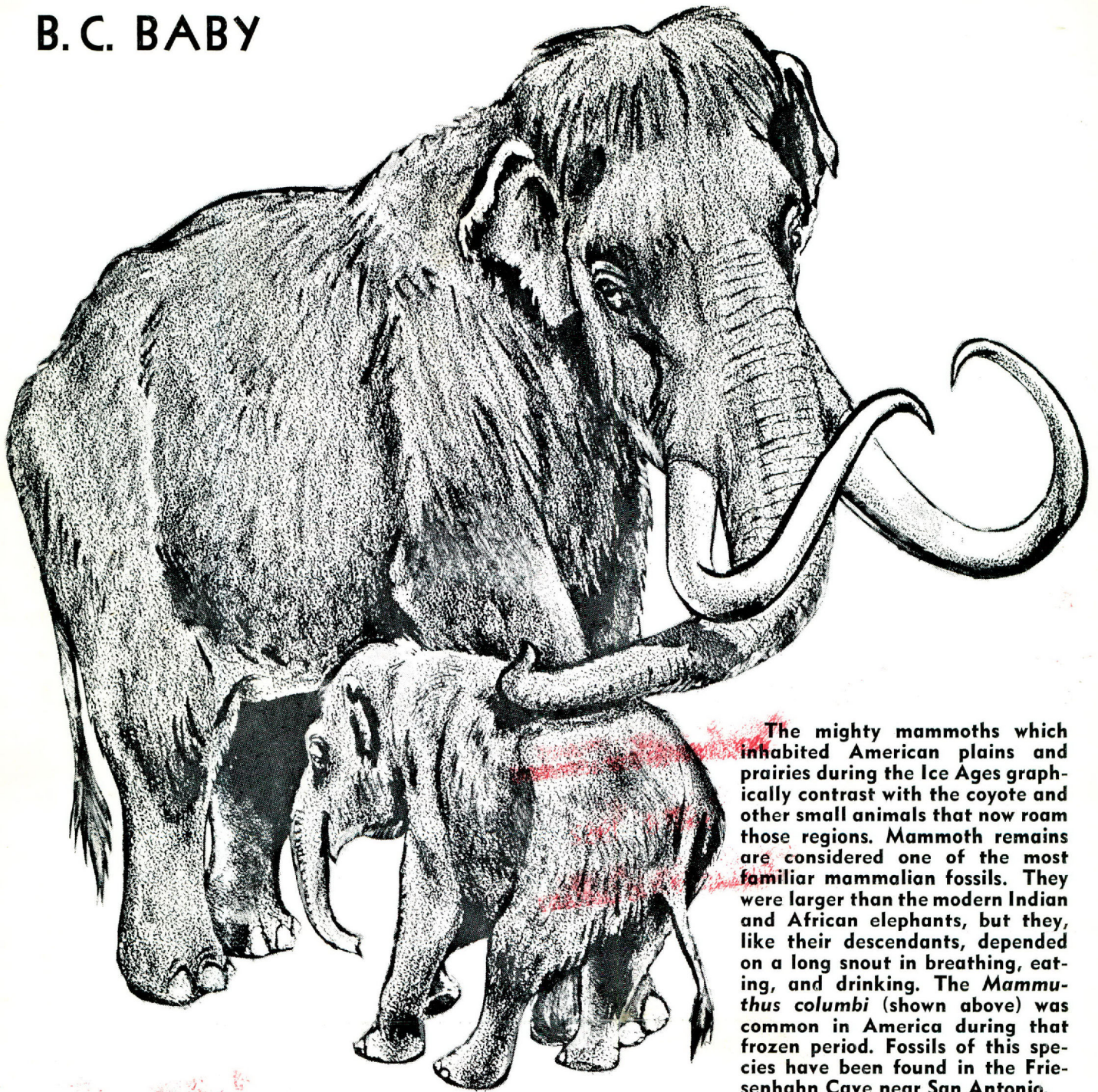
7) NATURE DETECTIVE, by William R. Scott, 1958, \$2.75.

8) WONDERS OF NATURE, by Jane Werner Watson, Golden, 1950, \$1.89.

9) THE RAINBOW BOOK OF NATURE, by Donald Culross Peattie, World, 1957, \$4.95.

Don't forget that many encyclopedias contain beautiful colored illustrations of wildlife along with the printed information. Studying animal life in the encyclopedia with Mom or Dad can be fun.

B. C. BABY



The mighty mammoths which inhabited American plains and prairies during the Ice Ages graphically contrast with the coyote and other small animals that now roam those regions. Mammoth remains are considered one of the most familiar mammalian fossils. They were larger than the modern Indian and African elephants, but they, like their descendants, depended on a long snout in breathing, eating, and drinking. The *Mammuthus columbi* (shown above) was common in America during that frozen period. Fossils of this species have been found in the Friesenhahn Cave near San Antonio.

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