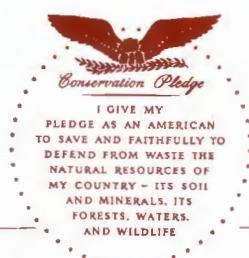


MASSACHUSETTS

Wildlife

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1962





MASSACHUSETTS *Wildlife*

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VOL. XIII NO. 5

DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND GAME

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Letter To A Landowner

by Rex Chapman

Dear Bob,

You'll probably wonder why I'm writing this instead of waiting until you get back from your camping trip in the Tetons, but I know a couple of places you'll be close to a postoffice and I'm sure you'll check your mail, if only to keep up on the doings on your home farm. Farmers like you depend on a lot of things to produce agricultural products — things like soil, water, good markets, and people — and people like us sure depend on you farmers to keep us supplied with food.

So while you're having a ball out there in the woods I know you won't forget the home place and will keep close tabs on it . . . which brings up the whole idea of this letter.

When you got up at the meeting last week and spoke out for the idea of closing the whole town to hunting, a lot of folks in the audience sure agreed with you. More than one perfectly sincere citizen got up on his hind legs and sounded off. While most of their arguments seemed to be a list of complaints against the lunatic fringe apparent in just about any group of people who are deeply interested in any particular activity, it seemed to me that basically they reflected a pretty generally held conception of what hunting is—a concept held by people who don't hunt, that is.

There were a few phrases like "blood-sports", "killers of wildlife",

“dangerous trespassers,” “thrill of killing,” etc., and one guy even hinted darkly that there might be a mighty thin line between men who would kill animals and men who kill people. But I think basically there wasn’t any real animosity, only a dislike of hunting stemming from lack of an accurate conception of what hunting is, perhaps best illustrated by the fellow who got up and said, “I’m for conservation, you all know that, but what in tunket does hunting have to do with conservation?”

Seems to me this chap cherished a misconception of conservation as well as a misconception of hunting!

He obviously still thinks of conservation in the same sense with preservation — if we just set aside land forever, don’t let anybody remove anything, flora or fauna, from it, we’ll be conservationists. I can well remember years ago when as a school-kid earning date-money I worked for you by thinning little green apples. I guess the idea was if we picked and threw away a certain number of green apples, the ones left on the limb would grow a bigger, have a better shape, ripen evenly, and bring better prices on the market. It must have worked; you certainly had enough kids doing the thinning. Your trees easily must have produced a lot more little apples than there was room for good, perfect ones to grow to maturity. I understand now there’s new, scientific methods for keeping the crop within reason so’s every apple will be as near perfect as science, the farmer, and God can make it — but I suspect the idea of controlling the product is still valid.

You and I know the same idea’s true in most things that grow on the land. Every farmer knows he’s got to thin his carrots and beets, he’s got to space out his seeds, he can put only so many chickens, sheep, cattle,

pigs, or whatever, in a given area on a given amount of feed.

If you’ve read this far, I’d like you to ask yourself, “Is wildlife any different?”

Like apples, carrots, beets, and all livestock, wildlife also has to have room to live. That’s why ecologists tell us that maintenance of habitat is the key to conservation of animals. I’m no ecologist, or biologist either, just a fellow that’s politely called a journalist (and impolitely called a lot of other things), but even I can see the sense in this emphasis on habitat. The only trouble is that maintaining or improving habitat alone is not enough. Besides being astronomically expensive, and impractical because most of the habitat is owned by private landowners, it’s a problem breeder. Let’s suppose you fertilized your trees, pruned ’em back, sprayed the bugs, and grew a bumper crop every year — maybe even planted more trees . . . then never thinned the crop, maybe never even harvested it. Would that be conservation?

Applying the same reasoning to apples that some of the folks at that meeting applied to wildlife (“Let’s preserve ’em because they look so pretty”) would be mighty wasteful, wouldn’t it?

Right off I can hear you saying, “But apples are a crop!” Certainly they are. And so is wildlife. Nature produces a crop of new animals every breeding season, right on top of the best habitat of the year. Lush spring and summer growth, with fall’s crop of seeds and fruits, helps ’em to grow big and lusty — and then along comes winter. Don’t have to tell you about New England winters and what a tough time any animal on the loose has just surviving. And that’s what happens to most of that annual crop of wildlife. One research study showed that nearly half of the population of ruffed grouse



Wildlife is a product of the land, as are tomatoes, hay, apples, and a host of other things. Like these other crops, there is also a wildlife surplus which should be harvested rather than wasted, and the only means of accomplishing this is through legal hunting

dies every year, and in Massachusetts not more than 11 percent of those that die are killed by hunters to provide some healthy outdoor sport and grace some housewife's table. The rest were kind of wasted, weren't they?

A Michigan study compared grouse populations on a sanctuary where no hunting was allowed with the population on a heavily hunted area. There wasn't any difference worth mentioning.

As a fruit grower you've had some experience with deer. They do like those tender little twigs on the end of apple tree limbs. Best of all they like a new tree that's recently been set out. Deer are one of the critters that, being big, don't fall prey to the natural predators we have in Massachusetts, and unless the habitat is really in a deplorable state they don't

die of starvation very readily. But they can and have, in some states where they've been protected long enough to the point there are so many deer that they're a costly nuisance to farmers, even a highway menace, and have literally eaten themselves out of house and home.

Then starvation, disease, and slow, lingering death step in, and neither the deer herd nor the habitat recovers from the damage done to them by protection. This can happen to rabbits, and some other species, too.

Fact is, Bob, hunting by legal means, under control of the state agencies specifically equipped with staffs trained in modern wildlife management, is just about the only tool we poor humans have to keep wildlife populations and their habitat in balance to the benefit of both —

and so that both folks who hunt and folks who don't will continue to be able to enjoy wildlife.

When you advocate prohibiting hunting, or restricting it beyond the wise limitations already placed on hunting by the trained men in the state wildlife agencies, you don't do wildlife any favors. Instead, you set up a fatal chain of events that does just the opposite. So you see, hunting does have something to do with conservation. Besides being the one tool man has to control wildlife populations to protect themselves and the habitat, it's also part of that "wise use" portion of the definition of conservation. Conservation is wise use — not disuse, misuse, or abuse. Letting the crows and rats clean up the carcasses of wildlife that died from man's neglect and well-intentioned but misdirected prohibition of hunting is hardly wise use, is it?

If you read this letter while sitting around your campfire out in those beautiful mountains, take a good look around. As you have your evening cup of coffee or a last smoke, reflect on why you are there. You're enjoying the outdoors in your favorite way — for much of the same reasons a sportsman hunts or fishes. Your favorite outdoor skill which calls you to the woods may be camping, skiing, canoeing, horseback riding or just plain sightseeing, but it's no more valid, honorable or deserving than the favorite outdoor skill of 25,000,000 other Americans—hunting.

Very few of them would fight to relieve you of your privilege to enjoy the outdoors in your own way. Why not be sportsman enough yourself to return this favor?

And please remember, a lot of them can't afford to go to the Grand Tetons for their outdoor fun — they have to get it close to home, perhaps even in our town.

These metal signs may be seen in many towns and cities of the Commonwealth. Heavy paper safety-zone posters for marking a 500 foot boundary from dwellings in use are available to any landowner desiring a reasonable amount upon request to Fish and Game Field Hq., Westboro, Mass.



BACK to those chilling remarks some of the folks made about hunters—it's typical of people who don't know the facts, or lack a charitable attitude, to paint a whole group with the same brush because of the real or imagined antics of a minority. Just because the head-shrinkers tell us that one person in every ten will have a nervous breakdown doesn't mean the other nine should start hunting for a padded cell, too.

Maybe if more people enjoyed God's outdoors like you and I do, even in different ways, there would be fewer nervous breakdowns. So why not enjoy and conserve what we've got, together?

Yours for real conservation,
Red

P.S. If your neighbors are still scared of hunters, tell 'em the state-enforced safety zone law already protects 'em. All most hunters need is a gentle reminder, like our free safety zone poster, to tell them they're getting too close to the buildings. And you might be interested to know that a town ordinance will not be enforced by the state; if enforced at all, (which it often isn't in some towns), it requires additional town police at added cost to the taxpayers. And as for the safety of hunting itself — remember that insurance companies rate it as a risk about 17th among participant sports; lower than ball games, swimming, boating, skiing, and a lot of others. In fact, the fatality rate for firearms deaths from all causes (police action, murder, suicide, and accidents in the home included) is 1.4 per 100,000 people, slightly above the 1.2 fatalities per 100,000 from choking on food. Have a good dinner!





CLUBS OR PUBS?

by Red Chaplin

ORGANIZED sportsmen's groups throughout the Commonwealth are as numerous and varied in size, scope, energy, and purpose as ants in an anthill, it seems. They range from active, well-informed groups to ones apparently without interest in much of anything except "what's in it for us?"

Looking at things statewide, it's obvious that many sportsmen's clubs in Massachusetts are sadly in need of rejuvenation. In the last ten or twelve years, there's been a noticeable slipping. Where most clubs ten

years ago were active, growing, and filled with missionary zeal to accomplish great things for hunting and fishing, today many of them have relaxed into (1) social organizations, (2) Sunday bar-rooms, or (3) selfish special-interest groups.

Now I know this doesn't apply to your particular club. Your group of lively outdoorsmen is dedicated to conservation of natural resources, meets regularly every month, always has a good turn-out, spends most of its money on worthwhile projects like habitat improvement, sponsors

at least two boys every year to the State Conservation Camp, has an active program for improving relations between sportsmen and landowners in your area, always appears in force to help the Division with fish or game management projects in your area, works directly with the 4-H, Boy Scouts, schools, and other youth services in town to develop youngsters with an appreciation for the outdoors and an understanding of the importance of wise use of natural resources, has a live-wire junior club of its own, makes its grounds and ranges available to other organizations not so abundantly endowed, sends an alert, active delegate to the County League or the Federation every month (who is *required* to report back in detail to the club on everything that took place) always backs up or maybe even sponsors sound conservation legislation, and battles like the dickens to defeat unsound proposals. And when you might disagree with some proposal of the Division's, your members always strive earnestly to thoroughly understand both sides of the coin, and then always act in the best interest of the majority of sportsmen in the state. And sometimes your club members will admit that they don't know everything about fish and game management.

If your club fits this description even half-way, you can pat yourself on the back. But don't pat too long, — while that hand's busy applying congratulations, it's not doing any constructive work.

Of course, few clubs are this good. Most are somewhere between the three types mentioned earlier, and this utopian description. There are a pair of groups in central Massachusetts that illustrate the point. On one pond, a local club often has a committee present to meet the State stocking truck, helps unload the fish, opens holes in the ice, shov-

els snow, and serves hot coffee to the Division crew. The club members always appear happy with the size and number of fish. The next stop for the truck is an adjoining pond, where the schedule calls for stocking about twice as many fish. Another delegation meets the truck here also, but this group is composed of two individuals who regularly complain about the size and number of fish, stand and watch while the Division boys labor, and then annually complete their self-appointed watch-dog project by writing a complaining, insulting letter to the State House.

Most clubs seem to slide along these days, content merely to exist, with an occasional arousing of interest when self-appointed "protectors of the sportsmen's rights" like those just mentioned report that "we're being short-changed again". This kind of club is usually a rest and rum club instead of a rod and gun club.

What the busybody is really reporting is that, in his opinion alone, his pet area isn't getting enough fish or birds. What he usually fails to realize is that his pet area isn't really his personal province, is probably getting more than it needs anyway, has probably received twice as much as he thinks, and if the Division were to give everybody like this his personal idea of his "fair share", everybody would get less because there's only so much to go around. The Division cannot base its stocking program on this kind of selfish squeaking wheel. It has to base fish and game distribution on the numbers available each year, the areas available in which to release them, and whether such areas are suitable for the critters involved and also open to all sportsmen.

Unfortunately, while some "sportsmen" (and I use the term loosely) are taking up their club's time and energy with this kind of

activity, hunting and fishing areas are disappearing because too few clubs have any program in their own communities to keep them open. Too few clubs make a regular effort to improve relations between sportsmen and landowners. Too few clubs take an active part in sponsoring good legislation, or fighting poor proposals. Too few clubs make an honest effort to really understand which is which. Too few organizations think of anything or anybody but themselves.

Too many of us think only of tomorrow's creel or bag limit; too few of us think of next year's hunting or fishing area. Only a relative handful think about conservation of all natural resources, upon which man as well as wildlife depends. Too few of us look beyond today.

Where good programs among sportsmen's clubs exist, they're usually the brainchild of, and largely done by, a few unselfish, public-spirited, aggressive members, working largely without the encouragement of the majority of club members. Many such we've worked with in the past have finally given up. They couldn't fight both city hall and their own club members without support, assistance and ideas from some kind of strong, central organization honestly devoted to furthering conservation by every available means, and able to act independently of political and State administration problems.

Much has been said and written about the unity among sportsmen. With all due respect to the leaders and workers of both the State Council of Sportsmen's Clubs and the Massachusetts Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, I suggest that true unity among sportsmen will never be realized until both groups dissolve and reform into one organization, retaining the best features of both, and financed sufficiently by

member clubs to support a full-time staff capable of creating and administering a state-wide program that will tie clubs together into an active, unified force.

And if this single state-wide group can attract large numbers of presently unaffiliated sportsmen either into clubs or as individual members, perhaps on an associate basis, that is so much to the good.

What's wrong with sportsmen's clubs today is largely the result of fragmentation, lack of a unified effort, lack of a directive force, leaving a vacuum largely filled with lethargy, selfishness, misunderstanding, misdirected effort, and rank provincialism. The State Council and the Federation both have many good points; both have done a lot of good, both have a lot to offer right now, but neither can realize its full potential by depending solely on unpaid, volunteer services of people who are already busy earning a living. Nor can the full potential be realized with both groups competing with each other.

Nor can they reach full effectiveness without the whole-hearted support and earnest cooperation of member clubs. And that support will not be forthcoming in large enough measure, backed up by the green stuff that makes programs tick, until one group or the other, or both in unison, produces a solid, truly state-wide program that will attract sportsmen, and give them an action program they can get their teeth into.

With hunting and fishing constantly under attack by the rank preservationists and anti-hunting cranks, with home and highway building taking more and more hunting and fishing areas, with anti-gun laws being sponsored more and more often, it's time we sportsmen buried the hatchet and worked together, both among ourselves and with other



Many of the active clubs statewide send one or two boys like these to the Massachusetts Junior Sportsmen's Conservation Camp each year. These lads are learning about the types and importance of soils in our state.

outdoor minded groups even if composed of folks who don't hunt or fish, to regain the ground we've lost or at least slow the tide.

As Ben Franklin said, "We either hang together, or we shall hang separately."

TREES and GAME—Twin Crops

The Tree Farm program of growing trees as a crop holds the key to material increases in wildlife resources as well as to the nation's wood supply, according to Arthur H. Carhart of Denver, well-known outdoor writer and conservationist, author of a new booklet, "Trees and Game—Twin Crops."

"Trees and wildlife live together on nearly half a billion acres of commercial timberlands in the United States," Carhart said in the new publication. "A great many of our animals and birds require forest environments for food and shelter. The value of natural resources lies in making wise use of such wealth. Therefore, wise management of timber and of game is directed at the production and harvest of each as a crop—indeed, they are twin crops."

Carhart said well-planned management of timberlands means two things of prime interest to sportsmen. First, in most instances, it assures high levels of production of both wood and wildlife. Second, it is the best prospect of sustained yields in both resources.

Carhart emphasized the importance of keeping wildlife populations in balance with the ability of timberlands to feed them. He cited several instances of major deer die-offs brought on by overpopulated herds.

Copies of this booklet are available from: American Forest Products Industries, Inc., 1816 N Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.





ARMS
AND
THE
MAN

HOODLUMS and trigger-tempered emotionalists have done more to promote anti-firearms movements than all other people. Their actions, sometimes viewed as a persistent menace to society, have prompted legislators at all levels to introduce measures that would end this nebulous threat to human welfare by the incomprehensible expedient of preventing or making difficult the use of firearms by the large number of law abiding citizens that enjoy them the most.

An objective statement on this action-reaction trend is David Cort's "Arms And The Man" appearing in *The Nation* for May 23, 1959. Cort writes, "The elementary attitude toward the U.S. Constitution's 'right to bear arms' seems to depend on which end of the gun the individual sees himself at.

"The typical sociologist's attitude toward guns is that they are totally a bad thing — he evidently expects to be at the bad end.

"Probably every state legislature in the country now has some bill before it to restrict further the ownership of firearms . . . With every respect for the legislators' honorable intentions, it must be noted that similar regulations were decreed by Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and, of course, the Communists everywhere. Dictators have to know who has the guns.

"These terrible lessons are not as obsolete as supposed in the atomic age. In an atomic war, intelligently conducted to conquer something worth having afterward, small units of enemy troops would appear suddenly in key areas of the United States. An American citizenry with guns at the right time at the right place would then be useful. In an atomic war insanely conducted to commit world suicide, the survivors with guns would be a few criminals (who always have them) who would not scruple to loot and spoil the last remnants of civilization . . . Why not let the honest heads-of-family have guns, too?

" . . . any further law restricting ownership of guns should probably be a well publicized federal law specifically aimed at criminals and stolen weapons. Hunting rifles and shotguns should never require a license or registration. The Founding Fathers believed, and I believe today, that an honest, responsible man with a gun is a support of the free society."

Sportsmen are citing a recent statement by President Kennedy on the need for a "Nation of Minute Men," patterned after those of the American Revolution, and ready to fight and sacrifice to keep the country free, as further justification of unobstructed private ownership and peaceful use of firearms.

The President said, according to the Associated Press, "Today we need a nation of minute men; citizens who are not only prepared to take up arms, but citizens who regard the preservation of freedom as a basic purpose of their daily life and who are willing to consciously work and sacrifice for that freedom. The cause of liberty, the cause of America, cannot succeed with a lesser effort."

Unarmed and helpless minute men, sportsmen say, hardly would be in a position to take up arms and rally to their country's defense.

—Wildlife Management Institute

A Look at a Barrel of Rabbits

by JOHN B. MOYLE

EVERY small boy who has persuaded his father to build a rabbit hutch has learned rapidly about multiplication. First there are two rabbits; then there are six or eight busily chewing away. If dad buys more food and builds more hutches, there soon may be dozens. Usually, however, at about this point the small boy (and his dad) tire of the rabbit business and give them away to other small boys whose indulgent fathers have not learned the biological multiplication table.

It is easy to see that there could be an astronomical number of rabbits, and yet in the wild there are not. At times there are more cottontails than at other times, but usually there are about the same number gnawing on the shrubbery each winter. Why is this? And why can hunters shoot a large number of rabbits each fall and there still be plenty of rabbits next year? Obviously, population arithmetic in the wild is more complicated than the straight multiplication in the rabbit hutch.

Let us exercise our imagination a bit and consider rabbits by the barrel and see how rabbit populations look on the basis of elementary plumbing. And in the process we will ring in a few game management terms that you will see are not nearly as tough as they look.

Everyone knows that no matter how much water you run into a barrel you can only fill it to the top. Then it runs over. This is, of course, the capacity of the barrel or

in terms of rabbits in rabbit country is the *maximum carrying capacity* of the range. For rabbits this "maximum" time of plenty is in the summer when the world is lush and green and there is plenty of food and cover. During the summer the cottontails busy themselves munching and raising more rabbits and, if it has been a good summer, by fall the *habitat* barrel is full to the brim. There is room for no more rabbits.

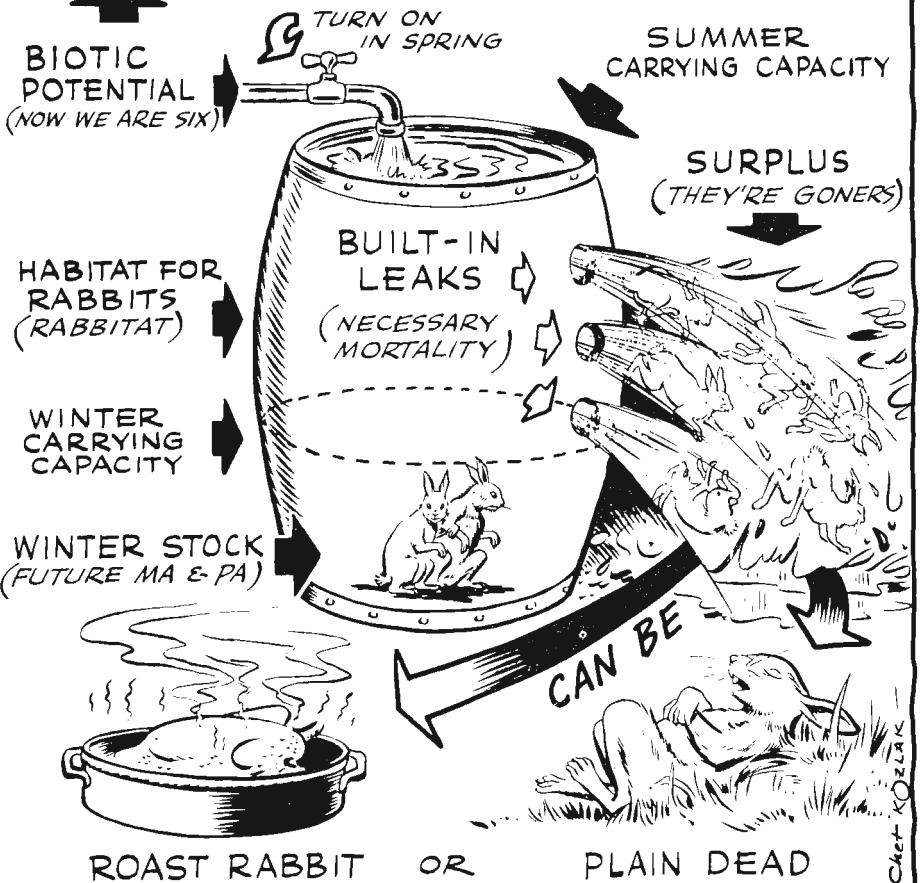
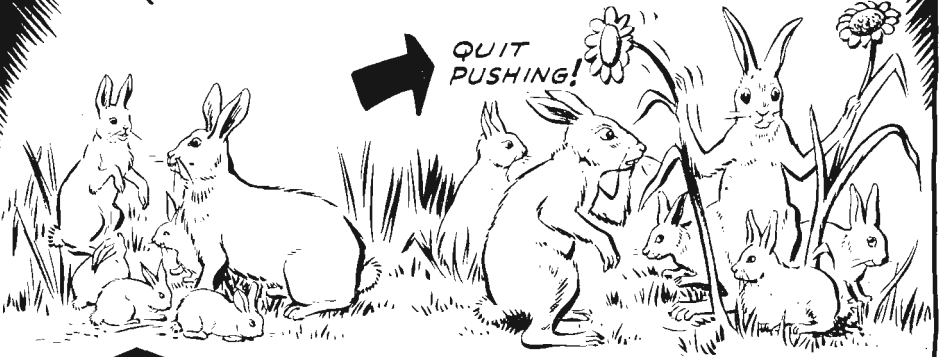
But, as the drawing shows, there are holes in the barrel through which the water leaks out and is lost. But even so, if the faucet supplies more water than leaks away, as long as the water is turned on the barrel fills. So also there is a continuous loss of rabbits from our habitat barrel throughout the summer. Some die of diseases, some are run over by cars, and some are caught by cats, dogs, and foxes. As long as the rabbits are reproducing rapidly, the habitat barrel fills with rabbits. But fall comes and by that time the rabbits are no longer raising families. Now the holes in the barrel (*natural mortality*) really begin to draw down the population level. Frost comes, the leaves drop, and hiding places are hard to find. Food becomes scarce. By winter the level in the barrel drops down to the lowest hole—that of the *winter carrying capacity*.

It has been a tough winter for Brother Cottontail, and by the time spring comes there are only two rabbits left (in winter this is a two-rabbit barrel). He nibbles a green sprout, finds a mate, and starts to raise more rabbits. The faucet feeding the barrel (*biotic potential*) is now wide open. At first the level in

John B. Moyle is Supervisor, Bureau of Research and Planning, Division of Game & Fish, Minnesota Department of Conservation.

BARREL OF RABBITS

(TWO RABBIT WINTER CAPACITY)



the barrel rises slowly for the barrel leaks — rabbits old and young die along the way — but gradually the barrel fills and the rabbit population rises. By fall we are back where we started; with a barrel of rabbits and have seen what game managers call a *population turnover*.

Why were only two rabbits left in the bottom of the barrel each winter? Because either winter food or cover was the *limiting factor* determining the number of rabbits that could survive until spring.

Now we have seen that the habitat barrel will hold only so many rabbits at any time and more in summer than in winter. We also see that it is a leaky barrel and that the holes (causes of mortality) tend to hold the rabbit population in balance with its food and cover despite the great capabilities for multiplication. But the most useful part of the barrel to us is the space between the rim and the bottom hole; the space from which the water leaks away — the home, as it were, of the lost rabbits that die during the summer and fall from many causes. It is part of this excess, the *biological surplus*, that the hunter can take without harming the breeding stock — the future Pa and Ma rabbit at the bottom of the barrel. And if the hunter did not take these extra rabbits they would die of other causes.

There are several things that game managers can do with this barrel of rabbits — or any other kind of wildlife.

He can adjust the hunting season so best use can be made of the leakage from the barrel; adjust things so that many of the extra rabbits reach the roasting pan. He can put a flange on the top of the barrel so it will hold more water; that is, provide more food and cover to raise more rabbits in summer. This, of

course, will be of little value unless the hunters take them in fall. He can try to plug up some of the mortality leaks, but this won't help much unless it is the bottom hole that is plugged and the winter carrying capacity raised by such means as providing more winter food and cover. The trick is to always keep enough rabbits in the barrel in bad times (winter) so they can fill it in good times (summer) and then to not let the surplus rabbits go to waste but rather to use them as a source of hunting.

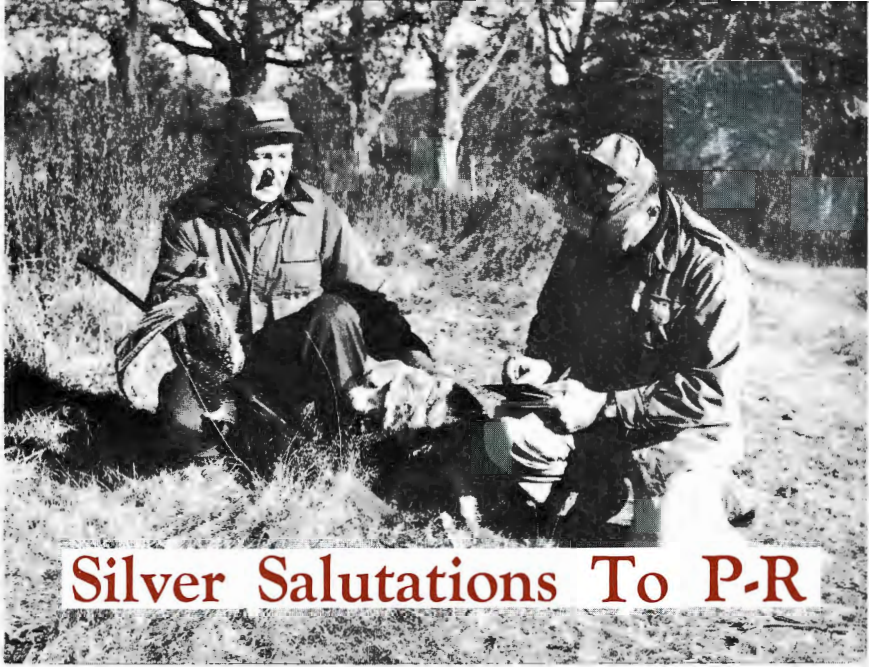
We can always have a barrel of rabbits — or pheasants, or ducks, or deer, or you name it — if we maintain the barrel (habitat). Even with its inevitable and necessary leaks (natural losses) the barrel will refill each year by population turnover and the leaks which would otherwise be a total loss can supply hunters with much game (*harvestable surplus*) without causing the barrel to go dry (injuring the breeding stock).

And remember too there is only a limited amount of water in the barrel that can leak out of it. A hundred people with cups (or guns) can't each get as much as could ten. What we need with the increasing number of hunters is a bigger barrel — improved habitat for game. But, and here there is a complication; this same habitat barrel is also full of corn, forest trees, automobiles, airfields, city developments, spraying equipment, and all of the other attributes of our civilization including ourselves. But let us try to make a little space in it for the rabbits and other wildlife. Maybe we can — with your permission — rearrange things a bit in the barrel so we have *multiple land use*; land use that will allow some room for rabbits and other game (and hunting for all of us).

ABC's OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

- A**lways practice safe gun handling.
- B**e considerate of the landowner. You are his guest.
- C**onduct yourself as a SPORTSMAN should.
- D**on't be a game hog.
- E**ducate youth in the principles of sportsmanship.
- F**avor the fellow who is hunting with you.
- G**ive wildlife a break. Work for its conservation.
- H**ave the location of your hunting partner always in mind.
- I**nfluence others to hunt safely.
- J**oin a sportsman's organization.
- K**eep a clean camp.
- L**eave young wildlife alone.
- M**ake sure of your target before you shoot.
- N**ever leave a cripple to go to waste.
- O**bey the game laws to the letter.
- P**ut yourself in the other fellows place. Treat him accordingly
- Q**uit harping about good sportsmanship and do something about it.
- R**etrieve every piece of game you knock down.
- S**hare your game bag with the farmer.
- T**ake a boy, other than your own, hunting or fishing.
- U**nite your fellow sportsmen in a common effort to provide better hunting and fishing.
- V**alue, and protect, your privilege to own and bear firearms.

— Vermont Fish & Game Service —



Silver Salutations To P-R

TWENTY-FIVE years ago this September, the Pittman-Robertson bill was enacted and approved by President Roosevelt. Beneath this simple statement of fact lies a multitude of hard work, perseverance, and subsequent benefit to all the states of the union.

Let us explain in more detail. Early in 1937, the National Wildlife Federation had extremely limited resources but a definite mission; provide revenues for a much-needed national wildlife restoration program by means of Federal aid to state projects.

A bill was drawn up which entailed an earmarked excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition to be allocated to the states on the basis of land area and number of paid hunting licenses issued. This part of the project was fairly simple. Then began the difficult part; getting the support of the states, the sportsmen who would ultimately pay the tax, and the industries which manufactured the sporting equipment. It certainly must have seemed like a monumental task to the tiny

organization tucked away in the small room they called their office on the top floor of the Investment Building in Washington, D.C.

Nonetheless, tackle the job they did. Conservation groups of all types and interests were reached; garden clubs, rod and gun clubs, women's clubs, the Audubon Society, and a host of others. Strange as it may seem, the greatest support for the bill came from those very people who had to pay the freight — the hunters themselves.

Encouraged by the response, the Federation intensified its efforts until there was soon enough support to get the bill introduced into Congress by the late Senator Key Pittman of Nevada and the then Congressman A. Willis Robertson of Virginia, now that State's junior senator. That was on June 20, 1937 — a most significant day in the history of conservation.

Once the bill was introduced, personal letters were sent to each of the 48 state governors, advising them of the bill and of the possible benefits to their states through its

enactment and urging them to study the measure and so inform their congressional delegations should they consider the bill worthy of support.

Once again the response was prompt and effective, a testimony to the widespread recognition of the need that definite conservation measures be taken, and promptly. In a very short time, the bill was passed by President Roosevelt, effective July 1, 1938. The Wildlife Federation had done its job with amazing speed and effectiveness through the outstanding support of the countless conservation minded groups and individuals throughout the nation.

Undoubtedly the most significant piece of legislation ever enacted in this nation for the development and preservation of game birds and animals, the Pittman-Robertson act has helped to develop game management to a high degree of consistency and accuracy previously considered unattainable.

How does the program actually work? P-R money is derived specifically from an excise tax on . . . "firearms, shells, and cartridges . . .". The program calls for an allocation of money to the states on a "matching fund" basis; that is, each state must put \$1.00 into the program for every \$3.00 provided by the Federal government. The money may be used only for certain specified projects, and these are both initially approved and finally inspected by the Federal agency.

The money thus collected is distributed under a formula that provides a specified percentage for ad-

ministration of the program, for specified amounts to each territory, and for variable amounts to each state depending on the land area of the state and the number of hunting licenses sold during the year.

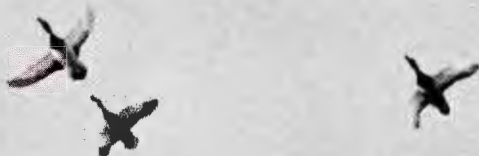
Massachusetts' annual share of the funds allocated under the program has averaged approximately \$70,000 in recent years. These monies have been used to good advantage to maintain and wherever possible improve the hunting. Life history studies have been made of many game birds and animals; deer, pheasant, quail, rabbits, hare, black and wood ducks, beaver, muskrat, and others. Postal card surveys have been made to determine hunter success, total kill figures, species preference, etc. One of the most significant aspects of the entire program is the land acquisition that has become possible with the additional funds available through P-R. Bay State hunters are now assured of some 8,568 acres on which they can hunt in the future. An additional 17,045 acres are currently under lease or agreement where the hunter may enjoy his sport. These areas are also open year-round to anyone interested in the outdoors, whether his (or her) main interest may be hunting, hiking, bird watching, picnicking, or whatever.

So it is with great appreciation that we can sincerely say happy 25th anniversary to the enactment of the Pittman-Robertson Act of September 2, 1937! Who can dream where we might be today if it were not for this timely piece of legislation? Or would it be a nightmare?

—RWB



A Conservational Nightmare



by JOHN C. PHILLIPS

THE other day while I sat in my fragile ark floating hopefully down the ***** river towards the ocean of permanent despair, a funny thing happened.

From afar over the muddled waters came winging his way a great big, red-necked, he canvas-back duck, and in his bill he held an object. So I put forth my hand and took him in; and what do you think was in his bill? Not an olive branch. Oh my, no, trusting reader, nothing so simple as all that. For firmly between his upper and lower mandibles he grasped a duck-shooter's Federal license stamp.

Moisture hovered in the carmine eye of the noble fowl, his head drooped, his bill parted, and the duck stamp fell directly upon my state hunting license which lay exposed on my knee.

"Sir duck," said I, "why this melancholy air? The stamp is prettily designed, especially for your benefit, by my friend, Frank Benson. Observe, I pray, the cunning delineation of three members of your own auspicious tribe.

"Don't you know that this little bit of paper, sold for one dollar by Jim Farley at every post office, will bring in one-half to three-quarters of a million dollars? And that all that vast sum is to be used for your especial benefit and delectation restoring those lovely ponds and marshes in the Northwest where you used to repair when the obstetric urge became too strong? Beg pardon, I meant of course your partner's urge.

"And besides all these things which a wise and enlightened government has planned in your behalf (an E.R.A. of magnificent perspective) you may rest assured that because of additional law enforcement in this year of 1935, you are not to be shot by anyone without a license in his pocket. Think that over, my mournful friend."

The accumulated moisture from the depths of my visitor's tear sac coalesced to form a large silvery drop which, falling upon the Federal stamp, almost floated it away. With a hoarse voice he spoke as follows:

"Mr. Sportsman, fellow citizens, gunners, poachers and other voters;

I feel deeply touched when I think of the honor which you have accorded to my once populous tribe. I feel sure that your hearts are placed where they should be, on the left side of your chests, but I am somewhat puzzled to know wherever you have mislaid your brains.

"Although we ducks are willing to sacrifice ourselves, as any good citizens should, in the cause of conservation, we humbly suggest that it is just as hard to die through the hand of a licensed shooter in the open season as by an unlicensed poacher after the season is closed. In the second case, you see, we will be just as dead, and remain so just as long, as in the first case.

"Speaking for myself, I must say I appreciate no end the efforts which are being made in my behalf and were it not for the open shooting season which lies ahead, I could look forward with equanimity to a nice quiet winter at Currituck and the following summer in a little Lying-in tule swamp I know of in Saskatchewan.

"Times there were years ago when you white folks set great store on us — at least, on our remains — and when they appeared on the festive board, paeans of thankfulness went up from the throats of a thousand gastronomics. But times must have changed. Maybe now you prefer the humble mud hen. Him you will have on your tables in the years to come, and him alone, for the tribes of the Nyrocinae and the Anatinae will soon follow the buffalo into the sha-

dows of that West which has no ending."

He finished speaking, he began to grow, to swell into fantastic shapes; at first like a Great Auk, then blurred into the form of a ponderous Dodo, and finally, vastly large, I saw he had assumed the proportions of a Moa. The giant bird stalked to my side, it hung above me, its arched and menacing neck directly over the center of my head. Its eyes glared like the headlight of a locomotive and I awoke in a cold sweat.

I am wondering. How much, do you suppose, should I pay for my hunting stamp? Maybe one dollar is too much. Maybe fifty dollars is too little.

Such were the thoughts of Dr. Phillips of Wenham, Massachusetts, following the issuance of the first duck stamp. Twenty-six duck hunting seasons have passed since he wrote of his "nightmare" wherein a canvasback duck, representative of depleted waterfowl and extinct bird life, pleaded the cause of waterfowl management.

Today, though our duck stamp costs three dollars instead of one, we are still dedicated to a program of restoration of waterfowl habitat and breeding areas. We can truthfully paraphrase, in 1962, the words of J. C. Phillips, noted sportsman, conservationist, and scientist, written in 1935:

The duck stamp? — maybe three dollars is too much. Maybe one hundred is too little.

—BRC



What Value Firearms Education?

THE population of this country at the turn of the century was 76 million people. Today, there are more than 185 million people in the United States, and the estimated population will be 210 million people in 1970!

The increase since 1900 represents a hike of 143% in the population. In addition to sheer numbers of people, the use and distribution of firearms of various types has also undergone tremendous increases during the same period of time.

National Shooting Sports Foundation states that, despite an increasing percentage of the population turning to the shooting sports for leisure enjoyment, a large influx of military arms into the field of sport shooting and hunting, and the large number of guns manufactured in this country, statistics bear out the fact that firearms and hunting are not the big bad bogey-men that die-hard antigun cranks would have us believe. In fact, the infinitesimally low accident rate from firearms has remained constant since the beginning of the 20th century, despite increases in the numbers of guns and their users.

An important factor to bear in mind is that these statistics include each and every possible use of fire-

arms in this country; not only sport shooting and hunting, but also accidents involving firearms in the home, those which occur incidental to the performance of police duties, those which happen as a result of individuals defending their homes and/or persons, suicide, etc. In short, accidents involving firearms from all causes, of which hunting and sport shooting are relatively minor ones.

Why haven't firearms accident rates increased along with the population, number of guns available, and the general interest a larger segment of the populace has shown in firearms? *Firearms-safety education is the answer!* An effective means it has been, too. People are now seeking out proper places and trained instructors to teach them and their children about the proper care and use of firearms with respect to personal and public safety.

Coming generations should and will be properly trained to enjoy and use firearms in their many forms through continued firearms safety courses. There is every reason to believe that with the fine brand of training available, the accident rate per 100 thousand people will not increase, and may even decrease, even though the population continues to skyrocket steadily upward.

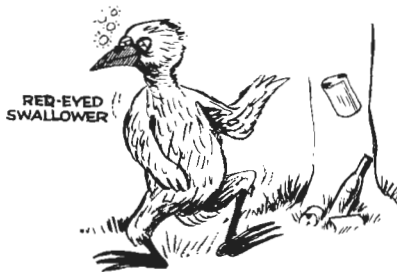
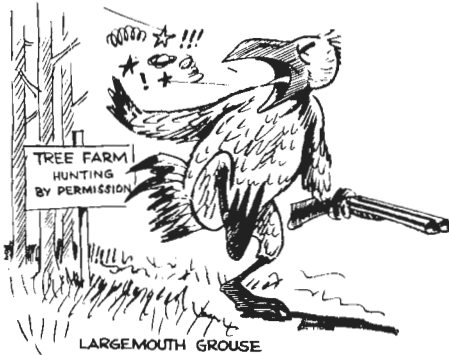
—RWB



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CAMP ROBBER



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