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# WILDLIFE



MAY  
1950

Trout Time in Virginia, pages 14-15

Volume XI  
Number 5



Owen S. Penttngill, Jr. from National Audubon Society.

*May Awakening!*

An American bittern balks at the photographer  
while shielding her young.

# VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

Published by VIRGINIA COMMISSION OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES, Richmond 13, Virginia  
*A Monthly Magazine for Higher Standards of Outdoor Recreation Through Wildlife Conservation*

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



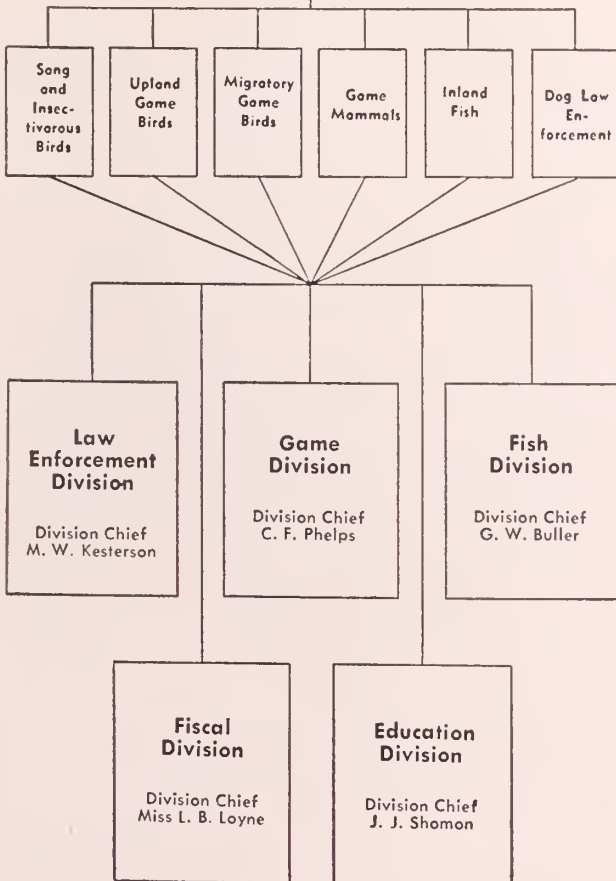
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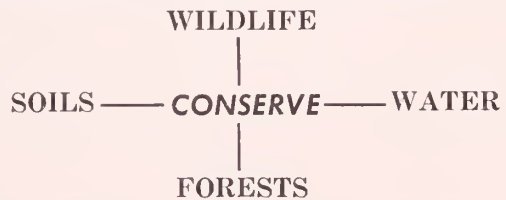
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*Cover Photo*

M. D. "Mac" Hart, executive secretary of the Virginia Game Commission, tells Marvin Paddie of Madison how the big one almost got away  
 Photo by J. J. Shomon

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE gratefully receives for consideration all news items, articles, photographs, sketches and other materials which deal with the use, management and study of Virginia's interrelated, renewable natural resources:



Since wildlife is a beneficiary of the work done by State and Federal land-use agencies in Virginia, editorial policy provides for recognition of their accomplishments and solicitation of their contributions. Credit is given on material published. Permission to reprint is granted provided proper credit is given.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** One Year, \$1.00; two years, \$1.50; three years, \$2.00. Remittances by check or money order to be made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia. Local game wardens will accept subscriptions or they may be forwarded direct to Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, 7 North Second Street, P. O. Box 1642, Richmond 13, Virginia.

Entered as second class mail matter November 10, 1947, at the Post Office at Richmond, Virginia, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

J. J. SHOMON—Editor

# Love Your Farm

**L**OVE your farm. Every farmer should not only love his work as the artist loves his work, but in this spirit, too, every farmer should love his farm itself as he would love a favorite horse or dog. He should know every rod of the ground, should know just what each acre is best adapted to, should have a joy and pride in having every hill and valley look its best. He should be as ashamed to have a field scarred with gullies as he would be to have a beautiful colt marked with lashes . . . as much ashamed to have a piece of ground worn-out from ill treatment as to have a horse gaunt and bony from neglect . . . as much hurt from seeing his acres sick from wretched management as he would be at seeing his cows half-starved from the same cause.

**LOVE your ground** — that piece of God's creation which you hold in fee simple. Fatten its poorer parts as carefully as you would an ailing collie. Heal the washed, torn places in the hillside as you would the barb scars on your pony. Feed with legumes and soiling crops and fertilizers the gullied and barren patch that needs special attention; nurse it back to life and beauty and fruitfulness. Make a meadow of the bottom that is inclined to wash; watch it and care for it until the kindly root-masses heal every gaping wound, and in one unbroken mass the "tides of grass break into foam of flowers" upon the outer edges. Don't forget even the forest lands. See that every acre of woodland has trees enough on it to make it profitable; "a good stand" of the timber crop as well as every other crop.

**HAVE an eye to the beautiful** in laying off the cleared fields — a tree here and there, but no wretched beggar's coat mixture of little patches and little thickets; rather broad fields, fully tended and of as nearly uniform fertility as possible, making of your growing crops, as it were, a beautiful garment, whole and unbroken, to clothe the fruitful acres God has given to you to keep and tend even as He gave the First Garden into the keeping of our first parents.

**AND so again we say, love your farm.** Make it a place of beauty, a place of joyous fruitfulness, an example for your neighbors, a heritage for your children! Make improvements on it that will last beyond your day. Make an ample yard about it with all the old-fashioned flowers that our grandmothers knew, set a fair orchard near it; bearing many manner of fruits; lay off roads and walks leading to it and keep them up, plant evergreen hedges along the approaches, and flowering bulbs and shrubs—crepe myrtle and magnolia, altheas, and roses — so that your grandchildren will some

day speak of their grandsire, who cared enough for the beautiful and loved the farm well enough to leave for them this abiding glory of tree and shrub and flower.

**NAME the farm, too;** treasure up its history; preserve the traditions of all the romance and adventure and humor and pathos that are in any way connected with it; and if some of the young folks must leave it, let them look back to it with happy memories of beauty and worthy ideals and of well-ordered industry.

**LOVE your farm.** If you cannot be proud of it now, begin today to make it a thing you can be proud of. Much dignity has come to you in that you are owner and caretaker for a part of God's footstool; show yourself worthy of that dignity. Watch earnestly over every acre. Let no day go by that you do not add something of comeliness and potential fertility to its fields. And finally, leave some spot beneath the shade of some giant tree where at last "like as a shock of corn cometh in his season," you can lay down your weary body, leaving the world a little better for your having lived in it, and having won the approval of the Great Father (who made the care of the fields and gardens the first task given man): "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of thy Lord.**"

—(Extension Service News)

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## Editorial Staff Changes

William H. Mullins, associate editor of *Virginia Wildlife* for 21 months, relinquished his post on March 31 to return to his native Tennessee and enter the insurance field with his dad.

Bill first came to work for the Commission in July, 1948 and has had numerous articles and photographs published in this magazine. His presence in Virginia and the familiar Mullins by-line will be missed by his many friends. Tennessee Bill has always been keenly interested in conservation and we hope that his experience and training here will serve him well in our neighboring state to the west.

Taking over in Bill's place is Ronald T. Speers, our special services educational assistant. Ron is well qualified for his new job by virtue of his wildlife training and keen eye for publicity. He has done such a remarkable job carrying out our special services work in Virginia schools that we are giving him a chance to head up our Publicity and Publications staff.

Ron has already been introduced to the pages of this magazine and lots more will be forthcoming from him in the future.

**From Maine to Georgia, with  
breath-taking scenery  
all the way—  
that's America's famed  
Appalachian Trail**



VSCC photo.

# "the Appalachian Trail in Virginia"

By ALFRED PERCY

IT WAS A CLEAR DAY in early fall. S. K. Roller, artist, and Bob Touzzo, engraver, of the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club of Lynchburg strolled leisurely along the level section of trail on Big Rocky Row on the Amherst-Rockbridge line. The Alleghanics were limned out across the valley of Virginia and the sun flashed on the waters of the James where the river snaked eastward to enter the Blue Ridge Gorge.

Roller's nostrils twitched. He sniffed a strong scent that put him in mind of many summers spent in the Maine Woods.

They rounded a sharp bend and there blocking all forward progress on the trail was the creator of the scent — a broad three-hundred pounds of black bear.

For a moment there was startled silence. Then each of the opposing forces wheeled and set off in a new direction.

This is merely to show that the Appalachian Trail in Virginia provides ample opportunity for wildlife study as well as free courses on the beauties of nature.

This trail in its entirety runs along the crest of the Appalachians from Maine to Georgia. There are

a few small breaks in this long footway that necessitate detours, but they are being eliminated as quickly as possible. This trail is sponsored by The Appalachian Trail Conference, Inc. The Conference, with headquarters in Washington, is made up of the various member Trail Clubs located near the mountains over which the Appalachian Trail passes.

In Virginia, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington has charge of the northern section of the Main Trail along the Blue Ridge from the Potomac to Rockfish Gap at the southern end of the Shenandoah National Park. The middle section from Rockfish Gap southwest, through the George Washington National Forest, across the James and on through the Thomas Jefferson National Forest to Black Horse Tavern Gap near Roanoke, is handled by the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club of Lynchburg. Incidentally, the name of the club came from the old Natural Bridge National Forest. The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club takes over at Black Horse Tavern Gap but for contrast at this point veers away from The Blue Ridge Parkway down to Wilson's Creek. This section carries on to U. S. Route 58, well south of Roanoke. From this point to the North Carolina



Hemmer photo.

**The trail in Virginia parallels much of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Overlooks and rest places are many and scenic.**

Today the Appalachian Trail touches at gaps where two centuries ago there were very old foot-paths — paths of the buffaloes, taken over by the Indians, followed by the early hunters, trappers and traders. The word *trail* was unknown when John Findlay and Allen Tye trod back and forth over these Blue Ridge paths, in what is now Amherst, Nelson, Rockbridge and Augusta, some years before they are said to have guided Dr. Thomas Walker, Boone and others west of the Alleghanias.

Before the building of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Appalachian Trail in the Peaks of Otter area of Bedford ran where freight wagons, during the Revolution, hauled lead bars eastward to go into the shot towers of the young nation.

The building of the Blue Ridge Parkway in central Virginia Blue Ridge swamped a good many sections of the Appalachian Trail. This created the necessity for planning a new trail through most of the area. The problem was whether to take the easy way out and just parallel the Parkway, or relocate the trail in areas away from this mountain autobahn. If the trail was constructed beside the Parkway the only added enjoyment to the hiker would be the exercise.

After thorough study the Main Trail was rerouted over many of the higher mountains and, in order to get a more complete contrast, down beside lovely, hemlock-bordered mountain streams. This contrast provides many advantages, especially in a wide variety of scenery and wildlife study. In some areas the Blue Ridge are a broad jumble of mountains. Here the trail passes over terrain where you are unable to drive a car, yet in the gaps between the mountains there is usually a trail or a Forest Service feeder road that leads to the Parkway or a highway. Thus there are some parts of our mountains left where one is unable to hear the rumble of a motor or the braying of a horn.

For those interested in wildlife this plan of keeping the Main Trail at least a little distance from the Parkway will prove all the more efficient and useful when the shelter system is finally continued south from The Shenandoah National Park.

These shelters are to be placed at intervals along the Trail, near water, but well back from any main highway. As everyone knows there are those among our public who have no respect for either public or private property. There will be less people willing to walk to enjoy a camp site, and that will in turn automatically reduce the number of people who spoil these places of convenience for the groups who follow them.

These are to be the Adirondack type of shelter, with the roof slanting down to the back wall from the open front. Around 1700, in the Virginia Piedmont and Blue Ridge they were known as hunting shacks or half-faced cabins. The original shacks used

line, there being no trail club, this section is generally under the eye of the Conference. As the Trail here parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway much of the distance, plans are being made to reroute the Main Trail to more interesting and unusual areas of the Thomas Jefferson National Forest.

Most members of the Appalachian Trail Clubs are interested in various forms of outdoor and wildlife. Many specialize in birds, others are interested in wild flowers, in geological formations. Artists are attracted by the everchanging colors and cloud shadows. The membership includes most every profession, trade or calling.

Some find it surprising that many hunters and fishermen are members of trail organizations. It is no surprise to us for mountain hiking trips provide a means of keeping sportsmen fit during the closed season at the same time increasing their knowledge of the mountains — possible areas for grouse hunting, the trout pools, and mental mapping of mountain roads, paths, and landmarks. At least some woods' lore, that was vitally essential to the old-time woodsmen, is needed now by part-time sportsmen.

The continued improvement of the Virginia highways since 1925, the creation of the Appalachian Trail from around 1928, the building of the Sky Line Drive, and later the Blue Ridge Parkway, have provided a system for opening up the Blue Ridge. Thus we have the footways, the highways and parkways all linked together to provide the means for enjoying heretofore difficult-of-access sections of our mountains.

huge fallen tree trunks as their back walls. Modern shelters are sturdily constructed and will have in front a double fireplace — the outer for cooking and inner for heating.

The Main Appalachian Trail is blazed at regular intervals and pointed with white paint. Metal trail markers are also nailed to the trees. Two blazes, one above the other, denote definite trail changes in direction at forks, etc. White paint is used because even at night the blazes are visible. If you have ever been lost in the mountains you will find them a great aid.

This can happen at night even to mountain people. One man refused to allow us to run the Main Trail across his property. Later he told us he had changed his mind and we could run the trail through his house if we wanted. He was lost in the mountains one night and finally stumbled on the Main Trail and followed the blazes until he came to familiar ground.

It must be stated here that not all sections of our Main Trail in Virginia are kept in perfect condition. Where clubs have a relatively small membership it is very difficult to control the fast-growing, summer weeds over many miles of trail, some of which are not frequently used. In the areas of the National Forests and Parks they are generally in better shape. However, the government services are limited regarding appropriations that can be applied to trail maintenance.

This also explains the ten-mile gap in Main Trail in Nelson County between the Head of the Priest, down across Tye River and up to Three Ridges. The War came along before the CCC could rebuild this section in the relocation plan made necessary by the building of the Parkway.

Many people otherwise interested in the mountains and outdoor life are afraid to join a trail club because they think they will be taken out by a bunch of hiking nuts who will speed up and leave them behind

to the mercy of the bears and the rattlesnakes. In the first place, regular hiking trips are in charge of trip leaders, who set a pace suitable to everyone. Therefore, walkathons do not materialize. Trail club members who want to set speed records can go out any time they desire on their own trips. This also applies to those people who do not like to hike in larger groups.

Most people like to hike at a reasonable cruising speed as they are interested in watching the color changes, the light and shadow, and the continuous shifting of the mountain views. They like to stop and examine, for instance, the slave-built, dry-rock walls that curl up over Cold and Tarjacket Mountains of Amherst County, and again on Humpback Mountain in the Augusta-Nelson Area. The walls vie in interest with the unusually fine views from these mountains.

Then too, while you stand enjoying the blazing loveliness of the rhododendron on Apple Orchard Mountain in Bedford-Rockbridge the bird scout reports he has discovered juncos nesting in the rocks nearby. Soon several hikers are quietly watching the rather rare sight of the fearless mother snowbird on her nest in a rock niche while a big, tough looking guy talks baby talk to her.

The hunter notes with pleasure a mother grouse and her young as he emerges from a bit of virgin forest into an old abandoned field. The fisherman sees many springs bubbling up through the black earth between the roots of ancient hemlocks, wanders down a little way to where the waters gradually merge into one stream and dash over the lip of this head-water cove. He is already estimating how far down it is to where the pools are large enough for trout. Here and there trillium carpet the forest floor, or yellow ladyslippers nod beside the trail.

No, you cannot see, feel and enjoy all of this and gallop over a mountain trail.

**Typical open shelter for hikers on the Appalachian Trail in Virginia. This one is in the Shenandoah National Park, and can accommodate a party of hikers.**



# Why Boys Go Fishin'

By PAUL P. HARRIS

*What is it that impels the barefoot  
youngster to seek the quiet solitude  
of a mountain brook or pool? What makes  
him hungry for the open road?*

(This article is reprinted with permission from the ROTARIAN)

Dementi Studio.



WHEN I WAS a child, Father, yielding to my importunities, took me trout fishing one day, with the result that the virus got into my blood. From that day on, every mountain brook has had its fascination for me.

Every likely pool beneath rock, log, or overhanging bank has been a challenge and I have yet to see a more thrilling sight than that of a trembling, bending rod and glistening trout as it emerges from its cold, dark lair, dances aloft for a moment in the sunlight, and then falls upon rock or bank my captive.

I have yet to see any more beautiful living creature than a brook trout. Note the perfect symmetry of outline and the delicacy and variety of its colors. Its mottled back varies in accordance with the color of the bottom of the stream and the water in which he has made his home; the darker his surroundings, the darker he is and therefore less easily seen by his enemies.

Trout-fishing boys and men admire the rich red of the belly fins, but far exceeding all in beauty is the delicate coloration of the flanks of the creature with its crimson spots encircled with rings of azure blue. No artist, painting on Dresden china, could equal the shading of the multicolored sides of this creature of the cold sparkling streams of the New England mountains.

When I called at the public library one day to ask for books on fishing, the librarian surprised me by asking, "Which do you want, philosophical or practical?" The question amused me so that at first I laughed outright, but eventually when I had thought the matter through, I answered, "I expect the book I am looking for is what you would designate as philosophical."

I had figured it out right. The practical fisherman is one who is interested primarily in "the kill." To the philosophical fisherman, the catch is only a part of the story, a very small part likely. He is interested in the great outdoors; he places first the opportunity to commune with Nature and to partake of its healing power. He can follow a stream or sit in a boat, as the case may be, without the slightest sense of loneliness; he is the philosophical fisherman.



Izaak Walton was one. He taught the religion of the outdoors and did more to popularize fishing than any other man in history. What delightful vistas of thought he opened up to the delectation of his own generation and generations yet to come. Professor Henry Drummond was a philosophical fisherman. Oh, yes, in a humble way, that's the kind of fisherman I have been.

The brook trout are not only the most beautiful of creatures, they are the most shy and intelligent of fish. Men love to match wits with them, and a sophisticated brook trout wins against all except the most experienced.

In the business of outwitting brook trout when I was a boy back in Vermont, long-bearded Ed Sabin, the tinner, and "Peg-leg" Pratt, the coffin maker, knew no superiors. They were individualists pure and simple and while their technique varied greatly, the results were the same—they caught the trout. Ed placed his catch in a creel, while "Peg-leg" would cut a crotched stick from the underbrush, cutting one side close to the crotch and leaving the other side long enough to accommodate the expected catch when strung through their gills. "Peg-leg" ordinarily was slow in his movements, but his return from Roaring Brook was always a march of triumph; his head was held high and his peg leg played a staccato tattoo on the board walks of the village. As a rejuvenator, trout fishing takes high rank.

As was the case with berrypicking, my fishing excursions began before the light of day. What mysticism there was in those early morning hours; all the world was mine. Even Grandfather, early riser though he was, had not thought of stirring. I used to make my way quietly down the cellar stairs to the swinging shelf, on which I would generally find a platter of brook trout, the result of a previous day's

fishing. They had been rolled in corn meal and fried in butter and even though they were cold, they constituted a fine breakfast.

Then I would take the chunk of dried beef which always hung in the cellarway and from it cut several sizable slices, my only provision for lunch. I abhorred impediments and early discovered that a tiny package of dried beef, washed down by cold water from the brook, supplied the necessary nourishment.

*I'm a merry mountain brook  
Hiding in some shady nook  
Babbling, laughing all day long  
Running, dancing with a song.*

*I'm as free as winds that blow  
Little care I where I go  
Only let me have a run  
Splashing, tumbling all in fun.*

*An obstruction in my path  
Simply makes me swirl and laugh  
Nothing stops me as I flow  
Over rocks to pools below.*

—BIRNEY C. BATCHELLER.

Child's Brook was my favorite; its source was a spring well up in the hills at the foot of White Rocks. The water near the spring, being protected from the summer sun by huge boulders, trees, and bushes, remained frozen the year round and was locally known as the "ice bed." Within half a mile of the "ice bed," I could begin fishing the icy water of Child's Brook. Creeping through the undergrowth in the wooded stretches and through the long grass bordering the brook in the pastureland, I would let my bait float down into promising holes.

(Continued on page 23)

Every likely pool beneath rock, log, or overhanging bank may harbor the wily trout—the prize game fish of all fishermen, be he a bare-foot boy with an alder stick, or a modern Waltonian with an expensive rod.



VSCC photo



*"A thrust of sharp spurs caught the old Gobbler in his exposed breast..."*

**T**HE WARY WARRIOR ruffled his bronze feathers, dragged his chestnut colored wings, and spread his broad fanlike tail as he regally prom- enaded. Deep throat- ed gobbles called his mates to the early morning trysts. Spring and the mat- ing season made the old gobbler quite pleased with the world. The sun glistened on the dew and fascinated the Warrior. Attracted by these color- ful jewels, he would pause after each call to peck at a dew drop. Like a crystal ball, each drop seemed to reflect deeds of his past. Perhaps the Warrior was remembering the days of his poulthood, or perhaps the struggles of his wild existence passed in review before his eyes.

Let us look into these crystal-like dewdrops with the Wary Warrior as he unfolds his life's story:

In early Spring, several years ago, a turkey hen carefully laid twelve eggs in a secluded nest in the forest. Each egg had been fertilized by the hen's daily contact with a handsome gobbler. This hen was my mother. The gobbler, whom I never saw, was my father.

The nest had been wisely placed under the branches of a fallen tree. Here my brothers, sisters, and I hatched out of the eggs and dried our damp, downy feathers. During rainy days we remained under mother's wings, sheltered from damp and cold. It wasn't until our downy feathers were replaced with pin feathers that we were permitted to venture forth into the early morning dew.

For the first four weeks we followed mother very carefully and would "freeze" into the surrounding vegetation at a moment's warning. Mother was quite expert at leading enemies away from us. Once when a gray fox crept stealthily into the clearing, mother's warning hid us completely in clumps of hay-scented ferns. Then feigning a broken wing, mother clucked frantically and dragged her left wing as though she couldn't fly. Thus she led the fox away from our hiding place. When the fox thought he had almost caught his crippled victim, she winged her way into the air.

When we were four weeks old we could fly a little and left the ground to roost in trees at night. Mother had a time get- ting her brood of twelve under

# The Wary Warrior

By W. W. HUBER

*The Warrior was aware that his opponent knew turkey philosophy:*

*"he who fights and runs away, will live to fight another day."*

her wings. Many of us fell off our perch, fighting to get next to mother's warm protection. Soon two mishaps reduced our number. One night one of my brothers fell from the roost into the waiting jaws of a large red fox and was soon eaten. We all made quite a fuss over this, but could do little else.

Later, two of my sisters fell into an old well near an abandoned farm house and disappeared forever. Mother reared the rest, schooling us to be always alert to danger, quick to take wing when she gave the alarm.

Our diet was by choice quite varied, and we found abundant food during the summer and fall. We ate various insects, seeds and plants and grasses, centipedes, bulbs, buds, leaves, fruits, spiders, grapes, snails and berries. In the winter months we concentrated more on buds, acorns, beechnuts, and seeds of shrubs and trees, such as dogwoods, gums and poplars. Even hickory nuts were eaten, although we found it necessary to get a crop full of fresh gravel before grinding these tough nuts.

Mother was very clean in her habits. She made us dust ourselves frequently. This was necessary to keep down lice and to clean from skin and feathers various alien matter that accumulated due to our active lives.

In January mother decided that we were old enough to take care of ourselves and left us. My brothers and I stayed together that spring but gradu- ally separated until, by summer, each was going his own way.

When I was three years old and quite proud of my bronze body feathers, fan-like tail and six-inch beard, I earned the name of the *Wary Warrior*.

Strutting and gobbling to attract the fairer sex, I was walking stately along the edge of a clearing when I noticed a large Tom strutting along the far side of the field. Apparently I was intruding on this fellow's domain. Making a pretense of not noticing the other gobbler, I slowly walked into the shadowy woods nearby. Then I quickly ran to the edge of the field where the would- be-king was puffing, blowing, and pompously gobbling his mating call. I made a quick attack. It was soon all over for that old turkey. A thrust of sharp spurs caught the old gobbler in his exposed breast,



and the force of the charge knocked him off his feet. My flashing spurs sank deeply into the old fellow's unprotected side. Repulsing his efforts, I continued to strike with telling blows until he ran from the field. No doubt he used the wise turkey philosophy that, "He who fights and runs away, will live to fight another day."

The defeat of this old warrior gave me complete charge of his domain. Five beautiful members of his harem now belonged to me. Each morning at the break of day I took a stroll about the clearing in the woods, and one by one the hens would answer my calls. After a short interlude with me, the hens would quietly slip back to their nests in the woods. The business of egg laying and raising the family was theirs, not mine.

Later that summer I became friendly with two other family gobblers about my age. One was known as Redface, and the other Bluebeard. Bluebeard had an unusually long beard of a bluish tinge. When frightened, Bluebeard's head would turn a purplish blue and his beard would bristle straight out.

One night the three of us were roosting in our favorite white pine tree and were sleeping comfortably when I heard a scream. When I awoke, Bluebeard was on the ground valiantly fighting off a large great-horned owl. A flash of feathers and a click of the owl's beak, and Bluebeard was dead. Back to the roost came the owl, and before Redface could move, the owl struck him a paralyzing blow that knocked him to the ground. Again the owl attacked his prey, but I didn't wait to see any more. Blindly beating my way into the night, I winged away through the trees. The next morning, getting up courage, I returned to the scene of the attack and found the bodies of my friends. The owl had eaten a little out of the throats of both and then continued his night foray. A sadistic, cold-blooded killer, he killed more to satisfy a blood lust than to appease his hunger.

Safety meant more to me than love of my community, so that day I traveled many miles from my favorite habitat on the headwaters of the St. Mary's River. Crossing the divide, I took up a new residence in a wildlife management unit deep in the national forest. Here the Resident Wildlife Manager was doing a good job of providing protection for wildlife. He was improving game habitat and cover, as well as planting vegetation that would provide food. The loss of the chestnut, due to the deadly chestnut blight, has affected our food to some extent and the grasses and shrubs being planted by the wildlife manager will be

of great help. These include the wild raisin, Asiatic chestnut and hawthorn, as well as clumps of conifers for roosting and protection.

Clearings being made to provide grassy openings in the forest soon have numerous insects which, of course, are enjoyed. The low-growing herbaceous cover on these areas dries off quickly following rains, and many enjoyable hours are spent here while the adjoining forest is drying.

The following April found me very nicely settled in my new home. I roosted in a pitch pine tree with dense branches that gave protection from evil birds of prey. My daily route of travel was a fairly safe one and rich in food. The clearings in the forest were abundant with grass seeds and insects. The woods still had nuts and acorns, and I filled my crop with these. I was even fortunate enough to attract another group of hens to my domain. Two of these had been released from a wild turkey propagation farm and were slow in

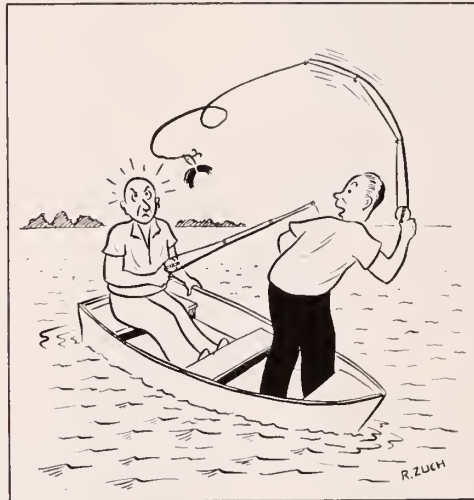
acquiring the ways of the wild. However, I am sure our offspring will be quite able to forage for themselves. It takes a lot of wild blood to nourish the keen instincts so necessary if a turkey is to survive the rugged life of the forest. Even some of the wariest of birds get it in the neck, so to speak.

It took me a little time to get wise to these new-fangled turkey calls hunters use. I am ashamed to admit it, but if one of those propagated gobblers hadn't beat me to the call of a hunter last fall, I would have left the woods hanging

over that hunter's shoulder. Fortunately, my wary nature made me slip up behind the spot from which the call came and this slipping-around maneuver saved my life. The hunter had taken a stand in a clump of pines, and his call sounded like a real turkey's call. The hatchery-reared gobbler dashed out into the opening, uninhibited by any ideas of caution. The roar of the gun and the flutter of the gobbler's wings broke the stillness of the glade, and stealthily keeping tree trunks between the hunter and myself, I left that place. I am a wiser bird now, and the calls invented by humans go unanswered.

Such is life. We live and learn. Usually a turkey is allowed but one mistake and that's his last. Our numbers are increasing here in Virginia. The aid given to us by the Game and Inland Fisheries Commission and local sportsmen is greatly appreciated.

One trouble that is not fully eliminated is the damage done to our nests, eggs, and young, by devastating forest fires. A wise turkey-management program must take into account the prevention of forest fires, especially in the spring of the year when the damage to our race is so severe. I ask your help because only *you* folks can prevent forest fires.



# CONSERVATIONGRAM

Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

THE SUCCESSFUL OPENING of Virginia's trout season can be attributed in a large measure to the unceasing efforts of the game wardens in the trout stream areas. All-night patrols were set up and maintained on the streams just before opening day, in order to prevent any jumping of the gun by unscrupulous anglers eager to take advantage of the well stocked streams.

Out of state fishermen were not as much in evidence on opening day this year. Apparently the abolishment by the General Assembly of the old two-day one-dollar nonresident license and substitution of the \$10 nonresident season license had some effect in cutting down the early season pressure from the out of state anglers.

THE COMMISSION of Game and Inland Fisheries is much concerned over the established custom of the people of making a field day of the opening of the trout season every year and catching out a large percentage of the recently-stocked hatchery trout before these fish have a chance to become acclimated. Efforts are being made to work out some equitable system whereby what is in reality a marvelous trout program can be kept from being so greatly nullified by the heavy catches with natural baits in the first few days of the open season.

Forty-one of 71 bills in the last General Assembly affecting the operations of this Commission were enacted into law. Fortunately, none of these measures affect wildlife adversely to any great extent, but they complicate administration. Of the 41 bills passed, 35 were of local application and six were general.

The 41 new pieces of legislation may be broken down as follows:

3 affected certain licenses, 1 of which was local and 2 general.

5 pertained to squirrel seasons in 33 counties, all of which were local in application.

Of 8 miscellaneous acts, 5 were of local application and 3 general.

Of 11 bills relating to fishing, all were local in application.

Of 6 bills relating to hunting, all were local.

Of 7 acts pertaining to dogs, 6 were local and 1 general.

One trapping measure was local in application.

All of these measures have to be written into the hunting and fishing, the trapping and the dog regulations, adding complications to an already complex system of rules for the sportsman.

THE GREATEST PLANTING program for game in the history of the State is in progress this spring. The number of plants of the perennials will double and the amounts of seeds of the annuals will be greatly increased over the supplies furnished free by the Commission last year. These plants and seeds are going to all sections of the State and to large numbers of individuals in each subdivision.

Not only is the Commission furnishing these and other materials free, but expert technical advice and assistance is being given in seeing that maximum results may be obtained. The plantings which are being made for game are of material assistance in the program of the Soil Conservation Districts in their efforts to prevent soil erosion and these two land-use agencies are working in closest cooperation.

THE OUTLOOK for Congressional passage of the Dingell Bill, HR 6533, to allot the excise taxes on fishing equipment to fish restoration work appears more promising, now that Treasury Secretary John Snyder has indicated that his department will no longer oppose the move. Administration approval of the bill was indicated by this about-face on the part of the Treasury Department.

The bill still has a long way to go, however. Action on the floor of the House, the Senate Committee and in the Senate itself must still be gone through before the nation's fishermen enjoy the type of aid that the Pittman-Robertson Act provides for hunters.

ALBERT DAY, Chief of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in a hearing before the Senate Sub-committee on Expenditures stated that over 8,000,000 ducks were killed illegally last season. The committee was told that only 71 federal wardens are employed to protect the nation's migratory birds, and if the illegal kill is to be stopped, funds must be forthcoming to enable the Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain at least 160 wardens.

# TROUT IN VI

(Photos by Kesteloo, M)



Legal size trout are seined from the hatchery pool for stocking in Virginia's mountain waters; most of these are two-year-olds.



Tank truck crews and hatchery workers load the wriggling trout for the trip to the stream.

Fish by the washtub full! Man size trout on their way to battle Virginia's fishermen.



No real fisherman needs a caption for this picture, and the big smile on the face of the fisherman it's opening day.

All streams aren't as easily stocked as this one! Sometimes miles of hiking are necessary to put the fish in the right water.



# TIME GINIA

(homon, and Flournoy)



...ent rod, the outstretched net, the fighting rainbow  
...their own story. Just for the record, however,  
...Whitetop Laurel.

End of the line! Fish go into a Blue Ridge stream  
that will draw its quota of anglers throughout  
the long trout season.



Trout water anywhere! Tye River, White Top Laurel,  
or Calf Pasture in western Virginia; white water  
and still pools are trout habitat.



Clean your fish when you catch them. There's less chance  
of spoilage and loss of flavor.

Opening day catch on one of Virginia's trout streams.  
Twelve beauties to delight the heart of any fisherman.  
Smaller ones are brooks, the larger, rainbows.



# This Thing Called carrying capacity

By J. J. SHOMON



*The ancients had a word for it:  
“one hill will not carry two tigers.”*

**W**E HEAR A LOT OF TALK nowadays about the productivity of the land, what it will or will not grow or support. Farmers like to speak of their pastures as being able to support so much beef or so many head of sheep. Wildlife experts, too, like to think in similar terms, because they realize that basically it is what we do with the land that affects wildlife. In recent years the term *carrying capacity* has been used frequently and it will not harm any of us to look into this term, and its meaning, a little more closely.

Every landowner knows that each piece of land he has will support just so much animal life, be it white-faced cattle, or goats. This is what he means by “carrying capacity.” This capacity of an area to support animals, be they domestic or wild, is not a static thing. For example, the carrying capacity of a field of clover changes with each grazing. Similarly we can see how the carrying capacity for quail can be reduced on a farm by the plowing under of a soybean field.

Wildlife experts feel that a full understanding of this term is important because it is a natural principle of good land use.

The ancient people had a good definition for carrying capacity: “. . . one hill will not carry two tigers.” This is as true today as ever before. Every field, every range, every piece of woods has a limit to what it will support in certain forms of animal life. Just as the farmer is well aware that his green fields will graze so many cattle, so the poultryman is aware that his domestic geese need so much grass land upon which to graze.

The landowner who wants more quail on his land or rabbits around his premises would do well to look into the carrying capacity of his land for wildlife before he begins worrying how to “get more game to the acre.” His carrying capacity may be fine during summer and fall months, but unless he has land that can support game during critical winter months also, there won't be much point in striving for higher populations.

Many people who are wildlife conscious and who understand something of wildlife abundance are not clear on two very basic properties of game population. One is carrying capacity, and the other, a more technical term, is saturation point. The latter means that

**Farmers know a given piece of land supports only so much animal life—be it domestic, stock or wildlife.**







**There is no magic formula for wildlife abundance. However if we acquire a practical knowledge of land management we should be in a better position to appreciate what the land will do for us.**

in most species, there is a population limit beyond which mature wildlife of that particular species, even under the most favorable environmental conditions, will not increase, provided conditions are uniform over a wide area.

Not every form of wildlife is known to have a saturation point. Most biologists seem to agree that the quail has, and that it is one quail to the acre. Rabbits seem to have it, and hold to about 3 to 4 per acre. Our deer may have it also, around one to 12.5 acres, but the problem here is mostly the carrying capacity of the range.

How frequently have you heard the expression "they've eaten themselves out of house and home." What actually happens in such cases is that the deer have outstripped their food supply, outstripped the carrying capacity of the land. And when this happens there is trouble. Today many states are experiencing difficulties with deer where the populations have been allowed to get too large—too many deer and not enough food. The result: starvation, undernourishment, poor development.

The big lesson to be learned from what has happened in the past is that we should not permit our wildlife to over-run the carrying capacity of the land, and that the land we manage be made to produce more abundantly for wildlife, especially during critical periods of the year.

There is no magic formula for wildlife abundance. The problems are too complex. Yet if we can acquire a practical knowledge of land-management methods we should be in a better position to appreciate what the land will do.

One of the best explanations of carrying capacity was given by the noted biologist, Errington, who drew an analogy of winter carrying capacity of quail to chickens in a henhouse. Said he:

"Winter carrying capacity of quail environment may be crudely compared to the capacity of a farm chicken coop. A chicken coop has room for only about so many birds, and if a poultryman has more chickens than his coop can accommodate, obviously he cannot get them all in. If the extra chickens leave the premises and find security in some other poultryman's coop, which doesn't happen to be filled up, it may make little difference to them. In the event of visits by predators, the chickens exposed outside will suffer, not the ones secure in coops. Depredations may continue until all of the chickens outside of the coops have been killed or driven away; those properly housed, however, will still be reasonably safe.

"To be sure, a quail wintering territory has not as sharply defined boundaries as a chicken coop, but the analogy is not far fetched. A quail covey range or territory has a combination of food resources and escape cover suitable for an approximately constant number of birds. As chicken coops are built in different sizes, so covey territories occur with different carrying capacities. . . ."

Errington then goes on to say, that carrying capacity in its simplest form may denote the upper limit of survival which is possible in a given covey territory as it exists under the most favorable conditions. Carrying capacity, he says finally, appears to be relatively constant from year to year for a specific territory or group of territories, but not the same for all territories or groups of territories.

# Audio-Visual Aids in Conservation Education

By DR. EDGAR M. JOHNSON

*Associate Professor of Education, Longwood College.*



(Photos by Kesteloo)

**T**HOSE OF US INTERESTED in Virginia wildlife do not require proof of the great need for conservation. We have had that need demonstrated over and over as we tramp the woods and the fields, wade the streams, or cross the rivers. Look at that muddy water; no good for fishing. Oysters too high to eat? Yes, we have polluted rivers and too much silting. No birds? No, they have no cover. No deer or even rabbits? No, we have burned out forests and eroded fields. There is an ever present problem of maintaining adequate food supply, breeding place, natural range or cover, satisfactory water and protection from predators for our wild game and fish.

The problem involves much more than the transplanting of game to depleted territory. It involves good farming with conservation of the soil, rotation of crops, care of wood lots and forests, good land use and management of live stock. It involves water control measures on areas larger than the individual farm, and

such things as dams, meadow strips, terracing, contouring, cover crops and farm ponds. It involves industrial wastes and city sewage which sometimes pollute our streams and rivers. It involves the direct protection of game from over hunting, extremes in weather, and predatory animals which may develop all out of proportion to their need in a balanced program of conservation. It involves forest fires, reforestation, fire wardens, game wardens, all kinds of governmental regulations. Certainly not least among all the things involved is education.

We depend a lot on education and have an implicit faith in its ability to help us solve our problems. How else can we get at the total picture of a problem so large as the one under consideration? It takes years of study and experience in a wide variety of areas to see and understand the implications and the relationships existing between the various factors mentioned above. We still are not fully conscious of all the real problems, and certainly are still divided as to the best

Many graphic materials including charts, graphs, maps and cartoons, are used to illustrate the progressive steps in land use or the status of our natural resources in relationship to human need and interests.





The most recent developments in the use of Audio-Visual materials for teaching conservation are found in the use of motion pictures and film strips or slides.

solutions of the problems of which we are conscious. The public school is not our only educational agency. As a matter of fact, it has learned much from the motion picture industry, radio broadcasting, newspapers, civic clubs, churches, and various governmental agencies such as the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

One of the important techniques of education which is rapidly developing in the program of our schools, as well as in that of other educational agencies, is the use of audio-visual materials and equipment. We have found that all learning does not come from a book. As a matter of fact, all we get from a book must be based on more concrete experiences we have had with actual objects or events. We have many text books on conservation and many text books that deal with some phase of conservation. We once heard a teacher read a very fine description of erosion to a small town high school class. It was dry stuff to those youngsters who had little actual experience with erosion, its causes and results. Just out the window there was an open field which was badly eroded. Just looking out the window, in this case, could have greatly increased an understanding of the significance of what was read. A short walk out of town would have shown many more extensive examples of erosion.

One of the most useful aids the school uses in teaching conservation is the field trip. In most sections of our state a class doesn't have to go far to see what constitutes good cover for wildlife, how it is established and maintained, and how it is related to agricultural, social and economic problems. The field trip is a self evident aid to learning which is being used to considerable advantage in teaching conservation. There are other aids which are less well known but none the less effective in dealing with the many factors related to conservation. Objects and models and prepared displays have been found useful. Paper pulp relief maps and sand tables are used to illustrate contouring, terracing, fire control, water control, forest management, etc. Models of fire towers, conservation



A good school library well-stocked with magazines, periodicals, books, etc., is a big help to the school pupil in grasping conservation fundamentals.

equipment, wildlife, and built up dioramas depicting scenes as they occur in nature, when constructed by students, stimulate a great deal of research which leads to greater understanding of significant relationships.

Many graphic materials including charts, graphs, maps and cartoons are used to illustrate the progressive or regressive steps in land use or the status of our natural resources, in relationship to human need and interests. These help the children see at a glance things which would take many pages to describe or many dry statistics to demonstrate.

Many pictures are now used in our classrooms to help make more real and meaningful the problem of conservation. There are commercial sets of pictures available, as well as pictures from magazines and photographs which may be taken by students or borrowed from others. These pictures are used effectively to show contrasts and comparisons of large conservation projects which could not well be shown on a field trip or seen in nature at the same time.

The most recent developments in the use of Audio-Visual materials for teaching conservation are found in the use of motion pictures and film strips or slides. Film strips and 2 x 2 film slides, both in black and white and in color, are available in large numbers. Many are commercially made and sold to educational institutions. Well over half of the school divisions in Virginia have a library of film strips or slides for use in their schools. Many of these deal with conservation. An example of some of the more recent productions of this nature is the series of four film strips in full color by the Popular Science Publishing Company. The title "Conservation is Everybody's Business," indicates the nature of the content. They deal with the conservation of soil, forests, and water as related to the conservation of our most important natural resource, people. Then there are many sets of film slides produced by the agriculture colleges and other governmental agencies which are available for school use on occasion.

The sound motion picture in color is perhaps the

most impressive of the materials used in teaching conservation. Several such films have been produced by the Film Production Service in the State Department of Education. These films, such as "The Oyster and Virginia," are available to the public schools of Virginia through the Bureau of Teaching Materials and the Regional film libraries. An example of recent commercially produced films in color is the LIVING EARTH series, dealing with ARTERIES OF LIFE, BIRTH OF SOIL, SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION and THIS VITAL EARTH, distributed by Encyclopedia Britannica Films Incorporated. There are many other conservation films in black and white, a recent example being the United States Department of Agriculture soil conservation series, TOPSOIL, WATER, EROSION and SOIL, and WATER. There are listed in the state catalogue, "Educational Motion Pictures for Virginia Public Schools," nearly two hundred films on conservation. They deal with eight areas of conservation, Man's Relationship to His Resources, Man's Use of Land, Man's Use of Water, Man's Use of Forests, Man's Use of Minerals, Man's Use of Recreational

Areas, Man's Relation to Wildlife, and Man's Use of Salt Water Fisheries. These films are booked heavily by the public schools, with many requests which cannot be filled. This alone indicates the effectiveness of using motion pictures to teach conservation. The motion picture is particularly effective in developing proper attitudes which lead to effective action in conservation practices.

For those of us interested in wildlife conservation, this is a hopeful sign. We are beginning to understand more clearly the relationship between wildlife conservation and other kinds of conservation. We have devised new techniques and developed new materials of teaching, so that even our youth are becoming conscious of these conservation problems. The use of these new techniques and materials does more than transmit the knowledge that has accumulated. It also develops the attitudes that should accompany the knowledge, which in turn stimulates action. We have every reason to believe that the effective use of Audio-Visual materials in schools will help us more quickly solve some of our pressing problems in conservation.

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## SPORTSMANSHIP

Webb Midyette, Supervising Game Warden, recently told us of an incident which typifies principles of true sportsmanship.

Three men, Judge Burnett Miller, Jr. of Culpeper, Stuart Robertson, former Commonwealth's Attorney of Orange County, and Judge Plunkett Bierne, Trial Justice of Orange County came to an agreement at the beginning of the past hunting season. They agreed that on the last bird hunt of the year when their dogs made the final stand of the day no one would fire a shot.

On January 20, the three sportsmen went on their last hunt of the season. Their dogs hunted hard but very few quail were found all day. By late afternoon the men had only a meager number of birds and their dogs were becoming discouraged from finding so little game.

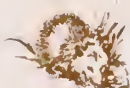
Everyone's morale rose, however, when the dogs produced a nice covey. The birds burst from cover and winged into the sunset. The hunters' bags were still far short of the limit as the singles dropped out of sight in some tall grass about 300 yards away—just right for singles shooting. But the sun had already disappeared from sight. There were only a few more

minutes of shooting time left, then quail hunting would be over 'til next year.

The dogs, their spirits revived by the covey find, whipped the grass in search of the singles. At last there would be shooting to make up for the rest of the day. One dog flashed into a stylish point and tensely awaited the kill. Two of the hunters, Miller and Robertson, stepped in for the flush. Plunkett moved to the side, his camera focused on the scene.

The next instant a quail burst from under foot. The dog stood taut, waiting for guns to boom and bring the bird down. But Miller and Robertson didn't raise their guns. This was the last bird of the season and the agreement was being kept. Judge Plunkett's camera recorded the action.

The dog was greatly disappointed, but not so with the sportsmen. They had enjoyed a season of sport and companionship in the outdoors. One or several more birds in the day's bag meant little to them. But the execution of that pact gave them a deep satisfaction—one that would remind them of good principles of sportsmanship in future hunting seasons.





American Museum Natural History photo.

Deer are plentiful at Faulkland and keep increasing.

## FAULKLAND: Mecca for Wildlife

By THOMAS S. LOVELACE

THE PHILOSOPHERS and teachers of ethics tell us that man naturally, through normal behavior and action, chooses the greatest amount of pleasure over pain. Now this is very true, but we don't have to become educated with the philosophers to realize that in life the best actions are those of pleasure and happiness. We all seek the bluebird and we do so in many and various ways. One person will crave to bury his mind in a fifth, another will follow the action of the gridiron; some seek enjoyment in the movie houses, opera, and such, while many make themselves content with the material pleasures of life. Each and every one seeks his pleasure, his escape — the object being to get his mind off himself and momentarily forget his burdens and relax. Some of our pleasures are of lasting value and are permanent, others are short and go with the passing act. Since I believe that perhaps each of us strives in our goal for perfection or the utmost happiness in our pleasure seeking, I would like to relate an experience which I consider to be my greatest pleasure in a lifetime of hunting and communion with nature.

On Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend, nineteen hundred and forty-nine, I received a call from friends in a county in south central Virginia. I was asked to come immediately to enjoy a day of deer hunting. I arrived a little late for the start of the hunt, but just in time for the second drive. After being placed on a stand it was only a short time before there lay at my feet a fine buck, and three empty shells which I had fired at a large gobbler. The first drive was over and as far as I was concerned the hunt was over too, for I had my share and could only look forward to being a spectator for the rest of the day. But little did I know the enjoyment which lay before me. After our group had assembled and were making ready for the next drive, we found that many deer had been seen by all, and some were fortunate enough to show their proof.

As many as twenty deer were counted on a single stand; both turkey and foxes were seen, and one of each was taken for the bag. During the day we were placed on several other stands and each time deer were taken and again many exciting stories of game seen were told.

In the afternoon it was decided that one more drive would be the end. I was last man to be placed on stand, which was a great distance down on the river lowland. My stand was a place of natural beauty. Water sweeps had been left in the low places between the tall oaks and pines because of heavy rains several days before. The borders of these tiny little ponds were contrasted by the green winter grass finding its way through the fallen leaves. The sun fell on this carpet in heavy streaks which found their way through the shaded evergreens and woods. Nature was putting on her best display and it didn't take a poet's soul to enjoy it.

The signal was sounded and the drive began; it was only a matter of minutes before the woods rang with the voice of the hounds. Two doe deer passed as though they had been loosed from Hell's gates. Effortlessly they went by, as a swift breeze passes over winter leaves. They had not gone very long before a buck appeared deep in the woods from me. Slowly and quietly he worked his way cautiously within range of my twelve gauge. He stopped at one of the water streaks ahead of me to drink, so I raised my gun quietly to my shoulder and sighted down the barrel at his golden-brown, graceful figure. I had no intention of killing him, but I enjoyed the huntsman's sensation of sighting on him. It seemed but a minute that he remained there before he moved off in the same manner in which he had appeared.

The hounds sounded closer and suddenly a beautiful turkey gobbler soared over the treetops like a bomber. He was traveling in a straight line and his wings seemed frozen in their most out-stretched position. His breast shone in the sun like a rainbow after a morning shower. I watched him as he found his roost in a tree a long way down the river. When I turned around, my eye caught another old Tom in the air, but this time a great distance off on my right.

This one banked in a long rhythmical curve and came in for a landing only forty feet behind me. I had no time for a shot however, because when the turkey hit the ground it only lowered its landing gear and took off like an All-American fullback on the loose. Another turkey appeared on my left, flying fast and low, and was soon lost to sight in the trees. A group of eight black mallard ducks passed at high altitude glittering in all their beauty and fashion in the afternoon sun. This was too much—nature was on parade, and I thought I had already seen the grand finale. I thought to myself that I had seen all the game that could be seen in that county except quail. Now, just as if I were the master himself and had ordered the event, one of the far-ranging hounds on the drive came up in front of my stand and stepped right in the middle of a covey. The birds exploded and tried to fly all over me as they dispersed down the wooded cut. The drive was over and the hunt had ended. I hadn't shot a gun on this last stand, but I had enjoyed it twice as much as the earlier stand where the meat was taken.

We returned to the spacious hunting lodge on the reservation for dinner, and after the many experiences of the day's hunt had been long discussed, we arranged ourselves around a table that fairly groaned under the bounty of the land. The dining room faced the front and a view of grand oaks and far reaching acres of new born wheat. The green wheat, the clouds, the setting sun, and the mighty oaks afforded much color, and while we were seated around the table feasting on venison, wild turkey, ham, vegetables of all sorts and most anything else you might ask for, there appeared on the wheat field five deer that came out to graze the fresh green. My soul was touched and I sincerely believe that any human being with any natural appreciation within him would also have at least stopped to apply some thought of thanks and



Deer hunters take to the woods at Faulkland. Hundreds of deer were taken here last season.



Two wild turkeys race through the woods at Faulkland. The photographer got these pictures by hiding behind a tree.

gratefulness for such enjoyment. Not being a religious person, I did not ask my associates to bow in thanksgiving, but the words were so strong in my heart I had to say to all, "Truly, this is a land of milk and honey."

The hunt which I have described was to me, as probably to you, very unusual. However, it is not unusual to the folks at Faulkland in Halifax County, because the scene recurs every time there are hunts in this tract of land. However, such an abundance of game and such wonderful hunting didn't "just happen." The only reason that there is such an abundance of wildlife in Faulkland is because someone has gone to the great difficulty of letting nature have its own way in this now man-made world. Someone has

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### WHY BOYS GO FISHIN'

(Continued from page 9)

Sometimes the results were disappointing; in spite of my efforts to conceal myself from the vision of the trout, the shy creatures had seen me. All I had seen was a flash upstream or downstream like a streak of light, a slight muddying of the water where the belly fins, serving as feelers, had stirred up the bottom of the stream.

Then again hungry trout would rise to my bait one after the other, several perhaps from the same hole. I can still feel the thrill of it; the desperate last second of resistance and then the catch.

It was my custom to fill the capacious pockets of my jacket with ferns and mint gathered along the brook and to bury each captured trout in my thus improvised crypt, there to remain until I arrived home when I would cast the entire conglomeration into a trough of crystal spring water, and proceed to separate the trout from their clinging shrouds, preparatory for cleaning, gloating the while at each prize and recalling the very hole from which it had savagely risen to strike the bait.

When the sun had risen to a position directly overhead, I would rest and, in the shade of spreading friendly beech tree, enjoy my simple luncheon while luxuriating in the view of the valley, the music of the brook, the aromatic fragrance of the mint, the soft breezes from the mountains, an occasional butterfly of gorgeous colors flitting without apparent purpose from place to place, honeybees gathering sweet nectar from the wild flowers of the mountainside, and the rustle of the long grass bending in the wind.

What sweeter music than the song of the brook? A friend of mine, whose photographs in "The National Geographic Magazine" have brought joy to millions of readers all over the world, told me that once while travelling in the mountains with the two great naturalists John Burroughs and John Muir, he came upon Burroughs lying on his side on the floor of an old and

applied all available time, effort and money to the extensive use of conservation methods as prescribed by our Commonwealth. Because somebody saw to it that a field of corn was planted for nature, and not reaped and sold at market, that habitat improvement both as to food and cover was considered; the area is now in ideal condition for the propagation of wildlife. It just shows that if old mother nature is given the right chance and a little help, she can still produce.

I had experienced a wonderful hunt, and it was more than appreciated from a standpoint of natural beauty. Yet, with just a little effort and coöperation on everyone's part, that same type of hunting could be found not only in Faulkland or in Halifax, but could be had everywhere in the state of Virginia.

seldom used bridge. "What are you doing?" my friend inquired.

"Listening through this knothole to the music of the brook," the grand old man replied.

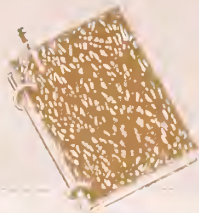
Some hear sounds to which others are deaf. Few indeed enjoy to the fullest the senses of sight, hearing, smelling, and feeling. What a privilege the companionship of these two men, who styled themselves "the two Johnnies—Johnnie of the birds and Johnnie of the mountains."

After lunch, with knees planted on convenient rocks and hands on others, I would let myself down and drink from the icy water. The brook increased in size as it continued its course down the hillside, through the meadow and into Otter Creek. The trout increased both in size and sophistication as they entered the broader waters. Neither brook nor creek was famed for large trout, even half-pounders being exceptions. The two largest I recall having been taken from the streams in our neighborhood were two-pounders. I saw one of them and greatly envied the captor.

I became fairly proficient in the art of angling as time advanced, but never to compare with Mr. Ed Sabin or Mr. "Peg-leg" Pratt; they could catch trout in any brook however bad its reputation might be. No brook was ever fished out to them and they always fished alone.

I usually finished my sport late in the afternoon and returned to the village, a tried but happy boy after my adventure in solitude. If there were sick folks in the village, my catch was shared with them; Grandmother would have the trout crisply cooked and done up in a snowy napkin and I was never too tired to make deliveries.

Grandmother had her other charities as well, and in those I was her willing messenger. Many a basket and many a pail of delicacies I have taken at her behest to the sick and needy. Two aged sisters, one of them stone blind, both serene in their afflictions, were regular recipients of Grandmother's bounty and they always greeted me with a smile and sent their messages of love and gratitude to Grandmother.



# Field Force Notes



## **Flying Warden Fired on by Duck Trappers**

Flying warden Bill Caton is certainly earning his pay these days. Some time ago he was seriously injured by an unknown assailant who struck him down while he was checking on night fish trapping operations. His latest occupation seems to be that of dodging bullets fired at him by duck trappers on Eastern Shore, Virginia.

Some weeks ago Caton was in his plane patrolling the Gargotha marshes on Eastern Shore. Upon spotting several duck traps and a man in the process of baiting the traps with corn, he set the plane down nearby. The duck trapper made for shore and fled through the marsh on foot.

Caton scrambled from his plane and started in pursuit, only to be stopped by a hail of bullets which began kicking up mud all around him. The warden determined that the shots were coming from a house some distance away. Being unarmed, he returned to the plane and rendezvoused with the Eastern Shore warden's power boat.

Accompanied by three other wardens, Caton returned to the site and found five duck traps which they destroyed. The poachers escaped.

This represents an unpleasant incident which game wardens frequently encounter in their efforts to protect game and fish from those who would steal from their fellow Virginians. They deserve a lot of credit for placing their lives in jeopardy to protect the game and fish resources from those who would take it illegally.

## **Warden Dobyms—An Outstanding VIRGINIA WILDLIFE Salesman**

Sam T. Dobyms, newly appointed game warden of Patrick County, has turned in 106 subscriptions to VIRGINIA WILDLIFE in the past two months. This initiative on the part of Warden Dobyms in his intensified effort to spread conservation throughout his county is highly commended.

## **Falling Spring Junior Wildlife Club Teaches Youngsters Conservation**

In October, 1949, R. M. Loving, Jr., principal of the Falling Spring School in Falling Spring, Virginia, organized a junior wildlife club. Its purpose was to teach wildlife conservation to the boys of that rural school. Since that time a great deal has been accomplished towards instilling sound ideas in the future adult citizens of Falling Spring.

The club's objectives are as follows: To learn more about our wildlife, their habits and habitat; to improve wildlife habitat wherever possible; to endeavor to re-

stock and properly manage depleted areas; to study the correlation of land use and wildlife; to study game laws, abide by them and urge others to do the same.

## **Sportsman's Club Releases Jack Rabbits**

The latest endeavor of the Outdoorsman Rod and Gun Club of Aldie, Virginia, is the releasing of jack rabbits in Loudoun and Prince William Counties. According to James O. Campbell, president of the club, these rabbits have a speed of 45 miles per hour and can clear a seven-foot fence.



**Outdoorsmen Rod and Gun Club members release rabbits.**

This club is eight years old and has conscientiously tried to build up the supply of game in the above counties. Members are conservation-minded and adhere to rules of good sportsmanship. They cooperate in every way possible with their county game wardens and with the landowners. Campbell stated that he hoped hunting and fishing in that section of Virginia would be continuously bettered through their club's activities.

## **Sportsman Has His License and Then Some**

During this past hunting season Charles Hunter, game warden of Surry County, came upon a hunter, Mr. W. W. Baugh, and made a routine check of his hunting license. Mr. Baugh obligingly produced his current license. The warden looked it over—everything was in order, but he thought he was seeing things when Baugh pulled about 30 more licenses from his pockets.

As it turned out, Mr. Baugh, a sportsman and conservationist of the old school, had in his possession practically every license issued since 1918. Warden Hunter stated that all these years this sportsman had been active in conservation work. In the late winter he would often help the retired Surry County warden feed game during heavy snows.





**VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY TO MEET IN HARRISONBURG**

The Virginia Society of Ornithology will meet in Harrisonburg, Virginia at 2:30 p.m. in the Main Street School on May 5th. The meeting will carry through the following day. All interested persons are cordially invited to attend.

The Virginia Society of Ornithology was founded in 1929, by men having a deep interest in all aspects of bird life in Virginia, with chief emphasis on field study. The Society now has approximately two hundred and fifty members, the majority living within the boundaries of the state.

Since the Society was founded its members have made many contributions in its field. The ornithological history of Virginia has been compiled and clarified, special studies have been made of specific counties and areas, and a great deal of information has been added on such matters as bird migration, distribution, and economic values. Sponsorship has been given to legislation aimed toward conservation of birds and of wild life in general. Members have cooperated with state and federal conservation agencies to obtain more complete information on problems such as the migration of waterfowl and hawks. In 1949 they assisted in a study of doves within the State in order to assure a hunting season adjusted to local conditions.

The Society holds an annual meeting, with informative talks and motion pictures on birds and a field trip to interesting local areas. There are also annual winter field trips of one day, usually for observation of waterfowl, while local groups get together frequently for walks and field work.

Further information about the Society may be obtained by writing to Miss Gertrude Prior, Briar Hill, Sweet Briar, Virginia.

**PHOTOGRAPHER L. G. KESTELOO COMES WITH COMMISSION**

L. G. Kesteloo has assumed his duties as wildlife photographer for the Game Commission. He replaced Mr. Crawford who was temporarily employed prior to going into private work here in Richmond.

Mr. Kesteloo has had considerable experience in free lance photography for newspapers and magazines. He also graduated from the Army Air



L. G. Kesteloo

Force School of Aerial Photography. For four years before coming with the Commission he was employed by the G. L. Hall Optical Company, and served in both Richmond and Norfolk as supervisor of the photo finishing plants.

His experience will be of great value in operating the Commission's newly constructed darkroom and in obtaining photographs for VIRGINIA WILDLIFE.

**E. M. KARGER SUPERVISOR OF GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST**

Ernest M. Karger is now serving as supervisor of the George Washington National Forest. He was appointed to succeed R. F. Hemingway who recently retired.

Mr. Karger is a graduate of Penn State and began his forestry career in 1933 on the Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania. He has served nine years in Virginia on the Jefferson National Forest where he attained the rank of assistant supervisor. For the past five years he has been assigned to the Northeastern Regional office of the U. S. Forest Service at Philadelphia.

Conservationists will be interested to note that Karger was one of the national forest rangers selected 13 years ago to help in the inauguration of the successful and now nationally famous state-federal "Virginia Plan" for joint wildlife management on national forest areas.

**WATERSHED PROTECTION MAY HAVE SAVED NEW YORK**

The foresight of New York's early conservationists may be all that separates discomfort from disaster in the current water shortage, according to the Wildlife Management Institute.

Thanks to some of the best protected watersheds in the East, the reservoirs which supply New York City with water are almost completely free of silt. This is in marked contrast to those of more than one-third of the municipalities across the nation which are filling with sediment so rapidly that much of the usefulness of many will be lost by 1975. It is estimated that many more will be filled in less than 100 years unless something is done to stop the present rate of siltation.



for

Students

Teachers

Parents

### Lesson No. 3 FACTS ABOUT SOIL

Do you know that it takes Mother Nature 1,000 years to make an inch of topsoil? And that man through bad farming practices and careless forest fires, can remove the result of ten centuries of work inside of a single year! When we look at it that way we begin to realize why preventing soil erosion is important.

Now the question arises, how does nature make soil? And the answer, of course, is through the weathering, breaking down and wearing away of rocks, and by the absorption into the earth of decayed animal and vegetable matter. Each rainstorm that beats against a cliff face, each breeze carrying tiny particles of abrasive sand, all play a part in the rock wearing process. Every plant and animal eventually becomes part of the soil when it dies.

Soil varies in different areas according to the rocks that decomposed to make it. Thus we have sands, clays, sandy loams and clay loams, podsolis and many others.

All living things depend on the soil directly or indirectly for their existence. Agricultural crops, living things themselves, provide food and shelter for animal life. The soil itself is home to many forms of life from the single celled mold to the burrowing ground squirrel. Animals that dig in the earth like the ground squirrel, field mice, moles, shrews, and even earth worms, perform an important function in the care of the soil. By running numberless tiny passages through the soil they aerate it and help provide a means whereby surface water can drain off.

Next month we will consider the relationship between forests and soil.

Before we can practice conservation we must understand how the soil gives life to plants and how plants finally get to be a forest community.

### BIRD OF THE MONTH Mockingbird

Have you ever rushed to the window to see the thrush who was calling in the honeysuckle, or the bobolink singing merrily in the mimosa, only to find instead a rather plainly dressed little bird with a gray back, white breast and some white stripes on each wing?



Undoubtedly you recognized the mockingbird at once for he is a familiar part of Virginia's wildlife picture. The season of the year makes little difference to him, winter, summer, spring or fall; Virginia is his home, and every hedgerow and woodlot seems to have its quota of mockingbird families.

The mockingbird is the opera star of the bird world and may know a score or more of different bird songs which he apparently never tires of repeating over and over again. In fact he appears to be so taken with the sound of his own voice that he is often likely to sing not only all through the day but halfway through the night as well!

His scientific name, *Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*, is based on his whistling ability. *Mimus*, of course, is from the same stem as our English word mimic or imitator. *Polyglottos* is from the Greek—poly: many, and glotta: tongue or speaking many languages. Thus the mockingbird's name simply says that he imitates many tongues.

His nesting habits are as carefree as his many songs. Nests are often constructed in low blackberries or cat briers, or high in tangled honeysuckle growth. A layer of twigs surrounds the rootlets and grasses with which the nest is lined, and three to four

eggs are laid usually between the last week in April and the second week in May.

He is the farmer's friend in eating large numbers of harmful insects, both adults and larvae. Any farm with mockingbirds in its cedars and fence rows can count their work as that of an extra hired hand.

### CLASSROOM SUGGESTIONS

Teachers, have you ever considered a nature walk with your class? Now, in the spring, with all of Virginia newly alive, is the time to undertake such a project. You'd be amazed at what a supplement to general science or biology an afternoon in the out-of-doors can be! The same boy who nods through a lecture and recitation period may prove to be the most eager searcher for the nest with young birds in it, or may hang on every word when the oxygen—CO<sub>2</sub> cycle is explained to him in the presence of a tree that is performing the function at that very moment.

In addition to actual lab work, a nature walk serves the very important purpose of breaking up the ordinary, everyday routine of classwork. Getting out for an afternoon together makes both teacher and class a little bit more human to each other. Miss Jones is no longer just "teacher" but a "good sport" as well. The class is no longer just a group of faces, but individuals now, each with distinctive likes and dislikes on these field trips.

If possible, more than one trip should be planned with special emphasis placed on a different phase of nature each time. For example, conservation of natural resources could be used as the overall theme with wildlife and its role in nature considered on one trip, plants and trees and their place in the scheme on another, soil, water, and erosion on yet another. Such trips teach far more than textbooks ever can.

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