

National Wildlife Week - March 18 - 24



40 YEARS OF LICENSES for hunting and fishing are exhibited here during conservation week by Jack Hurst, local conservation enforcement officer. The licenses started at \$1 each 40 years ago, and show the changes in style and size in that period. Hurst will be making several talks to conservation groups this week.



DAVID MCGINTY, center, explains ways of controlling weeds in ponds to Jack Hurst, left, enforcement officer, and county agent Leo N. Seltentright, right. In the background is the fish biologist truck which McGinty will be using, visiting the 900 lakes and countless ponds in his 18-county district.

Pheasant, Quail Now For Sale

Adams county conservation clubs interested in purchasing game birds to raise have been advised of ten places where they can be bought, Jack Hurst said today.

Quail are available from the following: Twin Oaks Quail Farm, Boonsville, Indiana; Alma Quail Farm, 213 East 18th St., Alma, Ga.; Mississippi Quail Farm, Batesville, Miss.; Dutch's Game

Birds, 1822 W. 7th, Joplin, Mo.; Crosswhite Quail Farm, Abingdon, Va.; M. E. Bogle, 527 Odgen St., San Antonio, Texas; Gordon Coble rural route 2, Dover, Pa.; and Stone Mountain Quail Farm, Box Z, Route 2, Stone Mountain, Ga.

Pheasants may be purchased from: MacFarlane Pheasant Farm, Janesville, Wis.; Marvin Maier, Route 2, Mreman, Ind. Each club will have to make its own arrangements with the individual companies.



WATER LILIES, POND WEEDS, provide food and cover, not only for tiny fish but for game birds as well. Clean ponds, without the pollution of gasolines, acids, or radioactive materials provide a good refuge for ducks and geese. All of the attacks of man are not as important as the gradual drainage of the swamps and ponds in decreasing the number of aquatic game birds.



FARM PONDS, like the one pictured above, can provide a haven for ducks and geese who need wetlands on their migration flights. Just this week several large flocks headed north stopped at Rainbow Lake and the Limberlost region, Jack Hurst has reported. The flights of ducks and geese are eagerly awaited as poetry in living motion by nature enthusiasts. If land is continually drained, marsh birds and wild life will disappear from America like the passenger pigeon.

Dilemma Of The Ducks

All over the continent, wild ducks and geese are heeding an age-old call of spring to head for northern nesting grounds where they will attempt to reproduce their kind. The "V" of high fliers or the rush of a flock rising swiftly from the water seldom fails to stir our emotional admiration, yet what will these birds find this spring as they seek nesting sites?

To put it simply, the ducks are in a dilemma. The situation is serious, in fact, the National Wildlife Federation and its state affiliates have decided it should be featured during the current observance of National Wildlife Week. Theme of the Week, being observed March 18-24 this year, is: "Waterfowl for the Future, by Conservation of Wetlands Which Benefit Man and Wildlife."

There is no question that ducks and geese are in severe circumstances. Many authorities say that continental flights of migratory waterfowl, once estimated in unnumbered millions, will dwindle to remnant flocks unless positive steps are taken within the next ten years to preserve their habitat. International aspects of the problem complicate a solution.

Many factors are combined to make inroads upon waterfowl populations. As soon as young birds hatched during the summer begin their southward migrations in the fall, they encounter the traditional hunter and run the gauntlet of skyward poised guns. A greater danger is the more effective illegal traps of the market hunted. Ducks also run afoul of agricultural chemicals and waters polluted by all sorts of wastes, including oil products which render them unable to fly. Disease, inadequate food supplies, and predators also take a toll. Most of these same problems, with the exception of hunting then persist on the trek back to the north in the spring.

In spite of these difficulties, however, waterfowl populations probably would flourish if habitat conditions were favorable, especially on the nesting grounds. Here, in the northern U.S. and in the prairies of Canada, rests the greatest problem.

Drought periodically hits the prairie pothole regions, as in the past few years, and the numbers of ducks decline. For more than two decades now, however, continuous drainage of wetlands is resulting in a permanent drought and waterfowl habitat has been reduced to a third of its original size. Then, when natural drought conditions prevail as well, waterfowl numbers dwindle to the point where years are required for recovery. In the U.S., it is an inconsistency of federal government which subsidized drainage of wetland to continue and create more agricultural land at a time when crop surpluses pose a major national problem. It is doubly inconsistent that one agency of the federal government should stimulate drainage of the waterfowl wetlands that another agency is seeking to acquire.

Clearly, immediate action is necessary to save the ducks and geese because of their tremendous importance to man. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Department of the Interior, and state wildlife agencies are busy acquiring wetlands for prevention as nesting, resting, and wintering areas. Funds for the acquisition of these areas come from sportsmen who purchase federal duck stamps and state hunting licenses and sporting arms and ammunition. Much, however, needs to be done in Canada, where 85 per cent of the ducks and geese are produced, where they often are considered nuisances by farmers. Mexico, too, needs encouragement in waterfowl management, especially with the enforcement of hunting regulations. Illegal activities of the "market hunter" in the U.S. also must be stamped out and all of us can help by refusing to buy wild birds.

The best solution to an international problem of this sort appears to be in an international organization composed of representatives of the nations concerned. All of these problems then may be considered and resolved through coordinated efforts for the benefit of all.

Pond Meeting Planned In May

Northeastern Indiana will have the first fish pond biologist in the state to work with pond owners and lake groups in the 18 counties of the area, it was announced today.

David McGinty, an Illinois university graduate in fish biology, has already started to work in the area, and has spent two days in Adams county.

McGinty, a native of Illinois, had studies in the department of agriculture and animal science, as well as in fish biology. He worked four years with the Illinois Natural History survey.

At the present, McGinty has been stationed at Seymour, until arrangements can be made in northern Indiana. He expects to move his family from Illinois to Ouabache State Park in Wells county

this week, temporarily. Later they will move to the Tri-Lakes State Fish Hatchery, near Columbia City.

There are more than 900 lakes in this area, ranging from small lakes to those which include several thousand acres. In Adams county alone there are 31 farm ponds, and innumerable other ponds and quarries.

Accompanied by Jack Hurst, district enforcement officer, he toured Rainbow Lake near Geneva, and became acquainted with its weed problem and stunted fish problem.

A pond management school for those interested in ponds, will be held tentatively on May 15, here in Adams county, he said. The first meeting will probably be concerned mostly with weed control, and how to do it the least expensive way.

McGinty will be available for consultation by contacting Jack Hurst, Geneva, Indiana, and he expects to spend part of his time in this county.

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