

Wild Life Lines

Oregonian Nov. 16, 1933

GONE, but not forgotten, is the 1933 elk shooting season. Not only did 575 mature bull elk furnish several times that number of Oregon families with fine roasts and steaks, but they also supplied sportsmen of the state with plenty of food for thought.

Hardly had the season closed than charges and counter-charges concerning the alleged wanton waste of elk meat and carelessness of hunters were flung over the state. The state game commission, with the co-operation of the state police department, followed down some of these reports, found they were apparently groundless and gave sportsmen in general a clean bill of health.

Sportsmen of high standing studied the results of the elk season with much interest and formed their opinions as to how it might be improved. For instance, Ed F. Averill, ex-state game warden, returned from his unsuccessful hunt in southern Umatilla county convinced that open seasons for elk should be continued in future years; that they should not be concurrent with deer shooting, and that every elk hunter should be checked into the elk country by the state police only after he has given assurance that he knows how to properly care for the meat after he has made his kill and that he has suitable equipment for removing it from the woods before it has a chance to spoil.

"In the first place," said Ed yesterday,

ing they had a fair chance and fair deal, and hoping that in another year they would again be able to obtain the trophies they sought."

Both Mr. Averill and Mr. Mosher declared the game commission's estimates that there were 9000 elk in the four counties open for elk shooting were very conservative, if not underestimated. The latter pointed out that the kill during this first season was undoubtedly far less than the natural increase in bulls alone, indicating that the open season did no great harm to the elk herds.

Mr. Averill had a sentimental interest in visiting the elk country during the open season because he and William L. Finley were active in bringing two carloads of elk from Jackson's Hole, Wyoming to Wallowa county for liberation 20 years ago, when Mr. Finley was state game warden. These elk, it was felt, strengthened the blood of the native herd, started the increase that mounted so rapidly in recent years, and aroused the people of Oregon to provide proper protection for the animals until they had increased to the point where hunting of them was practicable.

day, "any time anyone tells you these Oregon elk are as tame as milch cows you just tell 'em they're all wet. They may have been tame before the deer season opened, but after 30 days of deer shooting they were as wild as anything in Oregon. The bulls were smart. They stayed in the jack pine thickets and were seldom seen by hunters."

Ed should know. He went to the heart of the elk range with his rifle and the determination to bring home some self-shot steaks.

"My party found there are too many elk or too many cattle in that country," he went on. "The mountain willows had all been stripped of their leaves as high as elk could reach. Many of them were dying. Then the elk had moved down to lower altitudes looking for more feed. It was plain that the elk herds are getting too populous for the country."

"The best time to shoot elk, we decided, is after the deer season, probably two or three weeks afterward. August would be better, of course, because the animals are at their best condition then, but the weather at that time of year is too hot to properly keep the meat. The shooting season should be after the elk have stopped running, probably early in November."

Both Mr. Averill and D. H. Mosher, Salem, a director of the Oregon State Sportsmen's association, agree that the proper method of keeping meat

from spoiling is to skin the animal to remove the heavy coat of hide and hair and to quarter it and hang it up in muslin or woolen bags immediately after the animal has been killed. If this plan is not followed, the meat is likely to spoil over night, they said.

Mr. Mosher has a word or two of comment that is worth repeating. He says:

"It appears that the bulk of complaint against elk hunters came from one locality, this complaint being that these noble animals were slain and allowed to rot, only two ivory teeth or the head, at most, being taken for trophies. I cannot conceive of any man who classes himself as a sportsman committing such a dastardly act."

Mr. Mosher declared his party, which hunted in the neighborhood of Lehman springs, found the remains of two elk that had apparently been killed several weeks before the season, both evidently by poachers seeking their meat. Poaching, he feels, would be made more easy when the state has no open season on elk, owing to the fact that in such a case the animals would become tame and be more easily killed by poachers. But when elk are hunted, he said, shooting of them out of season remains difficult.

"As a whole," he went on, "I have found the sportsmen a reasonable, fair and considerate bunch of men and women. The majority of them went home without elk or deer, feel-

FINLEY LEAVING FOR LECTURE TOUR IN EAST

Commence 12-23-33

William L. Finley, vice-president of J. P. Finley & Son, well known naturalist, author and lecturer, will leave the first part of January for his annual tour of the eastern States. This is Mr. Finley's 21st tour displaying his remarkable motion pictures of outdoor life to clubs and organizations in leading cities of the middle West and Atlantic Coast. Through many years, he has advertised Oregon and the Pacific Coast as the vacation land of the nation.

The Portland, Maine, Press-Herald of December 4, 1933, says, "The largest assembly of sportsmen and fish and game officials in the history of the conservation movement in Maine is expected to greet William L. Finley of Portland, Oregon, one of America's foremost naturalists and explorers when he comes here next February 13 to give an illustrated lecture."

Maine is vitally interested in building up her outdoor resources to attract tourists. Governor Louis J. Brann of Maine will preside at the above convention, which features Mr. Finley's motion pictures, and the game commissioners of practically all the New England States will attend his lecture.

Mr. Finley will open his tour before the Chicago Congregational club, followed by lectures at the Camp Fire club and the Chicago Academy of Science. Among other club lectures that he will give are the Travelers' Men's Club of Hartford, Conn., Union Club and Harvard Club of New York City. He will appear at select private schools, such as the Choate School, Wallingford, Conn., Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Conn., Pelham School near New York City, also Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, and others.

As a member of the advisory board of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and one of the vice-presidents of the American Game Protective Association, Mr. Finley will take part in the annual three-day conference of the latter organization while in New York.

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Finley to Speak—William L. Finley will talk on "The California Condor" Friday at 7:30 p. m. at Central Library. Finley will illustrate his talk

with slides of pictures taken by himself and Herman T. Bohlman in California many years ago. The lecture is under auspices of the Oregon Audubon society and is public.