

Bighorns' Fate Sealed Unless Havens Set Aside

William L. Finley, D.Sc. and Ed. F. Averill
Write These Wild Life Articles

No One Knows About Smelt; Nature Abused

Will smelt ever again swim in the Sandy river? An authoritative favorable answer to that question would bring joy to thousands of residents of Portland and Oregon, not to mention the people of Troutdale. Possibly the only answer that would be accepted as reliable would be the sight of the fish in the stream. The unsupported statement of any so-called authority on fish probably would be viewed with skepticism.

Matt Ryckman, veteran superintendent of hatcheries for the game commission, frankly admits he does not know. He is certain of one thing, however, and that is that if the fish should return they must be protected if future runs are desired.

"Smelt will be a thing of the past in all streams if they are not given some protection," says Matt. "It is possible to destroy any species of any bird, fish or game by unrestricted killing."

MANY TONS DESTROYED

"In the past thousands of tons of these fish have been uselessly destroyed in one way or another. Millions of them have been used for fertilizer. Other millions have been placed in cold storage for use as feed for young trout and salmon in hatcheries. We must call a halt or the fish will be gone forever."

"If it is possible practically to eliminate carp from the waters of Sauvie island in a few years, as we have done, certainly a less hardy fish like the smelt can not stand up under unrestricted killing by thousands of people. It will be recalled that when we first started salvaging operations on the islands to save the young bass and crappies we took tons and tons of carp in our nets. Because they were held to be predatory and undesirable for food, they were unceremoniously destroyed. Now it is not possible to catch a single ton in a whole season."

"It is possible to kill off a run of anything of this kind. Look what has been done in the way of fly extermination. Where are the hordes of rats that formerly overran the Portland waterfront?"

MAN UPSETS BALANCE

"The smelt may return. It may be possible to bring them back, but if so, stringent regulations rigidly enforced, will be necessary if we are to keep them. We must protect the parent fish until after they have spawned. Nature provided for losses of great magnitude by endowing each female with the ability to deposit so many thousands of eggs in the spawning waters. When man enters the picture he always upsets the balance of nature."

The last migration of any size occurred in 1930. This run started March 18 and lasted 17 days. Records provided by the office of the game commission and by Ed Brockman go back to 1919. There was a run in that year and the one following. In 1921 and 1922 the fish failed to appear. Then followed a period of eight years in which there was a run every season, although the fish were not always numerous.

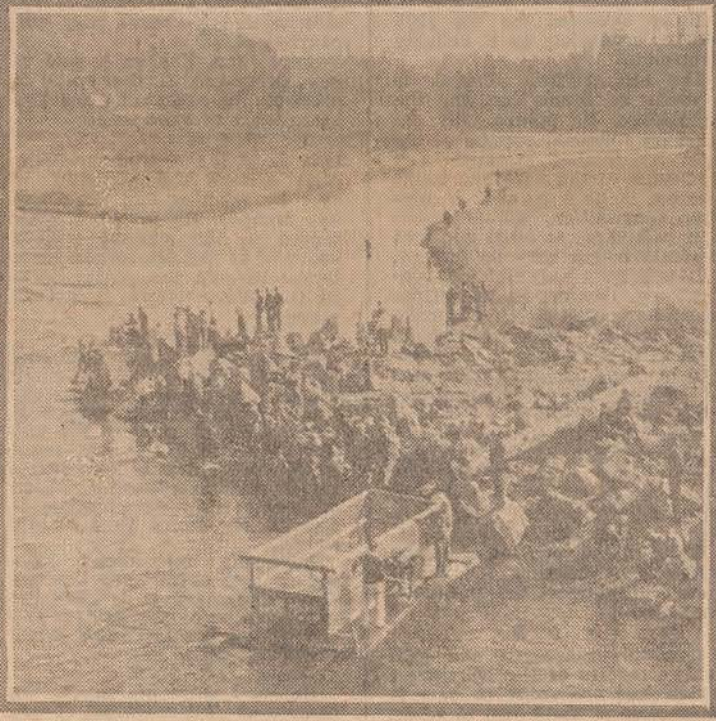
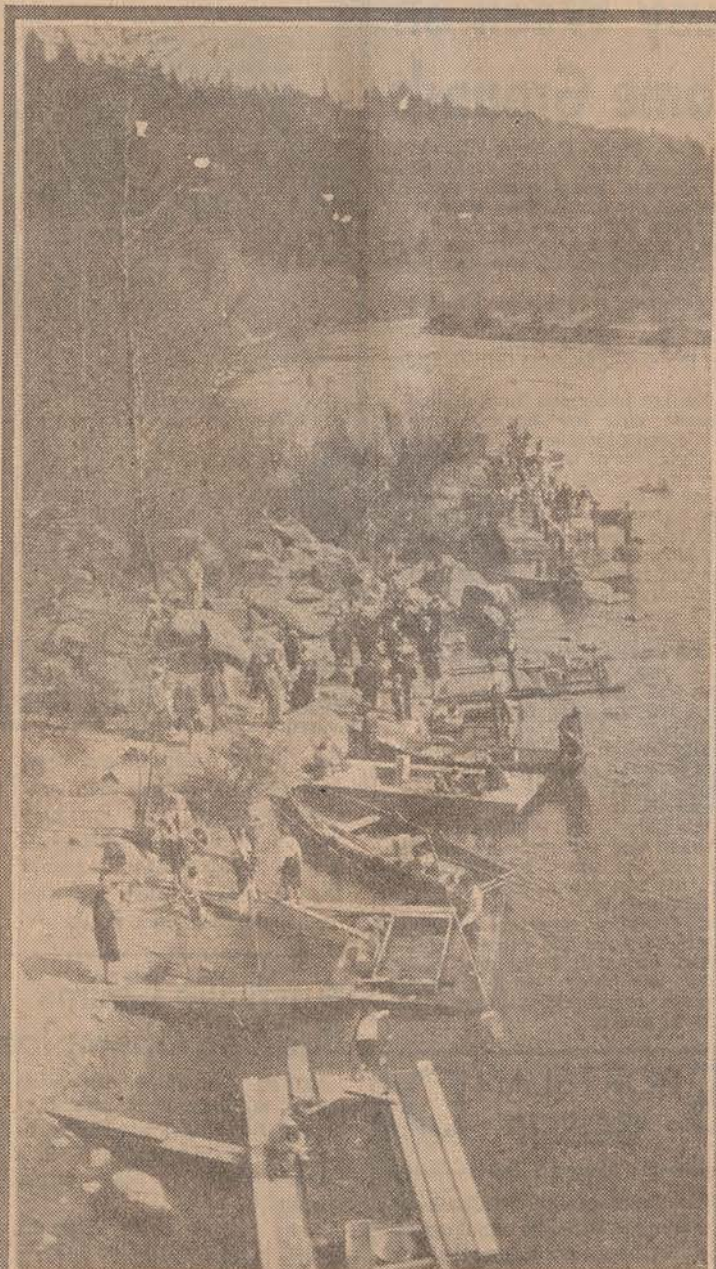
The fish were only in the river six days in 1929 when the run started April 9. Then followed the 17-day run in 1930, followed by a total failure in '31, a one-day season in '32, a failure in '22, a nine-day season in '34 and a failure in '35. The run in '34 started March 4 at 9 a. m.

Will there be any smelt in 1936?

"Complete Angler"

At a recent sale of old books in London a copy of the first edition of Walton's "Complete Angler" changed hands for £510, while a copy of the second edition of this famous book brought £140.

When Smelt Runs Were Good



Two scenes on the Sandy river, when smelt runs were at their height. Thousands of pounds of little fish were caught in those days, but in the last few years the poundage has been almost nil.

—Photos by Ed Brockman.

Eager Tourists Welcome, But What of Fish?

Columns of some of the California papers carrying sportsmen's news have a good many items about streams and outdoor life in southern Oregon. Looking through the clippings of the last two or three months, one might take for granted the Rogue river flows through the sunshine state. As a matter of fact, the Rogue is on the tongues of more California anglers than many of the streams farther south. If state ownership of a stream was decided by registration of anglers, Oregon might lose some of its waters.

The next thought that always bobs up is how the fish are making out. As good roads improve travel and more anglers crowd along the banks, the question of maintaining the harvest expert scratch his head. The coastal belt of Oregon is a drawing card for a large class of wealthy people around San Francisco and Los Angeles. In addition, Eastern tourists, basking in the winter sunshine, get tired of the increasing heat and dryness when winter passes.

NATURALLY MOVE NORTH

Like migratory flocks, they naturally move north, especially if they hear of good recreational areas, attractive camp sites and a few fish to catch. A lot of people think this tourist trade is as easy as plucking apples from a tree. All you have to do is to reap the harvest.

In a way, this seems to be true. The natural beauty of the coastline is a gift of Nature, and no one can put it in a basket and carry it away. The remarkable fish in these coastal streams are also Nature's gift, but unfortunately there is a limit to the schools of salmon and trout.

This always raises the question of whether it is advisable to continue the net fishing of salmon in these smaller coastal streams. It does not apply to the Columbia river with its big salmon industry because the Columbia, cluttered with towns and cities, mills and factories, is not an angling stream and its banks lack recreational spots.

HAS DIFFERENT VALUE

The salmon in the Rogue, Umpqua or Wilson, that goes from a net to a can, has a definite commercial value; but no one is going to talk much about canned salmon. On the other hand, a salmon in any of these streams hooked by an angler has a different value. Sometimes it is photographed. It is talked about. No one gabbles and tells his experiences more than the angler. But which is of greater value?

The real point to be considered is that the commercial fisherman is a man who has settled along one of these streams, has a little home and is rearing a family. He depends on the haul of his net to educate his children, all of which persuades many people that his right to net salmon for a living should continue. However, if schools of salmon are playing out in these smaller coastal streams it gives the problem a different slant.

There was a time years ago along the coast when pioneers reared their families by shooting deer for the hides. Homesteaders killed game for the market.

Everyone knows the world moves on. Conditions change. Business progresses. The old harness shop gives way to the garage. Is it not possible for the boatman on the night drift to make more as captain for a party of sportsmen?

NO FALL BEAVER SEASON

There will be no fall trapping season on beaver this year in Michigan. Instead, a spring season has been set for that state.

Love-Making in Wild Life Has Its Problems

"That little thing called love" does not contribute to the peace and quiet of game conservationists.

But don't jump to conclusions. Trials and tribulations in this case are caused by the wild creatures themselves.

Certain species of wild life suffer from their own susceptibility to acute attacks of romance or from the fine raiment and other indiscreet vanities they affect in courting.

Instead of love laughing at locksmiths, in the out-of-doors it sometimes laughs at actual extermination.

A good example is the wood duck. This most gaudily decked waterfowl, native American swain—so busy proving that home-grown sons occasionally can compete with those visiting princes—is either vain and foolhardy or inattentive to such outside details as a hunter's gun.

TOO MUCH LOVE-MAKING

Added to the decrease of water-side woods, his habit of flirting with powder and shot carried him near extinction. Under state and federal protection, he now is steadily on the increase, and appears to be plentiful in many parts of Oregon.

Those notorious lovers, the doves, spend so much time lovey-dovey they have little time for home-building. Their settings of one or two eggs are often lost through openings in hastily-rigged nests.

Which recalls the most famous of American bird love-tragedies. A comparatively few years ago the passenger pigeon was a wonder of the world because of its number. Its flights about America appalled the citizens, blotting out the sky for hours at a time and breaking down trees with their weight when they paused.

NEW HEIR MONTHLY

But with this beautiful bird life was an eternal dream of blissful mating, conservationists relate. In nesting grounds covering many miles each welcomed a new heir every month except during the dead of winter. While nesting they were easy prey to thousands of men who carted them and their squabs away by the hundreds of wagon loads. Now not a single passenger pigeon is known to exist.

Likewise the snowy egret tottered on the brink of extermination because of its love-plumes, which bloomed only in mating season and were in great demand for milady's hats.

Farm Youngsters Eager to Aid Game

Farm boys and girls making up Michigan's 4-H club membership are taking a hand in game conservation matters in a big way. All sorts of projects for this work have been introduced into next year's program. Establishment of winter bird feeding stations, game surveys, bird propagation, forest fire prevention, farm game management, distribution of bird and creel census cards and deer tallies are among the projects listed by leaders.

Stuffed Owl Did It

A stuffed owl placed on a pole in his yard rid the trees of annoying starlings for a Wilmington, Del., resident. The expedient was resorted to after tin pans, searchlights and other devices failed to have any effect on the clamoring mobs. Evidently the starling is as much of a pest in Delaware as the English sparrow is in Oregon.

Their Number Diminishes



Bighorn, or mountain, sheep in this state are making their last stand in Wallowa mountains. To protect them from becoming extinct, a refuge, covering both summer and winter range, is necessary.

Audubon Society Lectures Source Of Worthy Data

Persons interested in birds have a wonderful opportunity to learn more about them by attending the weekly lectures of the Audubon society. These are held in Central library every Friday evening throughout the winter. There is no admission charge and a cordial invitation for the general public to attend is always given. "Finches, Aristocrats of the Bird World," was the subject of a lecture by W. A. Eliot last Friday evening. Mr. Eliot is president of the society, author of a book on birds and popular leader of bird walks. Next Friday evening Harold S. Gilbert will talk on "Birds in Poetry."

Bird Count Today

Members of the Portland chapter of the Audubon society will make their annual Christmas bird census this morning. The count will be taken by the volunteer workers on that day regardless of weather conditions.

Poor Old Duck Hunter

Used to Get 50 Birds at One Sitting, But Now Look at It! Six Good Bag and Hard to Get

"Well, I've shot ducks for over 40 years down the river, and this is the worst season I ever saw. It's been rotten," said the old duck hunter as he glared at the game warden.

"Too bad? Why, did you ever stop to think that our daily bag limit used to be 50? And I could nail 'em all in three hours. Now what is it, only 10? You sit in a blind all day, and you're lucky if you get six. That's what I got, a mallard, a baldpate and four sprigs."

"No, sir. The trouble is, there is too much tinkering with the law. State laws, federal laws; state cops, federal cops. They have tied a duck hunter hand and foot with a ball and chain. Didn't we used to shoot all winter? The greatest shooting I ever had was always when the freeze-up came. The ducks had to get water and food. All you had to do was to break the ice around the blind, throw in the wheat, put out the decoys—and you got the ducks!"

"Too many? Tommy-rot! Did you ever count up the tons of wheat we used to feed? Didn't we pay the price? Our watchman poured it out every day. Then came Saturday, the ducks would flock into the blind. Why, many a time I've knocked over three or four, and by the time I'd reload the same bunch would swing around again to see what

was the matter, and get another dose. Them were the days—duck hunting days. And now they're gone!"

"Everything's changed. Sure, that's the rub. What makes me hot is, after we've spent our money for years, fed up these wild ducks like you take care of chickens in the barnyard, now we get nothing. Along comes this fellow, Ding Darling, and says we can't feed any more, can't even use live decoys to get the birds to the blind. What does he know about hunting ducks? He's an Easterner, a cartoonist; he's a New Dealer, dealing with ducks!"

"Poor duck! Hell, the whole deal is raw. It's a sock at the poor duck hunter. Don't the ducks belong to the hunters? If we don't get 'em, some pot-hunter will. Remember, when hunting ducks, get 'em while the getting's good!"

Man's Flocks Death Knell to Peak Dwellers

The forest service takes a census of big game animals living in national forests each year from Mexico to Alaska. This is done in all areas by rangers who are on the ground and can make a fair estimate by comparing numbers of former years and conditions. It is impossible to get a complete count of noses, but the forest service records are the best indication of whether big game is increasing or decreasing.

The deer is by far the most abundant big game mammal. There is an estimated total of 1,040,000. Other estimates are: elk, 120,000; bear, 60,100; antelope, 15,000; mountain sheep, 13,000; mountain goat, 17,900; and moose, about 8000.

In many areas outside national forests game has been nearly exterminated. By adopting a practical game management plan providing both summer and winter range and by establishing game refuges, forest officials have been able not only to maintain but to increase numbers.

One of the unique big game species that has almost faded out in the Pacific Northwest is the bighorn or mountain sheep. The reasons behind this decrease have been the original limited range of the animal and a certain amount of hunting, but the most destructive factor has been the occupation of its home by flocks of domestic sheep and the spread of a disease known as "sheep scab."

As far as we know, there are no early records of mountain sheep in the Cascades in Oregon. Some naturalists claim they lived in the Hart mountain area of Lake county. Flocks formerly ranged in the Steins mountains.

The last specimens killed in this region were taken by Harney county authorities and mounted to exhibit at the Lewis and Clark fair in 1905. At that time there was a small herd of about a dozen. The rest soon disappeared. It was considered impossible for these animals ever to survive in that area. This was open public range, and alien sheep herders with their bands of domestic sheep overgrazed every section of the mountains.

The last stand of the bighorns in Oregon is in the Wallows. The forest service can protect these few survivors from hunters, but the question is whether they will guard against inroads of the flocks of domestic sheep. It is a well-recognized fact that the only chance of bighorns surviving is a refuge set aside covering summer and winter range and the complete elimination of domestic flocks.

Big Owl Picks N. Y. Building for Home

A large owl has taken up residence on the fire escape outside the 16th floor of a building on Broadway in New York city. He comes back to the same perch after being frightened away. Pigeon feathers scattered about indicate the predatory bird has found living easy in the down-town district of our largest city. Alfred E. Smith Jr., son of the former governor and erstwhile presidential candidate, phoned the New York Zoo for assistance in saving the pigeons.

225 CALIFORNIA LIONS SHOT

Two hundred and twenty five mountain lions were killed in California this year. They were shot in the following counties: Siskiyou, Shasta, Kern, Placer, Tehama, Humboldt, Riverside, Lake, San Diego and Monterey.

Rogue Highway or Fish? Oregon Can't Have Both

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Lewis Type of Woodpecker Unusual Bird

The Lewis woodpecker is not a difficult bird to recognize in the field. It often is called back woodpecker or crow woodpecker. As a rule woodpeckers have a wavy flight, moving along with rapid beating of wings and then closing them for a moment as if gliding through the air. But this bird makes headway by steady flapping of his wings, as does the crow or blackbird. Sometimes instead of alighting on the side of a stump in woodpecker fashion, he perches crosswise on a limb like a robin.

This woodpecker has developed a character that makes him much unlike a typical woodpecker. In the first place, he has iridescent greenish-black coat and his method of flying are more like those of a crow than any of our other woodpeckers. In the second place, he has departed somewhat from the ancestral habit of hard work in digging grubs out of old stumps, for he much prefers to cruise around in the air, snapping up insects like a fly-catcher, and to vary his meals with fruits and berries like a robin.

STORES UP ACORNS
At certain times and places he has been known to store up acorns after the manner of his cousin, the California woodpecker. One bird student saw a Lewis woodpecker gathering numbers of Mayflies and sticking them into crevices of pines generally in trees in which it nested, evidently putting them away for future use.

Near Klamath Falls we saw a band of six perched on a fencepost. They were darting out and catching passing insects, returning usually to the same perch. They must have eyes like telescopes, for occasionally a bird would rise a hundred feet or more, snap up an insect and make an aerial slide back to his post.

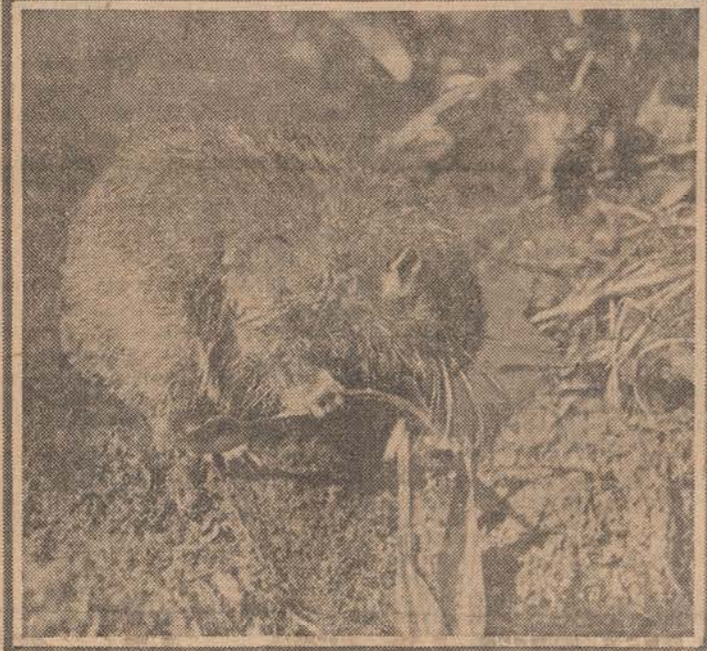
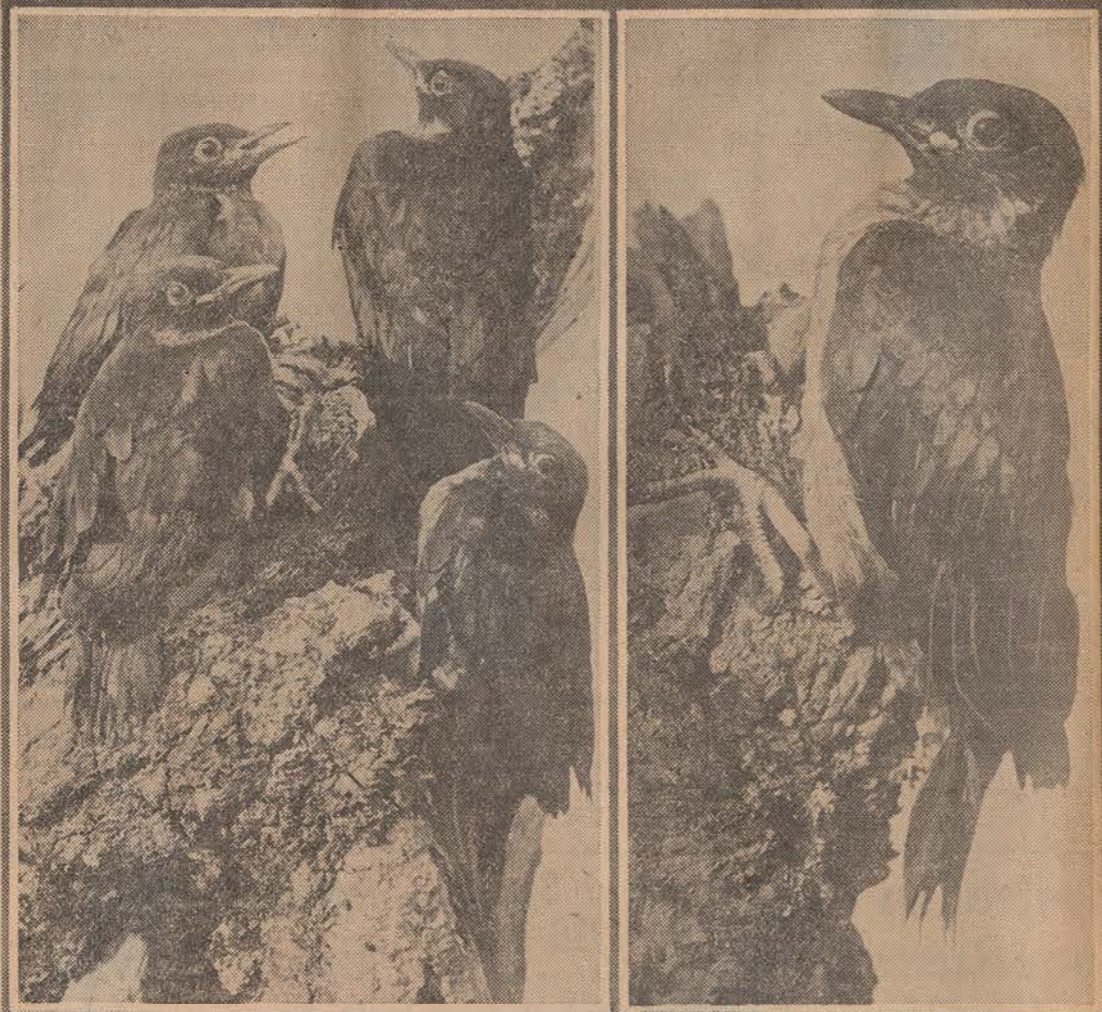
The sight of a Lewis woodpecker reminds one of the early explorations of Lewis and Clark. In his diary written on the trip, Lewis records seeing a black woodpecker at a place about 12 miles east of the present site of Helena, Mont., July 20, 1805.

FIRST KNOWN RECORD

This is the first known record of the bird. Lewis wrote he was unable to get a specimen at this time, but the following year on the homeward journey he got some of them near the base of the Bitter Root mountains in Idaho, from which the bird later was described and named.

Alexander Wilson, pioneer of American ornithology, made a colored drawing of this woodpecker from these skins. Writing at that time he said: "It was the request and particular wish of Captain Lewis, made to me in person, that I should make drawings of such of the feathered tribes as had been preserved and were new." It is fitting, therefore, that this bird was named in honor of Captain Lewis, who discovered it. Lewis died in the prime of his life and was buried in a solitary grave in the wilderness.

Lewis Woodpecker and Mountain Beaver



A group of young Lewis woodpeckers perched atop an old stump is shown above on the left and on the right, an old bird. Below is the mountain beaver, which is a native of Northwest coast line.

Road-Bordered Stream Soon Finishes Trout

It seems to be a pretty definitely proved fact that any stream bordered by a paved highway has little or no value as a trout stream. The reason for this is that any water course is exactly like a piece of pasture land. The latter provides food and supports a certain number of cattle. The stream is on the same basis. The number of trout in the stream is limited the same as the cattle in the field.

At present there are more people living in Oregon than formerly. A larger proportion likes to get out with the rod, and reel in the trout. It furnishes a family with both food and recreation. The increasing number of people owning cars and the ease with which they can move from place to place is the reason why the supply of fish cannot be kept up.

There is no way of saving enough spawning fish to produce the next year's crop. It is impossible to propagate sufficient fish in hatcheries to liberate. No one has ever solved, or ever will solve the problem of giving away a valuable public resource virtually free, and meet the demands of the public. No one can curb the practice of selfishness that exists in many people for "getting while the getting is good."

The alternative, of course, is a public effort of protecting the supply of trout that does exist by various restrictive laws and regulations. An important factor always to keep in mind is that good trout streams must not be too accessible. It is easy enough to argue that all men are free and equal and that each should have a hand in the pot. Since this is an impossible factor relating to game resources, the prize should go to those who are willing to trudge over the trails and make some greater effort than climbing out of an automobile.

There is a necessity for wilderness areas. Highways should not always follow the course of a stream. Since they are considered necessary from a commercial viewpoint, the cost and upkeep is often less expensive when a road follows a ridge or higher plateau.

There is a demand in Southern Oregon to build a highway connecting Grants Pass and Gold Beach. At present farmers and fruit growers in the Rogue River valley who want to market their produce along the coast, have a long way to travel going north and west. If they go south crossing the California line, in order to get back into Oregon, they are held up by inspectors who are very particular about Oregon products entering California.

The cry of many residents is to build a road down the Rogue river. Complaint of those trying to conserve our outdoor resources is that this road should not be built following the river, but should take another course across the mountains. A sound reason for this is that the Rogue has been one of the best known and most valuable angling streams in the country. Its value is in the runs of fish that come in from the ocean. In the valley the stream is accessible to the public. At present, the sea-run fish get through the mountains, although the supply is limited. If the whole course of the river is opened up by a highway, the fish resources of the stream will disappear much more quickly than they are at present.

The Rogue river is a serious problem for fish experts to solve. It needs systematic study and careful work. If it is to be used as a public highway from the source to its mouth, it is a waste of time to employ fish experts. The fact that certain runs of fish now come in from the ocean means nothing in the future, since these will soon be caught out. With the brood stock destroyed, the crop is ended.

BIRDS MORE SUSCEPTIBLE
Birds are more susceptible to contagious diseases than mammals.

Doesn't Make Sense

Decrier of Bird Slaughter Puzzled by Attitude of Hunter—Kills Faster, Gets Fewer.

By Frank Winch

When wild game birds become the target of commercialized sport for profit, it's time to call a halt. Time was when hunting cherished the idealism of a pastime, even a necessity to supply its portion of the daily family ration. Count back to the days of our pioneer forefathers, who pushed on to new frontiers with a Bible in one hand and a gun in the other. Our sole legacy seems to be the gun.

Never in American history have wild fowl been on the decline that faces them today. A hundred and one reasons are advanced for this depletion. Discount all but one reason and that a major one—too much killing, too much consumption of inadequate production. The business of migratory bird maintenance under such conditions is headed straight for wild fowl bankruptcy.

Two factors enter to smear red on the wrong side of the book. First the man with the gun who takes his sport for sport's sake. He pays a tax for shooting and will get it when he can. He and thousands of others

join organizations for the purpose of staving off wild fowl extinction—but killing goes on just the same.

The biological survey, realizing a dire necessity, confronts it by shortening seasons and bag limits which in the minds of expert conservationists appear to be a temporary retard of the wild fowl death sentence.

Other factors interested in the production of migratory birds are the industries which take a profit from shooting. There's no criticism to be found in profitmaking in any business unless that dividend earning power will eventually wipe out the source of investment. The investment here being the property of the entire nation's citizenry. Well intentioned industrial leaders have given generous appropriations to agencies seeking to restore wild life. To the observer standing close to the side lines, that money and effort have been admittedly wasted. How else could it be with fewer ducks than ever and more gunners using fast shells. Killing ducks and geese to save them, doesn't make sense.

U. S. Effort to Rebuild Forest Fine Insurance

Forests of the country mother the water supply which is so important to agriculture. During a rainy season the water seeps into the sponge of the forest floor and is held there, or some of the moisture filters on down, if the ground slopes, and forms springs or the sources of creeks.

If there were no forests and the rain dropped on the bare mountain side, the water would collect in little gullies, sweeping on to join others, cutting the soil and causing damage by erosion. The forests, then, have various values in addition to furnishing a supply of lumber for industrial use.

Although the forest is the most valuable crop of a mountainous country, if it is a privately-owned property and the trees are cut for timber or destroyed by fire, replanting is important, but difficult to handle. Forest trees may take 80 years to mature. The crop is too slow and the taxes too high for a private owner to meet.

Here is where Uncle Sam can take a hand. The government can finance reforestation, protect watersheds, prevent soil erosion, and in the end can capitalize on the lumber crop. One of the soundest investments Uncle Sam is making today in Oregon and other states is through its forest service. Young boys out of employment and coming from large cities like Chicago and New York, are given jobs in the C. C. C. camps, located in the federal forest areas of this state. They are planting young firs and pines on denuded areas. Six hundred and eighty thousand

Fears Wild Life Passing From Man's Dominion

Entomologists who predict a tremendous increase in insect life, to the point of extermination of civilization, hear a divergent opinion from Dr. James L. Clark, vice director of the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. Clark visualizes man's domination to the complete extinction of animals.

Men today are witnessing one of the vital changes in the world's history, he declares: the passing of a magnificent and prolific wild life from the earth.

"As long as there is a dollar in the hide or hair, conservation becomes impossible, and wild life goes down and down," he said, maintaining that the wild life now vanishing will never revive itself as long as man remains and predominates on earth.

were planted during the fall on 1090 acres in five different areas.

The taking of young boys from the centers of population, where too many develop criminal tendencies, and letting them live under the influence of the great outdoors of Oregon, is in itself a valuable government investment. But this is only a small part of the interest Uncle Sam will collect on the amount of money expended. The principal will all be collected later on. It is a life insurance policy that Uncle Sam takes out for his children.

Open Season on Frogs

Michigan's open season on frogs begins June 1 and will extend to October 31. Spear fishermen must not use an artificial light. There is no ban on lights if the frogs are taken in other ways.

Odd Creature Like Beaver Only in N. W.

The western part of Oregon is the home of a peculiar and little known animal called the mountain beaver. The only resemblance between this animal and the common beaver is that they both wear fur coats. From a structural standpoint, some scientists place the mountain beaver between the porcupine and the marmot or groundhog. It is more like a large gopher because it burrows in the ground, piling up the dirt at the entrance. The burrow is from 6 to 10 inches in diameter. For some reason, the mountain beaver is almost tailless because there is merely a tuft of hair where the tail should be.

If you want another name for this animal, you have to take the one used by the Indians when Lewis and Clark first visited the tribes along the Columbia. It was called *sewellel* or *show'tl*. Naturalists have never been able to figure out its ancestry or how it should be classified in relation to other mammals. The point is that there are no relatives.

FAMILY IS DISTINCT

The family is distinct and more than that, it is found nowhere in America except in the coastal belt from Northern California to Washington. It is a curious survival of past ages, a primitive type, an isolated species that held over from geological times. So the Pacific Northwest has something not found elsewhere.

In 1804 and 1805 when Lewis and Clark were exploring the Oregon country the Indians brought in robes made by sewing a number of skins together. The explorers noticed that each of these skins lacked a tail. They were not the skins of the regular beaver which at that time was used as a medium of exchange. The name of the animal used by the Indians told nothing, so the first time it was ever recorded in literature, it was set down as a species of squirrel.

One of the reasons why the mountain beaver is unknown to most people is that he never comes out in the daytime. There are colonies in the woods around Portland and along the Willamette river, as a rule near water, although the animal doesn't take to water like a real beaver.

COLONIES CLOSE BY

It likes to burrow where the ground is loose and damp but especially where the vegetation is thick and the holes are hidden in the grass and bushes. Colonies have been seen at Milwaukie, Jennings Lodge, Mount Tabor and through the Coast range and Cascades.

In the summer time one may find where this animal cuts grasses and twigs and lays them out to dry or cure before taking them into the burrow. In this respect it is like the cony that dries and stores up its food for winter. Little is known about the life of the show'tl. It may hibernate and sleep away most of the winter, especially where it lives in the Cascade mountains and the ground is covered with snow.

One that was kept in captivity became very tame within a few days, would sit up and wash its whiskered face and take tender ends of ferns and other plants from the hand as if it had no fear. It has small, bright eyes, long claws, brown fur and long, sharp teeth.