

# Fin, Fur and Feather



**Gun Training Offers Hunting Safety**  
Increased interest shown by youngsters in guns and hunting brings out the necessity for firearms education. Records show the incidence of gunfire casualties among youngsters decreases to practically zero among those taught safe shooting procedures prior to their first hunting trip. The prospect is, however, that many youthful nimrods will go out for wild game this fall unaccompanied and without previous gun safety training.

It is encouraging to note that the number of men who take their own boy or the son of a neighbor on hunting trips increases each year. At the end of the day the adult's game bag may not be so full as if he had accompanied a shooting

crony, but by reliving the excitement of his own early hunting experiences through those of his pupils, and having the satisfaction of teaching safe and mannerly conduct afield, he is amply repaid.

In past years, during September and October, many a Pennsylvania sportsman's organization has generously assumed the responsibility of teaching boys and girls safe gun handling and has provided shooting on a range under expert guidance. The basic course is sometimes followed by field trips, when safe and courteous hunting practices are taught under natural conditions. Experienced sportsmen are quite willing to lend a hand at instructing novice shooters. The beginner can always locate a club range or other

safe spot where he may do his practicing.

Through many high school assembly programs before small game season students are taught the rudiments of proper gun handling and the dangers of reckless shooting. In such programs tens of thousands of teen-agers are taught or reminded that guns improperly used or handled can cause pain or sorrow as well as bring thrills and recreation. It is important the beginner have proper instruction and supervision.

This year, for the first time in Pennsylvania, the Sporting Arms and Manufacturer's Institute offers a gun safety training course through its representative, James Dee, Dee, who resides at Highland Village, Camp Hill, Pa., is the man who introduced the course in the schools of New Hampshire, where it has caught hold rapidly. He is available to sportsmen's clubs, high schools, service organizations and civic groups with his gun safety programs.

**Polecats Move To Town**  
Game Protector A. J. Ziros, Greene County, says many skunks have moved from the country into the town of Carmichaels and have taken over garages and outbuildings there.

The postmaster of Carmichaels told this story to the officers. "I was sitting in my easy chair on the lawn one night not long ago, reading a newspaper. I felt a tickling and scratching on my bare feet. Thinking it was one of my cats I paid no attention. When the animal climbed on my lap and started rolling around, it seemed time to glance down. I did—and took off. So did the "kitten," a baby skunk."

**Importance Of Hunting And Trapping To Industry**  
Pennsylvania Industrial and Construction Exposition will be held September 20 to 25, inclusive, in the State Farm Show Building at Harrisburg. Governor John S. Fine said this about the Exposition: "It will be to our State's manufacturing segment what our world-renowned Farm Show has been to our notable agricultural pursuits. I entertain the great belief that this important project will enlist the enthusiastic support and cooperative participation of all our State's business firms and corporations, from the largest to the smallest, from the basic heavy industry producers to our transportation giants."

Exposition visitors will experience a "change of pace" at seeing the Game Commission's wildlife exhibit there, among heavy machines and recently developed engineering and scientific devices. People are beginning to comprehend, however, the economic impact of hunting and trapping on industries and trades. Actually, hunting itself is big business in the Keystone State where, on the basis of man hours afield and hunters per square mile, probably more hunters and fur takers pursue their sport than in any other State. As an indication, a conservative estimate of money spent each year by a million Pennsylvania sportsmen in pursuit of wildlife is one-quarter of a billion dollars.

Expenditures by these outdoorsmen, and women, go not only for the purchase of guns, ammunition, traps, bows and arrows, licenses, and for dogs and their training and upkeep. A large portion is paid out for: automotive equipment, gasoline, oil and tires; lodging; food; special clothing and footwear; portable stoves and coolers; knives, axes and cooking utensils; boats; camp furnishings and fuel; photographic equipment and supplies; tents; skis and snowshoes; house trailers; binocular and gun scopes; magazines and books; and numerous other necessities or luxuries that are part of the modern-day outdoorsman's equipment.

Our tourist industry benefits by millions of dollars spent annually by resident and non-resident hunters who often vacation away from home in game seasons to enjoy the

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hunters' paradise Pennsylvania offers. Also, though fur values have been comparatively low in recent years, the State's fur industry, garment manufacturers and taxidermists realized considerable profit

from wild-caught pelts in the Commonwealth. The estimated value in 1953 was \$1,500,000.

A recent-year survey was made of monies spent on hunting and fishing in the United States. (Pennsylv-

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vania regularly ranks among states having the highest number of license buyers, therefore her share of the nationwide expenditure is great.) Said the survey, in part: "The sportsman business (hunting and fishing nationally is over \$9 billion annually . . . It is nearly 50% more than the total business of all gasoline filling stations. It is almost three times the amount paid to dealers in farm equipment . . . The total spent on sportsmen's dogs alone totaled around \$875,000,000 over the nation. That alone exceeds by a wide margin the amount the public paid at the gate to see baseball, football and hockey games, horse races and prize fights." These amazing statistics are considered conservative.

Yes, the wildlife exhibit at the Exposition, appearing among such recent scientific and engineering achievements as the new solar energy battery and the interplanetary clock, may seem to supply a frontier or nature touch. Nevertheless, and obscure though the effects may be, hunting and trapping in Pennsylvania contribute much to a wide variety of industries and trades. Expenditures for them have a considerable bearing on the economy of our state and nation.

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