

Fin, Fur and Feather



Beaver Season Nears

Pennsylvania's 1955 beaver season will open at 7 a.m. on February 14; it will close at noon, March 5. These furbearers may be taken by the trapping method only. Non-residents may not trap for beavers in this State.

As last year, the number of these furbearers allowed any trapper is 4. A trapper may take the total number in one day or he may take his 4 animals over the entire season. Trapping for beavers, the largest member of the rodent family in North America, will be allowed throughout the Commonwealth this year.

On publicly-owned land no trapping will be permitted on dams posted by the Game Commission. Neither will it be permitted on water areas on private property, where the placarding has been done at the request or by the consent of the landowners concerned. Warning notices have been posted against beaver trapping at water impoundments in which beaver numbers are low. This is done to ensure sufficient brood stock for later years.

Traps may not be set on the structure of any beaver dam or house, or within 25 feet of the water line on the structure of either. One person may set, tend or operate 10 traps only. Traps must be tagged with metal name tags. These identifications must show above the ice or waterline to permit easy check without the traps being disturbed.

Seals shall be attached to beaver pelts by State Game Protectors, to whom the skins must be presented within 10 days after the season closes. Beaver hides may not be sold or otherwise disposed of legally until properly sealed. The skins should be presented to the game protector in the district or county in which the animals were trapped. Beaver kill statistics by districts are important to the Game Commission in planning future seasons.

Weather conditions affecting trapping and travel and the pelt value of beavers will, to a large extent, determine the extent of trapping and the total harvest of these animals. In the opinion of some wildlife men world supplies of beaver hides are low. Wealthy European men are said to be ordering beaver coats for themselves and their ladies once more. Beaver hair is used in fine felt manufactured for expensive men's hats, and this better felt is reported in demand also. These are reasons given why the pelt value of beavers trapped this season may be a little higher than last year.

Since the condition of the hides has much to do with their market value it is emphasized that careful skinning, fleshing and stretching will result in a higher dollar return

to the trapper.

Tracks In Snow Interpreted

Wildlife men hear many hunting tales and strange observations. The more amusing of these are sometimes retold, like this one by Game Protector William J. Carpenter, a McKean County officer, who says, "One day this past bear season I listened to several hunters discussing their luck and experiences. One man stated he saw the tracks of a man walking around in the snow in his bare feet. He was partly correct; bear feet did make the tracks."

Pheasant Chick Program

In 1945, the first year of the Game Commission's day-old pheasant chick program, 52% of the birds were raised to maturity. The score improved each year until recent years, when there has been a return of about 80%. The quality of the birds improved, too, with the increase in success of the amateur propagators.

Last year the Game Commission supplied 218,625 of the chicks to farmers and sportsmen. Approximately 83% of them, the best record so far, were reared to 12 weeks of age or older.

This year the Game Commission will again have day-old pheasant chicks for distribution to sportsmen's organizations, farm-game cooperators, rabbit farm cooperators and farmers with a minimum of 50 acres of land open to public hunting. Five pounds of starting feed will be supplied for each chick furnished clubs or individuals.

The minimum age for liberation is 12 weeks. However, the Commission will supply organizations with one cockbird for each ten hens held for liberation until March.

Applications for chicks and plans for constructing the required holding pens may be secured from game protectors. Each officer has a quota of birds. Those wishing chicks should apply early.

Pheasant chicks released by organizations do not affect allotments and distributions from State Game Farms. Persons and organizations interested should contact their District Game Protector. He must inspect the equipment and pens to be used before he can approve applications. Applications must reach the Harrisburg Office of the Game Commission prior to April 1st to insure feed delivery in time.

Chicks will be available between May 15 and July 15. The majority of the shipments will be made in June. Better results are possible if chicks are picked up at the Game Farm thus avoiding delay and loss in transit. Applications received late will be filled if chicks are available after all other shipments are completed.

The Game Commission is organized to do a real job with ringneck pheasants but the help of farmers

and organized sportsmen is needed to make it more effective. Teamwork will provide more pheasants and better hunting.

Bountiful Coon Tree

A Berks County game protector relayed this report from one of his deputies, a Wally Stout. Last fall, a farmer near Rehrersburg was losing poultry at a rapid rate. He suspected a coon was the cause. He tracked the culprit to a tree, where he found not one but ten of the masked robbers.

Deer Study Provides Valuable Information

The history of Pennsylvania's deer has been of tremendous interest to the State's hunters, conservationists and tourists since the early days of this century. Other States have profited from the Commonwealth's pioneering and experiences in bringing back its once-depleted herd. The story has been: almost no deer in 1900, too many in the late 30's, a serious overbrowsing of the State's forests, and a decline in numbers because of this food shortage. Occasional deer studies had been made and considerable was known about the changes which brought about this reduction in the herd, but scientific management called for more facts.

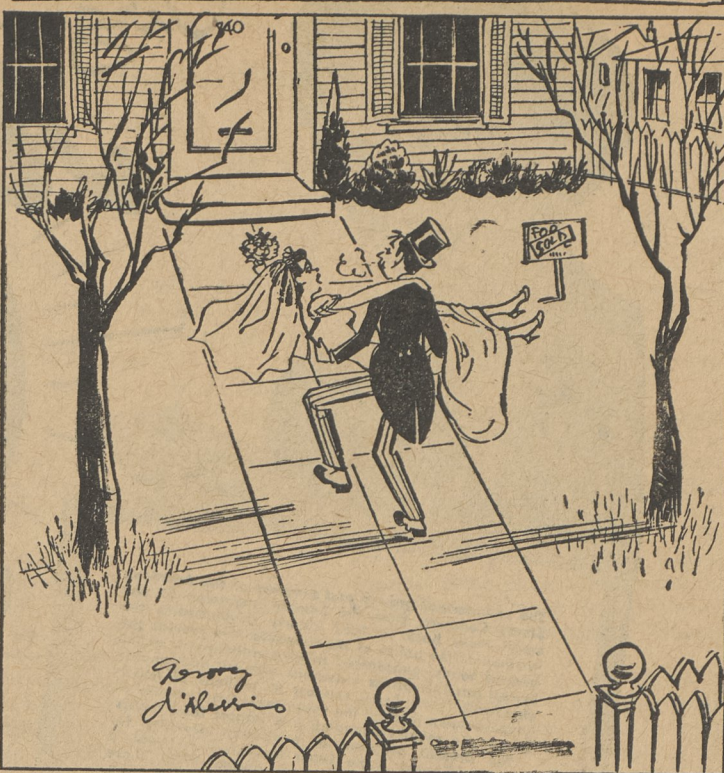
Since 1947, Stanley E. Forbes, a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, with a Master's Degree in Wildlife Management, has been studying the State's deer and conditions affecting them. In collecting data and specimens valuable to the project he has received much cooperation from other research personnel, field officers of the Game Commission and sportsmen.

Forbes' annual report, dated July, 1954, contains information based almost wholly on records and evidence submitted. While most persons believe the hunting season kill represents the total mortality to deer in any year, the researcher found that in the 12 months ending June 30, 1954, over 6,000 deer were killed in other ways than by bullets or arrows. These met death on highways, were killed for crop damage, died as fawns under mowers, killed themselves by running into fences, or were destroyed by dogs. Though the winter of 1953-54 was a mild one, approximately 2500 additional deer were reported to have died from malnutrition. The total does not include the many additional deer not found or reported, nor those illegally killed in season and out. So it becomes apparent the deer kill report would have to be increased considerably beyond the hunting season figure to show the total mortality in any year.

Here are Forbes' figures for the period covered by this report. Total legal deer kill (1953): legal antlered deer, 37,384; legal antlerless kill, 16,252. (Antlerless figure breaks down to 3202 males and 13050 females). The number of deer reported killed out of season in that year was: 2214 males, 3794 females and 20 whose sex was unreported—a total of 6028. The number of deer estimated to have died of malnutrition in that time was 2500, of which approximately 625 were males, 1875 were females. So the total of all these causes of mortality during the

THESE WOMEN!

By d'Alessio



"Of course, you can't make it. I TOLD you the threshold didn't start at the gate!"

12-month period of this study was at least 62,164. Put in another way, 86.3% of this total made up the open season kill; 13.7% of deer deaths was attributed to miscellaneous causes.

From this total mortality for the year, Forbes is able to figure the annual rate of reduction for both antlered bucks and antlerless deer. And from this, he is able to compute the total number of deer still alive in the spring and predict the coming fawn crop. It is vitally necessary that this information be received so that the Game Commission can scientifically control the hunting season kill through the setting of proper seasons. Such facts and intelligent interpretation of them will insure the future of deer hunting in Pennsylvania.

Magazine Campaign Opens At Dallas-Franklin

The annual magazine campaign at Dallas-Franklin Township School is now open. During a brief assembly program, students were selected as class leaders: 12th grade, Joanne Lewin, Deanna Townsend; 11th grade, Arthur Belles, Alan Mosier; 10th grade, Marie Goodman; 9th grade, Janice Hilbert, Pat Whitaker; 8th grade, Betty Harris, Connie Vietch, Sharon John; 7th grade, Priscilla Martin, Grace Bachman. Faculty advisor is Miss Ethel Shultz, assisted by Mary Lou Ehrgott and Ellen Walsh. The campaign will end February 15th.

Sordoni Builds Depot

Sordoni Construction Company is the general contractor for the new million dollar Lehigh Valley Railroad freight and passenger terminal in Buffalo, N. Y.

Famous Civil War Battle Flags Are In Danger Of Disintegrating

Five hundred Civil War flags now displayed in the rotunda of the Capitol in Harrisburg are in danger of disintegration, according to Frank C. Hilton, Secretary of Property and Supplies, in whose custody the flags are kept.

Hilton, with the cooperation of the State Historical and Museum Commission, already has got in touch with leading museum and textile authorities to obtain information about methods of treating these flags in order to preserve them forever.

"I understand that these flags probably could be preserved although preserving them would be expensive," said Hilton, a former National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. "But," he asked, "could anyone estimate their value?" They are a part of our heritage.

"Because of the flags' condition," he explained, "they must be handled with the care that would be given irreplaceable documents, which, in a sense, is what they are. They are part of the record of the great war in which thousands of Pennsylvanians lost their lives. They are memorials of the heroic dead."

displayed in six built-in glass-paneled cases, naturally have deteriorated during the ninety years or more that they have been without adequate protection. This is not a criticism of past custodians, Hilton pointed out, because only very recently processes have been developed for preserving flags which seem to be satisfactory.

Many other Pennsylvania flags, which are in the custody of the Historical and Museum Commission, are now displayed in the War History Room of the State Museum. These include flags carried by troops in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, World War I and World War II. Experts are of the opinion that because of modern methods of preservation and proper lighting, the flags in the Museum should last indefinitely.

The Civil War flags, which Hilton wants saved before it is too late, played an important part, he pointed out, in the history of Pennsylvania and of the United States.

"Some girls spend four years learning how to behave in polite society, and the rest of their lives trying to find it."

In the year 2000, Easter Sunday will be on April 23.



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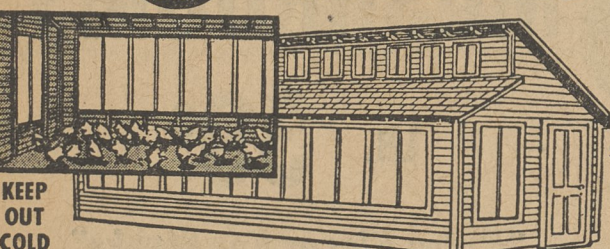
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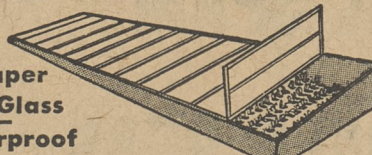
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