

Gamelands Tour Sees Abundant Wildlife



Resembling rush-hour on the highway in Trucksville is this line-up of vehicles — from jeeps to family sedans, taking the Game Commission's grand tour of Gamelands 57, northwest of Noxen. The trip is a favorite locally, and several are made every fall and spring.



Some animal life awaiting the hunter has been recorded by one tourist's camera: a turkey in the bushes (top left); three turkeys on the road, pursued by a gang of amateur photographers (top right); mallard ducks (center and bottom).

by Leighton Scott

An increasingly popular afternoon's fun in the way-back Back Mountain is the Game Commission tour of Gamelands 57, 38,000 wild acres of state-regulated land sort of behind Noxen and up into Sullivan County.

Gamelands 57 is also the basin of the Mehoopany Creek and such exotic tributaries as Possum and South brooks. Adjoining the land is 37,000 more acres, identically wild, comprising Gamelands 13, the total presenting such a wilderness that an imprudent hunter might never find his way out.

Indeed, as Ed Gdosky, genial Game Protector and guide of last week's tour, explained, until bulldozers had plowed longiercrossing strip-outs through the woods, he hesitated to venture too far back himself. Now, though, it is pretty hard to walk straight for many miles without eventually hitting a cut or a road.

We started from Ricketts Gate, above the Red Rock Air Force Base, about ten cars and jeeps, and several trucks. Some people in the tour knew the land well, a few old-timers recalling lumbering days. Art Kitchen, in fact, used to be postmaster at the now extinct village of Mountain Springs.

Others in the party came to look over the game situation for this season, or maybe to take pictures if a good shot presented itself.

We completed the circuit in about four hours, with occasional stops for Ed and Walter Malinowski, food and cover foreman, to explain things.

The trick, as I discovered, is to ride in the back of the Commission's truck, from which you are afforded the best camera shots and a running commentary from Ed and all the out-doorsmen riding with you. I felt I could go any Indian a close second in woodsmanship when we had finished the afternoon.

In my truck were Joe and Gerard Kipp, Harry Carey, Ed Gilmer Sr. and Ed Gilmer Jr., Dave Williams, Glenn Williams, and Fred Jones.

I met a whole contingent from Sweet Valley — Ord Trumbower, Preston and Kathy Mingus, and Charles Long, Miralie, Wanda, and Jan. Also: Wilson Ryman, Dan Kozick, Mal Kitchen, Jim Hopple, and Tony Hudak, as well as many I didn't get a chance to talk to.

Wild Ride

An unscheduled highlight of the trip for four of us was a jolly ride down the mountain trail in a wildly over-revving Power Wagon, which was our conveyance for the start of the trip. The motor threw a fit of mechanical enthusiasm after many years of loyal effort for the Commonwealth, and decided to go for broke. Luckily the better part of the ride to the rendezvous-point at the creek forks was downhill, and we didn't need the motor.

Where Possum and South joined, several trout were spotted. As for game, Ed said, grouse, pheasant, and turkey all looked fairly good, but ducks were off.

The gamelands are never open to traffic, with the exception of specified stretches of road, but are open to public on foot, bicycle, or what-have-you (so long as it has no motor!), all year round. In hunting season, they are open to hunters. Although

picnicking is forbidden, game wardens wink at peaceful family outings which clean up after themselves.

Swaths are cut through the woods, the knocked-over saplings, still rooted by shreds of bark and budding, providing food and cover for the animals.

Game protectors keep a weather eye on the berry bushes to determine if the deer and birds are going to have anything to eat.

Game Spotted

Well into the hinterland we spotted some red foxes, and Ed said it was in this area he had shot a bobcat recently. Camera bugs fell over each other to get a picture of a doe standing in the road ahead of our truck. But she was standing square into the sun.

A mile or so beyond, we ground to a halt, jumped out of the truck, and scrambled into the brush, chasing wild turkeys with cameras. Before hunting season the wild turkey is surely the stupidest creature alive, preferring to walk than to fly. All the birds simply maintained a careful lead on us, and when we hemmed them in, they ran every which way to get out before taking to the air.

Other sights we enjoyed were the wheat strips planted by the Commission for food for the animals, wood-duck boxes built by interested naturalists, beaver dams—some trapped out and some going strong. On a lake called the Meadows, we saw some mallard ducks, a strategic beaver dam, and the Sam Kittle family fishing.

Harveys Lake

Mrs. Albert Bainbridge and Mrs. Amos Hunsinger took Mrs. Helen Henry, Pittston, to Philadelphia last week-end and she was admitted to the U. of P. Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Elwood Davis and sons visited friends in Wilmington, Delaware recently.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Keller, Sterling Farms, visited their son at Media last Saturday. On Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hunsinger of Berwick were callers at the Keller home, and on Tuesday, Mr. and Mrs. Keller had dinner with Mr. Keller's mother, Mrs. Blanche Keller at Pikes Creek.

Mrs. J. H. Mitchell and son Jackie of Syracuse, N. Y., and Mrs. A. J. Nancarrow, Herkimer, N. Y., were week end guests of the Gilbert Carpenters. Mrs. Mitchell is the Carpenters' daughter, and Mrs. Nancarrow is a sister of Mrs. Carpenter. On Sunday Mrs. J. A. Rees, Clarks Summit, and Mr. and Mrs.

By this time we had come full circle, and proceeded back on the road from Mountain Springs to Ricketts Gate, well satisfied and grateful to guides Ed and Walter, and feeling pretty well briefed on the games scene in this area for 1963-4.

J. Jones, Wilkes-Barre spent the day with the Carpenters. Mrs. Rees is a sister, and Mr. Jones a brother of Mrs. Carpenter.

W. S. C. S. of Alderson Methodist Church entertained the women of the Charge and Loyalville and Maple Grove W. S. C. S. at the church on Thursday evening. Mrs. Raymond Garinger had charge of the program, and introduced Miss Pearl Averett of Shavertown, who spoke on India. Miss Averett and four ladies of the W. S. C. S. presented a dramatization on India.

The tables were decorated with the India Motif and lunch was served to 40 guests.

Majors In Retailing

Karen Culver, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Culver, 45 Church Street, Dallas, is registered at Chamberlayne Junior College, Boston, Mass. Students come to this Back Bay College from such distant points as Costa Rica, Mexico, Wyoming, Minnesota, and Florida for courses in liberal arts, fine and applied arts, business management, secretarial training, retailing and merchandising.

Miss Culver is majoring in retailing.

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Senior Girl Scouts Are Invited To Bloomsburg

An exciting day for Senior Girl Scouts has been planned by the Program Committee of the Penns Woods Girl Scout Council at Bloomsburg State College Saturday, November 2. Deadline date for registration has been extended because some of the troops had not received proper notification. Girls and adults still wishing to attend may notify the Council Office, 383 Wyoming Avenue, Kingston, by card or telephone up until Friday, October 25.

Program begins at 10 with Registration; 10:30 A.M. assembly and short speech by Dr. Barbara Schockly; 11 A.M. Guided tour of the campus.

12:30 P. M., Lunch
1:30 P. M., Question and answer period; 2 P.M. Matinee - performance of play by drama group of Little Mary Sunshine.
3:30 P. M., Departure.

Pledged To Sorority

Bonnie Gaylord Gross, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Gross, 100 Franklin Street, has been pledged to Zeta Tau Alpha national social sorority at the University of Tampa. Miss Gross is a Junior, majoring in Art.



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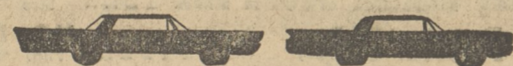
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