



# OREGON WILDLIFE

APRIL 1980

# OREGON WILDLIFE

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OREGON FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

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Ron E. Shay, Editor  
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**Cover** — Adequate nesting cover for birds like these valley quail is one of the essentials for survival. It is also one of the features frequently lacking in modern farming operations. Yet it needn't be, as discussed in the article beginning on page 3.

*Photo by William L. Finley*

## YOUR LAST CHANCE

We once read a story about an enterprising gent who put an ad in the paper stating it was the last chance to send one dollar to a particular post office box. He received quite a number of dollars and since he hadn't offered anything, they found it difficult to put a stop to his enterprise.

Now we'd like to remind you it is almost your last chance to donate \$1, \$3, or \$5. But we're offering something in return. It's a nongame program financed by folks who care about wildlife.

As we write this, we don't have much information to pass along. Things started slowly in January with the nongame income tax refund checkoff with only \$2,780 reported from the Department of Revenue. However, the picture brightened with the February figure of \$63,321.

We're told that the big peak of tax returns is yet to come so we're hoping the figure will continue to escalate as the March and April tallies come in. We thank those of you who have contributed and hope that those who are still in the process will consider checking a box for the nongame wildlife fund if you have a state refund coming.

Thus far, Colorado is the only other state that has a program that obtains nongame management funds from the tax refund. Their totals have increased each year and we were told that this year the donations have really taken a big jump. We can't hope to match Colorado's figures because they have options for larger donations and have been at this for three years, but we are encouraged at the interest that has been shown so far.

So . . . 'bout all we can say is if you've donated, thanks! If you haven't, your last chance for donating part of your 1980 refund is near. We hope you'll give it some thought and in case you have friends who are interested, remind them their last chance is almost here. □

R.E.S.

## COMMISSION MEETINGS

*The Columbia River Compact will meet at 10 a.m. on Monday, April 21, to review the status of the Columbia River spring chinook run. Following that, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission will convene in a general business meeting. At 7 p.m. the Commission will consider a draft agreement with the Siletz Indian tribe concerning hunting and fishing rights, and will conduct a public hearing. A business meeting formerly scheduled for April 22 has been cancelled.*

*On Friday, May 9, the Commission will conduct a general business meeting beginning at 9 a.m., and the next day, Saturday, May 10, will again meet at 9 a.m. to hear staff recommendations for deer, elk and general big game hunting regulations.*

*All meetings above will be held in the conference room at Department headquarters, 506 SW Mill Street in Portland. □*

HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS APPROVED	
Month of February . . . . .	15
Total Active . . . . .	1,734
STUDENTS TRAINED	
Month of February . . . . .	383
Total to Date . . . . .	271,163
HUNTING CASUALTIES REPORTED IN 1980	
Fatal . . . . .	0
Nonfatal . . . . .	0



Habitat, whether on farmland or anywhere else, is the key to wildlife abundance.

## *WILDLIFE HABITAT DOWN ON THE FARM*

*by Clyde Scott & Sharon Norris*

*Reprinted courtesy of IDAHO WILDLIFE MAGAZINE*

There is a flash of brilliant plumage as the pheasant explodes out of its fencerow cover. The ringneck sounds like a rusty gate hinge. The sound silences the score of songbirds in the nearby windbreak. The mallard at the pond guides her downy yellow brood to shelter among the cattails.

Anyone who has seen or can imagine these things knows something about the value of wildlife on farms and ranches. And, there is no need to miss such sights and sounds. They are easy to create. Simply match what land is producing to the needs of wildlife, and the wildlife arrives.

Most of the waterfowl and upland game birds are found on farms and ranches used mainly for cultivated  
**OREGON WILDLIFE**

crops, livestock, or wood products. This means that farmers and ranchers are the key to abundant wildlife. Farms, farmers and farm programs influence the existence of wildlife because it reacts quickly to agricultural management practices — good, bad or moderate.

Of course, we realize that if farmers or ranchers are to make a go of their business that their first priority must be crop or livestock production. Sometimes, wildlife must necessarily take a back seat.

But often with little or no cost, any farmer or rancher can easily adjust his regular farming or ranching techniques to encourage and help production of pheasant, quail, mourning

doves, songbirds, waterfowl or rabbits. The result is a wildlife crop to be enjoyed by him, his family and friends.

Here are some rather general do-it-yourself hints for managing your land to provide wildlife habitat. We'll get into more details later. Keep in mind that many practices used on farms and ranches help wildlife. Others are harmful.

The most beneficial thing farmers can provide for all species of wildlife is a farm pond. An ideal farm pond is one-half acre or larger that is fenced and planted to some trees and shrubs. Native vegetation should be allowed to grow around the edges of the pond.

Farm ponds are beneficial in many



**Multiflora rose provides excellent wildlife cover and food, and can be planted along (or in place of) fences and in other odd areas.**

other ways. They can provide livestock water, fire protection, recreation and beautification of the farm.

Cropland practices helpful to wildlife are cropping systems that include grass-legume meadows, grassy waterways, divided slopes, cover crops, stubble mulch tillage, delayed mowing of roadside right-of-ways, diversion terraces and ditchbanks until after nesting season, and leaving unharvested areas of grain next to good cover.

Cropland practices harmful to wildlife include fall plowing, mowing watercourses before ground nesting birds have been hatched, drainage of marshes and burning of ditchbanks, fencerows and crop residues.

Pastureland practices helpful to wildlife are livestock grazing which leaves adequate cover for wildlife, re-seeding, renovating or overseeding with legumes, building ponds both for livestock-wildlife water and wildlife cover.

Pastureland practices harmful to wildlife are uncontrolled burning, drainage of marshes, overgrazing and complete clean mowing early in the season.

Rangeland practices helpful to wildlife include proper grazing and salting, construction of watering places for livestock and wildlife, re-seeding and partial, not complete, brush removal.

**Page 4**

Rangeland practices harmful to wildlife are overgrazing, burning, and complete brush removal.

Woodland practices helpful to wildlife include protection from wild fire and harmful grazing, selective cutting in small woodlands, leaving den trees when cutting timber, piling brush near the edge of the woods, cutting trees out of woodland borders to increase growth of shrubs for food and cover and seeding clovers or grasses along roads, trails and in openings.

Woodland practices harmful to wildlife are uncontrolled burning and grazing and cutting of all den trees.

If you're really serious about increasing the production of more wildlife, you should start with pencil and paper. Draw a plan for wildlife habitat improvements on all your land — whether it's used for crops, pasture, range or woodland. It doesn't have to be fancy or precise, something that will help you keep track of what's being accomplished.

All wildlife have differences in their requirements for food, nesting areas, winter shelter, cover and daily living quarters, so your first step is to inventory and study each piece of land or farm individually. This will help you determine what areas to improve and how the areas can best serve your needs and those of the wild birds and animals. Get this on paper, and you

have a plan.

The second step in the planning process includes working in standard soil and water conserving techniques, economic considerations and present and future use by wildlife. It is important to plan for the management of the land and its use according to the land's capability to produce.

In designing your wildlife plan, you'll want to include the proper types of habitat attractive to those species that you want to increase.

Here are some of the most important practices, techniques and management principles for increased production of farm wildlife.

### **Pheasants**

This popular gamebird is a bird of agricultural areas that produce grain and feed crops. In fact, the better the agricultural area, the better conditions for the pheasant.

A favorable land use pattern for pheasants is diverse and consists of 60 to 80 percent cultivated crops such as corn, wheat and barley; 10 to 30 percent hay and rotation pastures; 5 to 10 percent hardwood trees and shrubs; and 3 to 5 percent permanently protected upland or wetland herbaceous weedy cover.

The pheasant's greatest need is for undisturbed nesting cover and good winter cover near food supplies.

The daily home range of the pheasant is about 200 acres. It is reasonable to use this size of area as a basic management unit and establish or maintain the following or similar vegetative types that are adapted locally:

\*Grain and seed crops — barley, corn, grain, sorghum, wheat, proso millet (120 to 160 acres).

\*Grasses and legumes — alfalfa, reed canarygrass, orchardgrass, timothy (20 to 60 acres).

\*Wild herbaceous plants — cattails, ragweed, rushes, smartweed, sedges, sweet clover, sunflower (6 to 10 acres).

\*Trees, shrubs and vines — Russian olive, blackberry, willow and various coniferous plants (10 to 20 acres).

Various techniques of improvement can be planned and applied once these basic vegetative patterns are established:

\*Allow some standing grain to remain.

\*Leave crop residue on the field

**APRIL 1980**

until the ground is prepared for the succeeding crop.

\*Mow only one-half of the grassy areas each year.

\*Delay hay mowing until the nesting season is past, usually about June 15.

\*Protect other areas such as brushy fencerows and waterways, cattail marshes, grassy flats and weed patches.

### Quail

Quail need cover to conceal nests and young, provide shade from hot sun, shelter from chilling rains and snow, escape from enemies and to protect roosting birds at night.

Quail nest on the ground in a variety of cover types that afford shade and concealment. Undistributed grass or weeds, low shrubs and brush piles are favorite nesting sites.

Cover suitable for loafing is usually good escape cover, but dense low shrubs, thick vine tangles, high weeds and debris piles are also used.

For night roosting, quail benefit from stiff-twigged, densely-foliaged, evergreen trees or tall shrubs. In good quail country, there is at least one roosting site every half mile.

When feeding, quail prefer well disturbed areas of short vegetation that afford an open view of the sky. Brush thickets and tall grass must be close at hand for escape.

Improving the food supply on cultivated land interferes little with the regular farm operation. Strips of cover, grasses, legumes or grains may



The valley quail is found on agricultural land throughout the state and is one bird that responds exceptionally well to habitat development.

OREGON WILDLIFE



The ring-necked pheasant is a bird *dependent* on agriculture. It simply is not found far removed from cultivated land. Changes in agriculture in recent years are responsible for some of the decline in pheasant numbers.

be left or planted along field borders adjacent to hedges or brush patches. Fencing of streams and creek bottoms to prevent over-grazing is a most beneficial practice for improving quail habitat. In some areas where roosting cover is lacking, artificial cover can be provided by piling brush on elevated platforms.

### Mourning Doves

This migratory bird is widely distributed throughout the state, but the largest populations are found in agricultural areas. Their wide distribution indicates their versatility in habitat needs.

For nesting habitat, they will use trees, shrubs or the ground as nest sites. Nesting is often concentrated in the orchard areas or other similar type tree plantings.

Habitat improvement for mourning doves can best be done by establishing food patches one-quarter acre or larger.

Waste food found in harvested wheat fields is a favorite of mourning doves. Food patches can also be created by discing fields formerly in cultivated crops. This will result in barnyard grass, bristle grass, pigweed, ragweed, and sunflowers which are all favorite foods.

### Hungarian Partridge

Huns are sparsely distributed

throughout the irrigated croplands of eastern Oregon. The best populations occur on grassy foothill rangelands and on dry farm croplands. They select nesting sites in alfalfa, weed patches, grassy fencerows and in grass stands on rangeland.

If food is available, these birds will remain on open prairie lands during the entire winter and are quite capable of scratching down through the snow for food. Brushy cover is important to them for escape when the prairies are mantled with snow.

Their preferred foods are barley, barnyard grass, bristle grass, millet and wheat.

A most important conservation practice that is highly beneficial to huns is to leave grain stubble unplowed throughout the winter. This will provide food as well as deter soil erosion when spring runoff occurs.

### Cottontail

Protection and improvement of cover are the most effective management tools for increasing rabbit numbers. Avoid overgrazing or burning brush cover. Retain thickets of roses and other close growing shrubs. Include dense shrubby plants in hedge rows, field windbreaks and critical area plantings.

Pile brush, prunings, old lumber, logs and irrigation pipe for additional cover in odd areas of fields.



The cottontail rabbit is much more popular in the eastern and midwestern part of the country than it is here, but is one that responds well to minimal efforts to provide habitat.



A small farm pond will not only provide a nucleus for wildlife populations, but can also provide benefits for agricultural uses.

Cottontails are very dependent upon cover for protection from predators. Brushy thickets, old buildings, piles of old lumber, logs, brush piles and culverts are readily used for such cover.

Although this animal is not as important a game animal here as in the eastern states, good habitat can be provided for bunnies with very little effort.

To summarize, most wild things ask little of the property owner. To survive, they need only a place to hide and nest — the protection that biologists call cover. Wild creatures also need food to eat, preferably food that is close to cover so they can scurry back to safety quickly when in danger. And they need water to drink or to live and feed in. All this is little enough payment for the benefits they provide.

The preservation and improvement of farm wildlife lies with the landowner, as well as the recreation use of this resource. And it is realized that sometimes financial assistance or incentives are needed for continued conservation of his — and our — land, water and wildlife.

Incentives come in many forms — monetary, added soil and water protection, abundant wildlife and good will.

Cost-sharing assistance is available through the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service for providing permanent wildlife habitat cover and food.

Look around your farm or ranch. Could you encourage better land use and more wildlife habitat?

*(Both Mr. Scott and Ms. Norris work in the Boise, Idaho office of the Soil Conservation Service. Ms. Norris is the SCS public information officer for Idaho, and Mr. Scott is the state biologist. What they have written here was aimed at Idaho, but the principles are the same in Oregon). □*

# Raucous, Smart and Everywhere

by Jim Gladson

They are smart, loud, seemingly fearless and they are everywhere. Persons who can say they have never seen one of Oregon's jays, crows or magpies can also say they have never seen a tree. For seldom is there a tree anywhere in the state that will not have one of these birds on or around it at some time during the year.

Without discrimination, the raucous morning calls of the jay have awakened sleepers in secluded mountain camps and suburban bedrooms. For every type of Oregon country, there is a member of this bird family to match.

On the coast, the black-crested Stellar's jay, the crow and the raven are all common sights. Other jay species, especially the gray jay, may also be seen from time to time.

Between the Coast Range and the Cascades, the scrub jay is common. The Stellar's jay is seen in the forested hills. Crows are common and ravens are also present in lesser numbers.

In the Cascades, the Stellar's jay shares territory with the gray or Oregon jay, also known as "the camprober".

Living still higher up the mountain slopes is the Clark's nutcracker. This bird is sometimes confused with the gray jay, but there are noticeable differences. The gray jay has a black head with white forehead and a two-tone body of dusky white on the chest and dark gray on the back. The beak is also shorter than the one on the Clark's nutcracker.

The nutcracker has a body of light gray with black wings and tail accented with white.

In the yellow pine and juniper zone on the east slopes of the Cascades, the pinion jay enters the picture. This jay is found most often in Sisters and Bend areas.

The pinion jay acts and sounds like its cousins, but its uniform dull blue color helps identify it.

Magpies also start showing up on the east slopes. By the time a person reaches sagebrush country, the mag-

pie is common. With its long tail and contrasting dark and white feather patterns the magpie is an easy bird to spot.

Ravens thrive in the desert habitat as well. They build stick nests on the ragged walls of lava rimrock. A quick way to locate a raven nest is to look for the telltale whitewash of bird droppings that usually covers the rocks below the nest.

Some of the forest jays can be found in suitable habitat on the east side, but they are not nearly as common as they are west of the mountains.

Of these nine species of birds that represent the bird family *Corvidae* in Oregon, it is the jays that seem to enter peoples' lives the most. The jays are also the most interesting in the way they stick so closely to particular types of habitats, with unique species adapted to each place.

As mentioned earlier, the Stellar's jay is a bird of conifer forests on the coast, Cascade foothills and higher points throughout the state where that timber is found. The scrub jay lives in the flats where brush and hardwood trees prevail.

Where these two types of habitat overlap the distinction of use by these two species is dramatic. For instance, on many of the timbered ridges that rise from the Willamette Valley floor, the scrub jay is the common bird at the bottom where trees are deciduous, but the Stellar's jay is the dominant jay at the top where conifers prevail. A difference of a few hundred feet in altitude and a distance of perhaps one-half mile divides the species.

Likewise in the Cascades, the gray jay is the bird often seen around most campsites below 4,000 feet. Anyone who ventures above that altitude will see Clark's nutcracker as well. So only grays may be in the lower campgrounds but the nutcrackers join them at such places as Crater Lake and Timberline Lodge on Mt. Hood.

Regardless of what habitat they are in, jays exhibit similar characteristics. Like crows and magpies, they are

survivors. They will eat almost anything, and they will take risks to get a meal.

Jays are a frequent problem in a variety of agricultural industries since they will help themselves to seed in the ground or fruit on a tree. Attempts to discourage the birds often fail since the birds manage to outwit the people and devices designed to keep them away.

It is difficult not to press human descriptions on jays. Clever, playful and greedy would all be believable labels; especially greedy. A Fish and Wildlife Department biologist recently reported that a hoard of more than 200 Stellar's jays wiped out his wild turkey trapping operation by taking the 60 pounds of whole kernel corn he laid out as bait for the turkeys. The corn was more than the jays could eat, but what they did not eat they carried away and stored in tree hollows and other hiding places.

Whether it is greed or supreme self confidence that allows the jay to demand food from the hand of man is anyone's guess.

Jays also like a good show. This writer once observed six scrub jays act like onlookers in a barroom brawl. The jays gathered on a phone line that hung over a spot where two cats were squaring off for a fight. From their perch above the action, the jays squawked at the cats in anticipation, then went wild when the fight started.

Little is known about why jays are the way they are, but whatever drives them appears to be successful. In their places they have few challengers. Likewise, the crows, ravens and magpies are masters of their habitats.

In comparison to the lordly eagles and hawks, the jays and other members of their family are strictly working class. But the ability of these birds to adapt and use all methods available to survive makes it likely that they will be around long after the eagle and similar species are gone. □

# OREGON'S RAVENS CROWS MAGPIES and JAYS

Common  
Raven



Black-billed  
Magpie



Common  
Crow



(Birds not drawn to scale)



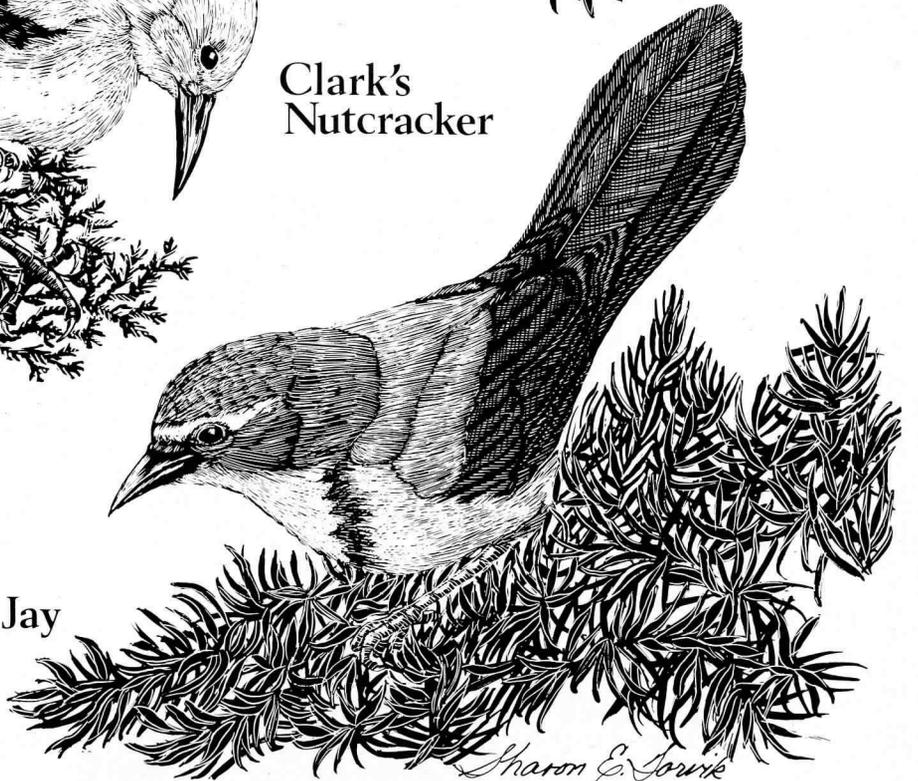
Steller's Jay

Gray Jay



Clark's  
Nutcracker

Scrub Jay



*Sharon E. Souvik*



Species, sex and age can be determined from duck wings. A Juvenile mallard hen wing is on the left and an adult mallard male wing on the right.

## A Wing In The Hand . . .

*by Ken Durbin*

"What the heck is a wing-bee?," I asked, feeling as though I'd just been invited to serve as bag man on a fraternity snipe hunt.

"The wing-bee," Ralph Denney explained, "is an annual Fish and Wildlife Service work party which sorts thousands of duck wings each year. The wings are sent in by cooperating waterfowl hunters during the season. Do you want to go or not?"

Ralph is head of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department's waterfowl management program, and being new in that particular job had not been to a wing-bee, either. Of course I wanted to go. And in due course we did.

The "wing-bee", as the project is popularly known among participants, is reminiscent of the old-time quilting bees. A variety of people including representatives from some of the state fish and wildlife departments in the Pacific waterfowl flyway, biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the region, and spe-

cialists from the Waterfowl Harvest Surveys Section of the U.S.F.W.S., gather to a common task. What we would be doing would provide part of the information compiled each year on waterfowl populations and hunting season harvest.

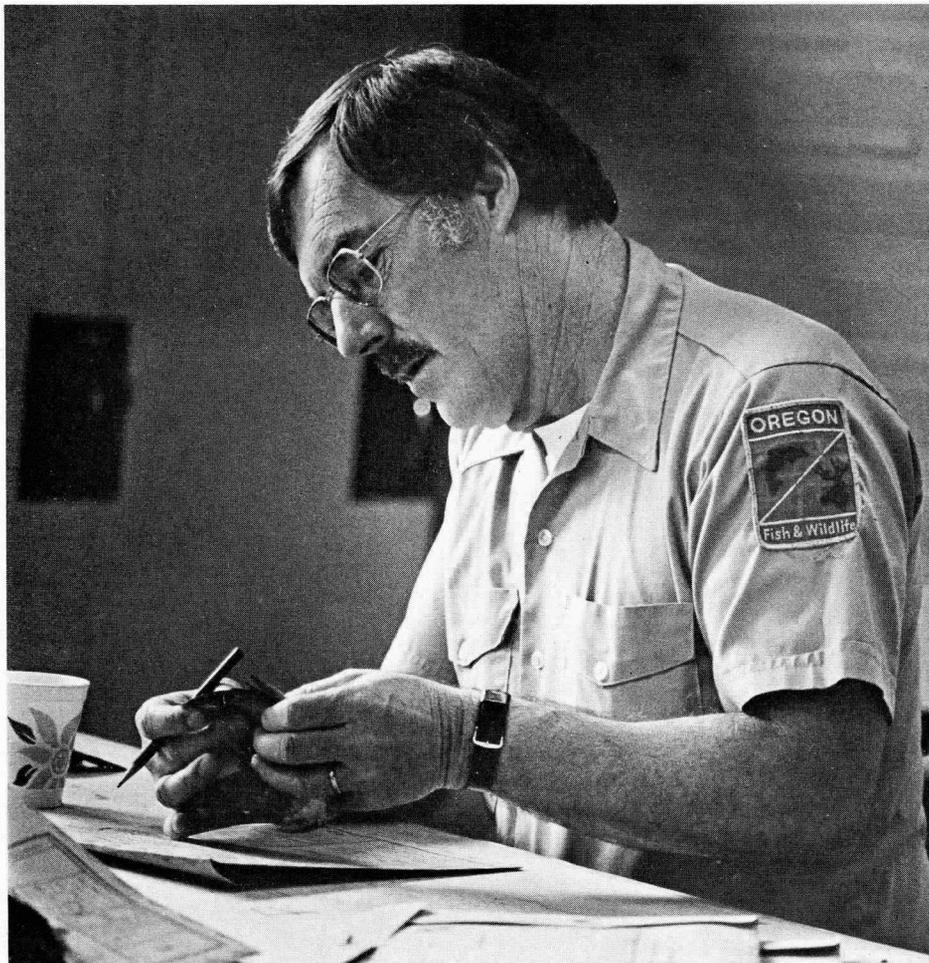
The project takes place at Coleman National Fish Hatchery near Redding, California. Once we'd all assembled there, Sam Carney of the Migratory Bird Populations Station in Laurel, Maryland explained . . . "The section collects, combines and processes three types of information to make estimates of annual waterfowl hunting harvest throughout the United States including Alaska."

First, he said, a record of the number of migratory waterfowl hunting stamps (duck stamps) sold at each of the 16,000 post offices throughout the country is obtained through the cooperation of the Postal Service.

A second type of information comes from a questionnaire sent to cooperating hunters who returned



Volunteers from throughout the Pacific waterfowl flyway gathered to sort through 18-20,000 duck wings and goose tails. The job took four days.



Ralph Denney, biologist in charge of waterfowl and upland bird programs for the department, puzzles over a scaup wing.

OREGON WILDLIFE

postcards from nearly 2,700 randomly selected post offices. Answers from approximately 70,000 hunters are processed electronically, and output from the computer tells biologists the percentage of stamp buyers who intended to hunt (separating out the stamp collectors and nonhunting conservationists), the percentage who actually did hunt, their average seasonal bag of ducks, geese and coots, and the average number of days spent hunting.

The final type of information, Carney explained, is obtained from another group of cooperating hunters. Each receives a packet of envelopes and a request for one wing from every duck he shoots. From some 70,000 wings thus collected nationwide, biologists determine not only the percentage each species, age and sex group has contributed to the previous year's waterfowl harvest, but also a breakdown in harvest for each state, for counties within each state, and the timing of the harvest throughout each flyway.

The data gathering and processing system is rather involved, and the information gained is used in a wide variety of ways. Our job was relatively simple and straightforward. From the Pacific flyway 18-20,000 envelopes containing either a duck wing or goose tail had been amassed and kept in cold storage.

The outsides of the envelopes were supposed to be marked with name and address of the cooperating hunter, date and time of kill, and state, county and location of kill. Our job was to verify species (envelopes had already been sorted according to species,) determine sex and classify the wing according to whether the bird had been a juvenile (product of the previous year's nesting season) or adult.

We marked the information on the envelopes which were then sorted by state and county for counting.

If you're a waterfowl hunter you probably identify species and sex of ducks by looking at a variety of things including size and color of bill, size and shape of bird, overall color, distinctive markings, etc. Doing the same thing on the basis of wing alone can be more difficult.

In ducks like mallards and pintails determining sex and species is fairly

easy; on other species like green-winged teal, gadwall and many of the diving duck species it is more difficult. Things are further complicated by the fact that in some species immature males may be difficult to tell from mature females. Determination often boils down to little things like the amount of wear on particular feathers, subtle shades of color or length of primaries. The experts do it at a glance. For we newcomers it took a bit of learning and a lot of eyeball strain in some cases to see the differences.

Some of the wings were used by another section of the Fish and Wildlife Service for another survey. The Service monitors contaminant residues in wild birds and freshwater fish as part of its Environmental Contaminant Evaluation Program. The mallard duck is one of two bird species monitored nationwide. The purpose of the program is to answer two basic questions: How do levels of environmental pollutants in fish and wildlife vary according to geographic region? What changes are occurring over time?

So samples of adult mallard wings were taken from each state for later chemical analysis. Duck wings have been examined every three years on a nationwide scale since 1965. Dave Lenhart of the FWS says the survey has so far given cause for both encouragement and discouragement. On the bright side, the study has shown a steady decline in the pesticide DDT and its byproducts since the 1972 ban on its general use.

On the less optimistic end of the scale, however, PCB's have shown no consistent decline yet in spite of voluntary and regulated controls over their discharge into the environment in recent years. The study monitors a wide variety of other chemicals. This is one instance where fish and wildlife serve as a barometer in a matter that can be of ultimate importance to eventual human well-being.

When a hunter puts a duck wing in that large manila envelope and drops it in the mailbox it is only the beginning of a long chain of events. His efforts add a little more to the bits and pieces of information that help guide management of the Nation's waterfowl resources. □



The sharp left-hand edge of the black stripe (center of photo) on this green-wing teal wing identifies it as from a male. Age is determined by degree of feather wear.



After the data from each wing and goose tail has been recorded on the appropriate envelope, envelopes are sorted by state and by county within each state for further processing by the computer.

# THIS AND THAT

Compiled by Ken Durbin

## Cure Coming for Poison Ivy?

Poisonous plants may be brought under control if compounds developed by scientists at the University of Mississippi prove as effective on human beings as they have on guinea pigs.

Researchers have developed derivatives of urushiol — those compounds found in poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac — that cause allergic skin reactions.

In one strategy, urushiol is hooked onto the membranes of red blood cells to form a molecule large enough to trigger the body's immune system to react against the intruder. In another strategy, simple compounds are injected into the body where they spontaneously form internal urushiol derivatives which in turn produce profound tolerance to the urushiols of the poisonous plants.

*Michigan Natural Resources Magazine*

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## Endangered Species Amendments Enacted

The President has signed legislation amending the Endangered Species Act, and the new statute authorizes appropriations to fund the Act through fiscal year 1982. It designates the Interior Secretary as the Endangered Species Scientific Authority (ESSA) under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

ESSA formerly was a seven-member independent body with regulatory authority, but not accountable to anyone. The panel was stripped of regulatory authority and is now the Scientific Advisory Commission. The Commission can advise but it cannot enforce.

The amendments do require, however, that the Secretary upon rejecting Commission recommendations, must publish the reasons in the Federal Register.

*Wildlife Management Institute*

OREGON WILDLIFE

## 1,250 Elephants Face Death

SALISBURY, Rhodesia — Wildlife authorities may have to kill as many as 1,250 elephants from the country's teeming game reserves because the swollen elephant herds represent a threat to the natural environment, the South African Press Association reported.

Barry Ball, chief ranger of the National Parks and Wildlife Department, was quoted as saying that the culling of the herds would begin in May. The Rhodesians shoot the animals in what is termed a conservation measure. Elephants are not meat eating animals, and they depend for their survival on vegetation.

The culling process has been interrupted by the war over the past seven years. Estimates made from the air last year indicated the herds numbered more than 40,000.

*Powder River Sportsmen*

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## Ducks Unlimited Needs Support

It's said their numbers once darkened the sun, but now wild ducks and geese need our help. One way to help is through support of Ducks Unlimited. This nonprofit organization works to protect and restore waterfowl marshlands in Canada — where 70 percent of North America's waterfowl are produced, and where United States federal funds can't reach. Since 1937, Ducks Unlimited has constructed 1,585 such wetland habitats. These wetlands not only help waterfowl, but also about 300 other wildlife species. So help keep those wild wings flying. Send your tax deductible donation to: Ducks Unlimited, P.O. Box 66300, Chicago, IL 60666.

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## Missouri Fines Go To County Schools

Those in Missouri who broke wildlife laws and got caught contributed \$224,690 to the state's public education last year. Fines from game violations in Missouri are funneled to the county school system. Conservation agents made 7,619 arrests with 7,397 convictions.

*Texas Parks & Wildlife*

## Pandas Get Help Under China Plan

PEKING — China has disclosed a plan to save pandas from extinction by making protected zones of their habitats and planting more food for them.

The Communist Party newspaper *People's Daily* said authorities in northern Sichaun Province where pandas live have designated 13 protective zones.

No hunting will be allowed in such areas and no trees can be cut in an effort to preserve bamboo, the panda's principal food.

*Powder River Sportsmen*

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## Tax Break Offered for Wildlife Land Sales

Legislation has been introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives that would give wildlife agencies a more competitive position to bid on important wildlife habitat. The bill would exempt a seller from federal capital gains taxes on receipts from lands sold or exchanged in fee simple or easement for use in fish and wildlife conservation or for the preservation of natural areas.

*Texas Parks & Wildlife*

\*

## Lead, Steel-Shot Performance Similar

A recent field test of lead and steel shot ammunition has found that steel shot ammunition loads used in hunting geese perform about the same as the lead. The test also found, however, that the opinions of the participating hunters did not reflect the actual performance of ammunition. Hunters had a lower opinion of steel shot than lead, even though test results showed steel and lead loads to be very similar at all ranges.

The test, conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with the assistance of the Oregon Institute of Technology, also demonstrated that marksmanship and the range at which shots are fired are more important factors in bagging geese than the type of ammunition used.

There was no significant difference between lead and steel in bagging and crippling geese.

## NORTH UMPQUA FLY AREA REGULATIONS CHANGED BACK

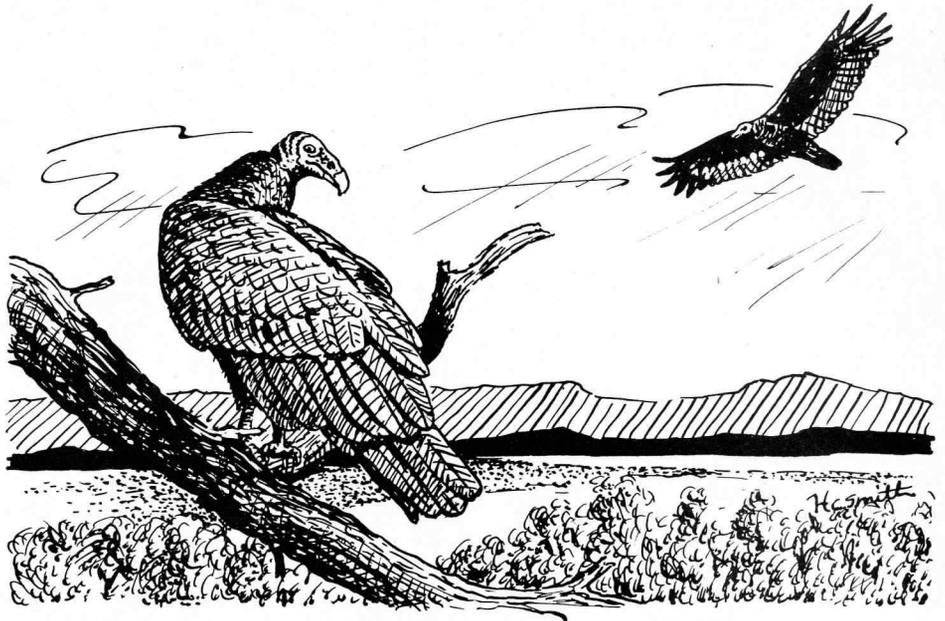
The Fish and Wildlife Commission last month rescinded a new regulation on the fly area of the North Umpqua River and substituted instead regulations that were in effect in 1978. A great deal of local opposition was received to the new regulation and a petition requested the Commission reconsider the regulation.

The 1980 regulations as published in the Angling Synopsis required the use of an artificial fly and conventional fly fishing gear only in the 33-mile stretch from Rock Creek to Soda Springs Power Plant. Under the revised regulations the area is still restricted to artificial flies, but they can be fished with any type of rod and reel. No metal core lines are allowed and no added weights or attachments except a floating plastic bubble or similar device can be used in addition to the fly.

The revised regulations essentially go back to the angling methods that have traditionally been allowed in this section of river.

The Commission also took a second look at new regulations restricting the North Fork Middle Fork Willamette River to fly angling only, and decided to let those regulations stand as printed in the 1980 synopsis.

A section of Crooked Creek which flows through the Department's Klamath Fish Hatchery was closed to angling under emergency order. The stream flows through the back yards of hatchery residences and has become a popular place for visitors to view the large trout that live there. The section on hatchery grounds has been signed "no fishing" to protect these fish for public viewing, but the stream was never actually closed by administrative rule. Now it is, and the regulation will be incorporated in the future into regular angling regulations. □



## TURKEY VULTURE

The dictionary defines the word "catharsis" as meaning something that cleans or purifies. While it may stretch the imagination of some people to relate a turkey vulture to anything clean and pure, the relationship is a true one.

Even the scientific name for the turkey vulture, *Cathartes aura*, bears witness.

The turkey vulture is a scavenger; a carrion eater: the one that cleans up the remains of creatures whose time has come. Other birds and animals include dead flesh in their diets. Food is, after all, food. But turkey vultures seek out carrion as their main food source.

The bird is uniquely adapted for this purpose. Both the head and feet are featherless and thus easier to clean after a meal. The head is small in comparison to body size and, on mature birds, is usually some shade of red. Though the bill is hooked somewhat like that of hawks, the feet of the vulture are weak, perching feet without hawk-like talons.

In the bird world, the vulture is a big one. With its six foot wing spread, the vulture rivals the eagle for size. In fact, many folks who think they have seen an eagle soaring on high have actually seen this less glamorous bird also known as the "buzzard".

There is an easy way to tell the birds apart when in flight. Eagles and many hawks soar and circle in the sky, but in a glide their wings are spread out flat from their bodies. The wings of the turkey vulture tilt skyward in a graceful "V" shape. The vulture also veers and tilts in flight rather than steering a steady course.

Vultures are among the most efficient gliders in the world. Their wing beat is slow and sometimes unnecessary since the birds are masters at finding updrafts and thermal air currents to keep them aloft.

From their platform high in the sky, vultures cruise the landscape using sharp eyes and an acute sense of smell to find a meal. Roadsides and open fields are the most likely areas to offer food.

Turkey vultures may be found almost anywhere in the state from March through September since their habitat needs are simple; carrion for food and someplace to nest and raise young.

Turkey vultures do not normally nest in trees. A hollow stump or log, a natural cave, or a rocky ledge are the usual place for the vulture to lay two or three eggs. □

Jim Gladson  
APRIL 1980



Oregon's

# WILDLIFE WINDOW

Looking out our wildlife window for nearly a year and a half now, we've made a number of suggestions about how to discover and better understand the creatures living around us. Perhaps we've overlooked one of the most obvious ways to learn about wildlife. They can be captured on film for future enjoyment.

Unlike perhaps any other photo subject, wildlife are usually the least cooperative in terms of waiting for you to get ready and holding still. Wildlife photography takes patience. Fortunate indeed is the photographer who can get a good photo in a few minutes. Most of the strikingly beautiful color pictures of wild creatures you see in magazines or postcards have required hours of waiting in a cramped blind, a large amount of expensive equipment, or use of semi-tame animals. Even Disney resorts regularly to the latter.

For those who have neither elaborate equipment or access to tame animals there are still many photo opportunities. A bird feeder or birdhouse can provide a means of bringing wild subjects within range. Often some temporary blind or other concealment near where the subjects may gather will be desirable. Set this in place *before* you put up the feeder or before activity begins around a nesting site. This way it will already be accepted as part of the normal landscape when you decide to get inside and try your hand.

Wildlife areas and refuges offer another source of animal concentrations and in some cases display ani-

mals that can be photographed in a mostly natural setting. A booklet titled "Oregon Wildlife Areas" by Bob and Ira Spring will be of value in locating these areas. Most bookstores should have a copy. Even penned display animals or large concentrations on refuges have the ability to get out of camera range by moving to the back of the pen, running or flying away. Any time an aspiring wildlife photographer has to sneak up on a prospective subject it is wise to take photos at a number of intervals during the approach. This way if the critter spots you and leaves, you will still have some sort of photo. It may not be as close as you wished but it beats waiting until you are as close as you

want to be and risking getting nothing.

A final tip to the budding photographer; try some cold-blooded animals like frogs, lizards or snakes during the early morning hours when the cold makes them unable to move fast. One of these creatures cooled down to about 40 or 45 degrees will hold reasonably still and can be photographed as close as the camera will permit.

Even with rising prices, film is cheap compared to the time that often must be devoted to getting a good shot. Take lots of pictures and some will come out. Even the pros leave most in the wastebasket. □

## THIS MONTH'S WINDOW

### Click It

**Set up a birdhouse or feeder near a window or other concealment and try to get pictures of the users.**

**Hold a wildlife photography contest in your class or group. Publish winners in the school newspaper or group newsletter.**

**Contact your local paper about printing some of the winning shots.**

## DELAYED MOWING CAN INCREASE PHEASANT SURVIVAL

The previous article spoke about some general things you can do to benefit wildlife if you are a landowner. But if you ranch or farm and grow hay in eastern Oregon and some areas in western Oregon, there is one very specific thing you can do to benefit pheasants on your property.

This one thing, according to habitat biologist Jerry Farstvedt and district wildlife biologist Bill Olson, became painfully evident last spring. Both biologists were involved in efforts to collect Malheur County pheasant eggs as a means of supplying the Department's game farm with some wild birds for future breeding stock. During this project some tragic facts relating to wild pheasant production in alfalfa hay fields were reaffirmed.

With cooperation from local hay producers, biologists followed behind hay swathers during the first alfalfa cutting in late May and early June. All or portions of 27 hay fields totaling about 200 acres were covered on foot between May 21 and June 6.

After many miles of tailing swathers, it became clear this was an effective way to collect wild pheasant eggs which would otherwise have virtually no chance for survival if left in the mowed fields.

Some 93 active nests with unhatched eggs were found during 12 days of searching and 549 eggs were collected from an estimated total of 1,036 eggs found. The remainder of the eggs were either cracked or broken by equipment or consumed by scavenging crows and gulls.

In addition, 12 hatched nests were found, but many salvaged eggs were either in the process of hatching or very near it. The average nest contained 12 to 13 eggs but the extremes ranged from two to 23.

The actual number of nests and eggs per field is believed to be at least twenty percent greater than recorded in the search, says Farstvedt because most of the fields were partially hidden from view by the swaths of hay left on the ground.

What these findings clearly demonstrate is the loss in potential pheasant numbers that occurs during early haying operations, says Farstvedt. Even though it is true that many hens which lose nests early in the year will attempt to renest, about half of the hens observed during egg gathering were either killed or severely injured by machinery. Those hens that do successfully renest generally produce smaller broods which come into pheasant season immature, lacking size and color, and having lower fat reserves needed for winter survival.

Those farmers and ranchers who must get the best value out of their hay crop will often necessarily make their first cutting during the time the pheasants are nesting, says Olson and Farstvedt, and there is a strong economic incentive to do so. But for those landowners who can afford and are willing to make some sacrifice in hay quality, a good improvement in pheasant production is likely to be the wages for delaying the first alfalfa cutting until mid-June or later.□

## 1980 BEAR SEASONS SET

The 1980 bear hunting season will open August 23, and run through November 30 with an annual bag limit of one bear, excluding cubs and sows with cubs which are protected. The entire state will be open except for an area within one mile of the Rogue River between Grave Creek and Lobster Creek. The season is one week longer than in 1979.

A spring pursuit season was set for Saddle Mountain, Wilson, Trask, Stott Mountain, Alsea, Chetco and Sixes Unit. It will run from March 29 through April 27. A statewide pursuit season is also established from June 28 through August 17. In pursuit seasons bears may not be harmed. Participants in the chase may carry no weapons and each participant must have a bear pursuit permit which can be purchased for \$5 at Department regional or headquarters offices.□

## POSTERS GONE

The response to an offer of 11 by 28-inch "Do Something Wild" posters last month was overwhelming. The limited supply was quickly exhausted and no more are available. Thanks for your interest.

So far interest and response to the "Nongame Checkoff Program" has been gratifying. Further information on the levels of contribution seen so far can be found in the editorial on page 2.□



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