

## Idaho Wildlife Review

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BY

THE IDAHO STATE FISH AND  
GAME COMMISSION

BOISE, IDAHO

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### COVER

Spring in north Idaho overlooking Pend Oreille Lake. Lewis mckcorange blossoming in the foreground is known throughout its range as "syringa" the Idaho State flower. The specific name of this attractive shrub is honorary tribute to Captain Meriwether Lewis who discovered and collected the plant in 1806. (Photo by Ross Hall)

## Fishing Is Fun . . .

It looks like spring—it feels like spring—so it must be spring. At least the sun shines warmly every few days on most of the state. Snows are melting rapidly from the low hills and all the usual signs indicate that summer is just around the corner.

We always associate that strange inner urge to dig in the yard, prune a few shrubs, dab on a little paint and some sort of increased activity, with those lengthening days and a new season. Right along with this common, everyday garden variety of unusual industry most of us find the fishing tackle box, fly rods, reel and line, crowding into the limelight and disturbing our serious efforts to better our place in the community.

This fishing fever that seems so closely associated with spring weather has never been satisfactorily explained. Some very solid citizens are subject to this disease all year around. Those cases are hopeless. Medical science can find no known antidote. Even ordinarily strong willed wives are helpless to stem piscatorial industry in cases of this kind.

We are more concerned with the multitude, however—this tired legion of nearly 200,000 men women and children who annually head for the streams, lakes and reservoirs of the state in search of recreation, rest and enjoyment, by just fishin'.

Fishing is fun! Real sport providing unlimited satisfaction and pleasure to young and old alike. Fancy equipment is not necessary. The willow or cane pole with enough line to reach a fish under the waters surface, has probably taken more fish than all the super deluxe tackle carried by man. Not that we have anything against good equipment. Far be it for us to belittle the featherlight rod,—the tapered line—the gossamer leader—the dry fly. We only want to let people know that fishing can be fun.

And its the very fact that fishing is such grand sport that we would like to repeat the theme that has been played throughout many excellent compositions on sport fishing.

The day has passed when we depend upon fish and game to furnish our food. This is still the west—but we also seem to have a large population living on these lands. We have lost much of the vast space formerly associated with our region. And in this transition we must learn to accept the change that has taken place with regard to our wildlife.

The fishing is the thing. Sure they're good to eat. You just can't beat a pan of crisp rainbow trout, fried in butter to a golden brown. We think they taste the best when they are closely associated with a stack of sourdough hotcakes. But the fun of fishing cannot be measured. Each trip can be relived many times, and the pleasure never dims. We don't have to take a limit every day—or every time we fish a stream. The limit is only a number determined in effort to provide enough fish to supply fishing for everyone. Its not the supreme goal.

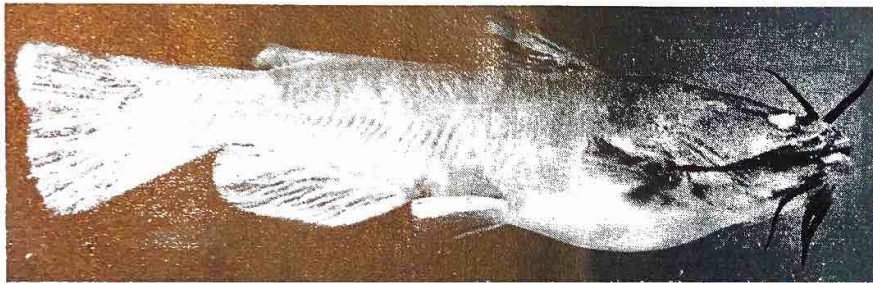
Let's remember this the next time we unlimber that favorite rod, string up the line and attach the leader and fly. The true sportsman fishes for the pleasure and thrill of the pursuit. He always leaves plenty for the next fellow. We think he feels good about it.

FISHES OF IDAHO No. 13  
NORTHERN BROWN  
BULLHEAD

*Ameiurus nebulosus nebulosus*  
(Le Sueur)

By JAMES C. SIMPSON  
*Idaho Fish Culturist*

The northern brown bullhead is an extremely popular game fish during the spring months throughout its established range in Idaho. Since it is largely nocturnal in its habits, fishermen prefer to fish for it at night. At such times it is not uncommon to see several dozen



*Northern Brown Bullhead, a popular game fish.*

fires burning along the shorelines of the more popular bullhead waters, having been built by the fishermen so that they might keep warm during the chilly spring evenings.

Brown bullheads seldom exceed 12 inches in length and a pound in weight, with the average size of the species taken from most waters of the state ranging from 8 to 11 inches and 7 to 12 ounces. The record fish for Idaho was taken from Chatcolet Lake in 1848. It weighed 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds and was 15 inches long. They are very tenacious of life. Many fishermen have found that by placing their catches in a moist burlap bag and then in the shade bullheads can be kept alive for hours. Among the freshwater fishes, bullheads are probably the most difficult to kill with rotenone.

Because the brown bullheads are omnivorous feeders, they may be found feeding on anything from plant material to fishes, provided such feed is found at or near the bottom. The principal items of diet, however, are insects and mol-

lusk. In fishing for bullheads, anglers prefer a cluster of angleworms or chunks of red meat such as liver or kidney. As is characteristic of all catfishes, the brown bullheads have a keen sense of smell.

Spawning takes place during May and early June. The eggs are laid in a shallow depression which is usually partially sheltered by a log or weeds. The female and, possibly, the male guard the eggs and young, conveying them around for a time after hatching.

Because of the fecundity of the bullheads and the relatively high survival of the young coupled with insufficient fishing pressure, an overstocked condition has resulted

in many bodies of water. In 1942 the sportsmen of northern Idaho requested the Fish and Game Department to reduce the population of bullheads in those waters adjacent to and part of Coeur d'Alene Lake, principally in the vicinity of St. Maries. According to the biennial reports of the department a total of 733,000 pounds of dressed bullheads were sold to public fish markets by commercial fishermen from 1943 to 1948. Since the discontinuance of commercial fishing a steady increase in the species has been noted.

The range of the brown bullhead is from North Dakota to New England, south to the Ohio Valley, and along the Atlantic Coast south to Virginia. Since its introduction into Idaho it has become widely distributed. It is exceptionally abundant in the lakes and sloughs tributary to Coeur d'Alene Lake and Coeur d'Alene River. They have been furnished by the Fish and Wildlife Service to fill applications for channel catfish. It was by this method that brown bullheads gained access to Elk Creek Reservoir.

## Ketchum Students Receive Training In Conservation

Conservation education activity is receiving emphasis with a program being carried on at Ketchum grade school in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

The program was initiated by the Ketchum Rod and Gun Club early in January. Glen McRoberts club president has participated in each session since the project was started, and arranged programs and travel trips and transportation for the youngsters.

A group of 41 students, teachers and car drivers made a trip to the state fish hatchery at Hayspur Friday, April 5 as part of the program. A complete tour of the facilities was conducted and fish rearing operations were explained by superintendent Pat Gaver.

The study course is held regularly every Friday, McRoberts advised. During the winter the boys and girls were taken to game feeding areas on Warm Springs Creek near Ketchum and talks have been given by U. S. Forest Service personnel regarding forestry and lands management.

Field trips are planned for this spring to game areas for on the ground studies of types of feed big game animals eat and habitat used by these species. Field trips will be utilized to show upland game bird habitat and requirements in the same manner.

The group plan to devote some time to gun safety demonstrations and Sun Valley guides have offered their services to teach youngsters fly fishing and proper fishing technique.

McRoberts said that club members feel the program is proving of great value. Cooperation of teachers in charge of the classes has been excellent. Classroom teachers have given study time for the conservation educations work and evidenced whole hearted interest and cooperation in the program. McRoberts emphasized that without this approval and cooperation by the educators, little progress could be shown.



Legislators and their families visiting the Hagerman hatchery during the 31st session were left to right, Senator Guy L. Geaudreau, representative Nora L. Davis, Mrs. Geaudreau and Mrs. Davis son. Right—Viewing fish in



Hagerman raceways are, left to right, Mrs. Wm. C. Smith, Mrs. Earl Gunnell, Representative Earl Gunnell of Soda Springs, and Representative Wm. Smith of Osburn, Shoshone county.

## Idaho Legislature Passes Seventeen Bills Dealing With State Fish And Game Matters

The 31st Session of the Idaho Legislature passed 17 laws dealing with fish and game matters, and one concurrent resolution directed the department to remove beaver from farming areas in which the animals have become a pest.

Ten of the bills passed provided amendments to laws now on the books. Two game preserves, the Selway on the Clearwater drainage in north Idaho, and the Hawley Creek preserve east of Leadore in Lemhi county were abolished.

A law was passed after many year's effort on the part of sportsmen and packers providing for regulation and control of packers, and protection for hunters from unscrupulous outfitters. The law requires that each outfitter be licensed and furnish a \$500.00 bond conditioned upon faithful performance of their agreements and contracts with the person receiving service.

A new law providing for the establishment, maintenance and regulation of private game bird farms within the state was passed. Raising, sale and shipping of game birds is regulated by this law.

Shipping of upland game birds and game fish received attention during the session. Organized sportsmen of the state had asked for restriction of shipping on these species for several years, and the

commission had acted under emergency powers for two seasons to prohibit any shipping of fish and birds. The amendments now provide that the following license holder may ship one legal limit of game fish during the license year:

1. Resident fishing and hunting
2. Resident fishing
3. Nonresident season fishing
4. Nonresident hunting & fishing

The holders of the following class license may ship not to exceed one legal limit of upland game birds out of the state during the license year:

1. Resident fishing and hunting
2. Resident hunting
3. Nonresident bird hunting
4. Nonresident hunting & fishing

Amendments were passed to the section dealing with special hunts. Fees were restored similar to those in effect when the law was changed two years ago, with the exception of a reduction on the maximum that may be charged for deer, antelope and elk. The law now provides that persons may be eligible upon payment of not to exceed \$3.00 for deer and antelope; \$5.00 for elk and goat; \$25.00 for moose and sheep. The provision making a person who secured game on a special hunt ineligible to apply on a drawing for the same kind of game for a period of three years, was abolished.

A bill enabling the State of

Idaho to participate with the United States to meet cooperative grants for the purpose of fish restoration and management projects, was passed. Projects under the terms of this cooperative action may include restoration and rehabilitation and improvement of areas of land or waters adaptable as feeding, resting or breeding places for fish, construction of works thereon, and research into problems of fish management.

A new license application form was approved in an attempt to prevent non-resident purchase of resident license; one requiring all hunters to stop and check on special hunts; one changing the license year from March 31 to December 31; and a change providing that one half of all fine money from fish and game cases shall be paid to the county in which the judgment is held.

The National Audubon Society has announced the issuance of Centennial Stamps as a means to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Audubon's death. The stamps reproduce some of the artist's most colorful and interesting work. Sets of stamps are available for one dollar from the Audubon Society 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, New York.



*Ben Barrus and conservation officer Melvin Barrus of Blackfoot come in with a pickup load of magpies taken during one weeks work. 667 black and whites in this load.*



*Conservation officer Grover Davis of Filer, and "Toots" Bagley, Buhl, survey the results of their labors in the Twin Falls area. Bagley was hired to effect control measures.*

# Control Measures Effective On Magpies

Conservation officers and hired predator control men waged an intensive campaign against the "Holstein Pheasant", commonly called a magpie, over most of southern Idaho the past winter.

Best results are usually obtained when snow is deep enough to cover the magpies' food supply and when the temperature is below freezing.

Conservation officers worked their districts and several men were hired to establish regular control lines in areas where magpies were numerous.

Magpie traps, portable type, constructed of wood and chicken wire, were placed in concentration areas and baited with meat. These traps were checked every day to remove trapped birds. When magpies were left in the trap their efforts to escape frightened others away when they attempted to enter.

Control stations were established on high poles, in trees and on buildings, using pork fat rind and strychnine. Field men obtained written permission from landowners and farmers before placing any station of this type. These stations were also placed on public domain in areas where domestic cats or dogs would not have access to them.

These stations were placed to allow regular attendance at each bait over the route every day or so. Field men picked up dead mag-

pies in all directions about the stations, and disposed of the birds by burning or burying.

As the magpies disappeared from the immediate area or when the station was not being used, baits were removed and a new location set up.

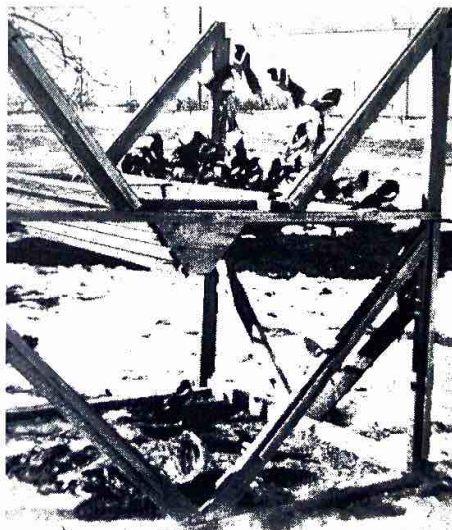
Reports from field men working on this project showed that best results were obtained during January and early February. Reports have not been compiled regarding

the total number killed during the winter, but will run into the thousands. In some concentration areas workers reported killing from 300 to 700 adult birds in less than ten days.

The game department paid bounty on magpies for many years. This method apparently had little if any effect upon magpie populations as young were gathered from nests and presented for bounty. Adult birds re-nested or laid additional eggs and brought off a hatch regardless. Bounty payments were increased several times, and increased somewhat the number of birds turned in for payment, but the overall cost increased to the point where it was determined to be far in excess of good derived. To make headway against magpie populations, it was felt adult birds must be destroyed, and larger numbers could be removed by bait stations and tapping.

Game department records show approximately \$11,000 paid in magpie bounty during the winter of 1946-47. This same amount was paid in 1947-48. These payments increased to an all time high of over \$17,000 in 1948-49. All bounty payments were discontinued in May 1950.

Extra help, bait station materials and trap materials cost \$3,350 for the magpie control carried on this past winter.



*A magpie trap pays off! Traps are baited with meat to attract the birds. Magpies enter through narrow slot in middle of trap and are unable to fly back out.*