

Idaho Wildlife Review

VOLUME VII

No. 2

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY
BY

IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT
518 FRONT STREET
BOISE, IDAHO

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The magazine is mailed free to Idaho residents upon request; subscription rate to non-residents is 50 cents per year.

Entered as second class matter June 30, 1948, at the post office, Boise, Idaho, under act of August 24, 1912.

COVER

Fishermen take advantage of the Fish and Game Department's public dock and campground at Farragut. A portion of Idlewild Bay, on the south end of Pend Oreille Lake, is shown.

LET'S PLAY IT SAFE . . .

Hunting season is with us again when approximately 150 thousand men, women and children, ages 12 to 90 (or maybe more!) will take up a firearms of some sort, and head for fields, forests and farms throughout Idaho.

License sales indicate that well over 100 thousand people hunt big game each fall. Over 40 thousand haunt sloughs, river, ponds and fields after migratory waterfowl. Probably 100 thousand folks hunt some form of upland game bird each fall.

Now this adds up to a large amount of firepower. It also means people who are not familiar with their new gun; many who have not hunted before, or even used a firearm. It will mean greed to be the first to get a shot in—maybe from a public road—if the opportunity presents itself. It will mean carelessness—with loaded guns in cars; in boats; getting through fences; loading or unloading the gun; failure to make sure of the target—and many other acts that are so easily charged off to the simple term "accident."

We know that folks get weary of our repeating these admonitions all the time. Within reason, we also know that practically everyone who can carry a gun feels that such a simple piece of equipment does not require extensive knowledge, or training, before using.

Interest in proper handling of firearms and hunting safety has increased during the past few years. This is not alone because of more firearms accidents, and the resulting publicity, but also to efforts of public-spirited citizens, sportsmen's clubs, game departments and last, but not least, the National Rifle Association with their program of Hunter Safety instruction. This course is available to everyone and stresses proper gun handling while in the field. It holds to the theory that the more safe hunters there are . . . the more enjoyment hunting will bring to all of us.

Now that we have the means and methods at hand to teach and promote hunting safety we should work with vigor and confidence toward this end. We can at least help the youngster who is just getting started—knowing that he will be the hunter of tomorrow. And we also can look with a critical eye on our own use of a gun. It will help to set a good example.

The past record of death and injury in Idaho, as a result of careless and unsafe handling and use of firearms, is not a pretty one. True—we have more people using guns—but we don't need more people injured or killed because of that factor. The record so far this year is good. Let's keep it that way.

M. C. E.

Smallmouth Bass . . . *The Fighting Fish*



Fishermen gather at the mouth of the Potlatch River when smallmouth bass start feeding. Early in the morning, or late evening is best time. *Photo by Leon Murphy.*



This smallmouth bass was caught in the Clearwater River with spinning tackle. Weighed nearly five pounds. *Photo by Leon Murphy.*

Sportsmen are finding that smallmouth bass are providing good fishing in portions of the lower Clearwater River during the past two seasons.

It seems to be the common opinion over much of the area that trout is the only species deserving of a place in a fisherman's creel. But a few of the dyed-in-the-wool fishermen who find fishing a real sport for almost any species, have found the best smallmouth bass fishing in the lower Clearwater River from Orofino downstream; the Salmon River from the mouth of White Bird Creek downstream; and Snake River from Weiser to Swan Falls, and claim they have fishing of the finest kind.

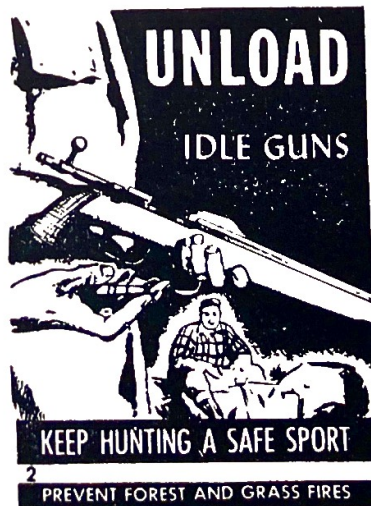
Once they tie onto a smallmouth with its fighting ability and resistance to being creeled another fisherman has joined the ranks, as this fish provides not only top quality eating, but puts up a battle to delight the heart of even the most critical fishing expert.

Smallmouth bass are being taken on many types of tackle and bait. The edible bait such as angleworms, night crawlers and small lamprey "eels" are good. Many fishermen use spinning tackle with plugs or other spinning

lures. Streamer flies have not produced favorable results as yet.

The most successful anglers seem to be those who work the stream early in the morning and late in the evening. It appears the mid-day period is one of rest and relaxation for the bass and permits the anglers the same privilege.

Limit catches have been reported from several stretches of the lower Clearwater River and one smallmouth weighing nearly five pounds was creeled in mid-July.



The range of the smallmouth in Idaho seems to be limited. It appears these fish first came into Idaho by migrating up the Snake River from Washington and finding suitable habitat in the lower Clearwater River.

In later years these fish have been released by the department in the Clearwater River above Lewiston; the Snake River from Weiser to Swan Falls; and in the lower Boise and Payette Rivers. Releases have been made in other waters, but with very little success. Smallmouth are produced from brood stock at the Hagerman hatchery.

The smallmouth has a shorter upper jaw bone than the largemouth. Its color is usually greenish-bronze to black on the back and sides, but this may vary in different waters. They prefer cool flowing streams and larger clear lakes. They spawn in the spring when the water temperature reaches 70 degrees F. The nests are prepared by the males who also stand guard over the eggs and young until they can take care of themselves.

Conserving and improving our land and water resources is high priority business for all of us.

Dwight D. Eisenhower