

LANDS^{and} FORESTS *Newsletter*

Number 8

Halifax, N. S.

April, 1968



In an era of constant change the Wildlife Conservation Division of the Department of Lands and Forests, in association with the Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation, deal with the complex problem of

RENEWING NATURE'S WEALTH . . .

Fish and wildlife were among the first of Nova Scotia's natural resources to be exploited. Perhaps to some pioneers the results of angling and hunting were important as morale builders as well as food supplements.

The early settlers believed in the apparent inexhaustible abundance of wildlife resources which led to wastage and destruction—diminishing certain species and making others extinct.

In 1955, Dr. G. W. I. Creighton, Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests was asked to address a service club in New Glasgow. Some excerpts of his talk are set down here:

"In searching through the records of our Province it would seem that when the white man first came to Nova Scotia he found an abundance of game.

"Some measures of protection were given to partridge and blue-wing ducks in 1794; gradually other birds and mammals were placed on the protected list. For many years hunting seasons were long and bag limits generous. A hundred years ago a hunter was permitted to take two moose and five caribou.

"In 1853 'The Game and Inland Fishery Protection Society of Nova Scotia' was organized. This is reputed to be the first society of its kind in what is now Canada and second in North America. This society was never active outside of the City of Halifax.

"A second organization was formed in 1907 — The Peoples Fish and Game Protective Association of Nova Scotia. This society became active throughout the Province and I believe it is the parent of the present organization (Nova Scotia Fish and Game Association which became the

Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation at the annual meeting in January, 1968.)

"By 1874 moose had become so scarce that the season was closed for three years and caribou were reported to be decreasing. In 1894 one or more interested persons brought in nine white-tail deer from New Brunswick which were liberated in Annapolis and Yarmouth counties. Deer had previously been reported in Cumberland County; it is believed they came across the border from New Brunswick.

"Important amendments were made to the game act in 1907 and a game commission was formed with a chief game commissioner and two assistant commissioners. This commission functioned till 1921 when the office of chief game commissioner was made full time with the title of commissioner of forests and game and presided over the new department of forest and game.

"In 1926 this department was merged with the department of Crown lands to form the present Department of Lands and Forests."

It is interesting to note that Dr. Creighton was proposing a small game licence and a report card in 1955; this measure is now part of the management program of the department.

Dr. Creighton is a forester who studied in Canada and Germany but a look at Department records reveal that he has always been keenly interested in wildlife and an advocate of common-sense measures to enhance the wildlife and fish populations of the province. Many of the present-day research and management programs are a result of his experience and foreseeability.

He is also responsible for the establishment of one of Canada's

outstanding wildlife parks located at Shubenacadie, which annually attracts about 200,000 visitors.

The Wildlife Conservation Division was formed in March, 1959 with the late Clarence A. Mason as director. On his death in 1964 Dr. Donald F. Dodds was appointed and served until 1966 when the present director, Merrill F. Prime was appointed.

The division is responsible for implementing and maintaining research and management programs which will conserve and promote the wildlife resource as an important economic factor.

Because every person who hunts, fishes, traps or otherwise uses the resource is intimately involved, there may be policies implemented which are not universally popular but are needed to ensure future wildlife populations. Errors brought about by popular appeal, uninformed demands or selfish interests can be costly in terms of the future of the resource.

As wildlife biologists have been added to the staff of the Department, emphasis has shifted from protection and conservation to include scientific management.

During the last few years there has been a multiplication of nature students, photographers, bird watchers and the like. They carry no guns or rods but they carry binoculars, cameras, sketch books, tape recorders and note books.

Although they may not belong to any organization, these people are forming an increasingly powerful group favouring the conservation of wildlife and protection of the environment. To them the other interests will have to pay greater heed as the years pass.



LLOYD NAUGLER *Fish rearing pond attendant Mosers River.*



GORDON W. ALGUIRE, *President Halifax Wildlife Association . . . better education and conservation practices will make a better outdoors . . .*



MERRILL PRIME, *director, wildlife conservation division;* DICK PASSMORE, *Ottawa, director, National Wildlife Federation and* HUGH D. FAIRN, *president, Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation, Wolfville.*



MOOSE CALF . . .



Stillborn twin fawns, caused by mother's starvation . . .



Each fall a number of hunters fall victim to avoidable fatalities and injuries caused by careless handling of firearms. The Department has conducted a hunter safety program for many years. Chief instructor BERT CROWE of Windsor demonstrates shotgun safety to a group of boy scouts.



Game patrols help cut down on illegal hunting which reduces the harvest for legal hunters.

Wetlands and Waterfowl



SUNRISE AND STILLNESS



Releasing young Canada geese to help form a permanent breeding colony.

When a marsh has a controlled and adequate water supply it can become a home for waterfowl. One of the largest marshes in eastern Canada is the Missiquash in Cumberland County, where more than 6,000 acres are available for breeding and resting populations. The marsh has many moods:



Pothole blasting gouges out a hole with an island in the centre. When the area fills with water it makes a protected area for waterfowl.



Using an air-driven skiff to catch, band and release waterfowl. This work helps to determine migration patterns.



An active fisheries management program is carried out by biologist JOHN BAIN and his staff. Rangers are seen with a net to live trap small mouth bass for transfer to another water system.



JOHN BAIN removes a scale from small mouth bass for study.



Big game biologist ARTHUR PATTON examines trees subjected to repeated browsing by deer.



This deer is probably safe at the provincial wildlife park.



Some of the Halifax office staff contemplate the thousands of applications received yearly for the moose drawing.



The protection of natural camouflage . . . A night hawk and her young.



Nesting boxes are for ducks . . .



Ring neck pheasant is weighed by HARTFORD THURBER, wildlife division ranger.



Some deer are curious and RUSSELL MORRIS, camp cook at Chignecto sanctuary feeds them table scraps.



NEIL van NOSTRAND—Biologist



FRED PAYNE—Biologist



F. A. STURMY—Forester
Law Enforcement Co-ordinator



JOHN BAIN—Biologist



ERIC MULLEN—Biologist



PAUL TUFTS—Biologist



The nocturnal raccoon says this is National Wildlife Week . . .

Cover Photo: ASHFORD FOX of Amherst enjoys an afternoon stroll with his canine friend.

All photos by the N. S. Department of Lands and Forests. ROBERT D. JONES, photographer.

The Lands and Forests Newsletter is published by the Department of Lands and Forests of Nova Scotia. MURRAY E. HIGGINS, editor. Copies are available from the department offices, Provincial Building, Halifax, N. S.