

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Mining on Public Lands

The Wilderness Society calls attention to a serious potential danger to public lands (see *Wilderness News*, No. 14, March 12, 1941). Senate Resolution 53, introduced by Senator O'Mahoney, calls for an "investigation with respect to the development of the mineral resources (including oil and gas) of the public lands of the United States, and of the existing laws which relate to such development, with a view toward (1) providing for more effective development and utilization of such resources for the purpose of national defense, (2) fostering free competitive enterprise and the investment of private capital in the development of the mineral industry and the production of essential and useful minerals, and (3) conserving such mineral resources to the fullest extent which is consistent with their proper development and utilization."

In the same article, Senator O'Mahoney is quoted as having said, in part, "Anyway, we could not forever expect the resources of the National Parks to be locked up when some of the minerals might be vitally needed for national defense."

Conceivably, some of these minerals might be needed under a defense emergency, but it is disquieting to learn that "competitive enterprise" has been considered on practically equal footing, and without specific exclusion of national parks and monuments, or of wilderness areas. The situation is the more serious as our present mining law—now almost sixty years old without amendment—is wholly inadequate to protect the public interest, should more mining be allowed for any reason on public lands.—F.N.H.

Conservation and National Defense

Albert M. Day, of the Fish and Wildlife Service, was recently detailed to act as liaison officer between national defense and conservation programs. He is to ensure that the operations of the War and Navy Departments, and of commercial firms under the Office of Production Management, do not damage wildlife.

First fruits of this provision have already appeared. According to *Wildlife News* (July, 1941, 1, 5), several bombing and gunnery ranges have been shifted or adjusted to spare areas especially valuable to moose, caribou, furbearers, and waterfowl. The plan also calls for the prevention of stream pollution by sewage from encampments and by government defense-industry wastes: two mobile field laboratory crews are being organized to make sure that specifications are followed.—F.N.H.

Yellowstone Coyotes

The Murie brothers score again—this time Adolph Murie, with his study on the "Ecology of the Coyote in the Yellowstone" (*Fauna of the National Parks*, Bull. No. 4, 1940), The coyote has been accused of many things in the Park, among them destruction of Trumpeter Swans. Murie says, "The data available at the present time indicate that the coyote does not represent an important mortality factor for the Trumpeter Swan." The same may be said for other animals except rodents.—Leonard William Wing.

Waterfowl

"Within recent years there has been agitation for an increase of the hunting season on the basis of the Bureau of Biological Survey report of an increase of five to ten per cent among the waterfowl. True, there has been an increase; but at the rate of a five per cent annual increase, it would require 14 years to restore the waterfowl population to 50,000,000 birds, one-half of the 1930 population which was considered a crisis population at that time." (from G. N. Rysgaard, "A short history of waterfowl," *Conservation Volunteer*, 2, No. 9, June, 1941:75-9.)

Parenthetically, it is encouraging to find a statement of this kind in the official publication of a state (Minnesota) Conservation Department.—F.N.H.

Humane Traps

The American Humane Association, after its thirteenth annual trap contest (in 1940), announced the development of chain leg-hold traps which "will do anything the steel trap will do"; i.e., equals the steel trap in the four qualities of humanness, efficiency, practicality, and reasonableness of cost. The Association considers leg-hold traps markedly more humane, and claims that they "go the steel trap one better by obtaining [for the trapper] an undamaged pelt." (*The National Humane Review*, 28, No. 7, July, 1940:3.)

Following their fourteenth annual contest, in 1941, the Association now says, "Humane traps of all types have now come to light which [compared with steel traps] are just as cheap to manufacture, just as light to transport, easier to set and more efficient." (*Ibid.*, 29, No. 7, July, 1941:5).—F.N.H.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Frederick N. Hamerstrom, Jr., Chairman

ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWS

The officers charged with the arrangements for the Tenth International Ornithological Congress scheduled to have been held in the United States in 1942 announce that the proposed meeting has been indefinitely postponed.

Material for a biography of Louis Agassiz Fuertes, naturalist and bird artist, is being collected by his daughter, Mrs. Mary Fuertes Boynton, R.D. 3, Trumansburg, New York. She is eager to have letters written by Louis Fuertes, as well as anecdotes and personal recollections. Letters sent to her will be copied and returned to the owners promptly.

Burt L. Monroe has been appointed State Ornithologist of Kentucky.

Harry C. Oberholser retired on June 30 after forty-six years of distinguished service in the "U.S. Biological Survey." Since his retirement from the government service he has been appointed curator of birds at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Dr. Oberholser is one of the Wilson Club's members of longest standing. He joined in 1894, the year the *Bulletin* began publication.

The Annual Convention of the National Audubon Society will be held at Audubon House in New York City from Friday evening, October 17 through October 21. There will be field trips to Cape May, New Jersey, and Montauk Point, Long Island on October 18 and 19. The meeting will be featured by the showing of some of the finest wildlife motion pictures in color. The public is cordially welcome.

The Fifty-ninth Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held in Denver September 1 to 6. The former officers were reelected. The Wilson Ornithological Club was represented at the sessions of the Council by George M. Sutton. The 1942 meeting will be held in Philadelphia.