



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of Information

Press Service



Release - Immediate

August 2, 1928.

PLUME HUNTERS OUTWITTED IN FLORIDA

Two game-law offenders, in possession of the backs of 21 egrets taken from birds they had just killed, were apprehended recently by State officers at Gulfport, Fla., and confined in jail pending arraignment before the United States commissioner at Tampa, Fla. This was effected a few days later by a Federal game protector, and the violators were required to furnish bond of \$1,000 each. The plumes as well as two shotguns were seized as evidence. Snowy herons, or egrets, from which the plumes known as "aigrettes" are obtained, are afforded protection throughout the year under the migratory-bird treaty act, which is administered by the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture, and persons killing these birds are subject to prosecution in Federal court. Efforts will be made to have the two offenders arraigned at the next term of Federal court for the southern district of Florida.

A fine not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment for not more than six months, or both, is provided for an infraction of the migratory-bird treaty act. In addition to killing the birds and possessing the plumes, the accused also violated Section 84 of the U.S. Criminal Code, in that the egrets were killed on an area set aside as a Federal bird refuge, for which a like penalty is prescribed.

As a result of the operations of Federal game protectors in Florida and other States, the work of plume hunters has been restricted, and persons who formerly derived material financial profit by engaging in this unlawful business have had to seek other employment.