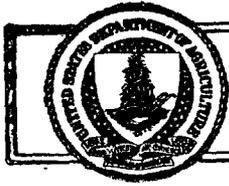


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UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR
WILD LIFE CAN BE REMEDIED

Biological Survey Chief Redington Tells
Waltonians Greater Public Interest
Must Be Enlisted

Speaking to the members of the Izaak Walton League of America at their convention, in the Sherman Hotel, Chicago, to-day (April 23) Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture, discussed present-day conditions unfavorable to wild life and presented possible measures of relief.

"Of all the handicaps under which wild life must exist to-day," he said, "lack of public information is one of the most serious with which we must contend. The gradual diminution in the numbers of the various kinds of wild life in this country, particularly the migratory waterfowl, is proof in itself that conditions for them have been unfavorable. That these conditions can be remedied, however, has also been demonstrated, particularly when an enlightened public opinion is brought to bear on the subject, through the instrumentality of such organizations, public and private, as the Bureau of Biological Survey, the Izaak Walton League of America, and other conservation organizations."

Among the conditions most detrimental to wild life, he said, is the destruction of natural habitats by unwise drainage, forest fires, water pollution, and drought. Through lack of human control, predatory enemies also take toll of the animals and birds themselves. "Though human needs must take first place when there is a conflict of wild-life and economic interests, yet the needs of our wild-life resources can have increased consideration when our people are rightly informed regarding the conditions, the needs, and the remedies."

Unwise drainage he termed wasteful both economically and in its destruction of the resorts of waterfowl and other wild birds and animals. Extensive drainage projects, he said, should be undertaken only when investigations show beyond doubt that the area to be drained will be made of more value to humanity through cultivation and other industry than in its natural quality as a producer of game, fish, and fur and the recreational values associated with wild life.

"Though one of the most effective of remedies for conditions unfavorable to wild life, restrictive legislation," he said, "is not always popular. This, however, is due as a rule to lack of information as to the true situation. Those who openly flaunt the law, of course, are in a class by themselves, and unfortunately those who lack broad vision, patriotism, and self restraint are enough to disable the common heritage of wild life if police regulation is lacking. Unfortunately there are some well-informed sportsman, numerically in the minority, but wielding considerable power, who, letting their selfish motives outweigh their sense of fitness, actively oppose restrictive measures whose only purpose is to benefit all concerned."

With all its present disabilities and with only a modicum of enforcement, he credited game legislation with being the primary if not the only important influence in saving such stocks of wild life as we now have. But

for the intervention of legislation to stop the slaughter and sale of game not artificially propagated, he said that many species of our wild ducks and geese, at least, would long ago have been exterminated as was the passenger pigeon.

Seeing birds in abundance on a few marshes, he said, critics of game administrators have ignored the fact that many of these birds formerly frequented other and more distant marshes that have been destroyed, and the critics have failed to comprehend that these concentrations were merely local.

With a truer realization of the needs of waterfowl, by the public, he continued, the open seasons could probably be reduced without much opposition to correspond more nearly with those on resident upland game birds, which are far shorter. As an alternative, he suggested that in a better general understanding of the needs of wild life, many would demonstrate willingness to set their own reduced limits during emergencies, and for others a more strict enforcement of present regulations would be needed in cases of deliberate violation.

At present there are only 25 Federal game protectors, when there should be, he said, from 75 to 100, with additional deputies at certain places in emergencies.

"If funds were available to permit the employment of such a force," concluded Mr. Redington, "we could enable our country to meet more fully its treaty obligations for the protection of the migratory birds of the country and give to the United States the maximum of conservation results."

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