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REDINGTON MAKES REPORT ON
WILD-LIFE ADMINISTRATION

Tells Secretary Hyde of Biological
Survey's Progress in Research,
Conservation, and Control

Progress in wild-life research, in the conserva-
tion of useful animals and birds, and in the control of injurious species, was reported to the Secretary of Agriculture by Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, in his annual report for the year ended June 30, 1931, made public today.

Mr. Redington's report surveys the program of the bureau in the light of its 45 years of research, conservation, and control activities. The events of outstanding importance during the year are as follows:

The Biological Survey discovered that the "duck sickness" prevalent in the West is caused by bacteria and not by alkaline poisoning. A cooperative study of upland-game bird diseases was begun in Virginia. To coordinate these and related studies, all wild-life disease investigations of the bureau were consolidated in a new unit created in February. The bureau started a cooperative study of the muskrat on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

The bureau completed the survey of 1,796,158 acres of land recommended as suitable for migratory-bird refuges, and the Migratory Bird Conservation

S Commission authorized the purchase of four additional areas recommended by the bureau for refuges. Amendments to the migratory-bird treaty act regulations reduced the kill of wild fowl, by shortening the season 15 days (after the close of the fiscal year the season was cut to one month), closing specified areas to goose hunting, limiting the number of live-goose decoys at a stand (including brant in the goose bag limit), and prohibiting mourning-dove shooting over baited fields. The bureau reintroduced musk oxen to Alaska by transplanting a herd of 34 from Greenland.

Predatory-animal and rodent control work was improved by the establish-^ament of regional plan of supervision. Congress approved a 10-year control program, including authorization of appropriations of not to exceed \$1,000,000 annually.

U Conservation through education and law enforcement, says Mr. Redington, has resulted from the migratory-bird treaty negotiated with Great Britain in 1916. This obligation was for a 15-year period, with the proviso that it should continue automatically thereafter from year to year. There has been no serious demand for lessening the restrictive terms of the act or for liberalizing its hunting provisions.

Accomplishments in making this treaty effective are summarized as follows: (1) Continuous protection to migratory nongame birds and to certain species of game birds that had become seriously depleted; (2) prohibition of the sale and spring shooting of migratory game birds; (3) establishment of close-season districts based on the times of migratory flights; (4) establishment of maximum daily bag limits; (5) limiting the methods and means for taking migratory game birds; (6) restricting the hours of hunting; (7) limiting to two days' bag the number of birds that may be transported in interstate commerce in a calendar week; (8) placing most of the shore birds

in the close season; (9) reducing the bag limits on ducks and geese and limiting the number that may be had in possession; (10) encouraging the propagation of waterfowl in captivity under permit; and (11) limiting the possession of migratory game birds to a period not exceeding 10 days after the end of the open season.

"The most effective Federal action to maintain waterfowl," says the report, "has been the prohibition of sale of migratory game birds. This action removed the incentive for commercialized exploitation of these birds by market gunners. This accomplishment together with the elimination of spring shooting fully justifies the intervention of the United States Government."

Federal acquisition of bird-refuge lands has a two-fold objective: (1) Establishment of sanctuaries, to preserve and improve the natural environment essential to waterfowl, particularly in areas where long droughts have seriously reduced their numbers; (2) acquisition of lands, in many cases of low productive value, thereby distributing money to landowners who otherwise would have little opportunity for sale. This has already helped somewhat to relieve unfavorable economic conditions.

The report calls attention to the expansion in recent years in the bureau's economic functions, including leadership in the control of injurious forms of wild life and research on fur farming, rabbit raising, and the reindeer industry. The bureau, Mr. Redington explains, seeks to serve the best interests of the animals and birds and also of the people. It works for the preservation of valuable, interesting, and harmless animals and birds, experiments in the propagation of those valuable in captivity, and leads in the cooperative control of species that locally become economically injurious. The idea of extermination of any form, he emphasizes, is abhorrent, though misinterpretation may lead to an impression in some quarters that the bureau seeks

to exterminate some species. The bureau is convinced that, though some forms must be curbed, the perpetuation of representatives of all forms in their natural habitats will lead to an increased appreciation of their esthetic and economic importance.

In order that its control practices might be fully understood, the Biological Survey proposed a joint investigation by the Bureau and the American Society of Mammalogists. The substance of the majority of the reports was that the bureau's employees are responsible men and that in general poison was found to have been so placed as not to endanger seriously the smaller fur-bearing animals. The investigators found little evidence that true fur bearers are being killed in any considerable numbers.

Research has continued a prime concern of the bureau and has resulted in the accumulation of voluminous data on the wild birds and mammals of North America and to some extent on the amphibians and reptiles. During the year preparations were made for opening a new sub-laboratory at Denver, Colo., on July 1, 1931, to study the stomach contents of predators and of other animals charged with being injurious.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Additional items of interest in the Bureau of Biological Survey Annual Report.

Banding of 169,279 birds was reported to the bureau by its 1,869 bird-banding cooperators in 1930-31. Since 1920 it has recorded the banding of more than 900,000 birds. Last year the bureau sent engrossed testimonials of appreciation to eight bird-migration observers who for 40 years or more have furnished spring and fall reports.

Some 500 stomachs of mammals, including about 150 of coyotes, were examined during the year.

The Biological Survey participated last spring in a natural-history expedition to Haiti made under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution.

Investigations in fur-animal production have shown that fur farmers with small holdings spend \$30 to \$40 to produce a silver-fox pelt, whereas those maintaining 100 pairs or more of breeding stock in connection with some other enterprise can produce pelts at \$20 each.

In Alaska, experimental crossings of reindeer and caribou have increased the weight of the reindeer by 50 to 100 pounds.

Federal funds available for predatory-animal and rodent control, carried on in 1930-31 in 40 States, totaled \$607,360, and cooperators advanced \$1,382,755. Through an emergency appropriation of \$202,645 under the construction and employment program, 36,056 days of labor were provided for this purpose.

Coyotes were reported in Haversham County, Ga., and in the vicinity of Jamieson, Fla., and one was killed on the outskirts of Baltimore, Md., in the year.

In Creek County, Okla., 22 wolves were taken in the year in an area less than 10 miles square.

As a result of the bureau's wolf-control work, farmers in an isolated valley of Carter County, Okla., where wolves had made profitable poultry raising impossible, were able to resume poultry raising on an extended scale and to market \$10,000 worth in the year.

Wild-fowl food resources have been studied on one or more prospective refuge areas in every State in the Union, and the ownership has been determined in 115 desirable units embracing 3,021,158 acres. In 9 States 15 prospective migratory-bird refuges with an acreage of about 283,700 were examined. Plans

contemplate a nation-wide network of refuges, each containing 20,000 to 50,000 acres.

Wild-life reservations under the Biological Survey on June 30 numbered 92. During the preceding year 6 new refuges were established, 1 for mammals and birds and 5 chiefly for migratory game birds.

On big-game preserves of the Biological Survey at the close of the year there were about 1,205 animals--692 buffalo, 290 elk, 59 antelope, 56 mountain sheep, 20 white-tailed deer, 88 mule deer. There were 116 buffalo, 14 antelope, and 3 mountain sheep born on the preserves during the year, and in addition numerous elk and deer.

"It can not be too frequently or too emphatically stated," Mr. Redington says, "that, with no practical method of greatly increasing the production of waterfowl and with constantly increasing numbers of better-equipped gunners, limitation on the number of birds that may be killed is a necessity if extinction of some of the more popular game species is to be avoided."

Seven State legislatures at recent sessions adopted laws conforming to Federal regulations protecting migratory birds; 45 States have thus cooperated with the Federal Government.

In enforcing the migratory-bird treaty act, 406 cases were disposed of during the year, with 267 convictions. Fines ranged from \$1 to \$250, aggregating (with costs) \$5,965. Jail sentences of 9 days to 6 months were imposed in 12 cases.

In enforcing the Lacey Act, regulating interstate transportation by common carrier of wild birds and mammals, the bureau gathered information regarding 5,450 shipments that apparently contained skins taken or transported in violation of State law, and submitted the facts to State game officials.

Section 527 of the tariff act of 1930 provides that when a foreign State or Province affords special protection to animals or birds, these species may not be imported into this country except under a certificate of the United States consul showing that they were legally exported. The United States, by denying importation permits, can now curtail the marketing of species protected by a foreign government.

Reports of individuals to whom the bureau issued permits to possess migratory birds for breeding purposes show that 73,933 birds, of which 67,860 were mallard ducks, were raised in captivity during the calendar year 1930.