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FOOD SHORTAGE THREATENS
WILDLIFE; FEEDING URGED

Winter this year looms as a serious barrier to the progress that is being made in the national program of wildlife restoration. Drought has been so severe that natural food is unusually scarce, and the same disastrous force has destroyed the crops that normally make it possible for the farmer to assist nature in caring for the wild creatures in times of stress.

The prospects for this year are especially alarming to the Bureau's biologists for they know that even at the best winter is a critical period for many species of wildlife. Coverts then grow smaller in area and, without foliage, become less effective in protection. Available food supplies diminish in both quantity and quality. Under such circumstances starvation kills many of the wild creatures--sometimes directly, sometimes by so weakening them that they are easy victims of predatory animals, or more susceptible to cold, disease, and other agencies that would not menace well-nourished individuals.

The problem of winter feeding even in normal years has, in fact, seemed so important in the Biological Survey's work for wildlife conservation that specialists in the Bureau have made careful studies of methods that have proved effective. These methods are explained in a 12-page, illustrated pamphlet entitled "Winter Feeding of Wildlife on Northern Farms," published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture as Miscellaneous Publication No. 159 and obtainable at 5 cents a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C.

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With this publication available as a guide, State and local organizations will find it possible to plan quickly and effectively for programs of winter feeding that will save thousands of birds. And the problem this year is so serious, and so much is at stake in the restoration program, that the Biological Survey is appealing to every interested organization and individual to start immediately to organize for next winter's feeding.

Town and city game associations, the Bureau suggests, can organize effective campaigns by appointing committees to raise funds, solicit labor, and obtain the cooperation of farmers, individual hunters, Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs, women's clubs, business men's associations, newspapers, outing-goods stores, grain-elevator operators, feed-mill proprietors, rural mail carriers, railway section workers, and others. In some communities schools may be able to cooperate by sponsoring winter-feeding contests. In other places such contests may appeal to the local newspapers, and they may be carried on by State conservation departments and supervised by game protectors or wardens. Any winter-feeding campaign must have the cooperation of the resident farmers.

When the groundwork of cooperation for the winter-feeding campaign has been completed, the Biological Survey suggests that copies of "Winter Feeding of Wildlife on Northern Farms" be distributed by the sponsoring organization to cooperating agencies and individuals as needed. With this manual of methods in hand, the workers will be able to carry on the campaign in accordance with practices that have proved effective and economical, and if a campaign is so conducted in each community where needed the threatened disaster to wildlife will be averted.