



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release NOVEMBER 19, 1948.

### NEW F.W.S. BOOKLET TELLS HISTORY OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

America's efforts to conserve its wildlife are described in a 46-page, illustrated booklet, Guarding Our Wildlife Resources, published today by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Written by Rachel L. Carson, of the Service's Division of Information, the new publication is Number Five in the "Conservation in Action" series.

The new booklet tells the story of U. S. Birds, mammals, and fishes — the conditions which favor and threaten them, their prospects of survival against the encroachments of modern civilization, and the efforts of Federal, state, and private agencies to protect them. The wildlife conservation movement became of significant national concern in the late 19th Century. Because of unrestricted exploitation of wildlife and the destruction of their habitat, some species had already become almost extinct.

In 1903, the first wildlife sanctuary was built on Pelican Island, in Florida's Indian River. The National Wildlife Refuge system now contains 282 sanctuaries, with about 18 million acres of land and water. Established within waterfowl migration routes and on their wintering grounds, refuges have been a vital factor in the preservation of North America's waterfowl. In the western United States, refuges have provided sanctuary for such big game animals as American bison, elk, Rocky Mountain sheep, and antelope.

The new publication describes the most important development in wildlife conservation during the past decade: cooperation between the Federal Government and the States to protect, restore, and develop wildlife habitat. Authorized by the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, the program derives its principal financial support from the Federal tax on sporting arms and ammunition. Through this tax, which is set aside for wildlife conservation, America's 12 million hunters contribute to the restoration of game birds and mammals.

International efforts in wildlife conservation are also discussed by the new booklet, with reference to the Migratory Bird Treaties of 1916 (between the United States and Great Britain) and of 1937 (between the United States and Mexico). There are no treaties as yet between the countries of the Northern Hemisphere and those of the Southern Hemisphere to protect migratory birds.

Guarding Our Wildlife Resources describes foreign agreements dealing with North America's fur-seals, the world's whale fisheries, the Fraser River's sockeye salmon fishery, and the Pacific halibut fishery as other examples of international conservation efforts.

The new publication was translated into Spanish and distributed to delegates at the Inter-American Conference on the Conservation of Renewable Natural Resources, held in Denver, Colo., during September. The Fish and Wildlife Service is now using this Spanish edition in its role as a participator in the U. S. Government program for cooperation with the American republics.

Copies of Guarding Our Wildlife Resources can now be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C. Price: 30¢ a copy.

x x x