



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1950

#### DUCKS GO HUNGRY WHERE CARP ARE PRESENT IN LARGE NUMBERS

Strange as it seems, carp and ducks are competitors. Carp--a vegetable-eating fish--and ducks both eat the same aquatic plants, states the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Where carp exist in large numbers, plant food suitable for ducks and geese may be entirely destroyed.

In certain areas of the West and Middle West, especially on Wildlife Refuges, large-scale carp removal programs have been necessary if quantities of duck and geese food were to be retained. In one marsh in Ohio, all carp and other fish were killed by the fish poison "rotenone". After thousands of pounds of dead fish were cleaned out and removed, the waters were restocked with game fish. Within a short time, wild celery and submergent vegetation suitable for waterfowl began to grow again.

On one Wildlife Refuge a recently planted 10-acre patch of Chufa (Cyperus esculentus), an important waterfowl food plant, was completely destroyed by carp. The carp not only devour entire plants, but, by their bottom-feeding habits, keep the water too turbid to permit seed germination to re-establish new plant growths. Other plants, besides chufa, which are important duck and geese foods and which suffer from carp depredations are the sago pondweeds--bearing starchy tubers--and wild celery, wild rice, bulrush, spike.rush, etc.

This constant movement of the carp, while grubbing out plants on the bottom, places silt over the eggs of desirable fish--preventing their hatching. When carp adversely affect the growth of plants, they also prevent the growth of numerous forms of small invertebrate life --such as the freshwater shrimp--which are dependent upon the plants for their existence. These little animals are an important link in the food chain for game fish. Their loss is usually simultaneous with the loss of aquatic plants.

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