NARRATIVE REPORT FOR OKEFENOKEE WILDLIFE REFUGE

NOVEMBER DECEMBER JANUARY

1938 & 1939

MAXIMUM & MINUMUM TEMPERATURES - As given for Waycross Georgia during the above three months are as follows - November - Max. 87 - Min. 23- December Max - 83- Min- 32- Jan. - Max - 85 - Min - 31.

RAINFALL- 1.66 in. in Nov. - 1.09 in. in Dec. - 2.04 in. in Jan. - Water continued low enough to make travel by pole boat difficult over many areas we have occasskon to cover.

FIRES - We had two fire troubles during November, December and January - but vigilance will be necessary during the coming quarter because of cattle owners who desire to burn off the old grass - The turpentine operators do some controlled burning that should not cause trouble for us - other timeber owners now try to keep all fires out - All the timber owners will try to cooperate with us but we will have to watch some cattle owners.

WILDLIFE - The winter migration to Okefenokee was later than usual and results from counts in January would indicate less than the previous winter- The writer is certain as to the lateness of migration to Okefenokee- but not so sure as to the numbers when they did come. (In 1938 the estimated duck population was twenty-five to thirty thousand and for 1939 an estimate arrived at in the same manner gave only about 18,000) - Hovever, there are several facts to be considered, - Previous to the acquisition of Okefenokee by the Government - the ducks were concentrated each winter for ten years by placing of easy food at certain points - In 1938 ducks that had been in Okefenokee previously might have preferred these areas but by another

year have become more naturally distributed over the entire swamp. The fact that ducks were found scattered over the swamp more than any year since they were first baited was particularly noticeable to the writer. The water was lower in January 1939 than in January 1938 - and some areas covered by pole boat in 1938 could not be covered by pole boat in 1939- Ducks would have not occupied these areas anyway - they would occupy areas with deeper water- The old log pond at Hopkins, Georgia, has been used by ducks so far all season. The four parties counting ducks in January 1938 reported seeing twenty Florida Cranes - The four parties counting ducks in 1939 reported seventy-six- Florida Cranes. From all reports I think it safe to assert that the usual number of Wilson Snipe and Woodcock are wintering in Okefenokee. Herons that occupy Okefenokee are apparently as numerous as usual but during the next three months we will have better opportunities to observe these and make comparisons and will have more to say regarding these in our next report.

Robins apparently invaded the Refuge as early as ever and in such numbers one not well posted would be slow to believe live in the whole United States. Mourning doves and quail are plentiful over the lands outside of the swamp. From all accounts quail are more numerous than last season - and this applies to wild turkeys on nearby areas usually occupied by them- Only a few have been reported within the Refuge.

Black bears and raccoons are unquestionably on the increase - This is noticed by every patrolman and deputy game warden - also more otters have been noted, than at any time in several years - Reports from all parts of the Refuge indicate a most staisfactory start toward their complete restoration. Deer are apparently doing much better than "holding their ow n"- tracks and trails are noted in all parts of the Refuge and just at this time

Chief Guide Roddenberry would have held the other "coon" in his other hand but this one kept him busy -
We had two cut off from cover - Tommy held this one captive only long enough to get his picture.

dozens are using Floyds Island, and probably the other islands.

A wildcat was seen up a tree at Big Water by Earle R. Greene, Lem Griffis, and McCray Coleman. Coleman says the cat had a long tail and Coleman is a native and should know his cats. A wildcat with a long tail was reported to be seen on several occassions and by different persons in the Sea Island Company's Game Preserve in Camden County in November 1938.

I have heard of long tailed wildcats in Arkansas. P.L.S.

REFUGE DEVELOPEMENT & MAINTENANCE - One patrolman's cabin at Camp Cornelia is nearly ready for occupancy and a second patrolman's cabin is well under way- The log walls being about to the roof plate - also the chief guide's log cabin at the boat landing has its log walls about up. The service building at Camp Cornelia will also soon be ready for the roof. The eight miles for fencing for the Camp Cornelia area is about 18% completed. Road between Jones Island and the Refuge boundary line completed. Board Walk from Jones Island to boat landing on Billy's Lake rebuilt and widened.

Markers for Genral Floyd's route through Okefenokee in 1837 were set up for November 11, 1938.

PUBLIC RELATIONS - Weather was bad on November 11, but 25 people gathered on Jones Island to see the markers for Genral Floyds route and these were taken by boat to Billy's Island. The writer showed the colored pictorial map prepared by the Georgia State Plannibg Board and made a short talk pointed out locations of old Indian villages and forts constructed by General Floyds force and answered questions asked by those present.

During November, December and January there were 172 visitors interested in the Refuge and wildlife. Among these were Mrs. J. L. Walker, local historian, who is also the first to request that General Floyd's route be marked. Dr. G. R. LaRue, of the University if Michigan. Six members of the Canoe Club of New York, four nature students from Atlants and Mr. Maurek of Region 9. Besides the above visitors permits were issued for 330 man days fishing and resulted in the following catch:

Perch	722
Bass	271
Jack	163
Mudfish	400
Catfish	471
	2027

REFUGE VIOLATIONS - Duck shooting and trapping during the three months was tempting to some but our patrolmen and deputy game wardens were sufficiently active to discourage most would be poachers- However, on Christmas day three natives did go in about three miles north of Camp Cornelia and shot a few ducks just inside the Refuge boundary line- We immediately learned of this and their intention to repeat, and we had Sam Mizell and Deputy Ryder waiting for them. The violation was not repeated until January 11 - When Sam Mizell and Rufus Ryder found one man shooting within the Refuge near the Durden landing - The man saw them coming and bolted - They could not catch him and did not get close enough to be able to identify him. Mizell and Ryder took the small boat the poacher had, together with his 12 ga. shells - fish tackle and the one Mallard, one Ring Neck, One Maganza, and two Blue Petes, and one Grebe found in

Big Mouth Bass - Caught by the writer in Okefenokee on January 16, 1939 and is his contribution to your list of fish lies - At least this picture has created a reputation ~~p~~ The writer holds that he certainly must have had some fairly good fish to start with and the picture was taken with a perfectly good camera - Recomar 33 - Government owned.

the boat. We feel certain of the identies of the three men who did shooting on December 25, but our evidence is only "hearsay" in court- It was made too hot for these violators and they have given no further trouble.

John M. Hopkins