



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

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### 17 MARKET HUNTERS AND WILDFOWL BOOTLEGGERS CONVICTED AS SURVEY ENDS WEST COAST ROUNDUP

Fifteen wild-duck bootleggers and market hunters received a total of 44 months in jail and \$125 in fines during the April session of Federal court at Sacramento, California, as game management agents of the Bureau of Biological Survey concluded an intensive drive on a Pacific Coast bootleg ring that sold wild ducks to night clubs and restaurants in San Francisco and Sacramento, the United States Department of the Interior announced today. Judge Harold Loudersback withheld sentence on two other convicted bootleggers, one being in the hospital and the other in hiding.

This brings the total number of convictions obtained since last December against illicit wildfowl dealers in the Golden Gate and Sacramento areas to 48 violators, fined an aggregate of \$3,315, and sentenced to a total of 57 months in jail. Three men were fined \$500 each, and three \$250 each. Other fines ranged from \$20 to \$100.

The 17 cases, which were filed by U. S. Attorney Frank Hennessey, and prosecuted in Sacramento by Assistant U. S. Attorney William L. Licking, were as follows:

Clifford Young, of Princeton, alleged to be an active market hunter for several years, 3 months in jail; Tony Kinkela, duck bootlegger of Eureka, \$20 fine;

Phillip Rolen, bootlegger of Princeton, \$50 fine; John Iaconetto (alias Jaconetti), bootlegger of Colusa, 3 months in jail; Lorraine Leathers, of Woodland, said to be one of the outstanding market hunters of the district, 9 months in jail; Rudolph Palette, duck bootlegger of Colusa, 4 months in jail; and Tony Nicoletti, bootlegger of Colusa, 5 months in jail.

Charles E. Hensen, duck bootlegger of Princeton, 45 days in jail; Frank Fusaro, of Princeton, said to be the outstanding retailer of the district, 7 months in jail; Jack King Wilson, a bootlegger of Princeton, 3 months; Joe Peters, of Princeton, an alleged go-between for buyers and sellers, \$25 fine; Walter J. Rohnacker, a bootlegger of Willows, 4 months in jail; James Daly, of Colusa, said to be a front man for the ring, 4 months in jail; and Tony Baronti, of Eureka, a night club proprietor, \$50 fine. Colon Young, a market hunter of Princeton, was not sentenced because he was taken to the hospital for an operation, while Manuel Fonseca, a bootlegger of Princeton, is still in hiding.

Describing the ring as one of the most notorious in the recent history of wildfowl bootlegging, Biological Survey game agents declared that the violators sold ducks in lots of 25, 35, 50, and 100, and reached a high of 242 ducks in one sale. Most of the birds were sold either to go-betweens or directly to proprietors of night spots, restaurants, and hotels in Sacramento and San Francisco.

Last year, Survey agents received tips that the West Coast ring was intensifying its activities, apparently in the belief that all Federal undercover agents were operating on the Atlantic Coast, where the wildlife bureau was conducting a drive on a large ring of operators in the Chesapeake Bay area. Undercover agents were immediately sent to the Golden Gate district, where the search for illicit dealers in wildfowl began.

California State game wardens joined the Survey agents in obtaining evidence, and in December the State and Federal agents spread a dragnet and apprehended 21 retailers in one series of cases, 4 market hunters in a second, 6 retailers in a third, and concluded with the 17 market hunters operating around the rice fields of northern California.

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