

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEW PUBLICATION TELLS HOW TO RAISE MINNOWS AND OTHER BAITS

A new publication intended as a guide for persons interested in raising minnows and other bait species as a commercial venture has been announced by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The "Propagation of Minnows and Other Bait Species" is a summary of information assembled to date on bait culture and has resulted from work done by a special committee appointed during the second annual meeting of the Tri-State Fishery Conference in 1946. Representatives of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Conservation Departments of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan comprise this Conference.

The growing number of fishermen appearing each year in the northern states has resulted in a greater fishing load and an increased demand for suitable bait minnows. In an effort to satisfy the demand, commercial minnow dealers have seined lakes and streams over wide areas and have trucked their perishable commodity over great distances. Recognizing the danger to game fish through the depletion of minnows in natural streams, since minnows constitute the greater portion of the diet of game fish, certain states have already put into effect regulations prohibiting the seining of minnows from certain of their fishing waters.

The solution to the problem of how to supply the country's army of anglers with sufficient quantities of their favorite lure has been found by those dealers who are propagating their own bait, according to the Service. By so doing these dealers not only are instrumental in conserving the natural food supply in inland waters for the native game fish but are providing anglers with a better-conditioned bait. The latter is achieved by having the minnows at hand in their natural home, thus eliminating crowded conditions in the holding tank. Rearing ponds become holding tanks as well as a source of supply, and the transportation of minnows from distant streams in crowded cans is unnecessary. Although the rearing of bait minnows is by no means easy, the advantages are many, according to the authors.

In addition to minnows, the bait dealer often has call for earthworms, soft crayfish, and crickets. These baits cannot be easily obtained in large enough quantities to supply the trade but all can be raised in large quantities in a relatively short time.

Copies of Circular 12, "Propagation of Minnows and Other Bait Species," may be obtained from the Michigan Conservation Commission in Lansing, the Minnesota Department of Conservation in St. Paul, or from the Wisconsin Conservation Commission in Madison. Copies may also be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 35 cents.

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