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GAME AND FUR FARMERS
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Bulletin on Game Bird Propagation
Is Latest in Long Series of Publications

The decrease in areas in the United States suitable for wild fowl breeding grounds emphasizes the need for propagating wild ducks, geese, and other birds on game farms. The Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture for many years has encouraged measures to this end, and its latest help for game breeders is a Farmers' Bulletin (No. 1521-F) just issued under the title "Propagation of Game Birds."

The bulletin points out that the possibilities of game-bird propagation have long been recognized, both abroad and in this country, and that enough has been accomplished to prove that increase in successful game farming is limited only by the area, the expenditure, and the effort devoted to it. Many methods that assure success are known, and these are treated concisely in the new publication.

The Biological Survey's activities in promoting game farming are to be noted in a great number of official publications of the United States Department of Agriculture and in special mimeographed leaflets on particular phases of the subject. A review of these reveals no less than 65 titles, covering the propagation of birds and of fur and game mammals. These bulletins and leaflets have been devoted either wholly to the purpose of increasing the number of these valuable birds and animals through artificial propagation or have made favorable mention of the subject in compiling facts to aid in the solution of the game

breeder's problems. Chapters on propagation have been included in all the bulletins containing the annual summaries of the game laws of the United States and Canada for more than a quarter of a century.

Ever since the activities of the Department of Agriculture were extended to game preservation, in 1900, recommendations have been made in publications of the Biological Survey favorable to importations of game birds and eggs for propagation, and the necessary importation permits have been issued. With the passage of the migratory bird treaty act of 1918, the Biological Survey began issuing permits for the possession for propagation on farms of such waterfowl as twice each year pass back and forth between the United States and Canada on their migratory flights.

Investigations are now being conducted in Southern States for increasing the supply of bobwhite quail, including a study of the control of diseases and of natural enemies of the birds. Investigations also are being made of practical methods of capturing beavers alive and planting colonies in areas where they will not only not be destructive to forestry and agricultural interests, but where they can make lands that are otherwise useless productive of valuable and interesting fur bearers. All phases of fur farming are being studied and recommendations on the subject offered in a number of bulletins. Special studies also have been made for the improvement of Alaskan reindeer, and experiments are now under way in cross breeding with native wild caribou, with a view to developing stronger and heavier reindeer with increased meat weight.

Preliminary to a still more active educational campaign in the interests of game bird farming, the Biological Survey is sending W. L. McAtee, author of its bulletin on "Propagation of Game Birds," to certain European countries. During the next three months he will visit world-famous places in Holland, Germany, France, and England to investigate the propagation there of migratory waterfowl, some of which are of the same species as occur in the United States. The methods

and equipment used will come under his observation and study, both as regards American species of birds propagated there, and those species that have rarely or never been introduced and raised in this country.

In addition to the recommendations made for rearing the game birds treated in the latest bulletin, such as pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, partridges, grouse, wild turkeys, and swans, the Biological Survey has issued instructions both in its publications and in its demonstrations for rearing many other useful species of wild life on game and fur farms, such as deer, elk, reindeer, silver and blue foxes, muskrats, hares and rabbits, skunks, martens, minks, otters, opossums, raccoons, and beavers.

The number of persons now breeding game birds and other forms of useful wild life for commercial and personal use is rapidly increasing, and many owners of large country estates are interested in our beautiful species of wild fowl and in perpetuating them while it is still possible. Practical information of value to prospective game breeders is to be found in many publications of the department still available for distribution and more will undoubtedly be developed from the studies now being made in Europe.

A leaflet issued about ten years ago and kept revised, listing publications of interest to game breeders, and one listing publications on fur and fur animals will be furnished applicants free on request addressed to the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture. Farmers' Bulletin (No. 1521-F), "Propagation of Game Birds," supersedes several former bulletins and leaflets, and will be sent to anyone on request as long as the supply for free distribution lasts.

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