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RESEARCH ESSENTIAL TO WILD-LIFE ADMINISTRATION, SAYS BUREAU HEAD

To be efficient, wild-life administration must have the fundamental basis of scientific research, Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, emphasizes in his annual report for the year ended June 30, 1933, made public today (November 20) by Secretary Wallace.

Without research, says Mr. Redington, there can be no continued use and enjoyment of our native wild life. Only scientific knowledge developed by trained biologists, he declares, can insure the adoption of rational policies toward wild life and the proper administration of protective laws. Improvement in propagation of game and fur species, intelligent acquisition and maintenance of refuges, and imposition of the right degree of restraint on animals that become injurious--all depend upon research.

In studying conditions affecting waterfowl, the Biological Survey during the year, carried on the most extensive and carefully planned investigations of this nature thus far undertaken. The field studies covered important regions on the breeding grounds in the United States and Canada, during fall and spring migrations, and on wintering areas along the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts, and on inland waters. Continued into the summer, these studies showed that without better protection some species may become extinct, and this knowledge, says Mr. Redington, is essential not only in conserving the birds but in regulating and perpetuating the sport of wildfowling.

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The bureau also verified reports that eelgrass, the principal winter food of brant, had almost disappeared on the Atlantic Coast, destroyed probably by a bacterial disease. Knowledge of an accompanying great reduction in the numbers of brant led the bureau to protect the species by providing a close season in the Atlantic Coast States.

Through cooperative studies the Biological Survey has demonstrated the prevalence of several infectious diseases that menace wild life, and it has shown the importance of certain parasites of wild animals and birds in spreading bacterial and other diseases. Cyclic losses of wild life have caused increasing concern for several years and with the necessary information concerning outbreaks of disease and other causes, the investigators will develop all possible measures for reducing the severity of these periodic declines. State officials and individuals have cooperated in calling attention to situations involving waste of wild life through disease.

Carrying on the Federal program for establishing migratory-bird refuges, th Survey completed field examinations of 141 refuge units, aggregating 3,710,927 acres in the 48 States. Two new refuges were placed under the Bureau's jurisdiction, one of them the Boulder Canyon Wild Life Refuge, covering about 620,000 acres, about 132,000 of which will be the artificial lake created by the Boulder Dam on the Colorado River. Wild-life refuges under the supervision of the Biological Survey on June 30 numbered 102, on 3 of which Civilian Conservation Corps camps had begun construction and other improvement work.

As a result of the bureau's work in enforcing the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 374 cases of violation were disposed of, including 279 convictions. In addition to 18 jail sentences, Federal courts imposed fines aggregating more than $8,000 and in 45 cases placed offenders on probation. A case involving the sale of wild ducks was terminated by a fine of $100 and a 2-month jail sentence, and

one involving the illegal interstate transportation of live quail resulted in a fine of $1,800 and a jail sentence of 18 months to stand suspended on payment of the fine.

Using information originally furnished by the Survey, the several States closed 150 cases of illegal traffic in fur-animal pelts with fines and costs aggregating more than $11,000. The Bureau furnished to game departments of 31 States evidence in connection with 421 violations of State game laws.

Rodent-control methods developed by the Bureau's research, Mr. Redington points out, made it possible to safeguard from damage by rabbits the public's investment in the tree-planting program under the Emergency Conservation Act. Through more than 1,500 Civilian Conservation Corps workers the Bureau also advanced the control of rodents on national forests, and under the Emergency Conservation Act it completed plans for treating 1,650,000 acres infested by rodents on Indian Reservations. The Bureau assisted in organizing 312 county and community anti-rat campaigns in 21 States east of the Mississippi River. In these campaigns the cooperating farmers used a series of baits developed by the Bureau in its research on control methods.

Improved methods of predatory-animal control enabled the Bureau to suppress a serious outbreak of rabies among coyotes in New Mexico and to increase the efficiency of its control work elsewhere. Analysis of the contents of 4,116 coyote stomachs constituted, says Mr. Redington, a material contribution toward a knowledge of the food habits of this predator, and the resulting information will be of value in determining control policies.

At the Rabbit Experiment Station in California, Bureau workers determined the feed requirements for carrying domestic rabbits through weekly periods from weaning to various marketing ages and demonstrated that the requirements compare favorably with those of other classes of livestock.

A biologist of the Bureau completed a 6-year intensive study of the life history, habits, and economic status of the elk in the Jackson Hole region of Wyoming, and a field naturalist conducted a cooperative biological survey of areas across northern Mexico, collecting scientific specimens and data for correlating life-zone findings there and in adjacent parts of Southwestern United States.

More effective provision against entry of injurious foreign species of animals and birds was made during the year by revision of regulations, published by the Treasury Department in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture.

In a cooperative undertaking the Biological Survey, the Alaska Game Commission, and the Forest Service investigated the status of big brown bears on Admiralty Island, Alaska, and in part worked out a game-management plan to coordinate timber operations and bear protection. The five species of bear on this area now number 900, it is estimated.

The Biological Survey, its chief shows, has continued to furnish the public reliable information on the habits and status of wild animals and birds, their usefulness or destructiveness, and on means of encouraging or restraining them. Drawing upon the results of its 48 years of research, the Bureau has answered a large volume of correspondence on a wide variety of subjects relating to wild life. It has also disseminated similar information by press and radio and by printed publications, and specialists of its staff have written many articles for scientific, trade, and sporting periodicals. These services, Mr. Redington points out, would be impossible without the basic research conducted by the Bureau.