

Oregon Hunters Use Firearms Safely

BY MILT GUYNON

It's pure fiction that the fields and forests of the state aren't safe to be in during the hunting seasons and the figures are there to prove it. Except for a very small minority, Oregon hunters are pretty careful with their firearms when they go afield.

Take the deer season, for example, with various rifle hunts held from late Septem-

ber through November and a few into December. During the entire season last fall we estimate roughly around 275,000 deer hunters were in the woods at various times. Yet only 23 people were injured with firearms.

Of the 23 accidents, six were self-inflicted and many others were the result of carelessness around vehicles or in

camp and did not happen when the persons were actually hunting. Three deer hunting accidents were fatal.

We don't like to report on hunting accidents with firearms because the reaction of many nonhunters is that this is some sort of suicidal recreation that should be done away

with. Yet it is one of the safest of all sports, far safer than swimming, skiing, or other types of outdoor recreation. Actually, a person is safer out hunting than he is taking a bath in his home.

No one advocates doing away with swimming as being too dangerous. The recognized course of action is to teach people to swim, recognize the dangers involved, and take precautionary measures to prevent unnecessary drownings. This is also the course of action with those who prefer to hunt.

During the entire year hunters experienced 64 firearms accidents, seven of which were fatal. In addition to the three deer hunters mentioned, two fatalities occurred during the elk season, one during the upland bird season, and one while hunting nongame critters such as crows and gray diggers. Of the total accidents, 22 were self-inflicted, indicating again that the hunter is his own worst enemy. Twenty-three more accidents occurred at close quarters of 10 yards or less. Twelve occurred while hunters mishandled firearms in or around vehicles, and four more while in camp. Four accidents occurred while hunters were illegally hunting, one while spotlighting, one with

no hunting license, and two out of season.

Forty-two hunters wounded their hunting companions or some other hunter. Causes given include several victims out of sight, several victims stepped into the line of fire, several more were hit by ricochets, and others by accidental discharge. Four hunters were mistaken for game -- three for deer and one for elk.

As usual, juveniles were involved in a disproportionate share of accidents. Horseplay led the list of causes. Several youngsters were hunting without adult supervision and several had no training in firearms safety, both required by law.

Very few mishaps can be termed strictly accidental but are generally the result of pure carelessness with firearms, such as two youngsters wrestling over a firearm in a vehicle. Or the young fellow who placed a cocked pistol back in his holster. Another hunter aimed at a flying bird, then lowered the 22 rifle downward, pulled the trigger, and shot his toe off. One freak accident occurred when a hunter shot a deer in the spine and the bullet actually ricocheted, hitting his companion. Another hunter shot at a ground squirrel only to have

the bullet hit a flat rock, fragment, and have some of the pieces bounce back directly at him.

But we will spare you details of these accidents because we claim hunting ranks as one of the safest of all sports. Statistics show that only a minute fraction of the hunters who go afield each year are even in any danger. Hunting ranks near the bottom of the list compared with other accident categories including all types of outdoor recreation.

When you stop to think that more than 375,000 licensed hunters with high-powered rifles and shotguns spent somewhere around 3 1/2 million man-days in the field last year in pursuit of the various game species, yet had only 64 accidents with firearms, it all adds up to a mighty small percentage with little risk to the individual hunter. Probably another million man-days of recreation were enjoyed by hunters after nongame critters such as rabbits and crows.

Unfortunately, there probably always will be a few hunting accidents caused by careless individuals who disregard the rules of firearms safety. A big point in favor, though, is the Game Commission's excellent juvenile hun-

ter safety program -- for adults as well -- which will tend to reduce even these small odds.

In our view, when it comes to living a long and enjoyable

life, hunting is really the best health insurance a person can have. For sure, this writer's health is always at its best when the hunter's moon shines bright in the fall.

Spraying And Pruning Time

February and March are the best times to prune most home orchard trees and some of the ornamental shrubs and trees, according to the Curry County Extension office.

Fruit trees are pruned to stimulate shoot growth, reduce overall tree size, rejuvenate fruit trees, improve fruit quality, and to make it easier to spray and harvest fruit.

Pruning is not a difficult job if one understands the basic principles. An easy-to-follow Extension circular is available free from the Extension office. Ask for "Pruning the Home Orchard."

sease problems from cropping up later in the season. Be sure to follow label directions on the spray container.

Ornamental shrubs and trees respond to pruning, too. In some cases pruning is essential if these plants are to produce flowers. Some ornamental shrubs, such as hydrangeas, roses and butterfly bush should be pruned severely now. Other plants such as cotoneaster, firethorn, holly and hawthorne should be pruned lightly and primarily to remove excess branches and water shoots or suckers. The spring flowering shrubs, such as camellia, forsythia, lilac and weigela are pruned immediately after the blossoms have faded.

For a more complete discussion of ornamental tree and shrub care, ask for "Pruning Ornamental Trees and Shrubs." It's free.

Ruling Cuts Protection Of Employees In States

Norman O. Nilsen, the State Labor Commissioner and Chief Administrator of Oregon's Human Rights Laws, last Monday told a State Senate Committee a year-old Attorney General's opinion has drastically cut the number of persons whose working conditions are protected by state law.

Speaking at a hearing by the Senate Judiciary Committee on the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution, Nilsen said that the Attorney General has ruled that the State Wage and Hour Commission does not have authority in regard to working conditions for persons covered by two Federal Laws, the Interstate Commerce Act and the Fair Employment Practices Act.

He said the opinion means that only about 10 to 20 percent of the adult work force has the coverage of the Wage and Hour Commission in this respect.

"I can't believe that our legislators intended to create this situation," he said. "It can be remedied by new and separate legislation."

The Commissioner said that after Federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination in employment cast doubt on the validity of laws setting working conditions for women only, the Legislature gave the Wage and Hour Commission authority to set working conditions for all employees.

He noted that the Legislature recognized that need for protection adheres to the job and not the sex of the person on the job. "We were proud Oregon took that step," he said.

However, he said several groups questioned whether the Commission did have jurisdiction over employees subject to accommodations, rental and purchase of housing. There are problems of access to education and training, which are extremely significant to the problems of employment.

"It seems to us that the best shield is constitutionally guaranteed rights," Nilsen concluded.

the Interstate Commerce and Fair Labor Standards Act because of the wording of the State Minimum Wage Law of 1967. The Attorney General then issued the opinion in question.

Nilsen gave his full support to the Equal Rights Amendment. He said, "I support the Equal Rights Amendment because we must affirm that all persons shall be treated equally before the law. We must establish equality as the benchmark."

"I urge the Legislature to pass Senate Joint Resolution No. 4 and thus have Oregon ratify this amendment."

It was pointed out that Oregonians have traditionally been front-runners in seeking equitable treatment for all people. He said from enforcement of laws pertaining to sex discrimination in employment, it has been noted that women do suffer many inequalities.

He said that in pursuing the elimination of illegal sex discrimination practices in employment "the Bureau sees the task to be so difficult because of the overall status of women in society. Not only in employment but in countless areas, the result has been to foster and maintain an image of women as children, incapable of fashioning their own lives."

"It is sometimes said that different treatment affords a special shield for women, a special protection of the family. With due respect, from our experience, we have come to question whether this shield really exists. It certainly is easily pierced."

"We have found problems in insurance, pensions, inheritance taxes, finance and credit, workmen's compensation, unemployment benefits, public

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Sandwich Bread 42¢
Hostess Donuts 52¢

FRESH CABBAGE 5 for \$1
BROCCOLI 29¢
Navel Oranges 7 lbs \$1
Green Onions 3 lbs 39¢
Fresh Pears 29¢
Bell Peppers 3 for 39¢
Russet Potatoes 2 lbs 29¢
Fresh Asparagus 69¢

Property Tax Assistance Available

In an effort to assist claimants filing for Homeowners Property Tax Relief, county tax personnel will be available locally. This service is directed towards those taxpayers who would otherwise find it a hardship to travel to the courthouse in Gold Beach. Tax payments can properly be handled through the U.S. Postal Service, but each application for Homeowner's Property Tax Relief will require screening for eligibility.

Tax relief is available to qualified applicants, regardless of age, and is based on total household income for 1972. Relief, however, is not automatic... you must apply. Under the law, relief is available when a person's tax bill exceeds a certain percentage of his total household income. Application forms and filing instructions accompanied all tax statements. Applications must be filed on or before April 15, 1973.

To apply for tax relief, complete and file the application with the appropriate office. Residents of the Brookings-Harbor area will have assistance available Jan. 18-19 at the sheriff's office in the Port of Brookings building located near Sporthaven, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

On Jan. 24, tax personnel will be at the Langlois Library-fire hall between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The City of Port Orford has made space available at the city hall for Jan 25, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The new telephone number to call for assistance is: Gold Beach, 247-7011, ext. 215; in Brookings-Harbor, 469-4600, and in North Curry dial operator and ask for Commerce 9213.

Of prime importance to persons for Homeowners' Property Tax Relief are:
(1) Own homestead by recorded document and reside there Dec. 31, 1972.
(2) Total income for 1972.
(3) Filing dates are Jan. 1, 1973, through April 15, 1973, no extensions allowed.

Applicants should bring a copy of their 1972-73 tax statement and a copy of the completed federal income tax return, if any.

"Trees to Know in Oregon." This 96 page bulletin, authored by Charles Ross, Extension forester, and illustrated by Hugh Hayes of the State Forestry Dept., is available from the Extension office in Gold Beach for 50 cents per copy.

The bulletin includes native trees as well as a few of the introduced species. It is very descriptive of identifying characteristics and tells many interesting facts and sidelights about Oregon's trees.

The Curry County OSU Extension office is located in the County Office Building, Box 488, Gold Beach.

ADVERTISING PAYS

Learn About Oregon Trees

Have you wondered what kinds of trees are located near your home? Do you like to identify the trees you find in your travels throughout Oregon? If you are among the group of persons becoming increasingly interested in your natural surroundings, you might be interested in the Oregon State University Extension bulletin,