

BARKERS POT SHOT

BY Ivan Barker

The heaviest rearing schedule ever attempted by the game commission proceeded without a hitch in 1958 and resulted in an all-time high in hatchery fish production for a single year.

October releases of large fingerling trout in lakes and reservoirs in preparation for the 1959 sport fishery pushed the poundage figure to a total of 715,000 pounds of fish released since last January, already a 36 per cent increase over last year's total. The poundage figure will go considerably higher before year's end since chinook and silver salmon yearlings are yet to be released.

The heavy increase in poundage is almost entirely attributable to the game commission's large fingerling production program and the production of the large legal sized fish than produced in the past. Although releases of large trout are viewed with favor with the angler, production of these fish causing some concern because of fish food costs.

Total fish produced at all game commission hatcheries during 1958 will reach approximately 20 million of all species, the second year that this figure has been reached. Oregon's federal aid apportionment will reflect a \$12,000 decline in funds for

1959. The United States Department of Interior announced last week that Oregon's share in Dingell-Johnson and Pittman - Robertson Federal Aid funds for the restoration of fish and game will amount to \$512,146. This is about \$12,000 less than was received for the program last year or about \$1,000 less per month available for this phase of Oregon's program next year.

Of the one-half million, slightly more than \$103,000 is available for fish restoration programs and just over \$409,000 for game restoration. Money for the Federal Aid program is derived from an 11 per cent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition and a 10 per cent excise tax on fishing tackle. Excise taxes apportioned to the 48 states and territories amounted to about \$21,000,000 this year.

The formula upon which the Federal Aid money is apportioned is prescribed by law and based on land area of each state and license holders. Federal Aid money must be matched by the state on the basis of \$3 Federal Aid to \$1 State Fund. In actual practice the states carry out all projects with their own funds and are reimbursed for up to 75 per cent of the project costs.

Some of the projects in Oregon developed under the restoration program include the Sauvies Island, Klamath, Summer Lake, and several smaller waterfowl areas; the Wenaha, White River, and North Fork big game winter ranges; Diamond Lake and many other lake and reservoir rehabilitation projects continuous habitat improvement projects throughout the state.

It's amazing how hunters living in a general locality migrate into the same general locations to do their deer hunting. This writer always assumed that when the deer season opened, hunters from a town or city scatter to the four winds throughout the state. This is true to a degree, and you will find hunters from the same town hunting in almost any section of the deer country. But for some psychological reason... perhaps word of mouth of good hunting... all of the hunters in a general hunting area, the preponderance will also live in the same city or community.

During the past deer season in the popular central Oregon deer country a running inventory was kept on hunter origin. The results were truly fantastic.

The Metolius country predominated with hunters from the Salem-Albany portion of western Oregon. Portland hunters took over the Ochocos with only a scattering found in other central Oregon locals. The Fort Rock district was overrun with Bend hunters and hunters from several west side communities. The Cascade mountains in the lake country were preferred by hunters from several coastal cities and central Oregon communities.

See what I mean? Next year this writer for sure is going to check into the next canyon. It might prove to be "Old Home" week. Oregon's bighorn sheep released into the wilds from the Hart mountain enclosure last year seem to be doing real fine and sticking right close to their craggy home. During the rifle deer season on Hart mountain two hunters reported seeing a band of about 30 head in the Indian Springs vicinity. The hunters thought they were deer at first until they stalked the animals to a point where a better observation could be made. Both hunters report it was a thrilling sight to observe these majestic animals in the vastness of the rocky crags.

Another hunter reported observing six rams in Deer creek canyon. Eighteen more were observed by a haying crew on Hart mountain. These sheep were observed as the animals worked their way out of Warner Valley from the vicinity of Campbell Lake made a precarious climb up the face of the west escarpment, and disappeared above the rim.

Each year the game commission is plagued with several hundred deer damage complaints which range all the way from a few deer in flower gardens to great bands of deer in grain and alfalfa fields. During the summer a report came in that strips of coyote hide attached to trees were keeping deer out of orchards. A test was made in the Dallas area where a block of 50 young trees were treated in this manner. The owner pulled a drag around the block so tracks could easily be seen.

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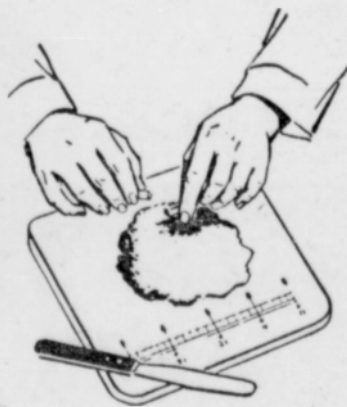
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