

Ring-Necked Pheasant

There was a time, many years ago, when Ring-Necked Pheasants were found only in China. From there they spread to Europe, America and other parts of the world. Wherever they live today, the colorful birds are eagerly sought each season by hunters.

To keep the supply plentiful in our country, state game departments raise and free large numbers of Pheasants every year. Though hatched and held in captivity part of their lives, the birds are wild when turned loose. They show no signs of having lived in pens.

When on their own, Pheasants dominate the territory in which they roam. With a fighting spirit, they crowd out other birds.



©1952 National Wildlife Federation
Ring-necked Pheasant

The male Pheasant is the battler of the family, and he often engages in combat with another male or with a barnyard rooster.

The male also sports some of the gayest feathers in the world of birds. Around his eye there is a bright spot of red. His head and neck are dark greenish-purple. Below that he wears a white collar. The rest of his body is a mixture of brilliant colors—red, bronze, green, brown, yellow and bluish-black.

By comparison, the female Pheasant is dull and plain—a mixture of brown and chestnut, speckled with black. While this makes her less attractive, the National Wildlife Federation points out that she can hide in the grass more easily than her mate.

This is especially important in the spring, when she is setting on her nest. It is built on the ground, among some weeds, and contains from six to twelve large, olive-buff eggs. After she keeps them warm for 23 days, they hatch.

The female takes care of the young until fall. Then they lose their first feathers and begin to fully grow, the males are from 33 to 26 inches long and the females are about 20 inches in length. They weigh up to 4½ pounds. Both birds have long

slender tails, and the male wears strong spurs on his legs.

As the weather turns cold, Ring-Necked Pheasants do not journey southward, but stay right where they are. They live the year round in the north-eastern fourth of the United States—from Maine to the Dakotas and south to Kansas and Pennsylvania.

Their favorite haunts, in this region, are the farmlands where corn and other grains grow. About two-thirds of their food consists of grain and plant life. To round out their meals, they eat great quantities of insects.

Despite their appetite for grain, Pheasants are not a serious menace to farmers. According to the National Wildlife Federation, hunters keep the number of birds down within limits which are controlled by game and conservation authorities.

OSC OFFERS FOREST SOILS SHORT COURSE

Oregon State College—A forest soils short course, designed to acquaint foresters with the problems and current activities in the field of forest soils, will be offered for the first time at Oregon State college this fall.

Scheduled for November 6 to 8, the short course will be open to all forest industry workers. It will be directed by Dr. C. T. Youngberg, recently appointed forest soils scientist. Sponsors of the course are the OSC schools of forestry and agriculture and the Douglas Fir Forest soils committee, composed of representatives from federal, state and private forestry agencies.

The short course will include work in general problems of soil and land classification; chemical, physical and biological aspects of forest soils; water shed management and a discussion of forest soils and problems.

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