

Along Azalea Row

By RUTH B. SMITH

THE ROBINS have won the contest. They have finally depleted the last of our cotoneasters of every red tit-bit. In spite of frequent taps on the window, waves of the arm, and even a white dish towel tied to the main stem, they persevered. As long as there were plenty of other bushes at hand, my conscience did not hurt, but those berries must be something special. The birds cased the situation from the top of the cypress trees for two days after I started to thwart their intent. Then a new onslaught. They had to work hard to get the berries for with the bush espaliered against the



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house, there was no bough on which to swing and sway. By means of a sweeping technique, like planes coming in for target bombing, they finally were successful. It was a sight to watch, but we miss those colored berries. However, we are not entirely deserted for now on the grass are fourteen quail which are having a wonderful time seeking something they seem to like. What do they eat, when a hard-hearted homemaker fails to offer them store-bought goodies?

Our conservation chairman, Mrs. Guy Rice, has handed me an article which she planned to present at the club meeting but was unable to do so. I am pleased to review it here, particularly since it refers to the success of the brother of one of our active club members, Mrs. Jack Collis.

Mr. Edson McCause of North Powder, Oregon, was selected Oregon's "Conservation Man of the Year" for 1953 in the sixth annual contest put on by the Oregon Wheat Growers' league, in which the Portland Oregonian shares responsibilities. The Oregonian arranged to be designed, a large bronze plaque on which, each year is engraved the name of the state winner in the contest. The paper presents the winner with a smaller replica of the large award and smaller plaques are also given to each other county winner.

This contest was the outgrowth of a statement by conservation authorities to the effect that the Columbia basin wheat area rated as "the nation's No. 1 erosion hazard area." The purpose was both to encourage conservation practices and to prove that farmers do not idly wait for their farms to be washed away, but that most of them do all possible to save and improve the priceless top-soil. During the past six years progress is evidenced by increased contour farming and strip cropping, while diversion terraces and waterways are found in many places. Annual cropping is also a useful measure against erosion.

Mr. McCause, in the forties, bought seventeen hundred acres of run-down, weed-infested and eroded land in Union county. Almost 700 acres had been abandoned and was growing Canada thistle while the better soil had grown wheat crops continuously over a long period of years. The

Silver Salmon Released In Coast Rivers

Silver salmon runs in the coastal streams are being strengthened by yearling releases being carried on by Oregon game commission crews. First liberations began this month, and a total of 173,996 silvers are destined for planting in the next few months.

All fish that are being released have been graded according to size and those under eight inches in length will be held for liberation later. The silvers were raised at the Alsea, Bandon, Butte Falls, Cedar Creek, and Rock Creek hatcheries.

All of the fish are marked by the removal of both ventral or belly fins before they are released. The marks help identify the fish when they return to the streams

Union county extension agent states that to many, this poor land seemed ready for a sheriff's sale but to Ed McCause it spelled opportunity.

First he licked the Canada thistle and planted alfalfa; then reorganized the irrigation system and rebuilt fences so cattle might use the stubble, pasture and hay. The wild hay was plowed up and the land planted to grain for one year; then he planted a grass-alfalfa mixture; on the balance, a sweet clover-wheat rotation was tried. This year the yield from 350 acres was 20,000 bushels of wheat while 2,700 tons of top alfalfa and alfalfa-grass mixed hay came from 700 acres of hay land. The balance is in summer fallow and new hay plantings. This crop alone exceeds in value the purchase price plus the irrigation improvements.

All crop residue is returned to the soil. The heavy wheat stubble is gone over in the fall with a heavy chisel-type cultivator, (teeth 2 feet apart for clearance). In the spring he repeats the process with teeth closer together and a harrow behind. A rod weeder follows. By fall, decomposition is such that a drill can go right through. The result: "Complete protection from erosion, good weed control and the addition of organic matter to the soil."

True, garden clubbers aren't necessarily interested in cultivating wheat land but we are conscious of erosion wherever we see it and we believe in the conservation of both soil and water. Perhaps a farmer may see this and be encouraged to go and do likewise. We are indeed pleased that this recognition has come to the family of one of our members and that Mr. McCause has set an example for many others.

Do bring a flower arrangement to the meeting next week. It can be dried materials, of greens only, the daffodils and crocuses now showing their heads, or from something you yourself think of and have at hand.

PAST NOBLE GRANDS ORGANIZE CLUB

A group of past noble grands of the Topaz Rebekah lodge met Wednesday, January 27, at the home of Rita Tierce for the purpose of organizing a Past Noble Grands club in Brookings.

Officers elected were: President, Faye Stanhurst; vice president, Rita Tierce; secretary, Marie Hoar, and treasurer, Lucille

Cole.

The February meeting will be at the home of Lucille Cole on Alder street in the old airport tract.

All past noble grands are eligible for membership in the club, and the group hopes for one hundred per cent membership in this area.

Refreshments were served following the business meeting by the hostess, Rita Tierce, and cohostess, Grace Zirbel.

Present at the meeting were: Rita Tierce, Faye Stanhurst, Grace Zirbel, Manilla Hassett, Lucille Cole, Cleo Craig, Marie Hoar, Cora Gustafson, Hulda Gardner, and Bertha Whirry.

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