

Uncle Sam Studies Traits of Salmon

WASHINGTON, April 8.—Fishing for the elusive salmon with a pair of pliers and a button, Uncle Sam has practically succeeded in solving the mystery of the life history of this lordly fish.

It was not merely a fishing expedition for the fun of it, but a serious attempt on the part of the government ichthyologists to lift the veil of mystery which has enshrouded the salmon.

Recently, however, the bureau of fisheries hit upon the idea of marking specimens of the fish and tracing their movements. The button is clamped through the tail of the salmon. One face shows the words "U. S. Fish," the other the number with which the scientists "christen" the specimen.

The location chosen for the marking of the salmon was the Washington state fish trap, a few hundred yards above the head of Sand Island. It was selected by the government because it marks the limits on the north of the area over which the gill-net fishermen operate. Standing as it does on the line which separates the gillnetters field and the set traps, it is especially well located for the experiments.

There were 59 fish marked and liberated on August 14—25 chinook salmon, 16 silvers and 18 steelheads. These fish ranged in total length from 41 to 103 centimetres for the chinooks, 47 to 78 cm. for the silvers and 71 to 96 for the steelheads, demonstrating that while the fish were small in number they were well distributed in size.

Information of the import of the experiment was given out to the fishery interests on the Columbia river with the request that they record the place and details of the catch of any marked fish.

Their co-operation resulted in the capture of 17 out of the 59 marked fish, representing 29 per cent of those liberated, which was a favorable proportion, considering the 12 to 15 days of the closed season. Of the 17 captured six were chinooks, six silver salmon and five steelheads. The period between the time of liberation and recapture of all specimens was 57 days.

The record made by the officials upon the receipt of the buttons and fish tails, which has just been made public here, sheds considerable light on the life history of the salmon. By comparing the facts recorded at the time of liberation with those of the time of capture, scientists have been able to figure out something of the individual history of each fish. By examination of the button scientists were able to tell whether the fish spent his time in salt water or fresh. The degree of corrosion of the aluminum button gave an index of the time spent in salt water. Where corrosion occurred extensively in a short time it was assumed that the fish spent most of his time in concentrated sea water.

An examination of the records showed that each group of the three species liberated included certain individuals that apparently lived in sea water long enough to produce corrosion of the marking buttons.

Chinook No. 113 was caught six days after liberation and by a purse seine operating near Republic Spit,

a point marked by the wreckage of a vessel which obstructs the channel off the south shore of Sand Island. It is four miles down the river from the state trap. The aluminum marking button of this salmon was quite smooth, demonstrating that the fish had not gone out into the sea. It is probable, therefore, that this salmon spent his time swimming back and forth in the tidewater of the vicinity in the process of acclimatization. Whether or not it swam long distances, either up or down stream, cannot be ascertained.

Silver salmon No. 97 had the most deeply corroded and pitted button of the entire series. It was more corroded than chinook No. 123, which was out 31 days. No. 89 was also a deeply corroded button. These two fish, 89 and 97, therefore, bear evidence of a considerable sojourn in salt or brackish water.

Steelhead No. 124, out 33 days, shows slight corrosion, but No. 98, out 52 days, shows marked corrosion. It is evident, therefore, that No. 124 spent little time in tidewater, while the corrosion of the button of the latter indicates considerable contact with salt water.

The speed of migration is divided into two periods, first, the migration through the various stages of tide-water, and, second, the migration up the river when once within fresh water. This experiment was launched in the tidewater zone, hence, it cannot solve either speed period. The hypothesis is, however, that salmon travel at an average speed that is apparently uniform for different individuals under similar conditions. This is demonstrated somewhat by the following record:

Number 76 was 28 days out and traveled 210 miles, 75 was out 27 days and traveled 216 miles, 89 was out 30 days and traveled 30 miles, and 79 was 33 days out, according to record, it traveled 210 miles.

In the summary of conclusions given by the officials, it is stated that

the observations are entirely too few to make the deductions absolutely conclusive, but that the following facts are satisfactorily established:

1. That salmon take from 30 to 40 days to pass through brackish water within the limits of the fishing waters at the mouth of the Columbia river.

2. That salmon spend considerable time swimming back and forth in tidewater during the acclimatization to fresh water is indicated by the fact that two fishes were taken below the point at which they were marked; by the corrosion of the aluminum marking buttons by salt water, and by the long time spent by certain fishes in reaching the lower limits of fresh water.

3. When wholly within fresh water, the silver salmon and the steelhead make the migratory journey at an average speed of from six to seven and one-half miles a day and probably more.

4. There is little evidence that the process of marking or that the partial obstruction of the course by fishing gear does more than produce a temporary checking of the migratory journey.

EAGLE POINT EAGLES.

(By A. C. Howlett.)

Mrs. Karnes of Medford and her little son are out here visiting her mother, Mrs. Heckathorn, and sister Mrs. Frank Lewis.

Mrs. Cheney Florey was out the first of the week visiting her parents Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lewis, and her father and mother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Florey.

Mr. Vestal, who lives on Reese creek near the P. & E. Ry. came in Wednesday on the train from Butte Falls.

There was quite a number of our leading citizens went to Jacksonville Wednesday to attend the meeting of the county commissioners' court, to use their influence toward securing a bridge across Rogue river at the old George Jackson place.

Rev. Mark C. Davis, the Sunday

school missionary for the Congregational church, spent two days with us the first of the week and owing to the rain Tuesday had to change his plans as he had planned to go to Elk creek, but as he was traveling on his wheel, had to postpone his trip until some other time on account of the sticky mud.

G. Noble, representing Calu, Nickelsburg & Co., of San Francisco, Cal. was interviewing our merchants last Wednesday. He took the 5 o'clock train for Butte Falls the same day. The traveling community find it a great convenience to have the train run through from Medford to Butte Falls. It is arranged now so that business men can take the trains in the morning, go to Butte Falls, attend to their business and return in the afternoon, stop off at Eagle Point and interview our merchants and take the 9:30 train the next morning for Medford.

Mrs. H. L. Young and her daughter, Miss Mildred, who live on a homestead near Brownsboro, were pleasant callers Wednesday.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Spencer near Dudley, March 23, 1911, a daughter.

Mrs. J. F. King of Corvallis, Or. a sister of Elmer Spencer, has been spending a few weeks with her brother and family, returned to her home Wednesday.

Harvey Smith came out from the road camp near Florence rock after a load of supplies Wednesday. Everett Edsall came out from the same section and reports that in addition to the gang of nearly 100 at the Florence rock camp that Dr. Ray has a large force at work on the electric plant.

James Bryer, our boss painter, is engaged in painting George Von der Hellen's house.

H. Z. King of Medford, representing the Hale Piano House of Medford, called for dinner Thursday.

A. B. Saling came out Thursday, procured a rig and went to the tall timber. He was accompanied by Mr. W. Wilcox and wife, Miss Anna Lane from Missoua and Miss Bessie Maxwell of Medford. Miss Maxwell remained at the Sunnyside while the party went to the timber. Mr. Saling said that he located a section of timber land while he was gone.

Mr. and Mrs. Jones of Jackson-

ville are here visiting Mrs. Jones' grand parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Knighton. George G. Palmer and son, Ira M. Palmer, the elder being a Portland contractor and the son an architect, also from Portland, were guests at the Sunnyside Friday night. They are here looking at a tract of land with the view of making a home among us.

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NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that the Rogue River Valley University Club will make application to the city council of the city of Medford, Oregon at its regular meeting on April 18th, 1911 for a license to sell spirituous liquors, and malt liquors, in quantities less than a gallon, at its club room in the Mail Tribune building on Fir street, for a period of six months.

Rogue River Valley University Club.
By W. C. ANDERSON,
Secretary.

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TIME TABLE
EFFECTIVE APRIL 1st, 1911, 12:01 A. M.

Westbound.			Eastbound.			
No. 3	No. 1	MEs.	LEAVE	ARRIVE	No. 2	No. 4
	7:00 a.m.	0	Butte Falls		6:45 p.m.	
	7:15 a.m.	3	Edsalls		6:25 p.m.	
	7:50 a.m.	9.5	Derby		5:50 p.m.	
	8:40 a.m.	17	School House Gap		4:50 p.m.	
	8:50 a.m.	18.5	Mount View		4:45 p.m.	
	9:10 a.m.	21 Ar	Eagle Point	Lv	4:35 p.m.	
	9:20 a.m.	21 Lv	Eagle Point	Ar	4:25 p.m.	11:10 a.m.
2:30 p.m.	9:32 a.m.	24	Agate		4:16 p.m.	11:00 a.m.
2:36 p.m.	9:40 a.m.	26	Table Rock		4:10 p.m.	10:55 a.m.
2:45 p.m.	9:45 a.m.	27	Davis		4:00 p.m.	10:45 a.m.
2:57 p.m.	9:55 a.m.	32	Bear Creek Je.		3:38 p.m.	10:33 a.m.
3:00 p.m.	10:00 a.m.	33 Ar	MEDFORD	Lv	3:45 p.m.	10:30 a.m.

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