

FARMERS SPECIAL RODENT PEST EDITION

HOW CALIFORNIA HAS FOUGHT SEED EATING PESTS LAST 7 YEARS

(Courtesy California Monthly Bulletin.) Minor operations against squirrels, gophers and seed-eating rodents were carried on in California from 1911 through 1912 on the Tahoe, Santa Barbara, Angeles and Shasta national forests. The season of 1913 marks the beginning of the extensive work in this state against ground squirrels on the Monterey, San Benito, Santa Barbara and Sequoia national forests. From this time on to the present season the operations have steadily grown in extent until some of the forests have now been entirely covered once and parts retreated a second and a third time to complete extermination. The California forest has been practically entirely treated, also the more heavily infested areas of the Modoc, Sierra, Sequoia, and Monterey forests. Extensive work on the Santa Barbara forest and the outlying public lands in San Luis Obispo county are planned for the coming season.

The total acreage treated for ground squirrels on the various forests and public lands in California up to the beginning of the 1918 season is as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location, Acreage. Includes California National forest (446,385), Modoc National forest (53,000), Monterey National forest (37,000), Sequoia National forest (93,645), Sierra National forest (7,607), Santa Barbara National forest (11,525), Tule Indian reservation (3,700), Public lands in San Benito county (4,610).

For Pocket Gophers: Sequoia National forest (1,380), Tahoe National forest (1,100). Total (2,480). The work during the 1918 season has been outside the forests on public and Indian lands adjacent to farming land. The acreage treated up to October 1 is as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location, Acreage. Includes Indian Lands (Mendocino county 36,495, Modoc county 640, Tulare county 3,100, Lake county 485), Public Lands (Mendocino county 5,880, Shasta county 1,160, Modoc county 20,953, Lassen county 26,683, Tulare county 8,600, Kern county 12,299, Merced county 18,490, Santa Barbara county 5,875).

Total (89,924). Acreage, as shown by reports not yet complete, treated in co-operation with the rodent control division of the state commission of horticulture, in which the bureau of biological survey furnished the poison and the state provided the labor:

Table with 2 columns: Location, Acreage. Includes San Luis Obispo county (13,600), Glenn county (8,000), Tehama county (5,619). Total (27,219).

Total acreage treated to destroy ground squirrels and pocket gophers in California, \$27,715.

The first operations on the forests were on those areas known to be heavily infested, the open meadows and glades. It was found, however, that the areas were soon reinfested because of the migratory habits of the squirrels. They moved readily into new territory where feed was found to be better than that in which they happened to be. To prevent reinfestation due to this natural habit of the animals, it has been necessary to treat both the open and timbered areas of the forests, even tho the infestation might be very light in the latter. A few breeding animals left soon reinfest a vicinity, as they are very prolific. It is quite necessary to kill the last squirrel.

The infestation of the forests averaged about five burrows to the acre. The poisoning crews consist of two to four men who work on horseback wherever possible. They have bags of poison hanging from the saddle horn and ride abreast about 25 yards apart, treating all the land that is infested as they go. The thick brushy belt is not infested with the squirrels except along the edges. In brushy country one man averages about 100 acres per day.

It was noted that the treated land along the borders of the forests adjacent to untreated private lands soon became reinfested. This fact, together with the increasing number of requests for assistance from ranchers in California who knew of the work on government lands, led the bureau into the broader field of giving assistance to the farmers and helping them to conserve and increase the food supply so greatly needed owing to the war and general commercial demands by organizing systematic community and county campaigns, using the most effective methods under competent direction and supervision.

A study of conditions under which ranchers were fighting the squirrels and methods employed by them revealed these problems: 1. Lack of an effective cheap

2. Lack of an effective method of distributing poisons.

3. Lack of organization to secure concerted co-operation of every land-owner whose lands were infested.

4. Lack of knowledge of the methods being successfully employed by the government agencies working on the problem.

5. Failure to realize the great damage and loss caused by rodent pests.

6. Lack of a desire to exterminate the pests on the part of the majority of the ranchers and discouragement on the part of the minority who were faithfully fighting them.

2 GOV'T HUNTERS WILL ERADICATE ANIMALS

The Jackson County Farm Bureau, through its county agent has been influential in securing the services of two government hunters, to devote full time to the eradication of coyotes, wolves, etc. Mr. George Hargadine of Ashland, and Mr. H. F. Hill of Derby have been appointed for this work and have been active for the last month. Mr. Hargadine is working in the section east of Ashland, while Mr. Hill is working out of Butte Falls. If the farmer's will cooperate in this matter it may be possible to secure two or three other hunters. These hunters will move to other districts as soon as they have cleared out the predatory animals in the district in which they are working. If you are troubled with coyotes, it would pay you to confer with the county agent in regard to this matter.

SWAT THE DIGGER

The most convenient and economical way I have found to get Mr. Digger is to carry a tobacco can of poison instead of tobacco while at work in the field, or any place that a man would carry a can of smoking. While my team rests at the end of the land, I scatter the poison where there is any sign of a digger. For safety first, I use a velvet tobacco can with a large rubber band around it to prevent any chance of spilling in case it should get lost or dropped round where stock or children would find it. JAS. ARCHIBALD, Brownsboro, Oregon.

THE SIGN OF A SLACKER

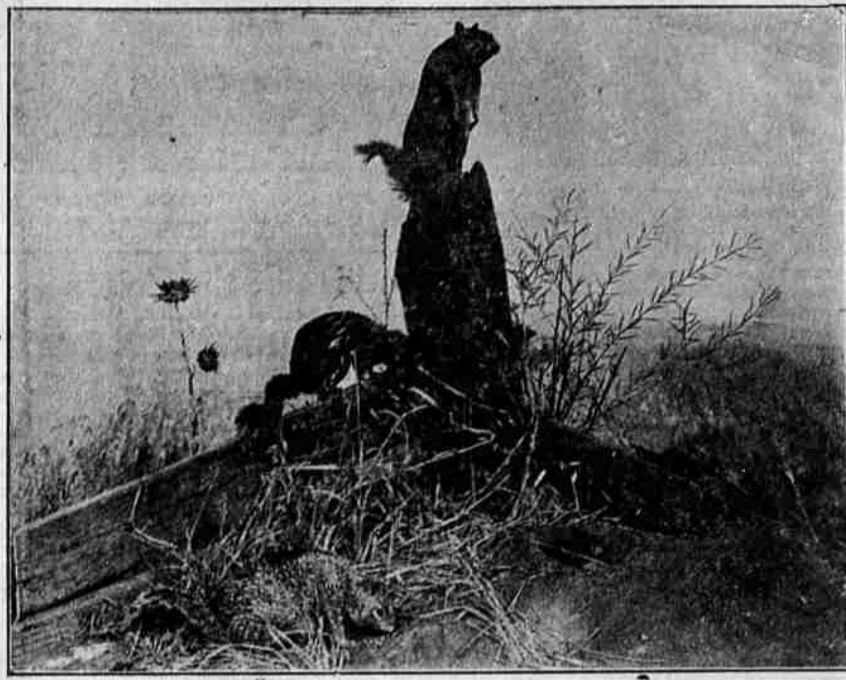


Photo Courtesy California Monthly

NOW IS THE TIME TO GET SCALP OF DIGGER SQUIRREL

Mr. Farmer of Jackson county, the "Diggers" have all awakened from their long winter sleep and are to be seen running hither and thither in quest of food. He is eating blades of young wheat and barley, but finds no grain, unless he steals into your grain-bin, or grain-hay stack.

Now is the absolutely opportune time to feed him the poisoned barley, which is provided by our County Farm Bureau, and can be obtained through some distributing agency in your community. For further information "call up" or "call on" your community project leader on "rodent control."

Mr. Digger will eat the treated barley eagerly now; place it near his hole, or in his runway, or along the old rail fence, or about the old stump or rock pile in or near the field, and leave the rest to him.

Several communities out of the 29 or 25 which are organized in Jackson county are already actively engaged in making war on the "digger" and are laying them out by the hundred. Within the next week or ten days we want every section of the county doing its full quota in this warfare.

A law was passed by our last state legislative assembly making it compulsory to poison rodents of all kinds in our state, and the Farm Bureau through its live co-operative members, and project leaders, is going to see that this law is enforced. Everybody poisons the digger squirrel whether resident farmer, speculator, or non-resident land owner. If he does not do it himself, it will be done for him, and the cost of same will be paid when he pays his taxes.

Report the fellow who doesn't poison; don't be tender hearted in this matter and let the "slacker" off. We are not going to have any "slackers" in this county—be 100 per cent efficient. The U. S. Biological Survey will see that a five mile strip of government and outside land will be cleaned up all around us, so we are safe from the outside.

Uncle Sam needs all of your crops of grain, and hay, and fruit and vegetables, and a famished Europe needs them more. Co-operate in the "rodent campaign" with all your might and we will swat the "gray digger" clear out of Jackson county.

Yours truly, FRED C. HOMES.

Testimonials from Jackson Ranchers Regarding Methods

From J. E. Judy, Medford, Oregon, March 12, 1919. Mr. C. C. Cate, Medford, Oregon.

I have had such splendid success in killing the digger squirrel with the poison barley in the last two years that I want to tell briefly my experience to give encouragement to those who are unfortunate enough to have all squirrels and no ranch.

I rented my father's place two years ago on Griffin creek, of one hundred and forty acres, about fifty acres of which lies next to the woods and foot hills. This woods and the brushy banks of Griffin creek have always furnished an unlimited supply of digger squirrels, so that the ranch was lousy with squirrels and always had taken a large percentage of any crop planted on the fifty acres, adjoining the woods. They also ate the corn crops, and were found to eat the sprouting ears so that by the time corn husking was on, the corn was already gone and Mr. Digger ready for something else.

I decided to plant corn on part of the fifty acres adjoining the woods, but my father told me there was no use for the squirrels would take it all. I wished to rotate the crops so I planned to do the best I could in trying to kill the diggers with the poison barley. I spent several days spreading poison,

not only on our own place but for some distance back into the woods, and the results were very satisfactory. Last year I had corn, without any loss to squirrels, on what had been considered the impossible part of the ranch for corn raising, because of the squirrels swarming in such numbers from the hills that it seemed useless to try killing so many.

I can say that today, while there are a few squirrels on the ranch, we are running the place now instead of the digger squirrels. J. E. JUDY.

From D. M. Love, Medford, Oregon, June 12, 1917.

Mr. Claude C. Cate, County Pathologist, Garnett-Corey Bldg., Medford, Oregon.

My dear Mr. Cate:—With regard to the poisoned barley that your office and the county have been furnishing to the many farmers of Jackson county, and with reference to its killing power and its safety to use on the farm, I wish to state that we have never had anything that equalled it.

We killed over 90 per cent of the squirrels on our property at the first application, and in a quarter of a mile of old rail fence on an adjoining property on which we placed the poi-

son, we found 92 dead squirrels, two days after the first poisoning, and doubtless did not then find all that were killed.

We have found no birds, quail or pheasants, that were killed from using the poisoned barley. We consider it efficient, cheap, and does the work to a frazzle, but we do need cooperation on the outside districts of government land, etc., and some kind of cooperation from the man who does not use the poison barley or some other poison, to protect his neighbor, when he does his utmost to preserve the crops that are now being grown, and will have to be grown to feed the millions of people that are at war.

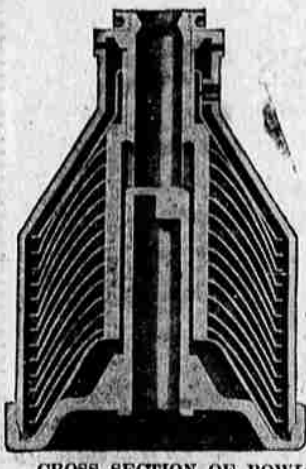
Respectfully yours, D. M. LOWE, Box 415, Ashland, Ore.

GOV'T AIDS FARMERS BY POISONING GOV'T LAND

Agents of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, are co-operating with the Farm Bureau of Jackson county and will start poisoning in May, all government land adjoining patented land in the floor of the Rogue river valley. This work will be started in the southern part of the county and the government agents will poison a strip five miles wide on each side of the valley from Ashland to the Josephine county line. Each land owner should do his best this year to clear his land of digger squirrels in order to benefit by the cooperation of the government in this work.

The World's Record Separator The "IOWA"

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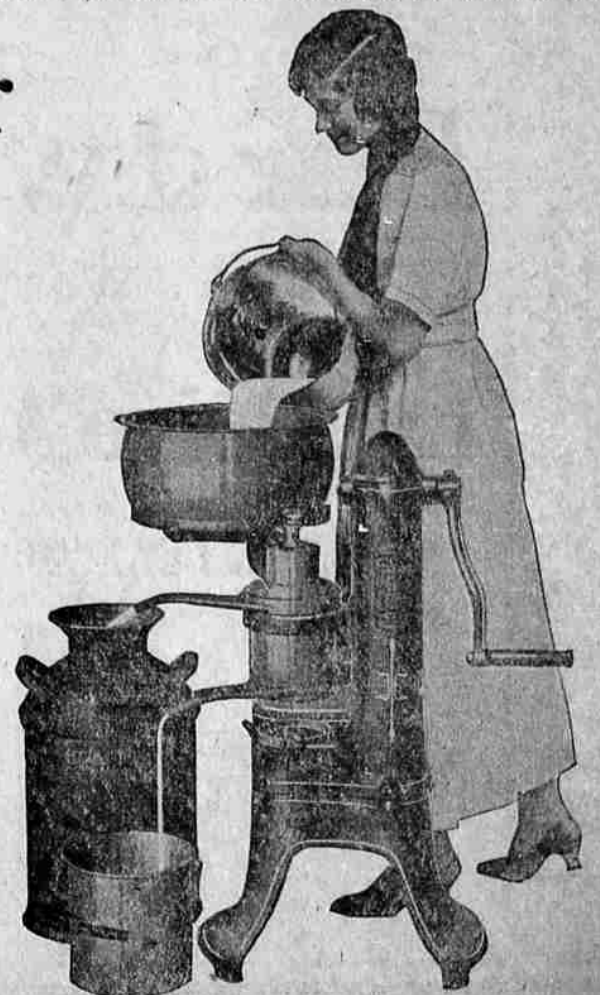
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