



A SICK GAL — Chills and pills accompany the flu bug sweeping Wheeling, W. Va., and leaves Karen Marsh, a high school senior, fighting the flu. She wrapped herself in blankets, checks her temperature and ponders whether to take her aspirins or gargling solution first. (UPI Telephoto)

Pesticide Application Seen Harmful to Nation's Wildlife

Editor's note: This is the last of three dispatches on the problems raised by the increasing use of chemicals in agriculture, forestry and food processing.

By LOUIS CASSELS
Washington — (UPI) — Millions of acres of U.S. farmland and forest are sprayed with chemical pesticides each year.

These pesticides, most of which have come into use since World War II, have been extremely valuable in controlling plant diseases, insects, rodents and other pests which destroy billions of dollars' worth of farm crops and timber.

But the steadily increasing use of chemical poisons has one adverse effect that the average American may not realize until he comes upon a stream depleted of fish . . . a hunting field barren of quail . . . or a flock of dead robins on the ground.

Major Project
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has undertaken a major research project to determine how badly the nation's wildlife is being hurt by wholesale application of pesticides.

"We have reason to fear that the long-term effects on wildlife will be very serious," said Dr. Dan Leedy, one of the directors of the study.

He said most of the chemicals which are used to kill insects and control tree diseases are also highly poisonous to wildlife, especially fish and birds.

When large areas are sprayed from the air — an increasingly common practice — the poison may get into streams and kill the fish directly. Or fish may die from starvation because their normal insect food has been destroyed.

Birds pick up the poison by contact with sprayed vegetation, by eating contaminated insects or berries, or by drinking from chemically coated pools of water.

Die-Offs Reported
Spectacular die-offs of wildlife following pesticide spraying operations have been reported on several occasions. For example, heavy mortality among robins and other songbirds, ranking from 30 to 90 per cent of the bird population, have been noted in the suburbs of Chicago and De-

troit after DDT spraying intended to control Dutch elm disease.

The Fish and Wildlife Service believes that this kind of slaughter of birds is entirely unnecessary. It has been demonstrated that the most effective time to spray for Dutch elm disease is when the trees are dormant — and spraying at that time may cause little or no damage to birds.

Naturalists are particularly concerned about the Agriculture Department's announced plan to spray about 27,000,000 acres of farm and forestland in the Southeast with a potent chemical called heptachlor to control infestations of fire ants.

Boy Scouts

Cub Scout Pack 8
Awards and badges were presented at a meeting of Pack 8, Jackson school Cub Scouts, recently. A total of 99 persons attended.

Den 8 led the flag ceremony, and each den participated in a skit. Awards presented included:

One-year pin: Jeff Jones, Greg Meadors, Rick Singler, Steven Rothbeck and Ronald Ogier. Two-year pins: Jimmy Phillips, Denner stripes: Jeff Jones, John Fitchner and David Rudig. Assistant denner: Gary Singler, Danny Gairson and Steven Rothbeck. Bear badges: David Rowe and David Rudig.

Wolf badge: Terry Witter, Gerry Douglas, Steven Fixsen, Tommy Pidcock, Larry Keene, Timmy Barker, Larry Funk, Ronnie Phillips, David Rudig and Greg Meadors. Den mother's badge: Mrs. Jackie White. Den mother's 1-year pin: Mrs. Iris Wimer.

Huge Plane in Safe Emergency Landing

Olathe, Kan. — (UPI) — A huge Trans World airliner with a jammed nose wheel and 31 persons aboard made a safe emergency landing Thursday at the Olathe Naval Air Station after circling over Kansas City and St. Louis for almost four hours.

Spot checks in areas already treated by heptachlor have indicated that it is particularly deadly to wildlife. For example, government naturalists found in a study in DeCATUR County, Ga., that the number of quail inhabiting a heptachlor-treated area was about one-tenth the number found on untreated lands in the same county.

Dr. Leedy said the immediate kill-off of wildlife that results from pesticide spraying may be less serious than the "long-term effects of sublethal doses which reduce fertility."

Many naturalists believe that pesticides are responsible for decreased egg-laying which is reducing the population of America's national birds, the bald eagles.

Some go further and warn that the continuing wholesale use of chemical poisons may ultimately upset the "balance of nature" and that insect pests, no longer kept under "natural" control by birds, may become a greater enemy to mankind than ever before.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which has strongly promoted use of pesticides, scoffs at such ideas.

"The preponderance of adverse effects to wildlife has been limited to restricted areas," the department says in an official pamphlet. "When the amount of insecticides used in the last 50 years is compared to losses, the impact on wildlife has not been great and certainly not disastrous."

Another factor which enters into the picture is that insects sometimes develop resistance to chemical poisons which were once deadly to them. In some cases, immunity has developed with unexpected rapidity. A classic example is the growing ineffectiveness of DDT against malaria-bearing mosquitoes.

Job To Keep Ahead
Much of the chemical research conducted in recent years has been aimed at non-toxic to wildlife and to human beings.

The research is beginning to bear some fruit. The Agriculture Department has announced discovery of a new pesticide called sevin which

is as effective as DDT in controlling gypsy moth infestations of woodlands, and which presents a "minimum hazard to fish and wildlife."

Sevin also has "very low toxicity" for human beings if it happens to get in their food. Nature lovers — and all consumers — will doubtless

applaud that kind of research. "Keeping ahead of the insects" by developing new poisons more rapidly than they can develop resistance to

the old ones. Recently, however, there has been a growing emphasis on searching for chemicals which are toxic to insects, but

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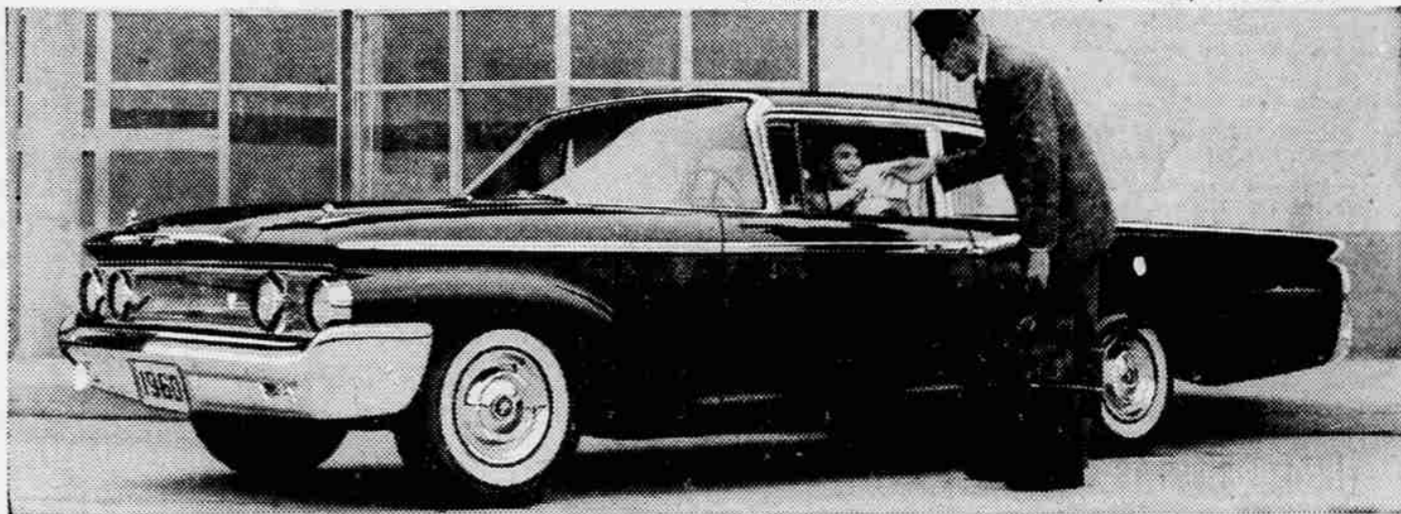
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