



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn W. Watkins

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Bowfin a Peculiar Fish Left Over From Prehistoric Era

He just sat there in his boat looking with disdain at what he had caught. He knew it was a fish but not like any fish he had ever seen, and he had fished the lake for many years.

Whatever it was it didn't look good. The only reason he brought it into the boat was to have it identified later. On the boatdeck the fish flopped and struggled. It looked a little like a short eel with a long line along the back. The fins were rounded. Near the upper base of the tail fin was a black spot surrounded with an orange ring. The body color was dark green. It had a blunt head and was nearly a foot long. The man kicked it under a boat seat and resumed his fishing.

The hours slipped by as they have a way of doing for the avid fisherman. The lowering sun at the western end of the lake alerted the man to the lateness of the hour; it was time to leave.

He pulled the anchor, lifted the stringer with its half-load of pan fish and rowed to the dock. Then he remembered the fish of unknown identity. He pulled it from under the seat. It was alive and as active as when it was pulled from the water several hours earlier.

Always Ready

There are always folks near a fishing dock ready, willing and sometimes able to give our information on any subject, fish or otherwise. Sure, they knew what the mystery fish was - a "mud-fish." Not good to eat, too soft. "And," finished the willing dispenser of information "those fish can live out of water forever; you can just about cut them in two without killing them."

All of which, with a few exceptions, are close to the true facts regarding the bowfin, commonly called the mudfish - a peculiar fish left over from prehistoric times. For some unexplained reason the bowfin still lives, in spite of the fact all the other members of its immediate family passed from the watery scene eons ago.

Indicative of its ancient ancestry is the presence of an air bladder in place of a lung, a primitive form of breathing apparatus and one reason why the bowfin is so tenacious of life, being able to live out of water for a long period of time. Nature discarded this breathing arrangement in her subjects thousands of years ago.

Redeeming Feature

Repulsive and disgusting as the mudfish is, the male does have one redeeming feature. He is the one with the orange colored ring surrounding the black spot at the base of the tail, an adornment not present in the female bowfin.

It is he that almost becomes a family man in a fish way, for he just about knocks himself out building a nest, a nest that comes within a few sticks, leaves and sedges resembling a bird's nest. The bowfin uses small pieces of wood, any assortment of debris that he can salvage from a lake or stream bottom and does right well in design.

Once the nest is completed the bowfin starts out hunting for a bride. If he locates her, somewhere in the mud, he brings her back home. She knows what's expected of her - she lays eggs in the nest. Once the eggs are in place he chases her away and takes up his self-imposed duty of guarding the eggs and nest.

It all sort of points up that old saying - "there's so much good in the very worst of us."

Ex-Portlander Heads Air Units

Washington - (AP) - Maj. Gen. Chester E. McCarty, a former Portland attorney, has been assigned as chief of staff for all Air Force units in Europe. It was announced Wednesday.

Gen. McCarty will assume his new duties at Weisbaden, Germany, next month. He is currently Chief of Staff for Reserve Forces, with headquarters in the Pentagon.

The World War II veteran returned to active duty in 1951 during the Korean War after practicing law in Portland.

SIZZLING
Akron, Ohio - (AP) - Space vehicles must be protected against searing heat when they re-enter the earth's atmosphere. To test new materials for this purpose, Goodyear Aircraft corporation has developed a \$250,000 wind tunnel that can simulate flight speeds up to 22,000 mph and temperatures in excess of 13,000 degrees Fahrenheit.



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- U.S.D.A. Choice **Boneless Chuck Roast**lb. **79¢**
- Lean **Swift Premium Bacon**1-lb. Pkg. **59¢**

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6 1-Lb. Pkgs. **\$1.00**

Nabisco Crackers

Premium Saltines 2-Lb. Pkg. **49¢**

Pork Spareribs

Lean and meaty lb. **39¢**

Tomato Juice

Hudson House regular 33c each **2 46-oz. tins 49¢**

Blended Juice

Del Monte pineapple-grapefruit-regular **3 29-oz. tins 50¢**

Purex Bleach

For a cleaner, whiter wash Half gallon jug **29¢**

Pillsbury **Cake Mix** Applesauce Spice - White **Reg. 39¢ each 19¢**
Chocolate Fudge - Double Dutch

Boyd's Coffee (Limit one tin, please) **2-lb. tin 97¢ 1-lb. tin 49¢**

Star Kist **Fancy Tuna** Star Kist chunk style... 29c each **4 No. 1/2 tins 89¢**

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 - Arden **Creamy Egg Nog** Quart carton **59¢**
 - Granulated **Borene Soap** Thrift package **59¢**
 - For automatic washers **C-20 Detergent** 4-lb. package **79¢**
 - For dishes **Liquid Trend** Quart bottle **69¢**
 - Regular 69c Gillette **Super Blue Blades** .. 10-blade package **55¢**

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