

# Hunting Season Will Soon Be In Full Swing

## Hunters Are Urged To Protect Rights

By BILL DECKER

Geographically, Klamath County is one of the most fortunately located areas in the United States so far as hunting and fishing are concerned. Our forests, ranges, lakes and streams furnish an abundance of fish and game each year and our position on the Pacific flyway makes the waterfowl shooting almost unsurpassed. With careful management these natural resources will offer a perpetual source of income and entertainment to this area.

With the approaching hunting seasons we should take a closer look at the game available to us and the laws governing its harvest. The Oregon State Game Commission works the year around to maintain a natural balance in the wildlife population so that we may be assured good hunting. The various forest service agencies make every effort to protect the homes of the animals and groups of private citizens strive to educate the public in practices which will insure continued good relations between sportsmen and private property owners.

By full cooperation with the extremely reasonable requests and regulations made by these agencies the hunting public can assure their future sport.

### GAME LAWS

The orderly harvest of surplus animals is the foundation of our game laws and our wildlife resources are managed according to sound principals and scientific studies. The laws are not simply arbitrary sets of rules designed to restrict the taking of game. When an area becomes over populated with wild animals to the extent that available food supplies are inadequate, the commission encourages hunters to take greater numbers from that area. Everything possible is done to promote hunting success.

The National Forests in Klamath County offer excellent hunting and it would seem reasonable that sportsmen should take every precaution to see to it that they continue to do so. The simple rules governing conduct in the woods impose no restrictions on hunters; they are designed for fire prevention. Only a few areas are closed to hunting because of fire hazards and in the open areas hunters are asked to observe elementary precautions against fire.

### KFFA

The Klamath Forest Protective Association has announced that campfire permits are required in several of the districts under their coverage. These permits may be obtained at the patrol stations or the KFFA headquarters on the Weed-Ashland highway.

Before entering the woods hunters are cautioned to determine whether or not the area where they intend to camp is a restricted one or not. Some of the districts where permits are required are: Boulder Creek, King's Cabin, Pitch Log, Horse Glade, Camp 6 and Green Springs.

Remember that the "no smoking while traveling" regulation applies in all forest areas. Smoking is permitted only while you are stationary and smokers should be sure to clear a spot down to mineral earth to put their cigarettes out in.

All the forest service district supervisors report that the unusual growth of grasses and weeds which resulted from last winter's heavy precipitation are now tinder dry. Most of the local fire records are good this year and it is hoped that hunters will not spoil the record.

### RED HAT DAYS

An experiment in cooperation was launched in the fall of 1955 under the name of Red Hat Days. The purpose of the campaign was to promote safety in the woods

and to better the relations between hunters and landowners.

Pledge cards were distributed and hunters signed them, agreeing to be law abiding, to respect the rights and property of others, and to be careful with fire and firearms.

The results of the campaign became apparent as game law violations decreased, fewer hunter caused fires were reported and fewer hunters were killed because they were mistaken for game. It is hoped that the record will be improved this year.

Sportsmen should keep in mind the fact that every year many large tracts of private lands are closed to hunting because of the thoughtless or malicious actions of hunters. Ranchers who have seen their fences torn down, their livestock shot and gates left open have every reason in the world to ban hunters from their property.

Ask permission of the owner before you enter private lands and while you are there remember that you are a guest and behave accordingly.

## Game Outlook Encouraging

In July the Oregon game commission closely examined the current status of the state's game and fur resources and found the supply adequate to justify a further increase in the harvest of many species, according to a recent report by John McKean, chief of operations of the game division.

The spring inventory of mule deer indicated a slight decline in most mule deer herds; however, winter forage problems continue to be acute in certain areas, the report indicated, and a reduction in numbers is necessary on many ranges. For this reason the general season has been supplemented with 15 controlled and 2 extended seasons to direct additional pressure to specific problem areas.

The game commission indicated that the outlook for deer hunters this year is excellent. Deer densities continue to be high and, with substantially greater hunting opportunities, the 1956 season should yield more than last year's record harvest.

Elk and antelope harvests are expected to show an increase as well.

The Oregon State Game Commission estimates that upland game birds will be found in nearly normal numbers in western Oregon, but that the eastern counties of the state will show a decline of about 27 per cent in the quail and pheasant populations.

All grouse populations are at comparatively low levels this year, but chukar partridges have appeared in sufficient numbers to warrant an open season this year.



A FINE EXAMPLE OF THE MULE DEER which range throughout Klamath County is shown above. Harry Obenchain killed this one last year. Mule deer are to be found to the east of Highway 97 and the best hunting is usually in either the dense lodgepole pine and fir thickets at higher elevations or the more open sagebrush and juniper ranges at the edge of the timber.

## Records Show Game Harvest Amounted To Several Tons

Based on current retail market prices, Oregon's wildlife provided more than nine million dollars worth of "meat in the pot" to hunters and fishermen during the 1955 seasons according to figures released by the Oregon Game Commission.

Statistics provided by hunter kill records and angler punch cards show that deer provided the most meat poundage followed by salmon and steelhead, elk, ducks, pheasants and geese.

The total value of the 13,408,700 pounds of meat provided by 134,087 deer harvested was \$5,363,480. Sport fishermen reported taking 98,896 salmon and 74,333 steelhead for a poundage of 2,078,104 and a meat value of \$1,810,827.20.

Broken down into their respective categories, big game animals provided 15,863,380 pounds of meat valued at \$6,345,352; upland game birds provided 641,765.5 pounds of meat which was valued at \$320,882.75; waterfowl provided 1,014,679 pounds valued at \$538,073.45; and salmon and steelhead had a value of \$1,810,827.20 from a total poundage of 2,078,104. For all big game animals, upland game birds, waterfowl, and salmon and steelhead the total value was \$9,035,135.40.

Poundage figures were obtained by applying the average dressed weight of the animals, birds, and fish to the total number. Meat val-

ues were then determined by multiplying the total weight of the dressed game by the value per pound as calculated from the cost of beef, ducks, chickens, and salmon on the retail markets. In all cases, a conservative figure was used for the retail values. Big game animals were compared to medium grade beef, upland game birds to chickens, and waterfowl to ducks.

It is stressed that this represents only the meat value of the wild-

life harvested last year on which records are kept. No attempt is made to record the number or poundage of trout or other sport caught game fish other than salmon and steelhead. Nor does it include expenditures made in connection with harvesting the fish, animals and birds.

Most important of all, it does not consider the factor that cannot be evaluated in dollars and cents but which most sportsmen place above all else—the priceless recreation obtained in quest of the creatures of the wild.

### CONVERSION

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