

Botulism Threat To Ducks Seen In California; Check Shows Hunting Pressure Up

By DEVAN L. SHUMWAY
United Press International

SACRAMENTO (UPI)—California state and federal officials have begun to muster their forces to fight a mysterious bacteria which already this year has killed 4,000 ducks in the state.

The bacteria, which apparently hides out in the soil around the Tulare Lake area, causes a fatal affliction in ducks known formally as "botulism."

What it does is this:

The bacteria is driven out of the soil in high water years—this year was one—and somehow the ducks get it in their craws as a toxin. The toxin paralyzes the ducks' nerves, eventually leading to death.

A spokesman for the State Fish and Game Department said that 75,000 ducks in the area are threatened unless something is done.

Of course, the major problem is what to do with the ducks; how to get them to flee from the infected land below Fresno into a clean area.

This will be done the same way ducks are driven off rice and grain fields—by providing them with a more attractive habitat elsewhere. To date, the site of the more attractive land hasn't been picked.

It's a fight against time. There aren't too many months left before the fall flights down the Pacific flyway begin.

As a matter of fact, the State Fish and Game Commission has set August 19 in San Francisco to look over Federal Wildlife Service recommendations for 1958 migratory waterfowl season and regulations.

In setting the season, the California commission will act within limitations placed by the secretary of interior. These limitations, which result from a federal yearly study of duck habits, will be forthcoming about the middle of August—probably shortly before the commission meets.

A commission news release quoted George Difani, secretary of the California Wildlife Federation, as expressing pleasure with last year's 55-day waterfowl shooting season—and a recommendation that bird regulations remain substantially the same this year.

They probably will. Ducks led all other species of game bagged by hunters in the state during 1957 if estimates taken from the annual hunter questionnaire of the Department of Fish and Game are true.

The estimate was made from a two percent random sampling of the state's 648,000 hunters. It indicated that scattergunners bagged a total of 4,025,000 ducks in 1957, an increase of 14.1 per cent over 1956.

It wasn't that the hunters were better shots, here were more of them. The department pointed out that duck stamp sales were up last year by 17 per cent from the previous year and a larger number of birds were available.

Duck hunting still isn't like the old days. Spanish explorers reported an abundance of fowl in the vast marsh areas of the state's valleys, formed by overflow of flood waters along the principal rivers.

But then came the white man. He dried up the marshes and used it for farming—and then began to fight the floods which were a boon to the duck.

Now-a-days, public shooting areas of the state fall into four types—each set up for a purpose. These are the federal refuges such as Lower Klamath and Tule Lake; federal areas acquired under a crop depredation control measure, the Lea Act; state management areas which are combination refuge, crop depredation control areas and public shooting areas; and leased lands.

California is predominantly a wintering area for ducks rather than just a feeding ground en route south. This means that the ducks stay around longer and are more vulnerable to disease and guns that come along.

The major part of the state's

waterfowl population comes from Alaska and Canada. In California, the ducks find winter living space and food.

The state's major problems can be summed up thusly: Harvest enough ducks to cut down the surplus and send an adequate breeding nucleus back north in vigorous condition.

Weed Killers Now Control Morning Glory

Two new weed killers tested by the Oregon State College agricultural experiment station look like the answer for control of wild morning glory—Oregon's most troublesome perennial weed pest.

Both chemicals belong to the chloro-benzoic-acid family and are now on the market. W. R. Furtick, OSC agronomist, reports up to 90 to 100 per cent morning glory control with either trichloro benzoic acid (TBA) or polychloro benzoic acid (PBA).

Most spraying for weed control will be on small patches of morning glory even out in the Columbia Basin wheat country where the weed is a major problem, says Rex Warren, OSC farm crops specialist.

One-half pint of the chemical mixed with two to four quarts of water is recommended for spraying one square rod—an area 16½ feet square. The cost: about 60 cents. A recommended mixture for spraying patches totaling one acre in area is 10 gallons of the chemical to 40 to 80 gallons of water. TBA and PBA now sell for about \$10 a gallon.

Cost of treatment is comparable to other commonly-used soil sterilizing methods. Big advantage of the new materials is that soil does not remain sterile as long after treatment as it does with other sterilants such as sodium chlorate.

Soil sterilized with sodium chlorate may cause loss of cropping for three to 10 years depending upon soil moisture, Warren reports. TBA or PBA sterilize the soil for about one year. Grains and corn are more tolerant to the chemical residue than are other crops.

Warren says beans are very susceptible to injury when planted a year following soil treatment. He cautions that TBA and PBA should be used cautiously in orchards and berry crops, since effect of the chemicals on these crops has not yet been tested.

TBA gave a better and faster kill of morning glory than did PBA in OSC tests. But Furtick says this advantage may be offset by the fact that PBA doesn't sterilize the soil quite as much. He suggests growers might try both materials to see which works best for them.

Chloro benzoic acids kill when absorbed directly by the plant or through the soil. Tests indicate, however, that weed control is best when most of the chemical comes in contact with the soil.

Treatments can be made any time under eastern Oregon conditions. Warren says mid-summer and early fall treatments look excellent. In western Oregon, treatment should be before September 1.

The chemical does not kill ungerminated seed. Seedlings appearing after the chemical has leached from the soil should be controlled with 2,4-D or by cultivation, the specialist says.

NATURAL HABITAT

HOLLYWOOD (UPD)—Anyway there are two real Texans in MGM's Western, "The Law and Jake Wade." They're a couple of quarter-horses trained especially for the film.

US Forestry Group Tours Swedish Wood

OREGON STATE COLLEGE—An American forestry tour group to Sweden got a good preview of management practices in second-growth stands that will be used in Oregon in the not too distant future.

That's the observation of Dr. J. R. Dilworth, Oregon State College forestry professor and leader of the tour.

The second-growth practices observed include a careful thinning of young stands to improve quality of final harvest and salvage of small trees which would otherwise be lost.

The 22 tour members, including 14 Oregonians, attended the Swedish-American Forestry conference, co-sponsored by Oregon State College. After the conference, they visited Swedish, Danish, Swiss and German forest areas and forest products plants.

Better methods of regeneration following the harvest cuts in order to maintain forest lands in a productive condition were found in all countries visited, Dilworth said.

Swedish foresters have been on a second-growth economy for 100 years so their experiences are broad and complete under a variety of conditions, Dilworth went on. Also seen was special logging equipment adaptable to smaller logs which Oregon and Washington foresters will be cutting in 20 years.

Sweden's economic situation is more similar to Oregon's than any other European country, Dr. Dilworth noted. Sweden and Oregon are both large exporters of forest products and about 60 cents of every payroll dollar comes from the forest products industry.

Danish scientists are recognized world-wide for their skills in developing hybrids and superior forest planting stock. The Danes are trying to tailor the tree to industry requirements—a high quality, fast-growing tree with few limbs and good form.

Expectant Mothers Strive To Conceal Cravings

By PATRICIA McCORMACK

NEW YORK (UPI)—This may come as a surprise to fathers-to-be. Women waiting for the stork to deliver do their darndest to keep their husbands from knowing about odd cravings that pop up.

That's according to a mountain pregnancy massed by British medical experts, who say that there's nothing lightly—or fancied—about these odd desires.

Probably the compulsion to keep these omnivorous desires secret accounts for the lack of agreement in medical circles about how real are the reported strange appetites induced by the stork.

Many doctors tend to wink about such things—especially when told about orders for fried grasshoppers at 3 a.m. But such a request is tame compared to some cravings reported by nearly 1,000 expectant mothers in the British survey.

The women want just about everything on earth and sometimes yen for things under the earth. Like coal.

On the edible list, apples come first. (Psychologists may say this is a throw-back to Eve.) Next come tomatoes, bananas, coffee grounds, fat, tea leaves, aspirin, coconut, dog biscuits, health salts, stomach powder and jelly.

In the not-so-edible department, appetites develop for coal, soap, disinfectant, toothpaste, moth-balls, gasoline, tar, shoe polish, paraffin, wood, soil, charcoal and cinders.

J. M. Harries and T. F. Huges, of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, reporting in the British Medical Journal, cited tea, tobacco, beer, bacon, eggs and fish as foods most shunned by mothers-to-be.

The expectant mother who admits to an odd craving should get sympathy and consideration rather than ridicule. For, say the ex-

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perts, cravings gnaw away at the appetite in a very real way. If she wants to munch on coal and moth-balls with a gasoline chaser, disabuse her of the notion. If you can't, keep her away from a hot stove. She might explode!

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