



**WATER SKIING** has become one of the most popular summer sports in the Klamath area the past few years. That there are always plenty of enthusiasts around during the season is pointed up by this picture taken at a local

dock. These lads are getting ready to take off on another run while in the background a sailboat hovers on the wings of the breeze.

## Wisdom Of Wild Things Proven Many Times; No Fears Held For Survival

By J. O. MCKINNEY

The wild things of the world have no universities, libraries, nor other media by which the accumulated learnings of the sages of their kind may be given to posterity. Each individual must learn all he will ever know by himself. Despite this handicap, the wild animals habitually display more intelligence than man.

This opinion is not based on what any one man, or one animal did to establish that belief. Every person I ever knew who has spent time pitting his skill and brain against the so-called lower animals has lost more contests than he ever won.

Outdoors magazines still use stories telling of a man who tried for years to catch some old trout. The story is never told until the fish is caught, but during the series the man lost many battles, and was winner just once. In any even the percentages were all in favor of the fish.

Wild things are not supposed to count. This is probably true. But their mathematical knowledge is sufficient for their needs. Few men are that well equipped.

Wild pigeons are rated low in the animal scale for brains. Did you ever hunt them? If you have, you'll probably not agree. These birds will mass in countless hundreds among trees loaded with acorns. They will alight on dead trees all over the country. But when a man with a gun is hidden near any of these places, the birds go elsewhere. I don't know how they understand the danger that threatens their favorite places. If I did, I'd probably be intelligent enough not to spend time afield with a gun, or fishing rod.

Rabbits are classed low down the scale of animals. They have no defense against a horde of enemies save speed, protective coloring, and their much maligned brains. If they had any more protection going for them, they would make farming difficult to impossible in many areas of the world. Quail are considered smart. They

should be. A day-old chick knows more about camouflage and concealment than man has learned in 2,000 years.

A party of hunters, of which I was one, was fortunate to find a favored spot for Canada geese. We had phenomenal sport for a few days, during which time we eliminated the less wary, and experienced birds. Our grand sport was over for the wise members of the flocks learned that the place was not good for them. We hunters didn't learn what they knew for about two months of steady hunting.

Hunting sharp-tailed grouse along Little Missouri River in North Dakota convinced me that these birds were not the dull creatures they are said to be. I was in good company that day, too. One member of our party was an attorney from Wallingford, Pennsylvania, which is near enough to Philadelphia to give it legal status. Another of the group was an army colonel (active); one a surgeon (retired); while still another was a wealthy contractor, a man who had succeeded in just about the most competitive business in the world.

Our guide for the day was a local game warden, a man who knew the country we were to hunt, as well as the game we hunted. But here is what happened:

A rancher told us of seeing several hundred grouse sail into some wild plum thickets along the brakes of Little Missouri. Hunting was allowed to begin at noon, and at that time we went into action. We combed the entire region, doubled back, and did it all over again. Not a bird was flushed.

By mid-afternoon we were too tired to go elsewhere, so we just waited until the evening flight began. The birds came out of the places where we had hunted, and began fanning out to feeding grounds as if fooling hunters was all in a day's work. They had been there all the time. How they hid is something that I don't know. But they understood it. I've never

seen a super-intellectual human who could have done what they did.

The contrast between the black soil of a Tulalake potato field and a Chinese rooster pheasant is about as great as one could desire. Yet I have seen the gaudy birds squat in bare ground without benefit of cover, and a dozen hunters pass them without discovery. That ability may not require brains, but a pheasant has what it takes under all circumstances.

Hen pheasants, when attacked by a hawk, get out of the air and onto the ground. They know that in the air, they will be killed. On the ground they can sidestep the predator, and gradually move toward cover. This requires thinking and ability to control panic.

Deer are given credit for being intelligent. Men who hunt them expect to be out-smarted—and are. It is only by being fooled enough times that the law of averages will usually give a hunter the chance he wants. If it comes sooner than that, the man is plain lucky.

Man has been trapped since there has been any history of such

activities. Seldom does he fail to become snared. Sometimes the victim loses his money, and sometimes his life. If he is fortunate, the law may salvage something for him, but he seldom avoids the pitfalls that another dumb human set for him.

Spanish is the most popular foreign language being studied in public high schools, with French second and German third.

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