

Mountain Lakes Being Put Into Golden Trout Plants As Program Gains Steam

By DE VAN L. SHUMWAY

SACRAMENTO (UPI) — California, acting on a tip from old-timers, is trying to salt its mountain lakes with gold.

Back in the days of '49, miners of doubtful character were accused of "salting" mines in order to sell them to a tenderfoot at inflated prices. Salting consisted of sprinkling flecks of gold among the rocks of the mine to make it look rich.

California's program doesn't involve the mineral gold. It concerns another kind of resource — the golden trout.

This fish, strikingly beautiful, is native to the state's high Sierra Mountains. They live in waters that's normally unreachable except by horseback.

As a result of their inaccessibility, the golden trout has become a prized game fish.

So California's Fish and Game Department has started a program to bring the fish out of the mountains and put them in spots where John Doe fisherman can get to them.

Gov. Edmund G. Brown recently helped out. He rode horseback for 20 miles into high Mono county and tossed in a line as part of a F&G Department conservation crew.

The governor startled his news conference by telling the reporters that he caught, not the 10-fish limit, but 28 fish. However, he later explained that he kept none of them but tossed them into holding cans for later transfer.

It's all part of a long-range plan. Spokesmen for the department say that present plans call for stocking the Laurel Lakes during 1959 with about 1,000 adult golden trout from Golden Trout Creek, their native habitat.

If everything goes according to schedule, the fish will be trapped and spawned at Laurel Lakes during the early spring of 1960 and their young trout planted in various golden trout waters through the Sierras later that year.

"If this program works out as planned, the result will be larger fingerlings at planting time and an

improved golden trout program," said Region 5 Fisheries manager E. P. Pister at Los Angeles.

Pister said it was "generally recognized" that the golden trout was derived from the Kern River rainbow trout. A long, long time ago, the Kern River and its tributary streams were all interconnected so that it was possible for fish to travel from one stream to another.

Then, along came the glacial period. It chopped down mountains and isolated groups of Kern River trout behind natural barriers.

"Being thus isolated," Pister said, "these fish became adapted to their own peculiar environment in the upper Kern Basin and developed into the golden trout as we know them today."

Two separate programs actually are underway to take the trout into more accessible areas. One is an attempt to raise the fish in hatcheries and the other is direct relocation from the Cottonwood Lakes.

The lakes are located at 11,000 feet in the Owens River drainage southeast of Lone Pine in Inyo County.

Fish and game employees started the golden trout egg-taking operation back in the early 1920s, suspended the program during World War II and didn't get it restarted

until 1953.

Pister said the egg-taking operation has two serious drawbacks.

In the first place, access to the Cottonwood lakes is time consuming and extremely difficult, requiring a six-hour pack by horse and mule, much of it over ice and snow.

"In the second place, because of their high elevation, these lakes generally remain frozen until late spring and spawning activities are naturally held up until the lakes thaw," said Pister.

"Since eggs normally cannot be taken until late June, the resulting fish are still very small at planting time in September and the survival of such small planted fingerlings is relatively poor."

The Laurel Lakes turned up as one solution. At lower elevation, they were less trouble to reach.

Chemical treatment took care of ridding the lakes of rainbow trout, clearing the lakes for the goldens. Then the Fish and Game Commission, last April, closed the Laurel Lakes to fishing.

Then the salting operation began.

SWIMMING HOLE

RUTLAND Vt. (UPI) — Opening of the municipal swimming pool was cancelled after city officials discovered that it leaked.

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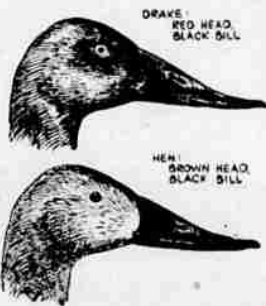
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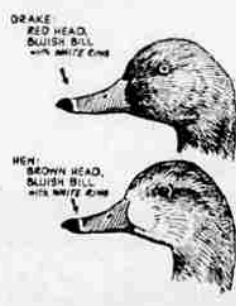
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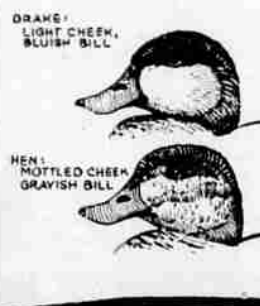
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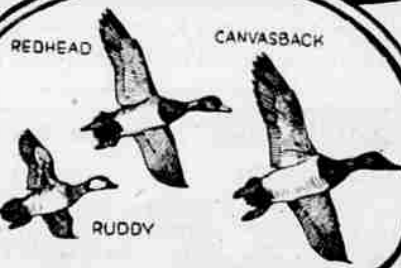
REDHEADS



RUDDYS



These Ducks
NEED HELP



DO NOT CONFUSE
WITH SCAUP

SCAUP HAVE A
WHITE SPECULUM



UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS IN NORTHERN NESTING GROUNDS HAVE CUT THIS FALL'S DUCK SUPPLY. IN MOST SERIOUS TROUBLE ARE THE THREE SPECIES SHOWN HERE.

GUNNERS:

LET THE DUCKS COME IN CLOSE UNTIL YOU CAN IDENTIFY THEM, THEN, IF POSSIBLE, AVOID SHOOTING REDHEADS, "CANS," AND RUDDYS. CHECK YOUR DUCK HUNTING REGULATIONS.

