

Dying Salmon Mystery Solved - Poachers Were At Work Despite Guard

SACRAMENTO (UPI) — California's Fish and Game Department today claimed credit for solving the riddle of the dying salmon.

It all occurred at the agency's Nimbus Hatchery, east of Sacramento, in the foothills of the Sierra.

Geoffrey V. Rice, inland fisheries manager for F&G Region 2, describes what happened:

"The results of king salmon spawning operations at Nimbus Hatchery were extremely poor during the 1936-37 and 1937-38 seasons.

"Hatchery personnel were convinced that the warm hatchery water supply during the salmon run was responsible; others believed that the manner of taking or incubating the eggs caused the trouble."

So the fish experts went to work in an attempt to see if they could solve the problem.

The puzzle was to try keeping adult fish alive until they were ready to produce eggs and then keeping the eggs alive until they turned into fish.

The main line of attack was to take the adult salmon when they arrived at Nimbus to a coldwater holding area.

"Considerable effort was spent searching for a water supply above 45 degrees Fahrenheit but below the 60 degree or higher temperatures which prevail at Nimbus Hatchery during September, October and part of November," said Rice.

"The Bear River trout planting

base in Nevada County was selected," he added.

The base is located in Bear Valley about one mile below Lake Spaulding near the Nevada and Placer County lines. The facilities consisted of two 48 by eight by four foot flume-type tanks, which Rice said were "excellent" for holding salmon.

The tanks were large enough to hold as many as 150 fish each and F&G personnel set up 12 standard hatchery troughs to handle the eggs—when they came.

At the beginning of the salmon season, the daily water temperature range was 62 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit but during the egg incubation period the temperature fell to an average of 51 degrees.

The first adult salmon were transported to the base on September 23, 1953 and the crews kept on going until 308 males and 1,037 females had been transferred.

(Incidentally, during the sorting process at the base, 132 males that originally had been counted as females were found.)

The fish were loaded into large tankers and hauled to the cold water area as soon as they arrived at the hatchery in order to get them out of the warm American River water as fast as possible.

Only one of the fish died during the transportation. The last salmon were transported to the base on November 4, 1954—about five weeks after the hauling started.

Then a watchman was stationed at the base to guard against

poaching by over-anxious fishermen.

But that ran into troubles.

Said Rice: "It was impossible for one man to guard the fish 24 hours a day and there is evidence that poachers took adult fish at night. A total of 100 adult salmon were unaccounted for at the end of the season."

The fish started giving birth to eggs and continued doing so for about six weeks. The eggs were taken under the care of Fish and Game personnel right away and Rice estimated they totaled 3,164,000—give or take a few thousand.

When the eggs began to "eye" they were taken to Nimbus to complete their growth.

As a result the problem was solved.

Rice said that 53 per cent survival was obtained by hauling the fish to Bear River for ripening

and spawning and then incubating the eggs at the base until they were eyed.

Rice now recommends that the holding pond be expanded to allow bigger operations.

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Ceiling Made Of Lumber Is Handsome Innovation

If you'd like to hide a bad ceiling, and also impress your friends with your decorative imagination and taste, you can do so by putting in a ceiling made of lumber.

There are many ideas or designs you can employ. For example, you might like the effect a plank and beam ceiling gives. If this is the case you can call on box beams or solid beams and paneling, decking or ordinary lumber. Box beams are fine for hiding pipes or other obstructions, and decking is particularly useful since it is thick enough to serve as sub-flooring for the room above if the weight load isn't too great. It also can act as the underside of a roof in certain situations.

If you would like to do something original with a lumber ceiling, the Western Pine Association suggests such innovations as a board and batten ceiling, lined up with a similar wall treatment if you like, or what might be called a squared radial design. Here, you might start with a rectangle of a dark wood in the center of the ceiling and then gradually lighten your lumber as you work your way out toward the walls. In a small room you might feel there is only room for two or three different species but in a larger room you might call on more. In any case, the ten species of lumber from the western pine region would be excellent because they afford a good variety in natural color, are readily available, and easy to work with. The darker woods are incense cedar

and inland red cedar and the species run to the very light of Idaho white pine. The seven other western pine region woods are ponderosa, sugar and lodgepole pine; larch; Engelmann spruce; white fir; and Douglas fir. Any of these species stains readily or will take a pigmented finish, so you can work with a clear finish that lets the natural color of the wood show through or use stains to achieve your variations.

Top Students Will Attend Math School

OREGON STATE COLLEGE — A unique seven-week institute for 50 mathematically-gifted high school students will be held at Oregon State College this summer under sponsorship of the National Science Foundation.

Fifty boys and girls will be picked from Oregon and adjoining regions to take the special program that will include a "taste of everything" in advanced modern mathematics. High school juniors will mostly be selected but some sophomores and even a few freshmen may be named.

The June 27 to August 12 institute is designed to give the especially-able math students an insight into the tremendous new fields of mathematics and its application in science, engineering and industry. It is one of the first such programs offered in the country.

Dr. Robert E. Gaskell, professor of mathematics, will be institute director.

Students will be picked on the basis of their high school scholastic records and recommendations from teachers and principals. Application blanks are available from Gaskell.



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THE COVER

With the coming of spring there is always a lot of cleaning up to be done. Herald and News photo artist Wes Guderian caught Bob Eickman in his lens as the manager of the Rick-falls Apartments was busy at his chores recently.