

NUTRIA, an imported South American rodent, once raised in this country for fur purposes, has become established as a crop-damaging pest in many areas of the United States as a result of liberations by fur farmers when pelts failed to justify the keeping of the animals. These animals are quite common in most of the areas of the county where water is abundant. This animal was photographed in the Deer Island area.

## Nutria Explosion in County, State Threatens Agriculture

are having a population explosion in Columbia county and Western Oregon and threaten to become a wildlife, according to Con Coin Walrod, county extension agent.

The clumsy-looking nutria gobble up a wide variety of succulent green plants. They especially like corn, alfalfa and have a taste for sweet potatoes, cabbage, clover, carrots and most other root crops.

In addition, nutria are feared for their burrowing activities and their competition with native wildlife habitats have thus often been altered and waterfowl marshes

This rugged rodent produces offspring prolifically, has few nat ural enemies, and is surprisingly resistant to control methods, says Lee Kuhn, associate professor of fisheries and wildlife at Oregon State University. Few poisons

parently thrive on strychnine. Most effective poison control at present is a carrot zinc phosphide bait exposed on floating platforms anchored away from the shoreline, but in all liklihood, traps will be used in conjunction with other methods. County trapper Robert Walker is currently having moderate success in trapping these rodents and results are improving as habits of the animals are found

In 1959, the Oregon State Game Commission warned that the stage was set in Oregon for a great increase in nutria if the animals found conditions along streams suitable.

Damage complaints from farmers and sportsmen this past year indicate the nutria's population explosion has occurred and that the state has a huge and expanding Oregon, primarily in the Willamette Valley counties. Only an occasional animal has been reported from any eastern Oregon county except Hood River, the U. S Fish and Wildlife Service reports.

Nutria were dispersed throughout the river systems of the entire Willamette River drainage by the December 1964 floods. They apparently found the sloughs and slow backwaters of the Willamette to their liking because they have increased greatly this year.

Nutria have been described as having a head like a beaver, whiskers like a walrus, front feet like a monkey, hind feet like a duck, a body like a badger, teeth like a parrot's beak, and a tail like a rat, They sometimes reach a weight of 30 pounds.

They are often confused with a beaver since they are good swimmers and can girdle and destroy trees that are near their watery home. Nutria like to burrow into stream banks to make their homes, and such damage is apparent in Columbia county, says Walrod.

Nutria are sometimes called South American beaver. As far in Argentina. Raising nutria in cap- Only larger pelts are useable.

tivity in South America for furs started in 1922. Germany, Switzerland and France imported the rodent for fur farming ventures and the U. S., Canada, Russia and other European countries soon followed. The earliest record of nutria imported to the U.S. was

Nutria fur farms were established in Quebec, Canada in 1931, the Green River area of Washington in 1932 and in Louisiana in 1937. Nutria have existed in Oregon since the 1930's.

In most of these areas, nutria either escaped or were released illegally into the wild by disillusioned fur farmers. In Louisiana, nutria reproduced with amazing speed. Trappers in that state reported the catch rose from a little over 400 in 1943 to almost 11/2 million in the early 1960's.

Nutria fur farms were once established in all sections of the U. Unfortunately, nutria furs did not take the market by storm and almost all profit came by promoters of breeding stock. Oregon trappers report that 1,749 nutria were trapped in 1964 bringing an back as 1849, nutria were abundant average price per pelt of only \$1.22.

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## Youth Rally **Plans Changed**

The Community Christian Youth Rally group, which last week announced plans for a banquet, this week announced that thee date for the event had been changed to April

For the March rally, set for March 19, the young people will journey to Portland to attend a Youth for Christ rally at which Miss America of 1965 will be present to give her

Time of departure for the rally and travel arrangements will be announced at the various church youth groups.

Restrictions on nutria importation now exist in many states as wildlife experts recognize the lurking danger of the animal's population explosion. Efforts are now being made to exterminate nutria colonies in the wild and to see that precautions are taken to prevent escape of nutria from zoos or private breeding farms.

### Vernonia Eagle THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 1966

#### Timber Route Unit to Learn Care of Machines

The Timber Route Extension Unit will meet March 8 at 10:30 a.m. in the West Oregon Electric build-

This lesson will be Know Your Sewing Machine-Use and Care. Election of officers will be held at this time, also

Pot luck lunch will be served at noon. Members are urged to bring their neighbor.

#### Girl Scout Week Theme Is Promise in Action

Girl Scout Week is March 5-12. The national theme this year is "Promise in Action."

The vital part of the "Promise in Action" is giving service to others in the home, neighborhood, school, community, state, or in the national or international scene. There are various ways in which the Girl Scouts can fulfill the theme in their own neighborhoods.

real menace to agriculture and

destroyed.

Nutria, large aquatic rodents, seem to affect nutria. They ap-

population of nutria in western

# LODGE AND CLUB NOTICES



### VERNONIA LIONS CLUB

MEETS FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY EACH MONTH 6:30 P.M., FIRE HALL

Charley Hickman, President David Banta, Secretary

A. F. & A. M. Vernonia Lodge No. 184 A. F. & A. M. meets at Masonic Temple. Stated Communication third Thursday of each month,

at 8:00 p.m. Frank Serafin, W. M. 1-67 Walter E. Linn, Sec'y.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS Harding Lodge No. 116 Vernonia, Oregon



I.O.O.F. Hall Second Monday of Each Month

Jack Bergerson, Chancellor Commander E. E. Garner, Secretary

PYTHIAN SISTERS Vernonia Temple No. 61 Meetings: I.O.O.F. Hall Second and Fourth Wednesdays of each month Martha Brady, M.E.C.

Vernonia Lodge No. 246 LO.O.F. First and Third Tuesday

Cora Lange, Secretary

8 P.M. P. E. "Jim" Markham, Noble Grand Harry Culbertson, Sec.

MT. HEART REBEKAH LODGE NO. 243

Meets 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings of each month in the I.O.O.F. hall. Marie Elliott, Noble Grand Dorothy Sandon, Secretary

#### VERNONIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors report to members quarterly. Board meets 2nd and 4th Mondays, 8:00 p.m., at West Oregon Electric office. Visitors invited. Ralph Bergerson, President

Mrs. Evelyn Heath, Secy.

#### NEHALEM VALLEY COIN CLUB

Meets last Thursday every month West Oregon Electric Auditorium,

Ruth Steers, President George Laws, Vice-president Stanley Enevoldsen, Secretary Ralph Bergerson, Treasurer

## Veterans of World War I



Meets 4th Monday each month at the IOOF hall, 1 p.m.

Marcus Haines, Adjutant



3-14 IWA Local Meets First and 7:30 P.M.

A.F.L. - C.I.O. Business Agent is at the hall, North and Washington Sts., third Thursday, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

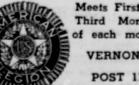
Order of Eastern Star Nehalem Chapter 153, O. E. S.

> munication first and third Wed. of each month at Masonic Temple. All visiting sisters and brothers welcome.

Mrs. Paul Gordon, Sec.

1-67

## AMERICAN LEGION



Thomas Hall, Commander Harry Culbertson, Adjutant

AUXILIARY First and Third Tuesdays Gertrude Schalock, President Lona Weidman, Secretary

7:30 P.M. VISITORS WELCOME

## Vernonia Barracks



H. L. Russell, Commander

AUXILIARY Meets 4th Mon., IOOF hall 1 p.m. Rose Valpiani, President 7-66 Cora Lange, Secretary



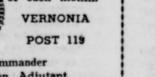
Third Thursdays



Regular com-

Mrs. Farrell West, W. M.

#### Meets First and INJECTABLE Third Mondays of each month.



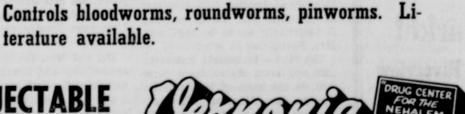
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