



DUCKS UNLIMITED (N. Z.) INCORPORATED  
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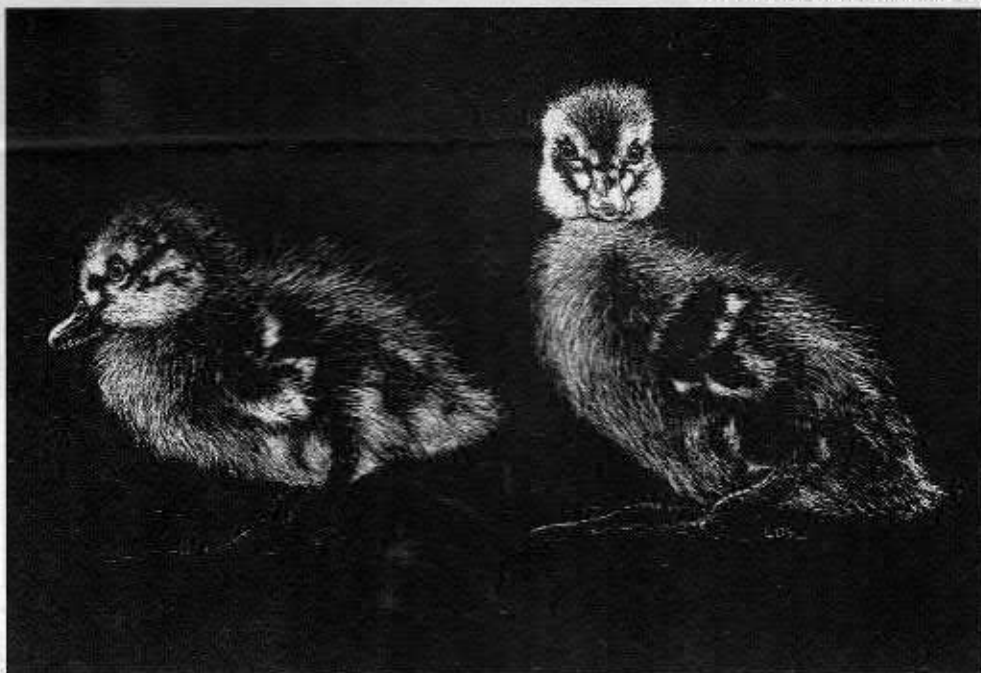


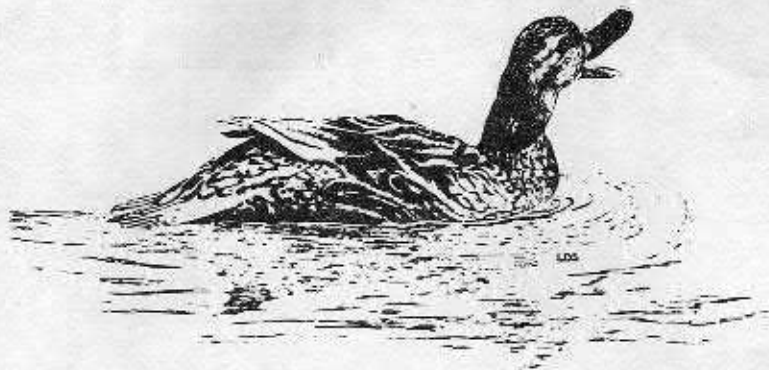
FLIGHT 1/80 ISSUE 23

MARCH 1980

**“FLIGHT”**

Sketchboard by Leo D. Salter, Forest Lake, Minn.





NO 1/80      ISSUE 23      MARCH 1980

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Brown Teal Liberation - full report, photographs  
"A View from Audubon"  
Reports - Operations Gretel and Branta  
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PLUS MORE!

REMINDER: MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

#### DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) INCORPORATED ANNUAL CONFERENCE - JULY 1980 - AUCKLAND

DATE      SATURDAY 12 JULY 1980      VENUE      GATEWAY LODGE, KIRKBRIDE ROAD,  
AUCKLAND

The sixth Annual Conference of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated will be held in Auckland on Saturday, 12 July 1980. REMEMBER TO KEEP THIS DATE FREE FOR OUR MAJOR EVENT OF THE YEAR!

Conference proceedings will commence early afternoon with the formal annual general meeting. Refreshments will be available during the afternoon and at the conclusion of the meeting, at approximately 6 pm. Dinner will follow and the DU ANNUAL AUCTION will commence at 7.30 pm. Participants at previous conferences will recall the excitement and pleasure generated by the auction and this year promises to be better than ever!

Interesting speakers will address participants, using slides and other visual presentations: details of these will appear in the June issue of FLIGHT.

A warm welcome is extended to all DU members and friends. Wives, friends, sportsmen are also most welcome - this could be your opportunity to introduce a friend to Ducks Unlimited and the work it is undertaking to benefit waterfowl in New Zealand. There will be an opportunity to renew your membership also, and to enrol new members.

#### MAGNIFICENT AUCTION ITEMS FOR THIS YEAR INCLUDE:

POTTERY, AMMUNITION, WATERFOWL ART, GIFT BOOKS, CAMOUFLAGE CLOTHING ETC!

Already auction items have been generously committed for the DU auction. Members and friends are invited to contribute also if they wish. Last year, a massive \$ 3,000 was raised at the auction in Wellington - this presents Auckland with quite a challenge! THIS IS DUCKS UNLIMITED'S ONLY FUNDRAISING EVENT EACH YEAR - TO BENEFIT WATERFOWL IN THIS COUNTRY. MAKE IT AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS!

Formal notice of the meeting and details of the conference will be published in the June issue of FLIGHT, due for publication and issue early June 1980. Watch for this issue!

#### CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE INDICATOR

In order to finalise catering etc at Gateway Lodge, please complete and return to DU Headquarters, Box 74 Hamilton

MY NAME: . . . . .

ADDRESS: . . . . .

NO. ATTENDING . . . . .



DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) EXTENDS A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS .....

L.J. Abernethy	(F)	Jonathon Galvin	(J)	S.E. Murphy	(S)
P.S.S. Bailey	(F)	Prof. J. Garrick	(F)	R.B. Robinson	(F)
N.B. Birchall	(S)	M. Lupton	(F)	G.W. Simon	(S)
R. Casey	(F)	Mrs J. Marden	(S)	Mrs G.B. Squires	(S)
W.L. Clinton-Baker	(F)	G.M. Moore	(F)	L. Stratford	(F)
Michelle Duncan	(J)	K.C. Murphy	(S)	W. Worlledge	(F)

MEMBERS! ASSIST WITH DU FUNDRAISING - ORDER YOUR LAPEL BADGE.

ALL SALE PROCEEDS BENEFIT DU PROJECTS. PRICE: ONLY \$ 3.00 EACH;  
(size: 5/8" diameter)

ATTENTION: DU MEMBERS WHO ARE ALSO WATERFOWL BREEDERS

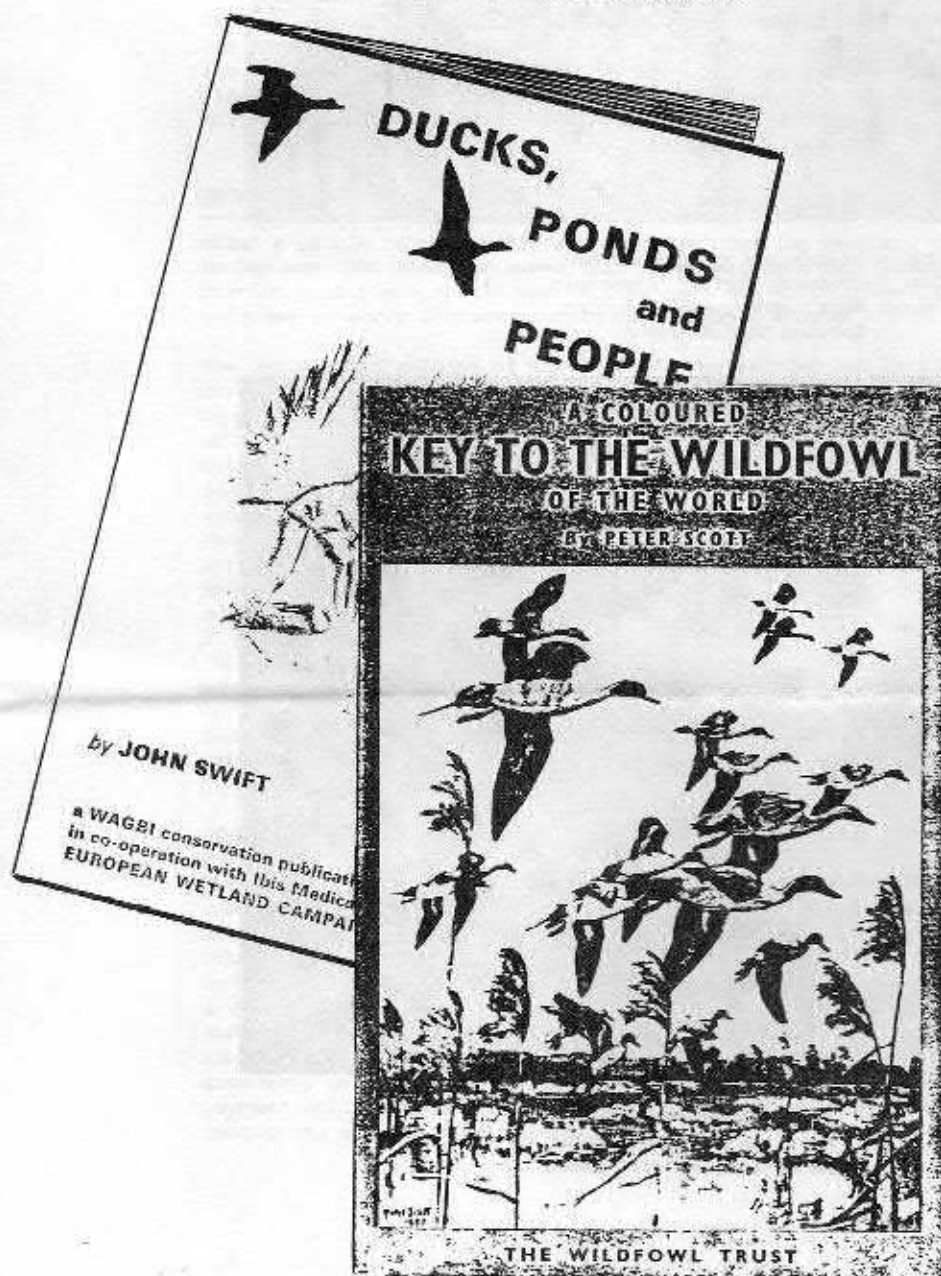
Mrs June Bronger, Membership Secretary, would like to hear from you. Please write to her at C/- P.O. Box 403, Tauranga.

### CALLING ALL "DUCK PEOPLE"

Copies of "DUCKS, PONDS AND PEOPLE" are available at \$ 4 per copy (includes postage)

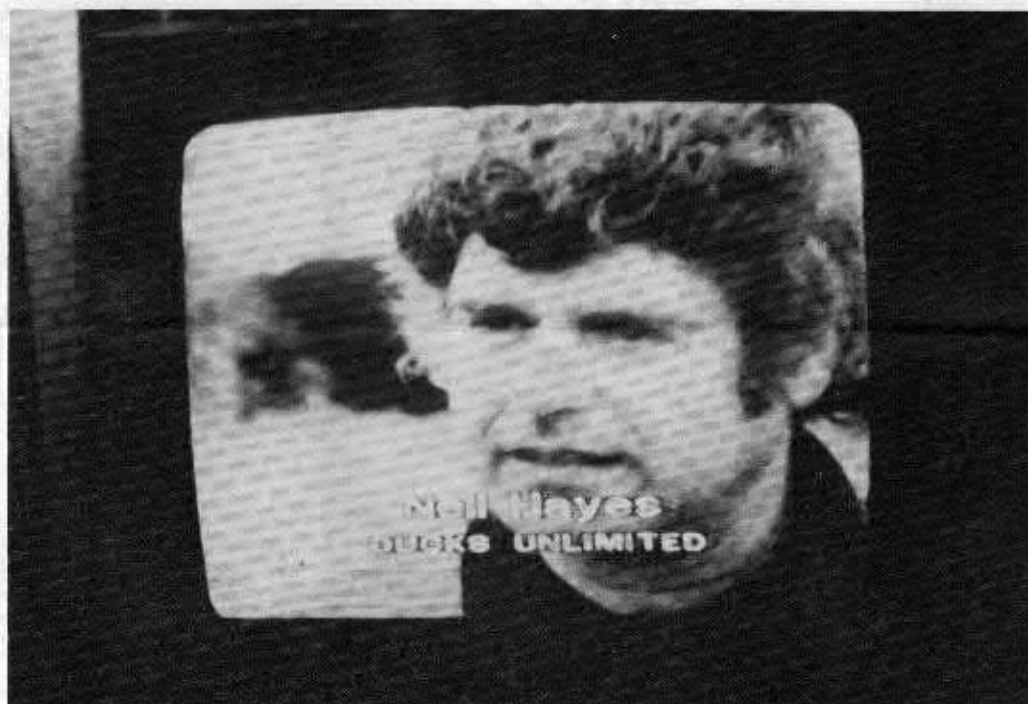
Sir Peter Scott's "THE WILDFOWL OF THE WORLD", a Wildlife Trust publication is also available to interested members. This book is \$ 10 per copy.

Interest in these two valuable books has been intense - order now to avoid disappointment.





Two well-trained Mt Bruce Brown  
Teal performing for TV cameraman  
Barry West, and sound recordist  
Lorraine Englebreton



GREAT ADVERTISING!  
Neil Hayes being interviewed  
about the objectives of "Pateke"

## OPERATION PATEKE

### GENERAL

The past breeding season (1979/80) has seen the highest number of Brown Teal reared by members. The final figure is 34 birds reared, compared with the previous best of 29 last season. Successful members were:

#### Messrs

Sig Bronger	-	14	birds	reared
Neil Hayes	-	6	"	"
Jim Glover	-	3	"	"
John Gill	-	3	"	"
Barry Rowe	-	3	"	"
Laurie Piper	-	2	"	"
Trevor Voss	-	3	"	"

34

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We congratulate these members for their efforts which bring the total number of Brown Teal reared since Operation Pateke began to nearly 100 birds. Twenty birds have been retained for flockmating purposes. Resulting pairs will be given to several new participants and to existing breeder/members. The project programme calls for 50 pairs to be held by DU members. With this season's breeding, DU should reach a figure of 34 pairs held by DU members.

The Wildlife Service has also had an excellent season with Brown Teal, and 42 birds were reared at the Mt Bruce Native Bird Reserve. Mt Bruce has been steadily building up its breeding stock and aims to hold between 10 and 15 pairs in captivity.

The next breeding season could easily see approximately 100 birds reared between Ducks Unlimited and the Wildlife Service, which will of course result in a higher number of birds available for liberation. Discussions between Ducks Unlimited and the Wildlife Service are currently taking place concerning suitable sites for the release of Brown Teal. In the June issue of FLIGHT, we will discuss some of our thoughts on Brown Teal releases.

### BROWN TEAL RELEASED AT PUKE PUKE

After a couple of reasonably satisfactory breeding seasons, Ducks Unlimited finally reached the stage in January 1980 where 10 Brown Teal were available for release. Discussions with the Wildlife Service took place and it was decided that the 10 DU Brown Teal should follow 14 Mt Bruce birds released in early January at Puke Puke Lagoon, Foxton.

The banding and release of the DU birds was carried out by director Neil Hayes and member Andy Garrick who is the Wildlife Service technician at Puke Puke. The release received good publicity in most national newspapers and as a result Television One made contact in the hope of obtaining film of the lagoon and a story. Thanks to some excellent co-operation from the Wildlife Service, it was arranged for 16 Brown Teal to be brought from Mt Bruce and released in front of the TV cameras. As can be seen from the accompanying photographs, the project went smoothly and efficiently which is very gratifying. The resulting news item was shown on Television One Regional News (Wellington) on 15 January. Greg Smith, Television One frontman put over a very good story which ended with Neil Hayes being interviewed. The item gained the project considerable publicity and our thanks to Greg Smith and his team of Barry West and Loraine Englebreton, Gideon Anderson in charge at Mt Bruce, Ian Bryant and Andy Garrick of the Wildlife Service for their efforts and co-operation.

### BROWN TEAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Mike Lubbock, Assistant Director of the Wildfowl Trust, reports that DU's two female Brown Teal are now well paired with the surviving male birds and he has high hopes for early breeding.

### BROWN TEAL SEMINAR

Thanks to the financial support of Mobil Oil New Zealand Limited, by way of their \$ 750 Mobil Environmental Grant for Operation Pateke, DU has arranged a one day seminar which will discuss many important aspects of Brown Teal management. The seminar will take place at the Gateway Lodge Motel, Auckland on Friday 11 July 1980 commencing at 10.30 am. This is the day before the annual conference which will be held at the same location. All holders of Brown Teal have been invited to the seminar and to date a good number have indicated they will be attending. Over the last few breeding seasons a considerable amount of knowledge has been obtained concerning the aviculture and management of the Brown Teal and the main purpose of the seminar is to disseminate this knowledge among current and prospective Brown Teal breeders, and to record all useful data for future application. It is inevitable that the entire Pateke project will gain considerable benefit from the gathering and it should greatly enhance the chances of saving the species from extinction.

MORE





Wildlife Service sign at Puke Puke



Puke Puke Lagoon  
'Willow Island' can be seen on  
the far side (note DU boxes in  
foreground)



Andy Garrick, ably assisted  
by Jack Ray, checking bands  
just prior to release



Sound technician with TV One  
Lorraine Englebreton firmly  
stuck in the Puke Puke mud  
and still smiling!



Two DU Brown Teal all ready  
for release



Getting the camera ready.  
Ian Bryant, Mt Bruce, passing  
a bird to Andy Garrick



Brown Teal sign at Puke Puke



# OPERATION GRETEL

## REPORT FROM POKENO, SOUTH AUCKLAND

Ian McFadden, Wildlife Officer with the Department of Internal Affairs, reports as follows:

"Nest box inspections began on 16 July 1979 and were continued on an every-3 days-basis until 8 November when I was occupied with other duties. By my next inspection, on 11 and 17 December the laying had ceased. On the last inspection only 5 boxes contained clutches or incubated Teal eggs with almost every other box containing a myna nest or being built up to the exit hole with coarse nest material. On each visit 25 boxes were inspected which took about one hour depending on data collected and that was considered to be maximum disturbance for incubating birds.

On each inspection the number of eggs was noted and when clutches were complete and incubation begun, all eggs were numbered and measured. This was to check if small or large eggs had a greater hatching success and if there was a change in egg size over the laying season. This data has not been analysed but there appears to be little evidence either way. Some nest boxes were re-used as soon as a clutch had hatched, whereas others were not used at all, with no preference being shown of direction of exit/entrance or box position on the pond.

In all, 1,556 eggs were laid, of which 35 clutches or 276 eggs were deserted - the cause of desertions being rats and mynas as both eat the eggs and the intrusion of mynas probably cause desertion directly, or by the disturbed Teal excreting over its eggs. Rat interference seems minimal and I suspect mynas are the main cause. However, when the "hide" has been erected more information may be obtained.

Of the eggs laid, 1,123 or 106 clutches were incubated through to hatching with 936 actually hatching. Those eggs failing to hatch were removed and broken and then recorded as infertile or fertile with stage of development. 21 eggs were infertile and 166 at various stages of development from a blood spot only to fully developed and pipping.

The two weeks I was away I missed the success of 13 clutches or 157 eggs and by my last visit mynas had taken over all but 5 nest boxes.

Laid	1,556	
Incubated through	1,123	Deserted 276
		Infertile 49
		* Other 157
Hatch	936	(83.5% hatch)
Infertile	21	(1.88% infertile)
Not hatched	166	

The average clutch size of those incubated to hatching was 10.6 eggs but there is evidence of dumping as 7 eggs were laid in one box over 4 days. This habit may also cause some desertion, but otherwise production would be boosted providing the dumped eggs were fertile and laid during the normal laying period.

\* Other 157 - the 13 clutches I missed.

Several broods were web tagged with the hope of catching them at a later date when individual colour combinations could be put on their legs. To date no birds have been caught but when birds return to the pond an attempt will be made. Some adults were caught on the nest close to hatching dates with no desertions so that practice may be used more this season.

An attempt was made to locate Teal nests in the wild to compare egg and clutch size from the pond at Pokeno to those of natural nests. This was a failure but will be attempted next year so any help in this area would be appreciated. There was an enormous variation in egg size within a clutch so a wild sample would enable me to see if this is normal." - Ian McFadden.

## LAKE PUKE PUKE, FOXTON (30 boxes)

No usage to date but as mentioned previously the boxes at Puke Puke were erected to see if we could attract Grey Teal to the lake during the breeding season.

## WAIRARAPA

BARTON'S LAGOON, MARTINBOROUGH (30 boxes): Nine successful nests were recorded against 4 for the previous season. Now that the area has settled down after the Catchment Board activity, hopes are high for a big increase in production during the 1980/81 season.

KURARAU DAM, MASTERTON (30 boxes): Richard Pinkerton, DU member in Masterton, has been kind enough to do all the monthly inspections at Kurarau since September. Grey Teal have not yet laid in any of the boxes but Grey Teal activity in the boxes has been recorded. We are very confident that production will get underway next season.





Canada Geese just arrived from  
the South Island - January, 1980

### OPERATION BRANTA

The problems mentioned in the last issue of FLIGHT concerning DU's difficulty in obtaining further Canada geese from North Canterbury suddenly disappeared when 30 birds arrived at Wellington airport in January from Christchurch. Peter McLeod, DU director based at Christchurch, had done his usual excellent and thorough job of crating and shipping the geese and his efforts are appreciated. Thanks also to the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society and to the Wildlife Service for their co-operation. Of course, thanks also to the Wellington Acclimatisation Society who have done so much to ensure the success of Operation Branta in the Wairarapa.



The birds were collected from Wellington airport by Ian Buchanan, DU member and Senior Field Officer of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society. They were held by Ian for several days in order to recover from the trip, and from the effects of pinioning. All birds survived and were released in groups of 6-8 on various properties in the Wairarapa. Several of the properties already hold small groups of geese and the new arrivals will provide "new blood".

A full report on Canada geese in the Wairarapa will appear in a coming issue of FLIGHT. While DU is aware that many farmers are anxious to take Canada geese and has a list of prospective holders, the group is always interested to learn of any new members or farmers who would like to participate.

### SUCCESS WITH BLUE DUCKS

During the past breeding season, DU President Ian Pirani became the first individual in the world to rear the Blue Duck in captivity. Previously the Blue Duck had only been captive-reared at the Mt Bruce Native Bird Reserve. Ian who only recently moved from Hamilton to Rotorua successfully reared two Blue Ducks using a bantam to incubate and rear. This is a very considerable achievement.

In its recent submissions to the Nature Conservation Council on Rare and Endangered Species, DU placed considerable emphasis on building up captive stocks of Blue Duck (at present only a few birds are held in captivity) so that something may be learned about the species and hopefully a "bank" of birds built up as a security precaution. Most members will be aware that the future of the Blue Duck is threatened, and under a considerable "cloud" - from small hydro electric power dams.



We reprint below an interesting feature from The Ducks Unlimited Magazine, the official publication of Ducks Unlimited Inc. U.S.A. The author, John Anderson has been Director of the Wildlife Sanctuary Department for the National Audubon Society since 1966 and reveals his organization's position on hunting, and discusses the universal battle between the anti-hunting factions and the hunting and fishing public.

## A View from Audubon

By John Anderson

**"The law locks up both man  
and woman**

**Who steals the goose from  
off the common;**

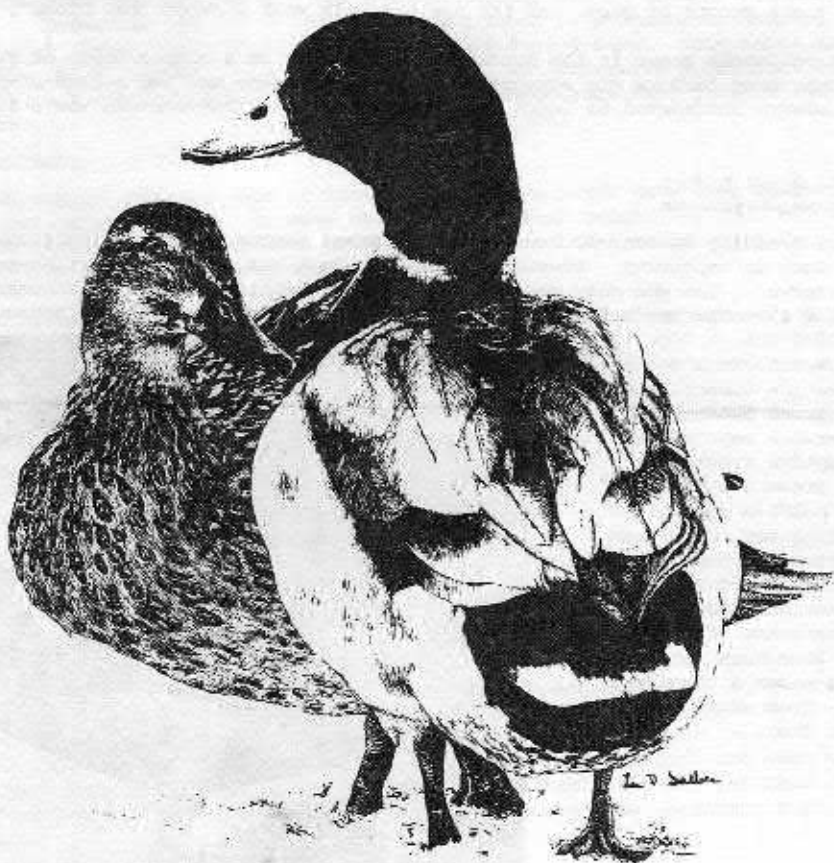
**But turns the greater felon  
loose**

**Who steals the common  
from the goose."**

These few revealing words, written by an anonymous poet of a by-gone era, sum up the impact of anti-hunters in times past and today. The sim-

ple verse portrays a too-frequent story of success achieved by anti-hunting factions. In their quest to exterminate hunting, this emotional group will do almost anything, including inhibiting the efforts of conservation agencies to help wildlife and present a well-rounded picture of wildlife management and promotion to the general public. The cumulative effect of these actions is not a supportive one for wild animals, but rather, a very effective "stealing" of habitat out from under wildlife populations of all kinds.

Obviously, some of the Johnny-Come-Lately organizations believe the best way to attract attention to their "cause" is to attack conservation organizations that have been around for half a century. There is a myriad of possible reasons why people recruit into anti-groups in addition to the universal emotionally based ones. Perhaps an occasional politician believes antis outnumber hunters among his constituents. The young lawyer may find it profitable to look for technicalities with which to tie the hands of wildlife adminis-





trators, or to try discrediting management based on research findings rather than sentimentalism. And it seems no conservation group is immune from onslaught by the antis.

The National Audubon Society's policy on hunting has been spelled out and in print for many years. The Society does not actively promote nor criticize hunting so long as it does not jeopardize the resource and is in keeping with good sportsmanship. This policy is an anathema to the anti-hunters. Like so many other organizations struggling to maintain America's wildlife heritage, Audubon has become subject to the destructive tirades of the antis.

A case in point: Biologists on the Audubon staff admit that mourning doves are still nesting in September in some sections of the country. As yet there is no evidence that September hunting, where allowed, results in starvation of nestlings. But because such mortality is theoretically possible, a group of so-called "dove-lovers" has spent considerable time and money in an unsuccessful effort to get the Audubon biologists fired and to force the Society to oppose dove hunting in any form. Meanwhile, much valuable time and money that could have been directed towards the betterment of the general public's knowledge about wildlife species was wasted on expensive litigation and defense.

One can see that workings within groups of antis such as this fall nothing short of fanaticism. And economically speaking, fanaticism in any form is usually bad news. The general history of our nation demonstrates this point more than adequately. Note the strife in Iran which shut down her oil fields and increased the cost of travel, to say nothing of many petroleum products in this country. During the consequent "energy crisis," the Iranian petroleum engineer had to duck his head or get out until things quieted down. He was effectively prevented from doing what he knew how to do, because of the threats of fanatics.

Likewise in the management of wildlife populations, those gleaming eyes, clenched fists and strident voices are invariably a sign of trouble. In the case of the Iranian engineer, some demonstrators claimed their actions stemmed from a fierce devotion to Islamic religion and customs. Because the framers of our Constitution separated the church

from the state, we are not accustomed to crippling religious conflicts. But something akin to religious fanaticism crops up every now and then when the antis in America start on the warpath. And when that happens, the food, shelter and living space for ducks, deer and other wildlife are often adversely affected, though the fanatics say they are motivated only by their "love" for these creatures. If obstructing the conservation of a species in an attempt to bar the sportsman from the field is love, then it must indeed be blind, since the security of the long-billed marsh wren, the snowy egret, the timber wolf, the alligator, the American eagle—every North American plant or animal that inhabits our wild lands—is threatened by it.

Antis usually try to justify their positions on the premise that hunting is cruel. Admittedly, the best marksman occasionally cripples game which undoubtedly causes it to suffer. Hooked beaks, talons, fangs, claws, ticks, botulism, blizzards, drought and hunger do likewise. None of these natural causes of pain and death was invented by the hunter. He does, however, do all in his power to prevent them. I have yet to see any of those people who say their hearts bleed for the suffering animals, out there spending much time, energy or money in an attempt to create an environment that offers better protection. They apparently find it easier and more rewarding to obstruct the wildlife manager and hunter than to contribute to a mallard's chances of finding a place to nest.

In all fairness, I should point out that many a sincere individual is unavoidably distressed by the sight of a sharp-shinned hawk knocking off a cardinal, and even more so by the thought of a sharp-eyed hunter bringing down a pintail. But no matter what motivates the anti-hunting fanatic, it is quite clear that they have no concern for the natural laws which control populations of wild plants and animals. They prefer to make laws controlling the behavior of their fellow man, regardless of the effect this has on the welfare of animals. If the wild critters are denied food or a chance to escape predators, it matters not to the bleeding hearts so long as those cruel hunters are confined to quarters.

In the guise of preventing cruelty to animals, many of our native spe-

cies are being starved, diseased and pushed rapidly toward extinction by anti-groups. Rather than pay fifty cents for a merciful bullet, the National Park Service must now spend millions of dollars to trap and move the exotic burros from western ranges. Any high school boy, after a single trip across the range, can see that there is no time for such nonsense if we are to save the bighorn sheep, the desert kit fox, the cougar, the cottontail and the vegetation on which all wildlife depends. Who among the wild horse and burro lovers (who have outlawed the shooting of burros) has given any thought to our native wildlife? No one.

Efforts to provide cover which will protect a gadwall's nest from hungry skunks and coyotes also help provide some two million American men and women with escape from the rush and scramble of the machine age. What the so-called humane defenders of animals offer as a substitute for millions of hours of wholesome outdoor recreation, enjoyed by the general public as well as hunters of all ages, is obscure, to say the least.

Those of us familiar with the overall conservation picture on this continent are already aware—or at least should be—of the positive impact the hunter's interest and financial support can have on wildlife, both plant and animal. Back in the Thirties, when the wind blew the topsoil out from under the sons of the pioneers, the threat to prairie-nesting waterfowl was clearly evident. In becoming the bread basket of the continent, our prairies had lost much of their capacity to produce wheat and widgeons. Restoration was a clear necessity; management of land had to replace mismanagement if ducks and people were to profit.

The duck hunters of America recognized and accepted the challenge. They put on their boots, rounded up a few bucks and set out to restore Canadian marshes. This group of concerned sportsmen called themselves "Ducks Unlimited," and the new-born conservation organization struggled to stand on wobbly legs. Slowly it learned to crawl, then to walk, and finally to run.

Hard-headed businessmen came to see that Ducks Unlimited Inc. was on the right track. The restored marshes spoke for themselves. The best advertising DU could get came winging down the flyways a few decades after the Dust Bowl. The



restoration program attracted support from a cross-section of America. You might say a lot of people, both hunters and nonhunters, were "sold" on sound management of prairie marshes.

In the intervening years, Ducks Unlimited has grown to a membership of approximately 300,000. DU has reserved almost 3,000,000 habitat acres of prime marshland with nearly 11,000 miles of shoreline, and provided the water that spells the difference between productive waterfowl habitat and just another pasture. To do this, the organization has raised and spent over \$88,000,000.

While this was going on in Canada, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the 48 state wildlife agencies joined in a conservation effort which, like the DU program, was something new in world history. They were implementing the Pittman-Robertson Act. Hunters are well aware that for every five-dollar box of shotgun shells, they pay an additional 55 cents in excise taxes as part of the Pittman-Robertson program. But I have yet to hear a hunter complain about this tax, which can only be used to acquire wildlife habitat and to study the life history, food habits, diseases and other environmental factors by which our wild creatures live and die. As a result of directing these funds toward wise management, some 34 million acres of national wildlife refuges and millions of acres of state lands are still producing Canada geese, condors and cattle egrets instead of condominiums and drainage ditches. Since this money cannot be used to pad the payroll, the politician finds it practically patronage-proof.

By joining forces, sportsmen have obviously accomplished much for wildlife and the natural quality of our wildernesses, though this is not to say that their union is always without flaw. Hunters sometimes have their share of within-ranks squabbles. A case in point is the Michigan bear hunter who would rather stay home than hunt without dogs. To him a hunter who shoots a bear from a blind has no right to call himself a sportsman. Likewise, the hunter in the blind turns purple with rage when he hears Old Blue leading a pack of bearhounds. If they carry their differences to the legislature, the outcome is apt to favor those who would put an end to bearhunting in any form.

Fortunately, the overriding fact is that private conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon Society, Wildlife Management Institute and Isaac Walton League are well organized with competent, professional leadership. They usually pull together on the real issues to the benefit of the

outdoor-minded public, both hunters and non-hunters.

The contribution to our wildlife resources by these groups is without parallel elsewhere in the world. The Pittman-Robertson Act, the Duck Stamp Act and the Dingell-Johnson Act, which provides funds for fish management through excise taxes on fishing tackle, are but a few of their accomplishments on the legislative front. On the land there is no species of wildlife, be it hunted or otherwise enjoyed by our outdoor-minded public, which has not benefitted from their efforts in the wildlife management field. Yet outfits claiming humane legislation as their goal, seek to repeal the Pittman-Robertson Act, abolish the duck stamp and put DU, the Federation and the Wildlife Management Institute out of business.

The true conservationists need to do yet more. The sportsman may have much to gain from an analysis of the non-hunting public. He should keep in mind that all non-hunters are not *anti*-hunters. This group is made up of people who are undecided or neutral in their views on the sport of hunting and its companion conservation ethic. They could comprise a valuable source of support that sportsmen should be willing to tap. While many non-hunters may not care if all our marshes are grazed by cattle instead of geese, those who do care are more numerous today than at any time in our history. Indeed, both groups warrant our attention.

The sportsman must also keep in mind that his selling job is not a one-time thing. He is not talking to a stationary audience but to a parade. As every segment of society marches past the viewing stand, we must sell them on the wisdom of sound land and water management. And as each new generation of young potential wildlife supporters steps into sight, its individuals must be educated to the total picture of wildlife conservation with the hunter's role in proper perspective.

It should be obvious to the reader by now that the professional public-relations man can play a decisive role in politics, marketing and even in education. I would strongly suggest that every sportsman, as well as all other true conservationists, direct their attention unhesitatingly to the vocal members of their community who will help see to it that the fanatical anti-hunter does not steal the common from the goose. **3**

Photo by Lee Salber

