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New Game Management Area Opens for Hunting this Fall

The Game and Fish Department has announced that a new 15,000 acre game management area near Eatonton will be open for Georgia hunters this fall.

According to Hubert Handy, Coordinator of Game Management for the Department, an agreement has been signed with the Piedmont Experiment Station to open land belonging to the station for supervised hunting this fall. This tract of land will be a game management area in which the Game and Fish Department will be in charge of wildlife management, hunting and game law enforcement.

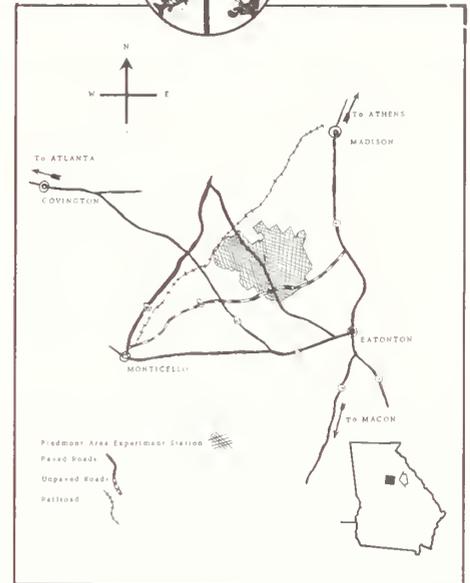
This new section will make 370,000 acres in Georgia's game management areas. The Piedmont Experiment Station will be operated in the same fashion as are the other 11 state supervised game management areas. Handy says that game biologists are planning to establish feed plots, provide access trails, post markers and build permanent checking stations on the area. As on other management areas, the hunter must buy a permit before hunting for a particular type of game. Large and small game hunters will not be allowed in the area on the same days. Fields and areas close to buildings will be closed. A wildlife ranger will be lo-

cated on the area at all times.

Handy says that because of the nearby Cedar Creek Management Area, a few deer have drifted into the new section, but are not plentiful. This year the harvest will be small, however with intensive management, deer should reach a maximum in four to five years. There are a few turkey on the area which will be strictly managed and not hunted at the present time. In addition to managing large game, the Department plans to provide dove and quail shooting.

This area will also be used for scientific purposes. The Department, in connection with the Forestry School at the University of Georgia is planning to conduct an experimental program on rabbits. In addition, the Experimental Station will continue with its agricultural work.

Dates for the opening of this area are not yet set, but probably will be the same as those set in August for the Cedar Creek area. The new management area is located northeast of Monticello on Highway 300.



Most sections of the new management area are easily accessible. Hunting is not allowed in positions which contain cattle or near buildings.

Deputy Rangers Turn in Badges

The State Game and Fish Commission has asked Georgia's 193 deputy wildlife rangers to return their badges and credentials to the Department after former Attorney General Eugene Cook ruled that the Department had no authority to appoint deputy rangers.

Cook's opinion said that provisions in a 1931 law creating the deputy rangers were omitted from the law's revision in 1955, apparently by legislative oversight.

Most of the voluntary rangers used their commissions for patrolling on private property, or patrolling with full-time rangers on holidays and weekends. Rosser Malone, Director of the Game and Fish Department, praised the non-paid deputies for their assistance to the Department's game law enforcement program. "We appreciate their interest in conservation and hope that they will continue to support the programs of our Department," Malone said.

Malone noted that the efforts of the deputies will be missed by the Department. On the point of the next session of the legislature renewing the deputy commissions, Malone pointed out that the Department's law enforcement program could best be strengthened by the addition of more fulltime paid rangers to the Department staff.



J. C. Clay, wildlife manager on the Piedmont Experiment Station Game Management Area, examines deer browse with other Game and Fish employees. The area promises to produce good deer hunting in a few years.

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Anti-Firearm Legislation Opposed by Game and Fish

Georgia sportsmen have been encouraged to oppose the administration anti-firearms bill now under consideration by Congress.

In an unusual resolution, the State Game and Fish Commission called for the defeat of Senate Bill 1952, sponsored by Senator Dodd of Connecticut. The wildlife agency said the proposed bill would restrict the right of hunters and targetshooters to buy guns and ammunition more than it would keep weapons out of the hands of criminals.

According to Jack Crockford, Assistant Director of Field Operations for the Commission, Senator Dodd's bill originally was developed to aid states in crime control by preventing indiscriminate mail order sales of concealable firearms to persons not entitled to purchase them under local laws. But this first version was enlarged by additional restrictions.

"We don't object strenuously to the original bill but subsequent restrictions do create an unnecessary hardship for the sportsman and would accomplish little towards reducing crime," said Crockford.

Objectionable to the Commission is the \$100 license required to sell firearms or ammunition. A provision such as this would eliminate the sale of these items by small grocery or hardware stores which have a low sales volume.

Other objections include burdensome and poorly defined restrictions which would be imposed on the non-resident hunter and the ban on all mail order sales of sporting rifles and shotguns to all individuals. According to Crockford, the Commission feels that such stringent regulations will remove firearms from law abiding citizens but leave them in the hands of criminals.

"The Commission feels that the answer to the problem is stronger enforcement of the existing 20,000 local laws in this country, and providing stiff mandatory sentences for persons who use firearms in the commission of crimes." Crockford cited the fact that less than 15 per cent of all serious assault cases (including homicide) in the United States in 1963 involved firearms. Crockford also noted that the Connecticut State Board of Fisheries and Game in Senator Dodd's home state has adopted a resolution similar to Georgia's in opposition to S. 1592.

In addition to its resolution, the Game and Fish Commission has also urged interested Georgia sportsmen to write Congressmen in opposition to Dodd's bill.

30,000 Walleye Fingerlings Stocked in Coosawattee River

According to the State Game and Fish Commission, 30,000 walleye fingerlings are now making their new home in the Coosawattee River in Gilmer County at the site of the U.S. Corps of Engineers Carters Dam.

The Commission recently stocked the three inch walleye in the river in a secondary effort to establish the species by the time the 400 foot high dam is finished in 1967. Upon comple-

tion of the dam, a 3,000 acre lake will be impounded.

Howard Zeller, Assistant Director of the Game and Fish Commission, says that the first step in establishing the species in the river was the stocking of 2,000,000 fry this May. Zeller adds that further research will be conducted at the dam site to determine future stocking plans.



Walleye pike should be established in the Coosawattee River by 1967 when the Carters Dam is completed.

Wildlife In Georgia (FIFTH IN A SERIES)



BLUEGILL SUNFISH

Bluegill sunfish (*Lepomis macrochirus*) are the "brim" of our childhood catches, but now are becoming favorites among adult anglers.

It doesn't grow as large as its cousin, the largemouth bass, but will give anglers a hardy scrap when taken on light tackle. World rod and reel record for this panfish is four pounds, 12 ounces.

Life Cycle

Bluegills spawn in the shallows of ponds or lakes when the water temperature rises above 73 degrees. Female fish may lay as many as 60,000 eggs at one time and, depending on the food supply in the pond, may spawn as many as three times in one year.

Food

Insects, crayfish, small frogs and other fish make up the diet of the bluegill.

Recreation and Economic Value

Bream are the favorite fish among families since either an "expert" or a "novice" Izaak Walton can catch them on almost any kind of tackle. The best time to fish for bluegills is when they spawn in the spring and summer of each year. Bream "beds" can be recognized by the shallow, scooped-out depressions in sand. Anchor a boat several feet away from the nearest "bed," and one can take his limit in a few hours, if he's lucky.

DEPUTY RANGERS

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This could be accomplished only with an increase in the price of Georgia's hunting and fishing licenses, which are the second lowest in the nation.

"In the meantime, I'd like to ask for the cooperation of all Georgia sportsmen in reporting game law violations and in obeying the boating safety regulations until some of this lost manpower has been replaced," Malone said.

Coastal Fishing Outlook Bright for Late Summer

Though Georgians are close-mouthed about it, their state offers some of the best salt water fishing in the nation with August one of the top months, according to the Game and Fish Department.

The 1,000 miles of Georgia coastal water, though often bypassed in favor of Florida, offers excellent salt water fishing during August. About twenty species of game fish, ranging from hand-sized croaker to boat-sized tarpon are found in these coastal waters, according to Howard Zeller, Assistant Director of the Department.

"Few sportsmen know about Georgia salt water fishing potential and a good example of this is the tarpon," said Zeller. "During the late summer and early fall, schools of these tarpon move into the tidal areas of the Altamaha, Satilla, Saint Marys, Ogeechee and Savannah rivers, and occasionally on high tide they are frequently seen breaking the water. During this period, catches above 100 pounds are not uncommon." Most fishermen find that either trolling or casting with spoons or cut bait produce the best results.

Most Popular

Perhaps the most popular salt water species during August are the summer trout and the channel bass. Both of these may be taken using shrimp fished near the bottom. The bass are usually caught on high slack tides or on high flood tides while trout feed on the low ebbs and high flood tides.

Second in popularity are the sheepshead, drum, flounder, croaker, spots, and squirrel fish which are usually caught on the low tide near shellbeds.

Fishermen who prefer the offshore waters find that the spanish and king mackerel, cobia, tarpon, albacore, amberjack, jack crevalle, bluefish and barracuda will readily hit trolled spoons or cut bait. For the still fishermen in deep water, anglefish and common sea bass will quickly fill the ice chest, Zeller continued.



During the late summer, tarpon like the prize shown above can be found in the rivers and sounds.



Striped bass like these can usually be found in the sounds and lower reaches of the coastal rivers.



Offshore trolling for king and spanish mackerel offers fast action on the Georgia coast from May through August. Charter boats are available daily at Brunswick, Jekyll Island and Savannah.



These spanish mackerel caught offshore at St. Simons prove the abundance of the species on the Georgia coast.

Freshwater River Studies Initiated on July 1st

According to the Game and Fish Commission, storekeepers are not the only ones taking inventory this time of year. Department biologists are currently taking "fish inventory" on rivers throughout the state.

The program which began on July 1st is designed to study the rivers around the state to determine the relationship between the species of fish present, evaluate the chemical content of the water, determine natural production of food organisms, and to evaluate the effects of the rate of flow or high and low water on fish production.

The future objective of this program according to Howard Zeller, Assistant Director of the Commission, is to find out what can be done to improve river fishing. Zeller explains that the research will enable the Commission to develop and apply the most desirable management techniques in the streams. This may include selected stocking programs to extend the range of the smallmouth bass and Flint River smallmouth, or to possibly include a program to construct "low flow regulatory structures" in the streams themselves if the research indicates such programs are needed.

Methods Used

Zeller further adds that the "fish inventory" is being taken by the use of shocking devices, large nets, and by applying a chemical to a selected area of the stream causing the fish to suffocate and come to the top of the water. These methods are also used each year in conducting similar fish population studies on the lakes.

"This is the most extensive research ever carried out on the rivers of the state," Zeller says, "We hope that it will furnish us with basic information to improve fishing conditions in these areas."



Biologist Herb Wyatt takes water sample from the bottom of a South Go. river to determine content.



Game and Fish persnanel use fish shocking devices to take "stream inventory." Information gained by this and other methods will enable biologists to determine how to improve river and stream fishing for the future.

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