

# WILD BIRDS INCREASING FAST UNDER FEDERAL LAW

## Vast Flocks Flying Northward Already Show Effects of Migratory Statutes, Bird Havens, Abolition of Spring Shooting and Restriction of Sales--Wonders of the Flight of Golden Plover Still Unexplained

By DONALD A. CRAIG.

**F**IVE million sportsmen in the United States and Canada and millions of persons who are not fond of the gun but take keen delight in the myriads of migratory birds that make their home on the North American continent will be thrilled by the news that migratory birds of practically every protected species are, beyond a doubt, rapidly increasing in numbers. It has been any reason to doubt this fact during the last two years it is now removed. More wild ducks, geese and even woodcock have been reported from widely separated parts of the United States this season than in any year since the passage of the first migratory bird protection law in 1913, or long before.

For the first time in decades wild ducks are stopping in their northward flight to nest in their old haunts around Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers, in the Jersey and Delaware marshes and the inland waters of the Mississippi Valley. Long ago ruthless spring shooting from blinds and motor boats, partly for sport and partly for market, either exterminated or drove these birds away from their oldtime breeding places. Now the strong arm of the United States Government is stretched out to protect them, and under a treaty with Canada they are protected on the other side of our northern border when they go that far to find a nesting place, which is the habit of many of the species of migratory birds.

Next fall it may be possible for sportsmen to kill their legal bag of "home grown" wild duck in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey—perhaps in New York—and certainly in some of the Mississippi Valley States. Isn't this enough to make the sportsmen's blood tingle?

### Spring Shooting and Sales Being Stamped Out Rapidly

Spring shooting and the sale of game birds are being stamped out, except in isolated places, where the law is violated by the ignorant or the greedy. But these instances are growing few and fewer. All that is needed is more United States game wardens practically to stamp out the evil.

Since the enactment of the migratory bird law of 1913, and particularly since the enactment of the migratory bird treaty act, which superseded it, on July 3, 1918, and which carried into effect the provisions of the treaty with Canada, there has been a noticeable increase—sometimes slight, it is true, but sufficient to encourage the real sportsman and the bird lover to renewed efforts—in the numbers of many of the species of wild ducks and geese.

But the reports from that other famous migratory game bird, the woodcock, were far from satisfactory. Indeed, it seemed that the woodcock, for some unknown reason, were decreasing in spite of everything the Federal Government and the various States could do to protect them. It began to look as if the woodcock was doomed to extinction like the passenger pigeon, which once flew up and down the North American continent in such enormous flocks as to darken the sun, and which is now no more—not a single bird being left, so far as anybody has been able to learn.

This winter, however, the United States Biological Survey, which has charge of the enforcement of the migratory bird law, has received reports that in the season of 1920-21 more woodcock have been seen nearly everywhere than for several years past. The corner has been turned. There is no reason now why every species of protected migratory bird—game or otherwise—should not multiply steadily for many years to come. The rate of increase will be much faster if more money is made available for enforcing the law and establishing bird refuges, but plans are already on foot to remedy this serious defect.

Here are three news bulletins, hot from the field, received by Dr. E. W. Nelson, chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, and they ought to make every true sportsman and lover of outdoor life set up a cheer, and they doubtless will:

**In Minnesota a total of 2,958,844 wild ducks were killed, according to the estimate of the State license authorities, during the regular legal hunting season of 1919 by persons having State licenses and complying with the law. This is an enormous increase over any recent year. It indicates that the wild ducks are increasing by leaps and bounds. The elimination of spring shooting and the prohibition of the sale of game birds mainly have turned the trick. Reports for 1920 have not yet come in, but they are expected to show a much greater increase.**

**In Missouri five species of wild ducks nested in 1920 for the first time in a great many years. They were mallard, blue wing teal, pintail, spoonbill and wood duck.**

**Even in City of Washington Effects of Law Are Seen**

Within the last few weeks large flocks of wild ducks have appeared flying over the city of Washington and also have been seen by thousands of persons feeding peacefully and unafraid on the Virginia side of the Potomac River, just across from the Washington Monument and the speedway south of the White House. They seemed entirely oblivious to the fact that only a few thousand yards away was a great city.

marshes and many nested and raised their young almost within sight of the Capitol and the White House. With the growth of the city came the market hunter and the reckless, selfish sportsman, shooting in the spring as well as the fall, and the wild birds flew to other parts.

Perhaps the most encouraging thing that has happened recently for those who love wild birds is that the Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Biological Survey, after making an exhaustive investigation of the effect of the protective regulations issued under the migratory bird law, and after reading the requests of many bird lovers for more stringent rules, has decided not to change the present ones. The reason assigned for this decision is that more stringent regulations such as longer closed seasons every year, are not necessary, because the birds are multiplying fast enough without them.

The Biological Survey has this year only \$142,000 to enforce the law and pay all of the expenses of the field force and the headquarters in Washington—salaries and everything else. There are only twenty-eight

and whose president is John B. Burnham. This measure has been devised for the double purpose of providing bird refuges and public hunting grounds, and enforcing the law for the protection of migratory birds. When the bill is examined in the committees of the House and Senate, and the opinion of the Department of Agriculture is asked for, the Biological Survey officials will give it their hearty endorsement.

### Much Remains to Be Learned in Spite of Forty Years' Work

It is a simple measure. It provides that every hunter of migratory birds shall have a Federal license costing either 50 cents or \$1—the exact amount has not been determined—which would be issued by postmasters in the form of a stamp to be affixed to the State hunting license.

The Government experts in Washington estimate that there are 5,000,000 gunners in the United States, and that about 1,000,000 of them take out State hunting licenses every year. Thus a fifty cent Federal license on this basis would yield \$500,000 a year and a \$1 license would yield \$1,000,000 a year, to

Directly below is shown a flight of ducks on their way to feeding grounds. In lower panel is a ducking blind in Chesapeake Bay where seasonal shooting is good. The nest shown in circle is that of a mallard—a rare photograph.



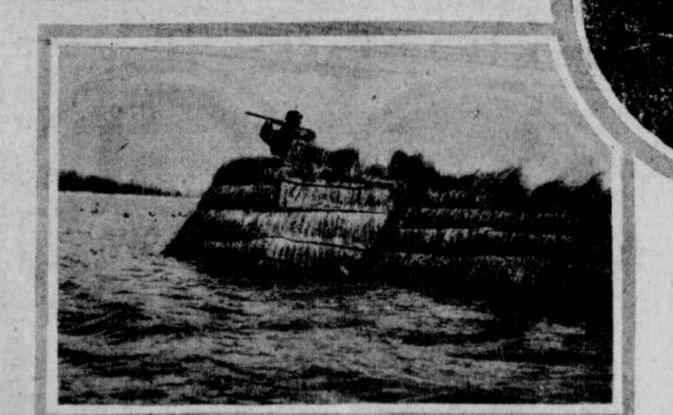
United States game wardens for forty-eight States. Their salaries range from \$1,500 to \$2,200 a year. They are allowed \$5 a day for expenses when travelling, and must turn in vouchers for every cent spent. There are a number of deputy game wardens who get nominal salaries of \$1 a year and an additional \$3.50 a day when called into the field for active duty.

So expensive is the work of law enforcement that it may be necessary to cut down the number of game wardens, before the present fiscal year comes to an end on June 30 next, for lack of funds. The amount carried in the agricultural appropriation bill for the next fiscal year for this purpose is the same as the figure for this year, Congress on the plea of economy having declined to make an increase.

How small this amount is in proportion to the work to be done is shown by the fact that the single State of Maryland will have this year \$100,000 available for game protection from hunting licenses. Maryland has twenty-two game wardens, but when it becomes necessary to enforce the law against any hardened offender these wardens always call upon the United States authorities to do it because of their greater prestige.

### Biological Survey Officials Ready To Indorse Protective Measure

Soon after the next session of Congress begins a Federal license bill will be introduced at the request of the American Game Protective Association, whose headquarters are in the Woolworth Building in New York

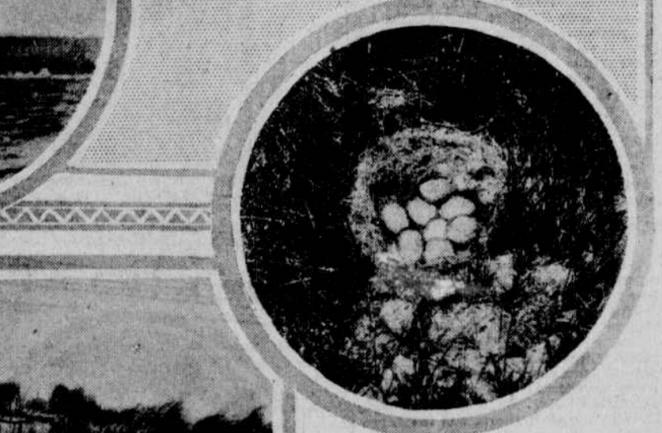
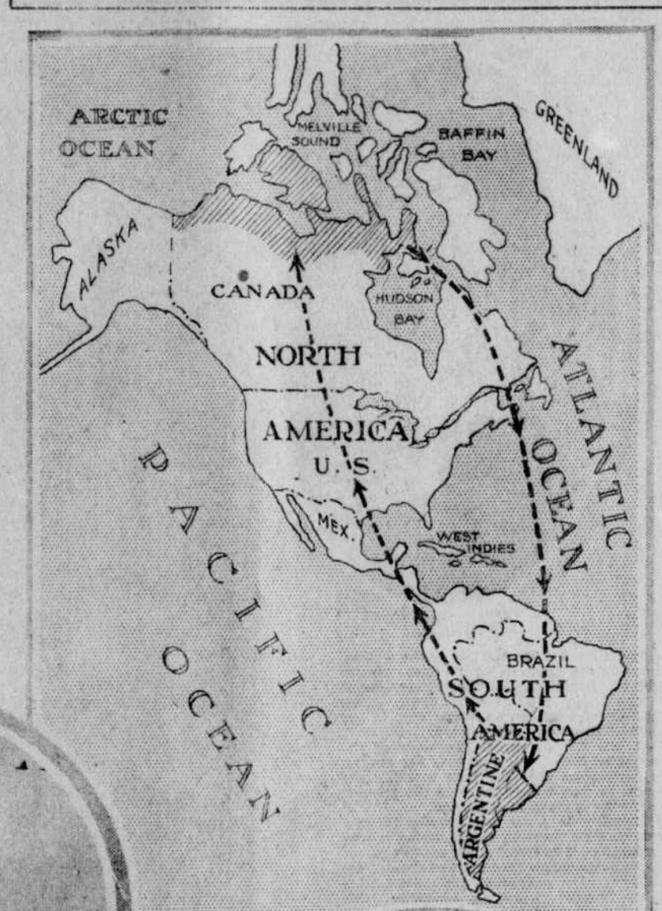


be used to enlarge the Government personnel and create bird refuges and public hunting grounds.

According to reports received in Washington, an overwhelming majority of the sportsmen of the country and of the State game officials are in favor of this proposed law. Tabulations made by the Government agents of opinions for and against the proposal show three in favor of it for every one against it.

Some States, like Illinois, have shown a disposition to inquire whether any of the money raised in this way would be spent within their borders before giving their approval. To such suggestions the Department of Agriculture responds that the money will be spent where it will do the most good—

Chart below shows the wonderful flight of the golden plover from the Arctic Circle to South America.



Flight of the Golden Plover One of Nature's Wonders

No account, however limited, of the migratory birds of the North American Continent would be complete without reference to that most marvellous of all flights—the yearly round trip of the golden plover. This has been described by Wells W. Cooke, assistant biologist of the Biological Survey, as follows:

"Its most striking characteristics are a single flight of 2,400 miles—the longest known flight of any bird—and an elliptical migration route following different paths for the spring and the fall migration. In the first week of June the golden plover arrive at their breeding place on the barren grounds above the Arctic Circle, far beyond the tree line. While the lakes are still icebound they build their shallow nests in the moss only a few inches above the frozen ground.

"As soon as the young are old enough to care for themselves fall migration is begun by a trip to the Labrador coast, where the plover fatten for several weeks on the abundant native fruits. Thence a short trip across the Gulf of St. Lawrence brings them to Nova Scotia, the starting point of their extraordinary ocean flight due south to the coast of South America, their objective point. In fair weather the birds fly past Bermuda without stopping, and many flocks do not pause at the first of the Antilles, but keep on to the larger islands and sometimes even to the mainland of South America, accomplishing the whole 2,400 miles without pause or rest.

### No Idea of Time Is Possible. But Odd Facts Are Known

"How many days are occupied in the trip may never be known. Most migrants fly at night and rest in the day, or vice versa, but the plover fly both night and day. After a short stop on the northern coast of South America they resume their journey and travel overland to the pampas of Argentina. Here they remain from September to March (the summer of the Southern Hemisphere), free from the domestic responsibilities of their Northern summer home. The native birds of Argentina are at the time engaged in family cares, but no wayfarer from the North ever nests in the South.

"After six months' vacation here the plover starts back to the Arctic, but by an entirely different route. They cross northwestern South America and the Gulf of Mexico, reaching the United States along the coasts of Louisiana and Texas. Thence they move slowly up the Mississippi Valley and by early June are again at their nesting site on the Arctic coast. The round trip has taken the form of an enormous ellipse, with a minor axis of 2,000 miles and a major axis stretching 8,000 miles from Arctic America to Argentina.

"The golden plover of the Atlantic Ocean, though often flying 2,400 miles continuously, could afford intermediate stops if they so desired. Sometimes when storm driven they seek the nearest land, and on these occasions appear at Cape Cod and Long Island. Some flocks stop for longer or shorter periods at Bermuda and on the islands of the Lesser Antilles.

"To the golden plover of the Pacific, however, no such convenient harbors of safety are available. Their flight of approximately equal length (3,000 miles) takes them across an islandless sea from Alaska to Hawaii. No matter what storms are encountered, when once they are started over the ocean they must continue to the end or perish.

"It seems incredible that any birds can lay a course so straight as to attain these, small islands in mid-ocean, 2,000 miles from the Aleutian Islands on the north, 3,700 miles from California on the east and 2,900 miles from Japan on the west. And yet year after year golden plover in considerable numbers fly in the fall from Alaska to Hawaii, spend the winter there, and next spring wing their way back again to nest in Alaska.

## Eddie Savoy Indispensable to Department of State

New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., Feb. 26.

**W**HEN the new Secretary of State arrives at his office on March 4 he will find along with the furniture which has been there for many years another useful fixture, which, though of mahogany color like the furniture, differs from the other appurtenances of the office in that it is animated.

This fixture is Edward Savoy, the diminutive negro messenger who, since 1869 has opened the door for every incoming Secretary of State. Incidentally, "Eddie" also has held the door ajar for every diplomat, foreign or domestic, who has visited Washington during that period, to say nothing of the thousands of statesmen, near statesmen, politicians and other visitors who find their way to the Secretary's office in the State, War and Navy Building.

Eddie is credited with knowing the names and faces of a greater number of the world's diplomats than any other living person, and he is an almost infallible encyclopedia of information, often resorted to by officials of the department. His memory for names and faces is traditional, and many stories are current of his having recognized at a glance representatives of foreign Governments who returned to Washington after an absence of ten or fifteen years.

The late Hamilton Fish gave Eddie, then a boy of 14, his first job at the State Department. That was in Grant's administration. When Hamilton Fish, Jr., grandson of the Secretary, and newly elected Representative from New York, recently came to Washington one of the first things he did was to call on Eddie. In paying the visit he said he was carrying out the wishes of his father and grandfather.

For nearly fifty-two years Eddie has been picking up information about diplomacy, and so well has he learned his lesson that he talks and acts like a diplomat. When the

war broke out in Europe and the representatives of the various hostile Powers were busily engaged in trying to win the support of the United States Eddie's tact was often put to severe test. The French, Russian, British, German and Austrian Ambassadors were constant callers at the State Department, and it frequently happened that their visits were simultaneous. Eddie's problem was to see that if two Ambassadors were to attend in the same waiting room they both should be of the same political persuasion.

On one occasion a green doorkeeper was on the verge of putting Count von Bernstorff and the Russian Ambassador in the same room, but Eddie managed to get the German diplomat sidetracked before any damage was done. Eddie also has been selected on numerous occasions for important and difficult jobs dodged by other functionaries. For example, it was Eddie who delivered Ambassador Dumba his papers when the State Department decided the Austrian diplomat had outlived his usefulness here, and some months later he performed the same duty in the case of Von Bernstorff.

In addition to knowledge and tact Eddie has the asset of unusual personal appearance. He is the smallest member of the department's messenger force, and he walks upon the most exquisitely bowed pair of legs in the District of Columbia. It has been recounted that Eddie, visiting a circus, once stropped too near the ring and a trick dog, which had been trained to leap through hoops, left the ring and began jumping through Eddie's legs, desisting only when threatened with the ringmaster's whip. Though this story has not been verified, it has all the elements of probability, for there is no disputing the fact that when Eddie stands erect the figure described by his lower extremities is not unlike that of a capital "O."

A statistician from the Bureau of Standards, who recently saw Eddie for the first time, calculated that if his legs

could be straightened he would be at least six inches taller. At present Eddie's height is approximately five feet.

Having spent the greater part of his life among diplomats, the little messenger has acquired to an unusual degree the diplomatic manner of speaking and the diplomat's cautious attitude toward the public. For example, he was asked which of the various Secretaries who have held office during the fifty-two years of his service he regarded as the best.

"It would ill become me," he replied, "to express an opinion on that question, especially since many of my friends are still alive. They were all singularly capable men and without exception they treated me well. It is perhaps natural that I should have a warm spot in my heart for the memory of the late Mr. Fish, who not only brought me to the department as a boy but who also invariably treated me with kindly consideration.

"That my execution of this policy has been attended by some degree of success," he said, "is evidenced by the fact that my relations with Mr. Bryan were always most cordial."

Eddie, it may appropriately be said at this juncture, has never endorsed the Eighteenth Amendment or the Volstead law. Edward Savoy, Sr., his father, was well known in the District of Columbia fifty years ago as "the head waiter of Washington," so called because he and his corps of waiters were always in demand for the many functions which marked life in the capital in those days. Young Eddie usually accompanied his father on these occasions and in so doing acquired a liking for the good things of the banquet table.

His taste for beverages against which Mr. Volstead wrought has become somewhat dulled by disuse, but the spirit of rebellion is still alive in him.

"Mr. Bryan was a prohibitionist," he said. "Personally I have never been able to sub-

scribe to that doctrine. Nevertheless, in all my official dealings with Mr. Bryan I kept my views in the background and we never had an open difference of opinion on the subject."

Toward other important questions his attitude is singularly common sense and practical. In reply to a question as to his views on the League of Nations he said:

"I have always been able to make my mind go along with President Wilson's, and while he is President I shall continue to do so. In that connection I remember a rather foolish friend of mine who was doorkeeper for Mr. Robert Lincoln when he was Secretary of War. There had been a rumor that Mr. Lincoln was to resign.

"One day a stranger called at the War Department and said:

"'Boy, where is your boss?'

"'I ain't got no boss,' said the doorkeeper. 'Mr. Lincoln done got through here.'

"'Well, sir,' said Eddie, 'it was true that Mr. Lincoln was about to resign, but before he left he got that boy transferred, and whether Mr. Lincoln had anything to do with it or not, they just kept on transferring him till they transferred him out into the street.'

"You may rest assured," said Eddie with conviction, "my mind goes along with Mr. Wilson's on the League of Nations and everything else."

Eddie has labored throughout his diplomatic career under one handicap which is beyond his control. When escorting a strange diplomat to the Secretary's office it is his custom to precede the visitor by a few feet, meantime lending encouragement by some such remark as, "Walk this way, please, sir."

Recalling that Eddie is perhaps the most bowlegged man in the world, one will have no difficulty in understanding the embarrassment experienced by some of the less experienced diplomats sometimes feel upon hearing the little man's polite request.