

# *South Carolina* **WILDLIFE**

VOL. 17, NO. 4

FALL ISSUE, 1970





# South Carolina WILDLIFE

VOL. 17, NO. 4

FALL ISSUE, 1970

Published quarterly by

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE  
RESOURCES DEPARTMENT  
Columbia

Dedicated to the Conservation,  
Protection and Restoration  
of Our Game and Fish and to the  
Education of Our People  
to the Value of Our Natural Resources

Robert E. McNair, Governor



## WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSIONERS

Clyde A. Eltzroth, Chairman  
P. O. Drawer 457, Hampton  
Edgar C. Glenn, Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Beaufort  
Robert W. Rhame  
Holly Hill  
Robert H. Epps,  
Rt. 7, Buncombe Rd., Greenville  
William L. Thompson  
119 W. Benson, Anderson  
W. Frank Mishoe  
Greeleyville  
Wade M. Williams  
632 Sedgewood, Rock Hill  
Roger Seamans, Secretary  
Columbia



## WILDLIFE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

James W. Webb, Executive Director  
Columbia

Pat Ryan, Director  
Division of Game and Fresh Water Fisheries  
Columbia

Jefferson C. Fuller, Jr., Chief of Game  
and Fresh Water Fish Management  
Columbia

Gene Howell, Chief of Law Enforcement  
Columbia

Thomas C. Welch, Jr., Chief of Boating  
Columbia

Frank P. Nelson, Chief of  
Planning and Development  
Columbia

Roger Seamans, Chief of Information—  
Education  
Columbia

Fred Ramage, Comptroller  
Columbia

Dr. James A. Timmerman, Jr.,  
Director of Marine Resources,  
Box 217, Ft. Johnson Road, Charleston

Charles M. Bearden,  
Chief of Marine Conservation,  
Management and Services,  
2020 Maybank Highway, Charleston

## EDITORIAL STAFF

John Culler, Editor  
Darrell Holt, Photographer  
Jo Cardwell, Circulation

## FEATURES

### WHAT GAME MANAGEMENT AREAS MEAN TO YOU . . . . . 3

South Carolina game management areas have gone from  
20,000 acres 20 years ago to almost one million acres today.

### NATIONAL FORESTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA . . . . . 4

National forest lands do more than just grow timber, they  
provide nearly 50 per cent of the public hunting areas in  
the state.

### WILDLIFE AND THE FORESTRY PRODUCTS COMPANY 6

By F. W. Kinard, Jr.

What one paper company is doing to assist wildlife on a  
managed forest.

### WILDLIFE FROM WOODLANDS . . . . . 8

By Claude F. Barden

Efforts of the S. C. State Commission of Forestry to im-  
prove Wildlife habitat on their lands.

### NEW HOPE FOR OIL SOAKED WATERFOWL . . . . . 10

The efforts of one man to save waterfowl from a slow,  
antagonizing death.

### SOUTH CAROLINA MARINE CENTER . . . . . 13

By Roger Seamans

The story of the South Carolina Marine Center now under  
construction near Charleston.

### IRON SHOT FOR DUCKS? . . . . . 16

Thousands of ducks die each year from lead poisoning, but  
help in the form of iron shot may be on the way.

### CHECK STATION . . . . . 18

By Walt Schrader

When your deer is checked by biologists at the check station,  
what they find helps maintain a well balanced deer herd and  
good hunting.

Front Cover—Deer hunter Paul Rowe of Columbia and some of  
his hounds on a hunt earlier this year near Ridgeland. Many times  
deer will instinctively head for water when being trailed, a trait  
the wise hunter will remember. Photo by Darrell Holt.

Inside Front Cover—A foggy fall morning on the Savannah River  
has a beauty all its own, while a dim sun offers a promise of the  
day to come. Photo by John Culler.

# IRON SHOT FOR DUCKS?

SINCE 1965 when the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife announced that waterfowl losses caused by lead poisoning might shorten duck hunting seasons or force bag limit reductions, leading American and Canadian ammunition manufacturers have been trying to find a non-toxic substitute for lead in waterfowl shotshells.

BSFW statistics still indicate ducks, geese, and swans feeding in shallow water are poisoned by some 6,000 tons of lead shot which accumulate in U. S. wetlands each year. After checking lead shotshell ammunition stocks in local sporting good stores, you might think that five years of trying was to no avail, but you'd be wrong.

An alternative to this lead poisoning has, in fact, been found. But the conclu-



sion of several years of research, recommending soft iron as the only feasible substitute for lead in shotshells has not left the lead-oriented ammunition manufacturers particularly overjoyed.

The research project—financed by the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers (SAAMI), (the trade association of the ammunition and firearms producers) and conducted at the Illinois Institute of Technology—failed to produce any of the non-toxic lead modifications SAAMI was eagerly waiting for. SAAMI has since been none too eager in picking up IIT's iron recommendation and running with it.

So iron was put on the line.

Tests at the BSFW's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland proved that shotshells with one ounce of No. 4 soft iron shot had almost identical "killing effectiveness" as

comparable lead loads at "in-range" shots not exceeding fifty yards. In terms of shot-crippled birds, the tests indicated no appreciable difference between experimental iron shotshells and comparable lead loads.

As for its effect on a shotgun, SAAMI's own tests last year revealed negligible gun barrel wear after 1000 test rounds of soft iron shot. There was increasing support for iron pellets in waterfowl shotshells, SAAMI said, evaluation of data would continue and final technical reports were forthcoming. Precious little has been heard from SAAMI since.

Assuming no news was good news, BSFW Director John S. Gottschalk (who will soon join NOAA, the new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) announced during the August, 1970 waterfowl advisory meeting in Washington, D. C., that iron shotshells would hopefully be available to waterfowl hunters within a year and a half. SAAMI quickly responded that this didn't look so likely, that iron shotshells were on the horizon but not yet in hand.

Whether SAAMI is indeed anxious to get iron shotshells into their hands is questionable. Two or more companies in New England have already suggested they can produce soft iron shot. But with a squeaky-tight economy and a general dislike of depending on production contracts outside the ammunition manufacturing industry, SAAMI might at present be walking an economic tight rope between its environmentally concerned four-color ad and its not-to-be-forgotten stockholders.

In any case, SAAMI would do well to consider carefully just how far out on the horizon iron shot really is. It might consider, for example, in terms of hunter recreation hours, spent shotgun shells, and its "environmental decade" image, the economic ramifications of saving an estimated one million waterfowl lost each year due to lead shot poisoning.

In the end, it is this kind of consideration that may put iron shotshells in the guns of duck hunters where they belong.