

Game Fishing

Canada has long been known as a fisherman's paradise. Indeed a great historical debt is owed to these aquatic members of the wildlife family. The codfish, which abounds on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, provided one of the first incentives for travel to the New World. Fishing villages and camps established on the nearby mainland grew into the modern cities of today.

A second great commercial fishery is that on the Pacific Coast. There the salmon, which spends most of its life in the vastness of the Pacific Ocean, returns in great swarms to ascend perhaps hundreds of miles of mountain streams to the spawning ground where it was born. The development of dams, and silt deposition in the spawning beds, are hazards to the continued existence of the great salmon runs. With wise management, however, this great resource should continue to supply food to world markets.

Inland, the Canadian sport fisherman comes into his own. Cold mountain streams excel in trout fishing. The warmer southern lakes are populated by trout, pike, maskinonge, pickerel, bass and many other fish that take the fisherman's lure and furnish the best of eating. Northern lakes, as yet little fished, produce lake trout that may weigh up to 40 pounds. From them also come the grayling, a fighting two-pounder, and the arctic char, which has recently been recognized as a fine-fleshed, flavourful member of the salmon family.

Fish Conservation

Wise use is a requisite of productive fishing also. The Canadian Wildlife Service has pioneered in the experimental planting of sport fish in small lakes and streams of the National Parks. Often these lakes become overcrowded with small coarse fish that have to be poisoned to remove them before better-quality fish will thrive. The results of these experiments have been phenomenal. Canada looks forward to maintaining its place as a fisherman's paradise.

To complete the picture of Canadian wildlife, a few imported species may be mentioned. Many animals and birds have been imported, some of them on the theory that if they provided good hunting in one continent they would do the same on another. The results have seldom borne out the theory. Many introductions have failed for reasons difficult to determine. A single food element not in sufficient supply, or one detrimental factor, may be sufficient to prevent increase. Some species have done well, some too well. The ring-necked pheasant and the Hungarian partridge are examples of game birds that have done well in their new habitat. The starling, the English sparrow, the European carp and the brown rat are examples of introduced wildlife species that have become pests. With the changes wrought by agriculture in the New World some of the original inhabitants, such as the prairie chicken, declined in number. Some birds imported to replace them found conditions much to their liking, however, and increased rapidly. For example, in 1930 three dozen pheasants were released on Pelee Island in Lake Erie. Seven years later 10,000 birds were harvested in a single autumn and the annual kill has remained high ever since. The Hungarian partridge, after the introduction of a few hundred individuals in 1907, began to increase rapidly and within 20 years had spread throughout the entire prairie area. Since then it has become one of the most interesting game birds to be found anywhere.