

# Careful Stocking and Handling Essential to Good Fishpond

(This the last of three articles by Verne E. Davidson, Biologist, and W. W. Stevens, Soil Conservationist, Soil Conservation Service.)

In two previous articles we discussed two important features of satisfactory fishponds — (1) good construction on a suitable site, and (2) the fertility of the water. The third problem is: how to manage the fish themselves? To solve this third problem, there are five es-

sential things to do:

1. Be sure there are no fish in the pond before you stock it with hatchery fingerlings. You can be sure of this only if you seine the pond with a minnow seine and find no fish of any kind. If you catch fingerling fish, you cannot stock correctly until you kill those wild fish which are present. No use to stock 1,000 to 1,500 bluegills and 100 bass per acre into a pond with a

population of untold numbers.

2. Early fall stocking of a pond with bluegills is best; either August or September, but November or even December are not too late. If bluegills are to attain a 4-ounce size, and if overpopulation is to be prevented the second year, a pond must be stocked before January. Bass should be stocked in the spring following the fall stocking with bluegill.

3. Don't fish either the bluegills or bass until the bass have been in your pond nearly a year. Otherwise you will find your first hatch of bluegills beginning to overpopulate the pond the second year. Maintain good fertility—feed the fish well — from early spring until fall every year.

4. Begin fishing as soon as you can find little bass around the edge which you know were hatched in the pond. This should be in May (sometimes as early as April or as late as June) when your original bass are about one year old. Don't guess about it. To be sure, catch a few in your minnow seine. The way to determine if it is a bass is to look at the size of its mouth. You can be sure it is a bass if its mouth will open as large as its body. When you find these fingerling bass, you know your original stocking with fish turned out successfully. You are ready to begin fishing.

5. Fish your bass lightly for the first month or two. Many ponds have been hurt by heavy bass removal in the opening weeks. Heavy fishing is all right after July.

Fishing is poor in many farm ponds because the fish population is too numerous. We call it an overpopulation. But "overpopulation" does not mean too many pan-size too many 1 — to 2 — inch fingerling fish. You cannot have to many of either. You want large quantities of catchable size; and large numbers of little fingerlings which are your bass-food. Overpopulation means too many bluegills 2 to 6 inches long (less than 2 ounces each in weight). You can avoid this condition; or you can correct the condition if it occurs.

You will need help from someone with a lot of fishpond experience to correct a poor population. USDA Farmer's Bulletin 2094 will suggest the correction possible. Its information that will help you avoid troublesome fish populations, and will help you manage the water and fish for good fishing.

## Beta Club Formed At Hiwassee Dam High School

A local chapter of the National Beta Club, a leadership-service organization for high-school students, was established on Thursday, March 4, at Hiwassee Dam High School, according to Mr. Harest King (Principal).

Objectives of this non-secret, leadership-service organization are to encourage effort, to promote character, to stimulate achievement among its members, and to encourage and assist students to continue their education after high-school graduation.

Mrs. Pope T. Singleton, teacher of English was appointed as faculty sponsor for the local chapter.

Permanent officers for this year are: President, Grace T. Carringer; Vice-President, Martha Jean Reid; Secretary, Annette West and Treasurer, Helen Roberson.

The local organization is composed of the following students who have fulfilled the requirements necessary for membership in the National Beta Club:

Martha Sue Hawkins, Grace T. Carringer, Shirley Anne Morrow, Sarah Rose McNabb, Lola Jean Jones, Helen Arlene Roberson, Annette West, Martha Jean Reid, Ruth Tamby, Marvin Neal Hawkins, and Quinn Hamby.

## ASC Practices OK On Soil Bank

Land which has been placed in the Soil Bank — either the Acreage Reserve or the Conservation Reserve — is still eligible for Federal cost-sharing in carrying out practices under the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), A. J. Barton, Chairman of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation County Committee, reminded Cherokee farmers this week.

But applications for cost-sharing for conservation practices must be filed with the County ASC Committee before any practice is undertaken Barton said. The County Committee is also the best source of information about which practices are approved for ACP cost-sharing in the County this year. Since approved practices are not the same in every county, it is important to check with the local ASC office, Barton stressed. The practices approved for each county include those that are considered most needed in that area.

Applications are now being received for the 1957 ACP at the County office. All applications for approved practice that are received in time for consideration under this year's program will receive equal consideration, said Barton.

If ACP practices are carried out on land placed in the Soil Bank, the Soil Bank provisions of no grazing and no harvest must, of course, be met. Some practices which are not eligible for assistance under the Conservation Reserve are eli-

## On Our Street

By SALLY DAVIDSON

Cub Scout night at the church, on our street, every little cub in full uniform, and every cub's mother, with a "pot luck dish."

Teenage boy holding candy bar for his girl to eat off of it.

What about a fellow wearing his little boys tobobbin, on a cold morning. Saying: "I need it worse than he does, my hair is thin up there."

Large white and black spotted bird dog, still wearing his Christmas jingle bell around his neck.



JAMES H. McCOMBS

Marine Private James H. McCombs, son of Mrs. Dorothy Ferguson of Murphy, graduated recently from basic training at Camp Lejeune, N. C. He will be transferred to a permanent duty station.

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