

CONSERVATION COMMENTS

By Paul M. Kelsey
Regional Conservation Educator

SNOW STORIES

Out of doors in winter is no longer the monopoly of ice fishermen and rabbit hunters, in fact, they have become a minority, giving way to vast numbers of skiers and snowmobilers. In addition an ever increasing number of summer hikers are also donning skis and snowshoes to take to the trails during the cold months.

Many snowmobilers are just out for the ride, but some, like hikers, are learning that there is a great deal to see in winter woods and fields.

Superficially woods in winter may seem very quiet and inactive, for many summer inhabitants have departed, or have retired for the winter. Even many of those that are active all winter stay in the warmth of some retreat much of the time. When they do venture forth, however, they leave the story of their wanderings clearly written in the snow.

For one interested in what the denizens of the woods do, this can make an afternoon afield more interesting than a warm summer afternoon when you must see the animal to learn what he is doing. Great care must be taken in reading snow stories, for if the wrong interpretation is placed on the story written in animal tracks, very misleading conclusions may be reached.

The first step is to identify the writer. This isn't always as simple as it may seem. The sun can quickly enlarge a track so that a fox track may pass for that of a large dog, or a cottontail track for that of a snowshoe. A competent tracker on the other hand, can often identify a track under an inch of fresh snow just by the pattern and action of a series of tracks.

Unless you can find an experienced and knowledgeable woodsman to help you with identification, *A Field Guide to Animal Tracks* by Olaus J. Murie, is the best aid you can get. This book goes far beyond animal tracks and also helps to identify and interpret many other animal signs.

Winter mortality as seen written in snow must be read with care. Often what is taken to be a kill is nothing more than a dead animal found in the snow. Only when tracks of both animals, fresh blood or signs of a struggle are present, should a kill be considered. Even when a true kill has occurred, conditions which lead up to the kill are an important part of the story. Was this animal a healthy victim, or was this Mother Nature's way of removing a sick weak or injured animal from the population?

The hunter who studies tracks of his favorite game can learn a great deal about their movements — types of cover they prefer for travel, where they spend their resting hours under different weather conditions and what they utilize for food.

While the hunter may be learning secrets that will mean more successful days afield in the future, game biologists find snow stories invaluable in telling of success or failure of game management practices and hunting regulations.

By toe-clipping live trapped snowshoe rabbits that are liberated in new areas, wanderings of individuals can later be recognized by characteristic tracks. Next winter any hare track with all the toes

was made by one born there during the summer and would represent reproductive success.

Systematic studying of turkey tracks is the best way to get an accurate tally of the wary turkey particularly on the edge of its expanding range. What the game manager has been able to read in the snow has often been one of the keys to determining when new areas could be opened safely for turkey hunting.

Just plain curiosity about what an animal is doing is a good enough reason for setting out along its trail. Much tracking may be just a hike as the animal moves from cover to cover, but along the way his daily activities will unfold as you read one small chapter in his autobiography.

IF TRACKS... TO LOOK CANNOT... YOU AND YOUR DOCTOR

For FREE booklet write: **AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY**
1500 Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20032

Attention Anglers

Anglers who plan to take advantage of the special winter fishing for muskaloage at Chautauqua Lake on January 30 - 31 and on February 6 and February 13 and 24, 1971, are reminded of the following regulations:

1. In addition to a regular 1971 fishing license or combination hunting and fishing license, the 1971 Special Muskaloage License (fee 50¢) is required. These Special licenses are now available at license issuing agents in Cattaraugus, Chautauqua and Erie Counties.
2. Chautauqua Lake is the only location open to muskaloage fishing on the six days indicated.
3. The use of tip-ups on Chautauqua Lake is prohibited on the six days that musky fishing is allowed. Anglers may operate two lines, with or without rod.
4. Successful anglers must affix the seals furnished with the Special Muskaloage License, to fish immediately upon taking.

All other provisions of the Conservation Law with respect to the taking of muskaloage in the waters of Cattaraugus and Chautauqua Counties will be in effect. These provisions are listed on Page 17 of the 1970-71 Hunting-Trapping-Fishing Guide and are also described in an information sheet furnished with each Special Muskaloage License.

William F. Shephard, Regional Fisheries Manager, suggests that

anglers should limit the size of the holes in the ice to a maximum of ten inches in diameter. This will be adequate to allow taking muskaloage while giving consideration to other recreational uses of the lake.

Births

- Jan. 20: To Mr. and Mrs. Edeek Bryzowa, Wellsville, a daughter.
- Jan. 20: To Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Rechner, Wellsville, a son.
- Jan. 21: To Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Simons, Belmont, a son.
- Jan. 22: To Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Schon, Alfred Station, a daughter.
- Jan. 23: To Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Toporas, Wellsville, a daughter.
- Jan. 24: To Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cady, Wellsville, a daughter.
- Jan. 24: To Mr. and Mrs. Robert Peck, Jr., Wellsville, a daughter.

Marriages

- Dec. 28: Miss Virginia Emerson of Issaquah, Wash. and Dale F. Marshall, Wellsville.
- Dec. 31: Miss Dorothy Jacinetti of Niantic and Harold R. Bissell, Allentown.

Deaths

- Mrs. Clyde Cook, 92, Bolivar, Jan. 20. Three grandchildren survive.

David Rogers, 86, Wellsville, Jan. 22. Two daughters and a son survive.

Mrs. Charles Mather, 87, FFA, Jan. 22. A son, a daughter, two brothers and three sisters survive.

Mr. and Mrs. McDonald, of Wellsville, Jan. 23. Five sons, two daughters and three brothers survive.

Mrs. Forest B. Welch, 81, Wellsville, Jan. 24. One son survives.

Mrs. Earl D. Adams, 77, Wellsville, Jan. 25. Two daughters, one son and a brother survive.

Howard M. Pitts, 77, Wellsville, Jan. 25. His widow, a son and a sister survive.

Lemmer

Chiropractic Office

Eugene J. Lemmer, D. C.

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(CLOSED THURSDAY)

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Dates Claimed
Feb. 13: — Andover United Methodist Church Bake Sale.

Tax Notice
Beginning, Monday, January 4, 1971, I will receive taxes at my home, 11 Maple Street, Andover, N. Y., on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for the months of January and February. After January 31st 1% will be added to all taxes due. After March 1st 1 1/2% will be added to all taxes due.

RETA K. FOSTER, Collector
If you do not own property for which you have received a Tax Notice, please return Tax Notice to Reta Foster, immediately.