

Outdoor Lore



By Nevyl Shackelford • University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

We often talk of the balance of nature as if to think of the situation as orderly in an old time Puritan prayer meeting. But the fact is, nature is about as well balanced as a sentinel crow perched on the top twig of a weeping willow in a high wind. Almost anything can upset nature's apple cart—usually with catastrophic results.

To illustrate the point, Charles Darwin once wrote that in a certain English village the amount of honey produced was in direct proportion to the old mads living therein.

The old mads in this village, as many women of this village once did, kept cats. They caught birds, and the birds caught bees. Thus, Darwin discovered a direct relationship between spiders and the amount of honey local beekeepers could harvest at bee robbing time.

All this balance of nature stuff is tied up in a word called "ecology." This is probably one of the most fascinating sciences and is somewhat of an extension of biology and a study of the extremely complex relationship that exists between all living creatures and their environments.

According to this science, no form of life—and that includes human life—stands entirely on its own. It is the consensus of these scientists, however, that man still has time to reverse the trend of unbalancing nature, but that time is swiftly running out. It has been proven that with his superior intellect, he can utilize natural resources without completely destroying them, but the test is: Will he do it? Will he be willing to sacrifice creature comforts and immediate gain and make the supreme attempts to save the last remaining fragments, and will he be willing to coordinate his knowledge into responsibility for the common good?

One of the best little birds I know is a little white-breasted nuthatch. It is an extremely sensitive little woodpecker, keenly intelligent within certain narrow limits, and faithful in its concern and devotion to any human who can secure its trust.

Unlike chickadees, titmice, and wrens that frequent bird feeders in winter and can be readily coaxed to take food from the hand, it takes a lot of patience to gain the confidence of a nuthatch. But unlike the other birds who tend to forget their benefactor once the austerity of winter is passed, the nuthatch's friendship long endures.

During a bitter and prolonged cold spell four winters ago, I managed with a handful of black walnut kernels to entice a wary, but famished nuthatch down out of a tree into my hand. Since that little creature has stayed around my premises both summer and winter, providing very interesting outdoor company.

Ornithologists say that the average life span of a nuthatch is seven years and that it goes into a torpid state in the winter. It shares with woodpeckers of wedging a seed or a soft-shelled nut in a small knothole or bark crevice or attempting to "hack" or "hatch" it open

Non-resident fishing dollars benefit everyone

Kentuckians often are not aware of the fine fishing available in the Commonwealth's major lakes as are residents of neighboring states. This premise is strengthened when one compares the sale of fishing licenses, resident and non-resident, for 1969. According to records in the Fiscal Control section of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources a total of 283,026 Kentucky residents purchased fishing licenses during that year, while out-of-staters bought 110,711.

By applying extremely rough figures, one can determine that about four out of ten persons who fished in Kentucky were from out-of-state. This statement is true for license buyers, but a little quirk reveals that the percentage of residents fishermen is much greater than that 6-4 ratio mentioned above.

You see, in Kentucky all residents 65 and older are allowed to fish free, without a license. Also, youngsters under 16 who are treated with repeated strokes of its bill.

In summer the nuthatch is loner, eschewing all other avian company, preferring—except for an occasional visit to check on its human friends—the solitude of the deep woods. In winter, however, in what seems to be an attempt to escape the season, it travels in the company of chickadees, titmice, and downy woodpeckers. It faces with them a lot but seems to enjoy the association.

HUNTING FISHING IN KENTUCKY

For three nights will be at least \$30. He'll eat 10 times in Kentucky and will spend about \$20 per meal—about \$20. His gasoline could cost him \$20-\$30. He may purchase some fishing tackle and bait, probably for the 1971-72 season opening early next month. It is indeed refreshing to hear an individual talk about and revel in the beauties of nature that are available in so many places in Kentucky.

This article, however, is in no way meant to indicate that the alarms sounded and the remedial measures undertaken should not be continued. The should, and they must be intensified by not only the youth of the nation but by every man, woman and child. The dangers of being overcome by polluted air, impure water and infested soil should not in any way be minimized. We are 100 percent for restrictions put on a number of products, and in the intense interest that has been generated to preserve this world of ours.

FRANKFORT, Ky.—Oftena person, upon returning from a fishing trip, spends a lot of time describing the wonderful countryside he saw on the way to his favorite spot, and about the beautiful scenery he often viewed from the palisades, the serene purity of the air, the clarity of the water in the lakes, the neatness of the docks and the roadside parks bordering the waterways. He tells of the beauty of the fish he caught, and all but blots out the memory of fish that were or were not harvested.

At a time when farms are soundly based on the impurities of the air, water and soil, when Earth Day is suggested as a national holiday, and when the population is warned that the world cannot last long under such conditions, it is indeed refreshing to hear an individual talk about and revel in the beauties of nature that are available in so many places in Kentucky.

Young but talented

Young but talented. That's how Morehead State University Head Basketball Coach Bill Harrell describes his sophomore-dominated varsity in the 1971-72 season opening early next month. The three-year Eagle member will not despoil a landscape by tossing out the remains of a meal to impair the beauty of the area and most assuredly contribute to the ugliness of a lake, a countryside, a rural road or a super-highway.

Yes, it is great to live in a state where such unpolluted beauty remains, unspoiled by man who has in the past dosed pesticides and acids and litter and clutter in other areas. But unless protection for those places is forthcoming now, it will be but a few years before they, too, become defiled areas, covered with ugliness brought on by mankind in greed and selfishness. Kentucky truly does have unspoiled areas. But they are becoming fewer. And Kentucky also has its areas of ugliness that must be abhorred by all persons—places of poison water and air laden with impurities and soil that is but an all the more necessary that interest in these beauties will do naught to tamper with such God-given delight.

opponent could expect the Eagles to use a running offense and a pressure defense. The former Kentucky high school coach of the year said he hoped to have his star lineup named in time for the annual freshman-varsity game Monday, Nov. 22. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. encounter at Laughlin Fieldhouse will be available at the door. No seats will be reserved. MSU opens the regular season Thursday, Dec. 2, at DeQueen. O. J. Roberts stars the home schedule Monday, Dec. 6.

COMMISSIONER MILLER on Kentucky Agriculture

Highway developments plus more rapid communication facilities have bridged the gap, so to speak, between rural and urban people. Thus, there is a less distinct line between urban and rural communities today than was the case in past years. As I look at farm-city relationships, I feel that our concern is not so much a question of understanding but, rather, one of caring with the total picture, rather than necessarily attempting to place a rural or urban label upon various problems.

For example, environmental quality is an important issue today. We are to find answers to the problems of pollution, we must have the cooperation of all people, regardless of where they live. Many chemical wastes are not so much a question of understanding but, rather, one of caring with the total picture, rather than necessarily attempting to place a rural or urban label upon various problems.



THE EAGLES

Morehead State University's varsity basketball team opens the 1971-72 season on Thursday, Dec. 2, at Bluegrass Park. The team includes Coach Bill Harrell, Assistant Coach Jack Hunk, and players including John Harrell, Howard Wallen, William Williams, Stanley A. Hill, Dotson of London, Lowell Ashby of Shelbyville, Eugene Standley of Jones Creek, Ron Nicholson at West Palm Beach, Fla., John Stacy of Jackson, Leonard Couder of Danville, the lineup of Louisville and Ken Sall of Bellevue, Conley, Abell and Unshell are the only lettersmen on the 12-man squad.

meet the demands of a progressive agriculture. Resource development is another issue requiring the cooperation of all people. As more farmland is needed to develop shopping centers, housing areas, and industrial complexes, urban and rural people must work together in planning these developments. The recreational needs of the future will, no doubt place greater demands on resources used by agriculture. Such needs must be met through cooperation by rural and urban dwellers. There are many other areas where we must work together to realize the maximum from our resources. I feel that farm-city work activities can play a major role in the spirit of cooperation which we need as our rural and urban people plan and build for the future.

From the hills to the Bluegrass on a frosty autumn morning is quite an experience

WEST LIBERTY, Ky.—Going down from the hills to the low country on a frosty autumn morning is quite an experience. Imagine high ridges fringed with autumn-colored trees and rimmed white with a coat of frost, all suddenly struck by surges of orange and red mixed with light blue and getting ever brighter. The approach of a strange, abstract, rosy pink tones quite soft-binding to one who is almost a stranger to the scene.

In Clark County dawn had traveled from treets and hills to level ground still pale-green with ice crystals. As sunlight touched the broad fields they seemed to glitter as oldtimers said hills over Elliott's diamond mines sparkling when hit by sun. The countryside was waking and by the time Lexington was reached, morning had become children, schoolbuses in hand, boarding a local bus. Frost had disappeared and with it some of the magic, but the countryside and the people were still the same. The picture now was people and cars—another scene, one of action in its rightful place as part of day. In this particular autumn morning coming down from East Kentucky to the Bluegrass was a Kentucky and its seasons with each fact an integral part of the scene. Kentuckians are proud of their whole as dawn is part of day, winter and spring, but they reverse most of all that between winter and spring like Indian Summer. Ben Franklin's "Up, slug, slug, slug" Time enough for sleeping, might be applied to everyone who has a chance to see autumn in its best. It is a country back in the past, but it is a country back in the present. Among the blessings for that is grateful to be struck by the sun on his walls... scenes perfect for lovers of art to paint and send greetings to friends and loved ones far from home... scenes perfect for a traveler to view while going down from the mountains to the Bluegrass.

Hand grasped the curtain of night and pulled it aside to await another evening and the first ray of sunlight struck tops of craggy cliffs in the Red River Gorge. Hills that had been dark now were lit together with bright ribbons of many colors where a thick layer of fog from the mountains to the Bluegrass. Hand grasped the curtain of night and pulled it aside to await another evening and the first ray of sunlight struck tops of craggy cliffs in the Red River Gorge. Hills that had been dark now were lit together with bright ribbons of many colors where a thick layer of fog from the mountains to the Bluegrass.

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