

Hunters' Corner
(Continued from page 6)

life is the cause of one 'beef' by local sportsmen. Quote . . . This is the season when young- sters of Brooks, Alta., start year- ning the fields for pheasant nests. The search is worth the effort because each egg brings four cents and a pheasant nest may contain up to 12 eggs. On an average year the boys turn in from 500 to 1,000 eggs to the Provincial Game Farm pheasant hatchery . . . To assure a hatchery . . . line the hatchery with healthy, vigorous cocks from wild requirements. The eggs the boys collect provide the cocks the hatchery needs. . . unquote.

Alberta sportsmen are asking the question: "Why turn an army of boys loose in the heart of the pheasant country with a price on the eggs gathered and thus disrupt Nature's breeding schedule? If they require wild cocks for the hatchery needs why not se- lect them by the simple exped- ient of live trapping during the winter?" They have a point here with four cents on each egg the average youngster is not go- ing to worry whether or not the egg is in an advanced stage of incubation or strictly fresh. How is he supposed to tell in any case?

The Superintendent of the Brooks hatchery says that ap- proximately 6,000 adult ring- neck pheasants are released each year in various areas of the pro- vince, from the Canadian - U. S. border to as far north as the Peace River country. This prac- tice also has come under fire. The complaint is that the birds are scattered all over the pro- vince and so far as the hunter is concerned are never seen again. It is also alleged that in numerous sections the birds dis- appear into thin air and are writ- ten off as a total loss. After all Alberta is a large province. It covers over 255,000 square miles to our P.E.I. modest 2,000 or a fraction over. 6,000 pheasants re- leased in one year may seem like a life saving gesture for the sportsmen. The same proportion in our tight little province would mean 48 pheasants. . . 16 in each of our three counties. In 1956 approximately two thousand pheasants were released in Vir- gin territory in West Prince. To- day (1958) one needs a Search Warrant to find one.

OFF THE BEAM

Two other statements in the article mentioned, to this column- lists way of thinking at least, are definite in favour of perpetual restocking. Quote - "Mother Nature cannot hold a candle to the hatchery. Whereas the mortality at the hatchery is extremely low, about 70 per cent of pheasants hatched in the wild state never reach maturity. . . The 2nd. statement, quote: . . . "In March 1951, a blizzard roared across Al- berta, killing 85 per cent of the province's pheasants - - a death blow from which the pheasant population might never have re- covered if it had not been for the Brooks hatchery" unquote.

There is no argument about 70 per cent of the hatch in the wild

falling to reach maturity. Some- times its higher . . . sometimes less but the general average holds. This has been going on since time and pheasants came into being . . . so what. As an illustration we'll take 100 hen pheasants hatching 10 chicks each 9 might be a closer figure but ten makes for easier figuring. Some of the hens may lose their entire brood, others save all with some in between losing part of their hatch. 30 per cent of one thousand leaves 300 pheasants plus the 100 mothers . . . total

400. That's plenty to take care of hunting fatalities, predation and winter killing and yet leave a substantially increased initial breeding stock.

The Article gave the impression that the survival of the released Incubator hatched Alberta pheasants enjoyed a one hundred per cent survival. British Columbia admits 70 per cent failed to make the grade while Wisconsin and other States figure the loss was 90 per cent and even higher. The \$65.00 question . . . why spend hundreds of thousands of dollars

attempting to out - do Nature when the best accomplished is an even break. Both B. C. and Wisconsin came to the conclu- sion that the game wasn't worth the candle and left the field to Nature.

PAT ON BACK

Now, with regard to the pat on the back the Brooks Hatchery as handed out. In the fall of 1933 we had an approx. 100,000 Hungarian partridge on Prince Edward Island with an open sea- son in the bag for 1934. On Nov- ember 3rd., 1933 several inches

of soft snow fell. This turned to rain and then to frost leaving the ground incased in a coating of ice. Storm followed storm un- til there was several feet of snow, interspersed with layers of crust, on the level. We were unaware then of the importance of grit in a Hun's diet. Covey's flocked to farmyards and the farmers fed them grain and wondered why they kept on dying like flies and their dogs kept catching those that were still alive. With no grit to act as teeth they became crop bound. I have picked up

dead Huns whose crops were fill- ed to the bursting point with wheat, oats and barley and yet were nothing but bones, skin and feathers.

Like Alberta an estimated 85 per cent of our Huns were lost. The covey's began flocking to the railway tracks in search of grit in the form of minute cinders and ballast scraped clear by snowploughs. They began to bed down for the night between the rails. Drifting snow filled in the cuttings and the covey's were buried so deeply they were so

weak they couldn't break out come morning. In a cutting near the Experimental Farm the late Sergeant "Joe" Trainer counted 30 dead Huns that had been turn- ed up by a snow plough along a 50 yard stretch of track.

By a miracle a few covey's or parts of covey's managed to survive. I'd locate a covey of 10 at one point and five or six mil- es away another 6 or 8. No at- tempt was made to introduce ad- ditional Huns. We left them to work out their own salvation. They came roaring back and I feel certain that the Alberta

four years later, October 15th., 1938, an open season was declar- ed extending till October 31st. with a daily bag limit of 5. Two years later it was increased to 8 birds per day. Now if some "smart operator" had started an agitation to import 15 or 20 pairs from Western Canada he'd still be thumping his chest and an- nouncing periodically, "Remem- ber how I saved our Huns." This is a long distance diagnosis but I feel certain that the Alberta

pheasants came back under their own power and not through the medium of an incubator.

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Whenever I hear any of my contemporaries shaking their heads over the present teen- aged mania for blue jeans, I feel like reminding him- or her - that most of us had our fads, too, when we were the same age.

Corduroy, for instance, was a popular fabric for boys' pants, and it often took a stern mother to persuade Junior that a month was plenty long enough to wear a pair of "cords" without having them cleaned, or at least laundered.

Today, with corduroy highly popular in a much wider variety of garments, particularly in jackets of various styles for "oldsters" as well as youngsters, some of the same people who, in their younger days, may have allowed their "cords" only a once-monthly cleaning, should revise their thinking about corduroy care.

For the truth is that a "cord" garment picks up dirt very easily, holds it tightly and so should be cleaned often.

It is typical of corduroy that the pile will mat down quite easily in spots which come under frequent pressure, such as at the elbows.

But that's no reason to despair. As long as the pile is not worn off, we can easily correct that condition right here in our plant, immediately after cleaning.

And here's one thing more to remember: Some dyes used in corduroys can be pretty tricky, especially if the cleaning process involves a stain that should be removed with water. So don't experiment with home cleaning solutions. Whenever you get a stain on any corduroy garment, bring it or send it in to us as soon as possible.

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