

MICHIGAN OUTDOORS

with MORT NEFF

REPORT ON OUR ELK

For the past 35 years Michigan has been striving to re-establish the elk or "wapiti" as it was known to the Indians in the early days—but to game biologists the job looks hopeless. Once upon a time elk were present in large numbers in our state, roaming in big herds throughout the area we now call the "thumb." Then, like the moose, elk retreated before the advance of civilization. Though far more adaptable to civilization than the wary moose, these majestic animals have now been reduced to a few stragglers in the range north and east of Vandenberg, apparently without fear of examination and in poor health. In Colorado, where the animals are to be blind—the result of a malady which, so far, has baffled our biologists. Some animals, victims of the same illness, have been found dead in the area.

Mystery Blindness Prevails

For many years during the summer months elk have been found wandering aimlessly in the range north and east of Vandenberg, apparently without fear of examination and in poor health. In Colorado, where the animals are to be blind—the result of a malady which, so far, has baffled our biologists. Some animals, victims of the same illness, have been found dead in the area.

Food Deficiency Probable

It was natural to suspect that a food problem existed—that a certain mineral or vitamin was lacking. So a study of a normal elk dug in their habitat in Colorado and Wyoming was undertaken. As a result, about ten years ago, we began to place salt licks fortified with cobalt on our elk range. The results...

A Birmingham resident, Mort Neff's "Michigan Outdoors" television show appears every Thursday at 10:00 p.m. over station WJW-TV.

Don't Miss The AUCTION SALE EVERY TUESDAY 7:00 P.M.

At the L & S Auction House, 3245 Auburn Road, 1 mile east of Auburn Heights on M-59. Merchandise of all kinds, new and used furniture, appliances, radios, TV sets, tools, antiques, produce and eggs. Also will sell anything you have for sale; Phone FE 7-0783 or OLive 2-6711. Ray Wernick Auctioneer.

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NATURE NOW

BY LYDIA KING FREHSE

The changing seasons which are so much of joy and variety to our days are one of Nature's most recent creations. The woods were old before the first autumn spread color over the land and there was no man abroad to trace with his finger the intricate pattern of leaf and branch, or to savor the tang of wild fruit, nor yet to stand silent under the glow of a flaming wood.

It was during the Cretaceous period that the great mountain ranges were formed and climatic conditions arose to make a pattern of changing seasons in our temperate zone.

This pattern was already well established by Tertiary times some 60,000,000 years ago when much of our present flora came into being.

Now it is autumn and we look to the woods this afternoon. The dappled shade was muted but warm, reflecting the changing colors of the landscape. Sumac, ivy and woodbine are already rendered and the hickories are there; what nuts are there stand out against the blue sky like knobs on the ends of the branches. Foliage, sassafras, elm, poplar, birch, maple and oak will color, each in its turn.

THE FOREST floor is dying.

Many of the herbaceous plants are withered and their broken stems and seed-heads remain. These bear mute testimony to the fragile pattern of leaf and flower, which has once again completed a cycle whose only goal is the setting of the seed. The plant's work is finished, and so well has nature attended to her business, that the wind, the water and all moving creatures will now become her agents of dispersal.

The brooms of decay is enlivened by the running stems of viburnum, with their strawberry-like fruits, and the "dollar" eyes of the white baneberry set on their crimson stalks. The spice bush is covered with its pungent orange fruits. The bittersweet has ripened its coral berries, which are so much sought after for winter bouquets that Michigan has had to place this shrub on its list of protected plants.

We chanced upon a few clumps of wild ginger so prized for its medicinal roots. Its five-petaled leaf is yellowed, but its neat clusters of ruby berries flaunt a color to remember. The blue fruit of cohosh decorates all the slope of the ravine and wild grapes is purpling on its graceful vine.

BUT IF THE green of summer is paling, the fungi come out in hosts to brighten the forest floor. As we climbed the ridge above the stream, we saw suddenly upon six specimens of the giant puffball growing in a neat line. It is unthinkingly that their round whiteness which sometimes attains a weight of 35 pounds, should spring up from a spore so small that it can be seen only with the aid of a compound microscope. Few varieties, such as the Christmas, are evergreen; but for

the most part, they die now, as gracefully as they have lived. We took with us the new small fern manual which shows a cross section of stem for each species, with its own characteristic pattern made by the arrangement of the vascular bundles. We made a game of matching these with actual specimens, and so unerring is nature in her ways that she did not fail us a single time!

THE SOUNDS

of the wood are lessening. But the squirrel's chatter is heard as he stocks his winter larder with mushrooms and nuts. The cicada and the cricket are still abroad. Now the blue-jays punctuate their flying and fighting with the "pump-handle" call.

A few warblers remain to make a soft murmur in the tree overhead, but their custom is to migrate early and journey far to the tropics. The chickadees, too, are having a party in the late sunshine atop a nearby maple. A crow sentinel, posted in a tree at the edge of the wood, gives loud warning to a flock of yellow warblers feeding in an adjoining corn field. They gorge themselves by day, but at nightfall fly many miles to a "dormitory" in the shelter of the deep forest.

A SOFT SHOWER

of aspen leaves drifts downward as we leave the woods and our hands and hearts are full of the wealth of this hour. For the essence of an autumn wood lies not in its colors, its sights nor yet in its sounds, but in the fulfillment of another period of earth's fruition. The cycle has been completed, and life has once more insured itself and its secure, hidden within the encased seed. This is the eternal principle demonstrated yet again on an afternoon in an autumn wood.

Library Friends Announce Year's Program Topics

Starting on Oct. 6, a schedule of five programs has been planned by Friends of the Baldwin public library for the coming year.

The opening program, according to James E. Tobin, president, will have as speakers Harry and Bonora Overstreet.

"This popular husband-and-wife team's books have done much to make the gains of modern psychology an everyday part of our lives," Tobin said. "Their wisdom and quiet humor makes them delightful as lecturers."

Scheduled for Dec. 2 is Kathryn Turney Garton, described as "tops among the book reviewers of the country."

Starting the new year will be a panel discussion on "The Library Today and Tomorrow."

Following this, in February or March, Edgar Smith, vice president of General Motors and staunch member of the "Baker Street Irregulars," will speak on Sherlock Holmes and the "Irregulars."

Dr. Felheim of the University of Michigan will close the series on April 13, speaking on drama and the theater.

Although the membership drive for the Friends ended officially on Oct. 1, applications are still being accepted.

The organization, besides promoting the advantages and pleasures to be gained through reading, work closely with the library for its betterment.

The eternal principle demonstrated yet again on an afternoon in an autumn wood.

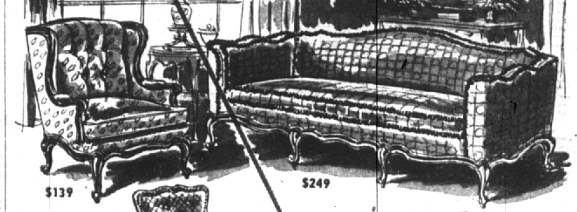
DURING THE past they have repaired work books at the library. They have worked at typing, planning posters, a library social committee, arranging exhibits and handling publicity for the library. Renewing and new members are being asked, this year, to indicate which of these extra services they might perform.

October 2, 1952 THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC Page 5

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THIS IS THE first meeting planned to deal solely with the library and its problems since the Friends were founded three years ago. The panel will be made up of members and guest speakers.

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MEN'S and BOYS' DEPARTMENT

UF Names Several Division Leaders

Two Birmingham men have been named divisional chairmen, and four others named co-chairmen, of United Foundation's major commerce and professional units.

William Ewald, 31 Barber Terrace, representing Campbell Ewald company, is chairman of Division IV, which includes advertising, graphic arts, architects and hotels. Kenneth Babcock, 315 Fairfax, is co-chairman for hospitals in Division IX.

James Cruikshank, 30330 Woodhaven, RFD 5, is co-chairman of Division VIII, which will conduct the drive among school employes. James Van Hout, of 528 Larchlea, representing Michigan Bell Telephone company, is co-chairman for utilities in Division III.

Too Trustful

Bristol, England — Roderick Downs, 2, accustomed to his family's Alsatian dogs, thrust his hand through the bars to pat the wolves in a cage at the zoo. One of the wolves snapped off the tip of one of the child's fingers.

"Say Folks when you see me about the neighborhood

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