

NATURE NOW

Massasauga Is State's Only Poisonous Snake

By Lydia King Frehe
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Now, in summer one is likely to meet a snake on any trip afield. These creatures do not seek our company, will not fight back and are less molested and their usual impulse when cornered is to escape.

Whether or not they are frightened by any particular individual is largely a matter of emotional rather than intellectual appraisal.

It is very difficult to convince the public that Michigan has only one poisonous snake, the massasauga rattler, and that its bite is seldom fatal to a healthy adult.



Mrs. Frehe

ALEXANDER RATTEN is an authority on Michigan snakes. He describes the massasauga as short and thick bodied, attaining a length of two and one-half to three feet. Its head is broadly triangular, its snout blunt. A slight cavity in the frontal region and a deep pit in the "horn" region are typical of poisonous snakes.

In color the massasauga is generally gray, relieved by several series of blotches of dark brown. These are margined on the inside with black and on the outside, with pale yellow.

The young are born alive in small litters and are not more than six inches long. Like their parents they feed largely on rodents. These they

exterminate, thus making them selves highly beneficial to man.

THE RATTLE consists of a series of tough, dry segments loosely fastened together. A new one is grown each time the snake sheds its skin, on an average of three times per year. When the tail is vibrated at a rate of about 18 cycles per minute, a distinctive "buzz" is produced. This serves as a warning to possible enemies.

The massasauga prefers swampy lands. He is frequently present in our lower peninsula. He is also reported from Charry and Bois Blanc Islands and from St. Ignace County in the upper peninsula. Because we cannot see the stream for many summers, we frequently saw him along the swamps of the Au Sable river.

It is wise not to label any species "good" or "bad." Snakes, like every other living thing, have their place in the complicated web of life.

ADAMS is chairman of the Detroit Area council camping committee of the Boy Scouts of America. Hynes is the president of the Brighton Chamber of Commerce.

The program on Sunday included guided tours of the camp, demonstrations of scouting skills and an evening campfire program.



Safety Slogan Winners

Receiving their awards for winning the bicycle safety slogan contest which was sponsored jointly by the police department and Kiwanis Club in Birmingham are Michael Byrnes and Kathy Nimmo. Officer Darlyl

L. Brunstle hands Michael a transistor radio and Kathy accepts the first prize clock radio from Lt. Robert Schaefer. Absent was Debbie Nitzke who won a wallet for third place.

Local Boys With Campers In Nat. Forest

Among area boys who are at Camp Ne-Kana, situated in the Hiawatha National Forest near Manistique, are Paul Bodor, 32155 Bingham Road, and Randy Judd, 32075 Bingham Road, both of Bingham Farms, along with Skip and Stu Harris, 1061 Country Club Drive, Bloomfield Hills.

Also there are Lloyd Diehl, 545 Suffed; Doug McGaw, 733 N. Valley Chase Road; Mike McMechan, 551 Piquette; Spunky Renault, 361 Pleasant; Ben Wells, 555 Fairfax Ave. and Dave and Don Muir, 775 N. Valley Chase Road, all of Birmingham.

REPRESENTING Bloomfield Township at the camp are Ray Krulik, 5055 Lahser Road; Dick and Tom Strickland, 684 Wadlington; and Brian O'Neil, 355 S. Williamsbury.

Joining the group when a new session starts Wednesday will be other local boys: Robert Amberg, Stuart Goldsmith, Frank MacDonnell, Jr., and Jon Miller.

ON THE CAMPS' list of activities are canoe trips on the Sturgeon, Au Train and Indian Rivers and pack trips and hikes through the Pictured Rock area of Lake Superior.

The Birmingham Eccentric Features Few Workers Here In Government Jobs

How many Birmingham residents are holding down government jobs? How does the number compare, in proportion to population, with the total so employed in other areas?

Figures recently released show that relatively fewer local people are in public jobs—federal, state and local—than in most parts of the United States.

Out of every 10 employed people locally, one works in some capacity for a branch of government.

THE OCCUPATIONAL data it revealed by the Department of Commerce in a report on the social and economic characteristics of the population, based on information collected during the 1960 census.

The figures for Birmingham indicate that 10 per cent of the working force are public employees, compared with an average of 13 per cent in the United States and 11.6 per cent in the East North Central States.

According to actual count, a total

of 914 locally are on government payrolls. 432 of them men and 482 of them women. This is exclusive of those employed in agricultural administration and control.

THE CENSUS BUREAU'S reports show that the number of people in public employment in the United States has been growing by leaps and bounds in the last 10 years or so. It has increased nearly 50 per cent, which is much faster than private employment has been rising.

More than nine million civilians are so engaged, as against a little over six million in 1950.

About two and one-half million of

Staff College Grad

Lt. Cmdr. James F. Rex, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Rex of 144 South Williamsbury Road, Birmingham, was recently graduated from the Armed Forces staff college at Norfolk, Va. The college is attended by personnel representing all branches of the armed forces, government agencies and allied nations.

them work for the federal government and the other 6.5 million for state and local governments. More than a million of the latter, however, are part-timers, such as volunteer firemen and nonnally-paid officials.

ON THE AVERAGE, throughout the country, there are 46 federal, state and local employees for every 1,000 people, with the ratio varying widely from section to section.

In the State of Michigan, it is 40 per 1,000 residents.

As to the earnings of public employees, they are at the rate of \$43 billion a year.

Area Resident Helps to Plan Scouting Event

A special 25th silver anniversary celebration of the founding of the Charles Howell Scout Reservation at Brighton was held Sunday.

Invitations to some 2,000 business, civic and professional leaders were extended by Charles F. Adams, 6139 Dakota Circle, Bloomfield Township, and by Fred T. Hynes.

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DOWN TO EARTH Association Members 'Put Area on Map'

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

"Orchids" are in order for the members of the West Beverly Hills Association who have constructed a sign at the corner of Riverside and Southfield—stunning in design and incorporating a road map.

It labels the names and locations of the irregular streets stemming off Riverside. This is the most practical sign I have ever seen and it could be a model for the many subdivisions which have mushroomed in the "greater" Birmingham area.

MOSQUITOES are a pest present in your gardens now. It is possible to use a spray in the area of your terrace or garden entrance of your home which will rid you of the pests for several hours. There are many which Mrs. Burlingame spray a mist which has the ability to get under the leaves of nearby shrubs and grass.

One prime argument for having a terrace adjacent to your home is that you can step outdoors onto your terrace regardless of whether the rain is wet or not and not stir up the mosquitoes.

Only female mosquitoes attack people. They seek the blood necessary for reproduction purposes and die soon after the eggs are laid. Their life span is very short.

THE FEMALE hatches, mates, deposits eggs and dies within a very confined area—a good reason for keeping your terrace sprayed. The food supply for most species is plant nectar and water. Therefore, they are attracted to shrubs as a food source and for a good place to rest. Now that you have had your lesson on this pest, it is

up to you to control the population where it interferes with your garden pleasure.

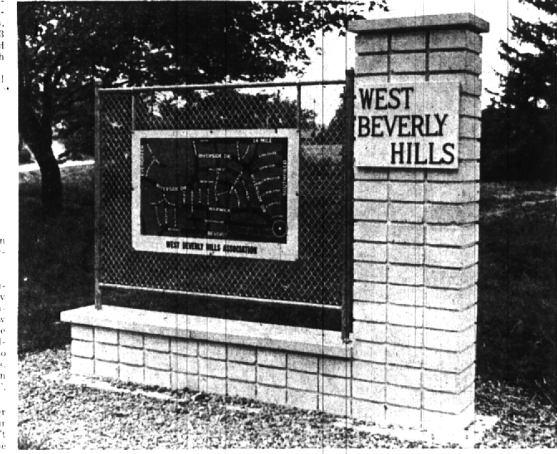
AT A RECENT meeting of county agents, a scientist in biology said, "Weeds, diseases and moths are all enemies of the farmer's resistance to control chemicals. We have many indications of the adjustability of plants and animals to environmental factors and controls. We should redirect our focus on insect and weed control problems."

LOTS OF fertilizer is the answer to many lawn problems. Get your turf so thick that a weed doesn't have a chance to prosper in the sun. Top dress your lawn always with Michigan peat. (This is the dark variety which is strip-mined in our area.) Dressing a lawn with a load of soil will introduce plenty of trouble for weeds for a long time to come.

DR. L. T. WHITE of the Department of Forestry in Maple, Ont., says: "I regret that the public has been led to believe cures for Dutch Elm are available. No actual, probable control has ever been demonstrated. The systematic use of sanitation practices will limit the spread of the disease to one per cent, whereas, without, sanitation it can be as high as 60 per cent."

It costs about \$2.50 per tree to cut out and destroy broken, weak deadwood whereas the cost of tree removal can be as high as \$250. We are tree value conscious in this area. However, in adjacent states, the story is not the same. Such an attitude will weaken our policing program for the Dutch Elm disease.

After every said and done birds are you doing to attract birds to your garden, so they can eat your nice grubs, worms and larvae? Birds are worth many dollars to you as you aim to make your property beautiful.



MEMBERS OF THE West Beverly Hills Association have made it hard to get lost, indicates the names and locations of the irregular streets stemming off Riverside, at least in their area, by erecting this sign

Scout for Senior Leaders

Who are Michigan's senior leaders? The State Commission on Aging would like to find out—and maybe you can help.

Need for leadership in the services, facilities and activities for the aged is growing rapidly. Gary D. Hansen, commission director, said today. Good ideas planning and organizational ability are at a premium. Senior leaders with the will to act and to stimulate intelligent action are vitally needed.

"There are many men and women, 60 years old and over, who are both well qualified and willing to serve as leaders and volunteers in the highly varied and interesting projects for senior adults," Hansen asserted.

SUCH LEADERS are needed to stimulate, develop and organize senior citizens clubs day centers, information and referral services, study groups, and committees on

housing, health and any other projects needed in their local communities.

They also could serve in arranging civic, social and recreational programs on a local level. This is a challenging opportunity for imaginative and resourceful senior adults.

"Anyone who knows a person qualified as a senior leader is urged to write to the Commission on Aging, 404 Tussing Building, Lansing 7, Michigan.

"The recommendation should include a listing of the person's qualifications, talents and relevant experience, Hansen said.

"The more we know about a recommended leader's background," the Commission Director explained, "the better we can judge his or her interests and relate them to special projects or to broad community organizations needed for services and facilities to senior adults."

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