





Friday, October 13, 1967

# 156 Acres Added To Shubenacadie Game Sanctuary

Lands and Forests Minister E. D. Haliburton has announced that 156 acres have been added to the Shubenacadie game sanctuary. The addition will form part of the Provincial Wildlife Park.

"We have had incidents in the past when persons have gone into the area to shoot, despite the fact that it was posted against hunting," said Mr. Haliburton.

## "DETRIMENTAL"

"This practice is detrimental to the work done by Park Superintendent Eldon Pace, who has spent years building up a breeding population of waterfowl.

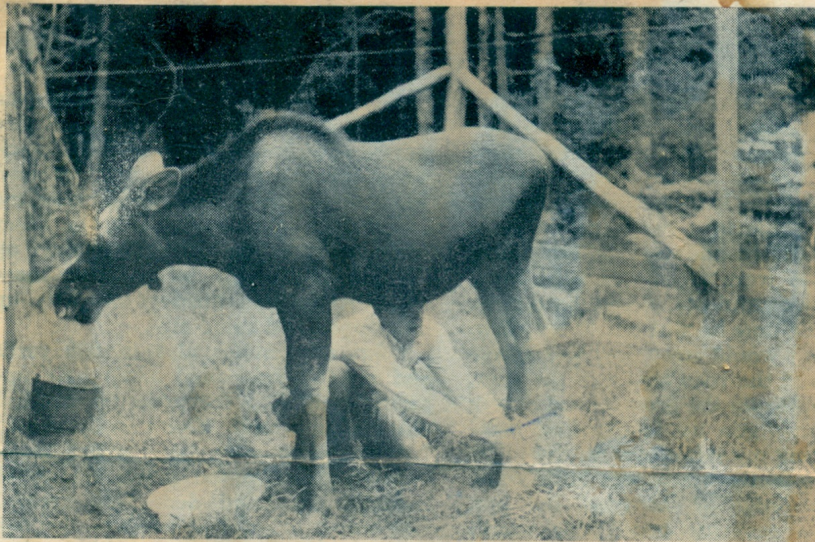
"The department is trying to establish colonies of nesting Canada geese. The dead waters of St. Andrew's River affords the birds a resting and feeding place.

"When they fly out of the area they are, of course, legal prey of the hunter.

"The new area has been posted and we will strictly enforce the law. I am sure that all law-abiding persons will understand our concern in this matter."

Mr. Haliburton said that Kejimikujik National Park has been declared a game sanctuary by Order-in-Council. The 140 square mile area will be patrolled by federal park wardens who, by the same order, have been given authority to enforce the provisions of the Lands and Forests Act with respect to sanctuaries.





# OF MAN AND MOOSE

BY CHUCK MEYER

**W**HEN A TRAIL CREW brought an injured moose into the Shubernacadie Wildlife Refuge in Nova Scotia, Superintendent E. R. Pace refused to permit amputation of the calf's left hind leg. Though a vital sinew was severed and veterinarians gave odds against the animal's survival, Pace determined to give the youngster a four-footed fighting chance.

Building splints by a method of trial and error, Pace was forced to use galvanized iron before the moose, now nicknamed Amos, quit splintering his handiwork. The calf finally realized that his practical nurse meant him no harm, for Amos permitted Pace to dress and change his bandages quietly, though he became extremely agitated if anyone else attempted the chore. As part of his marathon of moose-nursing, Pace did without sustained sleep for over two weeks while bathing the injured leg every two hours, feeding Amos penicillin tablets, and keeping a detailed fever chart. Finally, just as in the movies, the crisis passed. Amos is now healthy and strong, bearing only a slight scar, walking with a picturesque limp. At last reports, the calf was displaying interest in an introduction to a cow moose. All's well in Nova Scotia.

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Photographs by Frank Kuchirchuk and Chuck Meyer



Pace holds the splint he built of galvanized iron. Amos splintered the wooden braces. Other doctoring included penicillin and bathing.



Amos displays Pace's handiwork. It required long days without sleep to bring the calf past the crisis. Amos is now looking for romance.





# SHEP FEEDS THE PHEASANTS

BY CHUCK MEYER

Photos by Frank Kuchirchuk

**A**T SHUBENACADIE WILDLIFE PARK, 40 miles north of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Eldon Pace's 4½-year-old German shepherd Shepwert of Schubendorf flabbergasts visitors by calmly ambling inside the ringneck pens on a daily routine of helping her master feed scratch grain to the pheasants. Shep's job is to tote a small pail containing special feed, open the enclosure doors by applying her educated nose to the screen hooks, and ward off any bird attempting to squeeze through the opening.

As if these unusual canine services weren't enough for one dog, Shep helps capture loose birds by pointing their location and will even retrieve a bird without ruffling a feather, if so instructed. She drives the young, much as other shepherds herd sheep, and acts as a guard dog after sunset. On at least one occasion, an unhappy poacher left the seat of his pants inside the yard after attempting to scale the fence and carry off a bird. The ringnecks may be owned technically by the province, but Shep regards them as hers. ■ ■ ■



Hey! You guys who carry the Sunday paper home, sit up and take notice. Get a load of this trick. This young lady would probably be yelling, "Come and get it," too, except that she's got a mouthful.



Shep takes it easy while her master, Eldon Pace, spreads out the last of the feed. After all, a gal's got to relax sometime. Who was it that said a woman's work is never done? Ho-ho hum, this is the life.



young climb out of their nests, drop to the ground and follow their mother to the water right after they hatch.

One day Eldon Pace had a brainstorm. At the park, the newly hatched chicks were being gently taken from the incubator and placed in brooders with easy access to feed and water. They were not feeding, Mr. Pace realized, because they thought they were still in their nest, high in a tree.

He scooped a few chicks out of an incubator and into a paper bag. He then held the bag over a brooder. The chicks climbed out of the bag, fell to the floor of the brooder where they picked themselves up and started feeding. The fall, it seems, triggers their feeding mechanism.

The breeding program then moved into high gear. Over the years, the handling of wood ducks has been refined to the point where, as Mr. Pace says, "We can raise 'em like chickens."

To date, more than 17,000 of the birds have been released in the province, establishing a number of breeding populations.

Canada geese were another species that had largely disappeared from Nova Scotia.

"Should we start a program?", Mr. Pace asked Dr. Creighton.

"Let's not get too heavily into this breeding business," Mr. Pace was told. "But we should have a few geese for the park."

That was all Eldon Pace needed. Two pairs of Canada geese were bought from Prince Edward Island.

The first spring, raccoons killed one pair, but the other birds raised five goslings. Everything was working well. The young birds spent the winter in the park with their flightless parents. Then in the spring, a wild flock flew over and the young birds automatically joined it, never

to return to Nova Scotia.

"This happened year after year after year. We couldn't get them to stay here," says Mr. Pace. "But I figured I would fix it one way or another."

He had read that the greater Canada goose, a sub-species thought to be extinct, had been found living in Manitoba. The greater Canada is a non-migratory bird.

Mr. Pace bought two pairs of the birds and crossed them with birds in the park, inventing the non-migratory sub-species of Canada goose that now nests throughout the center of Nova Scotia.

"You have to be real sneaky with wildlife," he says.

Eldon Pace's enthusiasm for wildlife is something his family has accepted from the very beginning.

In 1958 he married Ruth MacDougall of Halifax. He had accumulated a great deal of vacation time and so they were able to drive out to Montana for their honeymoon. They came back with a whole carload of young geese. Mr. Pace acquired five different varieties in the United States.

The birds rode on papers in the back seat of the honeymooners' sedan. "Man, it was hummy!", Eldon Pace remembers. "You got out to go into a restaurant and people looked, and it wasn't the perfume you were wearing. It stunk to high heavens."

The descendants of those birds can be seen today in the wildlife park.

A love of animals and wild creatures has provided a common bond in the Pace family. Ruth Pace, a nurse at the time of her marriage, now works as an attendant at a local veterinary hospital, "nursing sick animals rather than people."

One daughter, Elizabeth, a graduate in environmental biology from McGill University, is now working on her masters degree at Dalhousie in conjunction with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College at Truro. The other daughter, Katherine, is a graduate in office administration and marketing from Mount St. Vincent.

Eldon Pace, who recently underwent major surgery, is approaching retirement. At his home near the park, he is building a facility where he will carry on his study of the brant. Undoubtedly, he will always keep an eye on the park.

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As he says, he is a lucky man. He's been able to do the work he loves and in doing so has given enormous pleasure to untold thousands. He once wrote a letter to a woman whose grand-daughter, despite dozens of warning signs, had been nipped while feeding a seal in the park:

"I'd feel very badly if this experience has turned her away from wildlife. There's not that many dedicated people and we need all we can get."

There are very few like Eldon Pace. ■





OLD TABBY AT SHUBENACADIE

(Lands & Forests Photo)

# The Provincial Wildlife Park

... a wildlife magnet

by

Lloyd S. Hawboldt

Department of Lands and Forests

Just north of Shubenacadie and a short distance off the main highway is a display of wildlife which has become one of the outstanding points of interest in the Province. The Provincial Wildlife Park, operated by the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests, developed to its present status largely through the interest and efforts of Mr. Eldon Pace, superintendent of the Park, and his assistants.

The purpose of the Park is, of course, educational. Many children and adults never have the opportunity of seeing these animals in the natural state. Indeed some of those who do have the opportunity to spend much time in the woodlands may never have seen a bear, or an otter, or others which may be seen and studied at close quarters in the Park.

It might be said that the Wildlife Park got its start in 1949. At that time, eight Chinese ring-necked pheasants were obtained as part of the Department's exhibit at the Central Exhibition. Five of these were liberated, while one cock and two hen birds were taken to Shubenacadie, where they were overwintered in a pen on the side hill alongside the highway. Eggs collected from these two hens were set under domestic hens and in 1950 one hundred pheasants were raised to adults. That same spring, three fawn deer brought in as orphans were yarded in a compound where the pheasant pens were located. Such a modest exhibit attracted considerable attention and many travellers stopped to watch these three fawns and the pheasants.

By 1951 a pheasant farm was developing, and it seemed more fawn deer were left "homeless" that year, because twenty-one were brought to the site. Other forms of wildlife were received also, including two bear cubs, a pair of mature

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## Provincial Wildlife Park

*Continued from page 8*

wildcats, two fox pups, nineteen young raccoons, a pair of young skunks (which had to be demilitarized) and a pair of beaver. On Sundays of the summer of 1951, mothers and fathers brought the children from far and near to see the animals at Shubenacadie.

By this time the idea of a wildlife park was beginning to materialize. But the "side hill" site was inadequate, as were the facilities. It was quite impossible under the circumstances to retain all these animals. The beaver had to be liberated. Twelve deer were sent to Prince Edward Island in response to a request from that province. The "cute" little bear cubs became big, dangerous, unmanageable yearlings and had to be disposed of in early 1952. For a few hours it appeared that the skunks were not cooperating in the housing problem, having produced a litter of thirteen, which is understood to be somewhat of a record. Because of the conditions, the female killed all thirteen the day after they were born.

It was not until 1953 that the present Park area was acquired. This was rough woodland of mixed tree growth and a great deal of cleaning up was necessary. Roads were built, the area was fenced and pens made. Land around a brook was excavated and a dam was constructed to develop a pond for beaver and otter. A swamp was cleaned out to provide another pond for ducks and geese.

The Wildlife Park now consists of twenty-eight acres. As much as possible the natural setting has been retained. Housing for the animals has been established among the spruce, fir, pine, larch, hemlock, birch, maple and other plant species occurring naturally. Approximately nine acres are fenced off as a deer yard, with a small corner for the fawns. An ornamental and game bird farm of about two acres has been established at one side of the Park proper. Another section of undetermined size is presently being developed for a moose yard. About eight acres to-

ward the back are undeveloped, while the remainder contains the ponds and housing for the wildlife on display.

The animals were moved to their new surroundings in the fall of 1953. The population is a fluctuating one, but presently there are seven deer, twelve fawns (five of which were born there this spring), one bear, two wildcats, two skunks, four foxes (one pair has two pups), four raccoons, two squirrels, one otter, two beaver, three porcupine, one ground-hog, and a pen of ever-changing numbers of domestic rabbits. Among the bird life are Canada geese, lesser and greater snow geese, wood ducks, mallards and black ducks. In addition there are a number of imported ornamental and game birds, including the black-shouldered peafowl, the blue-winged peafowl and chukar partridge, as well as a group of pheasants consisting of golden, silver, Lady Amherst, Cheer, Reeves', Chinese ring-necked and Swinhoe.

As one approaches the gates of the Park, the deer yard is situated to the right. Among the deer are "Foss", the larger of the two bucks; "Buckie", "Irbie", and "Snowball", the partial albino doe. "Foss" and "Irbie", now five years old, have been at Shubenacadie since they were fawns. At the age of one year they both escaped one day in May. "Foss" was found shortly after in a farmhouse kitchen near by, quietly helping himself to a pie from the table. "Irbie" was captured also, but not until July, "poor as a crow". Both have been contented to stay since then. "Irbie" has produced 4 pairs of twins since 1953. It is of interest to note that her first set of twins bred when they were only one-half year old. One had twin doe fawns, the other had a single fawn. "Buckie" is now four years old. When a year and a half old he questioned the leadership of "Foss" in the herd. A brief battle followed and a similar one has occurred each fall since. These have not been serious matches. "Foss" very quickly shows who is who. "Snowball" was received late in 1953, a victim of the hunt-

ing season. She had been shot in one eye with a .22 rifle. By the following May she had been nursed back to health and now makes an unusual addition to the yard.

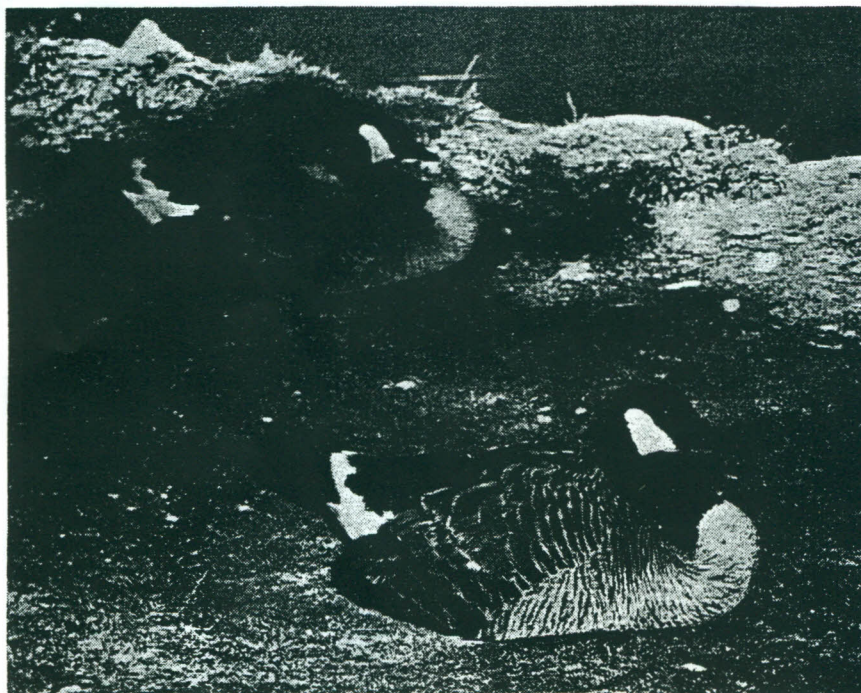
Proceeding down the road, the rabbits are seen to the right. At intervals signs are posted concerning the teasing of animals. Although seemingly tame enough, these are wild animals. Such warnings are for personal protection as well as to keep the animals in a contented state. Some are physically equipped and mentally capable of removing a too inquisitive finger. There has been only one accident since the Park opened, and that came from a most unexpected source. One child lost a piece of finger to a rabbit.

Next along the road is a cage containing a great horned owl. Until the past spring two of these owls had been together for more than a year. Around the middle of May for some unknown reason they fought one night and one was killed. The neighboring pen houses three porcupines and alongside is one containing a pair of skunks. At this point the road forks. Along the right-hand branch is a pair of red foxes with their two pups.

Continuing along the road, one comes to a cage of raccoons around the bend. Always busy at something, they furnish considerable amusement with their antics. Raccoons are especially adept with their fore-feet and will reach for and take anything within grasp. The black mask across their eyes would seem to be a mark of character, because not infrequently have they been guilty of picking pockets which have come within range. On one such occasion a gentleman who had been watching these animals at play turned and remarked to his companion, "They should charge admission." With this one raccoon put his paw into the man's pocket and withdrew a twenty-dollar note, which had to be retrieved by an attendant.

Next in view are the pens of the ornamental and game birds. One is immediately presented with the beautiful plumage of the peacock at the near corner. Down over a knoll, bearing a sign, "To the Beaver Pond", there is a cage of unusual companions, an eagle and two ravens. This eagle, which is immature, will develop a





(N. S. Travel Bureau Photo)

#### HONKERS IN THE PROVINCIAL WILDLIFE PARK

white head, the source of its name—bald eagle. At the bottom of this little hill is the beaver and otter pond.

The beaver usually remain in their house during the mid-day. Toward the latter part of the afternoon and in the evening they may be seen swimming around and feeding on the poplar provided. Although shy, the otter may be seen swimming around at almost any time, and one cannot help but be impressed with the lithe-ness of this animal in the water. Any who have seen certain wildlife motion pictures will appreciate how agile and swift the otter is in water. Several years ago an injured otter was brought to the Park. He became very tame and friendly and would follow along behind the attendants like a dog. Occasionally he would like to be carried. Such a long, sin-uous animal is an awkward armful. During the winter there were several favourite spots along the trails which he had singled out for sliding. Upon approaching one of these while being carried, the otter would wriggle fran-tically to get down, which was per-mitted promptly, as anyone who has tried to hold such activity well knows. Then he would undulate off to the slide and toboggan to the bottom.

Retracing steps back over the knoll, one sees to the right the pond for geese and ducks. A recent addition are the four snow geese. Looking closely, one may see a school of large goldfish, some of which were present-ed by the Halifax Public Gardens. Earlier a Canada goose nested on the island. An attending gander consti-tuted a formidable defender of his nesting mate. The weight of one of these birds and his powerful wings were experienced by at least one of the Park attendants—and with over-powering results.

On leaving the pond and returning to the road, the first cage on the right is of considerable interest to the chil-dren. It contains two squirrels ex-hibiting great speed and agility on their tread-wheel. One is a cross be-tween the black and the grey squirrel, while the other is a pure black. Neither of these occurs naturally in Nova Scotia, where we have only the red squirrel.

Next to the squirrels is another pen of red foxes. Across the road is a black bear which was obtained in the fall of 1954. She is now two years old, and, despite her playful appearance, at times she is very cross.

Caught in a trap, she was sent to the Park with a badly damaged paw, which has healed completely. Except for a slight twisting motion in walk-ing, the paw is every bit as formid-able as the other fore-paw.

At this point the road branches to the right to the location of the bird farm, as well as to the sick animal hospital and the feed houses. Along the left branch of the road are the two wildcats. "Old Tabby" has been at the Park since the summer of 1952. Despite her friendly-sounding name, she has a mean disposition. "Smokey" arrived in 1955 as a kitten. Because of a form of distemper which has taken several cats at the Park, he was kept apart and inoculated. Dur-ing this period he received a great deal of attention and became very friendly. He still is "playful as a kit-ten", although his natural weapons are to be respected, even in play. When "Smokey" was eventually placed with "Old Tabby" it was ex-pected he would become nasty. In-stead she has become more docile in the company of her young mate. The last cage along the road contains a ground-hog or wood-chuck.

Some expansion is planned for the Wildlife Park. Soon a fisher will be added to the display, as well as a marten with her three kits, a weasel and a mink. These are presently be-ing initiated to the presence of humans. There has always been dif-ficulty in raising calf moose, but it is hoped that a young bull obtained re-cently will be ready for the Park in October or November.

Actually the Park was never offi-cially opened. When the move was made to the present site, an opening was more or less enforced, before construction work was finished, by people continually appearing to see the animals. It was decided that further restraint was out of the ques-tion, so on July 1, 1954, the gates were opened. Since then thousands of people have visited the area. It is estimated that about 225,000 visitors went through the gates last year, the greatest attendance for any one day being about 12,000. Indications to date are that the interest is not only being maintained, but increased, and comments volunteered by visitors suggest that the Provincial Wildlife Park is serving a good and useful purpose.