

LOUISIANA conservationist

Published Bi-Monthly in the interest of conservation of Louisiana's natural resources by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission.



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I give my pledge as an American to
save and faithfully to defend
from waste the natural
resources of my country—its soil
and minerals, its forests, waters
and wildlife.



The Louisiana Conservationist received two awards for excellence from the International Association of Business Communicators District II at the annual conference in Athens, Georgia. It was named Best Overall Magazine and Best Nonprofit Organization's Magazine.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Riches From the Sea 5

Electronic Alligators 10

Adventure Below the Surface 15

The Busy Honeybee 19

A Gentleman's Sport

Re-Discovered 25

Wildlife Stamp Dedication

Ceremony 30

LOUISIANA CONSERVATIONIST MAGAZINE

VOLUME 23 NUMBERS 7 and 8

400 ROYAL STREET • NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70130

Subscription Free to Louisiana Residents
Upon Written Request

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Front Cover by Lloyd Poissenot

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Form 3579 to be sent to LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.

Second-Class Postage Paid at New Orleans, Louisiana

electronic alligators



Personnel of the Refuge Division of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission are currently utilizing some of the newest and most sophisticated field equipment to be introduced into the field of wildlife management in recent years—radio telemetry. That is, tracking animals which have been radio equipped with a collar-type radio package. Telemetry was first used in the late 1950's and is presently being employed on the Rockefeller Refuge to delve into facets of the life history of the American alligator. For the past three years, biologists of the Refuge Division have been capturing and attaching radio collars to sexually mature male and female alligators and tracking these alligators with portable receivers. The objectives of these studies were to determine the daily and seasonal movement of individual alligators. Also,

to determine the minimum home range of individual alligators and to relate the movements to habitat preferences.

Due largely to excessive hunting pressure, Louisiana's alligator population declined drastically from the mid-1930's through the early 1960's. This population decline was primarily brought about as a result of a systematic exploration of the natural resources of the coastal marshes of the state. Canals were dug into the remote areas of the marshes for the development of the various oil and gas leases. In a relatively short period of time, the development was expanded to include a network of canals along the entire Louisiana coast. This network of waterways provided hunters and trappers convenient access to the more remote marshes for the purpose of hunting alligators and trapping fur-bearing animals. This activity also

