

of the ravine. In this manner often a carload of poachers was trapped between the two cars. It didn't take the violators long to overcome this, however. They did not act until they had located the lookout car. Then they went to a more isolated spot to practice their violations.

Often the poachers will use several cars in their work. They, in this manner, confuse the enforcement officers, since these officers will not know which car they will use in killing the deer. While following one car, another probably will be bagging the deer.

Due to the grapevine, activities of the conservation officers are pretty well known to the violators. A stakeout often netted nothing but a long wait. The violators had heard previously that the stakeout had been planned. They knew where, when and how many men would be concentrated there. They simply did not show up on the given night. When the officers were forced to leave the area they knew that too, and then would proceed with their slaughtering.

We believe that most of the methods used by the Department would have been successful, had the officers been equipped with a radio system. A whole county could have been covered with a few lookout cars, and by working as a team, information could have been relayed that undoubtedly would have brought more of the violators to justice.

Until the people of a given area become educated to the necessity of laws protecting deer herds, the trapping of poachers is going to be a difficult problem. As it takes several years and maybe a new generation to bring about that educational program, the best method of enforcing this poaching law will be with a radio set-up and with a court which favors the law enforcement officers over the violators.

## THE METHODS USED IN LOUISIANA IN COMBATING THE HUNTING OF DEER AT NIGHT

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It is indeed unfortunate that limitations of any kind must be used in dealing with our American hunting and fishing public. In a country such as ours, in which fish and game was once so bountiful and in which our citizens had grown so accustomed to harvesting this same fish and game in such plentiful numbers, it is rather difficult to explain to some of these same people the necessity for either wildlife conservation or wildlife management.

Both you and I are aware of the heavy inroads that have been made by our advancing civilization into our wildlife habitat areas. We are also aware of the fact that since World War II our hunter-public has increased at least 10 fold and continues to increase each year. The end results of these two facts is that our hunters are finding themselves with smaller and smaller areas in which to pursue their favorite form of recreation each year.

Another unfortunate situation in which we find ourselves is in the enforcement of our fish and our game laws. In this great land of ours in which we like to refer to our hunters and fishermen as sportsmen there would seemingly be no necessity for law enforcement. Many of our "sportsmen" have been heard to say that they engage in the sport for the sport alone but occasionally they may be found with hunting bags that are too heavy. Occasionally some of them may be found using means of taking fish and game that are not considered in keeping with good conservation practices. These exceptions occur in such numbers as to necessitate the use of enforcement personnel by the fish and game agencies of the various states.

We of the Enforcement Division of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission realize that enforcement of our laws is not the full answer to this problem. However, until such time as our hunters and our fishermen have been educated to the necessity for wildlife conservation, enforcement will be the major tool in combatting law violations along these lines.

The purpose of this paper is to acquaint you with the methods employed by the Enforcement Division of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission in combatting the hunting of deer at night. Frankly speaking, I wish there was no necessity for explaining such methods. I would like to report to you that in Louisiana we have no illegal deer hunting. Unfortunately, however, such is not the case, but we do feel that our efforts have reduced such cases to a minimum.

It is my firm belief that no enforcement division can perform satisfactorily if it is not adequately equipped and properly staffed. Improperly trained and underpaid personnel seldom obtain results of which the agency may be proud. By the same token, personnel that is not provided with proper equipment could hardly be expected to compete with game law violators that may, in many cases, be better equipped. We could hardly expect an enforcement agent to overtake a fish law violator with an outboard motor three sizes too small. We could hardly expect to apprehend violators in 1957 model automobiles with game agents driving models turned out in the 30's.

One of the most important factors in enforcing game laws are our courts. Some of our game laws are rather elastic in their provisions and in past years these court cases have been decided accordingly. I am happy to report at this time, however, that our judges in Louisiana are rapidly coming over to our way of thinking. We are now obtaining convictions in areas where, a few years ago, this was an impossibility.

The actual methods of apprehending deer hunters at night might best be summed up by explaining what we have to work with. First of all, we are fortunate in that we have properly trained personnel; game agents who know their territories and are not afraid of hard work. These men spend many extra days and nights on the job and will often lose sleep several nights in succession in order to apprehend violators of our deer laws. Such hardships do not make for an easy life for our game agents but they do point out the conscientious type of personnel we are fortunate enough to employ.

The next most important tool we have is our equipment. As I mentioned before, it is imperative that we have automobiles capable of attaining high rates of speed. In one case we made recently, it was necessary to chase the violator who, incidentally, had been convicted previously of a similar charge, at the rate of 105 miles per hour in order to apprehend him. This violator was hunting at night in a game preserve, a preserve whose surplus deer have been used for a number of years to restock depleted areas throughout the state. I would like to point out to you that this particular violator was fined a total of \$650.00. Had we not had the use of fast automobiles, this violator would have, no doubt, eluded our agents.

Another type of equipment of which we are justly proud are our short wave two-way radio sets. These are installed in all our automobiles, our boats and our planes. These radios enable our agents to maintain contact with each other at all times and are used quite often to concentrate the efforts of the agents. When a violator successfully eludes one of our game agents it is possible to pass this information along to others in a very short time and effect his apprehension.

The success of our agents in securing convictions in our Louisiana courts has shown a marked improvement. Part of the credit should go to our judges who no longer take a dim view of our game laws. However, we must also give credit to our agents who are, at this time, more properly trained in presenting evidence. Fines assessed by our courts range from \$156.00 for a single offense to as high as \$750.00 for multiple offenses. In most cases, court costs are added to the fines.

In summing up, it may be said that deer law enforcement in Louisiana means long hours and hard work by conscientious game agents. Secondly, any enforcement division that would maintain high standards in the way of results must be properly equipped with fast transportation and two-way radios; and thirdly, we must have courts that weigh the evidence we present and pass judgment accordingly. When we have been equipped with these three basic tools then we may rest assured that our deer law violators will be reduced to the minimum.