SAVE THE EGRET: BY T. GILBERT PEARSON, SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AUDUBON SOCIETIES

THE "aigrettes" of the millinery trade are feathers which have been stripped from the back of egrets, two species of which are found in the United States. Formerly they bred as far north as New Jersey, but none are now found in the nesting season north of southern North Carolina. About ten thousand are still known to exist in the South Atlantic States, and the National Association of Audubon Societies is working desperately to save this remnant from becoming extinct.

The Audubon laws prohibiting the killing of these birds are of little avail in Florida and some other States because of lack of adequate systems of State game wardens. So the Audubon Society hires men to go into the swamps where the nesting colonies of the birds are located and watch them for the four months of the nesting season. This is necessary in order to keep away the "plume-hunters." But for this special protection the birds doubtless would be extinct in this country now.

The Audubon Society workers have also secured laws in several States to prohibit the sale of the feathers, but these laws are violated constantly and the Audubon Society feels it necessary to employ agents to cooperate with these States in stopping the sale of these contraband feathers.

Egrets are killed for their feathers only in the nesting season, for it is only at that time of year that they grow the plumes. This means a war of extermination, for the young are left unattended in the nest, and die in the agonies of starvation, as the writer has personally witnessed on more than one occasion in Florida.

Regarding the methods of killing these birds in Venezuela, from which country many plumes come, Mr. A. H. Meyer, for nine years the head buyer of aigrettes for certain New York and Paris millinery houses, has given me a sworn statement from which the following paragraph is quoted:

"I have known the plume-hunters to tie and prop up wounded egrets on the marsh where they would attract the attention of other birds flying by. These decoys are kept in this position until they die of their wounds or from the attacks of insects. I have seen the terrible red ants of that country actually eating out the eyes of these
wounded, helpless mother-birds. The young are left in the nests to starve."

The officers of the National Association of Audubon Societies now appeal to the lovers of wild birds for support in a special campaign against the traffic in the feathers of egrets and other native wild birds. We must have at least $10,000 at the earliest possible moment for egret protection work this year.

Before stating specifically what we wish to do with this money, I wish first to call attention to what has been accomplished by the Audubon Societies with the limited means contributed in past years to the Egret Protection Fund.

First, the passage of the anti-plumage laws, which have put an end to the sale of the feathers of native birds in the States of New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Ohio, Oregon, Missouri, Washington, Michigan and California.

Second, the employment of special agents to hunt out the colonies of breeding egrets hidden in the swamps throughout the Southern States.

Third, the employment each spring and summer of a force of from fifteen to twenty wardens, who have so successfully guarded the 8,000 or 10,000 egrets in their rookeries, throughout the nesting-season, that on an average not more than twelve of the protected birds are believed to have been shot by plume-hunters. (Two of our agents in Florida have been killed by plume-hunters, so insistent are the efforts of the feather dealers.)

Fourth, the securing of a hearing before the Ways and Means Committee of Congress; and later, with the cooperation of the New York Zoological Society, the conducting of a campaign of publicity and personal appeal, which finally resulted in the passage of the Federal Plumage Law prohibiting the importation of feathers of wild birds into North America.

Fifth, the collection of evidence which has led to the prosecution of scores of plume-hunters in Florida, and of feather-milliners in Northern cities.

Sixth, the prosecution, by means of at-
tractive literature, magazines, and newspaper articles, of a most systematic, continuous, and far-extended propaganda for public education on the cruelty of wearing feathers.

With this showing of results accomplished during the past few years we come before the public with the utmost confidence, believing that the good people of this country will be more ready even than heretofore to support this well-organized, well-known, productive and humane movement.

The following is what we propose to do the coming year with the help of the good people throughout the country, who believe it is worth while to give something of their means to help crush out this atrocious aigrette traffic, against whose inroads we have already made such rapid strides:

First, we must keep a constant watch on Federal and State legislatures to prevent the repealing of the laws now in operation against the sale of the feathers of wild birds.

Second, it is important to secure laws for stopping the sale of feathers in the States of Maryland, Illinois, Indiana, and wherever else the traffic is still permitted.

Brooding egrets without protection are easy victims of the plume hunters.

Third, the very important work of finding and guarding nesting-colonies of egrets. This has proved so remarkably successful that we feel the utmost justification in urging the continuance and increase of this effort.

Fourth, the illegal sale of aigrettes at Florida winter resorts, and in millinery stores in the North, must be broken up by careful detective work.

Fifth, much educational work yet remains to be done, by supplying schools and farmers' institutes with literature on the sub-

The same snowy egret shown above after her beautiful feathers were torn from her by millinery hunters.
HEALTH AND PROFIT IN SCHOOL GARDENS

ject of bird protection and by enlisting the aid of the press.

Sixth, to hundreds of women’s clubs throughout the country speakers should be sent to lecture on the needless cruelty involved in wearing bird-feathers as hat trimmings.

To everyone who sends in $5 or more, and mentions this article, the Association will send a complete set of eighty life histories of birds, each one accompanied by an accurately and beautifully executed drawing in colors of some native bird. All such subscribers also will receive for one year a free subscription to the beautiful magazine Bird-Lore, which is the leading publication in the world on bird study and bird protection.

Checks may be made payable to the National Association of Audubon Societies, and mailed to 1974 Broadway, New York.

HEALTH AND PROFIT IN SCHOOL GARDENS: PORTLAND FURNISHES AN INTERESTING EXAMPLE OF WHAT CHILDREN CAN ACCOMPLISH AS GARDENERS: BY HARLAN D. SMITH

When the warm breezes of spring blow restlessness and wriggles into the schoolrooms of Portland, Oregon, there is a remedy for the affected small bodies. The call of the outdoors and the soil is answered. This western city, in a way all its own, has gone strong—unanimously, almost—for school gardens. That is, it is a little more enthusiastic over them, perhaps, than other cities that have adopted the idea. Its schoolchildren now may have a lesson in gardening when the daily routine of staple studies grows irksome.

Flower and vegetable gardening during school hours is justified, the board of education believes, because it creates interest in a work in which pupils may well and profitably spend their time after school and during the summer vacation, and because it stimulates lesson-getting at a time of year when a stimulus is needed.

The Portland educators are not in an experiment. School gardening has been thoroughly tested and developed and now is firmly established in that city. The idea, applied with more or less enthusiasm in a number of cities, has been so successfully practiced and developed in this city, that others, desiring to take up the work, have turned to Oregon for a system. Not a little fame, in fact, has come to the “Rose City” through the achievement of its schoolchildren, particularly last year, on vacant lots. A number of cities have sent their garden supervisors to learn; government experts unofficially have ranked it first among American cities in this work; and the demands for a recent bulletin by its supervisor of school gardens, describing the methods, have been received. The excellent work done by the schools of Los Angeles last season was possible largely, perhaps, through a study and an application of the Oregon plan.

Ten thousand six hundred Portland school children, stimulated by the idea of money-making, turned weed-grown and trash-covered lots and backyards into profitable gardens last year. They didn’t make a mass of money, but they did grow a mass of garden produce—enough to supply thousands of tables in Portland homes with delicious, fresh vegetables every day. Further, they cleaned and brightened with flowers and growing things dozens of vacant lots—the eyesore type; they settled the vacation problem for many parents, and they learned the science of growing things and the business of selling them.

And they made some money, too, those who stuck to it. Several boys and girls sold their parents more than twenty dollars’ worth of vegetables during the summer. Emery Ingham, fourteen years old, made a net profit of $18.10 on a small home garden in which he worked only a few hours a week. Some of the boys opened a street booth down town with their surplus produce and disposed of several hundred dollars’ worth that way and locally in their neighborhoods. Altogether, some $400 worth of vegetables were sold. The profits were divided among those workers who, remaining faithful to the gardens after school had closed, saw to the care and sale of the later crops.

HELPED TO START A PUBLIC VEGETABLE GARDEN.

By their street market, incidentally, the children furnished a good business tip, without charge, to the commercial vegetable growers. Portland didn’t have a public vegetable market before the school gardeners opened their booth a year ago last sum-