

game to willing purchasers near home. For instance, it is a notorious fact that the market hunter enjoys a lucrative business in trafficking in deer during the entire year. They do not wait until the opening of the deer hunting season, November 11, but they start out and secure a supply and have it ready for the hunters when they arrive. The hunter who is not fortunate enough after a week or ten days hunting to get his stipulated one buck, can easily (if so disposed) purchase one from the wiley market hunter and take his trophy home. This is a common practice, and while we are able to arrest an occasional market hunter, the fine is so small that it makes but a small dent in his lucrative profits.

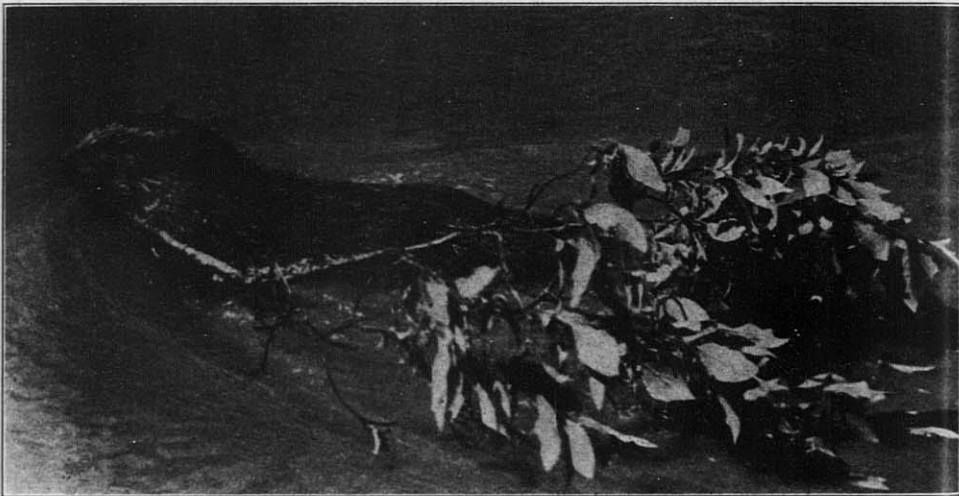
For instance, last winter we found where one of these market hunters had six deer hidden. We watched until he came after them and arrested him, took him into court where he plead guilty and was fined \$50, the maximum for this violation. We sold the deer in Milwaukee for about \$200. It is an inviting occupation for a good hunter and it is no wonder that they hazard the chance. The fine should be \$100 for killing a deer out of season and \$100 fine for each deer or part thereof sold, or six months in jail. Such a law would put a stop to the slaughter of deer for the markets and save them for the legitimate hunter.

From the mass of evidence we have, we feel safe in saying that one-half of all of the deer killed are killed by these market hunters. Their field for operation is so vast and their opportunity for evading an officer so extensive that it is hard to catch them. Besides, they are a lawless, desperate class of men and the law-abiding citizens are afraid to report them as they would be endangering their lives and property. Instances have been known where mysterious burning of buildings could be traced to this provocation. So we ask this legislature to arm us with some good stringent laws, backed up with rigid fines, and we feel confident we can suppress this vicious practice.

#### BEAVER.

In discussing the beaver situation in Wisconsin, we believe we have a sufficient fund of information on the life and customs of these little animals to write a book. There is no part of our duties that have been beset with so much difficulty as the wise little beaver have caused. He possesses more wisdom and is the master of more trades than the combined intelligence of all the animal kingdom. He is a forester, a lumberman, an architect, a carpenter, a mason and an all-round genius. He builds his dam and house and takes up his abode where he sees fit, regardless of all human consideration, backing up the water, covering cultivated fields and meadows much to the annoyance of the farmer. He backs up the water flooding railroad tracks and interferes with the commerce of the commonwealth, and no man dares molest his well laid plans to provide for themselves and families, for he is wrapped in the plainly written laws of the state of Wisconsin, which expressly provide that "no person shall hunt, take, capture or kill any beaver or molest their houses or dams." Protected as he is and has been for the past ten years, their numbers have multiplied until they have become a nuisance all through the northern

part of the state. Their numbers have become so great and they multiply so rapidly that they will soon hold title to a large portion of some of the counties by right of preëmption of claim. Scarcely a day passes that our commission does not get a complaint that a beaver colony has dammed a stream and asking us to relieve the situation. We, immediately upon getting a complaint, dispatch one of our wardens to blow out the dam and destroy the houses, only to have the satisfaction of repeating the operation in a few days, as the beaver immediately repair the damage and set up housekeeping as though nothing had ever happened. We realize that this kind of work cannot go on indefinitely, and we have settled on a permanent plan of solving the situation, and have started at the work.



A BEAVER AT WORK

The state owns 360,000 acres of forest lands in Oneida, Vilas and Forest counties, and we have trapped and shipped 30 beaver and liberated them on these lands. We had several colonies located on these lands prior to this shipment, which furnishes a sufficient number to guarantee the perpetuation of the species on lands where they will be immune from interference with any individuals' right and where they have sufficient space to spread out and replenish the earth.

Now that we have performed real conservation in this work, we recommend that our laws be so amended that this commission will be authorized to allow the farmers on whose lands a beaver colony is located and doing damage, to allow the farmer, under licensed supervision to capture the beaver and free the state from further annoyance. Further in this connection, it is well to know that many of the beaver colonies are located where they are doing no damage and no objections are raised to their remaining undisturbed.



A BEAVER DAM IN ASHLAND COUNTY, WISCONSIN