THE MAMMALS OF THE PINE AND POPPLE RIVER AREA

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The Pine and Popple rivers are located in Florence and Forest counties. These counties have perhaps fewer published natural history accounts than any others in the state. The human population there has always been low and the area is remote from institutions likely to investigate natural history. Historically, the region is also relatively sterile since there were no trading posts on either river. Records from such posts usually present data on occurrence and abundance for larger mammals and occasionally scattered records on noncommercial smaller mammals.

The primary source of information on Wisconsin mammals comes from H. H. T. Jackson’s book, Mammals of Wisconsin (1961). This publication was the major reference used in forming this status report for the Pine and Popple rivers. Although the reference material is now over 15 years old, to my knowledge there are no additional data from this region. Jackson must be considered a “splitter” as a mammalian taxonomist. Treatment here will tend to “lump” rather than split since the approach will be ecological rather than taxonomic. The only other major work on Wisconsin mammals is that of Cory (1912). Although the taxonomy and the range maps are outdated, the records and life history data are very good, and in its day, the Cory bulletin was an outstanding publication.

There has been no systematic mammal survey of the Pine and Popple river watersheds, nor can this present report in any way be considered definitive. Dr. Howard F. Young, Professor of Biology at Wisconsin State University, La Crosse, and I spent four days trapping small mammals in the various habitat types along the two rivers. From June 13–16, 1966, our total of about 520 trap nights produced only the common small mammals: short-tailed shrew, field mouse, deer mouse, masked shrew, and least chipmunk.

Purdue University has a forestry summer camp on the Pine River from which two colleagues, R. E. Mumford and C. M. Kirkpatrick of that institution, have contributed data on the small mammals and observations on the larger forms.

1 This is paper No. 4 in the series, “Studies on the Pine–Popple Wild Rivers Area of Northeastern Wisconsin.”
Mr. and Mrs. Carey Anderson of Sea Lion Lake in Fern Township, Florence County, have collected specimens and sight records from that area and allowed me to use them in this report. Charles A. Long, Director of the Museum of Natural History at Wisconsin State University, Stevens Point, has also made available his records from Chipmunk Rapids and Lost Lake in Long Lake Township of Florence County.

All game and fur harvest figures are those of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (formerly the Wisconsin Conservation Department). To eliminate repeated reference to the same work, information from the major sources will be designated by letters in brackets as follows:

[A] — data contributed (in personal communication) by Mr. and Mrs. Carey Anderson
[C] — Cory, 1912
[P] — Purdue University Forestry Camp staff
[L] — Aldo Leopold, personal notes
[G] — Records of Charles A. Long
[S] — A. W. Schorger papers, 1942–65
[DNR] — Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reports
[WCD] — Wisconsin Conservation Department, now the Department of Natural Resources

Isabel Brackbill of Madison compiled data from Department of Natural Resources records, and aided in numerous ways in preparing the manuscript.

The assessment below will follow the taxonomic sequence (but not necessarily the subspeciation or common names) of Jackson (1961). Walker (1964) was consulted and followed in some cases. All specimen records, observational data and kill records are assigned whenever possible to either Florence or Forest counties. Whenever the data are specific, the locality is identified, particularly within the watersheds of the two rivers involved.

CLASS MAMMALIA

ORDER MARUPEALIA

FAMILY DIDELPHIDAE.

*Didelphis virginiana* (opossum). The opossum is the only member of this order found in Wisconsin, but there are no records in Jackson for either Florence or Forest counties. However, the kill reports [DNR] show that four were taken in Florence County in
1946, and 51 in 1954. These are the only two years for which I could find harvest information.

ORDER INSECTIVORA

FAMILY SORICIDAE (shrews).

*Sorex cinereus* (cinereous shrew, masked shrew, common shrew). Six specimens from Florence County, three from the vicinity of Florence, and three from Spread Eagle Lake [J]. “I have examined specimens from various localities in the interior and several of the most northern counties including Douglas, Iron, Florence and Vilas” [C, p. 411]. Cory also lists three specimens from Spread Eagle Lake. These may be the same specimens recorded later by Jackson. There is a specimen in the Purdue University collection from Lost Lake area of Long Lake Township, Florence County [P] and the Andersons have a preserved specimen of this shrew taken in Fern Township of Florence County [A]. Long collected a masked shrew on August 19, 1968 at Chipmunk Rapids [A]. Although I found no authentic record of this shrew in Forest County, it doubtless exists there in the same kinds of habitats (e.g., moist woods, marsh edges, along streams) in which it is found in Florence County.

*Bharina brevicauda* (short-tailed shrew, mole shrew). Seven specimens are recorded from Florence County, one from Florence and six from Spread Eagle; one specimen from Forest County (T 34 N, R 14 E). These are recorded as *B. b. kirtlandi* [J]. This species has also been taken at Lost Lake [P], and at Sea Lion Lake in Florence County [A]. I also trapped this shrew at Tipler in Florence County. The animal is apparently a common small mammal in both the Pine and the Popple watersheds.

*Condylura cristata* (star-nosed mole). One specimen is recorded from Newald in Ross Township [J]. Cory records a specimen from “Newbold” in Forest County. This may be a misspelling of the Newald location also recorded by Jackson. Another specimen was taken at Sea Lion Lake in Florence County [A].

ORDER CHIROPTERA

FAMILY VESPERTILIONIDAE (common bats).

*Myotis lucifugus* (little brown bat). Although extremely common throughout the state, there is only one authentic record of this bat, taken at Sea Lion Lake, Fern Township, in Florence County, on July 8, 1968 [A]. This bat is recorded as observed at Lost Lake in Florence County [P]. There are no other records of other bat species in Florence or Forest counties, largely because there have been few, if any, collections made there.
ORDER LAGOMORPHA

FAMILY LEPORIDAE (hares and rabbits).

*Lepus americanus* (varying hare, snowshoe hare). This sometimes superabundant hare has only one authentic record each for Florence and Forest counties (no specimens examined) [J]. This species was also observed at Lost Lake, Florence County [P]. A specimen was taken by Long near the entrance to the Purdue Science Camp above Lost Lake [G]. I also saw several hares in Florence County June 1966, in the Pine River watershed near Chipmunk Rapids. Leopold (1945) shows both Florence and Forest counties to be well within the range of this species in Wisconsin. The average annual kill of this hare for an 18-year period ending in 1956 was 2,605 for Florence County (peak in 1949 with a bag of 5,481) and 3,177 for Forest County (peak also in 1949, when 8,168 hares were taken) [DNR].

*Sylvilagus floridanus* (cottontail rabbit). There is one authentic record from both Florence and Forest counties (no specimens examined) [J]. The Forest County record is not in the Popple River watershed. Leopold (1945) records the first cottontail seen in Forest County in 1914.

The progress to abundance has been slow, and it is doubtful that either of these two watersheds will ever support high populations of cottontail rabbits. In the 18-year period prior to 1956 the average yearly kill was 342 for Florence County and 613 for Forest County. By way of comparison, a county with a high cottontail population, such as Dodge County, in 1956 produced a harvest of 63,384 cottontails [DNR].

ORDER RODENTIA

FAMILY SCIURIDAE (squirrels and allies).

*Marmota monax* (woodchuck, groundhog, marmot). One authentic record exists for each of Florence and Forest counties. The Forest County record is not in the Popple watershed (no specimens examined) [J]. Young saw woodchucks in the Pine–Popple watersheds in May 1969.

*Tamias striatus* (chipmunk, gray chipmunk). There is one authentic record from Forest County, and three specimens from Florence County (two from Spread Eagle Lake; one at T 40 N, R 16 E). The record from Forest County is not in the Popple River watershed. Jackson also lists the specimens recorded by Cory [C]. The Andersons have a specimen from Sea Lion Lake in Florence County [A]; as does the Purdue forestry camp for Lost Lake in Florence County [P]. I also saw numerous chipmunks in both Florence and Forest counties.
Eutamias minimus (least chipmunk, little chipmunk). Forest County has one authentic record (but not in the Popple River watershed), and two specimen records for Florence, Florence County [J]. There are also specimens from Chipmunk Rapids where this species was observed abundant [G]. I collected a specimen in June 1966.

Sciurus carolinensis (gray squirrel). This squirrel is now common in all parts of Florence and Forest counties. There is one authentic record in Florence County prior to 1900 [J]. Schorger (1949, p. 204) records: “The shooting of a gray squirrel at Florence in 1886, and again in 1895, in both instances induced the remark that this species was very rare in Florence County.” As a hunted animal, the average annual kill (8-year record) has been 322 for Florence County, and 719 for Forest County [DNR].

Sciurus niger (fox squirrel). Although there are no authentic records of this species prior to 1900 [J] or any specimens examined, there has been an open season on fox squirrels in both Florence and Forest counties since 1948. A six-year average ending in 1956 shows that the annual harvest in Florence County was 122, and for eight years in Forest County the average harvest was 226 [DNR].

Tamiasciurus hudsonicus (red squirrel, chickaree). There is one authentic record since 1900 in Forest County. Two specimens were examined for Florence County (one from Richardson Lake; one from Section 26, T 40 N, R 16 E) [J]. The Richardson Lake specimen should have been recorded for Forest County, since Richardson Lake is in Sections 10 and 11, T 35 N, R 14 E of that county. There is at least one specimen from Lost Lake in Florence County [P]. This species is common in both the Pine and Popple watersheds. In the two years for which there are hunting statistics (1947 and 1948), 96 red squirrels were taken in Florence County and 1,002 in Forest County [DNR]. This small squirrel cannot be considered very highly as either a game or fur animal in Wisconsin.

Glaucomys sabrinus (flying squirrel). There is one authentic record for southern Forest County [J], one specimen record from Sea Lion Lake [A], and one from Lost Lake in Florence County [P]. This species is undoubtedly much more abundant than the records indicate since the species is nocturnal and is not sought after as a game animal.

**FAMILY CASTORIDAE** (beavers).

Castor canadensis (beaver). There were no specimens examined from either county. There is, however, a substantial population of these animals in both the Pine and Popple watersheds. In 1950–
1952 the population was relatively stable in Florence County and increasing in Forest County (Knudsen, 1953). The beaver has been observed in the Lost Lake area of Florence County [P]. Knudsen (1963), in his history of the beaver in early Wisconsin, lists the first record of beaver in Florence County from Tipler Township in 1920. In 1920 also the first record is given for Forest County in the town of Alvin. He also states that there were more beavers in the 1930's than in the 1960's. Schorger (1965, p. 167), however, points out that "A black beaver was caught by Paul Miller on Pine River, town of Commonwealth, Florence [County], 1886," and further that "Insofar as known, the beaver was never exterminated [from Forest County]."

The beaver, once on the verge of extinction, has been an important furbearer in both counties. In the 18 years for which we have harvest records, the average annual take of beavers for Florence County was 164, and 240 for Forest County [DNR]. Beavers have also been pests; between 1938 and 1948, for example, there were 29 complaints in Florence County and 38 in Forest County (Hovind, 1948). Such complaints have doubtless increased in recent years.

FAMILY CRICETIDAE (mice, voles, muskrats).

*Peromyscus maniculatus* (woodland deer mouse). Five specimens were examined from Florence County (four from Spread Eagle Lake; one from T 40 N, R 16 E) [J]. There are also specimens from Lost Lake, Florence County [P], and five specimens from Chipmunk Rapids [G]. This is doubtless a common species in both watersheds since Young and I trapped it in both watersheds in June 1966.

*Synaptomys cooperi* (lemming mouse). A specimen was collected at the Purdue Science Camp above Lost Lake, October 1959 [P]. There are no records from Jackson in either Forest or Florence county. This species perhaps occurs more regularly than the meager record shows. There appear to be large areas of suitable habitat.

*Clethrionomys gapperi* (red-backed vole). Six specimens were examined from Florence County (four from Spread Eagle Lake; two from Florence). One specimen was examined from Forest County (from Crandon) [J]. At least one specimen was taken at Lost Lake in Florence County [P], and one from Chipmunk Rapids [G]. I caught no specimens in either county while trapping in likely habitat (June 1966).

*Microtus pennsylvanicus* (meadow mouse). Four specimens were recorded from Florence County (all from Spread Eagle Lake), and
one authentic record was from Forest County [J]. Specimens exist in the Purdue collection from Lost Lake, Florence County [P]. At Chipmunk Rapids one specimen was preserved and several were discarded [G]. I caught this species in both watersheds in June 1966.

*Ondatra zibethicus* (muskrat). There are two authentic records, one from each county [J]. The Forest County record was not in the Popple River watershed. Although there are no specimens from either county from 1927 to 1957, the trapping records for these counties show a take of 79,338 pelts: 22,806 from Florence County and 57,032 from Forest County [DNR].

**FAMILY MURIDAE** (Old World rats and mice).

*Rattus norvegicus* (Norway rat). There are two authentic records, one in northeastern Florence County and the other in southwest Forest County [J]. Neither was from the Pine–Popple watershed, although it is doubtful that farms in this watershed are completely free of Norway rats.

*Mus musculus* (house mouse). There is one authentic record of the house mouse in southwest Forest County, and one in Florence County by the Pine River [J]. The Andersons obtained a specimen of this mouse on September 8, 1968, about one mile from the Pine River at Sea Lion Lake [A]. It is very likely a common species.

**FAMILY ZAPODIDAE** (jumping mice).

*Zapus hudsonius* (jumping mouse). There were two specimens examined in Forest County, one at Crandon and the other at Richardson Lake (T 34 N, R 14 E); and one specimen was examined in northern Florence County (T 40 N, R 16 E) [J]. Five jumping mice were seen in the Chipmunk Rapids area [G], and one was taken by the Andersons on September 13, 1968, beside Sea Lion Lake, Fern Township, Florence County [A].

**FAMILY ERETHIZONTIDAE** (American porcupines).

*Erethizon dorsatum* (porcupine). There are two authentic records of the Canada porcupine, one in southwest Forest County, the other by the Pine River in Florence County [J]. Porcupines were seen in the Lost Lake area (1966–68) [P]. I also saw porcupines in the Pine–Popple watershed, June 1966.

**ORDER CARNIVORA**

**FAMILY CANIDAE** (wolf, coyote and foxes).

*Canis latrans* (coyote, brush wolf). Three authentic records are shown for southern Forest County, and one in northeast Florence County [J]. Coyotes were heard in the Lost Lake area, Florence County, 1966–68 [P], and Young saw a crippled coyote on June 9,
1969, two miles east of the town of Florence. The spread of the coyote in Wisconsin needs documentation and appraisal. The replacement of the wolf by the coyote was perhaps relentless until it was complete. The “brush wolf” was reported as common in Forest County in 1937 (Anon., 1937). While deer hunting in 1962 I found much sign and heard coyotes frequently in the Armstrong Creek area.

*Canis lupus* (timber wolf). There is one authentic record in Florence County along the Pine River and two in Forest County [J], all made after 1900. One specimen was taken in Forest County, Hiles Township [J]. There has been no reliable census of Wisconsin timber wolves in recent years. In the winter of 1941–42 Daniel Q. Thompson reported (to Leopold) wolves in the town of Tipler, northern one-third of the town of Long Lake, northwestern part of the town of Florence in Florence County, and the eastern one-half of the town of Alvin in Forest County [L]. Thompson’s later paper (1952) does not repeat this detail of wolf range in Wisconsin. These were not, however, the only wolves in Wisconsin at that time. Oliver Flannery is reported (Anon., 1939) to have collected $185 in wolf and wildcat bounties in one week at Crandon in Forest County. Young talked to a fisherman in the Florence (town) area, who claimed he had seen a pair of timber wolves during the winter of 1968–69. There is little doubt that the timber wolf is a rare and endangered species in Wisconsin. The timber wolf, like a wild river, now requires the understanding, appreciation and protection deserving of a natural resource so intimately associated with Wisconsin history and heritage.

*Vulpes fulva* (red fox). There are two authentic records, one each in Forest and Florence counties. One specimen was examined in Forest County in Crandon [J]. Red foxes were seen in the Lost Lake area, Nicolet National Forest, Florence County (1966–68) [P]. The red fox apparently burst onto the Florence and Forest county scene in 1938 when 33 were recorded in the WCD [DNR] kill statistics. Prior to that time only gray foxes had been taken. Following 1938 an average annual kill of 204 animals occurred through 1955. At present it is the most abundant of the two resident foxes common to both the Pine and Popple watersheds.

The DNR harvest records show an average take in Florence and Forest counties to be 204 red fox (18 years) and 25 gray fox (25 years). These averages do not include years when there were no records. The first records which began in 1927 show a limited kill of gray foxes and no red fox. Eleven years later red fox harvest numbers increased markedly as the gray fox kill declined. This trend was maintained until 1955 when the last report of game
harvest by species by counties was available. The trend is shown in Fig. 1.

_Urocyon cinereoargenteus_ (gray fox). There are two authentic records, one in central Forest County and the other in the Popple watershed in Florence County [J].

**FAMILY URSIDAE** (bears).

_Euarctos americanus_ (black bear). Four authentic records are listed, three from Forest and one from Florence counties between 1915 and 1935 [J]. Three authentic records are listed for Forest County and one for Florence County in Pine River watershed since 1935. Three specimens were taken in northeastern Florence County, west of Spread Eagle Lake [J]. Adult and cub tracks were seen on 22 July 1967, one mile east of Purdue Forestry Camp [G]. Black bears were also seen in this same area by the Purdue Camp staff [P] (1966–1968). In May 1969 Young sighted a black bear in the Pine River area near Chipmunk Rapids.

Black bears have undoubtedly been common in the Pine and Popple watersheds for many years. In 1937, when counties were given the option of closing or keeping open hunting season on
bears, Florence and Forest counties chose to keep the season open and concurrent with the deer season (Grimmer, 1937). Ten years later (Scott, 1947) the estimated black bear population was 105 for Florence County and 200 for Forest County. The annual harvest of black bear in these two counties is shown in Fig. 2. In 34 years between 1934 and 1968 when data were recorded, 923 black bears were harvested in Florence and Forest counties [DNR].

**FAMILY PROCYONIDAE** (raccoons).

*Procyon lotor* (raccoon). One authentic record exists for Forest County and one specimen was examined in Forest County at Laona [J]. Long treed a raccoon on 22 July 1967 in the Chipmunk Rapids area [G]. The Department of Natural Resources harvest record for the raccoon in Florence and Forest counties is erratic. In 80 years ending in 1956, raccoons were taken in only 10 years in Florence County, and in 11 years in Forest County. The average annual harvest was 12 and 23 raccoons for the respective counties.

**FAMILY MUSTELIDAE** (weasels and allies).

*Martes americana* (American marten). One authentic record is shown for the Pine River watershed, Florence County [J]. Charles Cory wrote in 1912 that he had been informed that “martens are still to be found in the counties of northern Wisconsin . . . . based

![Figure 2. Black bear harvest for Florence and Forest counties [DNR].](image-url)
upon personal knowledge or the testimony of reliable hunters and
trappers . . . ." and he listed Florence County among others
[C., p. 383]. This furbearer was apparently present in the Pine
and Popple watersheds but obviously not in great densities. In
the personal records of Aldo Leopold is a notation that Mr. Jack Zatic
saw a marten near Wabikan Lake, town of Laona in 1933 [L].
I found no published records of recent date. The marten is not on
the list of furbearers that can legally be trapped in Wisconsin.

Martes pennanti (fisher). There are two authentic records for
Forest County, one in the north near the Michigan line, the other
on the Popple River [J]. Both records date from 1923. Tony
Oliester, of Antigo, in 1923 claimed he saw fishers in northern
Forest County just east of the Argonne game refuge and believes
they are still there (as of 1939). Eugene Mayo agrees with Oliester,
since he saw fishers in the same area in 1937 (Scott, 1939).
Fourteen fishers (6 males; 8 females) were stocked under Conserva-
tion Department [WCD] auspices in a 40,000-acre "Fisher Wild-
life Management Area" in a wilderness area within the Pine River
Stocking continued so that 60 fishers in total were released in the
Nicolet Forest from 1956 to 1960. They were shortly thereafter
surviving and extending their range (Olson, 1966). Sightings
have been made up to the present.

Mustela erminea (short-tailed weasel, ermine). One authentic
record is listed for southwestern Forest County and one at the
Popple River in Florence County [J]. The Andersons took a speci-
men on 18 October 1968 near Sea Lion Lake, Fern Township,
Florence County [A]. This little mustelid is, however, a common
species in both the Pine and Popple watersheds. A 30-year har-
vest record shows an average annual take from Florence County
of 436, and 732 from Forest County. In 1927, 3,424 weasels were
reported as taken from Forest County alone [DNR].

Mustela vison (mink). There is one authentic record in north-
western Forest County and one in Florence County along the Pine
River [J]. Mink are doubtless present along both rivers and their
tributaries. A 28-year average lists a harvest of 290 mink an-
nually for Florence County and 359 for Forest County [DNR].
In an article on the Popple River, Know a River (Erickson, 1962)
is the line: "You must watch for the mink that plays along the
bank . . . ."

Taxidea taxus (badger). One authentic record is listed for
southwestern Forest County and one in Florence County near the
Popple River [J]. Badgers are not abundant anywhere in Wis-
consin and harvest records for both counties show that in the
years when at least one badger was reported the average annual harvest was 9 for Florence County and 6 for Forest County [DNR]. Since 1955 badgers have been a protected species.

*Mephitis mephitis* (skunk). One authentic record is located in south Forest County and one in Florence County south of the Pine River near Lake Michigan [J]. Three juveniles were observed in the Chipmunk Rapids area on 8 August 1968 [G], and a skunk was also seen in the Lost Lake area [P]. Skunks are common throughout Wisconsin, with the average annual kill of 109 for Florence County (28 years), and 89 for Forest County (29 years) [DNR].

*Lutra canadensis* (otter). There is one authentic record for Florence County in the Pine River watershed, and three authentic records for Forest County, one of these on the Popple River near its delta [J]. There is one specimen examined from Crandon, Forest County [J]. On a map showing the relative abundance of the otter in 1951 to 1953, Knudsen (1956) shows the otter to be fairly common in both Forest and Florence counties. In Leopold’s personal notes he lists a Mr. F. Bell as seeing an otter on the Pine River in the town of Florence in 1924 [L].

The otter is rarely abundant anywhere in its Wisconsin range. The harvest data from Florence County show an annual harvest of 15 otters over a 22-year period, and 21 for Forest County over a 27-year period.

**FAMILY FELIDAE** (cats and allies).

*Lynx canadensis* (lynx). There is one authentic record of the lynx for Florence County [J]. There could have been and perhaps there still is an occasional lynx on either the Pine or Popple rivers. Published records, however, are meager. Fur-return records do not distinguish between lynx and the more abundant bobcat. The average annual harvest of “wildcats” for Florence and Forest counties is 62 (both counties over a 29-year period) [DNR].

*Lynx rufus* (bobcat). Two authentic records are listed, one in south-central Forest County, and one on the Pine River where it divides and turns north in Florence County [J]. One specimen was examined in Florence County (no locality) and three in Forest County, one at Laona and two at North Crandon [J].

**ORDER ARTIODACTYLA**

**FAMILY CERVIDAE** (deer and allies).

*Odocoileus virginianus* (white-tailed deer). Seventeen specimens have been examined from Florence County, 16 in the Spread Eagle area, and one in Florence. There are no records from Forest County [J]. Dahlberg and Guettinger (1956), in a range map
of deer, show Forest and Florence counties as principal forest range, but that probable deer densities in both of these counties before 1800 were only about 10–15 deer per square mile. White-tailed deer were seen in the Lost Lake area (1966–1968) [P] and by Young in the Pine and Popple watersheds in May 1969. Schorger (1953, p. 224) records the first mention of deer for Florence County was in 1882, and also that “The following year, a party of four Ohio hunters . . . killed 18 deer in 25 days on the Popple River in 1888.” Of Forest County Schorger says (p. 225), “There is no early information. Much game, including deer, was obtained by hunters in 1888. Indians bringing venison to Crandon in 1889 reported that there was not much game. Deer was scarce the following season. Indians had only fair success with deer in 1892; however, M. S. Barker bought 1000 pounds of venison from them at Armstrong. On October 26, 1893, John Bowers brought to Eagle River ten deer that were killed in the northern part of Forest County. The complaint was made that deer were being extermiated by market hunters so that few were left for the local people. Very few were killed at Three Lakes.”

The deer harvest record for Florence and Forest counties is shown in Fig. 3 [DNR]. About twice as many deer are harvested in Forest County as in Florence County.
Alces alces (moose). There is one record of moose in southwestern Forest County (Schorger, 1956). He states (p. 7), “There is no authentic record of a native moose [for Florence County].” However he continues, “In October, 1885, a party of Indiana and Ohio hunters was reported to have killed 8 deer and a large moose. The locality was not stated. At this time most of the ‘foreigners’ hunted in Florence County (p. 4.) And further: “A bull moose that was supposed to have wandered down from Lake Superior, was killed at Rice Lake by Indians on March 18, 1873. . . . Rice Lake, town of Crandon, Forest County.” It thus appears that there are no authentic (i.e., verified) records of native moose from either Florence or Forest Counties.

DISCUSSION

In spite of the remoteness of Florence and Forest counties from centers of population, the first state game refuge, it appears, was in Forest County. In the personal records of Leopold there is a letter from W. F. Grimmer, then Superintendent of Game Management for the Conservation Department, State of Wisconsin, dated August 1, 1936. It reads: “On checking our records it appears that the first state refuge in Wisconsin was established by legislative act (Chapter 310, Laws of 1915, approved by the governor on June 23, 1915) and was known as the Forest County Game Refuge. The description of the refuge was Township 38 North Range 12 East and Township 38 North Range 13 East.” Township 38 at that range includes the Pine and Popple rivers. Today that area is part of the Nicolet National Forest. The rationale for establishing a refuge at that time and place is vague at best.

As of 1970, there are 41 mammals recorded for Florence and Forest counties, any one of which either has been or is likely to be in the watersheds of the Pine and Popple rivers. The list is not complete for all possible resident species, nor has the subspecific grouping been thoroughly explored.

The fact that so little is known about the mammal fauna of the Pine and Popple watersheds should surprise no one. There has never been a county-by-county mammal survey of Wisconsin. Jackson’s work (op. cit.) is an excellent starting point, as is Cory’s (op. cit.) earlier report, but even in the former volume, published in 1961, the field work was completed ten years earlier, and much of it as many as 42 years earlier.

The much-needed survey would be expensive, but not exorbitant. The results could be used in problems of education, recreation, wildlife management, forestry, and in regional planning. It remains only for a public agency or teams of agencies to assume the initiative.
Some mammals, like wild rivers, may need to be protected and
cared for so that they will remain on the Wisconsin scene as part
of our historical heritage.

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