

Among the rodents, the beaver has the most valuable fur, but this animal has begun to show signs of decreasing and restrictions on the taking of beaver have been made more rigid in consequence. Muskrat is now quite highly prized and, so far as number of pelts taken is concerned, is far in advance of any other species; under the trade name of "Hudson seal", its pelt has become a favourite moderate-priced fur.

Conservation.*—The conservation of the fur bearers of Canada is a matter coming under the jurisdiction of the respective Provincial and Territorial Governments. Nevertheless, the Dominion, as a whole, is concerned in the conservation of fur and of all wild-life resources. It was to co-ordinate the wild-life conservation efforts of the various Dominion Departments that the Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection was organized in 1916. The Board is specially authorized to advise with respect to the administration of the Migratory Birds Convention Act and the Northwest Game Act, but has dealt with many other problems of wild-life conservation. Through conferences of provincial and Dominion officials which were convened for many years by the former Department of the Interior, but are now arranged by the Department of Mines and Resources, uniform and concerted action has been taken and the conservation of Canada's wild-life resources has been advanced. The general policy followed with regard to the fur-bearing animals has been mainly along two lines: first, to so regulate the taking of animals by limitation of catch or close season as to prevent their extinction in districts where natural conditions provide a suitable habitat; and second, to provide sanctuaries in strategic places which serve as reservoirs from which large areas of surrounding wild country may be naturally restocked.

Many of our most valuable fur-bearing animals are subject to marked fluctuations in numbers. The periods of abundance and of scarcity recur in sufficient regularity to be called cycles and they have an important bearing upon the fur trade generally and more particularly upon the well-being of a large percentage of our Indian and Eskimo population who depend upon the wild life for their livelihood. The Department of Mines and Resources, with the assistance of the Bureau of Animal Population, Oxford University, and the Hudson's Bay Company, has commenced an inquiry in the form of an annual questionnaire distributed to a number of Arctic stations with the object of endeavouring to determine the facts about each of these recurring fluctuations. It is necessary to continue this investigation from year to year because the situation is changing continuously, and it is hoped that the work will produce data from which a forecast can be made relating to the expected abundance of each important species. The study might also be suggestive of measures to prevent unnecessary depletion of any species of wild life during the periods of scarcity.

Information on the wild-life conservation activities of the provinces and territories may be secured from the chief game officials listed below: Roy A. Gibson, Deputy Commissioner, Northwest Territories, Ottawa (administers Northwest Game Act); G. A. Jeckell, Controller, Controller's Office, Dawson, Yukon; F. R. Butler, Commissioner, 411 Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, British Columbia; W. H. Wallace, Fish and Game Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Edmonton, Alberta; Edward S. Forsyth, Game Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, Regina, Saskatchewan; A. G. Cunningham, Director, Game and Fisheries Branch, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, Winnipeg, Manitoba; D. J. Taylor,

* Prepared under the direction of F. H. H. Williamson, Controller, National Parks Bureau, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, by Hoyes Lloyd, Superintendent of Wild Life Protection.