

Native Herd No. 1 was formed in December, 1938, by the separation of about 950 deer from the main herd and their transfer to an area in the vicinity of Anderson River. These animals were placed in charge of two Eskimos, father and son. The latter had received several years training as an apprentice herder on the Reserve, and the father was owner of a schooner necessary for the transfer of families and supplies. The agreement covering the transfer of the deer provides that when the new herd has sufficiently increased in size, a number of deer equal to the animals supplied shall be returned to the Department. The deer so returned may constitute the basis of another native herd.

In December, 1940, Native Herd No. 2 was established by separating 825 reindeer from the main herd and driving them to a location near Horton River, which lies east of Anderson River. These deer likewise were entrusted to two Eskimos, one of whom had trained as an apprentice herder on the Reserve. The other was in possession of a schooner. During the period in which these native herds are being built up, the natives in charge are allowed to take any animals required from surplus stock for their own use as food or clothing, in addition to a reasonable number to be used for the sale of meat and other products. On the return of deer equal to the number received on loan, the remaining deer will become the exclusive property of the natives in charge with the proviso that no live deer shall be disposed of to white men.

It has been the practice to hold a round-up of the main herd on Richards Island about the end of July, and a count made in 1943 placed the number of deer at 6,057 head. Round-ups of Native Herd No. 1 have been held at corrals on Nicholson Island at the mouth of Anderson River, and the 1943 return showed that the herd contained 2,104 deer. Corrals have not yet been constructed in the vicinity of Native Herd No. 2, but the number of deer was estimated in 1943 at 1,070.

General Management Routine.—The routine of the reindeer management on the Reserve commences in the spring with the movement of the main herd from the winter range to the summer range on Richards Island, where fawning begins about the tenth of April and extends into June. This period is followed by the movement of the deer to the northern part of the Island, where the winds on the Arctic headlands disperse insect pests. Later the deer are moved toward the corraling grounds. Round-up operations may be completed within four or five days if weather conditions are suitable. Following the round-up, the reindeer continue to graze on the summer range until transferred to the mainland, either by swimming in September, or by driving over the ice in the early winter. The slaughter of surplus stock occurs at different times. An autumn slaughter is held about the end of September and a winter slaughter about the end of November. In addition, some animals may be taken for meat in March when the herd passes the main station on the way from the winter range to Richards Island.

The annual round-up on the summer range is probably the most interesting event to occur on the Reindeer Reserve. The round-up affords an opportunity to balance the herd in relation to breeding stock and to select deer for slaughter later in the season. The animals are corralled, examined individually for condition, marked and counted. The round-up also provides an opportunity to demonstrate the handling of reindeer in large numbers, and the natives of the region who assemble for the occasion take a keen interest in the activities. The official count taken at this time shows the surviving fawn increase for the year. The young animals and those that escaped corraling the previous year are given a distinguishing herd mark