

increased staffs of game officials, better education of the trappers in conservation practices, and more complete information concerning the areas involved, the effectiveness of regulations for the conservation of wildlife shows a continuous improvement.

Conditions for the production of certain fur-bearers, especially beaver and muskrat, are readily improved through rehabilitation of the marshes and water areas that constitute their homes.

All provinces and territories now have trapping regulations and individual trappers are licensed. Some provinces register trap lines, others register trapping areas. These steps provide an incentive toward conservation measures on the part of the individual trapper who, in his own interest, will protect his area against poaching and will guard against 'over-trapping' or other unwise procedures that might wipe out local populations of fur-bearers on which his livelihood depends.

Subsection 2.—Fur Farming*

In the early days of the fur trade, it was the practice in Canada for trappers to keep foxes alive until the fur was prime, and from this custom has arisen the modern fur-farming industry. The earliest authentic record of raising foxes in captivity comes from Prince Edward Island, where about 65 years ago a number of foxes were raised on a farm near Tignish. After 1890, a period of rising prices for furs encouraged fox-farming and the industry grew rapidly. The beauty of the fur of the silver fox (a colour phase of the common red fox established through selective breeding carried on by the pioneer fox farmers) and the consequent high prices realized from the sale of the pelts, caused attention to be directed chiefly to this breed. While experiments were being carried on in Prince Edward Island, attempts at raising foxes in captivity were also being made in other provinces; the records show that foxes were successfully bred in Québec in 1898, in Ontario in 1905 and in Nova Scotia in 1906. The profitability of fur farming became widely known in 1910 when prices obtained for the first silver-fox pelts sold at auction in London, England, were published. An average of \$1,339 per pelt was received on the sale of 25 pelts, one alone bringing the sum of \$2,627. A boom followed but this collapsed in 1914 and it was some time before the industry regained stability. Fur farming is now carried on in all provinces. An experimental fox ranch is operated by the Federal Government at Summerside, P.E.I., where problems of breeding, feeding, housing and general care are studied.

The first recorded account of fox farming in Newfoundland appeared in the minutes of the Game and Inland Fisheries Board which stated that between July, 1913, and November, 1915, there were over 1,000 applications for export of live foxes and 750 permits were granted. At that time the law prohibited the export of live foxes except where they were raised in captivity. In October, 1915, there were 315 ranches with 2,600 foxes, most of which were wild animals taken from burrows in the spring. In 1947 there were six fox farms with 180 females and 80 mink farms with 2,000 females. Mink ranching began with importations from Canada in 1936. Fur farmers and exporters are licensed and it is necessary to obtain a licence to export live fur-bearing animals. Since 1936 the Newfoundland Government has conducted a fur-farm training school at St. John's where experimental work on feeding has been carried on.

* Revised in the Agriculture Division, Dominion Bureau of Statistics.