

wilderness. Some creatures thrive on change. There are more moose, deer, ruffed grouse and probably more coyotes than in Indian days. Fur species, such as beaver and muskrat, are easily managed and many small mammals and birds thrive better in fields and woodlots than in the virgin forests, provided that they are not poisoned by pesticides. At the present time, the harvestable surplus of game and fur species across Canada is seldom fully utilized and it is quite clear that wildlife will remain abundant wherever there is suitable habitat and enlightened management.

Thus, Canada today is known throughout the world for the wealth and variety of its wildlife. It maintains most or all the existing stocks of woodland caribou, mountain sheep, wolves, grizzly bears and wolverines, to mention a few. And these animals exist not only because of the vastness of their habitat but also because of man's efforts to preserve them. There is evidence of concern about the preservation of wildlife by the early Canadians; there were game laws in force in the original provinces when all but a few thousand acres of land were still the patrimony of the Indians. In 1885 pioneer conservationists were instrumental in establishing Banff Park in Alberta and in 1887 a bird sanctuary, the first on the Continent, was established at Last Mountain Lake in Saskatchewan. The same fervour for preservation of Canada's wildlife heritage led to the complete protection of wood bison in 1893 and to the purchase and establishment of a nucleus herd of plains bison at Wainwright in Alberta in 1907. Thus was formed the basis of wildlife conservation efforts, which, for a long time, took the form of protection of certain species from destruction by man or predator. Better knowledge of nature's operations and the recognition of the fact that many other factors combine to cause fluctuation in wildlife numbers are now being reflected in a loosening of restrictions on hunting and a rescinding of preserves. The science of animal numbers is new and sometimes runs counter to popular prejudice. But it is well understood that any area will support only so many animals, and species that are highly productive must have a quick turnover. Wildlife must never be separated from the consideration of its environment and if the environment is fully stocked the annual increment need only replace the losses. All extra is surplus, only part of which is taken by predators and part, if the animal is a game species, by man.

As a natural resource, wildlife within the provinces comes under the administration of the respective provincial governments; wildlife on federal lands and certain problems of national or international interest are the concern of the Federal Government.

The Canadian Wildlife Service.—The Canadian Wildlife Service deals with most wildlife problems coming within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. It was organized in 1947 to meet the growing need for scientific research in wildlife management and is a division of the National Parks Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. The Service conducts scientific research into wildlife problems in the Northwest Territories, Yukon Territory and the National Parks, advises the administrative agencies concerned on wildlife management, and co-operates in the application of such advice. It administers the Migratory Birds Convention Act, provides co-ordination and advice in connection with the administration of the Game Export Act in the provinces, deals with national and international problems relating to wildlife resources, and co-operates with other agencies having similar interests and problems in Canada and elsewhere.

The Migratory Birds Convention Act was passed in 1917 to give effect to the Migratory Birds Treaty signed at Washington in 1916. It provides a measure of protection for numerous species of birds that migrate between the two countries. The Canadian Wildlife Service, in its capacity as administrator of the Act, is responsible for recommending the annual revision of the Migratory Bird Regulations, which govern such matters as open