

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CREATURES OF THE WOODS AND STREAMS

Stocking the waters with fish and providing feed, water and cover for wildlife was a continuing practice with the Authority over the past 20 years. Even before Fanshawe Lake was created in 1952 the advice of Lands and Forests was sought on the best species of fish to be placed in the lake. The department's conservation officers worked closely with the Authority, providing invaluable assistance in creel census work and in restocking conservation areas.



*Restocking the Streams, left to right, Percy Johnston, Tom Beck, L. N. Johnson.*

On several occasions it was necessary to drain conservation ponds and place poison to get rid of coarse fish. These areas were then restocked with the most suitable species of fish and brought enjoyment to thousands of anglers.

Fish derbies were held for children on the opening day of the fishing season from 1955 to 1960. On an average, three conservation areas in different parts of the watershed were used each season, and prizes were awarded for the best catches. Experienced fishermen offered their services to coach the youngsters. The derbies were discontinued when it was felt they were no longer justified.



*Typical Children's Fishing Derby*

In 1959, the Authority, at the request of Lands and Forests, prepared one of the borrow pits at Fanshawe for an experiment in raising pickerel. Development of the fish was studied and thousands were netted, tagged and released in the lake. The experiment continued for three years.

Canada geese and different species of ducks, from the Jack Miner Sanctuary at Kingsville, obtained through the cooperation of the Kiwanis Club, were placed on Fanshawe Lake from time to time. The geese tended not to remain, but hundreds of ducks took up permanent residence.

Efforts are now being made to establish a crown game preserve or game sanctuary at Wildwood, for the greater protection of wildlife and to discourage wanton hunting and killing. Lands and Forests does not agree that the entire area should be closed to hunters. In the meantime the upper reaches of the reservoir were baited and signs posted. It is hoped soon to build a small water-holding structure to provide a natural duck breeding ground. A similar area on the Pittock reservoir will also be examined.

It is interesting to note that Wildwood is believed to be the only man-made lake in Ontario fed by natural springs, with water sufficiently cold to permit the successful propagation of speckled and rainbow trout.

Cover for wildlife, particularly ruffed grouse, pheasant and quail, is being provided through the Authority's reforestation program, and there has also been a noticeable increase in the number of song birds wherever reforestation takes place.