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DUCK REFUGE AT KLAMATH FALLS HAS EFFECTIVE DEATH TRAP

The Klamath River drops out of Upper Klamath Lake, swirls among the boulders at the edge of the city and passes into the smooth waters of Lake Ewauna. This stretch of water has a drop of about thirty feet and was formerly called Link River because it links the two lakes, and Linkville was the old name for Klamath Falls.

This stretch of water is always inhabited by various species of waterfowl. Near the center of the city, it is an attraction to persons who want to watch the flocks of birds from the bridge and shoreline. During the summer, the white pelicans fish for chubs that swim in big schools. Many kinds of ducks, grebes and coots gather along the stream not only in summer but in winter. It is an important feeding and resting area because it does not freeze up.

A few blocks up the right bank, the Biological Survey has built permanent pens with fresh running water for the ducks that seem affected by a disease called "western duck sickness," a form of botulism. These sick ducks are brought in from the shallow alkaline areas in different parts of the county. They are unable to fly but when given fresh water and food in the pens, they soon recover and are later released.

Some of the citizens of Klamath Falls have suggested that the River and Lake Ewauna should be set aside as a bird sanctuary. Under present conditions, the river is a constant menace to bird life because of the traps unintentionally built by the telephone company and the California-Oregon Power Company.

Above the bridge and across the river in various places are stretched a series of wires and cables. All of these

are just about the right height above the water to catch the flying flocks that cruise this regular flyway.

When it's clear weather, the birds swing above or below the wires but at night time or in foggy weather, it is a most effective death trap. The swift-flying birds hit the wires and are either killed outright or break a wing. In the electric cable running across from the power plant, I saw two dead ducks still hanging that had been caught between the wires.

During the fall and spring if the air happens to be thick with fog, one can pick up twenty or thirty dead and wounded birds in a watch of a few hours. The Game Warden estimated that at least a thousand ducks were killed by the wires each year. These companies could conserve many birds by changing the wires.