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NEEDLESS DESTRUCTION OF GAME RESOURCES

According to a dispatch from Banks, Oregon a few days ago, two hunters killed a mother bear and her cub. When discovered, the mother was tearing a stump apart to get ant eggs. When his mother was shot, the cub climbed a tree to escape but he too was bored through with a bullet.

A black bear is perhaps the most human of all wild animals in the Oregon woods. He is a sort of a clown or a happy-go-lucky fellow, always with an attitude of having a lot of time on his hands and he can't figure out just what to do next. He eats grass as a horse or cow does, also digs for roots, grubs or ant eggs. But perhaps his greatest joy is to find a bee tree and scoop out the honey. Fish or fruit is also a part of his menu. A wild bear in the woods is so afraid of man that even a mother with a cub is never dangerous. At times when food is scarce, a bear has been known to kill a sheep or a pig. This very rarely happens and is not any more of a habit in the bear tribe than murder is inherent in the human race.

Many states protect the black bear with other game animals that are protected. Even if permitted, very few gunners would kill a doe or a fawn at this season of the year. The flesh is not good for food, and it is poor sportsmanship. The same applies to a mother bear and her cub. The fur is not in prime condition, either.

This wanton killing of wild animals just to be shooting something is a thing that turns the average run of people against hunters. It is rather difficult to explain but often times when a person gets a gun in his hands and sees something alive in the woods,

the spirit of killing possesses him.

Today there is a very large class of people in this State who like to get out of doors for the joy of seeing the streams, the forests and the mountains. The sight of a deer or bear in the woods gives the average person a thrill that he never forgets. It would be a great attraction if such a sight were occasionally available along our highways. The average person is robbed of such thrills and enjoyment because there are always killers wandering around with loaded guns.

A few years ago I went out along a woodsy road west of Salem with Dr. C. C. Bellinger. He had discovered a ruffed grouse that for some unknown reason would fly at him and actually strike his leg with its wings when he approached this patch of woods. It was not a mother protecting her home site but an unusually bold male. While I have known of several cases of this kind, it is rare for a ruffed grouse to attack a man.

A few days later when Dr. Bellinger took another friend out to view this unusual sight, the scattered feathers in the road showed that some gunner had murdered the strange acting grouse.

One of the important attractions to thousands of citizens in our national parks is the fact that gunners are not allowed there and that wild birds and animals can be seen by visitors. Experience in such places shows that many wild folks of the woods are more valuable alive than dead.

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This wanton killing of wild animals just to be shooting something is a thing that turns the average run of people against hunters. It is rather difficult to explain, but often times when a person gets a gun in his hand, if he sees anything alive in the woods the spirit of killing possesses him.

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