

## Serene-Looking Mudhens Face Trouble



Mudhens which prefer the Carl Boppell lawn at 353 Majors street to their natural habitat in West lake just across the street, are likely to become the subject of a small-scale war. The mudhens, also known as coots, are ravaging the lawns of the Boppells and their neighbors. City hall can do nothing.

Harry Winterburn, park and recreation supervisor says, "It will take six months to get permits from the state and federal authorities before we are allowed to trap them." Fish and Game Warden Forrest McDermott says "If you trap them, it won't do any good. These are

migratory birds, and they've chosen West lake as their favorite spot. If they were moved to Woods lagoon, or any other practical location they'd be back at West lake before the trucks could return for a second load." McDermott suggests a bird dog to keep the mudhens away.

# West Lake Area Lawns Are Growing Mudhens

By Vic Jowers

Residents of homes surrounding the West Lake area are girding their loins to prepare for war.

The battle they will join is not expected to be a violent one, but will have all the niceties of a full scale war governed by United Nations rule.

Object of attack: Fulica Americana; alias gallinule — a member of the rail family, (or ralliadae); also known as coot, but better known here as the common ordinary mudhen.

Action is being demanded by residents from the police department and city hall to keep marauding mudhens from the expensive front lawns of newly-built homes in the area.

An encyclopedia describes the birds as "beautiful little creatures" when young. People seeing their lawns threatened by older brothers and sisters use other, stronger words when referring to them.

Retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Lloyd Winters of 144 Bradley drive said yesterday, "I'm completely flummoxed, old boy," when asked what action he thought he would take. The colonel, "not a bird colonel" he insists, moved here in September from Los Altos, and hopes to become "a good citizen in the community," but judging from the exasperation in his voice, it appears as though the mudhens might drive him out.

"The . . . birds have their H. Q. on the lake and make constant foraging parties over to my side of the territory," said the colonel. "I'm a nature lover, old boy, but I'm no mudhen lover."

Colonel Winters has one last resource — his son-in-law, Col. Herman Nickerson is in charge of planning and training the Marine corps detachment at Pearl Harbor — Winters may sink his pride and call in the marines to handle the problem.

New Police Chief Gene Pini has been asked to pit the power of the police department against the birds . . . to no avail.

Official methods, at police level at least, don't seem to be able to rally against the "100 or so" mudhens ravaging the colonel's lawn.

The embryo battle was turned over to Park and Recreation Supervisor Harry Winterburn for his action.

"There's nothing I can do about the birds," laments Winterburn, "they're protected by state and federal law."

Winterburn awaits clarification from both before he can take action.

One complainant stated "perhaps some kind of birth control could be practiced in the region." The mudhens, "while they've always been on the lake, seem

ing. Harry Winterburn, park and recreation supervisor says, "It will take six months to get permits from the state and federal authorities before we are allowed to trap them." Fish and Game Warden Forrest McDermott says "If you trap them, it won't do any good. These are

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Boppell of 353 Majors street have auxiliaries to aid them in keeping their lawn free. Chuck, 14; John, 10; Susan, 16, and Judy, 17, "take turns to run off the birds," said Mrs. Boppell. Chuck added philosophically, "The girls aren't much help though."

The Boppells have a Siamese cat and a lively dog.

"Both animals are lively enough," said Mrs. Boppell, "but when it comes to chasing mudhens they couldn't care less," she added.

Boppell who runs the Santa Cruz Original (shirt factory), probably won't decorate any of his shirts with pictures of mudhens. "They're causing him too much of a headache," said Chuck.

The man who seems most likely to succeed—in getting blessed with the problem — and who says he wants no part of it, is our fish and game warden, Forrest McDermott.

"People chose that location to live because they liked wildlife . . . well, now they've got it," said the game warden.

"There's an open season on mudhens at the moment . . . but before anybody allows hopes to rise to too high a level — there's a city ordinance banning

the shooting of any type of firearms within the city limits," he said.

"Besides," added the fair-minded game warden, "the mudhens were here before the people, and the mudhens certainly have a right to exist."

Various suggestions have been made by amused neighbors — or neighbors not affected by the marauders. One suggested posting signs on the front lawns reading: "Mudhens keep off." This was shrugged aside as being "facetious."

McDermott's suggestions, certainly a possibility, is for the interested parties to buy bird dogs. He said, "That's one thing that will keep the mudhens clear, short of poison. Both the federal and the state governments will prosecute if any poison is used, but a bird dog will keep the lawns free from the mudhens."

Another suggestion, which may have possibilities but may upset the world trade balance, is to let the mudhens stay . . . and then perhaps Santa Cruz can enter the Guano trade.

Guano is, at present — and who can tell about the future . . . found in great abundance on some sea coasts, especially on islands near Peru. At present — and who, again, can tell about the future . . . the Peruvians have a "corner" on the Guano market.

Perhaps it's time for Santa Cruz to step into this fertile field.

## Beach Parking Committee To Meet Tomorrow

Members of the beach parking committee will meet for breakfast at the Surf Rider restaurant at 8:30 o'clock tomorrow morning to hear the beach parking plan as submitted by Planning Consultants Harold F. Wise associates.

Mayor Paul E. Forgey, councilman Dick Farrar (liason officer for the committee) and city officials Bob Klein, Pete Tedesco, Harry Winterburn, and City Planning Director Bob Cook are expected to attend the meeting.

The plan is believed to call for three main areas to be set aside for parking facilities. The tentatively proposed parking lots will be in the Neary Lagoon area, on Beach street near Cliff street and at the eastern end of Beach street.

King Henry II, of France, introduced silk stockings to his court in 1559.

## Activities For Senior Citizens Are Scheduled

Senior Citizens' Opportunities activities for the coming week include:

Tomorrow—Oil painting class, 9:30 a.m. in the Scout house, 224 Market street, Mrs. Theodora Herold, instructor; choral group, 1:30 p.m. in the Scout house, Charales Tipper, director.

Tuesday — Spanish language study class, 10 a.m. in the Scout house, Bruce Lovely and R. Walter Hormann, co-chairmen; Cards and games, 1:30 p.m. in the Scout house, Myrtle Buddecke, chairman; lecture and travel group, 2:30 p.m. at Calreta court, 29 High street, Wilson Thomas, mineralogist, will speak; group phone chairman, members regarding E. D. Snow is chairman, 7:30 p.m. in the Scout house, Maria Schot.

Wednesday — and what