

Outdoor Life

1949

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MAY

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AN AIRPLANE
FOR SPORT?



GEORGE
SIGURE



Buck Skein

TRADE MARK

RAYON SATIN-BACK COTTON TWILL JACKET



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EACH

A Lustray Fabric
REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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As ever,

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GO TO YOUR DEALER—where you'll find Buck Skein flannel shirts and wool coats. If your Dealer is all sold out, send me your money—the price is \$10.00. Use the coupon.

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212 Fifth Ave., Dept. D-5, New York City

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Chest size _____

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Address _____

VOLUME 93
NO. 5

Outdoor Life

Reg. U. S.
Pat. Off.

RAYMOND J. BROWN, Editor

REGINALD A. HAWLEY, Art Editor

CONTENTS FOR MAY 1944

You Can Have Your Own Plane.....	ROB F. SANDERSON	17
A sportsman-flyer predicts new thrills in postwar fishing and hunting		
Lakers—the Limit Before Lunch!.....	ALLEN PARSONS	20
With only one day to fish in Quebec, it helps to have the trout oblige		
The Story of Billy.....	BUD JACKSON	22
This cocker needed only a master's affection, and a chance to hunt		
The Ruffed Grouse.....	FRANCIS LEE JACQUES	24
Full-color portrait of the king of game birds, done by a master hand		
Cougar at Bay.....	C. V. TENCH	27
When a killer attacks British Columbia ranch calves, track him down!		
The Irresistible: A Trouble Shooter.....	HARRY H. EDEL	28
How a new dry fly, tried out on New Jersey trout, lived up to its name		
Grizzlies in Our Hair.....	JACK O'CONNOR	30
Our gun editor saw thirty silvertips in the Canadian Rockies, and got one!		
The Deacon's Sin.....	CHARLES ELLIOTT	32
Too dang many varmints in that Georgia refuge; the warden said so himself		
Bullheads for Breakfast.....	JOHN P. BUDD	34
Having lured a guest to his pet Massachusetts lake, he had to deliver		
The Bold Approach on Squirrels.....	HOWARD BRISCO	36
Playing a hunch, the author just barged in on those Oklahoma bushy-tails		
Please Pass the Salt.....	GEORGE W. GRUNKEMEYER	38
In which a Wyoming trout angler learns that fishing the briny can be sport too		
Folding Table and Stools for Camp.....	WALTER E. BURTON	40
Here is a novel and practical project for the Sportsman's Work Bench		
Titans of the Malibu.....	PAUL W. GARTNER	42
Steelheads a stone's throw from Hollywood? Sure—if you know your stuff!		
Jungle Trophies Come Hard.....	B. T. CASTELLOW	44
A former congressman, still craving excitement, hunts tigers in Sumatra		
Outdoor Life in Pictures.....		47
This Happened to Me!.....	ARMOND VAN PELT	52
Fishing Seasons for 1944.....		54
Angling.....	RAY BERGMAN, Editor	56
Drag can spoil your fishing		
Arms and Ammunition.....	JACK O'CONNOR, Editor	86
How brush deflects bullets		
Boating.....	J. A. EMMETT, Editor	104
Cruisers of the future		
Camping and Woodcraft.....	MAURICE H. DECKER, Editor	108
Musts for your cook kit		
Dogs.....	WM. CARY DUNCAN, Editor	114
Three sterling performers		
The Health of Your Dog.....	DR. JAMES R. KINNEY	117
Game Gimmicks.....	GUS MAGER	120
What's On Your Mind?.....		14

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A SPORTSMAN-FLYER TELLS WHY



ROB F. SANDERSON
AUTHOR OF THIS TIMELY ARTICLE

"AH!" you say, on reading the title. "I wish I could afford a plane. But that's for rich guys—not an average train-my-own-dog man like me."

Brother, that's what pappy said when the first autos came out at around \$3,000. But later, when the Model T went below \$400, pappy bought one. History is about to repeat itself.

As a sportsman since youth, a plane owner before the war, and an airline pilot who has watched the possibilities of airplanes for outdoorsmen since 1938, when my trembling hands first grasped the stick of a trainer plane, I feel we sportsmen are on the threshold of a new era.

Planes have already been used for fishing and hunting, of course, but only in a sporadic way. In the next ten years they will cause the most rapid expansion of all outdoor sports since the popularization of the auto. Just as the auto opened up the neighboring outdoors to the average guy like you and me, the airplane will open the outdoor continent—and maybe more than one continent—to America's sportsmen. "The cream of the wild, away from highways and billboards."

Your plane will bring virgin fishing and hunting grounds

After the War
**YOU CAN
HAVE YOUR
OWN
Plane**

Here is some "postwar planning" that is based on experience and common sense. Just as the wider use of the auto-

mobile after the first World War broadened the horizons of sport for all of us, so will the impetus that the present war has given to aviation provide new thrills in fishing and hunting.

The writer of this article knows what he's talking about. He is not only an experienced sportsman whose articles have appeared repeatedly in *OUTDOOR LIFE*, but a veteran flyer, who owned his own plane before the war and is now piloting giant transports on a 4,000-mile route over South America for Pan American—Grace Airways.

right under your landing gear in a few hours' time; no more long auto trips, rough dusty roads, or days to pack in.

Problems like getting fresh fish or early-fall birds back before spoiling won't exist. You can hit your favorite spots just when the action is ripe, not a day or two too late. If the action is slow, within half an hour, you can try another place fifty miles away. From the air you will be able to pick the best camp sites, hunting stands, blind locations at a glance. Before landing you can see the exact shape of a lake or woods and plan your strategy accordingly. And when the trip's over you arrive home quickly through the clean, traffic-free skyways; no grinding drives in late-Sunday traffic which get



It's been done! Fishing from an amphibian off Miami, Fla., in 1937

you home in the wee hours tousled and fagged out.

Sounds like extravagant camp-fire talk? Actually it is within the realm of early postwar possibility.

First, we can expect a drastic reduction in airplane costs. When the Flying Fortresses and P-38's are through with the assembly lines, aircraft manufacturers will adjust their huge range of production and design power to the needs of John Q. Citizen. It was low output and hand labor that kept costs high; after the war a plane below the cost of present-day cars is possible and practical.

A prewar private airplane was nothing more than a framework of tubing, over which strong light cloth was stretched, doped, and painted; wing skeletons, similarly covered; and an engine. Postwar plastic construction may simplify the structure even more drastically. In any case, the propeller absorbs the power directly—no transmission, no drive shaft, no differential, no spider gears involved. Wheels are built only to coast short distances.

In short, the airplane is actually better suited to mass production than the automobile. With the lowest-priced two-place prewar airplane selling at about \$1,000, we can logically expect a greatly improved postwar model for less money than this.

"But what about operating expense?" you inquire. "Will it be so high my plane will sit on the ground when I

would like to be flying it?"

From my own experience as a light-plane owner, I found air travel cheaper than car travel. My 65-horsepower plane traveled slightly less than 100 miles an hour and consumed less than four gallons of gas an hour, or about a gallon for every 25 miles. Remember too that airline distances average only about 60 percent of indirect road mileages. A quart of oil was consumed in from five to twelve hours, depending on the engine age and length of time since overhaul.

Extra flying affects little but the engine, as the wear and tear on fabric, and other parts is almost negligible in normal flights, and there is no wear

on brakes, springs, or wheels, as there is on an auto while it travels. Every 600 to 800 hours (about 70,000 miles on my plane) a major overhaul is necessary on the engine. Normal shop price would be about \$125.

The only other expense is an occasional set of spark plugs and, every 100 hours, a periodic inspection of plane and engine by a licensed mechanic, at a cost of about \$12. (Incidentally, mechanics are usually glad to trade their work for a little flying time. They also like to fish and hunt!)

Difficult to fly? No—just don't pull the nose up so high you lose flying speed. The beginner's biggest handicap is tenseness and inability to relax. Like trying to make an accurate shot with buck fever.

After the first few practice hours, you as a sportsman will have a big advantage over the

Place: Moosehead Lake district, Maine. Time: 1940. Scene: Game warden with evidence of an unlawful kill, which he has loaded on his plane

average person. In cross-country travel, the two biggest worries are getting lost, and running into bad weather. But since youth you've been used to getting around with the aid of maps and compass (which is all navigation is) and have developed a keen eye for landmarks, so navigation should be a push-over for you. Likewise you've been used to judging weather for years.

Now for the actual choosing of your plane. At first it looks even more complicated than buying a boat. A given design gains one advantage only to lose another advantage.

Fundamentally the problem rests on where you want to land your plane. If you live in the city, far from pine needles and lily pads, you may want a plane just for quick transportation to the general district you boat or hunt in. In that case you would land at good airports or at least on fair-sized fields that have been proved large enough and smooth enough for use. This leaves speed the only consideration.

The sportsman who goes to lake districts for his hunting and fishing will have wide expanses of water near his actual destination for use in landing and taking off. Likewise the man on Western plains or Southwestern desert, where smooth flat areas abound, will have no worry. Take-off performance can be largely ignored and all emphasis put on speed.

However, the fellow who wants a substitute for a jeep, to land and take off in rough little clearings or tiny backwoods potato patches has another worry. He needs a plane that will land safely on rough ground, but most of all he needs quick take-off and fast climb. Like many other pilots, I have in emergency landed a plane in a field too short to take off from.

In this respect a plane is like a car with only one gear. A car with a single high gear takes a long time to get up speed and will stall on a steep hill, but once under way it whizzes along. A car with a single low gear will get up what speed it has quickly and will eat up the hills, but it won't burn up the straight-away. Flying out of a short field over





No spoiled venison here! Floats on this prewar Piper plane could be exchanged for wheels at will



Come victory, one craft which seems destined for sports use is the Army's cargo-carrying Fairchild Forwarder, which once was a private four-place cabin monoplane. About all it needs is a new paint job!

high trees is like going up a steep hill from a standing start. However, with an airplane you don't back up and try it again if the first time happens to fail!

Except for helicopters and autogiros (which are slower than conventional planes of the same power, but with which vertical approaches are possible), this problem—"jeep or racer?"—will be with the plane buyer until someone designs a wing which can be regulated as to length or thickness during flight. Controllable-pitch propellers help a lot, however.

Just where can an airplane be landed? You'd be surprised, as I was when, used to flying off roomy airports, I joined a crop-dusting outfit. These flyers landed in almost any old pasture, stubble field, or peanut patch, or even a near-by stretch of road. This experience completely changed my ideas of where an airplane could be landed. When using rough fields a sturdy landing gear with wheels far apart is best. The big rubber-doughnut tires will absorb an unbelievable amount of jars. The boys now in reconnaissance outfits piloting "grass-hoppers" or "flying jeeps" will be experts at this sort of bush flying, as it is called in the north. Possibly after the war some of these planes may be available for civilian purchase.

The load in a plane has a lot to do with how long the take-off run must be. Sometimes in close quarters it may be necessary to take off with half the load, fly to a larger clearing, and return for the other half.

For the man who encounters various types of landing conditions—snow, bare ground, water, and ice—a few simple tools are all that is needed to change over from wheels to floats or skis. It is comparatively easy, by the way, to take off from a green grassy field with floats or skis, especially if the grass is damp. While landings are also possible there is considerable risk of damaging the floats unless extremely smooth contact is made.

The more you fly your plane and gain experience under varied conditions the more you will realize that, contrary to popular belief, airplanes are not inher-



No, these New Mexico antelope (1937 vintage) weren't shot from the air, for that's against the law. But the hunters did fly in by plane—and they won't be the last of their kind

ently dangerous. Most accidents result when beginners, discovering how simple flying is, replace their initial timidity with dangerous overconfidence. This leads them to take chances and attempt feats for which they lack enough experience.

A plane is much like a canoe, or even a gun, in that you must learn what you can and can't do with it, and then observe the can'ts. Don't stand up in a canoe, and you're not likely to tip over. Always treat a gun as if it were loaded, and you won't get shot. Handle an airplane like an airplane, and it will treat you like the safe pilot you are. The average healthy sportsman with good eyesight—used to handling boats, judging distances, keeping cool—should have little trouble developing safe pilot technique.

Fast transportation for sportsmen to remote places is but one use for the airplane in the outdoor and conservation world. Just as the Border Patrol has found light planes invaluable to prevent smuggling and alien entry, so will

game-enforcement agencies begin more and more to adopt this means for patrolling and preventing violations.

Conservation units will find the plane a big help for game-census work in many parts of the country. In the open country of the Southwest, I have noticed, it is a simple matter to count a scattered herd of antelope from above. An instructor friend of mine had good duck hunting all one fall in Texas because one of his flying cadets scouted all the duck ponds daily and reported the census.

Countless other uses are possible. When used in fish planting, the plane will permit rapid transportation from hatchery to lake or stream, with far fewer losses. From a plane, wild rice can be successfully planted over wide areas, or oil spread on mosquito-infested swamps. And in recent years planes have been almost indispensable in controlling forest fires.

The outdoor world is on the verge of a new era of development, when

(Continued on page 78)



"I Sell Hawaiian Wigglers and Also Use Them!"

Fred Arbogast
Akron, Ohio

"Dear Fred: On April 19th when the lake was high and a cold wind was blowing, we made this catch on No. 2 Hawaiian Wiggler. The largest one weighed $5\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.

"I sell Hawaiian Wigglers and also use them. They're the best selling baits we handle."—Rezin Shaw, Elwood, Ind.



No. 2 Hawaiian Wiggler
(Shallow Running)

Write for Catalog

Tells where and how record catches are being made with Hawaiian Wigglers—deep running No. 1, shallow running No. 2 and weedless No. 3. Also tells all about Jitterbug, famous surface bait. A copy is yours for the asking.

FRED ARBOGAST, 415 North St., Akron 3, Ohio

MASTER WEEDLESS WIGGLERS

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Guaranteed weedless—all metal. At your dealer's or order direct No. B1 Chrom $\frac{5}{8}$ oz. Money back guarantee!



75c

AUGIE'S BAIT CO. 2945 So. 15th Pl.
Milwaukee, Wis.

ing season—these enemies include skunks, raccoons, crows, hawks, weasels, and foxes, with the last two the most serious offenders. Furthermore, grouse chicks are too delicate to survive a wetting, and a rainy nesting period means a high death rate among the broods.

Add the nests destroyed by predators and forest fires, and it is doubtful that more than 20 percent of the nestlings are in the land of the living by fall.

Yet the mature birds are tough as they come. For them, extreme cold has no terrors; and as far as snow is concerned, the feathers that grow between their toes when freezing weather approaches serve as miniature snowshoes, enabling them to negotiate the deepest drifts with ease. They even burrow beneath the snow for protection against

chilling storms and wintry winds.

And it's the same with heat. Whatever the weather man dishes out they take it and like it, as is indicated by their range, which extends from Alaska and Canada southward to Georgia and Alabama, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coasts. And to their credit be it said, they are immensely popular in all these localities and considered "regular guys" by all and sundry.

Incidentally, and as might be expected, real A-1 grouse dogs are born, not made; and in my neck of the woods their birth rate is disappointingly low. —Wm. Cary Duncan.

NEXT MONTH: The black bear, another of Outdoor Life's full-color studies of American game.

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70 PROOF



America's favorites FOR True Hospitality

SLOE GIN

PEACH

APRICOT

ORANGE GIN

MINT GIN

M. S. Walker, Inc.
BOSTON, MASS.

You Can Have Your Own Plane

(Continued from page 19)

fishing, hunting, and other outdoor sports will hit a new high, with thousands of new devotees and thousands of new square miles of outdoors readily accessible. What now are week-long trips will become week-end trips, and what formerly took all summer will take but two weeks.

Sportsmen with moderate incomes will be shooting walruses and ocelots, and the pages of sporting magazines will tell how to hunt animals we have hardly heard of before. The man who stays closer to home will find landing strips cut by forest rangers in all sorts of out-of-the-way places where there are no lakes to land upon.

Soon after I get back home from foreign soil and away from the big twin-engine transports I am now flying,

there's nothing I'd like better to do than to take six months off with one of the postwar sportsman's airplanes and "do" North America from Alaska to Panama, and South America as well—fishing and hunting en route for everything from polar bears to monkeys, grizzlies to tapirs.

When the bombers and fighters are no longer needed and the mention of airplanes makes you think of week-end trips instead of world war, you'll find that flying gives you a bird's-eye perspective of the whole outdoors from individual hunting grounds to national conservation problems.

And last but far from least, there's the thrill of discovering one of the greatest, newest sports in all the world—flying itself!