

JUDGING FROM THE NUMBER of comments the Fish and Game Department receives from the public, it seems nearly everyone in Alaska enjoys observing moose. For most individuals, however, moose watching consists of seeing an occasional moose while driving down the highway or being engaged in other outdoor activities.

Others, fortunate enough to live in areas where moose are frequent visitors, are able to watch them conveniently from their own home. There are, in addition, many individuals who expend a great deal of time and effort to enjoy the aesthetic experience of observing or photographing moose.

For those who wish to observe moose in the Anchorage area the opportunities are abundant. The chances of seeing

concealment of mature vegetation. At this time they are difficult to locate.

A second important guideline to consider is the time of year. During the late summer and early fall many moose concentrate in highland meadows at timberline. Those hardy individuals who wish some interesting photographs should be prepared to walk into relatively inaccessible areas. Some moose, however, remain in lowland areas where tall grass and abundant vegetation make them difficult to see. The person who wishes to observe moose in lowland areas will increase his chances by locating lakes which contain pondweeds where moose commonly feed.

From mid-September through October as the rutting season commences, moose activities change markedly. Tagging

opportunities to see them spar with opponents as they attempt to protect their harems or to win the favors of a particularly attractive female are available to anyone who wishes to make a trip into the back country.

It is during the winter months that moose watchers may observe the most moose with the least effort. Moose are commonly located along roadsides, in homestead clearings, in willow patches along rivers, or along power line right-of-ways where food is present. Some moose watchers have had excellent opportunities to see spectacular numbers of moose from side roads or sometimes along a main highway.

During a recent winter, one observer saw 200 moose along a two-mile stretch of highway near the Matanuska River bridge. Others reported numbers of a hundred or more along the highway between Willow and Talkeetna during the severe winter of 1970-71.

A fourth guideline to observe is the weather. During windy days moose retreat into the cover of mature forests and do not remain in the open. In winter moose seem to feed more during the daylight hours and may be seen most commonly when cold weather follows a deep snowfall.

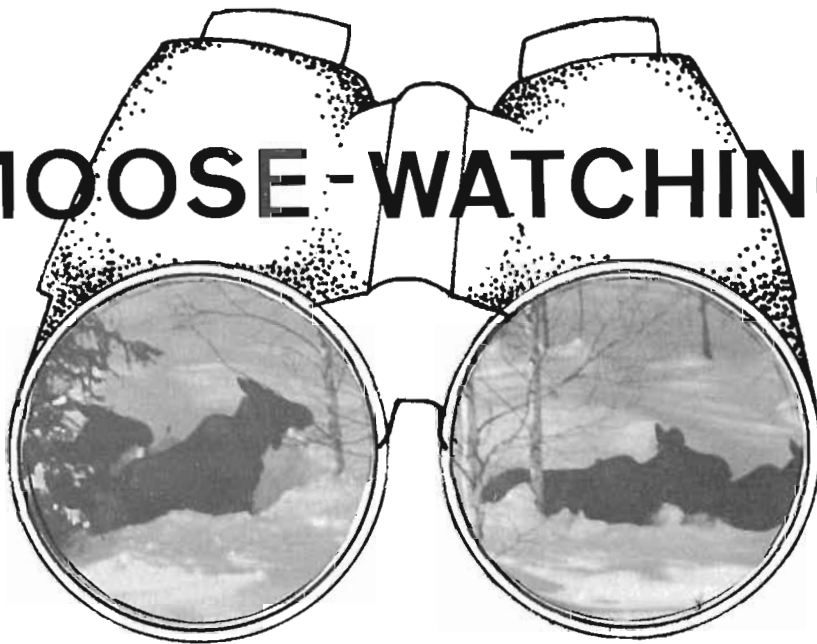
A fifth guideline is to go where the moose are. Not all of Southcentral Alaska is moose habitat. Learn to recognize the difference between plants that are preferred by moose (such as willow or birch) and those that are not (such as alders). As you find these preferred areas you will find it becomes easier to locate moose.

During spring and early summer moose usually remain in the lowlands where the female has her calf. Moose calving areas are generally marshy, open flatlands situated along Cook Inlet or rivers. These areas lend themselves to both observation and photography of cows with newborn calves. A word of caution, however: female moose may be very protective of their offspring and moose watching during this period is a dangerous sport. By July most moose have left these marshy areas and moved to their summer ranges.

A sixth guideline is to study the hunting regulation booklet and take advantage of being able to observe or

*(continued on pg. 25)*

# MOOSE-WATCHING



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moose are excellent if one follows the basic guidelines and is willing to expend a little effort.

One of the first guidelines to remember is that moose are primarily diurnal—that is, most of their activities occur in early morning and late evening. Regardless of where one goes to observe moose, the most likely time to see them is within a few minutes after daybreak and just before dark. During the middle of the day most moose are usually bedded down in

studies show that during this period there is a shift of moose from the lowlands (primarily cows and calves) to higher elevations, and a shift of moose from the highlands (predominantly single cows and bulls) to lower elevations. This movement is obviously essential to redistribute bulls and cows and to achieve a maximum opportunity for breeding. For a person who wishes to observe or photograph moose this can be the most enjoyable time of year. Bulls become less wary and

# PROTECTION NOTES FISH, GAME VIOLATIONS

THE PROTECTION DIVISION filed 1,350 complaints for fish and game violations in Alaska during the first 11 months of 1971. Sport fish violations led the list with 478 violations recorded, while 437 complaints for commercial fishing violations were filed. Officers

cited 319 persons for game violations and 116 other offenses accounted for the remainder.

Most common individual offense was fishing without a sport fish license, with 194 violations reported in this category. ■

Complaints Filed to Dec. 1, 1971	Commercial Sport			
	Fish	Fish	Game	Other
Closed Area	152	50	6	
Closed Season	55	23	36	
Exceeding Bag Limit		21	7	
Waste of Fish or Game			17	1
Aircraft Restrictions			8	2
Pollution & Interference				12
Methods and Means		167	37	
No License	35	194	32	5
License Falsification	6			37
Nonresident Game Tag			11	1
Waterfowl			12	
Sealing Requirements			9	
Possession and Transportation		15	50	3
Size Requirements	33		2	
Gear License	16			
Vessel License	17			
Subsistence Fishing	38			
Use of Gear	45			
Emergency Taking			9	
Required Presence				1
Herring Spawn	1			
Area Registration	5			2
Ethical Conduct				1
Miscellaneous	2	1	4	46
Harvest Ticket or Punch Card		6	31	2
Permits		1	21	
Use of Fish or Game			26	
Reports	5		1	3
Identification Requirements	27			
<b>Total</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>116</b>

## RECORD STEELHEAD *(continued)*

lake trout - 25 pounds, Millard D. Kretsinger, Anchorage

pink salmon - 8 pounds 1 1/2 ounces, H. A. Wiles, Norway, Maine

red salmon - 10 pounds 12 ounces, Walter L. Wilson, Anchorage

sheefish - 37 pounds 11 ounces, John Munshower, Lake Bluff, Ill.

Trophy certificates also were presented to 49 other anglers who caught fish which qualified for the awards.

The trophy fish awards are issued by the Department of Fish and Game to give special recognition to anglers who take fish that meet the minimum weight qualifications for each species. ■

## MOOSE-WATCHING

*(continued from pg. 14)*

photograph moose without competition. Moose are most available during the late winter, during the calving period and during the rut. At these times there are few other people interested in moose and you have vast areas to yourself where moose are both abundant and unwary.

Another advantage to studying the regulations is locating those places where you will not have to compete with hunters any time of year. These areas include the Anchorage closed area, the Paxson closed area, and the Portage closed area--all closed to hunting by the Board of Fish and Game. Similar localities are the Moose Research Center, the Denali State Park and all lands within one mile of the roads and trails of the Chugach State Park, where discharge of firearms is prohibited by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Division of Parks. Katmai National Monument and Mount McKinley National Park are closed to all hunting by the National Park Service. ■

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