

PRODUCTS OF THE FOREST . . .

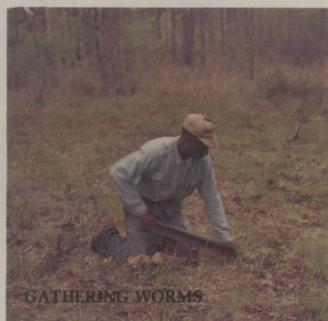
People look at the forest in many different ways. Some see the forest mostly as a relaxing interlude on a slowly-moving stream while waiting for fish to take the bait. Others may view it as a storehouse of natural resources that are constantly being replenished for a Nation's needs. Some may seek the peace and solitude of the deep woods. The well-managed forest is able to meet a variety of these desires — both for the material and esthetic.

The Apalachicola National Forest, located in northwest Florida, is a working, producing forest. It is managed by the U. S. Forest Service to provide the American public with the optimum blend of wood, wildlife, recreation, and pure water. Conflicts between the uses of these resources are minimized when the forest is properly managed under the administration of trained professionals.

An observant driver can spot many interesting facets of the Forest during a leisurely drive down some of the hundreds of miles of backroads that cross the 557,000 acres of the Apalachicola. One of the more unusual sights is a group of people **gathering worms** to be sold commercially for fish-bait. In local terminology, they are "grunting" the worms. A wooden stake, driven into the moist soil, is rubbed along the top with a piece of heavy iron, thus producing underground vibrations (with a "grunting" sound) that drive the worms up to the surface of the ground where they can be picked up by hand. The Apalachicola yields millions of worms for these bait harvesters each year.

During your tour of the backroads you may see **timber being harvested**. These logging operations are carefully planned by professional foresters, wildlife biologists, and landscape architects to minimize the visual effects while obtaining the best production of timber and browse for wildlife. The trees to be cut are marked by Forest Service crews, and sold to the highest bidder. A logging operation is interesting to watch. The trees are felled, the tops removed, and the logs "skidded" to waiting trucks. The logs are carried by truck to a sawmill or paper mill to be converted into the many wood products we use every day. After the removal of one generation of trees, a new generation is planted, insuring a continuously producing forest.

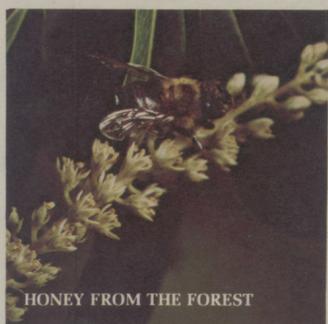
Honey production is another interesting operation that you may see. The Apalachicola National Forest includes vast swamps (or bays) covered with scrubby titi and gallberry. These impenetrable areas are valuable even though they contain no merchantable-size trees. The professional beekeeper sees the billions of blossoms in these areas as a source of nectar to be turned into tens of thousands of pounds of honey. The beehives are located adjacent to roads and are usually surrounded by electric fences to keep out the bears that seem to have a natural craving for honey.



GATHERING WORMS



TIMBER HARVESTING



HONEY FROM THE FOREST

YOUR APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST... PRODUCING FOR YOU!

RECREATION . . .

The magic of the Forest is its ability to slow down the fast tempo set by city life, bringing it in step with unhurried nature. Whether you seek a quiet canoe trip, a trip to photograph wildflowers, or an extended camping vacation, you should be able to find variety on the vast Apalachicola National Forest.

Camping on the Apalachicola is designed for families who enjoy a forest-type atmosphere. Each camping unit provides a table, fire grill, garbage receptacle, and space for a tent or medium-size recreation vehicle. The principle areas (**Silver Lake**, Wright Lake and **Camel Lake**) have modern restrooms, water hydrants, and attractive swimming beaches. The remaining areas are more secluded and have wells with hand pumps and vault toilets.

Camping at these areas is on a first-come, first-served basis. Visits are limited to 14 consecutive days at any one campground. During the fall deerhunting season, all camping must be within designated campsites.

Picnic areas are located to take advantage of pleasant forest settings; they usually are adjacent to attractive lakes in connection with swimming or camping facilities. Other picnic facilities are at boat-launching ramps on the blackwater streams (sloughs) that flow into the Ochlockonee and Apalachicola Rivers.

Recreation facilities for the handicapped are provided at **Trout Pond Recreation Area**, 12 miles southwest of Tallahassee. Designed and operated exclusively for handicapped individuals and their families, the facilities include a sheltered picnic area, swimming pools, restrooms, first aid building, fishing pier, and an interpretive trail. The area is open daylight hours from April-September; the remainder of the year it is operated by reservation only.

Portions of the Forest are popular with horseback riders. The Vinzant Riding Trail is a series of three marked trails that total 33 miles. The trail leads riders through a variety of open pine and hardwood forests.

A **canoe** offers an ideal way to leave civilization behind and explore the dark, slowly moving streams that wind through the vast hardwood swamps. The Ochlockonee River canoe trail offers 67 miles of scenic river with very few places where man's activities are visible. Portions of New River, Sopchoppy River, and Lost Creek can be floated when the water is high. Contact the District Rangers for travel information because some portions of these three streams cannot be traveled by canoe.

Your cooperation is needed to help us maintain a pleasant atmosphere for an enjoyable recreation outing. Please leave the area you use as you would like to find it. Regulations of use are posted in recreation areas.

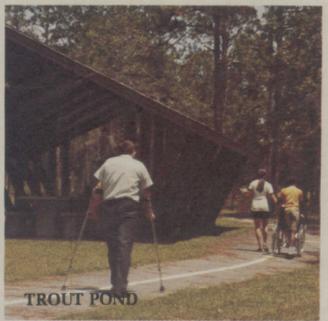
For information on the Forest west of the Ochlockonee River, contact the District Ranger, P. O. Box 578, Bristol, Florida 32321. For the eastern portion, contact the District Ranger, P. O. Box 68, Crawfordville, Florida 32327.



SILVER LAKE



CAMEL LAKE



TROUT POND



CANOEING

DISCOVERING WILDLIFE . . .

Many kinds of fish and wildlife make their home in the Apalachicola Forest. Whether you want to **hunt**, fish, photograph, or just see wildlife in its native habitat, you'll find enjoyment here. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the U.S. Forest Service work together to provide the food, shelter, and protection needed by wildlife. Forest management practices are modified to give greater benefits to wildlife. Openings are created to provide a variety of food supplies for wildlife. Controlled hunts are designed to keep the number of animals in balance with available food while also providing recreation to sportsmen. The entire Forest is a wildlife management area, and special hunting permits are required. Firearms are prohibited except in connection with the hunts.

In addition to game animals, hundreds of non-game species make the Apalachicola Forest their home. Stalking these elusive animals and birds with camera or binoculars can be a rewarding past time. The best opportunities are during the morning or evening hours when wildlife is most active.

You may see the **wood duck** (considered by many to be North America's most beautiful bird) in the swamps and streams of the Apalachicola. This duck, unlike most pond ducks, nests, feeds, and roosts in thick woods where the water is shallow. Ducklings feed primarily on insects, the adults consume large quantities of acorns and the leaves and tubers of aquatic plants. Many people call this duck the "squealer" because of its call when flushed from a hiding place.

Some animal populations have fallen to such a low number that their future existence is in question. The

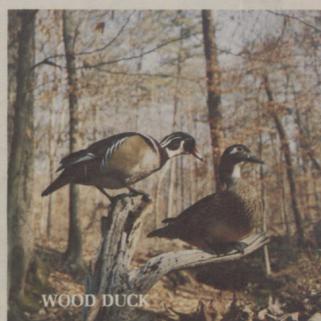
species are classified as rare, endangered, or unique, depending on their numbers. The Apalachicola is home for the southern bald eagle, red-cockaded woodpecker, sandhill crane, alligator, osprey, and panther — all considered rare or endangered. These animals retreat from advancing civilization and seek undeveloped areas like the Apalachicola. National Forest management is concerned with maintaining the vegetative conditions these creatures require.

The **red-cockaded woodpecker** is a good example of a species that needs our help. A sharp-eyed observer may notice white sap dripping down the trunks of the old pine trees the red-cockaded woodpecker uses for its home. This small bird makes his nest hole only in pine trees which have rotted in the center. For this reason, old decadent pine trees are left for the birds' nesting use.

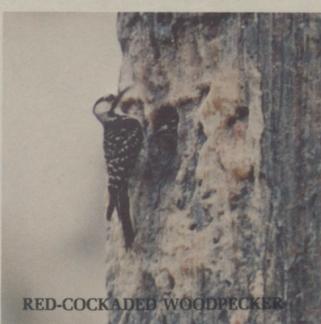
The **fisherman** finds the Apalachicola a year-round paradise. Its many lakes, rivers, and winding streams offer enjoyable fishing from a boat or from the bank. The principal fish caught are bass, bream, warmouth, and catfish. A State fishing license, a minimum of equipment, and a little skill are all that is required.



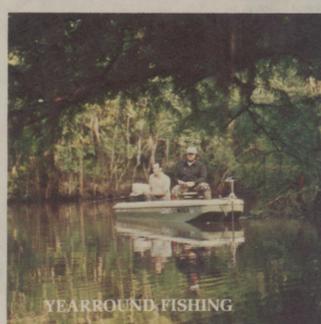
HUNTING



WOOD DUCK



RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER



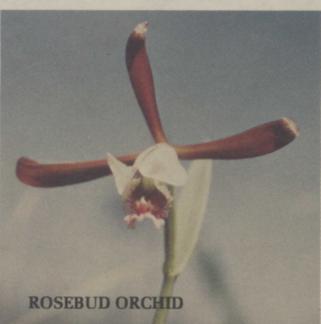
YEARROUND FISHING

LITTLE THINGS . . .

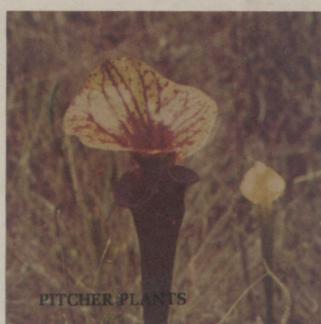
A sprawling forest like the Apalachicola is made up of countless little things that are fascinating to examine. Hundreds of different kinds of wildflowers add color and interest to the landscape. Some, like the **showy orchids** and lilies, are beautiful to look at. Others, like the pitcher plant and bladderworts which trap very small animals, are interesting to examine.

The best time to see wildflowers is during spring and early summer. Take a leisurely drive over the backroads of the Forest. Stop the car at almost any point and walk fifty feet into the woods. You will probably find plants you never realized existed. The important thing is not to worry about the names of these plants, but rather develop an appreciation of their natural diversity.

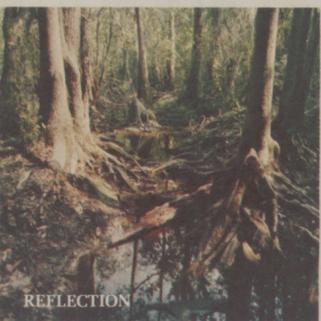
The tremendous variety of wildflowers is caused by the differences in soil and water conditions on the forest. An elevation change of only a few feet greatly affects the amount of water available to plants. The sandy soils on the "ridges" retain very little water and support dry site flowers such as prickly pear cactus and lupines. Only a few hundred feet down the road



ROSEBUD ORCHID



PITCHER PLANTS



REFLECTION



PINE SEEDLING

you may find entirely different plants in the wet soils of a swamp or bay.

Pitcher plants are a good example of adaptation to environment. Look for these in the boggy, treeless areas called savannahs. The yellow or green trumpet-shaped tubes that are 8-18 inches high form an enticing trap from which there is no escape for the unwary fly or ant. The digested insect supplements the limited nutrients that the pitcher plant can extract from the soil.

On drier areas you may see the hardy resurrection fern that grows on live oak trees. During dry periods this plant turns brown and appears dead; following a rain it returns to its original green fern-like form.

Flowing water is always fascinating. Stop your car on one of the large culverts through which a stream flows from one of the many "bays" or swamps. The dark color in the water is tannin which comes from the fallen leaves through which the water seeps. These waters mirror the **reflections** of picturesque cypress, blackgum, and bay trees in the still, early morning hours.

Young, managed **pine plantations** are good places to look for wildflowers and small animals. Harvesting or thinning removes some trees which would ordinarily shade the ground completely, letting sunlight reach the ground and stimulate the growth of young, vigorous plants. These plants provide rich sources of wildlife food.

A self-guiding interpretive trail at Silver Lake can help you learn more about the relationship between plants and their environment. The trail begins on a boardwalk through a cypress swamp and winds through several different plant communities. Labels along the trail explain what you are seeing.