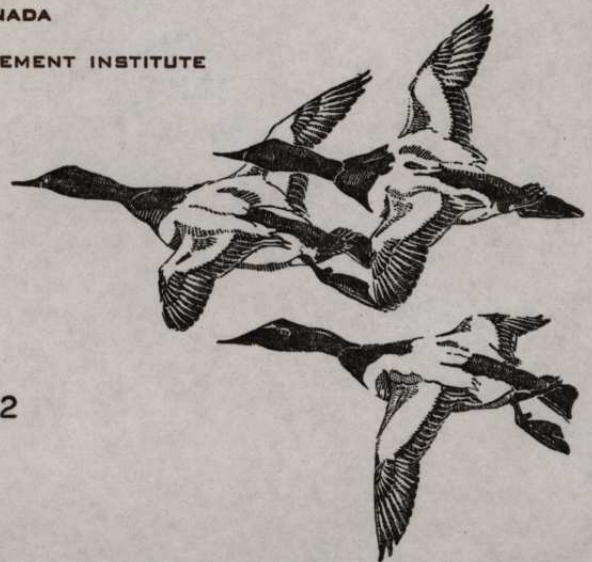


DELTA WATERFOWL RESEARCH STATION

DELTA, MANITOBA, CANADA

OPERATED BY THE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



May 30, 1962

Mr. Frederic Leopold, President,
The Leopold Company,
Burlington, Iowa.

Dear Fred:

Based on our experience here I can see no difficulties for you in raising Wood Ducks to the five or six week stage where they can be released to the wild.

For artificial brooding we use standard red-lamp chick brooders which are adjusted to a height above the ducklings where they neither crowd together or disperse widely. These can be regulated so that two of the four lamps cut in when temperatures drop below the desired level. I have purposely omitted specific temperatures since we find it best to judge the distance between bulb and duckling by the manner in which they sit beneath them.

To contain the ducklings we use a circular pen running about the brooder unit. This is made by cutting masonite or hardboard into strips eighteen inches high. For Wood Ducks you might need additional height. Three strips bent into a complete circle make a pen satisfactory for about 50 ducklings to hold until release stage. One corner of the circle is placed in the concrete tank so that the ducklings can swim and feed on the water. Under the heat lamps we use Sphagnum moss.

The great thing about the heat-lamp technique is that they allow free air circulation and even though the ducklings may wet themselves on first entry to water, when they return beneath the heat source they dry quickly and with no ill effects. On subsequent trips to water wetting is reduced and finally ceases.

Here we use turkey pre-starter as food since it has a high protein content. The addition of N.F. 180-Nitroflorizone one pound to a hundred pounds of feed protects against most bacterial infections.

Once ducklings have developed feathering on the back they can be safely introduced to outdoor pens until you feel

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Mr. Frederic Leopold - 2

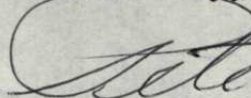
them ready for release. Once ours are put outdoors at this stage they are never again returned indoors. Nor do they receive further artificial heat.

I think with this outline you should be able to rear all the birds brought you with a minimum of effort.

The number of birds returning to the breeding grounds of Manitoba or at least the southern part, are down considerably this year over last, although over this region generally water conditions and precipitation are good. However this is not true much west of our area and from all reports, unless heavy rains are received there, little can be expected in the way of production from the central and west portions of the breeding range. There are no reports, so far, for the northern areas.

Good luck with any program you may undertake. We all hope to see you again this fall, if not for ducks, for Sharptail.

Sincerely,



Peter Ward

PW/sr