

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

December, 1970

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Help Stop Fire Ant Foolishness	Front Cover
Editorial	1
The Fall Season 1970 Thomas A. Imhof	2
The Fall AOS Meeting Gussie Arnett	8
Gulf Shores - Jan. 22,23,24	Back Cover

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Birmingham, Alabama
November 27, 1970

Honorable Richard M. Nixon,
President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Mr. President:

The Alabama Ornithological Society requests your cooperation in stopping the Agriculture Department's plan to spray Mirex over wide areas in an attempt to kill fire ants.



This is the same kind of foolish squandering of public funds as took place in another fire ant "kill" a few years ago when the use of chemicals killed almost everything but fire ants - laying waste game, songbirds, snakes, insects, and literally fouling the earth. The horrible details were published by a scientist who was in charge, and is now public record. There is no public record of another equally unsuccessful project.


The plan is similar to the unsuccessful cotton dusting program to kill boll weevils that has slaughtered millions of birds and animals, and which even the Department of Agriculture admitted has failed. In the fall of 1968 in a statement in the Anniston (Ala.) papers the county agent announced a new program of spraying insecticides in quadruple strength to kill embryos of the boll weevil. This plan was started but stopped by public reaction as the destruction of pollinating bees and other insects was quickly noted; and when rains washed the chemicals into streams and fish kills quickly resulted.

All the spray campaigns of the Agriculture Department in the last quarter of the century have only resulted in waste, destruction, and pollution.

I wish to emphasize that our trained and professional foresters are as a whole fine and capable men and, if the truth is known, they do not approve such practices as mentioned above, but they can only obey orders.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated by millions of people who have long suffered from the failures of our Agriculture Department.

Respectfully yours,
ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Walter F. Coxe, President