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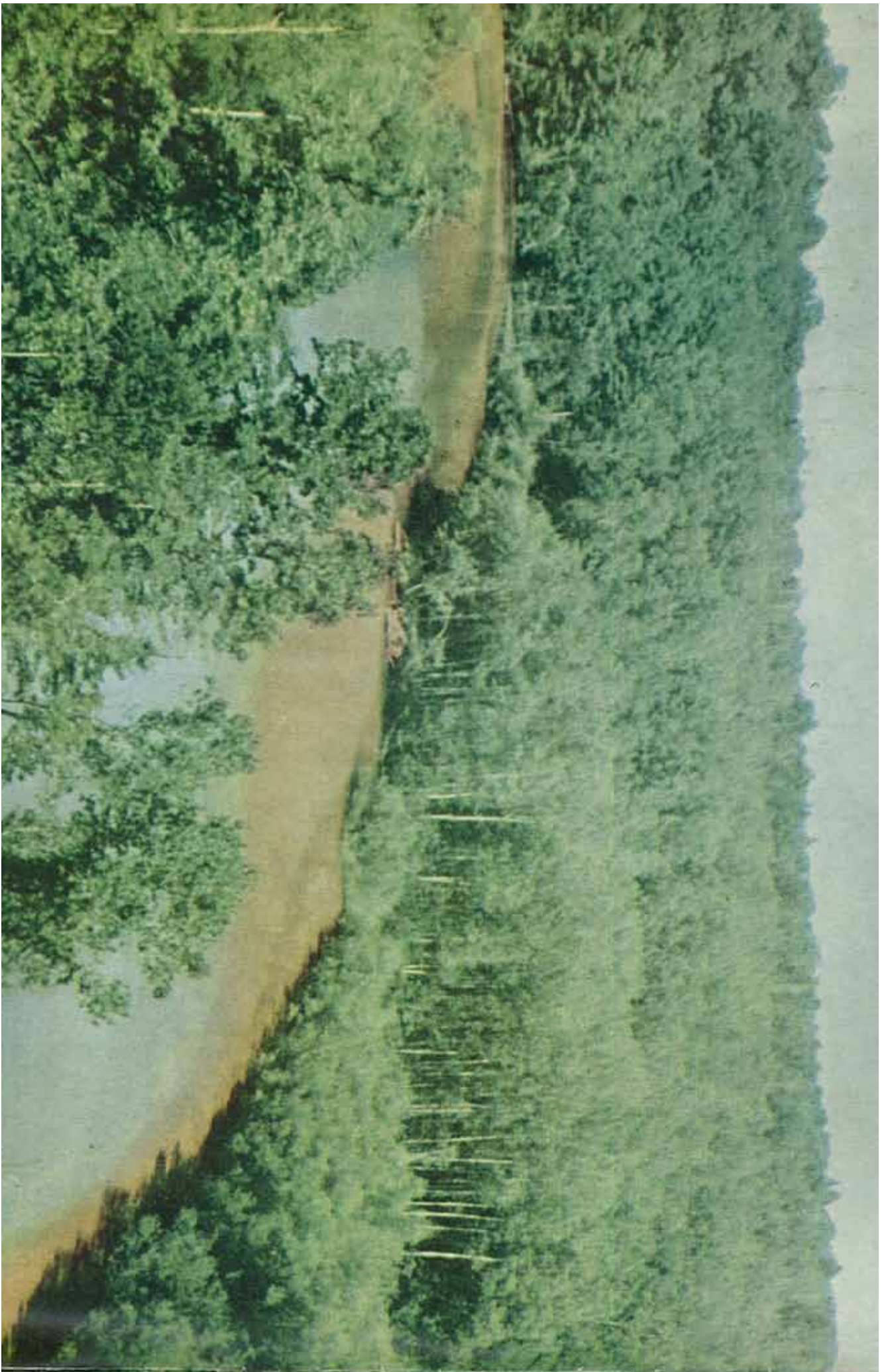
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*Deer and
Fawns*



2174





Deer and Aspen



AMERICAN BOX BOARD CO.
FILER CITY, MICHIGAN

He's A Big Eater. That big buck you hope to bag on your next hunting trip is a mighty heavy eater. In fact, his appetite affects your hunting.

Over the years the appetite of Michigan's white-tail deer has caused quite a lot of contention among people interested in conserving the state's game supply.

Probably no topic related to conservation has been more widely discussed than what is referred to as "Michigan's deer problem." Arguments run in all directions, but no matter what the viewpoint, the problem is still the deer's appetite—exactly what and how much he eats.

Assuming you're a regular Michigan sports fan who enjoys the great out-of-doors and looks forward to draping a deer over your fender every Fall—or if you're simply interested in Michigan wildlife—more than likely you'll want the facts on the deer herd.



The People Speak. To get an overall picture of the problem, look at the views of those who have voiced their opinions: The sportsman wants deer plentiful so he has a pretty good chance of bagging one every season. A good-sized herd appeals to tourists who enjoy seeing deer in their natural surroundings when they visit northern Michigan. Resort owners, and northern Michigan businessmen in general, want a plentiful deer supply to keep hunters and tourists coming north.

Farmers, on the other hand, don't want deer to become so numerous they ruin crops and orchards. Woodland owners and the growing paper industry are interested in protecting wood pulp sources and hence are concerned that the deer herd not grow so big it will jeopardize Michigan's forests. In addition, there are other well-meaning people who contend that permitting sportsmen to hunt does and fawns means the end of the deer herd.

Conservation Department officials, who probably know the facts of the problem better than anyone else, favor legislation that will permit



Food becomes scarce when deep snows and bad weather cause deer to group together.

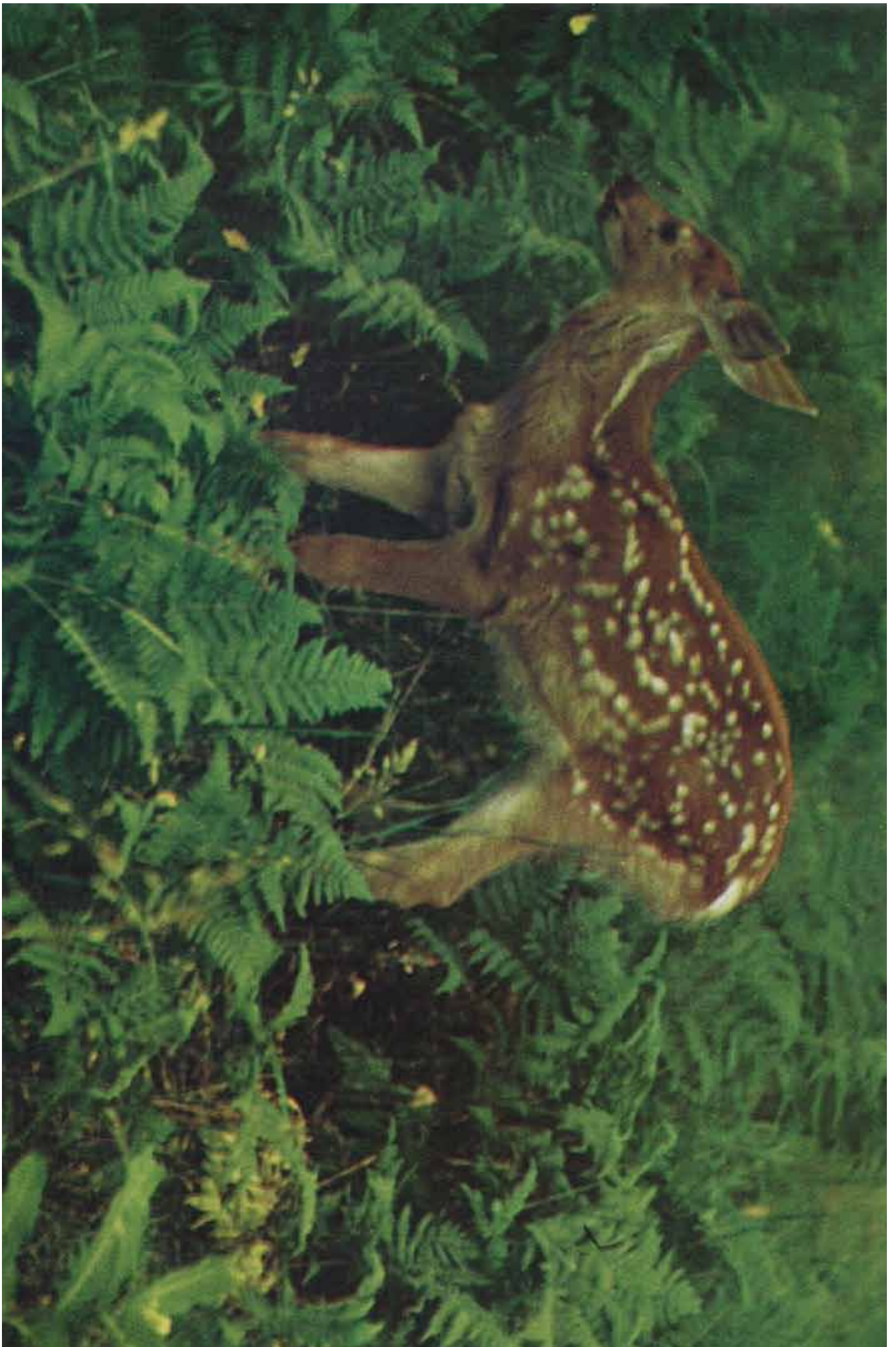
deer herd control. Such a program will maintain the largest deer herd that the available food supply will support.

Leave 'em Alone? The problem of deer food in many areas is serious enough now—and can get a lot worse. Some suggest leaving the deer alone, to develop as large a herd as anyone could want. But that simply won't work. The deer's appetite is too big . . . and he has outgrown his available food. If left alone, the deer eventually eats himself out of food. Reason: he multiplies faster than his food supply.

Maybe you didn't know that 100 years ago Michigan's deer herd was probably only a tenth as large as today. Heavy stands of pine and tall, full-grown virgin timber simply did not provide enough undergrowth to feed a large deer herd. The herd that wandered the forest primeval simply didn't have enough food to multiply rapidly. Only when lumbering operations started and new growth began was enough food available to steadily increase the size of the herd. A similar situation exists today. Most aspen or



Mature stands of pine like this covered northern Lower Michigan 100 years ago.



"popple" stands — which once provided a major deer food—have grown to a point where the browse is out of reach.

A Day's Menu. It may surprise you to know how much food a deer eats in a day. The average full-grown deer needs about five to seven pounds of first-class browse (buds, leaves, twigs) daily. That's a big menu when you consider the deer's size. Finding this amount of food even in the summer months is a problem in many areas. But in the winter things really get tough. Deep snow cuts the movement of the herd, and deer live on the buds and twigs of trees within reach. But when the food within their reach is exhausted, the deer simply starve.

During a bad winter, thousands of deer die by starvation. That isn't all—the new deer crop tends to be small and puny; the buck that should weigh 175 pounds weighs only 110 pounds. Even more serious, hungry deer not only exhaust the present food supply, but kill young trees that would provide food for future winters. This means poor hunting not only for the next year, but for several years to come.

Five pounds (almost a bushel) of green leaves and twigs are needed daily during summer to keep a deer healthy.



During the winter, the deer's diet consists of about five pounds of assorted twigs and buds daily.



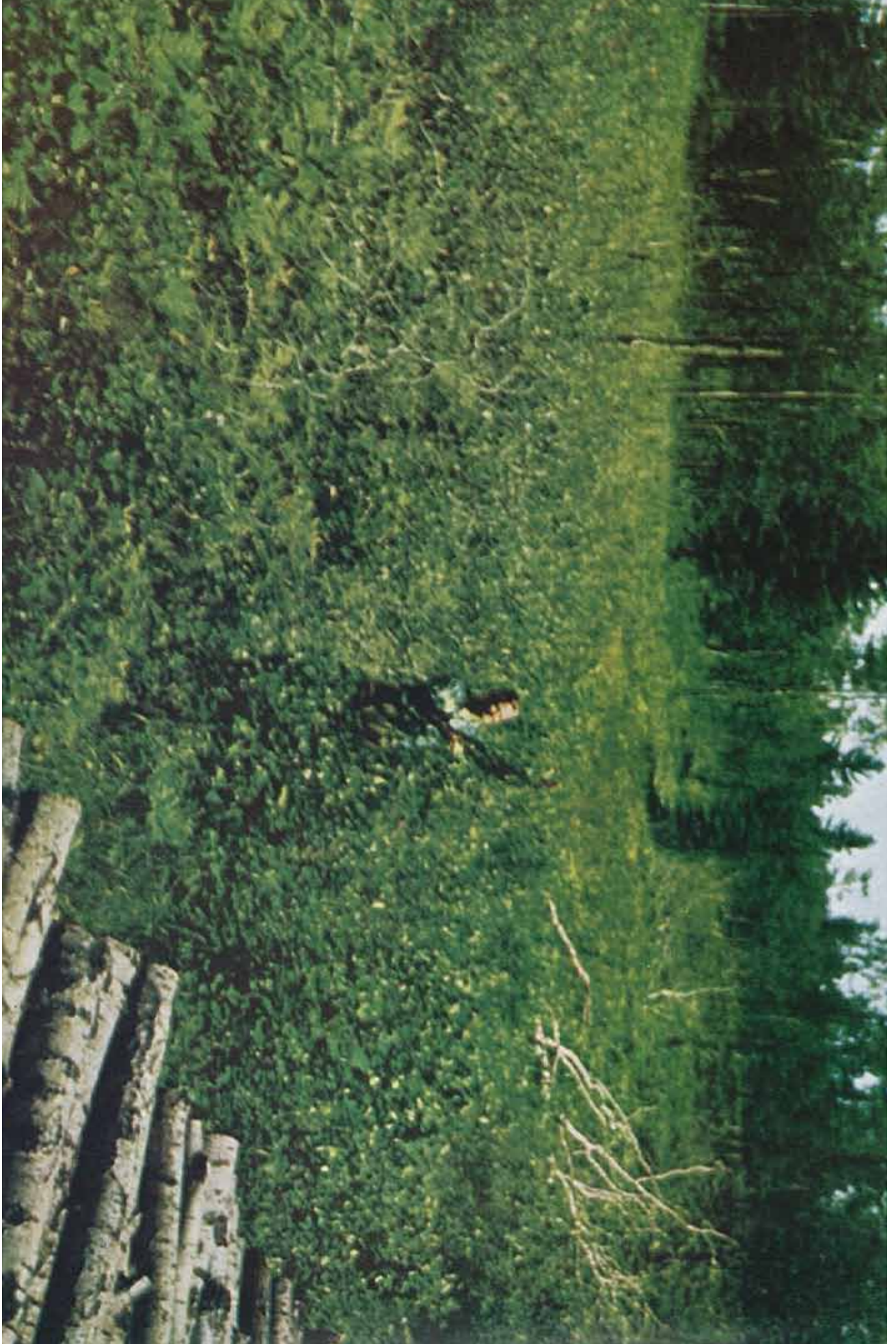


When food is scarce the deer crop is small and puny, averaging 110 pounds instead of 175 pounds.

Browse — Deer's "Staff of Life." Deer have a particular fondness for browsing leaves and small branches of the aspen, or "popple," tree. Because it grows easily in cut-over areas, aspen flourishes in Michigan and provides plenty of deer food. It is found mostly in the sandy soils that cover so much of the northern Lower Peninsula.

But what contributes even more to aspen's continued thriving is that the tree reproduces from root suckers. This means that when an aspen is cut, its roots, which extend outward as much as 60 feet from the stump, send up





A cutover aspen stand one year after the harvest—no deer food problem here. A ton and a half of browse is available on every acre of harvested aspen.

shoots which develop into trees. Often as many as a hundred new trees are started from the roots of a mature aspen after it is harvested.

Most aspen forests also contain some maple, birch and cherry. When cut along with the aspen for pulpwood the sprouts that develop from these trees are highly appetizing to the deer. In a typical cutover aspen stand this variety of nutritious food is just what the deer need.

Browsing on aspen to a certain point does no harm, but when aspen is overbrowsed by hungry deer, the young tree, stripped of its leaves and branchlets, becomes stunted or dies.

Here is a key to the food problem. Properly harvested aspens rapidly reproduce new stands which provide a tremendous amount of additional food. Overbrowsing of the new aspen stands, however, prevents the development of future browse and timber.

The "browse line" on trees graphically indicates an exhausted food supply. When all food within reach is eaten, starvation begins. Photo by Michigan Department of Conservation.





Management Means More Food. The

type of aspen management program being encouraged by the paper industry can greatly increase the deer's food supply. A program to assure a continuous supply of aspen requires stands in various stages of development, so new stands will become ready for harvest each year. As the mature, out-of-reach trees are harvested, new trees spring up bringing food within the deer's reach. Also, the green tops of aspen harvested during the winter make additional deer browse when they need it most. Then, too, a properly managed aspen stand requires periodic thinning during its development, providing additional deer food.

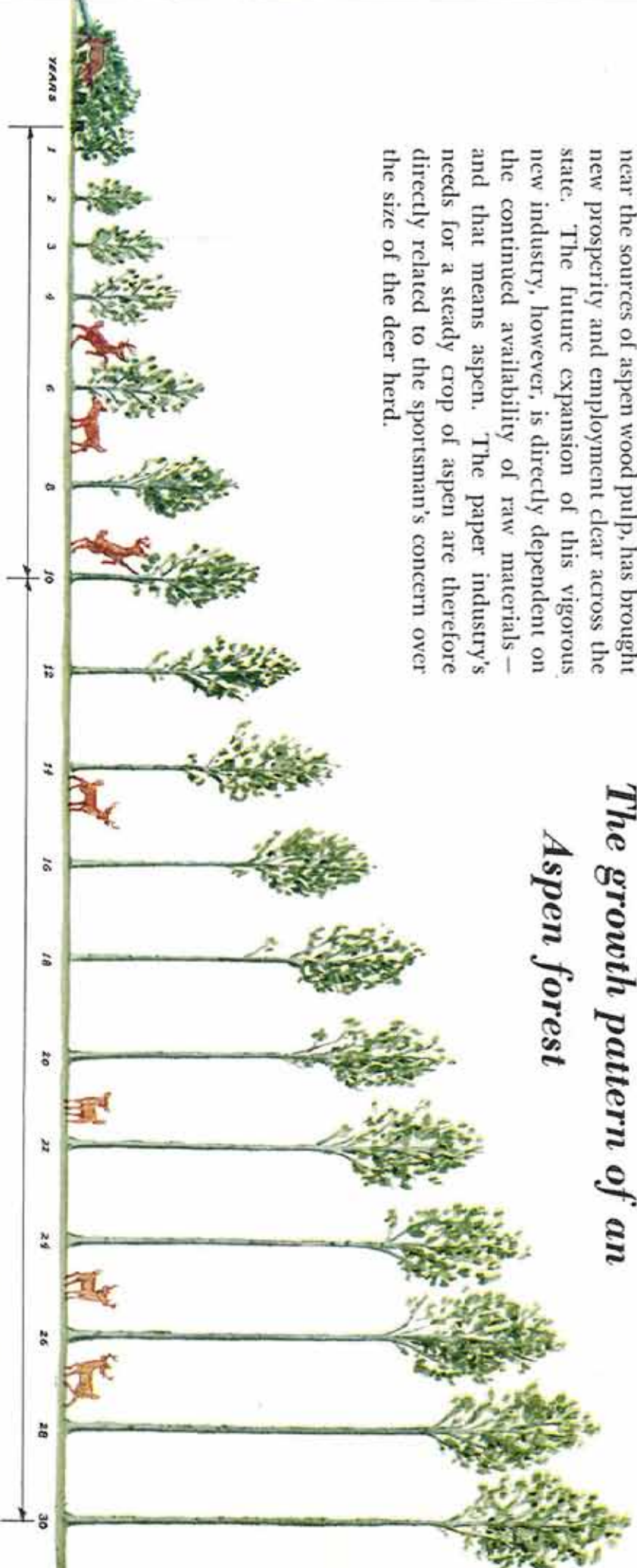
Aspen Links Our Interests. It so happens the deer's liking for aspen directly links the interests of Michigan's growing paper industry with those of the sportsman. As late as 1949, this tree was considered practically worthless by lumbermen. But in that year a special semi-chemical process adopted by American Box Board Company converted aspen pulp into

An aspen tree less than one year old! Good forestry practices will bring 10,000 to 15,000 of these per acre.

sturdy corrugated paperboard for shipping containers, creating an entirely new industry in the area.

The company's plant at Filer City, located near the sources of aspen wood pulp, has brought new prosperity and employment clear across the state. The future expansion of this vigorous new industry, however, is directly dependent on the continued availability of raw materials — and that means aspen. The paper industry's needs for a steady crop of aspen are therefore directly related to the sportsman's concern over the size of the deer herd.

The growth pattern of an Aspen forest



During the first ten years of an aspen forest's life, browse is easily within deer's reach. As it matures during the next twenty years, periodic thinning provides green tops for deer.

At about 30 years, when the mature aspen is harvested, its roots send up new shoots, repeating the cycle and providing an abundance of deer food.

At American Box Board's Flier City plant, a reserve of aspen logs harvested from Michigan forests assures a constant supply of pulpwood to this growing paper industry.

The American Box Board Company believes the best way to assure a continued supply of aspen is to encourage aspen management. When treated like a valuable crop, aspen not only meets the needs of the paper industry, but also tremendously increases the deer food supply.

Herd Management Needed, Too. Aspen management alone does not end the deer problem, however. Forest management must be combined with herd management.



It's true that aspen harvesting relieves the deer's food situation temporarily by providing him with more browse. But a deer with a satisfied appetite this year means more deer with big appetites next year. And eventually the herd's appetite gets too big for the available food supply, no matter how well aspen and other forests are managed. Too rapid growth of the deer herd, plus a bad winter, results in fewer and smaller deer, very little aspen for future deer and the paper industry. And to the sportsman this means poor deer hunting for a long time to come.

Aspen harvesting can provide more food for the deer, but only realistic herd management can keep the number of deer in balance with the available food supply, and maintain a maximum herd year after year.

The Best Solution. Those concerned with Michigan deer generally agree that the size of the herd must be regulated. They also agree that the State is more qualified to control the size of the herd than anyone else. Legislation

This typical, flourishing aspen stand, properly managed, will serve as an excellent source of pulpwood and provide plentiful deer food.





to provide deer herd control which is based on facts gathered from years of field work and careful study will provide the best solution.

This solution has the support of those who have looked squarely at the facts. By knowing these facts you will realize the need for supporting a program that will keep the deer herd in balance with the food supply.

Your interests as a sportsman, resorter, farmer or businessman are closely allied with those of the paper industry. For this reason the American Box Board Company has been active in presenting the facts of the deer problem. As in the past, the Company is continuing to work hand-in-hand with those seeking the best wildlife management and the most profitable forests.

The purpose of this booklet is to give you a clearer picture of how deer and aspen management can work together for the benefit of everyone. By telling others this story you contribute toward a concerted effort to maintain the best possible deer herd and help promote a sound wildlife program for Michigan.

Professional management of our natural resources will insure repeated happy scenes like this. (Photos by F. Kellum.)



"Deer Country in the Autumn". Logging and fires reduced the pine stands and brought in aspen and other hardwoods. These provided the food for Michigan's magnificent deer herd.



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