

Mercury pollution started generations ago: biologist

by Bryan Berriault
The May 18th meeting was profitable for both Zone Five of the Federation Anglers and Hunters and the Georgian Bay Hunters and Anglers. A check for two hundred dollars was presented to Ron Sheehan, the biologist, hired by the

which uses up the much needed oxygen. It is the methyl mercury that is being consumed by the fish through their food chain. Fish that prey on smaller fish will understandably carry a higher count of mercury. In fish it takes from 70 to 600 days to lose half the

amount they have taken in. In the human body it takes 76 days to break down in halves. Clean, skin fish When cleaning fish Ron suggested skinning and filleting or cutting away all fatty tissue which helps cut down the intake. In our area Ron main-

tains we do not have too much of a problem but we should be concerned as to where and if possible stop any major pollutants. In the western provinces pheasants in rearing pens were fed grains treated with the chemical for fungus and became contaminated to a point where hunting seasons had to be stopped. The chemical was omitted as a treating agent and the hunting seasons have been back to normal.

All foods contain mercury but not a great amount. Grazing cattle also pick up natural mercury which is then passed on to the consumer. This according to Mr. Sheehan is a natural occurrence and nothing to be alarmed about. Twenty-four per cent of mercury comes from combustible products such as wood or coal. Women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant are strongly urged not to consume fish which may have an excessive amount of mercury. Ron Sheehan stated that it does not affect the male. However in fish a small amount may be passed to the eggs.

P.C.B. and stated that after June 1st of this year P.C.B. will only be used in cases where it is an absolute necessity. However, Ron Sheehan did not know what the Ontario Government considered absolute necessity. Highly industrialized nations such as Japan suffer effects of chemical pollution far more than we do but people should be alerted and become aware that

we do have a problem. Mr. Sheehan went on to talk about deer populations and the winter feeding grounds for our deer herds. The Spence yard which the biologist has worked on contains about 600 deer and has for several years. There is a deer hunting season in this area which does not seem to harm the population at all. Logging done in a right manner could be a great asset to

the deer herds. Slides showing vast areas of trees cut leaving a void waste of our natural resources could be changed if logging was

done with wildlife in mind. Narrow strips could be cut at intervals giving a good brush growth so deer could utilize the brush for

winter feed and the timber left standing for shelter. Many stands of pines are undercut leaving a desert for wildlife. These stands of

pines will not even encourage grouse or rabbits to inhabit them. The Little Lake Bass Derby will be on June 26th with an entry fee of \$7.00.



For biology fund

Ron Sheehan, right, accepts a cheque for the biology fund from Bryan Berriault, zone five member of the Hunters and Anglers. Ron has been

hired by zone five to conduct biological experiments in lakes, streams and ponds in central Ontario.

Staff photo

Mr. Sheehan touched on the subject of Mirex and

zone. The money will go into the Biologist Fund from which are drawn wages and expenses to keep Sheehan on the job.

As the guest speaker Ron Sheehan gave the members a sample of what they were paying for. The members showed a keen interest in mercury pollution, which the biologist chose as his first topic of discussion. With the slides before the members they asked questions at anytime during the showing.

A few points brought before the members by Ron gained interest as the evening went on. Mercury pollution is not a problem that we have just started to have. This type of pollution goes back to early time when ancient civilizations use them for various reasons. There is a certain amount of natural mercury pollution in the air and ground as well as water. In more recent times technology has brought it openly in front of the public. Grains were treated with mercury to control fungus and as a result of feeding pigs with this type of grains in Mexico many people became ill from the effects of mercury poisoning.

The English River and Wabagoon Lake which have been in the news quite a bit lately have approximately 20 ppm of mercury. The river has a run of twenty miles which is dead because of pollution and decaying matter on the bottom

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