

medium-sized snake devours 40 young carp per day, for they digest very quickly. That would make for 225 snakes 9,000 carp per day, and 63,000 per week. That number is correct, sir! and it shows that snakes are more injurious than cranes, herons, and other birds.

I kill them by shooting, oftentimes seeing only a small part of the head in the water, or hiding beneath water-plants. I have had opportunity to see how they catch the young fish, and how they devour them. An old-wall constitutes their best hiding-place. I often shoot them sitting in the cracks of the old wall, the head looking outside, watching the poor little fishes.

UNITED STATES CARP PONDS, *August 12, 1883.*

August 15 and 16, I did not kill any snakes, by reason of the low temperature and rain. On the following days I killed 72: August 17 52; August 18, 7; August 19, 8; August 20, 5.

UNITED STATES CARP PONDS, *August 20, 1883.*

The snakes, so numerous in the ponds for some time past, have almost wholly disappeared. During the past five days I shot only 3, though watching closely for them. Since July 1 we have killed over 900, mostly by shooting.

UNITED STATES CARP PONDS, *August 26, 1883.*

During the past week I killed about 150 snakes in the west pond. To-day I killed 19. All had young carp in their stomachs.

UNITED STATES CARP PONDS, *September 25, 1883.*

156.—WHAT MUSK-RATS SOMETIMES EAT.

By CHARLES CARPENTER.

[From a letter to Prof. S. F. Baird.]

An old trapper, who trapped for years in the marshes of Sandusky Bay, tells me that musk-rats usually live on the roots and tops of water-plants, but in severe winters, when the water freezes deep, they do eat fish.

The winter of 1842 and 1843 I spent on Put-in Bay Island (South Bass Isl.). I trapped and speared a little. It was a severe winter. The shallow water froze to the bottom, and on opening some houses, I found half-eaten fish in them, which, I think, were black bass. In one house I found the remains of two fish of good size.

A few years ago I saw a musk-rat on the ice before my house, and on looking at him with a spy-glass, saw he had a large fresh-water clam which he was trying to open. Mr. S. G. Goodrich in his *Animal Kingdom*, page 483, says, "In winter, when hard pressed, they sometimes devour each other, and when one is wounded the others eat him."

KELLEY'S ISLAND, OHIO, *January 29, 1884.*