

# Letters to the Editor



CA,

Memphis, Sunday, July 3, 1977

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## We Must Preserve Them

To The Commercial Appeal:

Henry Reynolds in his June 19 Mid-South Outdoors column weaves a strange and ironic argument against the Endangered Species Act. Mr. Reynolds first states that the Tellico Dam in Tennessee and the Dickey-Lincoln hydroelectric project in Maine have been wrongfully halted because of the threatened extinction of the snail darter and the Furbish lousewart. Continuing, Mr. Reynolds urges the construction of the Obion-Forked Deer water control system and the completion of the Overton Park Expressway on the grounds that what is gained is greater than what is lost. He claims the "human values" of convenience and cheap energy have been overridden by the insignificant values of animal and habitat preservation.

First, Mr. Reynolds, you are absolutely wrong in thinking that some animal or plant species are not specific enough in their habitats to become extinct by the aforementioned projects. Many species have and will continue to vanish due to opinions such as yours. Second, you ask what does it matter if these animals or plants do become extinct? The answer is both biological and sociological. Each plant or animal occupies a certain role in our ecosystem; when one link is broken in a food chain or habitat niche, it can often have magnified results throughout the system. On the level of society, the loss of any form of life is both tragic and senseless. All outdoor enthusiasts, including fishermen, hunters and nature lovers, realize the beauty and/or sport particular to each animal and plant. One surely questions the wisdom which so selfishly removes these pleasures from future generations. We can never know the pleasures once provided by the now extinct heath hen, woods bison, passenger pigeon and Eastern elk. Finally, one wonders how an outdoor writer fails to see the human values intrinsic in a free-flowing, natural river and a mid-city forest park? Energy is certainly necessary, yet so are natural

beauty and endangered species. There are many values in our society, cheapness and convenience are only two. In making decisions with the finality of extinguishing a form of life or habitat, let us be both generous and responsible in preserving that heritage left in our care.

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## Destroying Our Heritage

To The Commercial Appeal:

I would like to congratulate Bruce Minkin on the fine letter he wrote to The Commercial Appeal that was published June 26. So many busy people agree with you that do not have the time to write or to let the news people know how they feel.

Unfortunately, the Tellico Dam project was not stopped in time to preserve one of the most beautiful, natural recreation spots in Tennessee — Fort Loudon. Fort Loudon was the area where my ancestors fought the Indians and were taken captive. Several shot and are buried there. Captain Raymond DeMere and his brother, Paul, were the founders of the first English colony in Tennessee and were ransomed back to Savannah, Ga. The monument to Raymond and Paul DeMere was at Fort Loudon.

When I visited there in May, I found the monument and other famous burial places are under nineteen feet of ground rock. The ranger who stays in a small hut to advise tourists that the monument is gone almost cried with me as he was relating the news to me. My family, here in Memphis since 1856, were not advised about the area being demolished. In October, 1967, Southern Living magazine had a great article on Fort Loudon. It seems such a shame that people who were not involved in this country's beginning had the right to give the permission to dismantle it and ruin the waters and natural beauty of the country.

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