



# THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN

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## THE COVER

The jaunty California Valley quail challenges the wildfowler with its elusiveness, lures the wildlife photographer with its beauty, and tempts the gourmet with its savory flavor.

Just under a foot long, with black plume and throat, reddish-brown crown, white 'eyebrows' and bib line, California's State bird is semi-domesticated due to being often in orchards and gardens near man.

Hungry Forty-Niners during the Gold Rush and vineyard owners resentful of the quail's innate fondness for grapes formerly decimated the flocks. In recent years, however, the birds responded to well-planned conservation, and are now plentiful.

Barbecued, braised, broiled, or baked, the California Valley Quail ranks with the West's tastiest game birds.

This male specimen was photographed near Encino, Calif., by J. Ennis Humphrey of Reseda. Camera was Hasselblad equipped with 135 mm. Kodak Ektar Lens, using Ektachrome film exposed at 1/250 sec. with lens set halfway between f5.6 and f8.

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## MAJOR ARTICLES

The U.S. Justice Department, Izvestia, And The New Yorker . . . Editorial	16
Hunting The Indian Leopard . . . . . Terence E. S. Underwood	18
97th NRA Annual Meetings . . . . .	21
The Exhibit Hall . . . . .	23
Dingell Dubs Dodd Bill 'Legislative Abomination' . . . . .	24
Highlights Of The NRA In Boston . . . . .	26
Reports Show Progress Of Committees . . . . .	28
Choosing The Choke For Ultra-Close Wingshooting . . . . . Don Zutz	30
One Man's Shooting Family: The Howard Vermillions . . . Bill R. Davidson	32
Revolver Still Police Standby, New Book Says . . . American Rifleman Staff	33
The Startling Changes In Gun Collecting . . . . . John S. du Mont	34
Hunting America's Heartland . . . . . Bill R. Davidson	35
Bullet Selection—The Hunter's Dilemma . . . . . Bob Milek	38
Learning To Shoot Running Boar International Style . . Col. Jim Crossman	42
FBI Registration Of All Guns Urged . . . . . NRA Staff	46
Making Your Own Holster . . . . . J. F. Rudin, Jr.	48
Cutting Rifle Chambers . . . . . C. W. Reynolds	50
W. H. Baker: Gunmaker Of Distinction . . . . . Kenneth H. Shanks	54
NRA Shooters Win Combat Honors . . . . . Paul Pierpoint	61
The Knack Of Calling Varmints . . . . . Bert Popowski	62
Shooting The Flintlock Pistol . . . . . R. E. Colby	66

<b>Dope Bag . . . . .</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>NRA News And Events . . . . .</b>	<b>98</b>
It Takes A Tiger To Bag A Tiger . . . . .	6	Izvestia Blast At NRA	40
The Armed Citizen . . . . .	8	Sounds Vaguely Familiar . . . . .	41
Famous Firearms . . . . .	9	Game Management News . . . . .	41
America's Leading Gunsmiths . . . . .	10	Inexpensive .32 ACP Practice . . . . .	45
Shooting Champions . . . . .	12	Illustrated Definitions . . . . .	53
Score Sheet . . . . .	13	M16 Rifles To Be Made By GM,	
Pistol Training Aid . . . . .	14	H & R and Colt's . . . . .	60
No Comment Necessary . . . . .	15	Contributions Sought For Perry	
Converting Impressed Checkering . . . . .	31	Matches . . . . .	63
Air Pistol Accuracy . . . . .	37	Obituaries . . . . .	69
		New Lifetime Memberships . . . . .	112
		Index Of Display Advertisers . . . . .	125

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