

Insect status takes wriggle for better

The scissor-tailed flycatcher holds the title in Oklahoma. In Vermont it's the hermit thrush. All 50 states, in fact, have chosen official state birds and many have also named official mammals, trees and flowers.

Eighteen states have gone so far as to designate official state insects.

The most honored bird in the U.S. is the cardinal, which is the official bird

in seven states (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia), perhaps in gratitude for the bird's helpful habit of feeding on the destructive boll weevil and codling moth.

Two states chose endangered species for their state bird: Hawaii took the nene (Hawaiian goose), and Louisiana, the brown pelican.

The most popular official mammal among the 23 states that have named one is the white-tailed deer, chosen by South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Mississippi. Three states appointed endangered mammals as their mascots: Connecticut, the sperm whale; Florida, the manatee; and Hawaii, the humpback whale.

Virginia declined to name a state mammal, but chose instead to appoint an official state dog: the foxhound, of course, in honor of the state's renowned fox hunts. Maryland also named an official state dog — the Chesapeake Bay retriever, while Idaho calls the Appaloosa its official state horse.

Every state has an official tree, and 18 chose a conifer from the longleaf pine (Alabama) to the Black Hills spruce (South Dakota). Other popular species are the oak, elm, and maple, while Mississippi, naturally, chose the magnolia.

Mississippi also named the magnolia its official state flower, as did Louisiana. Five states and the District of Columbia decided that a rose, by any name, is sweet. So, D.C. went with the American Beauty rose; Georgia, the

Cherokee rose; Iowa, the wild rose; North Dakota, the wild prairie rose; and New York, which isn't picky, just the rose.

Of the 18 states that decided to designate an official insect, nine chose the honeybee, that helpful pollinator. Connecticut honors the praying mantis, the gardener's delight, while California went with the yellow and black dogface butterfly.

As for official fish, 25 states were lured into naming one. Bass, both large and smallmouth, white and striped, were chosen by 10 states. Nine states named five varieties of trout—golden, rainbow, brook, steelhead, and the black spotted cutthroat, which is endangered in its sponsor state of Montana.

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Michigan trails in retail trade

In what may come as no surprise to Michigan residents, the state ranks first in new car registrations per capita — and most of those cars are American-made.

But while residents may buy a lot of new cars, the overall gain in retail trade lags behind the rest of the nation, according to David I. Verway, a research professor in the Graduate School of Business Administration at Michigan State University.

Statistics compiled by the Census of Retail Trade show that the state's retail trade grew by 55 percent between 1972 and 1977, lagging behind the national average of 58 percent. That puts Michigan 12th from the bottom if the states are ranked from the biggest increases to the least increases.

According to Verway, grocery store sales in the state increased by 39 percent during that five-year period, much below the national average of 58 percent, and that's the main reason overall sales lagged behind the national average.

Smaller families, particularly those without children who eat out in restaurants, and fewer people stocking provisions at their summer cottages has hurt grocery store sales in the state, said Verway.

Places to eat are more common than any other type of retail establishment, both in Michigan and nationwide, according to Verway. In 1977, eating establishments in the state employed 142,000 people, or 27 percent of all retail employees; but because they are so labor intensive, they accounted for only 7 percent of the retail sales in the state.

The number of gasoline service stations in the state dropped from 8,919 in 1972 to 8,572 in 1977, but because of the increase in the price of a gallon of gas, sales increased from \$1.4 billion to \$2.5 billion.

Michigan's interest in buying American-made cars is seen in several other statistics, said Verway. For one, the state ranked 42nd in registrations for new imported cars. In addition, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that vehicle purchases accounted for 8.9 percent of a Detroit Household's total expenditures, compared with 7.4 percent for urban households in the nation as a whole.

And sales of used cars in the state were depressed compared with sales in other states. High salaries and lower new car prices are the reason, Verway said.

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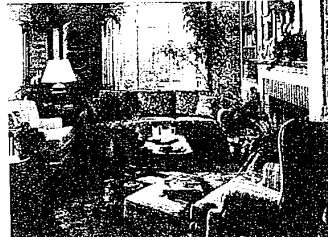
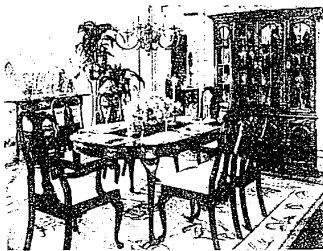
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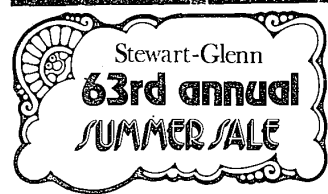


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