

THE FACTS ABOUT DUCK SHOOTING

REPORT ON THE DUCK SHOOTING

SEASON 1990

SOUTH WEST & EUCLA DIVISION



Coalition Against Duck Shooting

C.A.D.S

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REPORT ON THE 1990 DUCK SHOOTING SEASON IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SOUTH WEST & EUCLA DIVISION

INTRODUCTION:

In response to mounting public opposition a 2 year moratorium was placed on recreational duck shooting in 1987, with a view to a permanent ban on this activity. This intention was reflected in Labor Party Policy, during the 1989 Election which stated:

"Labor has taken strong action to protect our native birds. Finch trapping and duck shooting have been banned."

However, late in 1989 a decision was made by the new Minister for Conservation & Land Management to re-introduce duck shooting and after receiving advice from the Department of Conservation & Land Management (CALM), he declared a 4 week restricted season in the South West & Eucla Division, and a full 12 months' open season for the remainder of the State.

The mechanism which CALM has devised to determine whether there is a full, restricted or no season is based on rainfall data, and does not take into account water quality or loss of habitat (including breeding areas). It is designed to accommodate recreational "sportsmen" at a low administrative cost to the Department.

To facilitate the shooting season the Minister, Mr Taylor used existing legislation to open over 80 Nature Reserves including 22 A Class Reserves for recreational shooting. Protected birds by the same Ministerial directive, became "game" birds for the duration of the season, and could be hunted in sanctuaries which would normally give them protection. The Department of CALM, whose charter it is to protect native fauna for the remainder of the year, supervised their shooting.

Game species included relatively uncommon species such as the Pink-eared Duck, Chestnut Teal, Australasian Shoveler and the Hardhead. The last published count of these birds in the South West Land Division was only 6,131, 1,043, 4,554, and 1,351, respectively (Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union, Report No. 46, 1988).

The 1990 season was held despite the fact that the breeding season was still in progress. This was due to high water levels caused by good spring rain in 1989. (See attached newspaper clippings)

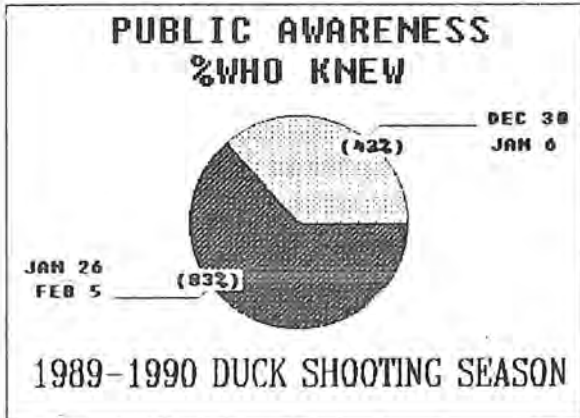
C.A.D.S. believes that duck shooting is unacceptable both on animal cruelty and conservation grounds. It exists merely to placate recreational shooters, who in Western Australia represent less than 1% of the population. It causes distress and offence to a clear majority of people who wish to enjoy waterbirds in Nature Reserves, without risking injury to themselves or witnessing the brutal killing of wildlife by humans.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS:

Two surveys were carried out to determine public awareness and public opinion towards duck shooting. 1,313 people were interviewed at random at shopping areas in Perth, Fremantle, Kalamunda, Armadale, Midland, Inglewood and Maddington.

Three questions were asked -

- 1) Did you know that a duck shooting season is being held in W.A.?
- 2) Do you approve of duck shooting?
- 3) Do you approve of duck shooting in Nature Reserves?



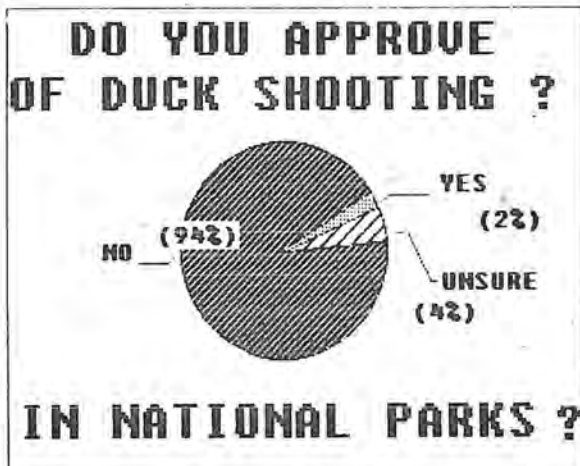
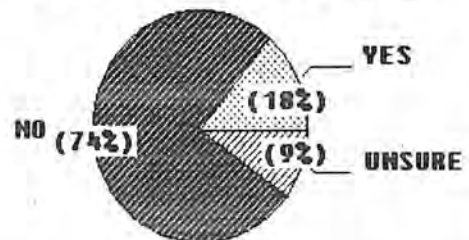
Question 1

The first survey was carried out in the last week of December 1989 and the second in the last week of January 1990. In the first survey, only 42% were aware that there was to be a duck shooting season in Western Australia in 1990. Once the shooting began there was a dramatic rise in public awareness, and the second survey showed that 83% were now aware that there was a duck shooting season in progress.

Question 2

In response to the second question, 74% of the respondents disapproved of duck shooting, 9% were unsure and 18% approved. A clear majority opposed to duck shooting.

DO YOU APPROVE OF DUCK SHOOTING ?



Question 3

The third question showed overwhelming disapproval of opening up Nature Reserves to duck shooting, with 94% of respondents opposed to duck shooting in Nature Reserves, 4% unsure and 2% approving.

RESCUE OPERATIONS 1990 - WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Many different organizations have individually opposed duck shooting in Western Australia over a number of years however their opposition has been uncoordinated and largely ineffective. Following the Minister's announcement of a 1990 duck shooting season the Coalition Against Duck Shooting, comprising both conservation and animal rights groups, was formed to spearhead opposition to duck shooting. The partners in the coalition are The Humane Society of W.A., Animal Liberation, Wetlands Conservation Society, Waterbird Conservation Group, Australians for Animals and the Conservation Council of W.A.

During the 1990 South West & Eucla Division duck shooting season, the Coalition endeavoured to expose the brutal side of this "sport". It was the first time in Western Australia's history that such media attention had been focussed on duck shooting. The usual glib assurances from shooters and politicians were not enough to block out the reality of healthy birds being shot for fun.

Our purpose at the wetlands was to:-

- * focus attention on the fact that shooters were being permitted to kill healthy wildfowl in nature sanctuaries purely for their personal pleasure
- * exert pressure on shooters to act more responsibly by our presence
- * exert pressure on the Department of C.A.L.M. to be more vigilant in their policing of duck shooting seasons
- * rescue injured birds and deliver them to veterinary care
- * record breaches of the regulations, including shooting of non-game species birds
- * demonstrate the genuine distress and concern of many people in the community who are aware of the cruelty and environmental damage caused by this "sport".
- * bring about the end of duck shooting by focussing public attention on the brutality of this activity

Lake Wannamal was selected for the duck rescue, because it is a popular duck shooting area in close proximity to Perth.

Lake Wannamal (C10) is an A class Reserve 9838 vested in the National Parks & Nature Conservation Authority for the purpose of Conservation of Flora and Fauna. The System 6 Report describes the area as follows:-

"The lake is semi-permanent and provides a summer refuge for waterbirds. Forty-four species have been recorded, including grey teal, mountain duck, black swan and freckled duck, the last named being one of Australia's rarest waterfowl. The dense vegetation in the northern end of the lake and extending northwards along a string of swamps in private land, provides a refuge for waterfowl."

LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 14TH JANUARY, 1990 (Opening Day)

Approximately 130 shooters were present. This was matched by around 150 rescuers. Rescuers, organized in teams, took up their positions in the water next to shooters, prior to the official starting time of 6.00 a.m.

27 wounded waterbirds were handled by the veterinary team.

Details as follows:-

Dead on arrival: 11 ducks

1 Pink-eared duck
2 Mountain Ducks
4 Black Ducks
2 Grey Teals
1 Blue-Winged Shoveler
1 unidentified)

1 Eurasian Coot

Died in care: 4 of which 3 were euthanased due to the seriousness of their injuries

Released after Treatment:

5 ducks (3 Black Ducks, 2 Grey Teals)
2 Juvenile Eurasian Coots

Delivered to W.A. Native Bird Hospital:

1 Grey Teal,
1 Mountain Duck,
1 Black Duck
1 Pink-eared Duck



BREACHES OF THE REGULATIONS WITNESSED BY RESCUERS:

(1) LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 14TH JANUARY, 1990

- * rescuer complained to CALM Officer that shooters were not retrieving cartridge shells. CALM Officer endeavoured to get shooters to retrieve shells. This was largely unsuccessful.
- * rescuer witnessed a shooter kill a Grey Teal but fail to retrieve. Rescuer offered it to shooter who refused to accept it. (This was happening repeatedly with shooters not interested in retrieving Grey Teal or Pink-eared Ducks presumably because they are too small and not considered good eating.)
- * rescuer witnessed shooter firing at a Eurasian Coot (protected species) on the water. The Coot dived, and the rescuer was unable to find it.
- * shooter hung a live duck on his belt.
- * whilst attempting to rescue a wounded Mountain Duck, shots were fired near a rescuer to deter him from picking up a wounded bird.
- * rescuer witnessed shooters pooling their catches (contrary to regulations.)
- * 2 incidents of birds being shot at while on the water.
- * Police advised shooter consuming alcohol from a stubby, that no alcohol could be consumed whilst on the Nature Reserve. (this shooter was with the official Field and Game party).
- * two rescuers were threatened by a shooter, who raised his gun and pointed it at them.
- * rescuer had the rear hatch window of her car smashed in while she was out on the Lake.. (Rescuer reported seeing 2 members of the official shooters' camp peering into vehicles - when they were observed they returned to their camp.)
- * rescuers advise that around midday when the media, Department of CALM and the Police had gone, that shooters at the northern end of the lake were shooting more than their 5 bag limit, also becoming aggressive and threatening in manner when challenged..
- * report of shooter arriving with a kayak on a roofrack. CALM Officer spoke with him and he did not use the kayak that day.
- * another group of shooters had a power boat with them but they did not use it.

- * hundreds of cartridges were picked up from the wetland including several illegal over sized cartridges (these were presented to the Department of CALM, Chief Wildlife Officer, David Mell).

(2) BEVERLEY LAKES NATURE RESERVE (LAKE YEN YENNING) 14TH JANUARY, 1990

CALM Officers were present

- * shooters booked for early start
- * 1 shooter booked for not having a current licence

(Refer to CALM for other prosecutions)

(3) LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 15TH JANUARY, 1990

No CALM Officers were present

- * shooting began prior to starting time of 5.30 a.m.
- * shooters were seen firing at a flock of cormorants (protected species).
- * found dead 2 Black ducks and 1 Pink-eared duck abandoned by shooters.
- * rescuers continued to pick up cartridge shells, and plastic inserts, including 3 live shells.

(4) LAKE MUIR NATURE RESERVE 16TH JANUARY, 1990

- * evidence of shooting in the closed sanctuary area, (i.e. north and north-east of the lake). Vehicle tracks leading to the edge of the lake - found a hide with a freshly killed Mountain Duck in it.
- * approximately 18 spent cartridges were found near the hide which was constructed of green branches and saplings, stuck into the mud to resemble a clump of bushes.
- * 3 more hides with a total of 80 spent cartridges were found.
- * tracks led to a camp, evidence of fires being lit, rubbish left behind consisting of food containers, empty cartridge boxes, paper, plastic bags, and beer cans. Five tiny partly cooked ducklings were found on a plate next to the campfire.
- * over the entire area were fresh tracks including dog tracks.
- * some of the carcasses were collected and handed over to the Department of CALM as evidence of illegal shooting at Lake Muir Nature Reserve. (Receipt issued)

(5) LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 17TH and 18TH JANUARY, 1990

No CALM Officers were present.

- * rescuers found dead, 8 Eurasian Coots, 2 Black Ducks, 2 Grey Teals. 1 of the Coots was wounded and was taken to the W.A. Native Bird Hospital for treatment. The Coot later died from injuries sustained (a shattered hip and bleeding from behind the left eye).
- * shooting continued until 8.15 p.m. on the 17th and began at 5.20 a.m. the next morning.
- * rescuers picked up hundreds of cartridges (some illegal) and plastic inserts from the Lake.

6) LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 21ST JANUARY, 1990

No CALM Officers were present.

- * rescuers witnessed a protected bird being shot (Eurasian Coot)

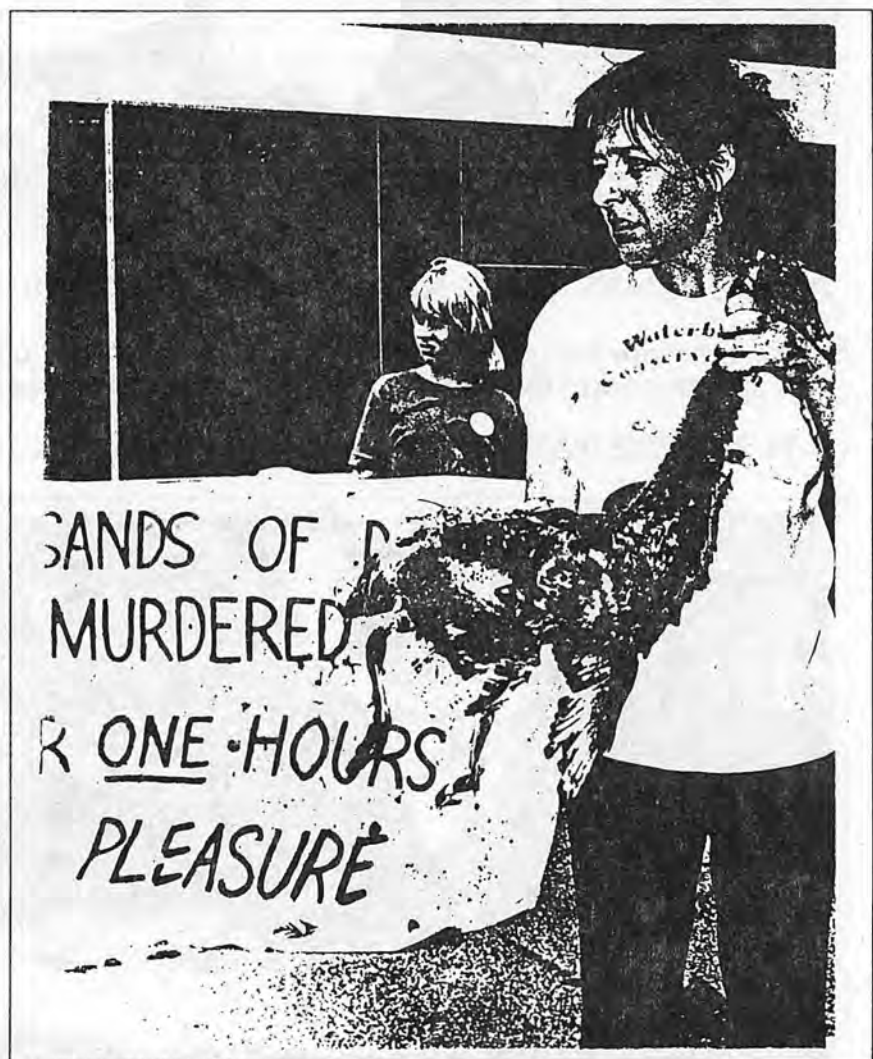
- * rescuers found dead 27 waterbirds including:

9 Black Ducks
7 Grey Teals
7 Eurasian Coots
1 Black Swan Cygnet
1 Hardhead,
1 Ltl Pied Cormorant
1 Blue-winged Shoveler

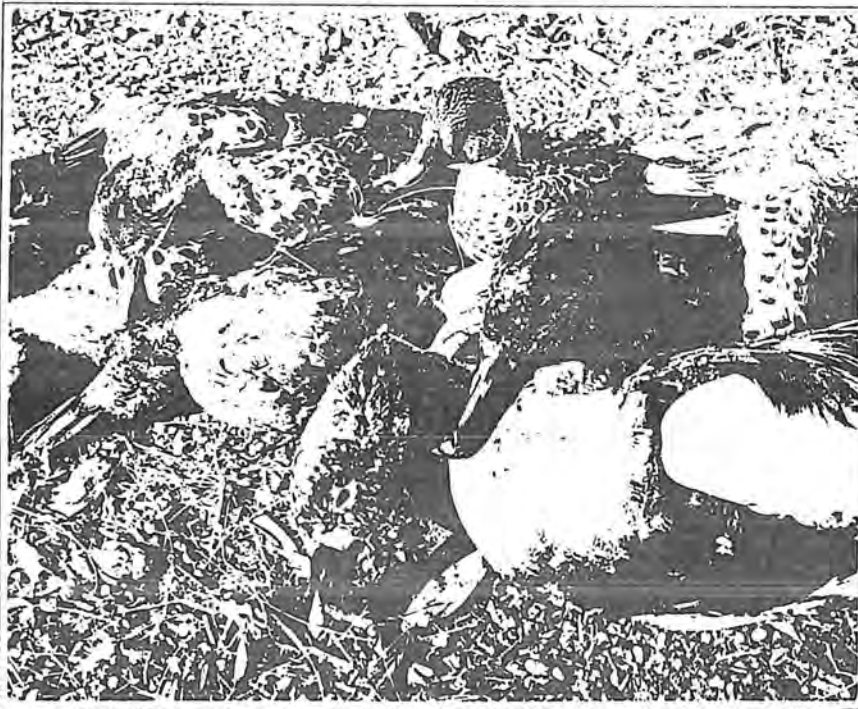
- * a Tree Martin was also found dead.

The protected species were handed over to the Department of CALM for analysis and necropsies. This confirmed that 6 of the non-game bird carcasses contained shot gun pellets.

- * many cartridges were collected from the Lake, including from within the sanctuary area.



* rescuers found fresh beer cans, riddled with pellets. These were removed from the Reserve.



* rescuers saw shooters plucking and removing both wings of birds at the lake (contrary to regulations).

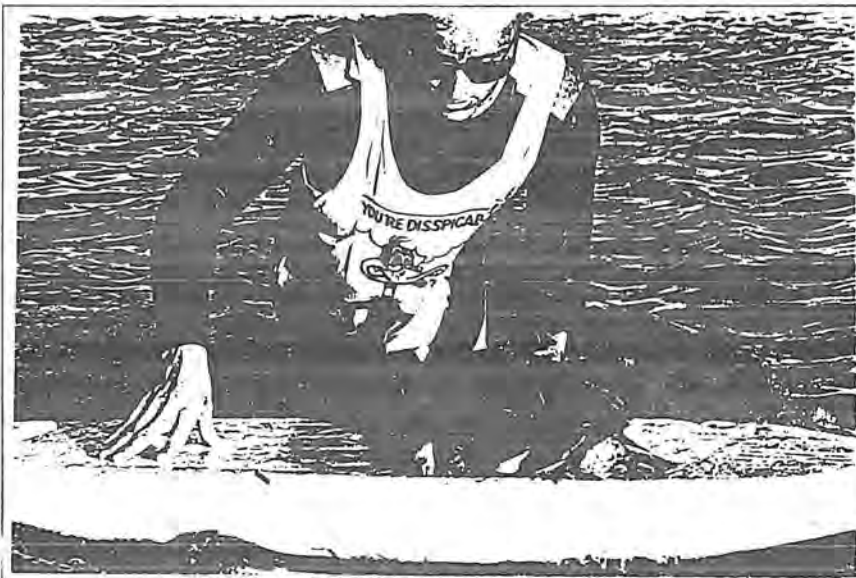
* evidence of breeding, a nest had been broken up, rescuers recovered 2 eggs containing embryos. Also, immature Eurasian Coots and Cygnets were seen on the Lake.

* shooting was observed in the Sanctuary. Police officers present went to investigate.

(7) LAKE YEN YENNING NATURE RESERVE 28TH JANUARY, 1990

* rescuers were advised by a local Police officer that shooting of all species occurs throughout the year on private properties.

(8) THE LAKES NATURE RESERVE (BEVERLEY SHIRE) 28TH JANUARY, 1990



RESCUING WOUNDED DUCKS

* 8.10 a.m. Shooter seen consuming alcohol took aim at a protected female Musk Duck on the water and missed. Another shooter then pursued the duck over to the other side of the lake. An altercation took place between rescuers and shooters. Rescuers challenged a shooter re drinking alcohol and shooting a protected bird on the water.

The rescuer was threatened by the shooter. A CALM Officer was located and brought to the area. He spoke to the shooter and took a joint statement from those present.

* shooters also had lit a fire (20 metres away was a sign advising that no fires could be lit). The Bush Fires Board advised that there was a moderate fire ban that day and that no fires should be lit except where there is a 3 metre cleared area and no flammable material within that zone. A wooden picnic table and shooters' Nissan Patrol (6PJ320) were within 3 metres of their fire.

* A statement was later made to the Victoria Park Police Station about the incident.

(9) LAKE YEN YENNING NATURE RESERVE 5TH FEBRUARY, 1990

No CALM Officers were present

- * shooters were drinking alcohol on Reserve.
- * Beverley Shire road sign peppered with gun shot
- * many shooters were unable to distinguish different species of waterbirds and were often seen aiming at protected species. At Lake Wannamal on opening day the Field & Game Association provided more than 30 spotters to advise shooters on which birds could be shot. This was only to avoid adverse media publicity, and was not repeated at other lakes or on other occasions at Lake Wannamal.



(10) LAKE WANNAMAL NATURE RESERVE 11TH FEBRUARY, 1990

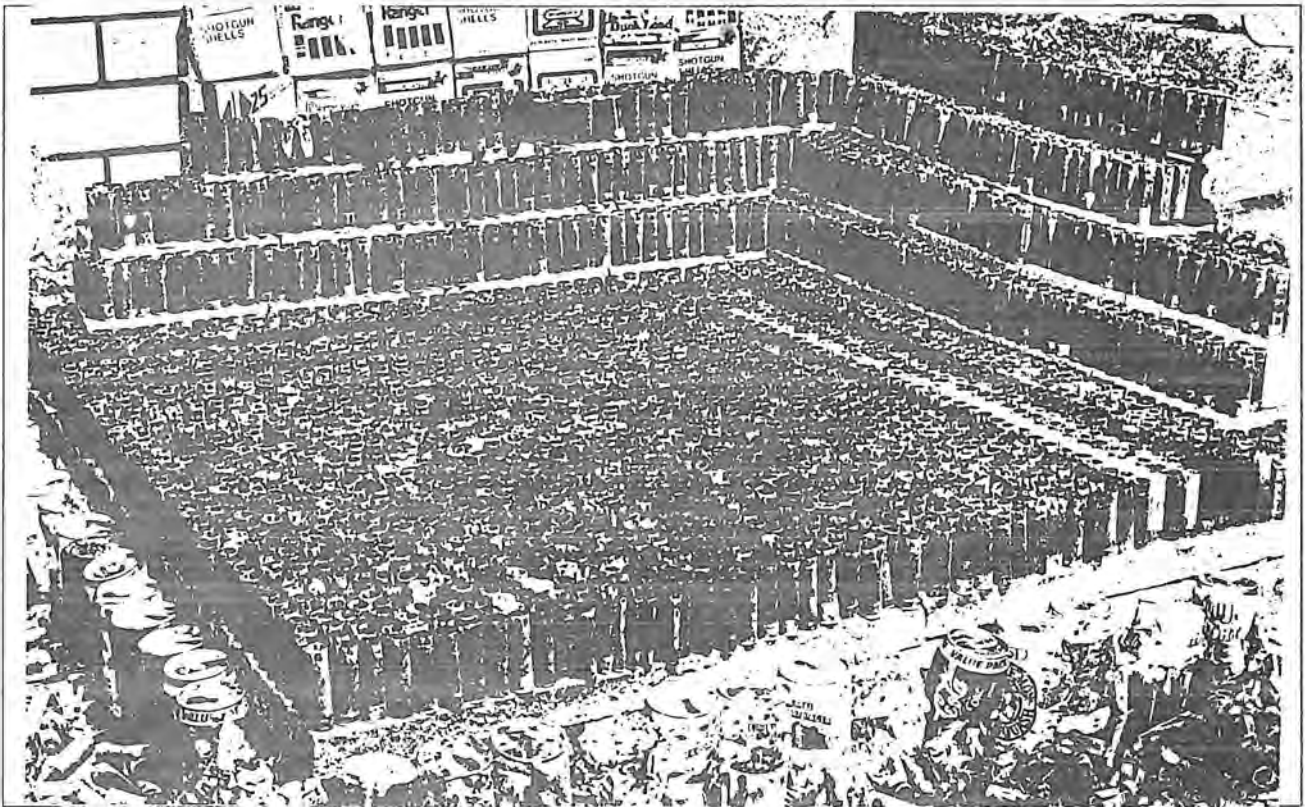
CALM Officer was present

- * rescuer threatened by a shooter, reported to the Police.
- * rescuers collected a lot of rubbish left by the shooters.

(Details will be made available to the Department of CALM on request should they wish to follow-up these breaches)

POLLUTION OF WETLANDS:

- * As a result of duck shooting our wetlands are becoming polluted with lead pellets which are building up in the sediments of the lakes. The long term consequences of this massive accumulation of lead is unknown. Many of our wetlands dry out each summer, making these pellets more readily accessible to bottom-feeding waterbirds and waders who ingest the pellets and die a slow, agonizing death from lead poisoning. There is ample evidence of the effects of lead in the wetlands, both overseas and in Australia. (See Reference "Lead Poisoning in Black Swans, *Cygnus atratus*, Exposed to Spent Lead Shot at Bool Lagoon Game Reserve, South Australia")



- * Spent cartridges and plastic inserts were not retrieved during the recent 4 week season. Rescuers collected 4,132 cartridge shells and 2,770 plastic inserts. This included 96 illegal cartridges and 5 live cartridges. Each cartridge contains around 200 lead pellets. Two of these pellets swallowed by a waterbird would be sufficient to cause a slow and painful death from lead poisoning.
- * It is estimated that this number of cartridge shells and plastic inserts alone would represent approximately 294 kg. of lead entering the wetlands.
- * The wetlands are being filled each duck shooting season with hundreds of tonnes of lead which will not go away but continue to accumulate. How will future environmental managers address this problem of their own making?

CONCLUSIONS:

- * C.A.D.S. rescuers witnessed innumerable breaches of the 1990 duck shooting season regulations. It is quite obvious that the Department of CALM are totally unable to police this activity adequately, and that they are forced to deploy their very limited manpower for up to 10 weeks of the year in overseeing an unnecessary duck shooting season, to the detriment of their other work. The cost of this policing activity alone is far in excess of the revenue gained from licence fees.
- * It is disturbing that even where there was supervision, shooters still blatantly disregarded their licence conditions. In the vast majority of wetlands there was no supervision whatsoever, and with no restraints it is quite clear that the duck shooting season is really a massacre of fauna and an abuse of the fragile wetland environment.
- * Waterbirds are under pressure from loss of habitat, particularly the seasonally waterlogged wetlands which are vital as breeding areas for many species of waterbirds. This vital factor was not taken into account when determining a season.
- * Wetland habitat is decreasing rapidly in W.A. due to urban expansion, groundwater exploitation, agriculture, pollution, salinity and mining. On the Swan Coastal Plain most of the natural wetlands have been destroyed or heavily modified. Those which remain are under increasing pressure from human activities and duck shooting is just another unnecessary and destructive pressure on the wetlands and their wildlife.
- * Wetlands are increasingly suffering from eutrophication which is causing outbreaks of botulism and massive waterbird casualties. (See Appendix 1 showing known waterbird casualties in the metropolitan area over the past 5 years).
- * Scientific predictions on the Greenhouse effect are that the wetlands in the South West of Western Australia will be severely affected and that waterbirds will have difficulty adapting quickly enough to the rapidly changing climatic conditions. Further avoidable losses due to duck shooting are therefore completely unjustifiable.
- * The 1988 R.A.O.U. waterbird count showed that the total population of "game" species in the South West & Eucla Division was less than 200,000 and declining. Each shooter is entitled to shoot five birds each day of the open season or 140 birds altogether. The 3,000 licensed shooters could therefore in theory shoot 420,000 ducks or more than twice the total known population of waterfowl in W.A.
- * Some game species are in fact quite rare, particularly the Pink-eared duck, Hardhead, Chestnut Teal and the Blue-winged Shoveler. There is no scientific reason why such species are listed for shooting.
- * Shooters represent only a very small percentage of the community. The majority of people wish to see an end to this blood sport.
- * C.A.D.S. believes that there are sound conservation grounds for permanently banning duck shooting. However the banning of duck shooting can be justified solely on the injustice and deliberate cruelty to our native waterbirds.

RECOMMENDATIONS:-

1. That the Government move immediately to repeal existing legislation within the Wildlife Conservation Act, 1950-1985, and the Conservation & Land Management Act 1984 which gives the Minister the power to open up Nature Reserves to shooting, and the power to declare protected native waterbirds "game" species.
2. That a moratorium be placed on all duck shooting seasons pending the enactment of this legislation.
3. That the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1920-1976 be amended to include native fauna, and that the expression "animal" include all animals including native fauna.
4. That encouragement be given to shooters to engage in a suitable alternative to duck shooting, such as clay pigeon or target shooting. This activity allows the participant to enjoy his/her sport without causing suffering to native fauna or damage to nature reserves. The shooting is confined to a range and the shooters' behaviour controlled by strict rules of the club. The obvious benefits of this alternative are:-
 - * protected native waterbirds would not suffer unnecessary pain
 - * wetlands would not be polluted with lead pellets
 - * a dramatic reduction in the litter in Nature Reserves (beer cans, cartridge cases etc.)
 - * the tranquillity of Nature Reserves would be retained for the benefit of wildlife and the majority of people who enjoy passive recreation
 - * the elimination of danger to both shooters and other wetland users
 - * a decrease in vandalism (e.g. pellet-ridden signs)
 - * protection of fragile wetland vegetation from inappropriate use (e.g. 4-wheel drive vehicles being driven up to the edge of wetlands, trees and shrubs being broken and used to construct hides, fires being illegally lit etc.)

C.A.D.S. believes that duck shooting is an anachronism. Western Australians, like other humane and compassionate people on this planet have outgrown such archaic practices. In an era where people have to make hard decisions concerning conservation and the environment it is totally unacceptable to the majority of Western Australians to allow a small group of shooters to massacre our threatened wildlife for their pleasure.

Joan Payne and Sally Carryer
Joint Convenors

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The West Australian

PERTH WEDNESDAY JANUARY 17 1990

Daffy decision on wild ducks

DESPITE an ALP promise to take strong action to protect WA's native birds, the State Government is presiding this week over what amounts to a mass slaughter of water fowl.

The spectacle of hundreds of hunters heading off in the pre-dawn gloom to do battle with local ducks does no-one any credit.

The police felt worried enough about the mix of shooters, shotguns and protesters to place quick response teams, ambulances, first-aid crews and even a helicopter on standby in case of trouble.

As it turned out the only casualties were ducks, even though some shooters were blasting away in the darkness nearly two hours before the season opened.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management says its role is to advise on the effects of shooting on long-term duck numbers and not to make value judgments for the community.

That decision was up to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Taylor. CALM estimated total game-duck numbers at 270,000, which it said was more than enough to sustain a short season safely. But research shows that some of the eight game species in WA are down to 3000 birds or fewer.

The Environmental Protection Authority has already warned that water birds are dying from botulism in WA lakes and population pressures are also threatening breeding areas.

The argument that shooting ducks for the roasting dish is no worse than slaughtering lambs does not hold water.

Sheep and cattle are killed under conditions that are as humane as possible while ducks are often maimed from a distance and left to die. And while lamb and beef are staples of our diet, the same could hardly be argued for wild duck.

It is hard to see why Mr Taylor ended the two-year shooting moratorium when public concern about the environment and wildlife is at a peak.

This season should be the last

Duck shooting despite pledge

THE WA Government lifted the two-year ban on duck shooting despite an election promise last year to increase the protection of wildlife.

Item 55 of the ALP's state platform for the 1989 election said: "Labor will ... prohibit the shooting or trapping of waterfowl in all wetland nature reserves." This was approved by the state conference in September 1988.

The first batch of environmental material released by the ALP during the election campaign quoted the Premier, Mr Dowding, as saying: "Labor has tak-

en strong action to protect our native birds. Finch trapping and duck shooting have been banned."

When someone realised that the ducks were protected only by a shooting moratorium and not a ban, the environmental policy was withdrawn and reissued with the second sentence deleted.

But in its final form the statement went on to promise: "A Dowding Government will crack down on people who deliberately harm wildlife."

● Editorial, page 10



Ducking sport

THE duck-shooting season began this morning. Throughout the State hunters were out at dawn, thigh-deep in water, awaiting their quarry.

Equipped with automatic or pump-action shotguns, decoys bobbing on the surface, quack imitators poised, these hardy souls prepared for their sport.

With all the hunters' technological aids, it hardly adds up to a fair contest.

Shooters claim it is a sport. But it is really a slaughter and cannot be compared with stopping a charging rogue buffalo or tracking a man-eating tiger.

And anybody claiming they shoot ducks for the table is stretching a point. There is little pleasure in such eating when mouthfuls are interrupted by having to spit out lead.

But there is an element of real danger today. The shooters and the conservationists have each imported Victorian expert advisers.

Feelings are running high, and therein lies the danger. Strong, even passionate, emotions combined with loaded guns and itchy trigger fingers are a ready-made recipe for disaster.

A strategic police presence will be on hand hoping to keep the peace among people, but ducks may not be the only casualties today.

Perhaps things would be different if the ducks could shoot back.

JANUARY 14, 1990
"SUNDAY TIMES"

16/1/90

Visual tests urged for duck shooters

SHOOTING organisations want a species identification test introduced for duck hunters.

The move would weed out "once-a-year cowboys" who gave duck hunting a bad name, said Mr Jon Branch, of the Sporting Shooters' Association.

Mr Branch said yesterday that the WA Shooting Association, which represents all gun sports organisations, had asked the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Taylor, last year to introduce testing.

Compulsory visual identification testing will be introduced in Victoria this year. To pass, would-be hunters will have to identify water fowl flashed on a video screen for three seconds.

"The shooter has to be able to

By ANNE BURNS

pick up the identifying marks on the TV screen and accurately name a majority of species," Mr Branch said.

He said shooting organisations were committed to seeing such tests introduced to WA.

A spokesman for Mr Taylor said that the minister was considering introducing a test before any future duck season.

A recognition test was favoured regardless of how many protected birds were shot during this year's four-week duck season.

There had not been enough lead time to introduce testing before the start of the current season, the spokesman said.

The Sporting Shooters' Association and the WA Field and Game Association both hold waterbird identification courses for shooters.

Animal liberationist Laurie Levy, who led Sunday's protest against duck shooting, said an identification test might save some protected birds but only a total shooting ban would ensure rare species were not killed.

Despite attempts by shooting organisations to educate hunters over the past four years, more than 600 protected birds, including 154 rare freckled ducks, had been illegally slaughtered in Victoria last year.

"Introducing species identification tests will cost WA taxpayers a lot of money just so a handful of people can continue their thrill killing," he said.

Wildlife officers charge 26

THE shooting of three protected birds and actions by trigger-happy hunters have led to 26 shooters being charged with offences against wildlife.

Wildlife officers of the Department of Conservation and Land Management apprehended the hunters on Sunday at lakes around the South-West.

At Lake Coyrecup, near Katanning, a hunter shot two coots and at Esperance a man shot a crow.

They will be charged by sum-

mons with taking protected species. They face a maximum fine of \$4000.

In the Beverley area, at Yenyening Lakes and Channel Lakes, 21 shooters jumped the gun and started firing before the official opening time of 6am.

Despite warnings from wildlife officers to observe the starting time the first shots rang out before sunrise at 4.50am.

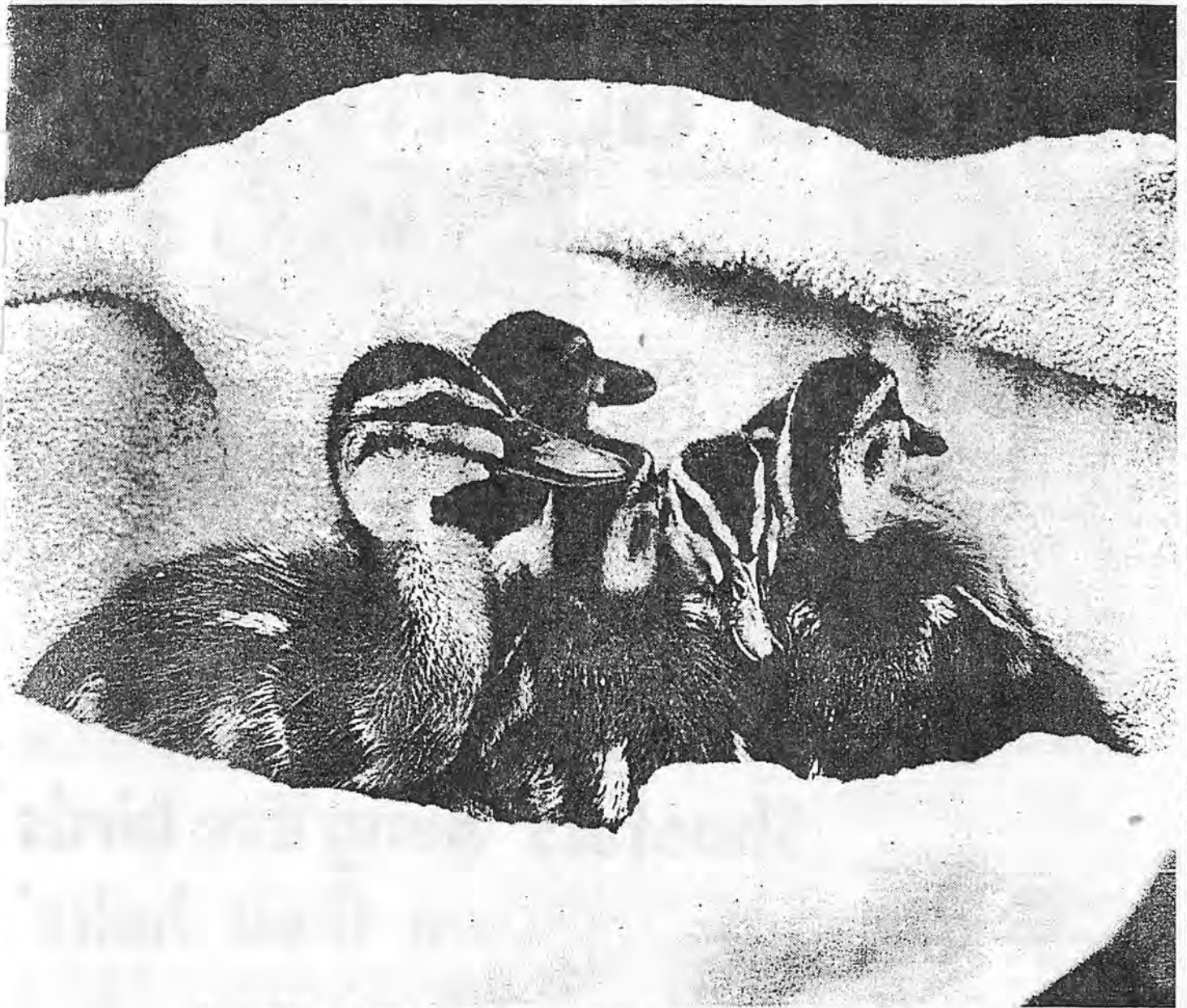
In the Wagin area one hunter was caught shooting a game bird

on the water, conviction for which carries a maximum penalty of \$1000, and another was found firing before 6am.

A hunter caught shooting without a licence will also be charged with giving a false name.

Department officers patrolled 22 wetland areas on Sunday from the Murchison to Esperance.

They will make regular checks at popular shooting spots for the remainder of the four-week season.



Some of the WA Native Bird Hospital's young patients. Picture: BILL PLOWMAN.

Duck shooting season 'too early'

THE DUCK shooting season should be postponed because the breeding season is not yet complete, according to WA Native Bird Hospital coordinator Sue Smith.

About 50 ducklings, most of them species allowed to be shot, were being cared for at the Mundaring hospital, Mrs Smith said.

None would have been fully grown before the season started on Monday.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management decides the date of the season for the south-west and Eucla areas partly on the belief

By LISE COLYER

that the breeding and fledging stage for ducks is complete.

But Mrs Smith said it was not uncommon for the ducks to continue breeding through December.

"By the time the shooting season begins, ducklings that were born during December will be three-quarter ducks," she said.

"Apart from their fluffy bellies and their slight wings not being developed, they will look just like ducks in the water.

"They won't be able to fly and you can't tell me that some shooters won't go for them because they will be easy targets in the water."

Mrs Smith said that if there had to be any shooting seasons, they should be held in winter, before the breeding season.

Water levels were high then and the ducks would have a "sporting chance".

A department spokesman, Mr Don Munro, said he was unaware of any breeding still going on but there could be some along the Swan coastal plain where, with its conditions,

breeding could continue throughout the year.

Mr Munro said young ducks were protected by a regulation preventing any bird to be shot below 3m above the water, unless a duck had been injured and had to be killed on the ground.

It would be difficult to defer the season because wetlands would begin drying up, leaving ducks with little refuge.

A winter shooting season would also be difficult because ducks began breeding after the first rains, usually as early as June.

CONSERVATION COUNCIL TO CALL FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY

Out for a duck!

By NORM AISBETT

THE Conservation Council will call on Environment Minister Bob Pearce to order a public inquiry into the future of duck shooting in WA.

Council president Phil Jennings said yesterday that a letter calling for the inquiry would go to Mr Pearce this week.

Dr Jennings said the council believed there were two grounds on which duck shooting should be banned or at least placed under more stringent conditions. They were:

- Pollution of the wetlands from spent shot and cartridges.
- The threat from shooting to four endangered water fowl species.

He said a ban was most appropriate. It would be in line with ALP State policy and had been promised by Premier Peter Dowding in his election platform.

Also, former Environment Minister Barry Hodge had promised there would be no more duck shooting seasons.

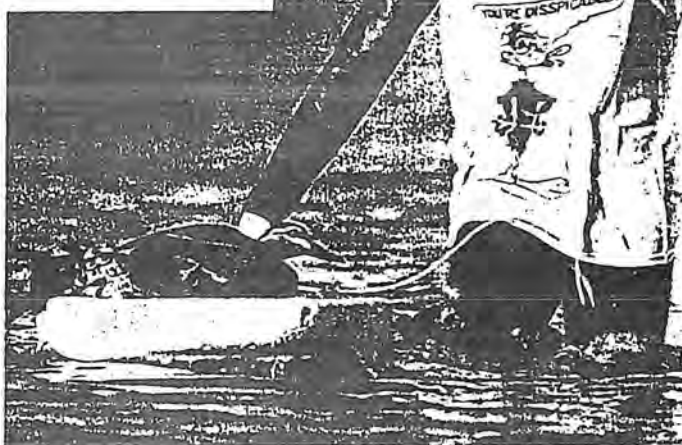
Dr Jennings said the council had completed a public opinion survey showing 75-80 per cent of the population was opposed to duck shooting.

He revealed the council had already asked the Environmental Protection Authority to hold an inquiry into the appropriateness of a 1990 shooting season.

But this was torpedoed by Conservation and Land Management Minister Iain Taylor's "surprise" announcement of a 1990 season — in conflict with ALP policy.



● Like father... a boy watches dad aim for supper



● Surfboard saint... a protester rescues victims of the morning's sport. Pictures: ROSS SWANBOROUGH

Hunters keep Levy in sight



● Laurie Levy

TOP Victorian animal liberationist Laurie Levy was never lonely at Lake Wannamal yesterday — the shooting lobby saw that.

In a remarkable game of "ducks and drakes" the lanky Levy was shadowed throughout the day by at least two Field and Game Association members, one with a camera.

One of his shadows, with a radio, stuck like glue. Trailing about 10m, he followed Levy all round the 82ha lake and through the reeds.

The move showed the military-style organisation of the shooters, who believed Levy would

stage-manage events to grab publicity.

Levy, who moves swiftly through the mud with the agility of a giant crane, was delighted.

"I think it's terrific. Normally he'd be out there with a gun," he said.

"There are a lot of hunters carrying cameras today instead of guns, and I think that's fantastic."

Field and Game spokesman Tony O'Brien said: "We thought Laurie needed some companionship. He's a nice guy and they can have a little chat as they walk around."

Shooters 'hung live birds on their belts'

ANIMAL libbers and conservationists claim live ducks were hung from the belts of shooters during a "war games" start to the hunting season at Lake Wannamal, 50km from Gingin, yesterday.

The charge is among complaints filed with the Coalition Against Duck Shooting (CADS) at the lakeside.

However, National Federation of Field and Game Associations administrator Tony O'Brien has ridiculed the claim, saying he'd never seen a live duck on a belt.

"It was more likely the nervous system of a dead duck going into convulsions. That's normal with death," he said.

"They will try to dig up every allegation. I'm waiting for the claims of rape and sexual harassment."

CADS joint-coordinator Joan Payne alleged that, when a rescuer told a shooter that a duck on his belt was still alive, he replied "yes, I know," and laughed. She alleged other similar reports but that was the only case where a shooter replied to bird rescuers.

The CADS "incident" list of complaints also included:

● A number of shooters being told by a CALM officer to collect spent cartridges from the water but failing to do so. The cartridges polluted the wetland. The CALM officer was seen collecting spent cartridges.

● Some shooters blasting ducks, mostly grey teal, and not collecting them because they were too small.

● Certain successful shooters pooling ducks with less-successful shooters so they wouldn't reach the individual bag limit too quickly.

● Two instances of birds being shot — at the start of the shoot — while sitting on the water.

● Shooters not waiting for the siren to start the season and "jumping the gun".

● A protected coot being shot and left on the water. A rescuer tried to retrieve the wounded bird but it dived and disappeared.

● The rear hatch window of a car belonging to two bird-rescuers being smashed while they were on the water.

● A shot being fired in the direction of a rescuer trying to rescue a wounded mountain duck.

Mrs Payne said she was "totally satisfied" the reports were genuine.

They would be part of a total report on the 1990 duck-shooting season being prepared for the Department of Conservation and Land Management and Minister Ian Taylor.

Stolen

Tony O'Brien claimed "dirty tricks" by animal liberationists on the water.

Birds were stolen and dead ducks were "sailed" on the lake to give the impression that shooters were wantonly abandoning them. One case was photographed.

Protest organisers showed "a total disregard" for human life by putting inexperienced people — many of them young university students — into the treacherous lake and amid the shooting.

Some bird-rescuers' complaints were the likely result of inexperience with shooting etiquette. They

were fully briefed beforehand, showed great discipline and did not fire a shot before 6am. This could be verified by CALM officers.

He said shooters would not accept offers of dead birds because they did not know where they had come from and it was "swamp etiquette" not to take someone else's bird.

Mr O'Brien said the estimated 150 shooters, who

TEXT FOR TODAY

Eccl 1:2
For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief, yet, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

KING JAMES VERSION

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REWARD

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VENUE: Cannington Central Raceway Albany Highway, Cannington.

COST: Adults — \$6.00
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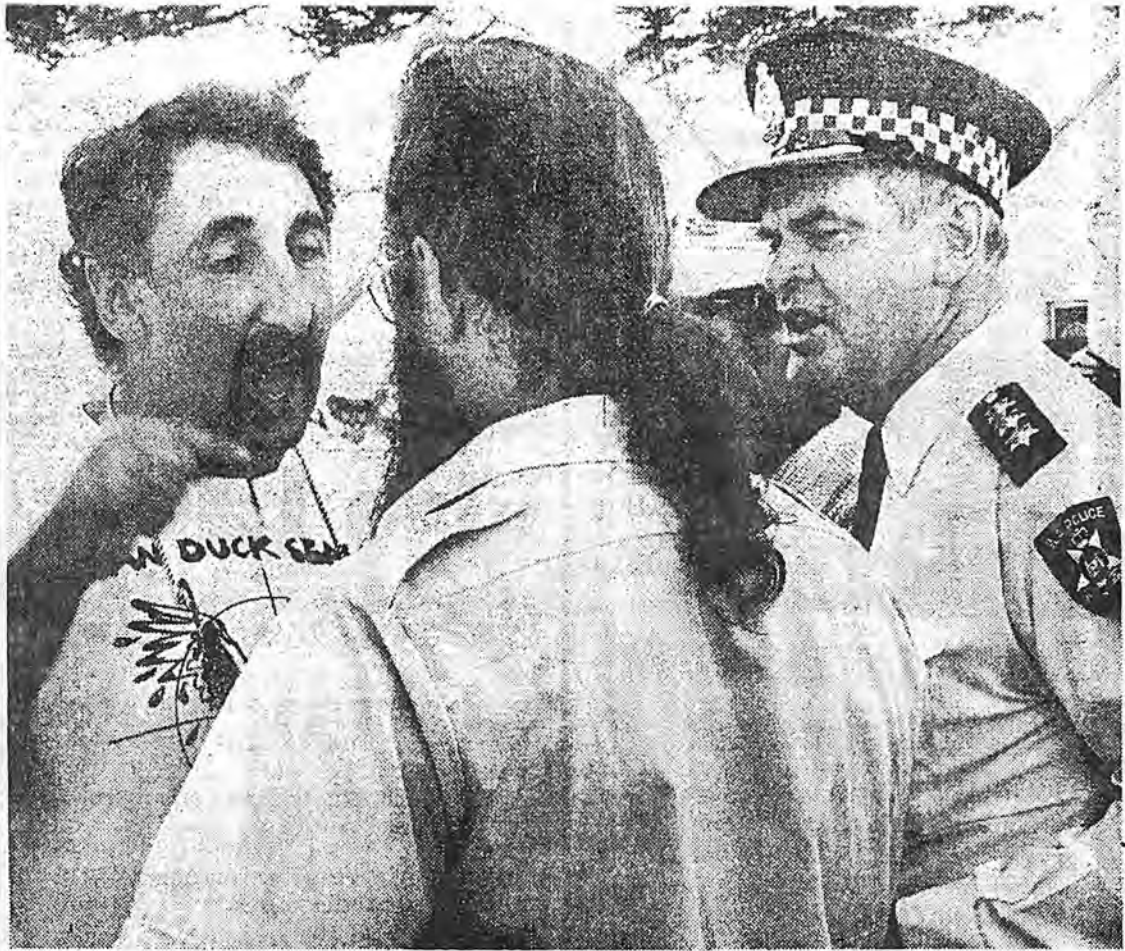
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□ Police move in to cool off duck shooting protester Laurie Levy (left) and duck shooter Stephen Clint. Picture — KERRY BERRINGTON

Crack shots duck in hunting protest

POLICE moved in twice as shooters and protesters clashed at a Fremantle rally yesterday on the eve of the WA duck-shooting season.

Confrontations were broken up as emotions ran high.

More than 250 people attended the rally and opponents of duck shooting were spurred on by Victorian campaigner Laurie Levy.

Both groups received a last-minute warning from the State Government.

The acting Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Wilson, said future seasons could be cancelled if strict safety controls were ignored.

He appealed to shooters and protesters to adopt a responsible approach.

More than 100 Campaign Against Duck Shooting (CADS) protesters are expected at Lake

By **CHRIS MANLY** and **LLOYD DONALDSON**

Wannamal, near Gingin, this morning to try to sabotage WA's first duck-shooting season in two years.

WA Field and Game Association safety officer Stephen Clint said: "These people are an accident waiting to happen."

"They have been given no safety instructions about walking in front of shotguns capable of killing them."

Safety

"CADS and Laurie Levy are not interested in the safety of these people."

"Unless they are told what can happen, they are going to get hurt. It is shooters who are going to be blamed."

He said the association would photograph protesters stealing birds or provoking incidents as

evidence for possible prosecutions.

Mr Levy told the rally that duck shooting was nothing more than a legalised "thrill kill".

He said: "It's dangerous out there. We are walking into a war zone but we are prepared to take the risk to help defenceless native water birds."

"We are not out there looking for a confrontation with duck hunters. We don't carry guns — they do. If there are any human victims it will be the rescuers, not the hunters."

Mr Levy backed off from earlier statements that protesters would stand in front of shooters to protect ducks.

He said: "Our role is to pick up the injured, the maimed and the crippled birds."

Protected species found dead would be brought out and presented to CALM.

● Editorial Page 44

Sunday Times

14/1/90

Animal libbers to try duck shoot ban

12/1/90

By BRENDAN NICHOLSON

ANIMAL liberationists will ask the WA Supreme Court today to ban the duck shooting season which opens on Sunday.

The president of the Conservation Council of WA, Dr Phil Jennings, said the council had briefed a barrister to seek an order to quash the decision by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Taylor, to declare a shooting season.

The council believed the decision late last year to end the two-year moratorium on water bird shooting was based on incorrect and incomplete information.

This had led the minister to conclude that a season would not pose a threat to the conservation of water fowl.



Mr Taylor

The council would present evidence that the survival of several important species might be threatened by the season.

These included the chestnut teal and the Australasian shoveller, both of which were on the shooters' list.

"The council wants the season cancelled," he said. "If we are



Dr Jennings

successful we hope the minister will be required to appear before the Supreme Court to explain the basis for his decision."

Dr Jennings said the council was also concerned about the minister's decision to permit the use of lead shot when considerable scientific evidence existed to prove the threat posed to water fowl by lead poisoning.

Even one lead pellet picked up from the water and swallowed by a duck could kill it.

"The last wild Californian Condor died recently from lead poisoning caused by pellets it swallowed while foraging for food," he said.

Dr Jennings said the council had also written to the chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority, Mr Barry Carbon, asking the authority to use its power to prevent lead pollution of the WA wetlands.

The court action is being handled by a council affiliate, the Waterbird Conservation Group.

The four-week duck hunting season in the South-West and Eucla begins on January 14 and there will be a year-round open season in the Kimberley and the rest of the state.

Opponents of duck shooting plan to "buzz" WA's wetlands in a light aircraft to frighten away ducks. Volunteers will also risk their lives paddling kayaks around the state's waterways to shield the birds from hunters.

Others will stand by to rescue the hundreds of water birds that opponents of shooting expect to be wounded over the coming weeks.

Shooters and their opponents have flown in experts from the eastern states to plan their strategies amid the growing row in WA about the WA Government's decision to end the two-year moratorium on the sport.

WA conservationists say Mr Taylor recklessly ignored EPA warnings that severe botulism in WA lakes could kill water birds and of the growing pressure on breeding grounds as wetlands gave way to development.

Two drown in rescue bid

HOBART: A man and his daughter drowned off a small beach on Tasmania's east coast yesterday while trying to rescue two children from the water.

Police Inspector David Fleming said the 64-year-old man and his 38-year-old daughter had been trying to save two young family members from a heavy rip when they also swam into difficulty and drowned north of Four Mile Beach.

The children — a boy and a girl of unknown ages — were

eventually rescued by onlookers and were described last night as physically well but "obviously quite distressed".

Four Mile Beach, west of Launceston near the small coastal town of Falmouth, was fairly isolated and unpatrolled.

"On the southern end there's a very heavy rip going in there at the moment and they (the children) got into difficulty and of course the people went out to try and help and got caught in the rip," Insp. Fleming said.

About 30 to 40 holiday-makers were enjoying the beach when, soon before 12.20pm, the pair noticed the boy and girl in difficulty and swam to their rescue.

The dead couple and the two surviving children were all from Hobart.

Police did not know the family relationships between the four last night and would not release their names.

● A town's tribute, page 5

14/14/89

Outrage over duck shooting decision

WA CONSERVATIONISTS have blasted the Government for "recklessly" reintroducing duck shooting and have accused it of selling out to the "pseudo sportsmen" of the gun lobby.

The vice-president of the Conservation Council of WA, Mrs Joan Payne, said the decision was atrocious.

The Government had ignored the Environmental Protection Authority's warnings that severe botulism in WA lakes could kill water birds, she said.

In a joint statement issued with the Waterbird Conservation Group, Mrs Payne said shooting and pollution were acting in concert to wipe out WA waterfowl populations.

She said the Government had

By BRENDAN NICHOLSON

also failed to consider the continuing loss of significant breeding grounds which was critical to the accurate assessment of waterfowl populations.

Mrs Payne said environmentalists were forced to doubt the sincerity of the Department of Conservation and Land Management as "the supposed protectors of native fauna".

CALM was actively promoting duck shooting to the extent that it ran a workshop entitled "why ducks do not mind being shot", she said.

CALM had stopped being the department that protected wildlife and was overseeing its slaughter.

CALM's executive director, Dr

Syd Shea, said he was disgusted that the council had challenged the professional integrity of staff who prepared the biological data on which the duck shooting decision was based.

The department's role was to provide the best professional information on the possible effect of a shooting season on the long-term population of ducks.

He said the conservation council's statement went close to being libellous and he challenged it to name any officer who had not provided impartial technical advice on the issue.

A restricted four-week duck hunting season in the South-West and Eucla land divisions begins on January 14. There will be a year-round season in the Kimberley and the rest of the state.

30 THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TUESDAY JANUARY 2 1990

Duck season 'could wipe out birds'

THE State Government authorised the shooting of almost four times more than the known population of duck game when it announced the 1990 duck shooting season, according to the Coalition Against Duck Shooting.

A spokesman for the coalition, Mrs Joan Payne, said the number of ducks which could be shot legally in the south-west during the duck shooting season, which begins on January 14, amounted to overkill.

Each shooter would be allowed to kill five ducks in the first day and 10 each day after that during the 30-day season, Mrs Payne said.

This amounted to 295 ducks each, and, according to 1987 figures, WA had 2957 registered duck shooters, she said.

That meant 872,315 ducks could be shot, but, according to unpublished March 1989 figures recorded by the Royal Australian Ornithologists' Union, the population of game ducks in the south-west was less than 280,000, Mrs Payne said.

She said 1043 chestnut teals were

By LISE COLYER

recorded in 1988 by the union so it would take only four shooters to legally wipe out the species.

Low numbers of Australasian shoveller, pink-eared and hardhead species put them in similar danger, she said.

Mrs Payne said the Department of Conservation and Land Management was expecting a flood of complaints against the duck shooting season.

She said the executive director of the department, Dr Syd Shea, had issued instructions to department workers on how to deal with the calls. A copy had been leaked to the group.

Mrs Payne said workers were urged to say the season was expected to have little impact on duck numbers and important wetlands would be closed to hunting.

The Acting Minister of the department, Mr Wilson, said last night he did not have the relevant information on hand, so he could not comment.

PO Box 143, Northbridge WA 6000

TO THE EDITOR

Your Say

p. 8. Ducks lobby to keep up fight

By CATHY SAWYER

ANTI-DUCK shooting protesters will continue to rescue injured birds on the three remaining weekends of the duck shooting season.

Waterbird Conservation Group spokeswoman Joan Payne said rescuers' efforts at the weekend kept down the toll of ducks and protected birds.

She did not believe protesters' presence in the lakes caused more birds to be killed.

Protesters were "standing quietly in the water alongside shooters", and were handing over dead birds they had picked up so that shooters would not have to kill more.

But she said most shooters had not accepted these ducks, as they were either too small or not edible.

Ms Payne said the presence of CALM officials, Field and Game officers and police — as well as protesters — made shooters more aware of their actions and kept emotions on both sides under control.

But the areas where there were no rescuers would not have had the same restraint.

"If people had not been at that particular place the casualties would have been higher," she said.

"It would have been quite devastating."

Ducks still breeding

I REFER to a statement made by the Victorian and National Federation of Field and Game Association's administrator Tony O'Brien that the duck breeding season is over and accusing the animal liberationists of lying about this.

Tony O'Brien is sadly misinformed.

I phoned a CALM officer who agreed that the breeding season was not over — that there are indeed still young flappers unable to fly.

I found additional proof of this on a lake in Wood-

ford Park, Lynwood, where, on January 11, three days before the duck shooting season starts, I saw two young duck families a few days old.

Fortunately these two small families will be safe from the hunters' guns.

They will grow in strength, protected by their parents, to give pleasure to the people in the surrounding district and who marvel at the trust these birds show in the human race.

Unfortunately many more young ducks will not

have the quick death meted out to their parents by the hunters' bullet; without their parents support they will suffer a slow and agonising death. — Mrs Eve Parry, Lynwood.



♦ Tony O'Brien

Mindless act

THERE are very few issues in life that do not benefit from considering another point of view.

But there can be no justification, at any level, for the so-called sport of duck shooting.

Sport, by its very definition, is the act of pitting one's skill against an opponent or the elements or a beast with equal ability

and opportunity on both sides.

What sport is there in shooting helpless creatures out of the sky?

Although I am offended as a human being by this mindless act, I am not approaching the issue emotionally, nor am I a radical conservationist or fanatic.

I am simply one who believes that we humans do not own the earth, nor any of the living things upon it.

We are privileged to share life's great bounty with everything that exists.

You cannot kill one single creature or tree or water supply without diminishing yourself as a person.

Think about that before you next pull the trigger and bring down one of life's noble creatures.

These birds could give you so much pleasure if you would stop to watch their flight instead of shattering their lives for a moment's satisfaction or a meal that's consumed and forgotten in minutes. — Charmaine Saunders, Subiaco.

Court bid for duck shoot ban fails



Ms Payne

WA conservationists failed yesterday in a bid to have the Supreme Court ban the duck shooting season which begins tomorrow.

Justice Franklyn dismissed an application to have a writ issued against the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Taylor, quashing his decision to end a two-year moratorium on duck shooting.

The application was filed by the Waterbird Conservation Group Inc, an affiliate of the Conservation Council of WA, and two individuals — Joan Elizabeth Payne, the group's president, and Keith Smith, chairman of the WA Native Bird Hospital.

By **BRENDAN NICHOLSON**

Justice Franklyn said the application was brought at the last minute.

The minister was not given time to meet the largely unsubstantiated allegations of the applicants.

The conservationists said the minister did not take into account factors such as the community attitude to duck shooting, the effect of shooting on protected species of duck and the effects of lead poisoning on waterfowl and the wetlands.

They produced a document on which the minis-

ter's office said Mr Taylor's decision was based which simply stated that there was an estimated total of 270,000 ducks in WA.

The document produced by the Department of Conservation and Land Management did not include the fact that numbers of some species of game ducks were down, the applicants said.

These included the chestnut teal, down to about 1030, and the hardhead, which was down to about 1040.

Justice Franklyn said he was not satisfied that Mr Taylor's decision was based only on the expert information outlined by the appli-

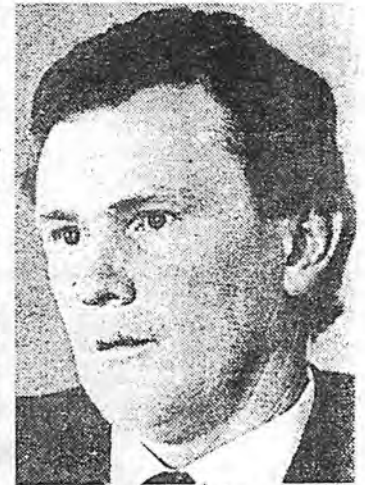
cants. It also would be clearly impossible to notify in time all those preparing to go hunting on Sunday.

"A severe injustice could result," he said.

● Police have prepared quick-response teams to quell problems which may arise when duck shooters confront protesters on Sunday morning.

Acting Chief-Supt Auriel John Smith pleaded with protesters and hunters to use common sense and not endanger anyone's life.

He said all regions had been alerted and teams were on standby to be sent from Perth to nearby hunting locations if trouble flared.



Mr Taylor

Ban shocks the shooters

ANIMAL libbers are elated but duck-shooters are "stunned and amazed" at new Conservation and Land Management Minister Bob Pearce's intention to have the sport banned.

Mr Pearce, who is also Environment Minister, says duck shooting is "a bit primitive" and is not an environmentally-sensitive activity.

A final decision rests with State Cabinet but he will oppose any move for a future season.

By NORM AISBETT

Prominent Victorian animal libber Laurie Levy, who came to WA to lead protests over the recently-concluded 1990 season said from Melbourne today:

"I think it's wonderful, terrific. Mr Pearce's statement shows that we are, indeed, living in an enlightened society.

"Duck shooting is an anachronism. It belongs in the past and has no relevance to the present or future.

"The WA Labor Party has a policy not to allow duck shooting and Cabinet obviously went against the wishes of its own Party members and their own policy in allowing the 1990 season."

WA Field and Game Association State president

Barry Carson said the association was stunned and amazed that Mr Pearce "could come out so early with such a statement without giving the relevant associations an opportunity to discuss the issue with him."

Mr Carson said it was particularly disappointing given the excellent performance by shooters over the recent season.

*Daily News
Friday,
February 23,
1990.
(P.12)*

Pearce says no to duck season

THE WA Minister for the Environment, Mr Pearce, wants to ban duck shooting.

"As far as I am concerned there will not be any more duck shooting in WA," he said last night.

"It is a bit primitive and not, in my view, an activity sensitive to the environment."

The Government's decision to lift the moratorium on the shooting of water fowl in WA to allow a season this year outraged conservationists.

But they failed in a last-minute bid to have the controversial season blocked in the WA Supreme Court.

Mr Pearce was given the other "green" portfolio of Conservation and Land Management in the recent Cabinet reshuffle.

He said the decision to lift the ban was made by Cabinet and not his predecessor, Mr Taylor.

The final decision would be up to the whole Cabinet and not to him alone.

But Mr Pearce said that when the question came up again for consideration, he would oppose any move for a new season.

Hunt claim shot down

By NORM AISBETT

SHOTS have been fired at claims by duck-hunting lobbyists that no flightless "flappers" are at risk in the coming season.

The WA Native Bird Hospital in Mundaring yesterday put 11 ducklings on show to disprove the claim.

Six of the ducklings shown to the *Daily News* were admitted to the hospital only three days ago.

It is feared that ducklings such as these will be left motherless by hunters and could suffer fright and other disturbance during the hunting.

Breeding

Hospital chairman Keith Smith displayed the young birds after what he described as a "false and slanderous" statement by National Field and Game Association administrator Tony O'Brien.

Commenting on animal liberation opposition to the opening of the shooting season on Sunday, Mr O'Brien told the *Daily News* on Monday: "They will go through a pattern of lies, making allegations that ducks in WA are still breeding, that the young are still flappers and unable to fly."

"That is all incorrect, according to the wildlife people."

Mr Smith, who is not a



◆ FLIGHTLESS ORPHANS: Two ducklings at the bird hospital. Picture: PETER RAMSHAW



◆ Keith Smith: "Slanderous"

member of Animal Liberation, said yesterday: "We have the evidence that flappers are still about ... and I take great exception to being called a liar."

"The batch of six duck-

lings brought in from Bickton, where they were being chased by crows, were born on Christmas Eve.

"Ducklings are flightless for 10 weeks, which means this batch won't be flying until the middle of March."

Mr Smith said the other five ducklings were not much older.

"The flappers now in the hospital are only the tip of the iceberg," he said.

"There is no doubt the season has been opened too early."

"Mr O'Brien would know that the Eastern States duck-shooting season does not start until the beginning of March — even though they breed earlier than ducks in WA."

Doctor wants tougher gun laws

SYDNEY: A leading psychiatrist is called for a dramatic toughening of gun laws to reduce the rate of murder and violence.

Dr John Ellard, chairman of Sydney's Northside Clinic and a former chairman of the NSW Law Foundation, said people who shot birds and animals for sport should not be allowed to own guns.

In an article in the latest Medical Journal of Australia, Dr Ellard said only those with an "ironclad

need" should be allowed to own guns.

"If we feel it appropriate to be concerned about whales, the ozone layer and plastic bags, surely we could extend the same concern to our fellow men, and more particularly, to our fellow women, in whose bodies most of the bullets lodge," he said.

Dr Ellard said people should be allowed only to own guns if they needed them for their work or if they enjoyed the precision of shooting at inanimate targets.

He said permissive gun laws increased the murder rate. For example, the United States had a homicide rate several times that of comparable but less heavily-armed countries.

Although violence was an unavoidable part of human nature, guns increased the likelihood of it having serious consequences.

"Guns are important because they make violence more violent," he said.

"Unless one is very expert, it takes a while to kill someone with one's

bare hands — there may be time for a second thought — but with a firearm, intention becomes achievement in the blink of an eye."

Also, he said, the armed victim produced a more deadly attacker.

"If professional criminals believe that potential victims are likely to be armed, then they equip themselves with better weapons and are prepared to shoot first," he said.

Dr Ellard did not expect his views

to win widespread support, as suggestions to limit gun ownership always provoked an outcry.

He could understand the opposition of gun and ammunition manufacturers who were motivated by profit.

"Less acceptable are the protests of those who call themselves sportsmen, the sport being to derive pleasure from inflicting injury, suffering and death upon the members of other species," he said.

Daily News January 11, 1990

CALM red-faced over seminar

NEWS that a Conservation and Land Management Department research seminar was called "Why Ducks Don't Mind Being Shot" has left the department red-faced.

The title of the seminar was revealed yesterday by the Coalition Against Duck Shooting.

Top Victorian animal liberationist and anti-duck-shoot campaigner Laurie Levy said he was "dumb-founded" at a circular used to promote the November 3 seminar at the WA Wildlife Research Centre in Woodvale.

CALM Director of Nature Conservation Dr Barry Wilson confirmed the "unfortunate" title of the seminar yesterday.

"I agree it was an unfor-

tunate choice of title," he said.

A brief release with the circular promoting the seminar gave local duck survival rates ranging from 70 per cent for one species to less than 55 per cent for others.

"Data on shooting mortality of pacific black duck and grey teal will be presented that suggest compensation occurs in these species," it said.

"It will be argued that, in view of the historical bene-

fits for conservation of duck shooting, shooting should be seen as an activity that helps maintain population numbers."

Mr Levy described the conclusion as "totally ridiculous".

Daily News January 11, 1990

Fishing for excuses

I REFER to the duck shooting issue.

To the people who argue fishing is no better, I say there is no other food to substitute for seafood.

There is plenty by way of meat — we kill cows, sheep, hens, rabbits, kangaroos and pigs, so why ducks?

And for those who say culling is necessary because of decreasing wetlands and the birds fouling farmers' lakes, whose fault is that? Humans — get rid of the humans who encroach on wetlands.

One shooter was heard to say his children who accompanied him enjoyed it.

Poor fool. They knew no better, but had they been given a cute chick or duckling to rear, I feel sure his attitude to ducks would be abhorrent to them now. — M. Gordon, Queens Park.

"The West Australian" January 11, 1990.

Out of the Dark Age with a gun

HERE we go again. Once more we have the grotesque exhibition of the gun lobby unctuously protesting its "basic" right to slaughter thousands of harmless creatures for amusement which they outrageously call "sport".

All blood "sports" are an anachronism from more primitive eras when witless destruction and trophy hunting were demonstrations of man's supposed divinely-endowed superiority over "God-bequeathed" natural resources!

This fatuous "harvesting" is a barbaric anathema to civilised men.

Males with guns (the symbolism is crudely conspicuous) like to fantasise that they emulate former leisured classes who epitomised male deep-seated impulses for adventure.

In the Dark Age's hunting stage, this was more easily gratified than it has been since. With the development of agriculture, life began to grow dull, except for the aristocrats and the mentally idle who remained, and still remain, firmly quagmired in the hunting stage.

Some hundred years ago, Oscar Wilde hit the nail plumb on the head when he described

fox hunters as "the unspeakable in pursuit of the uncatchable".

I believe modern blood sport advocates to be worse because they have remained just as determinedly bestial and primitive ever since.

There are some extreme fanatics who would like to catapult the duck shooters into the air and take sporting potshots at them with their own weapons!

I, of course, would condemn this as being equally barbaric; but I would not be much inclined to interrupt them. — JOHN P. TOOHEY, Como.

WATERBIRD CONSERVATION GROUP INC.

TOTAL OF WATERBIRDS AFFECTED I.E. DEAD IN FIELD, DIED IN CARE, RELEASED.

WETLANDS	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
ABERDEEN ST. INTERCHANGE	-	-	-	32	-	-
BAYSWATER BIRD RESERVE	-	-	-	-	1	-
BIBRA LAKE	-	4	34	16	262	31
BICKLEY RESERVOIR	-	-	-	-	1	-
BLUE GUM LAKE	-	-	-	-	1	5
LAKE CLAREMONT	-	-	-	-	19	-
COODE ST, MORLEY	-	-	-	-	38	-
DOGS SWAMP	-	-	-	-	19	15
FLOREAT SEWERAGE OUTLET	-	-	7	-	-	-
FORRESTDAL E LAKE	268	10	34	2	23	-
HERDSMAN LAKE	-	-	-	2	3	7
HYDE PARK	-	-	-	14	-	1
JACKADDER LAKE	-	89	2	96	11	35
KEWDALE, ABERNETHY RD.	-	-	-	-	28**	-
MABEL TALBOT PARK	-	-	-	23	27	105
MARMION RESERVE, MELVILLE	26	-	-	11	31	2
MARY CARROLL PARK, GOSNELLS	N/A	163	-	1,024	205	715
LAKE MONGER	-	47	-	44	463	294
MCGILLVRAY ST, MORLEY	-	-	-	-	-	49
PERRY LAKES	-	-	-	-	128	88
QUEENS GARDENS	-	-	-	-	8	16
SOUTH PERTH, DOUGLAS ST.	-	-	-	-	-	92
THOMSONS LAKE	684	15	10	-	-	-
WANNEROO, ARITA ST, SUMP	-	17	-	-	-	-
CARINE LAKE						1
CNR MORLEY & ALEXANDER DVE						1
SHENTON PARK LAKE						1
GENERAL	-	58	64	78	78	224
TOTALS:	978	403	151	1,342	1,346	1,682

** ACCIDENT PETROL SPILL INTO ARTIFICIAL LAKE

PLEASE NOTE: THESE FIGURES ARE CONSERVATIVE AND ONLY REPRESENT BIRDS PHYSICALLY COLLECTED BY W.C.G. MEMBERS. MANY CARCASSES ARE NOT COLLECTED OR ARE REMOVED BY COUNCIL WORKERS.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE ASSISTANCE OF THE WA NATIVE BIRD HOSPITAL IN PROVIDING US WITH THEIR FIGURES.,