

A REPORT ON A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF
CHINOCUP RESERVES

by

H. Butler

unpublished report

DEPT. OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

- 1972 -

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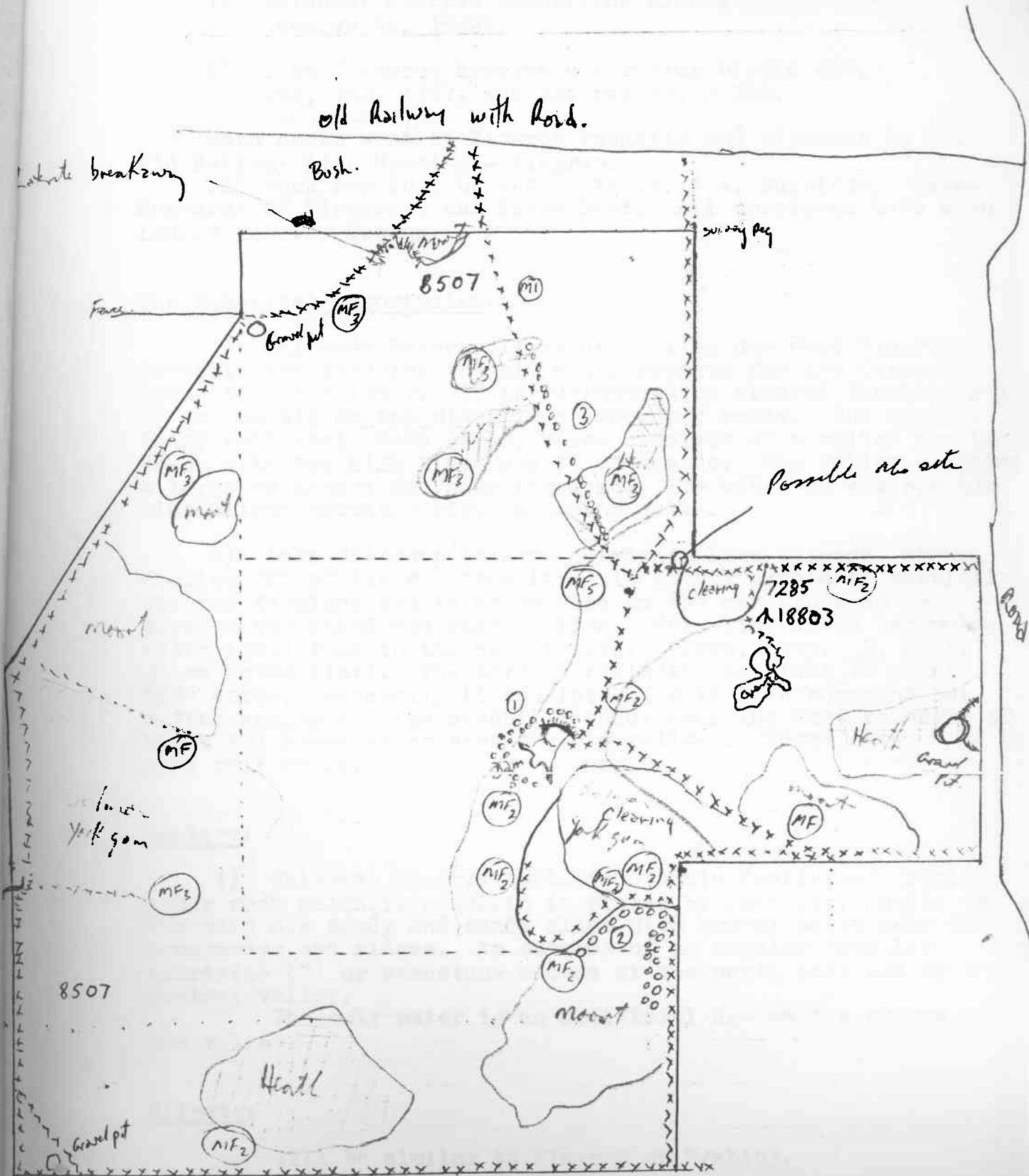
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CHINOCUP RESERVE

x x x Tracks.
 - - - block lines.
 o o o Trapslines.

MI Macropus irma
 IF Macropus fuliginosus

009447



A REPORT ON A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF
CHINOCUP RESERVES.

FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE

- 6 MAR 1980

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Introduction:

The reserves in question comprise two major areas -

- 1) Chinocup Reserve comprising blocks 8507, 7285, Reserve No. 18803.
- 2) Lake Chinocup Reserve comprising blocks 407, 992, 752, 1167, and Reserve No. 28395.

Both occur west of Pingrup Townsite and adjacent to the old Railway line Nyabing - Pingrup.

All work was done by authority Dr. A.A. Burbidge. Fauna Research of Fisheries and Fauna Dept. All specimens have been lodged in W.A. Museum.

The Reserves' Description:

1) Chinocup Reserve is about 7 miles due west Pingrup townsite and occupies the old water reserve for the Chinocup townsite and Railway. It is surrounded by cleared farmland and is accessible on two sides from secondary roads. The acreage is approximately 2420 acres, which consists of a valley running NE-SW with two high rises one to each side. The valley contains a large permanent dam near its head. The water is potable but mineralized probably with magnesium salts.

2) Lake Chinocup Reserve surrounds Lake Chinocup about 4 miles WNW of Pingrup townsite. It is surrounded by partially cleared farmland and is accessible on the western side or through the abandoned railway line. This line is to become a major local road in the near future. (Pers. Comm. D. Ball. Shire Councillor). The acreage excluding the Lake is about 5500 acres. Generally it consists of salt lake surround but a fine series of high sandhills occur near the west boundary of block 407 where it crosses the old railway. There appears to be only salt water.

Geology:

1) Chinocup Reserve contains a basic Kaolinised granite under rock which is overlaid in places by laterite. Soils in the main are sandy and sandy clays with gravel soils near the breakaways and ridges. An outcrop of an angular granular quartzite (?) or sandstone occurs at the north east end of the central valley.

The only water is an artificial dam on the centre of the valley.

Climate:

Will be similar to Pingrup or Nyabing.

Botany:

The botany is complex but seems to be controlled by soil factors and past fire areas. I recognised the following botanical areas as major units:

- 1) Granite shield and surround of pure Casurina campestris.
- 2) Mallee thickets of 3 - 4 species.
- 3) Moort thickets.
- 4) York Gum with Salmon Gum valleys.
- 5) Gravel heaths - usually high.
- 6) Sand heaths - including sandplains surrounding lakes.
- 7) Salt tolerant Melaleuca thickets on salt lakes.

Of course there are mixtures of these but generally overlaps and mixtures are at a minimum.

I recognised these botanical units as major habitat areas and traplines were arranged to cover all possibilities.

Human Alteration:

There appears to have been a farm property here prior to 1930.

Considerable post cutting has taken place in the stands of bigger timber (Habitat 4).

As part of dam construction considerable clearing of vegetation and drain lining has taken place in the immediate area of the dam. This has not regenerated to any great extent.

Local farmers use the area as a rubbish dump in particular the south west corner.

There are three gravel pits at least in the reserve.

There is some evidence of local waterfowl shooting on the dam and Kangaroo shooting in the reserve.

Perimeter Firebreaks have been made in the past but no longer appear to be maintained.

A.P.B. poisoning has taken place in the area.

Method of Survey:

The survey was carried out by my wife and myself from 11th to 17th Feb., 1972 (inclusive).

Traplines of various trap types were used in all habitats.

Mist nets were set.

Spotlighting from foot and vehicle carried out.

Foot and vehicle traverses were made at various times over all areas.

Mr. N. McKenzie and Mr. K. Morris of Fauna Research assisted during their stay.

An aerial examination was carried out at 500 ft.

1. Echidna Tachyglossus aculeatus. Tracks and diggings seen.
2. Dunnart Sminthopsis crassicaudata. Mr. A. Larter caught one of these animals near the dam 1970. I saw no traces.
3. Numbat Myrmecobius fasciatus. Mr. A. Larter records seeing them in the reserve about 15 years ago. I saw no evidence.
4. Possum Trichosurus vulpecula. They are frequent in the farmhouse area belonging to A. Larter. Old droppings were found in a hollow salmon gum by me. No recent traces. I sighted + collected identified by McKenzie + Youngson 7-15 Dec 1972
5. Grey Macropus fuliginosus. Frequent in reserve both areas. Many animals seen.
6. Brush Macropus irma. Infrequent in area. 3 sighted. Both areas
7. Tamar Macropus eugenii. Mr. A. Larter and Mr. F. Larter report 3 animals on the west side of the reserve. Last seen 3 years ago and presumed killed by dogs. No recent traces. - One sighted by N. McKenzie + F. R. Heffey 23/3/72
8. Chalinolobus gouldii. Frequent (Common) over water in December 1972 (McKenzie + Youngson) Infrequent over water, but collected at dusk.
9. Butesicus punilis. 2 seen in open woodland. McKenzie and Morris car collided one about 3 miles away. I collected by McKenzie + Youngson December 1972
10. Mus musculus. Not common but collected. Mostly in sandplain areas.
11. Pseudomys occidentalis. One collected. No other traces. Specimen taken. Very blue grey with bare tail. {Lake Chinacup floor pebbles only}
12. Cat Felis catus. Few on perimeter of both reserves. 2 seen edge of dam December 1972

Water Supply Dam

- | | | | |
|-----|--------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 13. | Dog | <u>Canis familiaris.</u> | Tracks seen in lake reserve. |
| 14. | Fox | <u>Vulpes vulpes.</u> | Few. Mainly perimeters. |
| 15. | Sheep | <u>Aries ovis.</u> | Flock running in eastern edge of lake reserve. |
| 16. | Rabbit | <u>Oryctolagus coniculus.</u> | Few. |

TRAPLINE AND RESULTS - CHINOCUP RESERVE.

	11 Feb	12	13	14	15	16	Total
site	Elliot	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/50
	Breakback	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/50
North Heath mallee		0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	1/10	1/50
		0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/50
Port Mallee		0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/50
		0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/50
at Block			0/10	0/10	1/10	0/10	1/40
			0/15	2/15	1/15	1/15	4/60
							6/400.
	Total trapnights		400				
	Total trap results		6	(3 <u>Mus</u>	1 <u>Pseudomys</u>	2 <u>Varanus.</u>)	
	Trapping percentage		1.5%				

Pseudomys occidentalis

The traps used: elliot's

190 trapnights
2 results.

Wooden Breakbacks

100 trapnights
3 results.

Steel Breakbacks

110 trapnights
1 result.

Tranline Descriptions.

1. Dansite. Surround of Dem.
Mallee Yorrel Eucalyptus gracilis,
dominant (25ft) with understory (4ft) of
Melaleuca (4 species) Callistemon speciosus
phoeniceus and a low red flowered Grevillea.
The ground is fairly open, coarse sandrains
in clay.
2. North Heath Mallee. South end of line is in Yorrel edge opening
into laterite plain covered with low
melaleuca Haeka Dryandra complex, average
height 12".
Half way along line it comes into Mallee
and Tamar scrub thicket very dense (25ft)
with sandy clay ground.
3. Moort Mallee. Mostly on fringe of moort-clearing. At
south end of line some mallee is inter-
spersed.
Soil sandy clay to laterite and quartzite
ridge.
4. Salt Block. Commencing on corner of 992 then east.
Mallee scrub tapering through to 8ft
Melaleuca thickets on salt edges.
White sand with some blue grey clay soils.

Results of the Survey - AVES. CHINOCUP RESERVE WEST AND EAST.

1. Little Grebe.
2. Pelican.
3. White-faced Heron.
4. Black Swan - downy young on salt reserve. about 2000 birds.
5. Mountain Duck.
6. Black Duck - feathered but non-flying young west dam.
7. Grey Teal.
8. Pink-eared Duck.
9. Waned Goose.
10. Goshawk.
11. Wedge-tail Eagle.
12. Brown Hawk.
13. Kestrel.
14. Mallee Powl - old mounds found. 1 bird seen.
15. Dusky Moorhen.
16. Coot.

17. Banded Plover -- young in paddock at S. edge of reserve.
18. Avocet.
19. Common Bronzewing.
20. Purple-crowned Lorikeet.
21. Galah.
22. Twentyeight.
23. Elegant Grass Parrot.
24. Boobook.
25. Frogmouth.
26. Spotted Nightjar.
27. Kookaburra.
28. Rainbow Bird.
29. Tree Martin.
30. Pipit.
31. Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike.
32. Scrub Robin.
33. White-browed Babbler.
34. Western Warbler.
35. Broad-tailed Hornbill.
36. Yellow-tailed Hornbill.
37. Spotted Scrub Wren.
38. Weebill.
39. Field Wren.
40. White-fronted Chat.
41. Wagtail.
42. Golden Whistler.
43. Black-capped Sittella.
44. Brown Honeyeater.
45. Singing Honeyeater.
46. Purple-gaped Honeyeater.
47. White-eared Honeyeater.
48. Brown-headed Honeyeater.
49. Tawny-crowned Honeyeater.
50. White-fronted Honeyeater.
51. Yellow-throated Miner.
52. Little Wattle Bird.
53. Magpie Lark.
54. Dusky Wood Swallow.
55. Squeaker.
56. Grey Butcher Bird.
57. Magpie.
58. Raven.
59. Little Falcon.
60. Western Rosella.

Generally birds were very scarce. Most of the Honeyeaters were seen on a flowering patch of mallee on north side of the reserve.

Results of the Survey - Herpetological

Reptiles were generally scarce, the only frequent or common species being Varanus gouldii rosenbergi.

Snakes

- 1) Demansia nuchalis one slough seen in granite area.

either D. nuchalis nuchalis
w/ D. nuchalis affinis

Gecko Lizards

- 2) Crenadactylus ocellatus
3) Phyllodactylus marmoratus

Legless Lizards

- 4) Delma sp one cast skin found.

Dragon Lizards

- 5) Amphibolurus maculatus

Skink Lizards

- 6) Tiliqua rugosa
7) Erernia nitida
8) Hemiergis peroni (?)
9) Lerista distinguenda (?)
10) Cryptoblepharus plagiocephalus
11) Morethia butleri (?)
12) Menetia greyii

Goanna Lizards

- 13) Varanus gouldii rosenbergi

Frogs

- 14) Hyla cyclorhynchus
15) Hyla sp (?)
16) Helicophorus sp (?)

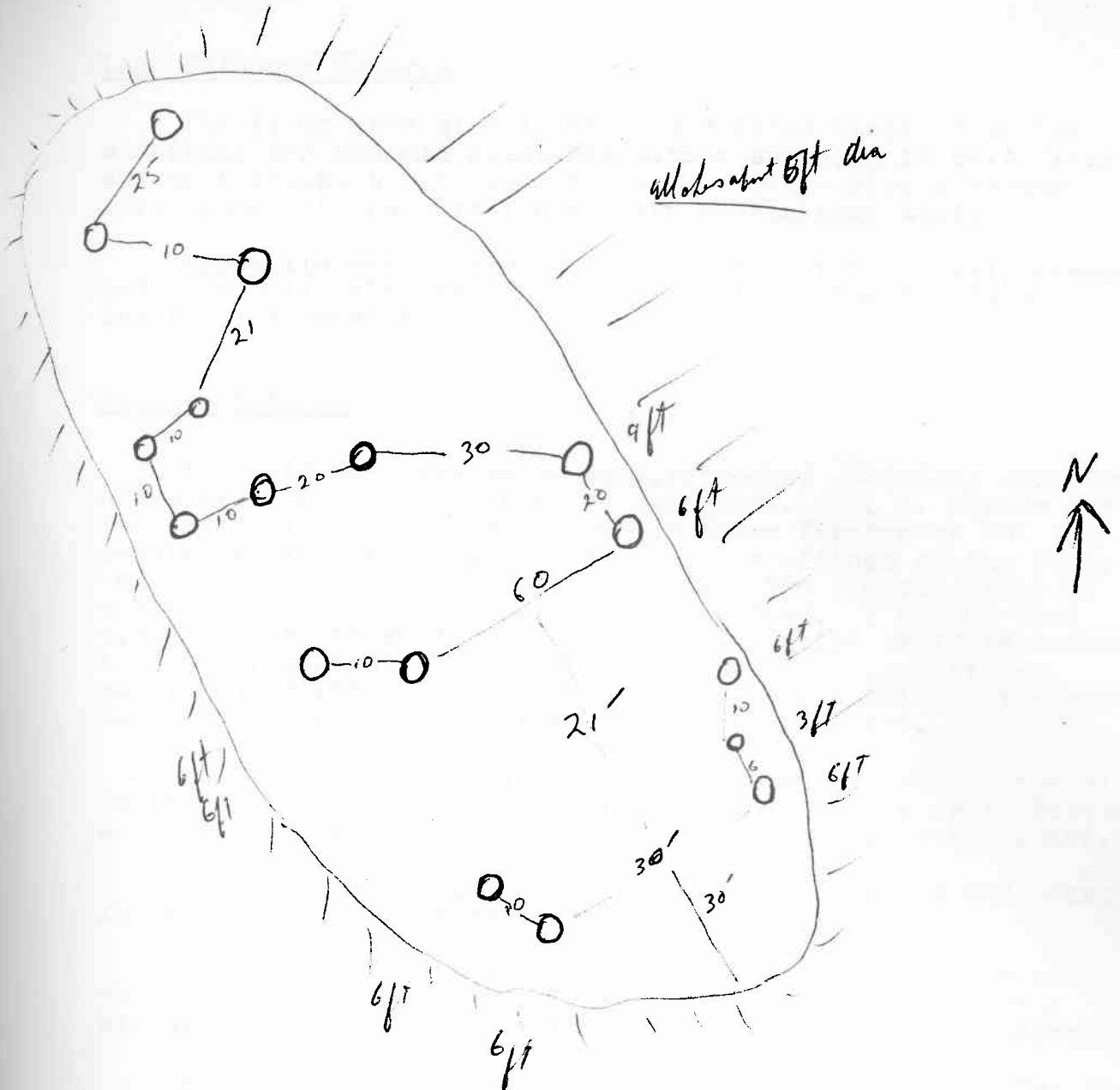
Molluscs

- 17) Two species both nov. sp.

Anthropological Results:

(?) Aboriginal Stone Arrangement - Chinocup Reserve.

Situation: On top of small quartzite hill in block 7285
where 8507 joins it with pipeline reserve access.



Description:

Heaps of even-sized granular quartzite
at random intervals over plateau.

A piece of grindstone was found also a
small struck flake.

78 yds



Probable

Rockhole area

36 yds

Rockhole granite

Discussion:

Chinocup Reserve

This reserve is made up of a large number of small habitats which are individually possibly too small to support a fauna with specialized needs. It is apparent that it has supported a specialized fauna (Tasmanian Numbat) until recently. There is room for speculation that the decline matches the clearing of the corridor block between this and the lake reserve.

Lake Chinocup Reserve:

The lower area of this is a good sized block of mallee sandplain and banksia sandplain with a surround of salt flats and salt tolerant melaleuca thickets. These blocks appear large enough to support faunas with specialized needs.

Currently both reserves are used to obtain gravel, timber, and game while also being used as rubbish dumps for farm rubbish and dead stock.

Recommendations:

1) Chinocup Reserve needs firebreaks. Existing ones are not useful being almost totally overgrown. Mr. A. Larter has indicated his willingness to put in these firebreaks but this should be discussed with him by a proper officer of the Dept. He has also offered to scarify and seed the cleared areas of the watercatchment to provide macropod feed. I concur that ploughing at intervals would materially assist reafforestation by natural vegetation. However I am strongly against any seeding or fertilizing as he proposes. Again this matter should be discussed by an authorized officer of the Dept.

Lake Chinocup Reserve has no breaks at all except the old railway. I understand (D. Ball) that this will shortly become a roadway. Further firebreaks based on this are recommended.

2) The rubbish dumps at south end of Chinocup and along railway at Lake Chinocup be discontinued.

3) That the Shire be formally requested to advise rate-payers that open season excludes reserves. I have already discussed this with councillors. (Ball, Badger, and Badger).

4) Arnold Larter seems to have a personal regard for the Chinocup reserve as well as a positive attitude to conservation. He may be a satisfactory Honorary Warden.

5) The sheep in the east end of Lake Chinocup Reserve be destroyed or removed.

6) Further work (i.e. survey) be done on the reserve especially the Lake reserve. My period of 6 days were too short at a very bad time of the year.

Feb. 1972

Thurs. 10th Ex Perth after vehicle trouble preventing start on Wednesday. 0930 start to Jitarning to examine Dalgyte possible. Burrows and tracks look valid.
Daily Mileage 200.

Friday 11th Ex. Jitarning through Lake Grace to Chinocup. Camp at dam. Call on A. Larter, not home. Set 20 traps around Dam site. Examine some perimeter tracks.
Too windy spotlight.
Collected 1 Varanus gouldii rosenbergii in moort.
Daily Mileage 123.

Sat. 12th Further vehicle traverses of area on all tracks. Set 40 more traps. 20 in heath mallee, 20 in moort mallee. 1st line negative.
Collected Amphibolurus maculatus
Hemiergis peroni
Big rubbish dump at SW corner of reserve. (?) Absolutely negative as far as vertebrate life. Set mist net over arm of dam. Too windy.
Daily Mileage 47.

Sun. 13th Foot traverses in moort and mallee - negative. Pick up skulls - Macropus irna and Macropus fuliginosus.
Dead fox, dead cat, dead sheep.
Vehicle traverse over salt lake area when 25 traps set. All lines so far nil.
Collected 2 Chalinolobus gouldii dusk shooting
1 Lerista distinguenda (?)
All life very scarce in area.
Daily Mileage 43.

Mon. 14th Traps nil. Rebaited. Mist net down due to winds. Shot 1 Chalinolobus gouldii at dusk.
Collected Uroecia greyii
Scorpius nitida
More skulls Macropus fuliginosus
Flew over all three reserves. Spotlight at night.
Daily Mileage 66.

Tues. 15th Traps 1 Mus musculus (male) sandplain mallee salt lake track.
1 Varanus gouldii rosenbergii sandplain mallee Salt lake track.
Collected
2 Mus musculus in gravel laterite on east side of reserve under rubbish at edge of main road.
6 Phyllodactylus marmoratus sandplain rubble in dead timber on ground.
1 Scorpion
Found probable aboriginal stone arrangement (see separate sketch). Old possum Trichosurus droppings in hollow log.
Daily Mileage 58.

*Pseudomys
accidentalis*

Weds. 16th.

Traps 1 Notomys mitchelli (?) male, grey animal, white belly. No tail tuft. White tail with black skin $\frac{2}{3}$ upper fore surface. No sternal or gular. Teeth orange not grooved.
HB 103mm TV 123mm
HF 27mm Ear 20mm
FFA 21mm

Wooden Breakback, universal bait with beetle. White sand. Mallee dominant, prickly grevillia ground cover.

1 Mus musculus, male, Elliott salt flat edge, melaleuca thicket.

N. McKenzie and K. Morris arrived last night. Pulled one trapline around dam. Will pull others tomorrow and move to next area of survey.

Collected

- Cryptoblepharus plagiocephalus
- Menetia greyii
- Hyla cyclorhynchus
- Hyla (?) sp.
- Helicoborus sp (?)

Spotlight run.

Daily Mileage 88.

Thurs. 17th.

Traps 1 Mus musculus, male, (B) Open dryandra heath, gravel soil. 15" cover.

1 Varanus gouldii rosenbergii, (B), mallee sandplain.

Starter motor burnt out.

Went to Katanning, and retraced, then moved camp to Cairlocup Reserve.

Daily Mileage 210.

Spotlight Traverse. 12th.

0.0	Ex Camp	SE to Corner fork	20.20
1.0	Corner	2 Grey 'Roos	Turn South
1.2	Corner	2 Grey 'Roos	Turn West
1.4	2 Grey 'Roos		
2.4	Frogmouth		
3.9	Turn back.		
6.8	Corner.	to east.	
8.1	Main Rd.	Turn back.	
8.5	Fork.	Rt taken.	
9.7	Camp.	2120	

Very strong East wind.

Spotlight Traverse. 14th.

0.0	Ex camp.	2055	Strong E wind. South
0.5	3 greys	clear ground	
3.2	Frogmouth.		
3.6	Gate.		
4.2	2 greys	fence, turn around.	
5.0	Gate.		
5.3	Frogmouth		
5.6	SW corner Reserve.	Turn East.	
7.2	SE corner reserve.	Turn North.	
7.5	Frogmouth.	Caught and released.	
7.8	Clearing.	Turn West.	
8.1	6 greys.		
9.0	Camp road		
9.1	Frogmouth		
9.4	Camp.	2130	

Spotlight Traverse. 15th.

- 0.0 2000 hrs. Ex camp. East. Very windy.
- 0.6 Grey.
- 1.6 Main Rd. Turn North.
- 3.4 Chinocup townsite. Turn East. South of old Railway.
- 4.6 Cross Railway to North track. Turn West.
- 5.7 Main track. Turn South.
- 6.8 NE Reserve corner. Turn West.
- 7.0 2 rabbits. Shot.
- 7.1 2 rabbits.
- 7.2 2 rabbits shot.
- 7.6 Abo hill. Leave fence. Turn south.
- 8.0 Camp, turn left.
- 8.3 Turn Right on clearing.
- 8.5 Fence
- 8.6 Hoort thicket fence, turn left.
- 8.8 3 Greys
- 10.5 Hoort thicket, turn right. (West).
- 10.4 Fence Corner.
- 10.9 Camp. 2130 hrs.

Chinocup Account:

7 days @ \$25 per day	\$175.00
840 miles (less 100) 740 miles @ 13c.	\$ 96.20
plus 8 days field allowance.	

HERPTILES COLLECTED BY W.H. BUTLER
CAHINO CUP RESERVE 11-17 FEB. 1972

LIMNODYNASTES DORSALIS (1)
LITORIA CYCLORHYNCHA (1)
(?) HELEIOPORUS sp (numerous) - not kept.
PHYLLODACTYLUS MARMORATUS (7)
CRENODACTYLUS OCELLATUS (6)
AMPHIBOLURUS MACULATUS GRISEUS (2)
EGERNIA NITIDA (1)
HEMERGIS INITIALIS (11)
CRYPTOBLEPHARUS PLAGIOCEPHALUS (1)
VENETIA GREYI (2)
VERISTA DISTINGUENDA (1)
DRETHIA OSCURA (5)
MORANUS GOULDI ROSENBERGI (2)

REGISTERED WAM R 41072 - 41,111