

PAPERBARK STRIPPING FROM *Melaleuca* Spp.

- (a) On March 30, Mr R H Gordon of Boddington wrote a letter of concern to the Director, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife about the effect of the stripping of paperbark from *Melaleuca* Spp. in particular in the Dwellingup/Boddington area.
- (b) Mr Gordon has been advised that the matter would be investigated by a Wildlife Officer who would call on him to arrange an onsite inspection of the damaged trees. It was pointed out that if the trees occurred on private property and the stripping was carried out with the owner's permission, it would be difficult to restrict the activity as it could be argued that paperbark stripping is a responsible use of a private source.
- (c) Mr Gordon replied on June 12, 1981, listing areas where stripping had taken place. He was however, unsure as to the status of the land concerned, but felt it could be a reserve (riverbed).
- (d) Investigations are currently being carried out by departmental officers.
- (e) Paperbark stripping has been carried out under licenses to take flora for commercial purposes. There is no specific restriction on taking paperbark.
- (f) The above enquiry raises the need to consider the commercialization of paperbark from Crown lands.

The following points may need to be discussed:-

- (i) Should there be restrictions on the taking of paperbark?
- (ii) Should paperbark as a trade item be considered to be forest produce.

LETTER FROM R.H. GORDON M.INST. AIMA, ENGINEERING SURVEYOR,
BODDINGTON, W.A.

The Director
Fisheries and Wildlife Department
108 Adelaide Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Sir

Concern is being expressed by farmers and other citizens about the practice of allowing people to cut strips off paper-bark trees, apparently in pursuit of material to make either useless ornaments or for the convenience of plant nurseries.

It does not seem to be realised the irreversible damage this practice can do to growth along river banks if it is allowed to proliferate, as it clearly is being allowed to do.

We have enough trouble in the bush holding the ecology together without urban types being handed licenses to come down and cut it up.

I would welcome your views on this matter, and in particular, some sort of assurance that before any more licenses are issued, a complete and proper review of the situation will be considered. From the farmer's point of view, it simply encourages people to mess around in places where they are a nuisance, and where they would not otherwise penetrate.

From the point of view of the environment, any such wholesale attack encouraged by a Department supposedly engaged in defending it, could be disastrous.

Yours sincerely

R H GORDON

March 30, 1981