

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND FAUNA

108 Adelaide Terrace,
Perth. W.A.

The Honourable A.W. Bickerton, M.L.A.,
Minister for Fisheries and Fauna

Sir,

In accordance with the requirements of Sub-section (5) of Section 7 of the Fauna Conservation Act, I have pleasure in submitting to you my report on the proceedings and work of the Western Australian Wild Life Authority for the period ending June 30, 1971, together with comments relating to the administration of this Act.

B.K. Bowen

(B.K. Bowen)
CHAIRMAN

Western Australian Wild Life Authority

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DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND FAUNA
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WILD LIFE AUTHORITY

1. MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP

A. THE AUTHORITY

Meetings

During 1970/71 the Authority met on four occasions; in the previous year five meetings were held.

<u>Membership</u>	<u>No. of Meetings</u>	
	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1969/70</u>
<u>Ex Officio members</u>		
Director of Fisheries and Fauna, Mr. B.K. Bowen - Chairman	4	3
Chief Warden of Fauna, Mr. H.B. Shugg - Deputy Chairman	3	5
Conservator of Forests, Mr. W.R. Wallace	2	4
Mr. D.W.R. Stewart (Deputy) Chief Vermin Control Officer,	(2)	(1)
Mr. A.R. Tomlinson	4	4

Appointed Members

Mr. R.D. Royce - botanist, Government Herbarium	3	4
Professor A.R. Main - zoologist, University of W.A.	4	4
Dr. D.L. Serventy - zoologist	4	4
Dr. W.D.L. Ride - Director, W.A. Museum	1	3
Mr. N.A. Beeck - farmer	4	5
Mr. H.G. Hall - farmer	4	5
Mr. A.H. Robinson - farmer	3	4

The above members were re-appointed for a further three years from June 1, 1971. In their inaugural term of membership all had shown dedication to their appointment and made outstanding contributions to fauna conservation in Western Australia.

B. STANDING COMMITTEES

From its members the Authority appointed standing committees on which a number of co-opted members kindly agreed to serve.

(1) Reserves Committee

As in the previous year this committee held five meetings during 1970/71.

<u>Membership</u>	<u>No. of Meetings</u>	
	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1969/70</u>
Mr. B.K. Bowen, Director of Fisheries and Fauna - Chairman	5	4
Mr. H.B. Shugg, Chief Warden of Fauna - Deputy Chairman	4	5
Mr. A.J. Mearns, Executive Officer	4	-
Mr. D.W. Arnold, acting Executive Officer	1	1
Mr. W.R. Wallace, Conservator of Forests	2	4
Deputy - Mr. D.W.R. Stewart	2	1

Mr. R.D. Royce, botanist, Government Herbarium	5	5
Professor A.R. Main, zoologist, University of W.A.	3	4
Mr. N.A. Beeck, farmer	5	5
Mr. A.H. Robinson, farmer	3	4
Mr. J. Bannister, Deputy Director, W.A. Museum	3	5
Dr. A.A. Burbidge, Reserve Management Section	4	5
Dr. T.L. Riggert, Waterfowl Research Section	4	2

(2) Game Committee

This Committee met three times in 1970/71, but only once in 1969/70.

<u>Membership</u>	<u>No. of Meetings</u>	
	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1969/70</u>
Mr. B.K. Bowen, Director of Fisheries and Fauna, Chairman	3	1
Mr. H.B. Shugg, Chief Warden of Fauna	2	1
Professor A.R. Main, zoologist, University of W.A.	2	1
Dr. D.L. Serventy, zoologist	3	-
Mr. H.G. Hall, farmer	3	1
Mr. N.A. Beeck, farmer	3	1
Mr. A.H. Robinson, farmer	1	1
Dr. T.L. Riggert, Senior Research Officer, Waterfowl	3	1
Mr. A.J. Mearns, Acting Chief Warden of Fauna	2	-
Mr. D.W. Arnold, Acting executive officer	2	-

(3) Bird Committee

The inaugural meeting of this committee was held in January 1971, and three meetings were held up to June 30, 1971.

<u>Membership</u>	<u>No. of Meetings</u>	
	<u>1970/71</u>	
Mr. H.B. Shugg, Chief Warden of Fauna - Chairman	2	
Mr. A.J. Mearns, Chief executive Officer	3	
Dr. D.L. Serventy, zoologist	3	
Mr. A.H. Robinson, farmer	3	
Dr. S.J.J.F. Davies, O.I.C., Division of Wildlife Research, C.S.I.R.O.	2	
Mr. T. Spence, Director, South Perth Zoological Gardens	2	
Dr. T.L. Riggert, Senior Research Officer, Waterfowl	3	
Mr. S.W. Bowler, Supervising Warden	3	

(4) Secretariat

During the period under report the following officers performed secretarial functions to the Authority and its various standing committee:

Messrs. K.J. Ammerer, D.W. Arnold, E. Dell,
A.C. Edwards and R.K. Grose.

C. ORD NOAH COMMITTEE

<u>Membership</u>	<u>No. of Meetings</u> <u>1970/71</u>
Mr. H.B. Shugg - Chief Warden of Fauna, Chairman	2
Mr. N.A. Beeck - farmer)Joint Field	2
Mr. H.G. Hall - farmer)Directors	2
Dr. D.L. Serventy - zoologist	1
Mr. J.L. Bannister - Deputy Director, W.A. Museum	2

D. VISITS

Members of the Authority visited many important fauna areas and held on site discussions. Major visits made were to:

(a) The Ord River

In November 1970, the Ord Noah Committee visited the dam site area to initiate plans to rescue fauna whose habitat would be destroyed by floodwaters in the catchment area.

(b) Thompson Lake and Jandakot Lake Reserves

In February 1971, the Reserves Committee inspected the effects of increased activity in these reserves caused by the urban development of surrounding areas.

(c) Shark Bay

In April 1971, six members of the Authority visited Shark Bay to determine the effect of industrial development on known breeding colonies of sea birds. Particular attention was given to the status of the white phase group of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters whose breeding site on Slope Island had been considerably reduced by the activities of a salt company. It was shown that although the Wedge-tailed Shearwater had shown extreme tenacity in holding on to ancestral breeding grounds, they were greatly reduced in numbers.

2. RESERVES (Sanctuaries)

A Sanctuary is defined in the Fauna Conservation Act as an area of land "vested in the Crown and which the Governor, subject to such conditions and limitations as he thinks fit, reserves to Her Majesty or disposes of in such a manner as for the public interest may seem fit for the conservation of fauna . . ."

A. Number of Sanctuaries

<u>June 30</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Vested in Authority</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>
1969	278	127	4,254,481
1970	320	135	4,384,448
1971	363	204	12,251,948

B. (1) Classification of Sanctuaries (by vesting) 30.6.71

	<u>Number</u>	<u><1,000ac</u>	<u>1,000-9,999ac</u>	<u>10,000-99,999ac</u>	<u>>100,000ac</u>
'A' Class-vested in W.A.W.L.A.	51	8,608	53,977	50,110	7,463,078
'A' Class-vested in Shires	3	1,033	-	-	-
'A' Class-vested in other bodies	5	2,067	-	-	-
'A' Class - not vested	11	2,220	16,842	50,000	-
'C' Class-vested in W.A.W.L.A.	153	30,656	122,048	107,028	1,565,000
'C' Class-vested in Shires	10	1,666	-	-	-
'C' Class-vested in other bodies	39	6,590	36,104	-	-
'C' Class-not vested	91	22,302	56,579	-	2,656,040
TOTALS	363	75,142	285,550	207,138	11,684,118

(2) Classification of Sanctuaries (by acreage)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
<1000 acres	251	75,142
1,000-9,999 acres	90	285,550
10,000-99,999 acres	8	207,138
>100,000 acres	9	11,684,118
Unsurveyed	5	-
TOTAL ACREAGE	363	12,251,948

C. Sanctuaries Reclassified (under Section 12A)

The Authority recommended and the Minister subsequently approved the following classifications:

(1) Prohibited Areas

Dorre Island (Reserve No. A24869)

Nangeen Hill Reserve (No.23187)

Two Peoples Bay, north-east corner (Reserve No. A27956)

- (2) Limited Access Areas
Bernier Island (Reserve A24869)
Twin Swamp Reserve (No.27621)
Two Peoples Bay, south-east corner (Reserve
A27956)
- (3) Unlimited Access Areas
Ellen Brook Reserve (No.27620)
Two Peoples Bay, balance of reserve (Reserve
No. A27956)

D. Management Programmes

The Authority prepared management programmes for the following sanctuaries:

Bernier and Dorre Islands - Reserve A24869
Nanger Hill - Reserve 23187
Ellen Brook - Reserve 27620
Twin Swamps - Reserve 27621
Two Peoples Bay - Reserve 27956

E. Sanctuaries Relinquished

(1) Reserve No.28462 (Gingin)

The Authority recommended that the purpose of this reserve be changed to National Park and that it should be vested in the National Parks Board of Western Australia.

(2) Reserve No.23262 (Tarmin)

The Authority recommended that this reserve was no longer required as it was not suitable for the original purpose.

F. Reserves Purchased

(1) Wanjarri Station

Situated at Kathleen Valley, south of Wiluna, this reserve of approximately 131,000 acres was purchased from Mr. T. Moriarty. It is unlike any other reserve vested in the Authority in that it is rich in arid-zone fauna, particularly bird life; this is undoubtedly due to the presence of spinifex sand plains.

(2) Avon Location 6931

An area of approximately 160 acres was purchased from Mr. S.R. Stanes for inclusion in the Tutanning Reserve. The uncleared land contains good quality bush and good populations of Tammars and Woylies.

G. Land Donations

The Authority accepted the offer of Mr. A.C. Morton of Darlington to donate approximately 300 acres of virgin land 15 miles north-east of Kulin as a fauna sanctuary. Mr. Morton had maintained the block as a fauna reserve while he had actively farmed the surrounding property. At June 30, 1971, transfer and survey documents were still being finalised.

The Authority accepted the offer of Mrs. M.E. Brown of Nedlands to donate two separate parcels of virgin land totalling about 300 acres and situated approximately 4 miles north-west of Three Springs. At June 30, 1971, transfer and survey documents were still being finalised.

H. Wetland Reserves

The Authority recommended that as much as possible of Herdsman Lake be reserved for the conservation of fauna. The Lake is considered to have potential as a waterfowl conservation area because, if it contained water for most of the year, it would become a waterfowl sanctuary without parallel in any Australian capital city and would have considerable value for conservation, recreation, education and tourism.

Benger Swamp in the Harvey district is one of the most important refuges for waterfowl in the State. It contains rare species of waterfowl and other fauna, yet has been the scene of the biggest duck shoots in the south-west. The Authority considers that this swamp, which is on privately owned land, is prime wetland habitat that could be made into a wetland showpiece. The practicability of repurchasing part or all of the area was therefore investigated, and it was recommended that finance should be provided for this purchase.

I. Naming of Reserves

The Authority resolved that all fauna sanctuaries should be named. They should have a general title to indicate whether the reserve is a sanctuary or game reserve. Each reserve is to be given a specific geographical name unless it is to be named after a donor.

1. Wildlife Sanctuary - for all reserves where shooting is totally prohibited.
2. Game Reserve - where limited open shooting of game species is allowed.

All individual geographic names are referred to the Nomenclature Committee for approval and gazettal. A programme of naming the reserves will be continued until all reserves are named, and names will be displayed on signs erected on the reserves.

J. Private Road Through Fitzgerald River Reserve

A report was received that an access way had been constructed within the Fitzgerald River Reserve (No.24048) by a private firm for the purpose of transporting equipment. Previously the Authority had advised the Under-Secretary for Lands that it would not give permission for access through this reserve. An investigation of the report and a recommendation for action is to be made.

K. Mining on Sanctuaries

During the period under review, Professor A.R. Main, Professor of Zoology at the University of W.A. and member of the Authority, submitted three papers to the Committee of Enquiry into the Mining Act.

- Paper 1. Prospecting and mining on reserves.
2. Mining in relation to conservation.
3. Rehabilitation and restoration of land affected by mining activities.

The Authority was of the opinion that its objections to mining claims should be considered by the Department of Environmental Protection instead of being argued before a Warden's Court.

The policy followed was that adopted by the Department for objections to mining claims lodged on fauna

sanctuaries.

Policy

In view of the number of applications made for mineral leases on sanctuaries -

1. Objections will be lodged against all prospecting or mining on sanctuaries classified as prohibited areas or limited access areas pursuant to Section 12(A); these would include sanctuaries set aside to preserve environments in a primitive state - such as Lake Magenta Mallee Reserve and others which were limited in area or which contained relict populations of rare and threatened species - such as various offshore islands, the short-necked tortoise and noisy scrub bird reserves and the rock wallaby reserve in the wheatbelt.

2. Not to oppose prospecting on reserves of other categories and to negotiate necessary conditions before agreeing to mining operations.

3. Until alternative safeguards were available, to continue to object to mining **claims** on fauna sanctuaries in the Warden's Court.

Formal objections to mining claims on the following reserves were lodged for hearing before the Warden's Court -

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Vesting.</u>
Duladgin Rock	Water and Cons. of Flora and Fauna	Min. for Water Supplies
Lake Jandabup	Fauna	Min. for Fisheries and Fauna
Jiboarding	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Woody Lake	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Thompsons Lake	Drainage and Fauna and Research	WAWLA
Billyacatting Hill	Catchment area and Cons. of Flora and Fauna	Min. for Water Supplies, Sewerage and Drainage
Williams	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Veryuica Brook	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Mullet Lake	Fauna	WAWLA
Fitzgerald River	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Lake Barker	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Shoalwater Bay	Fauna	WAWLA
Lake Preston	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Lake Jandakot	Flora and Fauna and Recreation	WAWLA
Carnac Island	Flora and Fauna and Recreation	WAWLA
Barlee Range	Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Nullabor Cliffs	Preservation and study of flora and fauna; geological and anthropological features	WAWLA
Twin Lagoons	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Lake Logue	Flora and Fauna	NIL
L. Pallarup	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
One Mile Rock	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA

Queen Victoria Springs	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Pt. D'Entrecasteaux	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	NIL

Informal objections to mining claims on the following reserves were forwarded to the Minister for Mines -

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Vesting</u>
Ord River	Water and Cons. of Fauna	Min. for Works
Daladgin Rock	Water and Cons. of Flora and Fauna	Min. for Water Supplies
24 Mile Rock	Water and Cons. of Flora and Fauna	Min. for Works and Water Supply
Harvey	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Fitzgerald River	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Lake Jandakot	Flora and Fauna and Recreation	WAWLA
Barlee Range	Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Truslove	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA
Lake Barker	Flora and Fauna	NIL
Wanjarri Station	Cons. of Flora and Fauna	WAWLA

3. GAME MANAGEMENT

A. Classified Shooting and Hunting Seasons

It was found necessary to classify sanctuaries open to duck shooting as shooting and hunting areas under Section 12(A) of the Fauna Conservation Act. These classifications were published in the Government Gazette. It is intended that notices signifying the classification will be placed on all wetland sanctuaries.

B. Open Season - Ducks

For the first time in many years there was no open season on ducks in the Eucla and South-West Land Divisions for 1969/70. It was the Authority's opinion that -

- (1) Normal breeding of waterfowl had not occurred.
- (2) Waterfowl were concentrated on the few existing areas of surface water.
- (3) Further areas of surface water would be reduced during the summer.

The Waterfowl hunting season was declared in the Kimberley, North-West, and Eastern Land Divisions throughout the whole year. The dry conditions continued in 1970 and as a result the waterfowl population was depleted and there were few young birds.

An open season for 1970/71 was declared for the South West and Eucla Land Divisions for a period of 22 days from December 19, 1970. The daily bag limit was reduced from 15 to 8 birds, and the Freckled Duck, Blue-bellied Duck and Musk Duck were excluded from the schedule of bird species which could be taken. The season opened at 6.00 p.m. rather than 5.00 a.m. as in previous years and there was a common opening date for both land divisions. The period of the 1971 open season in the Kimberley, North West and Eastern Land Divisions was not curtailed. However, the following birds were ~~deleted~~ from the

schedule of species of wild duck which could be shot - Chestnut Teal, Freckled Duck, Blue-billed Duck, Musk Duck and Magpie Goose.

C. Open Season - Quail

The open season for the shooting of quail was made uniform throughout the State for a six month period commencing January 1.

Brown Quail was added to Stubble Quail in the schedule of quail which were permitted to be taken.

4. BIRDS

A. Destruction of Nesting Sites

The Authority expressed concern over the activities of nest robbers. Because there is a demand for parrots and cockatoos, bird dealers are prepared to accept nestlings and risk some of their stock dying. It is easier to take young birds from the nest before they can fly than it is to trap them.

The problem is two-fold; the captive nestlings die because they are not weaned and the nest robbers destroy traditional nesting sites in an endeavour to get young birds out of the holes. The lack of staff prevents constant inspection of nesting areas, but known aviaries are inspected for nestling birds. To reduce the problem, conditions disallowing the taking of nestlings are placed on bird trapper's licenses. In addition, export licenses are restricted in that unprotected white-tailed black cockatoos can be exported interstate only in June and July, which is just prior to the breeding season.

The protected Naretha Blue Bonnet is difficult to net undetected, therefore bird poachers rob the nests. While taking young birds they destroy nesting sites and ultimately this action will do more harm to populations than the taking of the young.

Allegations have been received that all known nests of the protected Major Mitchell Cockatoos in the main nesting area east of Perenjori are consistently robbed of nestlings and some nests are being destroyed.

Apart from nest robbers, the development of agricultural areas has caused birds to abandon their nesting sites.

B. Emu Management

An enquiry was commenced into reported problems existing between emu populations and primary producers in the high rainfall forest country of the South West. Prior to settlement emus were numerous in these areas, but with the development of cleared areas and possible winter food shortages, emus have been attracted to pasture lands.

The aim of the enquiry, which is continuing, is to establish a satisfactory management programme through which the property holder may protect his farm without the emu population being endangered. The enquiry is being made in three phases:

1. Meetings between departments concerned with the conservation and control of excess wildlife populations.
2. Investigation of problem areas in the field.

3. The hearing of submissions by interested organisations on the control of emu populations.

C. Emu Farming

Conditional approval was given to an application to farm and breed emus at Kalannie. The Agridulture Protection Board also imposed conditions on the fencing of emus because these birds are classed as vermin in that part of the State.

The major aim of the enterprise is to produce high quality leather from emu pelts. To ensure this quality, only farm-raised birds will be used, with the parent stock consisting of chicks obtained from the wild. Future by-products of the industry are meat for pet food, emu oil for cosmetics, and the remaining parts of the bird such as blood, bone, feathers and intestines can be made into feeding fertilizer of high protein content.

A feasibility study was undertaken by the Managing Director based on his experience of the ostrich industry in South Africa. It will be several years before the industry can be expected to be a viable proposition.

D. Bird Trading

For many years there has been a steady trade in birds. During 1970/71 there was a large demand from the Eastern States for Western Australian birds. Most finches trapped in the Kimberleys were sent to the Eastern States.

FINCHES TRAPPED IN KIMBERLEYS

<u>Type of Bird</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>
Double Bar	411	114
Zebra	3	146
Star	1300	1901
Blood	91	64
Emblema	29	4
Blackheart	3056	1468
Gouldian	1671	1305
Masked	682	295
Pictorella	772	300
Chestnut	160	-
Yellowtail	9	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8184	5597

There was a large demand for King Parrots, Regents (Smokers), Twenty-eights and Western Rosellas. Over 4,200 of various species of parrots and approximately 8,000 finches were exported interstate.

During the twelve months ending June 30, 1971, 29 bird dealer's licenses were issued compared with 21 in the previous twelve months. Twenty five bird trapper's licenses were issued (21 in 1969/70).

EXPORT (INTERSTATE) OF BIRDS UNDER LICENSE

<u>Species</u>	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>
Budgerigars	10	9
Cockatoos -		
White Tailed Black	45	54

Corellas -		
Long Billed		2
Short Billed	2	1
Cormorants -		
Black Faced		3
Little Pied		2
Cockatiels		2
Finches -		
Bloods	54	32
Chestnuts	47	8
Double Bars	109	30
Gouldian	1344	1856
Longtails	3484	3473
Masked	836	698
Pictorellas	700	656
Stars	1214	1297
Yellow Rumped	52	
Zebras	3	2
Galahs	11	6
Ibis -		
Straw Necked		4
Lorrikeets -		
Blue Mountain		2
Red Collared	2	4
Lovebirds -		
Peach Faced		4
Parrots -		
Bourkes	2	
Crimson Winged	2	
Golden Shouldered	2	
Hooded	2	
King (Western)	184	718
Mulgas	2	
Port Lincoln	2	
Scarlet Chested	2	
Smokers	85	384
Twenty Eights	1038	2585
Pheasants -		
Golden		2
Silver		2
Pigeons -		
Brush Bronzewind		4
Plovers -		
Spur Winged		4
Banded		3
Quail -		
King		8
Rosellas -		
Western	311	545
TOTAL	9545	12400

IMPORT OF BIRDS

<u>Species</u>	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>
Budgerigars	857	484
Canaries	89	146
Cockatiels (Weeros)	364	249

Cockatoo -		
Gang-gang	2	
Major Mitchell		5
Sulphur-crested	41	83
Corellas -		
Little	2	
Currasow -		
Razor Billed	2	
Doves -		
Diamond	15	29
Peaceful		8
Finches -		
Aurora		8
Blood	45	35
Blue-faced	8	2
Chestnut	131	287
Cordon Bleu		9
Cutthroat		4
Double-bar	253	242
Elegants	12	23
Emblema Picta	116	122
Gouldian	7	12
Manikin	2	47
Masked		25
Melba		4
Parson	38	43
Plumheaded	188	155
Ruddies		8
Saint Helena Waxbills	3	
Star	2	
Sydney Waxbills		398
Zebras	299	73
Firetails -		
Diamond	107	166
Galahs. -		
Pink and Grey	30	9
Gulls -		
Silver		1
Lorikeets. -		
Musk	2	9
Rainbow	4	8
Scaly Breasted	6	74
Ostriches -		
Chicks	2	
Lovebirds -		
Black faced Myassa	2	
Peach faced Myassa	3	4
Red faced Myassa	6	
Parrots -		
Blue Mountain	89	171
Blue Winged	3	2
Bourke	22	21
Crimson-winged	36	13
Elegant	4	10
Hooded	2	
Indian Ringneck	2	
Kakariki		7
King	20	17
Mallee Ringneck	20	46

Mulga	6	22
Oak (Blue Bonnet)	23	20
Orange-bellied	1	
Princess Alexandra	2	2
Red-rumped	34	44
Rock	5	
Scarlet-chested	6	41
Turquoise	8	9
Partridges--		
Chukor		2
Pheasants -		
Mallee	4	
Pigeons -		
Brown	10	
Spinifex		2
Wonga	4	
Quails -		
Brown		3
Button		2
King	132	209
Stubble		6
Rosellas -		
Adelaide	26	20
Crimson	61	194
Eastern	34	116
Murray	2	
Pale Headed	92	117
Tasmanian		6
Western		6

EXPORT OF BIRDS OVERSEAS

1970/71

<u>As family pets:</u>	<u>Number</u>
Budgerigars	6
Cockatoos -	
Major Mitchell	2
Sulphur-Crested	2
Coreellas -	
Little	7
Long billed	1
Finches -	
Blood	6
Emblema Picta	4
Star	4
Galahs	26
Twenty-eight parrots	2
Weeros	2
<u>For zoological purposes:</u>	
Emus	5
Finches -	
Painted	20
Red-eared firetail	20
Parrots -	
Naretha Blue Bonnet	20
Twenty-eight	20

5. KANGAROO MANAGEMENT/CONSERVATION

A. Grey Kangaroos

Agreement on the adoption of a Grey Kangaroo Management Programme was achieved through co-operative discussions with the Agriculture Protection Board, representatives of the Authority and the Department. Objectives of the programme are the long term survival of the Grey Kangaroo with recognition of the right of the primary producer to protect his property from damage. The programme established two divisions of land - one where grey kangaroos are abundant and secure, and the other where they are not abundant and are relatively insecure.

In areas where grey kangaroos are secure, property owners can destroy kangaroos on those parts of their property being actively farmed. Where kangaroos are not abundant a property inspection must be made by a fauna warden before shooting can commence; if damage is evident the warden will issue a damage license.

Throughout all areas, landowners wishing to sell the skins or carcasses of grey kangaroos, must first obtain a damage license and purchase royalty tags; no skin or carcass may be sold or transported unless a royalty tag is attached.

B. Red Kangaroos and Euros

A continuing enquiry showed that the rate of exploitation of the red kangaroo was increasing. Procedures were implemented therefore to exercise more control on shooting.

Under previous legislation commercial hunters of red kangaroos and euros did not require a license. On the recommendation of the Authority red kangaroos and euros were removed from the list of unprotected fauna by Ministerial notice, and a restricted open season was then declared on these species in most Shires within their range. Persons wishing to take red kangaroos and euros for commercial purposes had to obtain a license and royalty tags.

The Fauna Conservation Regulations (November 18, 1970) provided for the licensing of shooters, dealers and processors of kangaroos, and required royalty tags to be attached to all carcasses and skins taken for commercial purposes. On February 8, 1971, the system of control came into effect; applications for licenses had been called for from all persons engaged in the kangaroo industry, and the selected shooters were then licensed and given an annual "take rate" as follows -

(a) 43 shooters were allowed an annual take of 4,000 animals each.

(b) 8 shooters were allowed an annual take varying between 500 and 2,000 animals each. These shooters were selected from pastoralists who had been involved in the kangaroo industry as commercial shooters.

(c) 4 shooters were allowed an annual take of 1,500 or 2,000 animals each. These shooters were all pet shop owners who in the past had relied on their own shooting for supplies of pet food.

Royalty tags were also issued conditionally to pastoral leaseholders whose properties were being damaged

by kangaroos. These tags may be used on the property by an approved nominated shooter; this could include one of the above licensed professional shooters.

It was the intention that, in 1971, royalty tags would be issued to those commercial shooters entitled to take 4,000 animals per year, on the following basis -

- 1,500 issued on February 8
- 1,000 issued on May 8
- 1,500 to be issued on September 8.

6. GENERAL

The Western Australian Wildlife Authority is serviced by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna which controls all finance and staff. Many of the following items were the subject of discussion by Authority members on various departmental and inter-departmental committees and are directly related to the administration of the Fauna Conservation Act.

A. Smuggling

1. Birds

Continual reports of bird smuggling have been received. Because of the high market value of birds, illegal trappers are prepared to risk apprehension and being fined because the maximum fine often does not exceed the market value of one pair of birds. An example of such a species of bird is the Naretha Blue Bonnet which is restricted to an area of desert country east of Kalgoorlie; they have always been fully protected. These birds have been offered in the Eastern States at \$150 - \$200 per pair and one dealer advertised at \$300 per pair. Prices offered overseas are considerably higher - \$4,000 per pair has been reported.

Western Australia has large areas where illegal trappers can direct their operation on such bird species and transport their illegal fauna to the market area by road, air or sea.

There are also unsubstantiated reports that protected birds from relict populations are being trapped.

2. Crocodiles

Salt and freshwater crocodiles have been taken by illegal operators who plan to smuggle the skins into Queensland for sale. Arrests of Eastern States' shooters have been made and abandoned bags of skins confiscated. Detection is difficult because of the rugged and isolated nature of the areas where crocodile poaching takes place. The Police Force rendered valuable assistance in apprehending offenders, and the Authority and the Department are very appreciative of this assistance.

B. Private Wildlife Parks

In recent years there have been a number of applications for approval to establish private wildlife parks to display local fauna as a commercial enterprise and for tourist purposes.

Applicants have been encouraged by the success gained by similar enterprises in other states and overseas. The difficulties encountered by the public in seeing local fauna in its natural surroundings, the increasing awareness of the public in all matters of conservation, together with the traditional interest and enjoyment of viewing animals and birds, has indicated a need for this type of display. Each application is fully investigated.

Licensed premises are regularly inspected to ensure that the native fauna is well-treated and housed and that the licensee has complied with the license conditions

and the requirements of the Act and Regulations.
There are 11 licensed wildlife parks.

<u>Licensee</u>	<u>Address of Park</u>
E.B. Austla	Wyndham
Bullens African Lion Safari	Wanneroo
A. Chugg	Dunsborough via Busselton
Collie Game Sanctuary	Collie
E.F. Ganzer	Wagin
Manjimup Game Sanctuary	Manjimup
J. Murray	Mullewa
I. Offer	Benger
Parkerville Hotel	Parkerville
Wave Rock Tourist Development	Hyden
W.A. Marine Aquarium and Oceanarium	Cottesloe

C. Scientific Licenses

The Fauna Conservation Regulations provide that licenses may be issued to authorise the taking of fauna for scientific purposes.

In the year ending June 30, 1971, licenses were issued to 69 persons (1969/70 - 72 persons).

In general, the licenses were issued to persons carrying out specific projects for organisations such as Universities, Museums, Government Departments and the C.S.I.R.O. These projects are concerned both with research on the fauna itself and into diseases in man.

D. Amendments to the Act

In the light of new trends and recently discovered needs for the conservation of fauna, the Fauna Conservation Act was made more flexible and updated in 1969. These amendments were aimed at.

1. Enlarging the definition of "fauna".
2. Widening the purposes for which research may be undertaken.
3. Allowing the rationalised commercial cropping and sale of surplus kangaroos on sanctuaries.
4. Simplifying procedures for opening and closing seasons on fauna.
5. Allowing more flexible and effective controls over the kangaroo.
6. Expanding the authority of full time wardens and dealing with difficult field situations.
7. Giving more protection to sanctuaries.

It was these amendments that permitted the comprehensive regulations to be tabled in the following year.

In 1970 further amendments to the Act were passed. Extra protection can now be given to fauna which is rare and likely to become extinct, and it is now an offence for any person to have in his possession the skin or carcass of fauna which was unlawfully taken.

The function of the Chief Warden of Fauna has been separated from that of the Chief Executive Officer of the Western Australian Wild Life Authority. Due to expansion and growth it is administratively expedient for the authority to be held by the Chief Warden of Fauna, a highly classified officer in the person of the Administrative Officer of the Department. The duties of the Chief Executive Officer are carried out by the Assistant Administrative Officer who can be appointed to 19.

the Authority through the Public Service Board.

E. Regulations

A complete new set of Regulations under the Fauna Conservation Act 1950-1970 were published in the Government Gazette on November 18, 1970; these were laid on the table of the House during the last few days of the 1970 session. It is expected that the debate on the regulations will be held in the Legislative Council in July 1971. The draft regulations are comprehensive and cover most aspects of fauna conservation.

F. Finance

The costs of the administration of the Fauna Conservation Act were met from normal departmental funds and were not specifically segregated.

Below is a statement of receipts and payments of the Fauna Conservation Trust Fund, signed and certified by the Auditor General.

FAUNA CONSERVATION TRUST
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

1/7/70 to 30/6/71

RECEIPTS

PAYMENTS

Balance 1/7/70 \$ 44 . 70

INCL

Balance as at 30/6/71

44 . 70
\$44 . 70

44 . 70
\$44 . 70

R.J. Wilkinson
ACCOUNTANT.

B.K. Bowen
DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES

I certify this Statement is correct.

W. Adams
AUDITOR GENERAL.

G. Staff

1. Fauna Wardens

Since July 1969, eight fauna warden positions have been created - five district fauna wardens and three mobile wardens to police the kangaroo industry. The State has been divided into 14 districts and as finance becomes available staff are appointed to unmanned areas.

Appointments and Transfers -

- K.D. Morrison - transferred - Pingelly to Busselton.
- L.R. Moss - transferred - Carnarvon to Pingelly.
- J.E. Neal - appointed Carnarvon ex Fisheries inspection branch.
- R.F. Dear - transferred headquarters of his district from Wittenoom to Onslow.
- A. Pearce - transferred Albany to fisheries inspection branch.

At June 30, 1971 the following officers were stationed in the districts indicated. The two trainee Wardens, D. Mell and R. Gardiner were given the responsibility of relieving district officers. The additional wardens' positions were created to cope with the increased work and responsibilities associated with the Red and Grey Kangaroo Management Programmes:

- Perth - Senior Warden S.W. Bowler
Trainee Warden D. Mell
Trainee Warden R. Gardiner
- Albany - vacant
- Busselton - K.D. Morrison
- Carnarvon - J.E. Neal
- Esperance - vacant
- Geraldton - vacant
- Moora - patrols carried out by L.J. Silvester.
- Nilgarn - vacant
- Onslow - R.F. Dear
- Perth Metropolitan area - A.R. Marshall
- Pingelly - L.R. Moss
- Waroona - patrols carried out by Messrs. Morrison and Moss
- Wongan Hills - L.J. Silvester
- Wyndham - G.J. Hanley.

2. Fauna Research

A graduate from Monash University, Mr. N.L. McKenzie, B.Sc., Hons., joined the fauna research branch as reserves acquisitions officer.

A technical officer, Mr. S. McWhirter was appointed to assist in macropod research; he replaced Mr. D. Munro who transferred to the Waterfowl research section.

Mr. W.A. Gibb was appointed as a Technical Assistant, waterfowl research section.

Mr. R.J. Grayson was appointed as a technical assistant to carry out duties in the Two Peoples Bay Reserve.

3. Head Office

The Chief Warden of Fauna, Mr. H.B. Shugg is assisted in fauna matters by the Assistant Administrative Officer, Mr. A.J. Mearns. A Senior Clerk and a Licensing Officer are fully employed on fauna work, and the whole of the fauna aspect of the Department's work is serviced by

normal clerical and administrative back-up at all levels. The increased awareness of the public of the need for conservation and their demands that positive action should be taken in the preservation of fauna populations and wildlife sanctuaries, have overloaded the staff at Head Office.

H. Accommodation

Accommodation continues to be inadequate and generally unsuitable. This situation has arisen due to the rapid expansion of the Department and the specialised needs of the Fauna Research Staff.

Head Office is located at 108 Adelaide Terrace; the Waterfowl Research Branch at Ellam Street, South Perth; the Reserve Management and Acquisition Branch and the Macropod Research Branch in temporary premises at 266 Hay Street East; and the Fauna Wardens at 233 Adelaide Terrace.

It is anticipated that a research station to accommodate all sections of fauna research will be built near Lake Joondalup at Wanneroo. Approximately 100 acres of land have been acquired for this purpose and funds have been made available for the preparation of building plans.

Additional space has been made available at 108 Adelaide Terrace and after extensive renovations to this building the Senior Warden and the Metropolitan Wardens will move from 233 Adelaide Terrace to Head Office.

I. Enforcement

(1) Prosecutions

Despite their training and dedication to duty Wardens find it difficult to detect offences against the Act, due principally to the size of their districts. Once an offence has been detected, it is not always a simple matter to bring forward sufficient evidence to sustain a prosecution. However, in addition to the convictions listed below, wardens have, in the past year, interviewed many other probable offenders, issued warnings and explained the requirements of the Act and Regulations.

In their work, Departmental officers have received valuable assistance from Honorary Wardens who are able to exert considerable pressure locally on friends and neighbours; instilling in them the need to respect the protection afforded to our wildlife. These Honorary Wardens perform a most worthwhile task in this respect, and many of the convictions recorded were the result of information and co-operation from Honorary Wardens and other responsible members of the public. Details of convictions recorded were as follows -

1.7.69 - 30.6.70

Section of Act or Regulation	Number Convicted	Result		Amount \$
		Cautions	Fine	
16	22	-	22	1005.00
17(3)c	1	-	1	10.00
Reg. 7	1	-	1	9.40
TOTAL	24	Nil	24	1024.40

Section of Act or Regulation	Number Convicted	Result		Amount \$
		Caution	Fine	
16	31		31	730
17.2.E	5		5	135
14	1		1	25
17B(2)(A)	1		1	10
17(3)	4	2	2	30
25(1)(D)	2		2	20
25(1)A	1		1	25
Reg. 30	1		1	10
Reg. 44(1)	1	1		
Reg. 54(b)	1		1	50
Reg. 54(2)	2	1	1	10
TOTAL	50	4	46	1045

(2) Property Inspections

The Fauna Conservation Regulations provide for the issue of licenses to destroy fauna causing damage to property. Damage licenses can only be issued after an inspection by a departmental fauna warden, and because of the distances that must be travelled within rural communities, inordinately long delays occur in the issue of licenses. This has caused the Department some embarrassment.

Some Shire Councils have requested the appointment of additional wardens to attend to the needs of their particular area, and consideration must be given to these demands. Property inspection has become a major part of a fauna warden's duties, regrettably to the detriment of other important aspects of fauna conservation.

(3) Rubbish Dumped on Sanctuaries

Sanctuaries in the vicinity of development areas are becoming a dumping ground for refuse in the form of car bodies, building materials and household rubbish. In many cases offenders have been sought out, warned, and made to remove the offending material. Some offenders have been prosecuted under local government by-laws. Because of the number of occurrences of this breach, consideration must be given to the prosecution of offenders under the Fauna Conservation Act which provides for a maximum penalty of \$100.

(4) Problems of Conservation in the Kimborley Area

For many years the Camballin area has been recognised as the most reliable fauna sanctuary in the harsh conditions which prevail in the general area of the Fitzroy River. It is the habitat of little corellas, brolgas, bustards, magpie geese, jabirus, teal, kites, hawks, red-tailed black cockatoos, finches and other bird species, agile wallabies and other small marsupials and a variety of reptiles.

The establishment of grain crops on this prime fauna habitat brought the developers and the resident fauna into conflict which to date is unresolved. Although the development has had an adverse effect on the fauna it is possible that there has been an increase in some populations; in particular the little corellas with a local population in tens of thousands. Fences around the crops have been used to keep out the animals, but

there is no such easy answer for the control of birds. Problems of conservation of rare birds occur with the developers attempting to reduce excess populations of little corellas. There is difficulty in applying controls to specific bird species and reports have been received that important birds such as the Magpie Geese, Jabirus and Broilgas have been victims.

A rational solution must be found if Western Australia is to conserve these colonies of birds. The need for an additional fauna warden to control the situation is apparent when one considers that the fauna warden stationed at Wyndham has to patrol this vast area of 170,000 square miles to investigate the activities of crocodile poachers, bird smugglers and illegal bird trappers. While he has had some outstanding successes, further development of the area presents greater opportunities for illegal activities to go undetected.

J. Publicity and Extension Work

Convergence of important matters relating to fauna and habitat preservation were released through the various news media.

Staff officers have been involved in both radio and television sessions outlining departmental policy and activities and discussing fauna conservation in general terms.

The Department's quarterly journal "S.W.A.N.S." (State Wildlife Advisory News Service) which has international distribution was well received.

The Duck Shooter's Guide was issued on request and publicised the conditions of the open season, the daily bag and wetland reserves which were open or closed to shooting.

Four reports on research projects were published -

- Inspection of Barrow Island - Professor A.R. Main and
Dr. A.A. Burbidge.
- Biological Survey of the Millstream Area - compiled by
Dr. A.A. Burbidge.
- Flora and Fauna of the Montebellos - Dr. A.A. Burbidge.
- Status of Crocodiles in Western Australia - Dr. H.R.
Bustard.

Details of other important research work were featured in the "S.W.A.N.S." journal.

The following popular brochures and leaflets were produced or re-issued -

Brochures

- Care of Young Kangaroos
- Treatment of Waterfowl - Algal Poisoning and
Botulism
- Import and Export of Fauna
- Western Australian Wildlife is Protected

Leaflets

- Dalgite
- Freckled Duck
- Bustard
- Magpie Goose

The Authority and the Department is deeply appreciative of the co-operation given by members of the news media.

K. Fauna Research

(1) Reserve Management

During this period a considerable amount of research time was wasted because staff had to work on the general problem of mining on reserves. A number of fauna surveys were carried out on reserves (which were not listed for current survey) in order to prepare evidence for Warden's Court hearing or submissions to the Mines Department. Because of this, research into reserve management was seriously curtailed. The problem of fauna survey work was overcome to some extent by the appointment of a professional officer for this work. However there is still far too much work in this area for the capacity of one officer.

Major surveys were carried out on the following areas:

Lake Barker Reserve, Fitzgerald River Reserve, Duladgin Rock Reserve, Muiron Islands, Dampier Archipelago, Monte Bellow Islands, Barrow Island. In addition arrangements were made with the W.A. Museum to carry out survey work on behalf of the Department with the Department meeting expenses. The Museum carried out surveys of Two Peoples Bay, Lake Magenta and Tarin Rock reserves and assisted with work on Lake Barker and Fitzgerald River. A survey of Crown Land in the wheatbelt was commenced.

Research on the Short-necked Tortoise continued and further firebreaks were constructed on the reserves. Firebreaks were also constructed on the following reserves: Boyagin, Two Peoples Bay, Thompson's Lake and Lake Magenta.

In January, 1971 a major research project into the effects of fire on the fauna of Dryandra State Forest was commenced. This was as a result of a request from the Forests Department. In addition to assisting the Forests Department prepare management plans for the area it is hoped that the research will also provide the basic information needed to manage many of the reserves in the South-west under the control of the W.A.W.L.A.

During July and August 1971 some staff will be attached to a mapping team of the Royal Australian Survey Corps which will be working on the Kimberley coastline between Kunmunya and Kalumburu. Staff will be able to visit a number of the islands in this area by helicopter and the information gained will provide the basis of a survey by boat planned for 1972. The Department is most grateful for the assistance of the R.A.S.C. and the Army in this matter.

(2) Macropods

The inquiry into the extent and effects of human activity in relation to the kangaroo population was continued. This work showed that the commercial exploitation was concentrated mainly on the red kangaroo and to a lesser extent on the grey kangaroo and euro.

The findings indicated that further control of the kangaroo industry was needed and the administrative procedures described previously were put into effect to institute controls on the commercial shooting effort.

A system to obtain hunting data relative to the continuing control and management of kangaroo populations was devised and implemented. There was a considerable involvement of research officers in this work on programming.

Monitoring of data on kangaroo populations which were being commercially exploited was commenced.

Data from a commercial hunting venture on the Nullabor Plain during the latter months of 1969 and early 1970 indicated that the grey kangaroo in this area was extremely vulnerable to over exploitation and early inspections of this area carried out in October and November 1970 showed that the distribution was restricted and population densities generally were low.

Aerial inspections of the Coolgardie - Kalgoorlie - Menzies and Wiluna area were made in April 1971. The survey showed that in that area the distribution of the red kangaroos was extremely scattered and populations mainly appeared to be low. The extreme drought conditions in this area were evident.

(3) Waterfowl Research and Game Management

The following list of research projects constitutes the work carried out by the Waterfowl Research Unit during the period 1969-71.

1. General waterfowl banding programme. This programme operates at Moora, Katanning and on the lakes found within the Metropolitan Area.
2. Aerial surveys for evaluating wetland areas and waterfowl populations.
3. The erection of artificial nesting boxes for waterfowl production (an artificial propagation study).
4. A study of the biology of the Mountain Duck (Tadorna tadornoides) on Rottnest Island.
5. A study to evaluate shooting pressures on a population of waterfowl at Moora, Western Australia.

Explanation of Projects

The waterfowl banding programme commenced in October 1967 and to date approximately 11,000 birds have been banded and released. This project is mainly concerned with a species of duck known as the Black Duck (Anas superciliosa) which is the most pursued and highly prized species of waterfowl taken in the annual duck hunting season.

Aerial surveys which commenced operating in 1968 for estimating waterfowl populations and evaluating wetland habitat have, because of their success, now been modified to a series of annual surveys. These surveys not only supply the research unit with the most current information available but also supply the Western Australian Wild Life Authority with information on the status of breeding populations of waterfowl and the seasonal wetland conditions which are of major importance for making recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna for the setting of the annual duck hunting season.

In April 1969, a project commenced on the artificial propagation of waterfowl by the use of nesting boxes. At present 1,690 boxes have been erected in lakes and swamps in the South-West and Eucla Land Divisions. It is envisaged that this programme will allow the research unit to understand better the breeding pattern of waterfowl populations in Western Australia.

The first phase of the research programme on the Mountain Duck (Tadorna tadornoides) on Rottnest Island was completed in September 1969. The project was used as an index to judge other waterfowl research programmes being carried out on the mainland. A total of 1,280 birds were captured, banded and released. Later recoveries of these bands by shooters showed that the birds from Rottnest Island would migrate to areas such as Esperance, Albany, Bunbury, Collie, Lake Grace, Mandurah, Jurien Bay and north of Geraldton.

Phase two of this research programme commenced in February 1970 and the work concentrated on the natural mortality of young birds on Rottnest Island's salt lakes. Also additional work was carried out on the physiology of the extra renal salt gland which is used for desalination of water taken in during feeding and drinking.

Lastly a research programme has been established at Moora to assess shooting pressure on populations of waterfowl in that area. This programme is carried out with the co-operation of a shooting group which has traditionally shot the Moora Lakes for the past 90 years. Birds taken during the proclaimed duck hunting season are examined, sexed, aged, weighed and checked for bands. This information is then collated and examined against other shooting activities in Western Australia and against the information collected during banding projects throughout the State.

Game Management

A large proportion of the research unit's time is taken up by projects orientated towards game management. This consists of aerial and ground surveys to assess waterfowl populations and the status of populations in the South West and Eucla Land Divisions. Some additional preliminary studies have been conducted in the Kimberley Land Division; however, this work has not been established on an annual programme basis. Besides the setting of seasons the Waterfowl Research Unit is engaged in the selection and recommendation of areas which are suitable as wetland reserves, either for Sanctuaries or Shooting Reserves.

At present Western Australia does not have an adequate number of wetland reserves; however, it is hoped that within the next few years this situation may be overcome with the addition of new reserves and funds available due to the formation of the "Trust Fund" from the sale of duck shooter's licenses.

Mineral Cases

Early in 1971 the Department of Fisheries and Fauna placed two formal objections on mining companies which had registered claims on reserves which were important wetland areas. The cases involved wetland areas in the immediate area of Esperance and another case in the Lake Muir area. Both cases were brought before the Wardens Court and it was possible to come to an agreement with the mining companies through negotiations so that mining could go on in these areas with restrictions to ensure that the wetland habitat remained useful after mining operations had ceased.

The Waterfowl Research Unit acted to supply the Crown Law Department with scientific information for both of these cases. A major portion of the year was taken up in these activities.