

In the next issue of the Bulletin a list of all honorary wardens will be published and inspectors are requested to give these people as much assistance as possible as they are voluntary workers who will carry out the major part of the police work necessary under the Fauna Protection Act.

TROUT FRY DISTRIBUTION

On September 5 Inspector Simpson and Cadet Inspector D. Wright organised the distribution of 80,000 trout fry from Pemberton at the Department's boat shed. Seventy-six thousand were sold and the surplus of 4,000 were released in Craig Swamp at Belmont.

WHALING

The following report has been received from Assistant Inspector V. J. Sinclair on whaling operations at Point Cloates during the season just completed. In view of the excellence of the report it is reproduced here in full.

"I arrived at Point Cloates Whaling station on May 28, 1953. Whaling operations commenced on June 8 and the first whale of the season was taken on June 10.

"During the first two weeks of the season humpback whales were very scarce, only four being taken in the first week and five in the second. On June 12 a request for permission to take minke and fin whales was made by the Company to test their respective oil content. Permission was granted on the grounds that, although minke whales would make no difference to the quota of humpbacks, fin whales would be deducted according to formula that two fin whales were equal to two and one-half humpbacks. However, humpbacks became more plentiful in the third week and the chasers consequently concentrated on them and no minke or fin whales were taken after all. Incidentally, the Commonwealth Director of Fisheries was in some doubt as to whether the gunners at Point Cloates had mistaken minke whales for Sei whales as no reports on minke whales on this coast had previously been made. However the

gunners were sure that no such mistake had been made and a copy of their description of a minke whale was forwarded to both the State and Commonwealth Fisheries Departments.

"When humpbacks became plentiful and were taken in numbers it was found that the station was undermanned and could not cope with any large quantity. Consequently some whales lay in the water for a considerable time and when treated yielded only third grade oil. Three whales lay in the water for more than thirty-three hours, which is the maximum time allowed by the Commonwealth Statutory Rules between the shooting and hauling on deck for treatment of any whale. This was partly due to the fact that the men on the towing launch were inexperienced and two whales got out of control in heavy swell while being towed in and were subsequently beached. The time taken in refloating and treating these caused further delay in the treatment of other whales moored in the bay.

"With the arrival of more men the efficiency of the station was increased, and as many as twelve or fourteen whales were treated per day without further mishap.

"The greatest number of whales taken on any one day was fifteen and in any one week seventy-seven. This weekly total was a record for the station. On other weeks as many as sixty-six and sixty-three were taken. An average weekly catch was in the vicinity of forty.

"Very little trouble was given by the machinery and only breakdowns of a minor nature occurred, mostly with winches. On occasions water in the dams became very low and had to be conserved for the boilers. Trouble was experienced with the drier and for three days meal had to be taken by truck and deposited on the sand hills. However this meal was recovered at the end of the season. Apart from this everything ran very evenly with a minimum of trouble.

"This season the quota of 600 humpback whales was filled for the first time since the Nor'-West Whaling Company began operations in 1949. The total oil production totalled 30,600 barrels, equalling 5,100 tons. The total meat meal production was 18,086 bags, equalling 1,127 tons 10 cwt. The oil is shipped away by overseas tankers and the meat meal is shipped to Fremantle by the M.V. "Kybra", in 5,000 bag consignments. The "Kybra" is the largest vessel to enter the bay.

"During the season only four undersize whales were taken as against eleven for the 1952 season. Two of these undersize whales were taken by the Chaser "Point Cloates", one by the "Haeremai Star" and one by the "Vigilant".

"A special permit was granted to the Company for the taking of six special whales on and above their quote this season. These comprised two yearling whales and two cow and calf pairs - all for scientific research to be carried out by Mr. Graham Chittleborough, C.S.I.R.O. Some difficulty was experienced with the gunners as they were reluctant to take the cow and calf pairs, considering it unethical whether for scientific research or otherwise. However Mr. H. Larsen, Captain of the "Haeremai Star" decided he would shoot one cow and calf and this was done on September 15. The cow measured 43'0" and the calf which was a female measured 20'4". One yearling female was shot by the Chaser "Vigilant" on the 28th August and measured 31'4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Mr. Chittleborough considered that enough material was gained from this yearling whale for the present and therefore cancelled the taking of the second yearling whale. I believe that from these three special whales some very good material was obtained by Mr. Chittleborough for research purposes.

"Equipment at Point Cloates station consists of -

- 2 Hartman Digestors
- 2 Kvaemer Digestors
- 4 Sharples Super Decanters
- 2 De-Laval Oil Separators
- 2 De-Laval Glue water separators
- 1 Stalfer-Duktar Dryer (manufactured by "Molde", Norway)

"The Hartman cookers can digest approximately 80 tons of blubber and meat in 24 hours cooking. They take about one hour for one cooking.

"The Kvaemer cookers can digest approximately 25 tons in one cooking lasting approximately 4 hours.

"The Sharples Super Decanters are of American origin and serve the dual purpose of -

1. Clarifying the glue water to make it more suitable for the better running of the De-Laval glue water separators.
2. Recovering and discharging the meal from the glue water.

"The Sharples machines not only reduce the oil content of the meal to about 5% on a dry basis, but they also discharge the wet meal (at about 55% moisture content) in a finely shredded condition for easy drying.

"Oil storage space became very scarce in August and whaling operations were reduced to a minimum until the overseas tanker M.V. "Tamar" arrived to take on oil at Maude Landing. This oil was shipped from the station to the landing base by the company tanker M.V. "Nor-Whale". After this, two more storage tanks were built as that such a situation may not arise in future seasons. Had it not been for the shortage of men in the early part of the season and the shortage of oil space later on this season would have been concluded at an earlier date.

"Breakdowns in the Chaser "Vigilant" were very frequent and she was constantly under repair for one thing or another. Consequently she lost a good deal of time which could have been spent chasing. The "Haeremai Star" suffered damage to her propellor shaft which had to be repaired under water by means of a diving suit consisting of gas mask face piece and lead belt and boots. The Chaser "Point Cloates" was fortunate to have no serious mechanical trouble throughout the season.

"The three chasers' total catch was as follows -

"Haeremai Star"	231	killed	with an average length of 40.6ft.
"Point Cloates"	245	" " " "	" " 39.7ft.
"Vigilant"	124	" " " "	" " 38.9ft.

"The total footage for the season was 23,941'9" with a total average length of 39'9".

"Of the 30,600 barrels of oil obtained, there was an average of 51 barrels per whale, making an average of 1.2 barrels per foot.

"All considered the 1953 whaling season at Point Cloates was a successful one and was concluded at an earlier date than was originally anticipated.

"The following is the approximate disposition of men on key jobs when the station is in full production -

Boilers - 5 men.
Flensing Deck - 2 shifts of 3 men and 2 winch drivers
Top cutting deck - 2 shifts of 9 men and 2 winch drivers
Power house - 2 shifts of 1 man.
Motor Launches - 4 men
Separator Room } - 2 shifts of 3 men
Super Decanters }
Maintenance } - 8 men.
Fitters Shop }
Meat meal dryer - 2 shifts of 3 men
Cookers - 2 shifts of 2 men
Blacksmith shop - 3 men
Each of the three chasers has a complement of Captain and 9 men.

"Details of Harpoon gun and equipment -

Gun Calibre = 90mm. or $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter.
Harpoon length (fully equipped) C.M.V. Brand 5'11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Larvik Brand 6'1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Total weight approximately 170 lb.
Warhead length = 14", diameter at base = $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".
Charge weight = 2 lbs. black powder (approximately)

"The above details of the harpoon gun are correct as far as I know, but may vary with different whaling stations."

WHALE MARK FOUND

Last August the following report was received from Assistant Inspector V. J. Sinclair -

"I have to report for your information that on July 27, 1953, a whale marker was found in the back meat of humpback whale serial no. 203 which was a female measuring 46'7".