

WHALE MORTALITY

Early last month a letter was received from Mr. M.R. Edwards, of Manjimup, that he had sighted a large number of dead whales on the beach near Black Point, half-way between the mouths of the Donnelly and the Blackwood Rivers.

Inspector J.L. Gallop was detailed to inspect the whales, and if possible to secure the skull of the smallest fish for identification. Mr. Gallop left Bunbury on July 15, and after obtaining directions started off on the long journey to the south coast. The track was particularly bad, and at one stage it took him three hours to drive 17 miles through swampy country where at times the water was well over the running board. He had to leave his vehicle eight miles from the beach and complete the journey on foot. He was able to locate only one of the whales, as darkness was rapidly approaching.

He took a count of the mammal's teeth and found that it contained 20 in the lower jaw and 6 in the upper. Its total length approximated 25 ft. Although Mr. Gallop extracted some teeth from the top jaw and with them forwarded a sketch of the tail, the species has not yet been identified. Owing to the almost impassable nature of the track, it was out of the question to attempt to secure any part of the whale for transport to Perth.