



FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MONTHLY SERVICE BULLETIN

Vol. IV. No. 2.

February 1, 1955

STAFF NOTES

The Superintendent (Mr. A.J. Fraser) is holidaying at Eagle Bay in the Busselton district and will resume duties on February 2.

The Senior Inspector (Mr. J.E. Munro) commences three weeks' annual leave on February 2. Inspector A.K. Melsom will be in charge of the metropolitan district during Mr. Munro's absence.

Inspector and Mrs. A.V. Green were blessed with an addition to their family on Saturday, January 2. Betty and the baby, Glenice Margaret, are both well.

On January 27, Assistant Inspector V.J. Sinclair tendered his resignation from the Department, giving the usual one month's notice. His duties will be taken over by Assistant Inspector B.H. Boyd.

Inspector N.E. McLaughlan, with Cadet Inspector D. Wright as crew member, will bring the p.v. "Kooruldhoo" to Fremantle in the middle of this month to refit for the Abrolhos season.

Inspector R.J. Baird, with Cadet Inspector M.J. Simpson as crew member, will continue to patrol the Lancelin area in the p.v. "Garbo" until the "Kooruldhoo" returns to Fremantle when he will proceed to the Cervantes - Jurien Bay area.

ANNUAL LEAVE 1955

The following programme of leave for inspectors has been drawn up and each officer notified of the date for when his 1955 leave has been arranged. Some slight alteration to suit the convenience of officers may be permitted provided that Departmental requirements are satisfied.

<u>Name of Officer</u>	<u>Date of Leave</u>
Inspector R. J. Baird	September 5 - 25.
" A. J. Bateman	August 1 - 21.
" S. W. Bowler	June 27 - July 17.
Ass. Insp. B. H. Boyd	October 1 - 21.
" " B. A. Carmichael	November 20 - December 11.
" " G. Coombes	October 10 - 30.
Inspector W. Davidson	September 5 - 25.
Ass. Insp. J. L. Gallop	May 2 - 22.
Inspector A. V. Green	October 24 - November 13.
" G. C. Jeffery	November 28 - December 18.
" N. E. McLaughlan	September 26 - October 17.
" A. K. Nelsom	August 1 - 21.
" H. J. Murray	May 30 - June 20.
Cadet Ins. M. J. Simpson	September 26 - October 17.
" " D. Wright	December.
" " J. Milne	to be arranged.
Technical Officers:	
L. G. Smith	} to be arranged.
J. S. Simpson	
J. Traynor	

PERSONAL PARS

Late in January Mr. John B. Davidson called at the office. Mr. Davidson is an authorised collector for the Los Angeles County Museum, California, and has spent some months collecting fauna in the Eastern States. He intends to secure specimens of animals and birds in the South-West and later undertake an overland trip to Darwin, through the North-West and the Kimberleys. A collector's license has been issued.

DUCK BANDING

Since the details published in the previous issue, Technical Officer J. Traynor has visited Lakes Taarblin (some 20 miles east of Narrogin) and Yealering (about 30 miles east of Pingelly). Reports of a profusion of ducks at Taarblin were more or less confirmed by Mr. Traynor but conditions were inimical to successful trapping. Only 4 ducks entered the traps. They were then shifted to Yealering Lake and nearby swamps where 69 (almost all grey teal) were banded.

Telegraphic advice reached Mr. Traynor later that a co-operator at Cape Riche was holding 150 ducks, mostly black, and Mr. Traynor will proceed there early in February. It will be remembered that 134 ducks were banded at Cape Riche in May last year.

Recoveries came in steadily during January and since the season opened in December, the following bands have been returned :-

Band No.	Date Banded	Place Where Banded	Date of Recovery	Place Where Recovered	Distance Travelled
<u>Mountain Duck</u>					
2965	27/10/54	Cockleshell Gully, N.W. Dandarragan	14/1/55	On the lakes at Capel	245 miles
<u>Black Duck</u>					
1685	23/3/53	Swamp near N. of Gingin	14/1/55	Salt Lake, 6 miles E. of Mandurah	90 "
2970	29/10/54	Cockleshell Gully N.W. Dandarragan	3/1/55	Harvey Cut	210 "
2904	23/10/54	do.	1/1/55	The Island, Harvey Estuary	185 "

Band No	Date Banded	Place Where Banded	Date of Recovery	Place Where Recovered	Distance Travelled
<u>Black Duck</u>					
1657	22/3/53	Big Bootine Swamp, Beer-mullah N. of Gingin	7/1/55	Cooper's Lake, near old mill in Peel Inlet.	95 miles
2874	21/9/54	Glengarry Station near Geraldton	19/12/54	Greenough River, 15 mls S.E. Geraldton	7 "
2473	5/3/54	Wardering Lake Woodanilling	9/1/55	Swamp 15 mls W. of Wagin	15 "
2733	19/5/54	Cape Riche	Dec. '54	Ludlow	200 "
2517	12/3/54	Wardering Lake	26/12/54	6 mls W. of Boyerine N. Woodanilling	5 "
2975	20/11/54	Lake Mears Brookton	Not yet known	Dumbitmooney Hotham R. 28 mls W. of Pingelly	About 50 miles
2811	21/5/54	Cape Riche	Jan. '55	15 mls S. of Borden on the Pallinup River	30 "
2953	26/10/54	Cockleshell Gully	24/1/55	Amelup, 15 mls S. of Borden	340 "
<u>Maned Goose</u>					
2673	15/4/54	Lake Karringup	2/1/55	2 mls E. of Quindanning on Williams River	95 "

Band No.	Date Banded	Place Where Banded	Date of Recovery	Place Where Recovered	Distance Travelled
			<u>Grey Teal</u>		
3101	29/11/54	Lake Mears	19/12/54	Lake Mears	--- miles
3064	24/11/54	do.	26/12/54	do.	" "
1656	22/3/53	Big Bootine Swamp Beer-mullah	1/1/55	10 miles south Borden	250 "
3111	2/12/54	Meckering District	Dec. 1954	Rocky Lake on Avon River	about 45 "
3102	29/11/54	Lake Mears	do.	5 miles W. of Harvey	110 "
3058	24/11/54	do.	27/12/54	Taarblin Lake	50 "
3024	23/11/54	do.	13/1/55	4 miles W. of Coolup	100 "
3030	23/11/54	do.	16/1/55	14 miles E. Brookton	10 "
3104	29/11/54	do.	Jan'55	Avon River, 12 mls N. Yealering	15 "
1658	22/3/53	Big Bootine Swamp, Beer-mullah	9/1/55	Marle's Pool Arthur River, E. Highbury	155 "
3087	28/11/54	Lake Mears	27/12/54	Lake Mears	-- "

LICENSING - CARNARVON

The Minister for Fisheries (Mr. Kelly) has approved of the issue of professional fishing licenses to part-time fishermen at Carnarvon subject to the following conditions :-

1. That licensees furnish to the Inspector of Fisheries, Shark Bay, each month, a return on the prescribed form of all fish taken for sale during the immediately preceding month;
2. That no use or attempted use be made of a fishing-net in waters where the capture of fish by means of fishing-nets is prohibited;
3. That no use or attempted use be made of a net for the capture of fish with meshes of a smaller size than the net prescribed for the whole of the waters of Shark Bay.

It must be understood that this approval to issue professional licenses to part-time fishermen is limited strictly to the Carnarvon area, where peculiar circumstances apply.

YOU HAVE THE POWER !!

Officers over the age of 21 years who have received permanent appointment to a classified position in the State Public Service have the power to witness most documents. The positions of Assistant Inspector and Inspector, for example, are classified positions, and officers permanently appointed to them, and all officers of equivalent or senior status, are classified officers.

The Under Secretary for Law points out that some officers appear to be unaware of this and have refused to witness documents - particularly at the request of road boards. It should be clearly understood that classified officers have almost all the power to witness documents that a justice of the peace has -

the exceptions being police court complaints, warrants and search warrants and other documents, such as affidavits, which are sworn to on oath.

Classified officers are specifically directed to exercise their powers upon request provided that the document is not one which, to be properly executed, requires that the person executing it be sworn.

WHITE CRAYFISH

From Geraldton Inspector Bowler has reported that the 1954 white crayfish season has been a record one.

In December 1953 the total take amounted to 236,000 lb. while to December 31, 1954, the total catch amounted to 340,000 lb. The season last year was of course opened earlier than in 1953. The run of whites started on November 21, the day after the opening.

At Port Denison the 1954 December catch was outstanding at 76,000 lb. compared with the previous season's catch of only 20,797 lb. The Geraldton onshore catch of 250,000 lb. compared favourably with the 203,293 lb. taken in December, 1953.

Several individual fishermen made remarkable catches, the best being that of Mr. R. Carlberg, in L.F.B. "Dawn", who caught over 22,000 lb. of crayfish in December. His best day's catch was 27 bags, amounting to over 2,500 lb., a record for the Geraldton district.

From the Lancelin area it is reported that the white crayfish run commenced on November 21, the day after opening, and lasted for about three weeks. Up to December 31, 377,111 lb. of crayfish was delivered to the two processing works situated at Lancelin; a further 280,396 lb. was trucked to the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative, lifting the total Lancelin area catch to 657,507 lb. This catch was taken by 33 boats operating over 42 days, whereas 25 boats operating over 31 days last year caught 345,014 lb. There was, therefore, a 6% increase on a catch-per-boat-per-day basis.

At date of publication, the production figures for the Fremantle area are not complete, but it is expected that they will show an increased catch as the fish were more plentiful and were of a larger size.

The white crayfish run in this area started on opening day and continued for a month to about mid-December.

GERALDTON DINGHY RAMP

As an outcome of representations made by this Department, repairs to the dinghy ramp at Geraldton were undertaken by the Railway Department on behalf of the Under Secretary for Works.

The missing and broken portions of the decking were replaced and the job completed before the end of January.

OUTSIZE SWORDFISH

From Drummond's Cove, north of Geraldton, anglers last month reported the presence of a swordfish which, according to eye witnesses, was 8 ft. long and had a girth of about 2'6".

One angler, who was operating his boat in the vicinity where this fish was observed, said that the fish attacked the propeller of his outboard motor and shook so hard that it broke the bracket of the motor and nearly capsized the dinghy.

Several attempts were made to catch the fish while it was near the beach in shallow water, but without success.

"FISH FOR THE INLAND"

(A Report by Technical Officer J.S. Simpson)

The stocking of farm dams with rainbow trout was first started in 1952 after successful experiments

had been carried out by Mr. Job Haddleton of Katanning. Earlier attempts had met with mixed success, but Mr. Haddleton was able to show that trout could thrive in dams in the Great Southern provided that there is sufficient depth of water and an adequate food supply.

Since 1952, when "Fish for the Inland" scheme got under way, 356,000 fry, 219,000 fingerling and 2,000 yearling trout have been transported by the Fisheries Department for the stocking of dams throughout the South-West Land Division. During October and November, 1954, a total of 128,400 fingerlings were delivered to the following centres for the stocking of farm dams :-

Wickepin	22,000	Kondinin	22,000
Lake Grace	21,500	Ardath	22,000
Corrigin	19,900	Quairading	21,000

In addition over 40,000 fry from the Pemberton hatcheries were distributed in Perth in September, and a number of large consignments of fingerlings were transported to trout acclimatisation societies.

Some of the large dams with a capacity of 5,000 cubic yards or more and a depth of over 10 feet are producing takeable fish in one year.

Brand's dam at West Pingelly gives an excellent example of the weight of fish that can be produced, provided conditions are suitable. This dam, when full, has a surface area of approximately 4 acres and a depth at the centre of 12 feet. There is a heavy growth of aquatic vegetation, which carries an abundant supply of fish food such as shrimp, scud and other small crustaceans. Three-inch fingerlings were first planted on December 18, 1952, and two fish taken on November 8, 1953, weighed 2 lb. 13 oz. and 3 lb. respectively. A total of more than 50 fish have since been taken - the largest being one eighteen-months-old fish which weighed 5 lb. 12 oz.

The town dam at Mount Barker has also produced a number of well-grown fish since August 28, 1954, when Mr. R. Doust grassed a male rainbow which weighed 3 lb. 12 oz. and measured 20 inches. Scale samples proved this to be a 2-year-old fish.

The growth rate in the smaller dams has been much slower, 10 to 12 inches being about the average in two years.

A small dam on the property of Mr. Stanley North, of Byford, carries some sixty or seventy 12 to 15 inch fish. This dam, approximately 8 yards long, 5 yards wide and 2'6" deep, is screened at the inlet drain and outlet pipe, and the water supply is drawn from a small permanent stream. Fry from a consignment delivered to Perth in September, 1952, were planted and the fish were hand-fed to supplement the natural food supply.

Mr. R. Abbey, of Beverley, is grassing some good fish from a small spring-fed dam which was stocked with fry in September, 1952.

Two-year-old trout 11 to 13 inches in length have been taken from two dams on Mr. J. Rushton's farm at Mount Barker. The fish taken from an old established dam of about 1,000-yard capacity, with good weed growth, were highly coloured, while the fish from the other, a new dam with very discoloured water, were almost silver with the rainbow markings hardly visible.

Mr. H.G. Kett, of Wickepin, called at the Department on January 19, 1954, to report that he now has $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. trout in his dam. On October 11, 1954, three-inch fingerlings were planted in his 3,000-yard dam with very discoloured water. Three cwt of superphosphate has been used as fertiliser, and the water is now quite clear with an excellent growth of plankton and an abundance of aquatic insect life.

Fry plantings have been successful only in dams that are well protected or have steep banks and very little shallow water, as the fish at this stage prefer to travel and feed in the shallows and are easy prey for wading birds.

Many of the smaller dams were heavily over-stocked during the early plantings, two to three thousand fry being liberated in dams with a carrying capacity of perhaps only 500.

The most successful stockings have been with

three-inch fingerlings planted during October-November. Twenty-three thousand of these fish can safely be carried in the Fisheries Department's transport tank, provided they are transported at night and liberated in the dams before the heat of the day.

The planting of yearlings would conserve the food supply in the dams and give a quicker return, but the high cost of transport, 700 to 1,000 per load, makes it uneconomical.

WHALING

Shore-based whaling activities were further expanded last year when a new company, Australia's fifth coastal whaling station - began operations from Byron Bay, New South Wales, in late July. With the addition of the new company's quota of 120 whales, the permissible catch this season was raised to 2,040 humpback whales. Whalers experienced little difficulty in making continuous kills and were able to keep processing plants at shore stations operating at near capacity during the three months to mid-September, by which date stations at Point Cloates, Babbage Island and Cheynes Beach in Western Australia and Moreton Island in Queensland had all taken their quotas. By the close of the season on 30th October, Byron Bay station had also taken its full quota of whales.

Production.

The quantity of high grade whale oil, whale meal and solubles produced in 1954, together with comparative figures for the two previous seasons, are shown in the following table :-

	1954 (tons)	1953 (tons)	1952 (tons)
Whale Oil	16,667	17,058	15,226
Whale Meal	*	4,750	4,128
Solubles	1,425 (dry)	1,809 (wet)	3,290 (wet)

* not available

The smaller yield of 8.2 tons of oil per whale this

season, as compared with 8.5 and 8.7 tons in the past two seasons, is due largely to the smaller amount of blubber on whales, which this season migrated earlier than usual from southern waters because of the adverse weather in their winter feeding grounds.

The price of whale oil again showed little variation during 1954 and at £76 sterling per ton, f.o.b. Continental ports (£A96 per ton), production for the season was worth approximately £A1,600,000 as compared with £A1,586,000 in 1953. Value of meal and solubles is more difficult to estimate as the value is gauged on an arbitrary ruling price for a particular protein content. During 1954, The Australian Whaling Commission, which is the sole producer of whale solubles, changed over to the dried product to facilitate marketing. Selling at £60 per ton, this has proved an attractive by-product and, with initial difficulties now surmounted, stations at Point Cloates and Moreton Island are to install similar drying plants this year or early in 1956. Whale meal was again sold wholly on the Australian market at approximately £40 per ton.

On present indications, the Fisheries Division of the Department of Commerce & Agriculture places the value of the industry's total output for 1954 at approximately £1,750,000 - the same level as that of the previous year.

FISHERIES LICENSES ISSUED DURING 1954

The table below sets out the licenses issued and the value of the boats and gear for 1954. As a comparison, the totals for 1953 are also shown with the increase or decrease as the case may be.

There was a continuation in the decline in the Amateur Net Fishermen's Licenses issued, mainly due to a reduced number in the metropolitan area.

The fall in the total number of Professional Fishermen's Licenses was partly due to the direction restricting the granting of licenses to part-time professional fishermen.

Licensing of boats has been policed more

strictly, and the increase in the total boats licensed should not be taken as an indication of increased fishing intensity. There has been, however, some transference of crayfishing boats from the Fremantle to the Geraldton district as the onshore area there is open the whole year round.

Where Issued	Prof. Fisher- man's	Amateur Net Fisher- man's	Fish- ing Boats	Value of Boats £	Value of Gear £
Albany	116	12	69	27,428	38,405
Broome	10	4	-	-	-
Bunbury	90	91	63	32,765	20,825
Carnarvon	2	1	2	1,960	-
Hopetoun	3	-	1	150	200
Pt. Hedland	4	2	-	-	-
Esperance	6	2	-	-	-
Fremantle	436	36	168	575,285	93,630
Geraldton	180	28	133	190,685	71,810
Mandurah	95	62	86	21,370	17,400
Perth	90	249	59	111,909	17,809
Shark Bay	37	-	35	23,830	-
TOTAL :	1,069	487	616	£985,382	£260,079
TOTAL 1953:	1,125	535	600	£886,618	£168,614
Incr. or Decrease	-56	-48	+16	+£98,764	+£91,465

TOTAL VALUE OF BOATS AND GEAR 1954 : £1,245,461

TOTAL VALUE OF BOATS AND GEAR 1953 : £1,055,232

INCREASE : £190,229

CRACKERJACK

An urgent 'phone call alerted the office a few days ago that duckshooters were operating out Maylands way.

Such heinous outlawry under the very nose of the Chief Warden could not be tolerated - nor could it safely be delegated to juniors. So, armed with badge and quill, the Supervising Inspector and the Senior Scribe themselves raced to the scene with impressive promptitude

The telephone had buzzed and someone gave a red
hot lead,
So Jack and Harry raced away to get the culprits
treed,
They crept along the river, they didn't make a
sound,
When suddenly a shot went off: 'twas like a single
round,
Of duckshot from a shotgun, and both men smiled
with glee,
Two more shots broke the silence, these made the
total three,
On through the rushes both men stole, a feed of
ducks in view,
When close at hand a small voice said, "We've been
expecting you,
"Who gave the information; who put us in the blue?
"The shots were only crackers - the joke is sure
on you."
The vision of that feed of duck had faded right
away,
They prayed to God that no one learned how they'd
been tricked that day.

'Stumpy'