

from November 15 to August 31, 1956. Mr. Kelly said that this was in accordance with the recommendation received by him from the Fishermen's Advisory Committee which had previously taken evidence at Fremantle in relation to the conservation of the crayfishery south of the 30th parallel of south latitude. He also approved the Committee's recommendation that waters lying between Jurien Bay and Knobby Head, which had been closed for some years, should be re-opened to crayfishing next season. He said that he could not agree to a suggestion made by several fishermen to the Committee that the minimum carapace length of white crayfish should be reduced from $2\frac{3}{4}$ " to $2\frac{1}{2}$ ". He said that the white crayfish constituted in large part the future stocks of red crayfish.

Mr. Kelly concluded his statement with a warning to fishermen not to remove the eggs or berry from female crayfish. He pointed out that this was a very serious offence and any fisherman convicted on a charge of this nature will have his license cancelled and, in addition, the license for his boat suspended for a period.

ABROLHOS CRAYFISHERY

The Fishermen's Advisory Committee will meet early in December to take evidence on the conservation of the Abrolhos and Geraldton crayfish fisheries. The Committee will follow past procedure in interviewing any fisherman desiring to give evidence and to receive any suggestions which they may care to make in respect to the crayfishery. As the white crayfish season may not have terminated, it is expected that the Committee will meet in the evening as well as in the day, to suit the convenience of fishermen who otherwise would not be able to attend.

1955 WHALING SEASON

The table on page 175 sets out statistics for the 1955 humpback whaling season. The Australian Whaling Commission and the Nor'West Whaling Co. each had their quota reduced by 100 whales. Consequently,

STATION	WHALES TAKEN				AVERAGE LENGTH		P R O D U C T I O N						
	Males	Fe- males	* Sex Unknown	Total	Males	Fe- males	O i l (in barrels)			Bone	Meal	Solu- bles	Ferti- liser
							Total	Per whale	Per foot				
					ft.	ft.				bales	tons	tons	tons
Point Cloates (Nor'West Whaling Co.)	228	270	2	500	39.3	41.2	24,900	49.8	1.23		1,188	38	
Carnarvon (Australian Whaling Commission)	271	228	1	500	40.5	42.6	23,858	47.7	1.15		1,362	964	
Albany (Cheynes Beach Whaling Co.)	78	41	1	120	39.8	41.2	5,774	48.1	1.19	23	116		42
TOTALS ..	577	539	4	1120	39.9	41.8	54,532	48.7	1.19	23	2,666	1,002	42

* Only portion of whales recovered - remainder eaten by sharks.

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neither company had any difficulty in taking its full quota. In fact, the Nor'West Whaling Co. reported that they were able to carry out selective fishing and thus catch larger whales. The Cheynes Beach Whaling Co. was also untroubled to complete its quota of 120.

A striking feature of this season's production was the increased average length of the whales taken by all three whaling companies compared with the previous year (vide Vol. III, No. 10, October, 1954 issue of this Bulletin). The increase was 1.1ft. in the case of males and 1.3ft. in the case of females. This increase could be due to many causes, one of which is the fact that at least one station paid the gunners and crew of each boat a bonus for every whale taken that was of a greater length than last year's average of 39 ft. 8 in. The bonus was increased for every three inches over the average. The increased average length of whales taken was reflected in the output of oil per whale. The figure of 47.7 barrels per whale was slightly higher than last year. However, the output in barrels per whale-foot decreased by 0.02ft.

The bulk of the oil was "sold forward" to the United Kingdom, Sweden, Holland and Germany at a price of approximately £A106 per ton. This figure was slightly higher than last year's figure of £A100 per ton. Oil loading operations have been carried out satisfactorily this year with the result that the last of the oil should be shipped early in November.

By-products were again sold on a ready market. Whale meal, which is used as a stock food, commanded a price of about £A48 per ton, while solubles (also used as stock food) sold at £A65 per ton. Both of these products were sold within Australia. Last year an overseas market was found for baleen and 377 tons were exported. This year, however, the company concerned did not export any of this by-product.

Economically, the season has again been very successful. Taking into consideration the sales of oil and the by-products associated with its production, the approximate value of each whale caught was about £A1032. The industry is worth, therefore, something like £1,155,840 annually to this State.