

BABBAGE ISLAND WHALING STATION

The Commonwealth Government on April 16 announced its decision to sell the Australian Whaling Commission's Carnarvon station to Nor'-West Whaling Co. Ltd. This company operates the land station at Point Cloates, just south of North-West Cape. Although no figure was mentioned by the Minister for Trade (Mr. McEwen) when making his announcement, it has since been learned that the purchase price was £880,000, or £260,000 more than that tendered by the Government of Western Australia.

According to reports from time to time issued by the Whaling Commission, the total amount advanced by the Commonwealth Treasury was £1,375,000. A substantial portion of this sum has already been repaid and a big sum salted down in Government securities. The net profit since the Commission went into production in 1951 was almost £900,000.

If Nor'-West Whaling Co. Ltd. can operate as successfully as the Commission - and there is no sound reason why it should not - the company, whose overheads must be lower, should pay for the whole plant in 5 years.

It was certainly a good buy.

DUCK BANDING

The Department's duck banding programme continued during April.

Technical Officer J. Traynor, who is in charge of the field work, again was successful in banding over 200 ducks during the month. Operating at Yere Yere and Yathroo stations in the Dandaragan district, he trapped and banded 140 grey teal, 78 black duck, 20 maned geese and 2 white-eyed duck, the latter being the first of this species banded. Having the previous month completed the original order of 3,000 bands of the English No. 4 size, he was able to commence on a new series of two different sizes - Nos. 3 and 4. The black duck, maned geese and white-eyed duck banded during the month were ringed with No. 4 bands and the grey teal with No. 3.

The No. 3 bands are numbered 4001 to 6000, and the No. 4, 6001 to 8000.

The total number of birds banded this year is 785 - a very satisfactory figure considering that banding did not commence until the middle of February. This makes a grand total of 3199 birds banded since the inception of the scheme in June, 1952.

Recoveries : Six bands were recovered during the month - 5 of them black duck and one grey teal. One of the most interesting recoveries was that of No. 3274, which was from a bird banded at Cape Riche in February, 1955, and recovered by Mr. A.G. Gardiner, of Burekup on the Collie River, 190 miles away from its banding site.

Band No.	Date Banded	Place Where Banded	Date of Recovery	Place Where Recovered	Distance Travelled
<u>Black Duck</u>					
2329	14.2.54	Moora	1.1.56	5 miles W. of Gingin	50 miles
3523	19.2.56	Kewdale, Belmont	21.4.56	Bokan Lake E. Narrogin District	120 "
3598	21.2.56	Queen's Gardens	21.4.56	Wannamal	60 "
3788	11.3.56	Dumbleyung	12.4.56	Salt Lake, 5 m. sth. of Wagin	22 "
3274	3.2.55	Cape Riche	Apr '56	Burekup, Collie River	190 "
<u>Grey Teal</u>					
3790	11.3.56	Dumbleyung	12.4.56	On a farm 3 m. south of Dumbleyung	3 "