

December 31. During this period persons who are licensed to do so may trap any number of finches for gain or reward. Strict regulations apply in respect to the caging, holding, transporting and exporting of finches, and any person interested in trapping in the far north should be referred to Head Office for full particulars.

FAUNA PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Reports by the Chairman and the Secretary were received at a meeting of the above Committee held at Head Office on July 5. Following is a brief summary of the recommendations and decisions made :-

(a) Proposed National Park between Mandurah and Harvey

It was decided that a sub-committee be formed to go more thoroughly into the plan to have a national park in an area adjacent to Lakes Preston and Clifton, and including those lakes. Mr. Angus Robinson, of Coolup, a deputy member of the Committee, was invited to join the sub-committee. Other members appointed were Dr. D.L. Serventy, convenor, and Mr. A.J. Milesi.

(b) Open Seasons

- (i) Grey Kangaroos: The Committee agreed to recommend an open season in all the districts in the lower South-West from which a request had been received from the local authority. Members expressed the opinion that open seasons seemed to be ineffectual, judging by past experience. The number of kangaroos destroyed did not seem to be great as skin sales did not increase overmuch and farmers claimed that there were more kangaroos causing damage than before. The Committee felt that the latter was caused through habitat destruction as a result of land settlement, rather than an increase in the overall population. The clearing of their habitat forced the kangaroos into local concentrations which made them more noticeable.

- (ii) Finches: In view of the increased number of trappers licensed to operate during the open season this year, the Committee recommended that a departmental officer be made available to check the trapping and caging facilities used and the effects on stocks.
- (iii) Emus: The Committee believed that an open season for this species within its protected area was not warranted. Members considered that the emu menace in the lower South-West was exaggerated and that an open season would be of little use if the birds were really a pest, as there was no financial inducement to professional hunters to operate. It was pointed out that where emus were causing damage to property, owners could take out a license to destroy them, or, if they had an existing license to take grey kangaroos, it could be amended to include the taking of emus.

(c) Royalty

Previously, a recommendation had been made by the Committee that outside the protected area royalty be abolished, and inside the area the present charge of ninepence per skin be reduced to sixpence per skin.

The Committee was advised that the matter had been considered by Cabinet, which had decided that there was to be no alteration to the present methods of assessing royalty.

(d) Regulation Amendments

Consideration of amendments to the regulations was deferred until the next meeting, so that additional information could be obtained on a number of points.

(e) Inspection of Sanctuaries

It was agreed that some important fauna sanctuaries created in recent months in the northern wheatbelt should be inspected by the Committee, and, as

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reported elsewhere in this issue, the inspection will be made later this month.