

OPEN SEASON FOR WILD DUCKS

On the recommendation of the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee, the Minister (Mr. Kelly) has announced that the open season for wild ducks this year commences -

- (a) at 6 p.m. on the evening of Saturday, December 21, in the Augusta-Margaret River, Balingup, Bridgetown, Bunbury, Busselton, Capel, Collie Coalfields, Dardanup, Greenbushes, Harvey, Manjimup, Nannup and Preston road districts;
- (b) at 5 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, December 22, in that part of the South-West and Eucla Land Divisions not included in the road districts mentioned.

The open season will not apply in any of the following areas, which have been set aside as sanctuaries :-

- (a) The whole of the area within a radius of twenty miles of the General Post Office, Perth.
- (b) All municipalities and townsites in the South-West Land Division.
- (c) The whole of the Rockingham Road District.
- (d) The whole of the waters of Lakes Leschenaultia, Yealering and Seppings, and Bambun, Wagin, Nambung, Mungala, Nannerup and Wardering Lakes, and all land within twenty chains of their shores.
- (e) The whole of the waters of the Vasse, King and Kalgan Rivers and all land within twenty chains of their shores.
- (f) The whole of the waters of Vasse and Wönnorup Estuaries and all land within twenty chains of their shores.
- (g) All the waters of the Leschenault Inlet extending southwards from a line drawn south-east from

- (g) Waterloo Head (Belvedere) on the west foreshore to a point on the opposite foreshore.
- (h) All that portion of the Capel River between the Capel and Stirling Bridges and all land within twenty chains of the river bank.
- (i) The whole of the waters of Oyster Harbour and Princess Royal Harbour and all land within a radius of twenty chains of their shores.
- (j) The whole of the area of the Yanchep Caves Reserve.
- (k) The whole of the Harvey catchment area.
- (l) The whole of the area within a radius of two miles of the Post Office at Mandurah.
- (m) The whole of the area within a radius of two miles of the Post Office at Boyup Brook.
- (n) The whole of the area within a radius of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Post Office at Balingup.
- (o) All that portion of the Avon River in the Toodyay road district, between the northern boundary of Avon Location 3 and a point opposite road 2069, and all the land within twenty chains of the river banks.
- (p) All that portion of the Avon River from Dumbarton Bridge to the railway bridge north of Toodyay, and all land within twenty chains of the river banks.
- (q) All that portion of the Serpentine River from road 8629 at the southern end of Goegrup (or Willies) Lake to Peel Inlet near the Old Mill, and all land within twenty chains of the river banks.
- (r) All State forests, timber reserves, town reservoirs and other areas where shooting is prohibited under the provisions of any other Act, Regulation or By-Law.

The close season, which extends right up to the week-end before Christmas, will be actively policed this year. This State has the longest open season of any in Australia, which makes even more indefensible the poor sportsmanship of those who try to beat the gun. Any such person who is apprehended can expect seizure of his firearm and prosecution. A strong effort will also be made to stamp out the illegal practices of using spotlights and capturing ducks in traps.

"An interesting outcome of the Department's duck research programme is the consideration at present being given to the proclamation of a long open season in outback areas where shooting intensity is low," said Mr. Kelly. "It is expected that a decision on this suggestion will be reached in the next few weeks. The research programme is being continued and, on opening day, departmental officers will examine as many ducks as possible on the shooting grounds before they are plucked and drawn. Every shooter is requested to co-operate in the programme and to return all bands recovered as soon as possible. They are also asked to keep a careful record of the ducks shot during the season and to complete a scorecard, supplies of which will be available from the Department and all gun clubs.

"Reports indicate," Mr. Kelly concluded, "that the season has not been a very good one for breeding, and shooters might not have things all their own way later on when surface water is expected to be at a minimum."