

OPEN SEASON FOR WILD DUCKS

The Minister for Fisheries, Mr. Kelly, announced recently that he had accepted a recommendation from the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee to open the 1958/59 season for wild ducks on the traditional week-end before Christmas. It would, however, close a month earlier than usual - on April 30 instead of May 31.

Details of the opening given by the Minister were as follows -

- (a) at 6 p.m. in the evening of Saturday, December 20, 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 21, in the remainder of the South-West and Eucla Land Divisions not included in the road districts mentioned above.

Duck-shooting will be unlawful 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 Wonnerup 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 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's banks.
- (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 of 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 land within twenty chains of the river's 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's banks.
- (q) All that portion of the Serpentine River from road 8629 at the southern end of Goegrup (Willies) Lake to Peel Inlet near the Old Mill, and all land within twenty chains of the river's 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.

It had been decided to close the season earlier, the Minister said, in accordance with numerous requests received from shooters and observers who for some time had been concerned with the effect of shooting in the early days of winter. Information received suggested that a considerable percentage of the ducks paired off in May and if these birds were disturbed by shooting, nesting would be delayed.

The Department's research programme was being continued, and on opening day departmental officers would again examine as many ducks as possible on the shooting grounds before they were plucked and drawn.

Every shooter is requested to co-operate in the programme if they are notified that the official team is in their area, said Mr. Kelly. They are also asked to return all bands recovered as soon as possible with the date and place of the recovery and also to complete a scorecard at the end of the season. Supplies of the cards will be available from the Fisheries Department and all gun clubs.

Emphasising that the close season extended right up to the week-end before Christmas throughout the whole of the South-West and Eucla Land Divisions, Mr. Kelly made a direct plea to all shooters not to try to beat the gun as there were many young ducks still in the flapper stage. Any person apprehended while shooting in the close season, or in any of the prohibited areas listed, could expect to have his firearm seized and be prosecuted, the Minister warned. He also drew attention to the following restrictions which were designed, he said, to conserve duck stocks -

- * The use of traps is entirely prohibited throughout the State.
- * Spotlights are an illegal device.

* The sale of wild ducks is forbidden.

* No person shall keep wild ducks in captivity.

Reports indicated, Mr. Kelly concluded, that the season had been a very good one for breeding, not only on account of the favourable climatic conditions, but also as a result of the decrease in the number of foxes. In many areas there was still a lot of surface water about and ducks could be expected to remain well dispersed for some months.

PROHIBITED AREAS FOR SPEARFISHING

In the Government Gazette of October 17, two additional areas closed to spearfishing were announced. The areas given were described as follows :

- (a) that portion of Geographe Bay contiguous to the Busselton Road District 440 yards wide measured from the high water mark between the prolongation of the eastern alignment of Ford Road and a prolongation of the western alignment of Lennox Drain; and
- (b) that portion of the Indian Ocean contiguous to the Wanneroo Road District 100 yards wide measured from the high water mark between a prolongation of the northern alignment of Marmion Lot 105 and a prolongation of the southern alignment of that lot.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

The Supervising Inspector (Mr. J.E. Bramley) and the Fauna Protection Officer (Mr. H.B. Shugg), will each commence three months' long service leave in January. Mr. Bramley will be relieved by the Senior Inspector (Mr. J.E. Munro) and Mr. Shugg by Mr. A. Buchanan. Mr. Bramley will commence his leave on January 5 and Mr. Shugg on January 14.