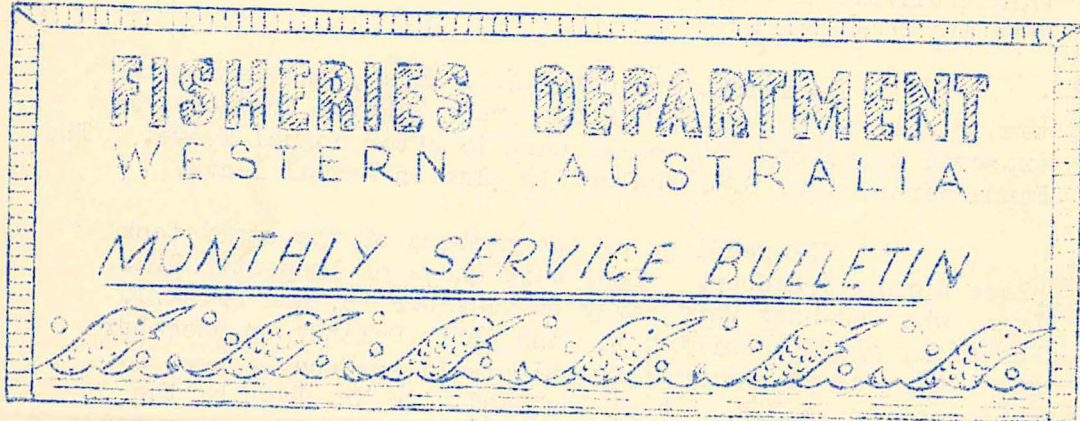


[MONTHLY SERVICE BULLETIN
(WESTERN AUSTRALIA. FISHERIES

8(1) Jan 1959

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

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Vol. VIII. No. 1.

January, 1959.

STAFF NOTES

The Fauna Protection Officer (Mr. H.B. Shugg) and the Supervising Inspector (Mr. J.E. Bramley) will each commence 3 months' long service leave this month. Mr. A.J. Buchanan will act in Mr. Shugg's position and Mr. J.E. Munro in Mr. Bramley's.

Inspector R.M. Crawford, of Geraldton, is still enjoying long service leave. He and his wife have just returned from a visit to Singapore. Inspector R.J. Baird, of Broome, is in Perth with his family on biennial leave. Relieving Inspector G.C. Jeffery is holding the fort at Geraldton, and Inspector B.A. Carmichael, of Albany, will leave for Broome in the next day or two to take over pending Mr. Baird's return towards the end of February. Inspector J. Traynor will relieve at Albany during Mr. Carmichael's absence.

Mr. John Terrence Kelly has been appointed cadet inspector, and is expected to start work on January 7.

Assistant Inspector D. Wright, who was on sick leave over the holidays, will resume duty on January 5. He will be stationed temporarily in Fremantle to assist the Fleet Maintenance Officer (Mr. A.J. Bateman), who has quite a number of jobs on hand at this moment.

We offer our congratulations to Mr. Wright on having recently qualified (by examination) as Skipper, Grade 2. This qualification entitles him to command fishing boats of from 15 to 50 tons.

Assistant Inspector R.J. McKay, who is acting temporarily as Technical Officer Grade 2 (vice Traynor), is expected to resume duty on January 19 after annual leave. The Fauna Warden (Mr. S.W. Bowler) is also on annual leave.

The weddings of two members of the staff took place during December. They were those of Inspector G.H. Lyon, who wed Miss Mary Davey on December 13, and Mr. A.J. Buchanan, who was married to Miss Robin Delaney on December 26. At a small informal function held in Head Office, a presentation smoker's stand was handed to Mr. Lyon by the Superintendent with the best wishes of both inside and outside staff. At the Department's Christmas eve party, the Minister for Fisheries (Mr. Kelly) presented to Mr. Buchanan, with the felicitations of his fellow-officers, a sum of money which had been subscribed as a wedding gift.

PERSONAL PARS

A visitor to Western Australia during December was Mr. B.V. Hamon, of the Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, C.S.I.R.O., Cronulla, who stopped off for a couple of days on his way back to headquarters after 9 months overseas. For most of his stay abroad Mr. Hamon was working at the National Institute of Oceanography, at Godalming, Surrey, England.

* * * * *

Another prominent visitor was Mr. Tokuichi Kuribayashi, president of the Nippon Pearling Co. Mr. Kuribayashi, who was accompanied by his daughter, is one of the principal shareholders of Pearls Pty. Ltd., which under license from this Department operates the pearl culture station in Brecknock Harbour, North-West Australia. It is from the first two syllables of Mr. Kuribayashi's name that the small bay of Brecknock Harbour in which the station is located received the name "Kuri Bay".

Mr. Kuribayashi in a press statement said that the excellent colour, large size and good shape of the culture pearls produced in this State made them superior to culture pearls produced in Japan. They were, he said, the equal of natural pearls.

During the few days he stayed in Perth Mr. Kuribayashi had discussions with the Minister (Mr. Kelly) and the Superintendent (Mr. Fraser).

* * * * *

Dr. D.L. Serventy, of the Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O., returned to Perth on December 19. He had spent several weeks on the Tasmanian islands in Bass Strait pursuing his studies on the mutton-bird.

* * * * *

The Minister for Fisheries (Mr. Kelly) is enjoying a fortnight's holiday at Rottnest Island.

MOVEMENTS OF DEPARTMENTAL VESSELS

R.v. "Lancelin" is undergoing refit at Fremantle, and r.v. "Limicola" will be handed over to the shipwrights for conversion early this month.

P.V. "Misty Isle", under the command of Assistant Inspector H.D. Kavanagh, with Cadet Inspector Geoff. Hanley as crew, is busy patrolling the Fremantle-Rottnest region.

P.V. "Kooruldhoo" will proceed to Geraldton early in January following reports that certain fishermen propose operating on crayfish in the Abrolhos area during the close season. Inspector S.C. Stokoe will be in command, with Cadet Inspector Eric Barker as crew.

P.V. "Silver Gull" will proceed to the Jurien Bay area within the next few days. Assistant Inspector E.I. Forster will act as skipper and he will have Cadet Inspector Ray Emery as crew member.

R.V. "HALIMAH" TO BE SOLD

Some criticism was recently voiced in Parliament following the Government's decision to dispose of the "Halimah". This British-built vessel arrived in Fremantle from Borneo early in 1958, and was offered for sale. For some time discussions had been taking place at the Minister-Superintendent level with a view to securing a second research vessel to undertake exploratory fishing and general scientific investigations in deeper water than has hitherto been possible with "Lancelin".

Arrangements were made for a quick survey of "Halimah", which is 73 feet long, both above and below the water line. As a result of the reports received a decision was taken to purchase her at a cost of £11,000. However, as the vessel was stripped down for refit a number of hidden defects, which were not apparent earlier and could not possibly have been discovered without stripping, were found. Teredo and/or dry rot was discovered in most parts of the ship, and as stripping proceeded it soon became apparent that it would be necessary almost completely to rebuild her. In the circumstances it was decided to cut our loss and to secure another vessel.

At this time former H.M.A.S. "Limicola" became available. She is 75 feet in length, and was in excellent condition. The Department purchased her for £9,500. She is now being refitted for departmental purposes, and should be in commission by the middle of the year.

The following replies were given by the Minister (Mr. Kelly) to questions asked in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. Crommelin, M.L.A. -

- Q. From whom was the vessel "Halimah" purchased at a cost of £11,000?
- A. The Sarawak Co. Ltd., Sibul, Sarawak, Borneo.
- Q. (a) Was the vessel put on a slip for examination above and below the water-line before purchasing?
- (b) Did a marine surveyor examine the vessel?

(c) If so, did he give a certificate that the vessel was in good, or reasonably repairable, order?

A. (a), (b) and (c) - Yes.

Q. If not, who examined the vessel and recommended its purchase?

A. See foregoing answer.

Q. For what reasons did the estimated cost of repairs and improvements increase from £11,000 to £24,000?

A. Principally hidden defects. The provision of a new keel, additional equipment including refrigeration, complete reorganisation of crew accommodation, provision of laboratory, and other alterations necessary adequately to fit the vessel for research purposes.

Q. Were tenders called for the cost of repairs, etc., to the vessel, amounting to £24,000?

A. No.

Q. If not, on what basis was the estimated cost arrived at?

A. By quotation.

Q. Has a contract been let to carry out the repairs as required?

A. Yes.

Q. What amount of money is due to be paid for repairs to date?

A. Approximately £4,000.

Q. (a) Is it a fact that the "Halimah" beneath the waterline is affected by toredo or such other type of worm?

(b) Is it also a fact that the hull is affected by dry rot, and is not in a condition to repair satisfactorily for use as a fisheries vessel?

A. (a) and (b) - Yes.

Q. Is it a fact that the vessel has been given up and in reality is to be written off?

A. Upon expert advice, and after careful analysis of the cost involved, it was deemed advisable to purchase "Limicola" and to dispose of "Halimah" to the best advantage.

Q. If so, has the Government any redress, or is the amount involved completely lost?

A. This aspect is being examined.

Q. Has the Department already purchased another vessel to take the place of "Halimah", and at what cost?

A. Yes - cost £9,500.

On December 5, when introducing the departmental Estimates, Mr. Kelly had this to say -

MR. KELLY : At different times during the year I have dealt with other departments, but do not think I have said very much about the Fisheries Department. Therefore, I would like to address a few comments in that regard. The fishing industry has had another record year, being nearly 2,000,000 lb. up on the previous year's record.

The sperm whale industry is comparatively new, and is only in its second year of operation. In ten months 171 sperm whales were taken, and this added just over £100,000 to revenue. Very important research work has been carried out in the fishing industry, but there have been limitations to the extent to which this work could be accomplished. However, we are hopeful that before very long we will see an interesting advance.

The culture pearl industry was established about two years ago at Augustus Island; but because of unsatisfactory conditions applying there, it was moved to the mainland, where it has made rapid strides.

It is apparent that the temperature of the waters in Kure Bay is more suitable, and the amount of fish food life that is available has had a marked influence on the industry. It can now be claimed that pearls which previously took in the vicinity of four years to grow under the same conditions in Japan - where the industry originated - are now taking only about 18 months to develop; and the lustre and quality of the pearls are apparently very high. They have been graded into high categories and are most favourably spoken of. I heard only yesterday that a quantity of these pearls has now been graded for the market and the forecast is that they will sell at a very high figure. I am told that it is possible to sell in the vicinity of three necklaces per year at an average price of £25,000 for each necklace. I cannot see many people in this country paying £25,000 for a necklace!

Mr. Brand : Except the Minister for Fisheries. I think he could afford it.

MR. KELLY : At this stage I want to say a little bit about the vessel "Lancelin", because it will highlight my following remarks in regard to another vessel. The "Lancelin" has been the only research vessel which this State has had for a period of years, and it has been handicapped by the limitations of its range and size, and in many other ways. This vessel has been mainly used in the carrying out of inshore investigations which cover the shallower waters, and it has been limited to a sea depth of 15 fathoms. Beyond that depth its gear is insufficiently powerful to operate satisfactorily.

The vessel has been too small in its range. It has always been regarded as inadequate in respect of its overall dimensions. There was an insufficient area in which to handle the trawling gear; and the crew quarters and galley have been too cramped. Therefore, long trips were difficult to undertake. The "Lancelin" will be useful in the matter of research, but it will be used in the closer waters. We have now reached the stage where it is desirable to have a larger vessel than the "Lancelin". For some time the Department has been looking for a type of ship that would incorporate many features desired from a research point of view.

Research into industry has been instanced in the House on several occasions during recent times as being of paramount importance. Whether it be in regard to fruit-fly or any other matter, research must play an important part in the progress any industry can make. With the smaller boat, we have carried out a lot of work between Exmouth Gulf and Shark Bay, which seems to be the limit of the mammoth pink prawns; and we have reached the stage where it is almost impossible to extend our operations in this regard. A great deal of work is necessary in regard to the Dirk Hartog, Dorre, and Bernier Islands. The waters of these islands are very dirty at times, and a suitable vessel is needed for the area.

We have an excellent southern crayfish potential. Tests as to the possibilities of crayfish have been made on various occasions with some of the vessels, and very good catches have been brought back, proving that there is an extensive ground in the area. However, because of difficult conditions - particularly seasonal conditions - the majority of the boats have more or less been precluded from experimenting in that part of the State.

Recently the Commonwealth Government agreed to associate itself with some form of research. I have not heard anything further about this, except what I have read in the Press; but I understand the Commonwealth Government is going to devote to research into the southern crayfish some of the money which was received from the sale of the Carnarvon whaling station.

Deep sea trawling to locate sole, flounder and other ground fish would be undertaken if it were possible to get into southern waters. We know the fish are there, and it is a matter of finding the best grounds. This applies to other ground fish such as flathead, which appear in large numbers in these waters. It would also enable the State to do a certain amount of research into trawling and line-laying for tuna. These avenues are well worth exploitation. The limitations have been caused by the difficulty of getting into deeper and more uncertain waters.

We have had many reports regarding tuna, but most of them are unconfirmed. Nevertheless, there is every indication that tuna exist in these waters. It is obvious, therefore, that a larger vessel has been a necessity for quite

some time. If we had this vessel it would allow us much more freedom of activity and we would be able to include a small laboratory which would allow biological and hydrological studies to be made on board as specimens are trawled. Refrigeration has been a difficult problem with the present research vessel. The crew was handicapped, because the vessel was equipped with only a small household refrigerator.

A refrigerator is important for keeping the specimens, and at the present moment we are unable to keep them for any length of time. On one occasion on the "Lancelin" it was necessary to turn back into the ocean some 1,500 lb. of scallops and a large number of king-size prawns, both banana and tiger prawns. Good refrigeration, in order that specimens taken from the sea could be preserved, would be a great advantage.

Early this year when a vessel called the "Halimah" became available at Fremantle, the Department became interested in it. The vessel came here early in the year from Borneo; and although it badly needed paint, it appeared to be quite sound. It had sufficient space and tonnage and enough girth for the installation of adequate refrigeration. The crew's quarters must have been constructed for pygmies as the berths were only 4ft. 6in. or 4ft. 9in. in length; and after a cursory inspection, it was decided that for our purposes most of the deck structure would have to be rebuilt.

The purchase price of this vessel, together with the estimated cost of the work that would require to be done on it, amounted to about £25,000; and we thought that would make it a good proposition, as the cost of building a new vessel to our requirements would be £75,000 or £80,000. Had the project been successful, it would have put this State far ahead in its research programme; because had the intended rebuilding and renovation gone according to plan, the vessel would have been in the water by the end of February or March.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson : . Were you badly advised on the condition of the vessel?

MR. KELLY : The vessel had had only an overall or floating examination up to that stage; but it was thought the potential was there, as the boat was heavily constructed of English oak and other suitable timbers, having been built for the British Navy in 1943. As it had been built to the specifications of the British Navy and the dimensions, power, and so on of the vessel were suitable, it did not seem possible that we could go astray. That was our opinion, particularly in view of the fact that even a poorly maintained vessel of 14 years of age -

Mr. Ross Hutchinson : The waters she had sailed in would be a deciding factor.

MR. KELLY : Yes, to some extent, but she had been in British waters for 11 years of her life. We thought it was an excellent chance to get a vessel of that calibre for only about £25,000; and so the second stage was embarked on, entailing an examination on the slip by ship surveyors, ship engineers and shipwrights. In due course these men gave their reports on the vessel. The reports were in minute detail such as -

Timbers running up to the top of the stern knee are affected slightly.

After removing some of the lining, and lifting ceilings and examining wherever possible I found the hull generally in very sound condition.

The condition of the deck is fair. Bulwarks, staunchions and capping very good.

I would say that the vessel is well worth the price and consider that the above repairs could be carried out for about £400.

The further we investigated the more need we found to extend the search in order to find what was really wrong with the vessel. We decided that a thorough investigation was necessary. The engineer and ship's surveyor gave a very fair report. It reads -

The engine was seen under working conditions and appears in good running order, not requiring any major repairs. All gauges and auxiliary equipment in good condition.

With reference to the auxiliary engine, the report said -

The unit, as seen under working conditions appears in good condition requiring only minor attention to glands, joints, etc.

He spoke of the steering gear as being in good condition and the electric wiring as being in reasonable condition and ended by saying -

The vessel generally has been maintained in good condition. Safety glass in wheel house is discoloured and possibly requires renewal. Full life saving and distress equipment on board; also one fire extinguisher.

In conclusion -

It is considered that the vessel would be suitable as a research craft for Fisheries Department with modifications principally to deck erections.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson : It was just a bad buy,

MR. KELLY : I freely admit that. One would have thought that with all the stripping and rigid examination the condition of the vessel would have been discovered sooner.

Eventually a few borers were found in one part of the keel that was exposed; and on further examination it was decided that in order to put the vessel in 100 per cent condition the keel should be renewed. It was then reported that, apart from the keel, the vessel appeared in excellent condition and would prove most suitable as a good research vessel. When the keel was being replaced, all the ribs and other timbers had to be severed and certain sections of both the forward and aft portions had to be removed in order to get the new keel into position.

The further we went in the examination the more deterioration we discovered. As hon. members would see if they cared to inspect it, the actual planking of the vessel is in sound condition for anything; but underneath, deterioration had taken place, with dry rot and toredo worm behind

the sheathing. I can assure hon. members that everything possible was done, as the examination went forward, to ascertain the true condition of the vessel.

Eventually a decision had to be made whether to put good money into an unsound hull to an extent that might ultimately reach 50 per cent of the cost of a completely new vessel, or not. At that stage there appeared on the horizon another suitable vessel, and it was felt that with the experience gained in the case of the "Halimah" we would not be again let down. This other vessel was also an army craft, but one that had been in Australian and Western Australian waters, and of which we had some prior knowledge.

It was found that a decision which would bring about the entire scrapping of the "Halimah" and selling it at a recoup value would allow a saving of approximately £4,000 or £5,000 on the estimate of the vessel. With the sale of the engines and the costly equipment of the "Halimah", the cost of the repairs was greatly offset. The "Limi-cola" should be in the water from two to 2½ months prior to the date the "Halimah" would have been, if these setbacks had not been encountered.

Unfortunately, I had to face up to the fact, for once in my life, that a second-hand purchase had let me down. Even now, however, I consider that the fisheries industry, with the aid of this new ship, fully equipped, will mean a great deal to fisheries research in this State.

INTERSTATE FAUNA AUTHORITIES CONFERENCE

As previously advised the Superintendent (Mr. Fraser) attended the biennial conference of Interstate Fauna Authorities held in Sydney from November 17 to 21, 1958. With the exception of Queensland all States were represented. Also in attendance was an officer of the Northern Territory Administration and a team (including the officer-in-charge) from the Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O.

The conference was under the chairmanship of the Chief Guardian of Fauna, N.S.W., Mr. Allen Strom. It was

officially opened by the Chief Secretary for N.S.W. (Hon. C.A. Kelly, M.L.A.), and the opening ceremony was televised.

The agenda was a lengthy one. Subject headings for the discussions were Research, Education and Publicity, Registration and Licensing, Management, Wild Ducks, Interstate Co-ordination, Bird Banding, Collection of Specimens and States' Authority in Lands held by the Commonwealth. A verbatim report is to be published, and any officer desiring to read the report may borrow it from Head Office.

Features of the conference were a complimentary dinner tendered to delegates by the Government of N.S.W. at the Hotel Metropole, Sydney, and an excursion to the Barren Falls Nature Reserve near Kiama, on the nearer south coast of New South Wales.

WILD DUCKS A HAZARD?

People who ate wild ducks which had consumed the vermin-poison 1080 could become ill, deputy-Public Health Commissioner Dr. W.S. Davidson said recently.

It was extremely unlikely, however, that they could receive a toxic dose in this way. It seemed safe to assume that poison sufficient to kill a human would be sufficient to kill a duck, but the resistance of ducks to the poison had not been established yet.

The deputy commissioner said it was not the first season that 1080 had been used. So far there had been no reports of illness.

ROYALTY ON ROOS LIFTED

The royalty payment of 9d a skin on all grey kangaroo skins has been lifted for a trial period of two years.

The Minister (Mr. Kelly), in a recent press release, said that the Farmers' Union hoped that the lifting of the royalty would bring about increased activity by professional and amateur shooters in those areas where kangaroos were over-plentiful and causing serious damage.

On the present low market price of 4/- per lb. for first-grade skins caused by a decrease in overseas demand, the royalty payment absorbed an unfair proportion of the hunters' net return.

He warned that licenses to authorise the sale of skins of kangaroos taken in the South-West Land Division were still required.

APPEAL FAILS

In Sydney, on December 4, the High Court of Australia dismissed an appeal by Dr. J.S. Marian, formerly managing secretary of the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd. Dr. Marian had appealed against a dismissal by Mr. Justice Wolff in the Supreme Court of Western Australia in June last, of his claim for damages against the Society (see Bulletin, VII, 7, July, 1958).

His claim was for money he said the Co-op had agreed to pay him when he relinquished his appointment. The Co-op maintained that Marian had been dismissed, and that it had good reason for dismissing him.

WHALE OIL MARKET SHAKY

The uncertainty and depressed state of the sperm oil market may delay the resumption of the Cheynes Beach Whaling Co's operations.

The company ceased operations for an indefinite period on December 19 while staff take holidays and maintenance work is done. The market situation will influence the date of resumption.

Total catch for the 12 months ended November was 347 whales - 265 sperm and 82 humpback, but a succession of gales and a breakdown in one of the company's chasers early in the season hampered operations.

Total exports for the season were 1,970 tons of sperm oil and 651 tons of humpback whale oil. The output of 610 tons of whale meal was sold in W.A.

DEPARTMENTAL PROSECUTIONSOctober 1 - December 31, 1958

Date	Defendant	Court	Charge	Result
11.11.58	Green, M.J.	Albany	Fishing in closed waters	Fined £7
do.	Casey, H.R.	do.	do.	" £6
do.	Marwick, R.K.	do.	do.	" £5
24.11.58	Parisi, A.	F'tle	Obstruction	" £10
6.11.58	Frew, W.	Ger'ton	Undersize c/fish	" £2
do.	Evans, C.D.	do.	do.	" £5
do.	Davis, G.	do.	do.	" £5
do.	Lamberton, K.	do.	do.	" £2
4.11.58	Smith, P.F.	Perth	No number on boat	" £5
do.	Estimoff, I.	do.	Undersize c/fish	" £5

REIMBURSEMENT OF PARKING FEES

Circular instruction No. 577 received from the Under Treasurer authorises the reimbursement of parking fees paid by officers during the course of official business. Those who use cars on a regular mileage basis may include the fees in their monthly travelling claim.

Those who use cars intermittently or Government vehicles may be recouped from petty cash.

It is emphasised that the respective dates on which the expenditure was incurred must be shown.

DUCK BAND RECOVERIES

Hereunder are details of the duck bands returned to this Department since the previous list was published in Vol. VII, No. 7, July, 1958, of this Bulletin

Band No.	BANDING		RECOVERY		Distance Flown
	Date	Place	Date	Place	
			<u>Black Duck</u>		
7492	13/4/58	Woodanilling District	3/5/58	Woodanilling	-- mls
7683	10/4/58	do.	do.	do.	--
7790	12/4/58	do.	12/5/58	Carrclup River	15 "
6840	31/3/57	Karrinyup Lake	14/3/58	Springfield, Gingin	45 "
6468	5/2/57	Queen's Gardens	13/2/58	Mouth of the Warren River	180 "
7134	16/1/58	Karrinyup Lake	22/8/58	On a swamp between Yokaine and Worsley	97 "
6805	3/3/57	Karrinyup Lake	22/12/57	Treens Pool	
7401	3/4/58	Murapin Lake, Woodanilling	21/12/58	Walbyring Lake	45 "
2102	8/1/54	Karrinyup Lake	1956/57 open season	Lake Wannamal	45 "
2183	14/1/54	do.	do.	do.	45 "

Band No.	BANDING		RECOVERY		Distance Flown
	Date	Place	Date	Place	
7472	3/4/58	Near Murapin Lake, Woodanilling District	21/12/58	Near Junction Collie and Brunswick Rivers	85 mls
6640	20/2/57	Queen's Gardens	21/12/58	Mealup Lake	52 "
7566	5/4/58	Murapin Lake, Woodanilling District	21/12/58	West Coolup	95 "
6100	20/4/56	Yere Yere Station, Dandaragan	28/12/58	Namming Lake	22 "
7521	4/4/58	Near Murapin Lake, Woodanilling District	31/12/58	Toolburup Lakes, Granbrook	60 "
7340	31/3/58	do.	28/12/58	Beaufort River, 5 mls E. of Bokal Siding	15 "
7796	13/4/58	Woodanilling District	3/1/59	15 mls S. of Borden	80 "
<u>Grey Teal</u>					
4642	20/3/58	Cook's Farm, Mocra	14/5/58	Willies Lake, Mandurah	132 "
4668	5/4/58	Near Murapin Lake, Woodanilling District	29/4/58	Pootenup	55 "
4521	20/1/58	Karrinyup Lake	11/10/58	Swamp 12 mls S. Coolgardie	320 "
2176	12/1/54	do.	1956/57 open season	Lake Wannamal	45 "

Band No.	BANDING		RECOVERY		Distance Flown
	Date	Place	Date	Place	
<u>Grey Teal (contd.)</u>					
4538	22/1/58	Karrinyup Lake	unknown	Lake Wannamal	45 mls
4183	8/12/56	Gundaring Lake	21/12/58	Gundaring Lake	--
4192	8/12/56	do.	21/12/58	Taarblin Lake	25 "
3939	27/3/56	Wardering Lake	23/12/58	Perup River, 21 mls E. Manjimup	70 "
4263	13/3/57	Queerearrup Lake	27/12/58	Swamp 4 mls S.E. Bokal Siding	20 "
4786	15/4/58	Near Murapin Lake, Woodanilling District	21/12/58	Dumbleyung Lake	30 "
3076	26/11/54	Lake Mears	20/12/58	Capel	140 "
4426	16/11/57	Dowerin District	26/12/58	"Channels", 3 mls W. of Lake Mears	80 "
3995	28/3/56	Wardering Lake	26/12/58	Woody Swamp, 20 mls N. Kojonup	4 "
4781	13/4/58	Woodanilling District	Jan '59	Malcolm Dam, 8 mls N. Gwalia	400 "
4681	5/4/58	do.	do.	5 mls W. Quairading	103 "

Of considerable interest also were the return of two C.S.I.R.O. bands, nos. 090-14326 and 090-15304. These bands had been fixed to the legs of two grey teal at Humpty Doo Station in the Northern Territory, on July 29 and August 14, 1957, respectively. Band no. 090-14326 was recovered from a duck shot on the Ludlow River, about four miles from Capel, on December 28, 1958 - its flight from the banding site being 1,750 miles in a straight line, and band no. 090-15304 was taken from a grey teal shot at Dermody's Lake, seven miles east of Wagin, on December 21, 1958 - its flight from the banding site being 1,670 miles.

THE CLEARING HOUSE

Six Modern Research Ships Will Probe Shoal Fish Waters from Cape to Kunene

With the new research vessels Sardinops, Trachurus and Kunene completed and ready for service, the Union of South Africa's Division of Fisheries and the Fisheries Section of the South West Africa Administration will soon start the most intensive investigations ever made into the pelagic shoal fishing waters of the Southern African West Coast.

These investigations come under an augmented research programme which has been planned for a period of nearly five years. It will more than double previous efforts to probe into the secrets of such shoal fish as the pilchard, maasbanker and mackerel, and should at last produce detailed information about the pelagic shoal fishery of the West Coast.

Starting in January, six modern and extremely well-equipped vessels will range over almost the entire West Coast sweep of the fish-rich Benguela Current. Their range of operation extends to a breadth of 250 miles along 1,000 miles of coastal waters from the southern tip of the Cape north to the mouth of the Kunene River. Manned by some 80 seamen, they will collect and feed information on water and weather conditions, nutrient salts, plankton and fish to a team of 30 biologists, chemists and other scientists.

The total value of ships, new and enlarged laboratories and other equipment used in this, the largest research programme ever planned for the fishing waters of the Southern Hemisphere, will exceed £500,000. The research operations will cost the Union Government and the S.W.A. Administration some £100,000 a year.

But the size and scope of the research programme are more than matched by the value of the shoal fish to the economies of South and South West Africa. For 12 years the pilchard and maasbanker have comprised the bulk of the Southern

African fish catch and to-day they support an industry employing thousands of fishermen and factory operators in 300 boats and 19 factories. The investment in this industry is estimated at more than £15,000,000 and each year it produces canned fish, fish meal and fish body oil valued at about £12,000,000. Of the expected total catch of 700,000 tons in 1958, nearly 570,000 tons will be pelagic shoal fish, pilchard, maasbanker, mackerel and snoek.

Fish catching on this scale has, however, stimulated the fear that the resource may be over exploited and for the past eight years fishery scientists have endeavoured to assess the extent of the resource and perhaps to predict the movements of the shoals. Both the Division of Fisheries and the Fisheries Section in South West Africa have collected and examined considerable data, but the results have been uncertain and the conservation measures at present applied to the industry are arbitrary and have little scientific basis.

("The South African Shipping News and
Fishing Industry Review" Cape Town November, 1958.)

Fisheries Survey in Australia

The Australian Fisheries Department is conducting an economic survey of the structure of the fishing industry, involving marketing research in all States, Mr. McMahon, Minister for Primary Industry, announced recently.

The financial prospect for Australian fisheries provided cause for concern, he said. While the fishing industry supplied about half the fish eaten in Australia, with exports worth £5½ million a year, large numbers of fishermen claimed they could not operate at a profit.

On the other hand many housewives had come to regard fresh fish as almost a luxury, and thousands of families in inland districts rarely ate salt water fish.

"Many of our fishing grounds either have been fished out or are yielding relatively poor catches.....We must

try to find new grounds," Mr. McMahon said.

"There is one branch of fishing that has hardly been tapped in Australia, though it could yield very substantial results. It is the netting of pelagic fish which are so much exploited in the northern hemisphere. In Australian waters they include tuna, sardines, jack mackerel, anchovies and sprats.

"The demand in Australia for fish is growing with the rising population, many of whom are migrants from fish-eating countries. So there is a real potential for increased fish production, particularly of fresh fish.

"Despite the present crisis, our fisheries are an expanding industry. Australian fishermen have proved themselves people of considerable enterprise, and the Commonwealth Government aims to help them as much as possible," Mr. McMahon added.

("The Fishing News"

London

November 7, 1958.)

Whaling Nations Meet to Discuss Future

Norway, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia and Great Britain, the five countries with the greatest interest in Antarctic whaling, met in London on Wednesday to discuss the situation in the industry as a new season starts.

All except Russia are anxious to agree on greater control of the catching industry, and a proposal to award each country an individual annual quota was to be put forward, it is understood.

If this proposal is not accepted, there is some danger that the International Whaling Convention may collapse, for Norway has been threatening for some time to leave this organisation.

It was realised between the two World Wars that there was danger of over-fishing for whales, and an agreement was signed between Britain and Norway, then the two main whaling

nations, in 1932. This fixed the number of whales to be caught in the '32-'33 season, and the oil production.

It was renewed the following year, but a British and a Norwegian company remained outside these agreements. Further agreements followed, and in 1937 the first International Whaling Convention was signed, and renewed in 1938, with certain modifications.

Industry's Charter

There was no pelagic whaling during the war years, but in November, 1945, an International Whaling Conference was held in London, attended by 12 nations. Regulations were then drawn up, and eventually published in the "Official Journal" of 1949. This forms the present-day Charter of the world's whaling industry.

The International Whaling Convention, in fact, regulates the size of whales which may be caught; according to the species; it decides on "open seasons" for each species; and, more important, it lays down how many "blue whale" units shall be caught each season. One blue whale, or two fin whales, or two-and-a-half humpback whales, each equal one unit.

This year Norway has nine expeditions, Japan eight, Britain three and Holland one. Russia has two, with three more under construction, and Japan is also increasing her fleets. For the coming season the limit has been set at 15,000 units.

In order to regulate this, each factory ship must cable its total weekly catch to the Committee of International Whaling Statistics at Sandefjord, in Norway. When the limit is nearly reached, Sandefjord decides when the season shall end.

Unfortunately, however, official circles have long suspected - and commercial whaling interests had more than a suspicion of - Russia's tactics. There is little doubt that Russian whalers take all the whales which come within range of their harpoons, regardless of size or quota. And the Russians will allow none of the Committee's international observers aboard their ships - a ban which speaks for itself.

It is also more than suspected that Russian vessels report their catch as being far higher than it actually is, so that the season is declared to be at an end before the quota is reached. Russia then has the field to herself, and it is impossible to say how many units in all she actually catches.

In face of this, the other nations concerned mount larger and more expensive expeditions each year, in order to catch as many whales as possible before the global quota is reached. If the proposal for an individual quota were agreed, however, there would be no race, and the wasteful expense of competition could be cut.

At the moment, the cost of one expedition from Britain costs between £6 million and £8 million, and a poor catch can be disastrous.

If Russia refuses to agree to the quota system proposed, it means that Britain, and perhaps Norway, might have to cease operations altogether. Or, alternatively, the whaling nations may imitate Russia in ignoring quotas, and catch all the whales they can get.

This, undoubtedly, would mean the end of the whaling industry within a very few years.

("The Fishing News" London November 21, 1958.)

£3 Million Being Spent by Eire on Fisheries' Development

A total of £3 million for the development of fisheries, including harbours, is included in the Irish Republican Government's Five-Year Economic Expansion programme. Expenditure on fisheries is fixed at the rate of £400,000 in the first year, increasing to £500,000, £500,000, £550,000, and £600,000 in the succeeding years. In addition £500,000 is likely to be spent on harbour development in the five-year development.

Outlining policy the White Paper giving the programme says "Hitherto, sea fisheries policy has been aimed at supplying the home market with fresh fish from landings by

inshore fishermen. The market is restricted; our consumption of fish is one of the lowest in the world. The home market could be expanded considerably if prices were reduced by an increase in supplies, and if the means of distribution were improved.

"Our exports are small, but it is clear that markets are available if we can supply high-quality fish at a competitive price. With good prospects of markets at home and abroad, policy is now aimed at a substantial increase in landings of fish.

"An FAO consultant is being engaged to review the industry, to suggest the lines upon which it should be developed as an export industry, to advise on measures to increase catching power and processing, to facilitate marketing and to attract the necessary capital....An Icelandic master fisherman has been engaged to advise fishermen in modern methods and techniques. Two groups of young fishermen are undergoing training as skippers - the first ashore at Galway and the second at sea. It is hoped the course started at Galway will develop into an established nautical school."

("The Fishing News"

London

November 28, 1958.)

Rigid Inspection for Canadian
Fish Processing Factories

Canadian fish processing factories will have to meet rigid standards of quality and hygiene before inspection will be granted their product by the Department of Fisheries.

This announcement by the Canadian Government Specifications Board follows the statement by Fisheries Minister J. Angus MacLean that there will be a greater degree of inspection of fishery products and processing plants, beginning next January (Fishing News, October 10).

The new specification applies to fish products which may be iced, scaled, dressed, filleted, steaked, portioned, batter-coated, breaded or cooked, and are preserved by icing or freezing.

Buildings

It provides that in plant construction the surface of floors in wet working areas must be of concrete, asphalt or other approved material. All floors must be sloped to drain and be properly maintained. Drains, where connected to a sewer, must be equipped with traps.

The inside walls of wet working areas must be of smooth, waterproof and light coloured material, and built to permit extensive washing up to a height of not less than four feet. Ceilings must be dust-tight so that vibrations cannot cause dust to fall through to the room below. Working rooms must have adequate ventilation and well lighted, "minimum illuminating intensity being 20 foot candles."

Plants must have adequate sanitary facilities of an approved type, and the surrounding area of the plant kept clean and free from refuse. All table surfaces, other than filleting and skinning boards, and containers, trays and other utensils for processed fish shall be of stainless steel, salt water resistant alloys or other approved material, and the frames and legs of all tables on which fish is produced and packed must be of metal. The containers must have smooth surfaces free from cracks or crevices.

Equipment

Conveyor belts coming in contact with fish or processed fish, except packaged fish, must be fitted with a spray of "approved water," and where practical, with a scraper. Cutting and skinning boards must be made of a single piece of planed lumber, other than plywood, or other approved material.

If, in the opinion of an inspector, the operation, equipment or other processing facilities of a plant are creating an unsatisfactory or unsanitary condition, he shall refuse to inspect any fish produced during the period that the conditions exist.

The quality requirements provide for no detectable spoilage in the marketable portion of the fish, the flesh must be firm and resilient, the edible portions free

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from abnormal conditions, and not mutilated. Dressed fish must be properly split and cleaned "in accordance with good commercial practice."

Where the packer claims by labelling or advertising that the fillets or fillet portions are "boneless", no bones shall be permitted; in other cases, with the exception of pin bones, fillets or fillet portions shall not contain an excessive number of bones.

Fish for processing shall be either processed immediately or adequately iced or chilled for holding following unloading from a fish boat or transport vessel, vehicle or aircraft. Fish held before processing must be contained in clean, well drained bins, boxes or containers, and, except in refrigerated sea water, not be piled more than three feet deep.

Frozen or processed fish must be continuously maintained at the lowest practical temperature; not higher than 10 deg. F. is recommended during frozen storage.

Containers

All containers and wrappers for fresh, frozen or processed fish must be correctly and legibly marked or labelled to indicate the vernacular name of the fish; net weight of contents, excepting wrappers indicating that contents will be weighed at time of retail sale; the name and address of the person or firm for whom they are produced and packed or by whom they are distributed; and the words "Product of Canada."

The Department states that necessary steps will be taken to ensure that the consumer will be protected against the purchase of improperly labelled fish products.

("The Fishing News" London November 28, 1958)

U.S. Beauties for N-West

W.A.'s most colourful North-West will get some outside colour next week. Two high-fashion U.S. models will fly into Broome (population 1160), as part of an ambitious

scheme to promote the sale of Australian pearlshell. The models are in a party of 11, led by fashion editor Mrs. Rosemary McMurtry, from the U.S. magazine Seventeen (circulation 1,500,000).

The magazine is co-operating with Government and civil organisers to give a wide cover to the pearling industry and pearlshell in fashion.

Members of the party are due in Perth on Saturday night, will leave by M.M.A. on Monday for Broome - 18,000 air miles from home.

Writers

With Mrs. McMurtry and the models will be high-pay writers and cameramen. The cameramen and script writers will be quickly on the job. To give an Australian background to the project, they will start gathering sales promotion material in Perth on Sunday - with marching girls as a background.

The visit has been arranged by Wall-st. millionaire pearlshell importer Allan Gerdau, president of the Otto Gerdau Co., one of the biggest buyers of W.A. pearlshell.

In an effort to counter the threat posed by synthetics, he has been working in conjunction with the New York office of the Australian Trade Commissioner and with Keith Dureau, Melbourne chairman of a world-wide company with pearl trading interests.

In a recent announcement, Minister for Trade McEwen said that the Commonwealth was about to support a "special advertising campaign to promote sales of Australian pearlshell products in the U.S., the U.K. and Europe."

The Commonwealth would contribute 40,000 dollars to a campaign that would cost 120,000 dollars this year. Matching contributions would be made by the Australian pearling industry and U.S. importers and manufacturers of pearlshell products.

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Said the Minister: "The advertising campaign will feature the natural beauty and prestige appeal of genuine ocean pearlshell. It will particularly be aimed at creating a heavier demand for pearl accessories in the high fashion field.

"The organisers of the campaign have already been assured of strong support from fashion leaders, garment manufacturers and the fashion Press in the United States and Europe.

"I am confident that it will be successful in increasing sales of Australian pearlshell and will do much to bring stability and prosperity to the Australian pearlshell industry."

Next Move, January

In another move to publicise W.A.'s pearling industry, a party of top overseas writers, broadcasters and photographers will visit the North-West in January.

It will include representatives of American magazines McCall's, Mademoiselle and Holiday, Paris Match and Argosy (London).

Howell Conent, photographer to the Swedish royal family and to Princess Grace of Monaco, is expected to be in the party, which will number about 15.

There will also be representatives of the Hearst chain of U.S. dailies, King Features, United Press International and world-famous radio feature Monitor.

Movietone international cameramen will make a series of TV films.

("Daily News"

Perth

December 3, 1958.)

Crays Are Dumped in Big Glut

Thousands of pounds worth of crayfish which are dying before they can be processed, are being dumped at sea off Fremantle.

Yesterday, about 300 bags are believed to have been taken three miles to sea and dumped by one boat. Live crayfish are worth £10 a bag.

The loss is being caused by an unprecedented run of white crayfish and catches are said to be the best ever.

So many are being landed at Fremantle from laden catcher boats that processing facilities cannot cope with them.

White crays are not as hardy as the more common red cray, and many are dying before the processing works can take them.

A spokesman for Fremantle crayfishermen said yesterday that the refusal of the W.A. Meat Export Works at Robb Jetty to lease a processing and freezing room to the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society this year had aggravated the difficulties. This room had been used by the co-operative in past years at a cost to it of about £6,000 each season.

The manager of the W.A. Meat Export Works, C.C. Bennett, said that the lease of the room had been held for some years by Brown and Dureau, from whom the co-operative hired it when there was more than could be processed at Fremantle.

The manager of Brown and Dureau, J. Houlahan, said that his company sold the processing equipment in the room before the start of the season. The co-operative was offered it, but would not buy.

An adjacent company, Genex Pty. Ltd., bought the equipment and took the lease.

Mr. Houlahan said that Genex had been operating at Robb Jetty for some years while the co-operative had used the facilities there for only a few weeks each year.

75 Per Cent

The Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society handles about 75 per cent of the State's crays and about 85 per cent of the boats sell to them.

The co-operative is working round the clock at its Fremantle processing works in an effort to keep up with the big intake of crays.

Fishermen say they have never seen big quantities of crays dumped in past years and believe there will be more losses for a week or two until the flow of white crays slackens.

Last season crays exported from Western Australia - 79 per cent of Australia's total - sold for a record 5,900,000 dollars.

Fisheries Minister Kelly said last night that he had not heard any reports of cray dumping. Until a few days ago white crays were not running, he said. He would take up the matter immediately if there was a glut or shortage of processing facilities.

("West Australian" Perth December 8, 1958.)

Crayfish Glut Overtaken

The processing plant at the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd., was now able to cope with the influx of white crayfish, general manager John McGowan said yesterday.

The plant had caught up with the big volume of crayfish it had received.

No further difficulty was expected for the remainder of the white crayfish season, which generally lasted about seven to ten days.

Mr. McGowan said that boats were catching from 25 to 30 bags a day where normally they would only get 12 to 14 bags.

The percentage of dead crayfish this season was not high. The percentage, including those dumped at sea and those treated for fertiliser, was only 0.75 per cent of the live weight

No crayfish were transported alive by road from Jurien Bay to Fremantle. They were processed on the mother ship Miss Phoenix and brought to the Fremantle freezer plant in refrigerated trucks.

Live crayfish were transported by road from Lancelin and Ledge Point for processing. This proved satisfactory last year.

A processing plant had not been established at Lancelin because it was uneconomical. The most economical method of processing was by freezer boats.

The Fremantle Co-operative's method had been most successful and last year its fishermen had been paid the highest price in the State for their crayfish.

The co-operative's export of frozen crayfish tails had been the biggest single dollar-earner for the Commonwealth last year.

("West Australian" Perth December 11, 1958.)

Fishermen Disappointed

Open Go on Prawns from May 1, 1959

Despite strong protests from fishermen and the trade, State Government will abolish size restrictions on prawns from May 1, 1959.

Latest move to stop the Government amending the law was made this month by the Union of Fishermen's Co-operatives. The Union is the largest organised body of professional fishermen in Australia. Its chairman, Frank O'Grady, of Yamba, led a deputation to the Chief Secretary's Department suggesting an alternative to the "open go" policy.

Fishermen asked that the :

- * Present $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch minimum legal length be retained with a 10 per cent tolerance for undersize.
- * A £50 minimum penalty be imposed for infringement of the law.

* Restrictions on mesh sizes for prawn nets be removed.

State Superintendent of Fisheries, N.V. Harris, said the proposals were not acceptable. There must be some fixed mesh size for nets.

Furthermore the policing of a tolerance was a responsibility he would not like to impose on fisheries inspectors.

Mr. Harris said the "open go" on prawns would start on May 1, 1959.

Mr. O'Grady said fishermen were "bitterly disappointed".

Outside fishermen in particular feared there would be a flood of small prawns from the estuaries which would depress market prices and make the industry unprofitable.

Mr. O'Grady said the Government evidently held the view that the slaughter of small prawns would not deplete the fishery.

It was paying an Austrian marine biologist (Dr. Racek) £70 a week for advice on prawns and evidently felt the money would be wasted if his advice was not acted on, he said.

Mr. O'Grady added: "Of course we may be proved wrong. There is a big increase in the population and more people are eating prawns."

The Union held a three-day meeting in Sydney this month.