

Abrolhos Crayfish Production (cont.)

(3)

Year	Catch per man				
	North Island	Wallabi Group	Easter Group	Pelsart Group	All Groups
	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.
1951	16,601	16,684	22,732	14,771	17,530
1952	16,555	22,084	18,118	16,481	18,446
1953	17,606	22,041	16,199	17,294	18,203
1954	13,931	18,883	19,784	19,800	18,756
1955	15,482	18,402	17,082	14,952	16,592
1956	12,769	16,979	20,373	14,038	16,189
1957	16,661	17,221	17,382	14,211	16,411
1958	17,204	17,692	18,018	14,516	17,063
1959	15,329	14,001	17,164	14,912	15,373
1960	12,529	13,205	14,391	14,728	13,679

Biennial Conference of Australian Fauna Authorities.

Last September delegates from all States and from the Australian Capital and Northern Territories, with representatives of Commonwealth Departments, met at Brisbane to discuss problems and policies associated with fauna conservation and protection. It was the first time that Queensland had been the host State and only the second of these at which all States had been represented.

Items discussed included reports on current research programmes and the co-ordination and planning of research. These comprised waterfowl in general, vermin control measures and their effect on fauna, and other management problems. Not the least of these were those resulting from the commercial exploitation of kangaroos.

A feature of the conference was the early appointment of a committee whose job it was, progressively, to draft and prepare resolutions arising from the discussions for later consideration by the conference. The compact and smoothly-functioning

committee, which comprised the conference's convening officer, Mr. J.A. Weddell, of Queensland; the Director of Fisheries and Wildlife, Victoria (Mr. A.D. Butcher); and our own Director, Mr. Fraser, was able to crystallise various decisions into readily acceptable terms. The net result was that the most important function of the conference, the circulation of its resolutions, was accomplished before the record of proceedings reached draft form.

The resolutions passed by the conference read as follows :-

Resolution No. 1 - Pesticides.

That this Conference, having given consideration to the increasing use of pesticides for the control of pest fauna and weeds, and appreciating the need for adequate control, believes that little cognizance has been taken of their adverse effect on native fauna and recommends to the Governments of the respective States and Territories that, before undertaking poisoning on Crown lands, or on reserves, sanctuaries or other areas set aside for the conservation of native fauna, the opinion of the fauna conservation authority be obtained as to the possible effect of such poisoning on the native fauna occurring therein.

Resolution No. 2 - Wedge-tailed Eagle.

That this Conference, having regard to the diverse opinions of pastoralists and agriculturists in regard to the depredations of the wedge-tailed eagle, and being anxious to avoid unnecessary destruction of native fauna, recommends to the Wildlife Survey Section of C.S.I.R.O. that it undertake a biological study of the species for the purpose of arriving at an authoritative assessment of its destructiveness or otherwise.

Resolution No. 3 - Basic Research.

Conference is of the opinion that, in attempting to seek the solution of short-term fauna problems, the role of basic research in providing the solution to problems is frequently neglected. As one step towards achieving an acceptance of the need for basic research the State fauna authorities should consider inviting co-operation of groups of interested persons and providing them with information which would foster their interest. This in turn could lead to a greater public awareness. One of the present difficulties in organising biological investigations is that of obtaining assistants with adequate biological training.

Conference recommends that the respective State authorities give consideration to possible ways and means of meeting this problem.

Resolution No. 4 - Waterfowl Breeding Areas.

That this Conference, having consideration to the very great importance of certain areas of duck breeding habitat within the Murray-Darling basin, wishes to bring to the attention of the N.S.W. Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission the urgent need for the provision of protective measures for duck breeding habitat during planning stages of water conservation schemes.

Resolution No. 5 - Waterfowl Drought Refuge.

That this Conference, having regard to the very great importance of the area known as BAMEROO-GJAGA, Goose Camp, in the Northern Territory, as a refuge for waterfowl during times of extreme drought, recommends to the Northern Territory Administration that steps be taken to ensure the future preservation of this area under the appropriate form of reservation.

Resolution No. 6 - Banding Records

Conference agrees to the necessity for uniformity of waterfowl banding records and recommends that the respective State and Federal authorities carrying out banding should retain an additional record for delivery to a Central Depository when such has been established. For this purpose the Australian Waterfowl Advisory Committee should define the form of record to be kept.

Resolution No. 7 - Wildlife Reserves.

Conference places on record its recognition of the value of the very real progress made over the past few years in respect to sanctuaries and related wildlife reserves as reported by the several States and takes cognizance of the need for a greater public awareness of these developments. Conference also wishes to acknowledge the assistance being given by the Australian Academy of Science to the national parks concept in this country.

Conference strongly recommends to the several State and Federal authorities that this activity in the field of wildlife habitat be intensified.

(S.A. abstained from voting).

Resolution No. 8 - Private Zoos

Conference places on record its opposition to private zoos or collections of fauna, but in so doing accepts that such opposition may be qualified in those States which do not possess major zoological gardens. Conference excludes bona fide avicultural collections from the terms of this resolution.

Resolution No. 9 - Overseas Export

Conference expresses its disapproval of the unilateral action by the Commonwealth on the question of the export of fauna and stresses the necessity for Commonwealth and State consultation before action affecting State fauna administration is initiated.

(C.S.I.R.O., Department of the Interior, and Department of Customs and Excise abstained from voting)

Resolution No. 10 - Control of Exotics in Aviaries.

Western Australia expressed concern at the possible spread of exotic aviary birds and instanced the case of the Java sparrow and the potential risk to the rice industry. Conference therefore recommends that each State and Territory and the C.S.I.R.O. Wildlife Survey Section examine the exotic aviary bird position with a view to submitting to the Conference Secretariate lists of those species considered to present a potential threat to primary industry or native fauna, together with a statement as to the specific potential problem, and that this item be included in the next Conference agenda.

Resolution No. 11. - Check-Lists of Birds and Mammals.

That this Conference, recognising the need for up to date check lists of both birds and mammals in Australia, seeks the co-operation of the Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O., the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union and the Australian Mammal Society in the preparation of these lists.