

data of salmon in Western Australian waters, and Dr. Kesteven was anxious to learn to what extent we could assist. The Director has now approved of our co-operation, and details of the required studies will be worked out by Dr. Malcolm and our Research Officer, Mr. Bowen. It is expected that the necessary field work will be placed in the hands of Technical Officer L.G. Smith.

#### OPENING OF DUCK SHOOTING SEASON

Four groups of officers left Perth on the weekend before Christmas to patrol the final hours of the close season and to witness activities generally at some of the more important duck shooting areas. This was the first occasion when so many officers attended the opening shoot of the season.

The Research Officer, Mr. Bowen, accompanied by Technical Officer J.S. Simpson, first went to Gundaring Lake, near Wagin, but the shooting was so poor there that they later proceeded to Taarblin, where they inspected shooters' bags and aged and sexed a number of birds.

Messrs. H.B. Shugg and W.K. Cherrington, of Head Office, called in at Benger Swamp, near Harvey, and contacted honorary wardens and shooters before going on to the Stirling Estate at Capel. Well over 100 guns operated at both areas. The shooting at Benger was more successful than in previous years, shooters bagging on the average more than six birds. No count was taken at the Stirling Estate, but the party reported that there were more ducks present than in previous years and shooters appeared to achieve reasonable bags. Full details were not secured as the two officers left the area before the shooting concluded to patrol the closed Vasse and Wonnerup Estuaries, and to inspect the Broadwater south of Busselton which local residents had petitioned to be closed.

Fauna Warden S.W. Bowler attended the opening shoot at Lake Wannamal, north of Gingin, where he contacted honorary wardens. His arrival on the afternoon before the opening was timely as he was able to apprehend four men who commenced shooting at 6.45 p.m. on December 17. The opening time in that area, it will be remembered, is 5 a.m. on December 18. Mr. Bowler estimated that approximately 60 guns were present at the opening on Sunday morning but, contrary to expectations, ducks were rather scarce although the Lake was at a high level. The average bag was approximately three.

Fauna Warden N.E. McLaughlan, accompanied by Honorary Warden D.G. Bathgate, went to Walyormouring or Oak Park Lake in the Goomalling District. Mr. McLaughlan estimated that about 2,000 ducks were on the Lake as well as large aggregations of banded stilts and coot. As in all other areas (except the Stirling Estate), grey teal predominated. Mr. McLaughlan reported that a number of shooters had taken the bag limit by 7.30 a.m. He and Mr. Bathgate were able to sex and weigh 235 ducks, a really commendable effort on their part. 80% of the birds examined were grey teal and 11.5% were mountain duck. The percentage of black ducks was only 2.5.

The following comparison of the weights of grey teal has been prepared by the Research Officer :-

Year and Place	Males		Females	
	Juvenile	Mature	Juvenile	Mature
	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.
1957 (Gundaring)	16	17	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	16 $\frac{1}{2}$
1958 (Taarblin)	15 $\frac{1}{2}$	18	14	16
1960 (Taarblin)	17	20	16	18
1960 (Oak Park)	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	19	16	17

Mr. Bowen says it is obvious that there has been very little variation in the year-by-year weights of teal sampled in 1957, 1958 and 1960. It is of interest to note that the teal examined at Oak Park in 1960 were similar in weight to those at Taarblin.