

BOAT LOSSES

The 1961 Abrolhos season got away to a bad start when the 20' bondwood fishing boat "Soeker", owned and skippered by Mr. L. Thompson, was rolled over by a breaker whilst rounding the North-East Point, East Wallabi Island, Houtman Abrolhos.

Tragedy struck at Jurien Bay on March 15, when two experienced crayfishermen, George Barbarich and Mate Parentich were drowned. They had been crayfishing in their 26' boat "Marlene Ann" when she was swamped by a wave.

On April 9, the crayboat "Trader", owned by Mr. P. Coussens, of Mt. Yokine, was swept onto the rocks at Yanchop Beach. It is understood that only the engine was saved from the vessel, which was valued at £2,000. Mr. Coussens said that he had been grappling for his moorings when a heavy wave struck the boat just as the engine cut out.

PEARL CULTURE LICENSES

Three additional licenses to culture pearlshell and pearls have been approved by the Minister for Fisheries. Two of these are in respect of small areas taken up by Pearls Pty.Ltd., one at Brecknock Harbour and the other at Sampson Inlet, both in close proximity to the Company's main centre at Kuri Bay. The third area is one applied for by a Broome pearler, Mr. D.M. Brown, who will operate in a four-square-mile area off Shenton Bluff in King Sound. These three bring to a total of seven the number of areas approved for this purpose.

LONGEVITY OF SILVER GULLS

On March 18, Inspector A.V. Green of Mandurah, saw three sea-gulls killed by traffic in the main street of Rockingham. He inspected the carcasses for bands and found that one was carrying band No.080-00936. A check of our records revealed that this band had been placed on the bird at Bird Island, Shoalwater Bay, on October 23, 1957, by Fauna Warden S.W. Bowler and Inspector J. Traynor. As the 41 months for which this gull had been banded appeared to be the longest band on our records, an enquiry was directed to the Secretary of the Australian Bird-Banding Scheme asking whether there were instances of greater longevity in these species. His reply, recently received, advises that a silver gull banded at Thirroul, N.S.W., on November 13, 1955, had been recovered 59 months later quite close to its banding place. Another bird banded at Wynyard, Tasmania, on December 24, 1955, had also been recovered near its banding place 59 months later.