

Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Victoria; and Mr F. Bagley, of the Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra. They will arrive on June 13 and leave for Adelaide on the morning of June 17.

\*\*\*

Mr J.D. Tipper, Director of the Muogamarra Sanctuary, in the Hawkesbury valley, New South Wales, called during the month to discuss fauna conservation in Australia. Mr Tipper, who was on a 10-day visit to the State, also called on other conservation authorities..

#### MANDURAH CRAFT BUFFETED

Although surprisingly little serious damage seems to have been suffered by the fishing fleets during the gales experienced in May, many of the small craft at Mandurah were severely buffeted. Reporting on this, Inspector E.I. Forster says that about a quarter of the small craft in Soldier's Cove and the main channel were sunk and, to June 1, many had not been raised.

One fishing boat damaged was LFB M 18, owned by Mr Lionel Renfrey. Caught by the nor'-west gale, she capsized near the bar and was beached on the south shore. Damage estimated at £50 was sustained. This consisted mainly of a broken mast, stove-in planking and damaged prawn nets and frame. Mr Forster quotes local fishermen as saying that they had not experienced a storm which lasted so long.

#### TORTOISE HUNTERS CAPTURE ASTRONAUT

Well, not exactly! But on one of their forays in search of the elusive short-necked tortoise, Fauna Protection Officer H.B. Shugg and Fauna Warden S.W. Bowler, with their voluntary co-searchers, Misses C.A. Nicholls and D. Rook, did pick up visiting master of communications at Muchea for Project Mercury, Mr Dan Hunter, whose hire-car had broken down. This was about 4.30 a.m. on Saturday morning, May 26. Mr Hunter had been bound for the tracking station for some last minute business before returning to Cape Canaveral, when his car stopped and could not be restarted. It was raining steadily at the time, and he appreciated getting an unexpected lift to the Station, so much so that security was slackened for a few minutes while the "hunters" were shown over the inner sanctum where "Deke" Slayton and he had sat and conversed with human missile, Scott Carpenter.

Up to that time only one short-necked tortoise had been found this year. It was discovered by Misses Nicholls and Rook on the edge of a cleared paddock adjacent to the tortoise reserve. It was under the bole of a dead zamia palm which was one of many that had been bulldozed off the paddock now under cultivation. To cap a most interesting morning, however, Miss Nicholls found a second tortoise. This one was a male. It was discovered on the reserve proper, lying at the base of a clump of sedge and appeared to be in very good condition although its carapace was damaged, apparently by a kangaroo's hind claw.

The searches are being continued, not only to try to widen the area of the distribution of the tortoise, but also to record the movements and occurrences of the little fellows on the reserved areas.