

Harry W. Kaufman, Atlanta's vice president in charge of seafood, says;

"These two sizes give the retailer a chance to price our rock lobster tails at realistic levels attractive to the consumer. Moreover, the tails we are marketing are imported from Brazil, the fastest growing lobster-producing area in the world, and are carefully selected for quality to satisfy the fastidious American palate. These two packages will really move."

Whereas it used to be said that Australian tails designated "South African tails" were being sold retail at premium prices, it has lately come to notice that Brazilian tails are now frequently retailed as Australian, and thus securing a distinct price advantage.

#### SWAMPHENS CAUSE DAMAGE

Although their eastern States counterparts are often classed as pests, we have only two records of the Western Australian species of Swamphens, Porphyrio porphyrio, causing damage to agriculture. These birds are normally shy and secretive. The first report of damage was forwarded to us by Honorary Warden A. Hinge, of Harvey, in a letter dated April 30, 1960. He advised that the birds were then causing considerable damage on the farm of Mr. D. Collela, whose property adjoined the main highway just north of Harvey. The report was forthwith investigated by Fauna Wardens S.W. Bowler and N.E. McLaughlan. The officers were shown two paddocks, each of about four acres, where the birds had been uprooting rye and clover grasses. It was said that about 250 of the birds were located in a swamp which fringed the property. Its area was about 50 acres.

A few days later, at 4.30 in the afternoon, they called again and saw the birds

uprooting grasses in the paddocks. They positively identified the birds as swamphens. The wardens commented that many of the birds were immature, but added that judging by the numbers in the paddocks, the swamp must have been an excellent breeding place. The owner stated that he had tried scarecrows and firing shots to frighten the birds away, but without any success. Presumably the damage ceased in that instance for no license was sought or issued. In fact, no further complaint has been received from Mr. Collela.

Early this month, however, Mr. Bowler investigated a complaint made by a Mr. A. Salleo, of Cannington, that swamphens were damaging his market garden. Mr. Bowler found that over a hundred tomatoes had been partly eaten, while 35 tomato plants had been knocked down by the birds on this 5-acre garden. At the time of his visit, Mr. Bowler observed 11 swamphens eating the tomatoes, but Mr. Salleo told him that at times there were up to 40 birds in the garden. A short-term permit to allow Mr. Salleo to destroy a few of the birds was issued, but further visits will be made to check whether the damage continues.

It might be only a coincidence that these isolated instances have occurred at the same season of the year, but one almost automatically assumes it has been caused by a seasonal shortage of natural food.