

Tuna

A report on tuna tagging, by Mr. J.S. Hynd, C.S.I.R.O., was elaborated by Dr. Kesteven.

Other

A number of papers were presented on other matters, including a proposal concerning geological research at Shark Bay, and its impact on prawn research, by Dr. B.W. Logan, Geology Department, University of Western Australia; the economic survey of the crayfish industry of Western Australia now in progress, by A.G. Bollen, Fisheries Division, Department of Primary Industry, Canberra, presented by Mr. Taylor; taxonomic work in Western Australia in 1962-63, by Mr. McKay, submitted by Mr. Bowen; and crayfishing packing records, given by Mr. Stark.

Members of the committee and guests were entertained at a buffet dinner during the evening of October 25. The Minister for Fisheries, Mr. Hutchinson, who was indisposed, was unfortunately unable to attend.

FAUNA NOTES

A duck sent in from Meekatharra has been identified as a Plumed Tree Duck (Dendrocygna cytoni). Mr. C. Fisher, of Meekatharra, who shot the duck, advised that it was one of twenty five seen at Irridabubba Pool on the Murchison River, 75 miles west of Meekatharra.

This is the first report to be received for many years of the taking in this State of a tree duck south of the Kimberley Land Division, where two species of the genus occur. Known usually as the Plumed Tree Duck and the Whistling Tree Duck, they are both thought to be more closely related to swans and geese than to ducks. However, they have not been studied very closely and nothing much is known about them. One member of the genus, Dendracygna bicolor, known as the Fulvous Whistling Duck, has the widest distribution of any bird in the world. It occurs in widely separated areas, in both Americas, in Africa and Asia, but, strangely enough, not in Australia. The Plumed Tree Duck is limited to Australia, but the Whistling Tree Duck is found all over southern Asia and in the Pacific Islands north of the Philippines. Both species occasionally penetrate into southern Australia, more commonly in the eastern States, and wanderers have also been picked up in Tasmania and New Zealand.

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A vigilant quarantine inspector, Mr. S. Cook, of the Department of Agriculture, whose officers inspect all inward and outward consignments of animals passing through the Perth Airport, recently detected a box of illegally imported snakes. They were consigned from South Australia to a showman's address in Victoria Park, but arrived without either the necessary import license or the required health certificate.

Inquiries were made immediately by Fauna Warden S.W. Bowler, as well as by Mr. Cook, but the consignee could not be found and, consequently, the reptiles were returned to the sender.

This is the second consignment of vertebrates to be returned to the sender (at his expense) in recent months. The previous one was a shipment of tortoises which arrived from Singapore addressed to a local dealer in aquarium fishes. These animals were returned on the next plane as there is a complete ban on the import of all vertebrates with the exception of some fish.