

NATIVE CATS ABUNDANT

Fauna Warden A. R. Marshall reports that in May this year he discovered the bodies of four Western Native Cats (*Dasyurus geoffroii*), all killed by vehicles on the Brunswick Junction/Collie road.

The bodies were distributed over about four miles and all the animals had been recently killed. There were three males and one female.

Mr. Marshall comments that to see four native cats in such a short distance is indicative of the number that must be present. In fact, Collie is a known stronghold of the species, but further investigations show that in the past few months a large number of sightings have been made. Furthermore, many of these have been in or near the metropolitan area, notably at Armadale, Kalamunda, Quinn's Rock and in the John Forrest National Park. One specimen found at Wanneroo had only three legs which appeared to be a congenital deformity rather than the result of an accident.

There could be two reasons for the large numbers of sightings of native cats. One is that the species is making a comeback, or at least holding its own in the face of increased development of the bush. The other reason would be that the efforts of this Department's Extension Service are paying off and individuals are taking the trouble to report sightings and bring in specimens.

Readers are urged to report all sightings to this Department and specimens are always welcome at the W.A. Museum.