

small area adjacent to the swimming site to cater for picnickers, and that authority be granted for the erection of shelters and sanitary conveniences. A short visit was made to Little Unicup Lake, which is situated approximately one mile north-west of Lake Unicup. Unlike Lake Unicup, Little Unicup is salt. However, the vast number of water fowl and wading birds on Little Unicup at the time certainly proves its worth as a fauna reserve. During the afternoon the sub-committee was shown around Byenup and Tordit-Gurruup Lagoons east of Lake Muir by local farmer and Honorary Warden Bessel Hanekamp.

Following an overnight stay at Walpole an investigation was made of the reported presence of the Noisy Scrub-bird in dense growth adjacent to a swamp along the Boat Harbour track, near Quarram. Although there was no sign of the bird, members of the committee were enthusiastic over the possibilities of its existence there. The habitat where the bird was reported is very similar to that at Two People Bay where the Noisy Scrub-bird was re-discovered two or three years ago. The party took the opportunity to go the extra two miles to visit Boat Harbour where a commercial salmon fishery exists. The sub-committee called on the Shire Clerk at Albany later in the day, and an informal meeting was held in the Council Chambers with three members of the Shire and the Shire Clerk. Several matters were discussed, including the Department's suggestion that a Folk Museum be built on the Fauna Reserve at Two People Bay as an added tourist attraction. The following day before returning to Perth, a visit was made to Two People Bay to acquaint those committee members who had not previously seen the Noisy Scrub-bird habitat, with the nature of its domicile, and also to inspect the damage caused by the recent fires at Two People Bay and on Mt. Gardner.

SPERM WHALING

Inspector D.P. Gordon, reporting on the 1964 Sperm Whaling season, says that the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company commenced operations on March 1 and concluded on December 7. During that period 711 legal size whales and 90 undersize (under permit for research purposes) were taken.

It will be recalled that in the May edition of this Bulletin it was mentioned that the Minister for Primary Industry had approved of the taking for scientific purposes five undersize sperm whales each month during the 1964

season and that after sampling had taken place the carcasses were to remain the sole property of the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company. This quota was subsequently raised to a total of 140, to be taken at 25 each month over a period of five months. It will be remembered too, that the failure of the International Whaling Commission to give further protection to the sperm whale stocks off the Western Australian coast resulted in the decision of the Minister for Primary Industry to abolish sperm whale quotas in August, 1964. The restriction of the minimum size is however still applicable.

Mr. Gordon reports that production of sperm whale teeth find a ready market, and those from Albany were exported mainly to the United Kingdom, U.S.A. and Tahiti in that order. On the London market the teeth fetched 6/3d. (Aust) a pound.

Only one aircraft was used for whale spotting. This was a Cessna 172 float plane which replaced the Company's older wheel-equipped Cessna. The use of planes for whale spotting has proved its worth and has contributed largely to the success of the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company, whose figures have shown a marked increase since the introduction of spotting aircraft.

Three chasers were operating during the season. These were the Cheynes II and Cheynes III and the Kos VII. The Kos VII was taken out of service during the 1963 season but was recommissioned on August 14, 1964, after a complete and costly, refit. Although the Kos VII is a slower vessel than her counterparts she has proved a very efficient catcher and has increased the company's catch rate by nearly one-third.

The Company's old chaser Minilya has been sold as scrap. All deck fittings and as much metal as profitable will be removed before she is towed out to sea and scuttled.

An old Nissen hut which served as quarters for some flensers has been replaced by a new building, giving added comfort to the employees.

Several additional items of equipment have been purchased for the factory. A second hand Lemvann three-stage evaporator and four Simons roller driers were purchased during 1964 and are now partly installed. The Company anticipates that the additional equipment will be operating by early April. The new plant will be capable of producing solubles with a protein content of 80% at an average of

three tons for each whale. Both Japan and Italy are interested in this product, which will be priced at approximately £75 per ton.

Other machinery additions and factory improvements include a new DeLaval oil purifier, a new oil storage tank with capacity of 750 tons, and an additional 50,000-gallon water storage tank. A new 500 h.p. Cleaver Brooks boiler will be installed to power the solubles plant. The existing catwalk has been extended and improved to carry permanent whale oil lines as well as those for sea water, fuel oil and compressed air. A new laboratory is to be erected in the soluble plant building.

Two additional leading hands and four other persons to operate the soluble plant will be employed during the coming season, which, if all goes according to plan, will open on February 25.