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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MONTHLY SERVICE BULLETIN

Vol. XIV, No. 9

CALM LIBRARY ARCHIVE

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1965

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Greetings for Christmas and New Year



FROM THE DIRECTOR AND HEAD OFFICE STAFF, DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND FAUNA,
PERTH, W.A.

STAFF NOTES

Officers who commenced annual leave during the month included Mr. A. E. McKenzie, engineer of the r.v. "Peron" and Miss D. Patrick (Head Office), on November 30. Mr. G. E. Dixon (Head Office), will commence leave on December 16.

* * * *

The r.v. "Lancelin", under the command of her master Mr. C. J. Seabrook, is currently working in the Abrolhos Islands -- Dongara area, catching crayfish to gather further data on the abundance of undersize crayfish (recruitment stock) on the grounds. Also on board "Lancelin" is her mate J. D. Duckrell, Technical Officer J. S. Simpson and Cadet Research Officer J. Penn.

* * * *

Technical Officer N. E. McLaughlan returned to Perth on November 27 after having spent a week at Jurien Bay setting up and instructing Cadet P. Wood in methods of collecting crayfish length frequency data. This data will be collected at the shore-based processing works and at sea on fishing vessels. Cadet Wood will also receive any punch-marked crayfish caught by the fishermen. Technical Assistant D. Donnelly is doing similar work at Port Dennison.

* * * *

We welcome to Head Office staff Mr. A. J. Mearns and Mr. D. G. Sivyer. Mr. Mearns commenced duty on November 16 in the new item of Clerk-in-Charge, C-II-5. Prior to gaining promotion, Mr. Mearns was Clerk-in-Charge, Correspondence and Staff, Department of Agriculture. Mr. Sivyer came to us from the Crown Law Department on October 11. He has been promoted to the clerical item, C-II-1, formerly held by Mr. J. B. Byleveld.

* * * *

Research Officers R. J. Slack-Smith and R. C. J. Lenanton returned from the Eastern States on November 18, after annual leave. While in the Eastern States, both officers took the opportunity to carry out phases of their research at the C.S.I.R.O. Marine Research Laboratories at Cronulla.

Mr. Slack-Smith was engaged on placing Shark Bay prawn research data, obtained from fishermen's log books at Shark Bay, on some 11,000 punch cards. This data was then then edited on the National Standards Laboratory computer at the Sydney University. A computer programme to fully analyse the data is being written-up by Mr. A. Stark of the C.S.I.R.O. Research Officer R. C. J. Lenanton took the opportunity to read many whiting scales that he had obtained from Shark Bay. Following his return to Western Australia Mr. Lenanton left for Shark Bay on November 30 to issue trial log books to fishermen and also to carry out length frequency measurements on whiting in connection with his research on the Shark Bay whiting fishery.

* * * *

The Senior Research Officer, Mr. B. K. Bowen, addressed the Triggs North Beach and Waterman's Progress Association at their annual general meeting held at the Hamersley State School on November 29.

Mr. Bowen's talk was entitled "The Need for Aquarium Studies in Crayfish Research." Members of the Association are of course interested in the Department's activities in the field of aquarium studies because of the proposal to build an aquarium for this purpose at Waterman's Bay on two-and-one-half acres of land which at present is part of a reserve set aside for recreational purposes.

Following Mr. Bowen's talk, the meeting passed a motion that in the event of the Shire of Perth agreeing to the excision of the area required for the aquarium, steps be taken to have the remaining ten acres of reserve set aside as "A" class.

* * * *

Our sincere congratulations are offered to Inspectors I. L. Cardon, C. W. Ostle and R. G. Lindsay for their recent success at the Field Officers' Training School, Cronulla, N.S.W.

It is very pleasing to note the marks gained by these officers at the examination held at the completion of the school. Inspector Cardon obtained 81 marks out of a possible 100 and by so doing gained a Distinction and took third place in the school. Inspector Ostle gained a Credit with 71 marks and Inspector Lindsay passed with 69.

"NAMING OF P.V. "PELSART"

The new patrol vessel "Pelsart" was named by Mrs. G. C. MacKinnon, wife of the Minister, at the Victoria Park boat shed on November 12 last. "Pelsart" is a 42-ft. flushed-deck, cabin launch, powered by a single G.M. diesel of 167 h.p. She was built by Back Bros. and Co., of North Fremantle to modified designs prepared by Naval Architect, Edwin Monk of Seattle, U.S.A. Inspector E. I. Forster is her skipper and Assistant Inspector W. M. Mahoney is crew member.

FIELD STAFF DISPOSITION

With the onset of the crayfish season and following the resignations from the Public Service of Inspector F. J. Campbell (Shark Bay) and Assistant Inspector P. Carroll (p.v. "Misty Isle"), several movements of the field staff have taken place. The following is the disposition of our inspecting staff on December 6, 1965:-

Pearling Inspector R. J. Baird (Broome), Inspector R. Smith and Assistant Inspector E. J. Little (Shark Bay), Inspector A. T. Pearce and Assistant Inspector G. J. Hanley (Geraldton), Inspector G. Clifford and Assistant Inspector K. P. Enright (p.v. "Dampier"), Inspector D. H. Smith (Dongara), Inspector I. L. Cardon and Cadet Inspector J. R. Chantry (Jurien Bay), Assistant Inspector D. Blackman and Cadet Inspector P. W. Harrison (Cervantes), Inspector A. E. Tanner and Cadet Inspector P. M. Lambert (Lancelin), Cadet Inspector J. S. Fletcher (Cape Leschenault), Assistant Inspector D. Noble (Ledge Point), Inspector A. V. Green and Assistant Inspector R. J. Lindsay (Mandurah), Inspector E. R. Hammond (Bunbury), Inspector D. P. Gordon and Assistant Inspector J. T. Kelly (Albany), Inspector T. B. Baines and Inspector C. W. Ostle (Mobile Patrol), Inspector A. K. Melsom, Inspector D. Wright and Inspector R. G. Emery (Fremantle), Inspector E. I. Forster and Assistant Inspector W. M. Mahoney (p.v. "Pelsart"), Inspector B. A. Carmichael, Inspector R. M. Crawford and Cadet Inspector K. C. Lewin (Perth).

NETTING BY AMATEURS

From time to time complaints have been received from licensed fishermen in regard to the use of nets by amateurs. The complaints refer chiefly to estuarine waters and, in some instances, to weekend netting by amateurs in waters which are the subject of weekend closures. The question of the desirability of banning amateur net fishermen was recently discussed

at a meeting of Branch Heads as well as at the recent departmental field officers' conference.

At both meetings the view was expressed that there was, as a general rule, no real warrant for withdrawing from amateurs the right to use nets. If nets were harmful to a fishery, it was argued, they should be denied to professionals as well as to amateurs. It was felt there was insufficient evidence that amateurs with nets created a problem, and that as the use of nets by holidaymakers was traditional, they should not be banned.

CRAYFISH SEASON OPENS

The 1965/66 crayfish season opened on November 15. As in previous years, the fishermen were given some days grace prior to the opening, to put out their unbaited pots. This measure has a two-fold purpose (a) to give the fishermen time to soak their pots before the opening date, and (b) to allow the fishermen ample time to get their pots out and up the coast to prevent congestion in the limited harbour facilities offering.

Reports to hand indicate that the "white" crayfish catch will exceed last year's figures. The "whites" commenced to run in the Geraldton and Dongara areas around November 29 and 30, and further down the coast and the Fremantle area around December 1. Initial catches at Geraldton were excellent, but a recent report advises that catches were not being maintained. The onset of a full moon could be the reason.

In the Fremantle area catches have also been good. Some excellent catches have been reported further up the coast, particularly from Jurien Bay.

Generally, fishermen's catches, so far, are up on last year and, all in all, it appears as though it will be a good season even though the average price of around 6/-d. per lb. being paid to fishermen is lower than last season's peak price.

STAFF CONFERENCE

The 1965 Staff Conference was held from November 8 to November 11 in the Civil Service Association conference room, Irwin Street, Perth.

On the opening day, the Director welcomed the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna Mr. G. C. MacKinnon and the

Public Service Commissioner Mr. R. H. Doig to the conference. In his welcoming address the Director said:-

"I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all the field staff to this annual conference. For some twenty years now we have met regularly to enable us to discuss our problems and for you to learn something of what's in the mind of the administration; what's in the mind of our research team and what's in the mind of our inspection section regarding the duties that you are required to perform in the field.

"I would also like to welcome Mr. MacKinnon, the new Minister for Fisheries and Fauna or, at least, new since the last conference was held. He has now been in office for several months and no doubt you have read very assiduously the paper reports as to what has been going on since he took office. You probably have learnt something of the legislation that he has introduced, for the benefit of the Industry. He himself will speak to you a little later on and give you more details, I am sure.

"I would also like to welcome the new Public Service Commissioner - new in the sense that he was not with us either when our last conference was held. As a matter of fact, when I think of those who were present at the first conference twenty-one years ago, only three remain besides myself - Mr. Bramley, Mr. Munro and Mr. Melsom. I suppose a quick glance at any of the four of us would certainly indicate that we are easily able of being at a conference twenty-one years ago.

"I would like to congratulate Mr. Munro on his success in the recent reclassification appeals heard by the Public Service Appeal Board. I would also like to congratulate others who were successful at the appeals - Mr. Green who is now Senior Inspector and Mr. Pearce and Mr. Campbell who were successful in having the jobs of Masters of the seagoing launches increased. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Ian Cardon. He recently attended the Fisheries Officers' Training School in Sydney and he was one of only three who achieved distinction as a result of the course.

"I have already had a few words to say before the distinguished guests arrived so, without further ado, I will introduce Mr. MacKinnon who will formally declare the conference open."

The following is a transcript of some of the Minister's remarks:-

"Mr. Fraser, Mr. Doig, Dr. Francois, Gentlemen - I think I will do something a shade unusual. I will officially declare this conference open and then my speech becomes part of the conference. At the opening of a gymkhana at Dumbleyung I had to return to the microphone to officially open the show, so if I do it now I won't forget - so I officially declare this conference open.

"Over the last few years you have seen fisheries in Western Australia grow from a comparatively small business to the largest export earning fishing industry in Australia. Up until March this year, my interest in matters appertaining to fisheries was very slight indeed. I represented an area where there was a certain amount of fish caught, not only in Bunbury and Mandurah, but right down the coast as far as Walpole. I have done certain things for fishermen when I have been asked to do them at different times, but I have never really delved into the fishing industry. In retrospect, I think this was an advantage because I came to this Department without any preconceived ideas and I just had to settle down and learn. Fortunately, I had the greatest help from all of those I have met and by constant repetition from Mr. Fraser, Mr. Bowen, Mr. Saville and Mr. Shugg, I have managed to obtain a certain amount of knowledge.

"In what I have learnt I have realized the grave difficulties with which you have been faced. The whole industry of crayfishing has grown so rapidly and on such a long coastline that it lends itself to all sorts of irregularities. I want to thank all of you and the Department as a whole for the very great efforts over the last few years. It has been a trying time, not yet over. Various appeals made to you were met and I would like to officially place on record that the Government is very grateful for your efforts.

"During this last legislative programme, which is not yet quite complete, endeavours have been made to strengthen your hand. I think it's fair to say that a penalty which starts at £1,000 minimum and goes to £2,000 for second and subsequent offences is a very solemn penalty indeed. There are very few Acts in Australia which have penalties of this nature written in them. Similarly, there are very few Acts which provide for the infringements down the scale of things having penalties ranging from £100 first offence up to £200, with added penalties of suspension of license and for a third offence, cancellation of licenses, including boat and fisherman's. You, who know the industry so well, are aware of the capital expenditure involved and what a terrific penalty this is. This, however, brings upon the inspector a far greater responsibility, for in handling a situation the livelihood of the fishermen

involved rests in the inspectors' hands, in many cases. It is a grave responsibility, for in some cases, the first and second offences have already gone by and therefore, some fishermen on their next offence face the hardest penalties under the new Act. This additional responsibility is so heavy that you must use a great deal of care and discretion. We can't expect fishermen to behave with moderation and decency unless they are treated with moderation and decency, this goes without saying, but within your hands rests the most lucrative fishing industry in Australia, an industry currently earning in excess of £6,000,000 per annum income from overseas.

"In the eyes of the Government you are the caretakers of a very important industry indeed and, to the best of its ability, the Government has given you the tools to work with. We received enthusiastic support for both fisheries Bills which have gone through the House this year and I think it fair to say that the newspapers have helped a little. The newspapers have certainly given a different slant to their writing and I don't think anyone who reads them fairly would have room to complain of the general attitude they have taken towards the Department and the Inspectors who are looking after the industry.

"The fishermen themselves have demonstrated a great deal of co-operation. The way in which the Fisheries Act Amendment Bill No. 2, which sets up the processing levy, which will net annually some £45,000 for the development, discovery, exploitation and expansion of new fisheries techniques, has been accepted, demonstrates very clearly that a big percentage of the industry actually earning their living in fishing have the welfare of this industry at heart. At meetings of the processors in both Perth and Geraldton this was received very well indeed.

"I have already declared this conference open and I thank you very much for the way in which you have listened to my few remarks and trust that we will be able to work together in peace and harmony at least for the next 2½ years."

On behalf of the staff, Inspector B. A. Carmichael moved a vote of thanks to the Minister. He said:-

"On behalf of the inspectors here this morning who have come from as far north as Broome, down to Albany, and many places in between, I would like to say how much we appreciate you making time available to come here this morning to open our conference and to assure you, Sir, of our continued support through the coming and future years. We have something like forty to forty-five members on our staff who I can assure you

are completely devoted to the preservation of the industry and we sincerely hope that the new penalties you have seen fit to introduce to Parliament will result in the crayfishing industry being stabilized. The number of staff has grown considerably over the last few years and we have no doubt at all that it will continue to grow. There is no doubt whatsoever that new industry will be established and the need for more staff to police the regulations will grow. It is not only the fishermen that depend on the industry for their livelihood, but it is also ourselves and we thank you."

The Director then called upon the Public Service Commissioner Mr. R. H. Doig to address the meeting. The following is a transcript of Mr. Doig's remarks:-

"The Chairman, the Minister, Dr. Francois and Gentlemen. I am sure you have all listened very intently to the Minister's remarks this morning and it must have given you all a very considerable boost to your morale to hear what the Minister had to say and to make you feel that you were part of a very important department in the Public Service. What I want to do, this morning, is to go on slightly wider horizons and make you feel that you are part of the Public Service as a whole and that the Public Service Commissioner takes an interest in your activities. Perhaps I could start by joining with Mr. Fraser and the Minister in offering my congratulations to those of you who have distinguished themselves with certain achievements in the last twelve months, and I do not exclude those who have been successful in appealing against the Public Service Commissioner's decisions. I can do this with a very detached manner of course, because I wasn't the Public Service Commissioner to make those decisions. But, I can assure you that even if I had been, I would still congratulate you and cheerfully accept the unbiased decision.

"When Mr. Fraser invited me to come along this morning I was very pleased to accept his invitation and for two reasons. The first is, that the Public Service Act imposes on the Public Service Commissioner a responsibility for the efficiency and the conduct of the Public Service as a whole. I firmly believe that the Public Service Commissioner cannot adequately discharge that responsibility by sitting at his desk in the State Insurance building and relying for his knowledge and his information on the paper which comes before him, as massive as that quantity of paper may be. I believe that the Commissioner must get out and meet personally as many members of the Public Service as he can, go into the Departments and meet the officers and see just what type of work

they are engaged upon, and with this in mind, I have already made a start in this direction. This year I have already been into a number of departments to see what their actual work is, and this I hope to increase. The second reason I'm glad to be here is that I feel that public servants as a whole have a right to meet the Head of the Public Service, to meet the Commissioner, to see him, to make up their own minds, to see what sort of chap he is and to get some idea of what his general ideas on policy are as far as the Service is concerned, and to know what goes on in the Public Service Commissioner's office and to have some idea of how their various requests, and various ideas which they put forward are likely to be dealt with.

"Now the theme on which I would like to speak briefly to you this morning is the place of the Public Service in the community. To start with, I think I could enunciate two very simple principles. These are, firstly, that the public pays through its taxes to employ a Public Service. The public provides the money, therefore, the job of the Public Service is to work for them. Now the public and the community are entitled to the best possible service that they can get. They are entitled to an efficient, capable, forward-looking progressive service. The second principle is that if the community requires this service then they must be expected to pay for it and the Public Service on its part is entitled to expect that they will receive pay and other conditions of service at least comparable to those operating in outside employment and at least sufficient to give them the necessary incentive to go ahead and provide that type of service.

"The fundamental principles of how the Public Service works in a democratic system of Government is that at the top of this system of Government you have Parliament elected by the people responsible to the people. Parliament lays down the laws of the country and if the people don't like those laws, they take it out on Parliament at the first opportunity they get. That's why the Minister said he could only look forward to 2½ years in office at this stage. Beneath Parliament you have the Ministers of the Crown and the Ministers of the Crown are responsible for laying down the policy. They are responsible to Parliament and, if Parliament isn't satisfied with the way the Ministers are carrying out their job, well, they can pass a motion of no confidence in them. The Ministers lay down the policy and determine what the Public Service ought to do. Now it's the job of the Public Service to carry out the policy of the Government and be responsible through the Government to see that their work is sufficient and that the policy is properly carried out as the public would want it to be.

The way this works, in principle, is that the departmental heads must give advice to their Ministers as to what they think the policy of their department should be. Then it becomes the responsibility of the Minister to decide whether that policy is acceptable or not. Once the Minister makes his decision it doesn't matter two hoots what the permanent head's opinion is of that policy. His job is to carry it out loyally, enthusiastically and to the best of his ability. This, gentlemen, applies down the ranks within the offices of that department. It applies to the top of the department and to the bottom and it doesn't matter what your job is, your function is firstly to carry out your own task, secondly to advise the man above you the way you think it should be done. If he accepts your advice, well and good. If he doesn't, that's his responsibility. It's then your job to carry out your work under his instructions, to the best of your ability. Just the same way as the permanent head does under the Minister.

"The Public Service in Western Australia has, to some extent, inherited traditions which were set up by Public Services in Britain many, many years ago. But, we don't want to rest on this, we want to create and establish a tradition of our own, and I think we are all engaged in the process of doing this. The Public Service, I would say, has always enjoyed the highest standing in the community. It's always been looked upon as an honourable profession, and many years ago it was probably sufficient to look upon it in this way. A lot of people joined the Public Service (a) because they had security, (b) because they had a status and they were rather content to go along with this and to be rather underpaid in a general comparison with the outside world. Although you won't all agree with me on this point, I would like to say that this set of circumstances does not apply today. I believe that the Public Service today offers a career where not only do you have the capacity to serve the community, where you not only have security, not only do you have a status in the community, and enjoy the respect of your fellow citizens, but also that you receive reasonable financial rewards for carrying out that job. The Public Service as a whole is something that I would just like to mention to you in its entirety. There is, of course, a tendency for officers of every department, as is natural, to become immersed in the functions of that department and perhaps not to have a realization of what goes on in the Service around them. The permanent public service today consists of over 5,000 permanent officers. There are, in addition, over 1,000 temporary officers. These people all have similar objectives and are all engaged in the one common task. Now, they include almost every profession and trade and occupation to be found in Western Australia. Anybody looking forward today to joining the Public Service can find that no matter what their interest, if the Public Service is where they want to make their career, the

possibility exists for them to engage in the particular type of work they choose. At the present time we are engaged in a review of several aspects of our recruitment system with an idea to try to attract into the Public Service the best possible sections of the school leavers who will come on the labour market during the forthcoming year. Not only do we want to make it an attractive career, we want to make sure also that there is about it those things which will want the younger members of the community to join the Public Service and to take a distinct pride in their work.

"Now, gentlemen, there is just one other aspect that I would like to mention today which is, that your particular department is, at the present time, very much in the public eye. There is no question of that, and therefore, on your shoulders to some extent, rests what might be the view of the community of the Public Service as a whole. You are being brought today into contact with a pretty large section of the community and what you do is reflected almost daily in the press with the publicity that you receive. Therefore, you have some responsibility, not only to your own department, but to the Public Service as a whole. The Minister has already expressed (and I echo his sentiments), his complete confidence that the responsibility will be very faithfully discharged.

"Mr. Director, I want to say that I am particularly glad to be present this morning. There is, in my view, a particular type of training which exceeds in value the in-service training. It is the training that will be gained by members of the department from discussions at this conference. We, in the Public Service Commissioner's Office, can lay down certain principles and we can encourage members of the Public Service to qualify in certain directions. All of these things are, in my mind, only subsidiary to the actual practical training in the job which occasions of this nature bring before you."

Mr. Doig concluded his address by answering several questions concerning the responsibility, functions and policy of the Public Service.

On behalf of those present at the meeting, Technical Officer Mr. N. E. McLaughlan moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Doig. He said:-

"It gives me a considerable amount of pleasure, Mr. Doig, to welcome you to this conference, and thank you on behalf of the staff for finding the time to come along and address us. I feel that these annual conferences play a very big part in the overall efficiency, the efficient running

of this Department, and I feel that the personal contact between yourself and our staff can lead to a greater understanding of the problems of each, and in the long run increase the overall efficiency. Once again, Mr. Doig, I would like to thank you for sparing the time to come along and talk to us and would like the staff to show their appreciation in the usual manner."

Features of the conference included a most interesting and informative talk by Dr. D. D. Francois of the New South Wales Fisheries Branch. Dr. Francois' talk was on the inland fisheries of New South Wales and associated problems.

Other guest speakers to the conference were Mr. H. Skewes, Secretary, Superannuation Board, who spoke on superannuation matters; Mr. N. Smythe from the Crown Law Department, who spoke on the powers of the Fisheries Inspector under the Fisheries Act, and Mr. H. de Burgh from the Public Service Commissioner's office who spoke on the Public Service and training generally.

The final day of the conference saw a very enthusiastic session of group discussion. Agenda items and matters arising out of conference were discussed by groups and then considered by the meeting as a whole.

At a meeting of Branch Heads on December 3, some conference recommendations concerning agenda items were considered and the decisions of the meeting are as follows:-

1. Restrictions on the taking of prawns in the Murray River (a) a season (b) a limited area:

The meeting accepted the conference recommendation that no additional restrictions be imposed.

2. Education of amateur fishermen, of closed water areas to net fishermen, by a form of booklet covering all districts. To be issued with license:

It was agreed that further consideration would be given to this proposal in conjunction with preparation of estimates for 1966/67. There were insufficient funds this financial year to cover publication of a suitable booklet.

3. That the legal minimum size of crabs be reduced from 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 5 inches:

The meeting considered the conference recommendation that the size be reduced but owing to inherent problems, it was decided to defer action for twelve months.

4. Spear fishermen to be licensed; cost of license £1: -: -d.; license number to be attached to gun on small metal plate; unlicensed guns to be seized and disposed of:

The meeting agreed with the conference recommendation that no license be introduced.

5. Christmas greeting cards be sent to all professional fishermen in W.A. for better public relations:

It was agreed to accept the conference recommendation that cards be not sent to individual fishermen. However, it was agreed to continue the existing policy of sending cards to processors and fishermen's associations.

6. Professional Fishermen's Licenses at present issued from Esperance by the Clerk of Courts be returned to the control of the Albany Office:

The meeting could not agree to the conference recommendation that the Albany Inspector should issue licenses in respect of Esperance fishermen. Because of the distance between Albany and Esperance it was considered that nothing was to be gained.

7. Uniforms for Fisheries and Fauna Officers:

The meeting agreed to submit the conference recommendation, that a simplified uniform consisting of a combination shirt and trousers be supplied, to the Public Service Commissioner.

Matters other than agenda items arising out of conference have yet to be considered by the Administration. These will be dealt with as soon as possible.

JAPANESE SURVEY W.A. FISHING GROUNDS

An offer to have a Departmental observer aboard the Japanese fisheries vessel the No. 1 "Suruga Maru" during an exploratory fishing cruise off the north-west coast of W.A. during November was accepted following confirmation by the Embassy of Japan, Canberra.

The "Suruga Maru" of 350 tons is under charter to the Japanese Fishing Agency. She has a crew of twenty-four and is equipped with a comprehensive array of fishing gear including demersal longlines, drift nets, traps, beam trawls and longlines.

During the first phase of the survey off the southern Australian coast, Mr. K. Godfrey of the C.S.I.R.O., Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, sailed as observer. He disembarked at Fremantle and his place was taken by the Department's Technical Officer Mr. E. H. Barker who stayed with the vessel as far as Darwin, arriving there on November 20. Mr. G. Nielsen, a representative of Genex Pty. Ltd. also joined the vessel at Fremantle.

Mr. Barker reports that during the thirteen days trip en route to Darwin, bottom long-lining was carried out in varying depths up to approximately 100 fathoms. As much as three miles of line was set at different stations along the coast. Twenty stations were fished in this manner during the voyage. Whaler sharks of many species constituted the bulk of the catch. These were headed, gutted and frozen and would eventually be processed into fish sausage back in Japan. Small snapper up to eighteen inches in length were most sought after. These are frozen whole and are served in Japanese restaurants as whole fish. The snapper catch, however, was not particularly good, certainly not in commercial quantities.

A trammel net was set for prawns in 42 fathoms west of Shark Bay. Although the net was badly damaged by sharks, two king prawns were caught. This could be an indication that the prawns in Shark Bay, on reaching a certain stage of maturity, migrate to the deeper waters on the Continental Shelf.

In Cambridge Gulf dredging was carried out with a modified scallop dredge but results were poor. Only a few hardback and one king prawn were taken.

While in Darwin Mr. Barker and Mr. Nielsen accompanied Mr. C. J. Cunningham, Acting Fisheries Officer, Northern Territory Administration, in the Commonwealth Fisheries vessel "Brolga" on a short exploratory cruise to a tidal creek on the western side of Darwin Harbour. The vessel was anchored off the southern point of the creek mouth and with a hauling net of approximately 30 yards by 4' deep of $\frac{3}{4}$ " mesh, four hauls were made in the shallows before lunch. These resulted in approximately three hundred juvenile banana prawns being caught ranging in overall length from 1" to 3". The number of prawns caught gave only some indication of their abundance. Mr. Barker says that the water both inside and outside the net was literally jumping with prawns during the fourth haul. At the time the tide was on the ebb towards slack water.

PUBLICATIONS APPRECIATED OVERSEAS

The publication "Maintaining the Catch" has now been widely distributed throughout Australasia and also among many fishery agencies overseas.

A letter received recently from the State Fisheries Director, Fish Commission of Oregon, Portland, U.S.A. expressed his appreciation of the publication and also his thanks for the copies of our Monthly Service Bulletin which are regularly sent to him. The letter from the State Director, Mr. Robert W. Schoning is of particular interest and is quoted hereunder for the benefit of the staff:-

"Thank you for your very interesting brochure on the crayfish industry and its related problems in Australia. I am passing this literature on to our people for possible use in some of our activities. I think you have done a nice job in presenting a situation with economic and scientific applications in a form readily understood by the laymen.

"We appreciate receiving your Monthly Service Bulletin. A surprising number of items in it are of direct interest to us. I was particularly interested in an issue of a number of months ago in which you cited some administrative problems that are common to our organization as well. One was the request by field people for more visitations by supervisory personnel and the inability of supervisors to actually make the visits. Co-ordination problems among departmental personnel apparently develop in Australia as well as Oregon.

"Again may I say how much we appreciate receiving your material."

JAPANESE SURVEY JOINT VENTURE TUNA INDUSTRY

To survey the potential of a joint venture tuna fishing industry in Western Australia a party of Japanese representing Taiyo Fishery, the Pearl Shell Fishing Co. and other interests of Tokyo visited Western Australia during November. The initial party of four visited Darwin, Broome, Carnarvon, Geraldton and Perth. They were joined in Perth by a further representative of the Japanese fishing industry.

The Minister held a cocktail party and reception during the evening of November 29 to welcome the Japanese mission and to give them the opportunity to meet representatives of fish companies in Western Australia interested in a joint venture. Before the group left on December 3 the Minister again received the mission in his office and advised them that he was aware, as they were, that there would be problems and difficulties to be overcome before any joint venture could be established. He suggested that Taiyo Fishery, if they were still interested, come up in due course with a firm proposition.

ESCAPE-GAPS IN CRAYPOTS

Replying to a letter from the W.A. Fishing Fleet Masters' Association concerning problems arising out of the compulsory provision of escape-gaps in crayfish pots, the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, Mr. MacKinnon, in October last advised the Association that the Department had issued a pamphlet on escape-gaps giving the general requirements as to size and position. He added that the Department was also making every effort to assist the fishermen in overcoming difficulties associated with the fitting of escape-gaps. A technical officer had been constantly in the field and had endeavoured to see every crayfisherman who had contacted the Department with a query. During the course of his work the technical officer had found that fishermen were experiencing difficulty in fitting escape-gaps to stick and cane pots already constructed. The Department had therefore experimented with metal frames which are easily fitted next to the frame wires. These forced the sticks apart to form a two-inch gap. A circular outlining the use of the spaces had also been issued.

The Minister said he was anxious that the principle of escape-gaps would be accepted by all fishermen and during the phasing-in period the aim would be education rather than prosecution. If a fisherman made an honest attempt to comply with the escape gap requirements, any device used by him, would be approved. Departmental inspectors had been instructed along these lines.

CAPE BARREN GEESE - BANDING

Advice has been received from the Animals and Birds Protection Board, Hobart, Tasmania, that a programme of Cape Barren Geese banding would be carried out this year.

In October a banding party, operating on Chappell, Goose and Badger Islands in the Furneaux Group in Bass Strait, banded 618 birds. Of these 605 have been banded with a red neck-band.

Field staff are requested to report any sightings of Cape Barren Geese, particularly any that might be observed carrying a red neck-band.

SUB-COMMITTEE VISITS SLOPE ISLAND

Since the development of an industrial salt undertaking in Useless Loop and on Slope Island in Freycinet Estuary, Shark Bay, considerable concern has been felt for a population of a dimorphic species of shearwater which has bred on the island in past years. This species of shearwater is of particular interest to science because of its dimorphic characteristics - some specimens have white breasts and underparts and flesh-coloured feet and legs - and because Shark Bay is the only known breeding area in the Indian Ocean. In fact the only other area where the dimorphic species has been reported is in the North Pacific Ocean.

It was known that considerable blasting and excavation work had been carried out to develop Slope Island as the terminal for stockpiling and loading salt. This development, it was feared, had destroyed considerable habitat and possibly endangered the very existence of the shearwaters. To gain first-hand knowledge of the damage caused to the habitat and to assess the status of the birds during their annual visit to the island to breed, a sub-Committee of the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee visited Slope Island on August 28 and 29 last. The opportunity was also taken by the sub-Committee to visit ten other islands in Freycinet Estuary which comprise the greater portion of Reserve No. 26004, set aside for the

protection of fauna and guano.

The party consisted of Committee members Mr. J. B. Higham and Dr. G. M. Storr, secretary to the Committee Mr. G. E. Dixon and Technical Officer Mr. N. E. McLaughlan.

The sub-Committee found that although some damage had been done to the breeding sites on Slope Island the population was considered to be in no danger providing no additional development is carried out. There was sufficient habitat remaining and the birds were found to be quite actively engaged in preparing their nests, ready for breeding. It was estimated that approximately two hundred pairs of shearwaters were nesting on Slope Island. Of those it was estimated that about one third had white characteristics.

During the inspection of the other islands in Freycinet Estuary the sub-Committee also found a small colony of shearwaters nesting on Baudin Island some twenty-seven miles south of Slope Island and a larger colony nesting on Freycinet Island. Specimens of shearwaters with white breasts and underparts were examined on both Slope and Baudin Islands. The presence of the species on Baudin Island dispelled previous beliefs that they were confined to breeding only on Slope Island. A larger colony of shearwaters, estimated at some five hundred pairs, was found to be nesting on Freycinet Island and although no evidence was found - possibly because no overnight stay was made at Freycinet Island - that the dimorphic species was common to Freycinet, it is reasonable to assume that they are, because a substantial population of a species is nesting there, and the island is situated in a direct line between Slope and Baudin Islands.

A species of bird found during the visit and which had not previously been reported on any of the islands of the reserve, was stubble quail. These were found on both Baudin and Salutation Islands.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

It will be remembered that in August last, as a result of representations made to the Premier for the proper protection and conservation of Western Australian wildlife, a special committee was appointed. The members appointed were:-

- Mr. S. J. Stokes - Department of Lands & Surveys.
Chairman and Convenor.
- Mr. D. G. Eustace - Department of Main Roads.
- Mr. C. F. H. Jenkins - Chief, Division of Biological
Services, Department of Agriculture.
- Mr. R. D. Royce - Curator of the State Herbarium.
- Mr. E. K. Steere - Executive Engineer, Public Works
Department.
- Mr. H. B. Shugg - Fauna Officer - was appointed to
represent this Department.

The inaugural meeting of the Committee was held in the conference room, Department of Agriculture, South Perth on September 22, 1965.

The Chairman, in opening the meeting, said that the Committee's responsibilities would be to advise the Minister for Lands in relation to the need for reserves for flora and fauna. He said that his Department was faced with increasing demands for the opening up of suitable areas for agriculture and these demands had to be offset against the need to set aside reserves for various purposes, including the conservation of our wildlife. His Department accepted that much of the native flora and fauna could shortly be eradicated and lost forever.

The chief concern of the Committee would be to advise the Government as to the adequacy of existing reserves, and on proposals submitted for the creation of additional ones.

After considerable discussion in which the various members put forward the points of view of the Departments and interests they were representing, it was agreed:-

1. That it was essential that all existing flora and fauna reserves be retained and be declared to be "A" class.
2. That each member survey the situation and report to the next meeting on any additional areas that should be reserved.
3. That the next meeting be held in mid or late January, 1966.

SEISMIC SURVEY VESSEL

A report that a Japanese fishing boat was believed to be crayfishing off the West Australian coast has not been substantiated.

A professional crayfisherman fishing from Dongara reported that on November 26 he was fishing about twenty miles south of Port Denison outside Leander Reef some four miles off-shore when, at 11.00 a.m. a large light grey coloured vessel came into sight and hove to alongside some 35-40 white nylon floats about half-a-mile seaward of his boat. The vessel was described as having a high bow section, wheelhouse amidships and a low after section. It appeared to be equipped with radar and on deck appeared to be ropes, nets and poles. Side gantrys held a large dinghy approximately twenty feet long. The dinghy was lowered over the side, three men boarded it, and made off in a northerly direction. The large vessel turned and steamed south-south-westward and disappeared.

Another report from a professional fisherman at Freshwater Point advised that on November 26, while he was fishing twelve miles off-shore from Freshwater Point he saw a vessel answering the same description. The vessel was observed through binoculars and many powerful explosions were seen to erupt in the sea near the vessel.

Enquiries made from other fishermen at Little Freshwater Point, Freshwater Point and Cliff Head revealed that numerous fishermen had seen the vessel and had also felt and seen the explosions.

It seems most likely that the "Japanese vessel" as reported to Inspector D. A. Smith at Dongara was, in fact, a seismic survey vessel currently working off the lower W.A. coast.

MAN WANTED

Wanted -- A man for consistent work and rapid promotion; a man who can find things to be done without the help of a manager.

A man who gets to work on time in the morning and does not imperil the lives of others in an attempt to be first out of the office.

A man who listens carefully when he is spoken to and asks only enough questions to ensure the accurate carrying out of instructions.

A man who looks you straight in the eye and tells the truth every time.

A man who does not pity himself for having to work.

A man who is neat in appearance.

A man who does not sulk for an hour's overtime in emergencies.

A man who is cheerful, courteous to all, and determined to "make good."

This man is wanted everywhere. Age or lack of experience do not count. There isn't any limit to the number or size of the jobs he can get.

-- "Management Review."

DUCK SHOOTERS' GUIDE - 1965/66

THE OPEN SEASON

OPENING:

The 1965/66 season will open --

- (a) at 6.00 p.m. in the evening of Saturday, December 18, in the Shires of Augusta-Margaret River, Balingup, Bridgetown, Busselton, Capel, Collie, Dardanup, Greenbushes, Harvey, Manjimup, Nannup, and Donnybrook;
- (b) at 5.00 a.m. in the morning of Sunday, December 19, in the remainder of the South-West and Eucla Land Divisions, not included in the Shires named.

CLOSURE:

Unless otherwise proclaimed, the season will close throughout the whole of the Eucla and South-West Land Divisions at midnight on April 30, 1966.

SPECIES INCLUDED IN THE OPEN SEASON:

Whistling Tree-Duck (Dendrocygna arcuata)
Plumed Tree-Duck (Dendrocygna eytoni)
Mountain Duck (Tadorna tadornoides)
Black Duck (Anas superciliosa)
Chestnut Teal (Anas castanea)
Grey Teal (Anas gibberifrons)

Blue-winged Shoveler (Anas rynchotis)
Pink-eared Duck (Malacorhynchus membranaceus)
Freckled Duck (Stictonetta naevosa)
White-eyed Duck (Aythya australis)
Blue-billed Duck (Oxyura australis)
Musk Duck (Biziura lobata)
White-headed Shelduck (Tadorna radjah)
Wood Duck or Maned Goose (Chenonetta jubata)
Pied or Magpie Goose (Anseranas semipalmata)
Green Pygmy Goose (Nettapus pulchellus)

PROTECTED SPECIES:

The Cape Barren Goose, the Black Swan and the White Swan are the only members of the family of ducks and geese which are not included in the open season. They are fully protected at all times. In this State the Cape Barren Goose normally occurs only on the islands of the Recherche Archipelago, a sanctuary for fauna, where all shooting is prohibited.

BAG LIMIT:

15 ducks per person per day.

ILLEGAL MEANS OF CAPTURE:

That a person shall not take any wild duck by any means other than a shotgun, provided that this restriction shall not prohibit a person who is a native, within the meaning of the Native Welfare Act, 1905-1954, from using any native artifact in the taking of wild ducks.

CLOSE AREAS:

Duck shooting is prohibited in all the following areas which have been set aside as refuges.

GENERAL AREAS:

- (1) All municipalities and townsites in the South-West Land Division.
- (2) All State Forests, timber reserves, town reservoirs and other areas where shooting is prohibited under the provisions of any other Act, regulation or by-law.
- (3) The whole of the area within a radius of 20 miles of the General Post Office, Perth.
- (4) The whole of the Rockingham Shire.

SPECIFIC AREAS:

Albany Shire -

- (5) The whole of the waters of Lake Seppings and all land within 20 chains of its shores.
- (6) The whole of the waters of Nannerup (or Taylor) Inlet and all the land within 20 chains of its shores.
- (7) The whole of the waters of the King and Kalgan Rivers and all land within 20 chains of their banks.
- (8) The whole of the waters of Oyster and Princess Royal Harbours and all land within 20 chains of their shores.

Balingup Shire -

- (9) The whole of the area within a radius of one and one-half miles from the Post Office at Balingup.

Busselton Shire -

- (10) The whole of the waters of Vasse and Wonnerup Estuaries and all land within 20 chains of their shores.
- (11) The whole of the waters of the Vasse River and all land within 20 chains of its banks.
- (12) The whole of reserves 3872 and 3876 (Public Utilities) in the Broadwater.

Capel Shire -

- (13) All that portion of the Capel River between the Capel and Stirling bridges and all land within 20 chains of the river's bank.

Dandaragan Shire -

- (14) The whole of Caro Swamp and all land within 80 chains of its shores.

Dumbleyung Shire -

- (15) All that portion of the Cobline River downstream from the eastern side of the bridge at the junction of road 3375 and road 323 (Oxley Road) to its mouth

at the high-water mark of Dumbleyung Lake and all land within 20 chains of that part of the river's banks.

Gingin Shire -

- (16) The whole of the waters of Lakes Nambung, Bambun and Mungala and all land within 20 chains of their shores.
- (17) The whole of Swan Location 2340 including Wallering Swamp.

Gnowangerup Shire -

- (18) The whole of the land and waters contained within reserves 21646 and 21657 in the Beaufort and Wellstead Estuaries respectively.

Harvey Shire -

- (19) All those waters of the Leschenault Inlet extending southwards from a line drawn south-east from Waterloo Head (Belvedere), on the west foreshore to a point on the opposite foreshore and all land within 20 chains of the included foreshores.
- (20) The whole of the Harvey Catchment area.

Mandurah Shire -

- (21) The whole of the area within a radius of two miles of the Post Office at Mandurah.

Manjimup Shire -

- (22) All that part of the waters of Lake Muir lying north and east of a line drawn from the north-eastern corner of Nelson location 1330, to the northernmost point of Nelson location 9246, and all within 80 chains of the north-western, northern and eastern shores of the said lake between the said locations.
- (23) The whole of the waters of Byenup Lagoon and all land and waters within three miles of its shores, including the whole of the waters of Tordit-Gurrup Lagoon, and Poorginup, Neeranup and Coorinup Swamps and all land within 80 chains of their shores.

Mundaring Shire -

- (24) The whole of the waters of Lake Leschenaultia and all the land within 20 chains of its shores.

Murray Shire -

- (25) All that portion of the Serpentine River from road 8629 at the southern end of Goegrup (Willies) Lake to Peel Inlet near the Old Mill and all the land within 20 chains of the river banks.

Rockingham Shire -

- (26) The whole of the shire of Rockingham

Toodyay Shire -

- (27) All that portion of the Avon River in the Toodyay District, between the northern boundary of Avon Location 3 and a point opposite road number 2069, and all land within 20 chains of the river banks.
- (28) All that portion of the Avon River from Dumbarton Bridge to the Railway Bridge, north of Toodyay and all land within 20 chains of the river banks.
- (29) The whole of the area within a radius of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the Post Office at Boyup Brook.

Wanneroo Shire -

- (30) The whole of the Yanchep Caves Reserve.

Wickepin Shire -

- (31) The whole of the waters of Lake Yearlering and all land within 20 chains of its shores.

Woodanilling Shire -

- (32) The whole of the waters of Wardering Lake and all land within 20 chains of its shores.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS:

- (a) Wild ducks are not to be kept in captivity except under special license;
- (b) The sale of wild ducks is forbidden;

- (c) A person shall not drive any bird over shooters by means of motor vehicles, aircraft, power boats or other means;
- (d) A person shall not take more than fifteen wild ducks on any one day.
- (e) Eggs of any wild duck shall not be taken for any purpose.

NOTE: A continuous open season applies throughout the Kimberley, North-West and Eastern Land Divisions. For further details apply to the Department of Fisheries and Fauna, 108 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

BLACK SWANS IN PERRY LAKES

When the area around Perry Lakes was chosen as a site for the British Commonwealth and Empire Games, thoughts were expressed that the lakes would be ruined from a water-fowl conservation point of view. However, Fauna Wardens Frizzell and Morrison have reported that a pair of black swans have taken up residence there and have hatched out a brood of cygnets.

GIANT PETREL RECOVERED

Mr. P. Rigg, of Lancelin Island, recovered a giant petrel near Lancelin Island 80 miles north of Perth on June 25 last. The bird was found to be carrying band number 5021622. After noting the number Mr. Rigg released the bird, which appeared to be in good health.

Subsequent information received from the British Trust for Ornithology advises that the bird was banded by a British Antarctic Survey at Signy Island (South Orkney), Antarctica, on March 10, 1965.

THE OCTOPUS

Tell me, O Octopus, I begs,
Is those things arms, or is they legs?
I marvel at thee, Octopus;
If I were though, I'd call me Us.

-- Ogden Nash.

CLEARING HOUSE

CONFERENCE MOVES TO CUT ANTARCTIC WHALE KILLING

What might conceivably turn out to have been a long awaited turning point in the battle for and against the survival of the Antarctic whale population was reached in London recently at the seventeenth meeting of the International Whaling Commission.

Fourteen contracting nations - including South Africa - took a number of constructive decisions which could point a new swing away from the excessive slaughter of recent years towards a new policy of economic conservation.

But, in the light of past experience, it is necessary to wait and see to what extent the expressed good intentions will be translated into concerted action. It remains a question of how much will actually be done to cut catches - and of whether enough will be done in time.

The Commission approved a number of amendments to its Schedule which, although not so far reaching as the conservationists would have liked, should effectively prevent a final disastrous fall in the numbers of whales remaining in the Antarctic stock. They also ratified the International Observer Scheme which was formally agreed in 1963 but which has never yet been implemented.

This scheme, which is widely felt to be the prerequisite to any practicable proposals to control whale catches, would station an observer from another nation on every factory ship setting out on an Antarctic expedition.

However, the Soviet delegation qualified their approval to implementing the I.O.S. in the coming season with the reservation that both the quota of the whale catch and the scheme itself should be extended both to factory ships and to all land stations catching Antarctic whales; they also felt that it would be necessary to solve on a just basis the problem of re-allocation of national quotas between the countries concerned. No solution to these points was worked out at the meeting but talks are continuing.

South Africa was represented at the June/July meeting of the Commission - and at the special meeting a month earlier - by Mr. D. van B. de Jager, Director of Sea Fisheries. A staunch supporter of moves to conserve the whale population within limits which will enable it to regain its long-term economic potential, South Africa was the first country to

abandon the hunt for the great blue whale in the Antarctic, followed by the U.K. and then by Holland.

Among the most significant conference moves was a decision to implement a recommendation of the special May meeting that the quota for the 1965/66 season should be 4,500 blue whale units (one blue whale unit equals two fin whales or six sei whales. It is still used as a measure although Antarctic expeditions no longer catch the blue whale.)

No quota of blue whale units had been fixed for the 1964/65 season in the Antarctic and this decision means that the last quota on the Schedule - 10,000 units for the 1963 season - has now been cut by more than half. But the new figure of 4,500 is still 50 per cent above what the Conservationists had called for in May.

Realising that any spasmodic conservation plan would be bound to prove ineffectual, the Commission reinforced its decision by an agreement to make further reductions in total catches in the seasons 1966/67 and 1967/68 so as to ensure that the total catch for 1967/68 will be less than the combined sustainable yields of the fin and sei stocks, as determined on the basis of more precise scientific evidence.

Like all amendments to the Schedule, the new quota limit will not become effective for a period of 90 days from the date of the official notification to the various contracting governments and if an objection were received within this period, it would automatically produce a further 90 day delay.

Other decisions by the Commission included the following:

- * It is forbidden to kill blue whales in the Pacific Ocean and its dependent waters north of the equator for a period of five years beginning with the 1966 season.
- * For the 1966 season, no humpback whales may be killed in the north Pacific Ocean and its dependent waters north of the equator.
- * It is forbidden to use a whale catcher attached to a factory ship for killing sperm whales in the waters between 40 degrees South and 40 degrees North.

- * Contracting governments concerned with land stations in the Southern Hemisphere are asked to take domestic measures on a voluntary basis to ensure that the level of pelagic whale catches for the forthcoming season does not exceed the figures for the 1964/65 Antarctic season or the average (in blue whale units) of the catches for the three seasons, 1963 - 1965 outside the Antarctic. In the case of South Africa, Mr. de Jager has already indicated that the Sea Fisheries Act will be amended to enforce this recommendation.

The tone of the conference was partly set by an urgent message from Mr. B. R. Sen, Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, relayed by Mr. Sidney Holt, Chief of the F.A.O.'s Fisheries Biology Branch.

"The regulation of whaling" he said "must eventually - and as soon as possible - be achieved at global level.

This is now very urgent in view of the need to establish, without reasonable doubt, the levels of sustainable yield of each species in the seasons 1966/67 and 1967/68 and to pave the way for a long-term regime of regulation which will ensure the attainment, as soon as possible, by these stocks, of levels at which they can sustain maximum yields."

(The South African Shipping News
and Fishing Industry Review Cape Town August 1965)

NOT A DROP OF WATER - BUT 12 BEERS A MAN A DAY

Twelve bottles of beer a day was the ration of a Swedish sailor aboard the salvaged 17th century man-of-war Wasa, which sank on its maiden voyage in Stockholm harbour on August 10, 1628. The life of the seamen in those days can now be seen with illustrations at an addition to the Wasa museum in Stockholm, which was inaugurated recently.

The exhibit which is a "now and then" display shows the equipment of a sailor today and in the early 1600s. Today's cloth bag was yesterday's wooden chest and from salvaged chests from the Wasa it has been possible to tell exactly how a sailor was dressed then, from the linen shirt to the woollen cloth, jacket and the leather boots.

The beer was all the "fresh-water" on board and when the supply was empty the seaman drank salt water, one reason why more seamen died from illness than from battle, the Wasa research team explains.

That being ill on board *Wasa* was hazardous can be deducted from the crude medical equipment on exhibit. There was no doctor in the ship. First record of practising doctor aboard a Swedish ship dates back to 1654.

Butter was scarce in the diet - each sailor was allowed 1 lb. 13 oz. a month and as much cheese. He further consumed an average of 28 lb. 10 oz. of bread, 3 lb. of pork, about 15 lb. dried fish and 5 lb. 8 oz. salted and 15 lb. dried meat.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOVIET SET-UP
Fishery Delegations' First Visit

Fourteen days of almost non-stop travel through the Soviet Union, covering the ground from Murmansk on the Barents coast to Yalta on the Black Sea, and taking in Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad en route, produced, fresh and fit, Mr. James Hoy, Parliamentary Secretary (Fisheries) to the Ministry of Agriculture, at a London Press conference on Wednesday.

It has been his task to lead the first British fisheries delegation that has ever visited the Soviet Union. "It has been an exciting time," said Mr. Hoy. We felt we were breaking new ground.

"We had a long interview with M. Ishkov, the Soviet Minister of Fisheries, who has the distinction of having held his post longer than anyone in the Russian Government. He suggested exchange visits between British and Russian scientists and engineers. Without going into the realms of official negotiation, I think we can claim modestly to have achieved our objectives. We have opened the door."

High Esteem

Mr. Hoy's first impression of the industry in Russia was of the high esteem in which fish was held as an article of diet. It had been this factor which had led to fish consumption expanding at a rate when it represented currently 10 per cent of the Soviet citizen's protein intake. It stood at 10 kg. per head.

The Minister was able to form a clear picture of the Russian distant water fleet.

"The mother-ship is the key to the whole Soviet fishing set-up," he explained. "All other vessels either feed their catches into her or draw supplies from her."

But when asked if he saw Britain's future building plans developing in this direction, he shook his head. "Our fleet is not built for fishing in this way with 'dories' feeding their catch into a central floating depot."

Mr. Hoy's second point was the extraordinarily wide variety of the Russian catch.

The Canning

"For example," he explained, "they use redfish in vast quantities along with many other species, and they smoke practically every variety, including some we never think of treating in this way. We had the opportunity of sampling some of these products at what they called 'tasting luncheons,' at which the menu was mainly fish, and where nearly all of it was smoked."

"There is a very large canning industry. Much of the fish caught is fed direct from the ship into the processing plant used for canning."

Mr. Hoy was questioned on how Russia distributes her catch over the enormous population areas which she must cover.

"Fish - and I mean fresh fish, iced in blocks - is reaching all the main centres in the interior," he replied. "The blocks are split by the retailer - I have seen a fishmonger using an axe - and the transport is in specially insulated rail trucks and road vans. But they are no further advanced in the field of refrigerated transport than we are - for example, in moving fish from Hull."

The Filleters

There was virtually no such thing as the consumer pack in the Soviet Union, the delegation found, but the Russians made up "presentation caskets," each holding some half-a-dozen cans of varied content.

The Minister was loud in his praises of the Russian women filleters. "Never have I seen fish more expertly filleted than it was by some of the women we saw," he said. "Some of them work so quickly that there would be no advantage in employing a machine."

Another point which impressed him was the output of the inland fish-farms. Inland lakes and ponds together with certain areas of the White Sea and the Sea of Azov, which were counted as inland waters, produced 1,000,000 tons of fish annually - rather more than the entire UK catch from all sources.

The spreading of fishery knowledge and technology he found was encouraged, not only at the big research institutes such as those at Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev, but through colleges such as that established at Murmansk. Here, correspondence courses have been established, and at the moment they found a thousand students enrolled in these - some from the industry, others well inland.

The USSR employs 250,000 in the actual catching side of the industry, and half-a-million altogether counting the ancillary trades, but the Secretary was instrumental in introducing something new into the Russian menu - a case of Scotch kippers which he presented to M. Ishkov, who, said Mr. Hoy, "commented very favourably on their quality and flavour."

And that must count as high praise from a country where they "smoke everything."

(Fishing News

London

September 1965)

SAFCOL TURNOVER EXCEEDS £4 MIL.

The South Australian Fishermen's Co-op. Ltd. (SAFCOL) had record sales of £4,021,672 for the year ended June 30, 1965 - a rise of 27 per cent.

The year's surplus, however, was down from £203,319 to £179,193.

At the annual meeting, the general manager, Mr. R. M. Fowler, reported an overall decrease in production of 10.81 per cent which included a record crayfish catch of 404,810 lb.

Mr. Fowler said the shark catch, down 39.6 per cent, was directly affected by the availability and high price of crayfish.

Major Factors

Practically the whole of the 37.49 per cent drop in the salmon catch occurred in the Portland area.

The two major factors in the increase of Safcol sales were the increased sales of canned products and the high return of crayfish tails.

Total group sales for the year compare with £3,166,007 in 1964 and £1,318,648 in 1958.

Mr. Fowler said prices for export tuna were not as good as last year and comparatively had a depressing effect on turnover figures.

Safcol was formed just on 20 years ago by a group of fishermen who subscribed £33 share capital.

Essentially a marketing organisation, the big co-op. has spread its interests in canning, processing and fishing to four States.

It is Australia's largest fish canner, the biggest tuna producer and the sole exporter of frozen whole tuna.

(Fish Trades Review

Sydney

October 1965)

TOAD FISH - A DELICACY OR POISON!

The toad fish, which killed a young Tasmanian couple honeymooning at Eden (N.S.W.), recently is a delicacy in Japan.

Special chefs are trained to prepare and cook the fish, called fugu in Japan, so that gourmets who eat it won't be poisoned.

This information is contained in a book called "Dangerous Marine Animals," in which the author, American marine biologist Dr. Bruce W. Halstead, describes toad fish as among the most poisonous of all sea creatures.

Dr. Halstead says toad fish belong to the puffer-like or Tertraodontoidea order of fishes.

He writes: "A characteristic of all puffers is their remarkable ability to inflate themselves by gulping in large quantities of water or air.

Offensive Odour

"Puffers make considerable noise during inflation by grinding their heavy jaw-teeth together.

"They have a distinctive offensive odour, which is particularly noticeable when they are being dressed.

"The liver, gonads, intestines and skin usually contain a powerful nerve poison, which may produce rapid and violent death.

"At best, eating puffer is a game of Russian roulette.

"Unless you are a professional fugu connoisseur leave puffers alone - you will probably live longer.

"More than 60 per cent of the victims poisoned by this fish die.... There is no specific treatment or antidote for puffer poisoning."

The Toad fish has been known to be poisonous since the foundation of Australia as a colony.

Captain Cook, himself, was poisoned by eating the fish when he arrived in Botany Bay in 1770.

One of the first recorded deaths from Toads was in 1821, when a Parramatta resident died within 20 minutes of eating them.

Victims of Toad fish poisoning sink into a coma from which they never recover.

(Fish Trades Review

Sydney

October 1965)

BIG PLANS FOR NEW ZEALAND DEEP SEA FISHING INDUSTRY

Inside two years New Zealand will make a flying start in the deep seas fishing industry field with ocean-going ships and a shore processing factory.

A £500,000 company has been floated. Known as New Zealand Sea Products Ltd. it has as its chairman of directors the retired Chief of the New Zealand Defence Staff, Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Phipps.

With, initially, two 140 ft. stern trawlers from Norway and a factory, the company will begin tapping the resources of some of the world's richest fishing grounds - the waters surrounding New Zealand.

Five Days

The ships, steaming out into the Tasman Sea and Pacific Oceans for up to five days, will be guided by the latest scientific devices in their search for fish. Fish will be taken for quick-frozen fillets, for fish meal and fish oil.

These last-mentioned by-products of the catch will be a valuable source of overseas earnings for New Zealand, Sir Peter believes. Some of the fish, mackerel and mullet for instance, can be frozen without any cleaning or processing whatsoever. Japan and several European countries are expected to be excellent markets for these "as is" fish.

"Mackerel and mullet are at present often thrown away by New Zealand fishermen, which is a waste of both food and foreign exchange," says Sir Peter.

The company, employing a new electrical process, plans to process dried fish for Asian markets.

In the early stages the company does not intend to process shellfish, but is considering harvesting the king crab - abundant but untapped in New Zealand waters - for home consumption and export to the United States. The company may can some of its catch later, but initially will make use of the existing and growing resources of the New Zealand canning industry.

Before the new enterprise was announced 18 months research into economics, market potential, and technical requirements was made. When the company was announced there was a rush of applicants for employment. Sir Peter is delighted that those applying hope to make their careers in the industry, in many cases because they realise its potential value to the economy of the country.

The waters surrounding New Zealand, rich in plankton, the principal source of food for sea life, will support an industry which may soon become as big as the fruit industry. (New Zealand fruit exports bring the country about £4 million annually.)

The oceans are a rich source of food supply for the world, but competition to reap and sell this bountiful harvest is intense. New Zealand has without a doubt obtained the right man to lead her entry into the deep-sea fishing field.

The 55-year-old Sir Peter Phipps, DSC and Bar, the first vice-admiral in the country's history, is a man of vision and of action. A navy man most of his life he has a real interest in the sea and the fish that live in the waters he has sailed over. And ever since he began his naval career, firstly as a volunteer reservist in the late 1920s, Sir Peter has made himself a name for quick thinking and even quicker action.

He accepts with relish the challenge of heading an infant industry which promises to grow into a giant. "I like the challenge of change," he says simply.

So this distinguished naval officer has beaten his sword into a ploughshare and taken on the task of building a multi-million industry. New Zealanders confidently expect that

he will succeed.

(Fishing News

London

September 1965)

GOOD NEWS UP NORTH

The Canadian Wildlife Service's new wetlands-preservation program in the prairie provinces is gratifying to all duck hunters. A trial leasing project initiated two years ago has shown great promise, and various techniques and administrative procedures have been tried out in attempts to speed up the program.

Now the Canadian Government is prepared to spend \$53 million over a 10-year period to preserve waterfowl breeding grounds. Other amounts, it is suggested, will be available to buy large marshes or lease them.

Destruction of waterfowl habitat on the Canadian prairies has been slower than in the States. Nevertheless it occurs and has been gaining momentum. This preventive move should be a big help.

(Field & Stream

New York

October 1965)

EELS CONQUER FALLS

African mottled eels somehow climb the world's mightiest waterfall, the Victoria Falls, in their lifelong odyssey from the Indian Ocean up the waterways of south-eastern Africa.

The Victoria Falls which are a mile wide vary from 200 to 250 ft. in depth and the lowest flow of water recorded is 6.5 m. gallons.

(The South African Shipping News and Fishing Industry Review
Cape Town August 1965)

TASSY IMPORTS SCALLOPS

Tasmania, once the exclusive supplier of scallops to the Australian fish trade, is now importing scallops from Victoria to satisfy local demand.

Well-known Hobart fish merchant, G. A. Casimaty, is principally concerned with the imports.

(Fish Trades Review

Sydney

October 1965)