

FUR FEATHERS AND OIL

Reference was made to the cohabitation of West Australian Petroleum Pty. Ltd. oil men and fauna on the Barrow Island reserve in the September issue of the Petroleum Gazette. It reported on this subject being mentioned at an international conference in Switzerland, which was attended by Fauna Officer H.B. Shugg.

W.A.P.E.T. has brought in productive wells on Barrow Island and, by maintaining a strict set of rules, the Company is achieving its objectives without disturbing the fauna. The Company's activities are confined to a small section of the island.

The Department has received letters from many interested people who have expressed concern for the safety of the Wildlife, but we have been able to assure them that the fauna is being well cared for.

CAPE RICHE DUCKS

Honorary Fauna Warden, D.J. Moir, of Cape Riche, has advised that due to the high water level in swamps in the district, the black duck population is higher than it has been for some years. The abundance of water in the swamps has been caused by heavy winter rains.

BIRDS AT SEA

The P.V. Pelsart, while on patrol early in November, called at Lancelin Island to check on the bird population.

"We saw hundreds of bridal terns, many of which appeared to be paired off, but we saw no signs of nesting. Crested terns, caspean terns, as well as the usual numbers of silver gulls and pied cormorants were seen. Another bird sighted, but which we were unable to positively identify, was not unlike a wedge tailed eagle. This intruder appeared to be causing a great deal of consternation among the smaller birds.

Later we stopped at Wedge Island and sighted a sooty oyster catcher, curlew, common sandpiper and apart from a few silver gulls and crested terns, bird life on the island was relatively scarce. We did, however notice a sea eagle's nest but this did not appear to have been occupied recently."