

ISLAND FAUNA RESERVES VESTED IN
WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

At a meeting of the Executive Council held on July 24, 1968, approval was given for the following new reserves to be vested in and held by the Western Australian Wild Life Authority, in trust for the purpose of Conservation of Fauna. These reserves are all islands between Lancelin and Dongara, and are numbered 29251, 29252, 29253, 29254, 29255, 29256, 29257, 29258, and 29260. Notice to this effect was published in the Government Gazette dated August 9, 1968.

In January 1966, the then Fauna Protection Advisory Committee, considered a recommendation by this Department that the offshore islands between Lancelin and Dongara be set aside for the conservation of fauna. The fauna occurring on them is, in the main, restricted to sea birds, hair seals and various reptiles. Many of the islands are important breeding areas for the sea-birds, some of which appear to be threatened as a result of the intense of the crayfishing industry which has introduced a comparatively high human activity in previously important breeding areas on the coast itself.

Perhaps the greatest value of these islands to fauna conservation and to science lies in their reptilian fauna. Mr. J. Ford, in a paper published in the West Australian Naturalist, indicates therein the importance of these islands as areas in which to study the effects of competition (both intra and interspecific) on the evolution of species and the causes of the vulnerability of island populations.

Ford and other scientists have pointed out that there is a close relationship between the size of islands and their capacity to carry diverse populations of flora and fauna.

Fauna utilizing these islands includes the White-faced Storm Petrel (Pelagodroma marina) which incidently is the only local breeding storm petrel; Pied Cormorant (Phalacrocorax sulcirostris) Caspian Tern (Hydroprogne caspia), Roseate Tern (Sterna dougalli), Crested Tern (Sterna bergii), Fairy Tern (Sterna nereis), Bridled Tern (Sterna anaethetus), Pacific Gull (Larus pacificus), Silver Gull (Larus novae-hollandiae), Pied Oystercatcher (Harematopus ostralegus), Mountain Duck (Tadorna tadornoides) and Rock Parrot (Neophema petrophila)

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"An optimist is a fisherman who takes a camera with him when he goes fishing".

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