

A REPORT ON THE RED AND GREY KANGAROO
IN THE GOLDFIELD'S AREA

During July 1969, Mr. K.D. Morrison, Fauna Warden, carried out an investigation in the Goldfield's area of the Red and the Grey Kangaroo populations, their comparative percentage status and their present rate of exploitation by commercial enterprise. Information was obtained by visits to the Kalgoorlie Town and Shire Councils offices, pet meat dealers, Honorary Wardens of Fauna, personal observations and by making roadside counts of kangaroos killed by traffic.

According to both Councils, kangaroos in the district are quite prolific but are not reported as being in pest proportions. The Kalgoorlie Shire Clerk advised that a questionnaire was at present being answered by pastoralists concerning the kangaroo situation on their properties. It is anticipated that results of this survey will be forwarded to the Department.

The investigation revealed that kangaroos were plentiful in occurrence south of Kalgoorlie. Motorists using the Kambalda - Kalgoorlie road were experiencing considerable damage to vehicles by these animals. On a 30-mile stretch of this road 23 carcasses were counted by Mr. Morrison; of these about 65% were Grey Kangaroos, the remainder were Red Kangaroos and Euros. In comparison on a 25 mile stretch along Broadarrow Road, north of Kalgoorlie, Mr. Morrison counted only 4 dead kangaroos; 3 Grey and 1 Red. However, this may not be a true representation when comparing the density of the traffic on the two roads. During a patrol 45 miles to the east of Kalgoorlie, as far as Kurnalpie, a total of 12 live kangaroos were sighted, 6 Grey and 6 Red. Along this secondary gravel road only 3 carcasses were noted, 1 Red, 1 Grey and 1 Euro.

In his report Mr. Morrison stated that almost all of the kangaroos observed were in the vicinity of dams and windmills. He was of the opinion that his observations may therefore not be a true indication of the abundancy of the kangaroo in these areas, as the animals would tend to congregate at these watering places due to the dry conditions being experienced in the Goldfields.

A count of carcasses along Great Eastern Highway between Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, a distance of 23 miles, revealed 7 Grey, 4 Red and 2 Euros. Between Coolgardie and Bullabulling, a distance of 20 miles, 10 Grey and 8 Red kangaroo carcasses were counted.

In Kalgoorlie and Boulder there are five pet meat shop operators. Most of these do their own shooting but some also buy from professional shooters. Investigation revealed that if shooting is conducted to the south of Kalgoorlie about 75% of the kangaroos taken are Grey Kangaroos, whereas when operating either to the north or to the east of that centre the take is 90% Red Kangaroos. It would appear that the overall average take consists of 75% Red and 25% Grey Kangaroos. The total number of kangaroo carcasses sold as pet meat in these five shops would be about 310 per week.

Proposed business ventures by two South Australian pet meat companies to operate in the areas north and east of Kalgoorlie have come to the notice of the Department. These inter-state developments, as well as the existing local trade, will be considered in the present review of the Fauna Conservation Act Regulations.