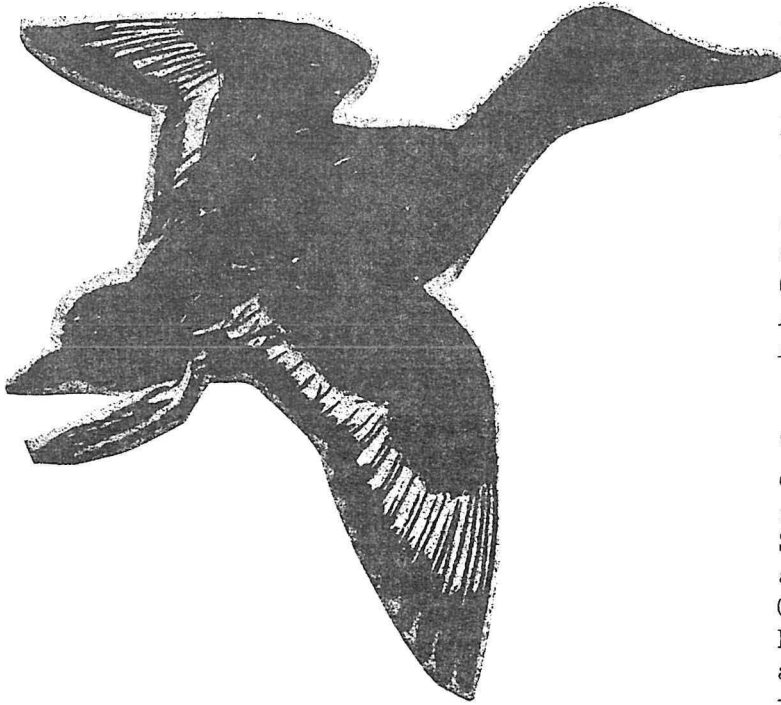


NO DUCK SHOOTING SEASON IN  
SOUTH WEST AND EUCLA LAND  
DIVISIONS THIS SUMMER

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Western Australia's drought has caused a complete ban on wild duck shooting for the 1969-70 season.

Fisheries and Fauna Minister MacKinnon took immediate action today after receiving a report from the Game Management Committee of the West Australian Wild Life Authority.

Mr. MacKinnon said "The drought has caused a critical situation in the State's Wetlands and after receiving the Committee's report I had no hesitation in agreeing to their recommendation that the wild duck season remain closed as I

believe the wild duck population could be dangerously reduced if any hunting is allowed this summer."

The Minister said that the Committee had carried out aerial and ground surveys during August and September including a ground survey in the major waterfowl areas in the South West.

Areas visited were Mandurah Estuary, Benger Swamp, Vasse and Wonnerup Estuary, Norring Lakes, Flagstaff Lake, Coyrecup Lake, Queerearrup Lake, Wagin Lake, Lake Gundaring, Dumbleyung Lake, Toolibin Lake, Lake Taarblin, White Lake, Little White Lake, Yearlering Lake, and Chammel Lakes System.

Few breeding birds were observed and all adult birds

were still bunched indicating that the drought has seriously affected the normal breeding behaviour.

Aerial surveys were also made of the places mentioned plus areas north and north-east of Perth and it was found that favoured duck shooting areas such as Oak Park, Lake Ninan, Lake Hindes, Moora Lakes were dry or nearly so, and others, including Lake Pinjareega, Lake Logue, Arrowsmith Lake, and the Snag Island Salt Lakes are expected to dry out early in the summer months.

Mr. MacKinnon said the Committee described the situation as critical and little or no breeding had been observed in either aerial or ground surveys and it is expected that the major populations of waterfowl will seek refuge in the areas from Lake Muir to Katanning.

This would make them particularly vulnerable the Minister said and for that reason he had agreed to ensuring their complete protection.

Mr. MacKinnon said it was a remarkable indication of the natural instincts of wild duck that even those at the South Perth Zoo, where ample water was available, had shown little or no breeding activity.

The Minister added that if any special reason arose such as big congregations on farm dams, applications for their dispersal could be made to the Department.

He added that he made the announcement as early as possible in an effort to assist businesses and hunters generally and while he realised the decision would come as a disappointment to many hunters he was confident that their general concern for the continuation of the species would result in all thinking people lending support to the decision.

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"He must have had a magnificent build before his stomach went in for a career of its own.

- Halsey