

SAND DUNE HABITATSWANBOURNE - MARMION

During 1969 the W.A. Wild Life Authority considered the possibility of preserving the natural flora and fauna of the coastal dune formations between Swanbourne and Marmion. A special sub-committee was set up to investigate the possibility of having vacant Crown land set aside for the conservation of flora and fauna.

In its investigation the sub-committee interviewed representatives of the two local authorities - the Shire of Perth and the Perth City Council.

The Perth City Council indicated that the general planning of the beach front provides for the area between the Boulevard and Oceanic Drive to be developed with bathing facilities for public recreation. This area will be levelled, with lawns and shade trees provided. The area south, to the boundary of the city, will provide some recreational facilities, but the details of any possible development have not yet been finally decided. Northwards from the Boulevard provides for no development of the area. This section is to be left in its natural state.

The City Council is of the opinion that in a built up area, large numbers of the public will use these undeveloped areas and, therefore, such locations could hardly be considered suitable for reserves for the protection of the fauna. When the public use the sand dunes, the vegetation is destroyed and creates areas which are then subject to erosion by wind. Eventually complete dunes can become denuded of vegetation. These bare dunes can then create problems of shifting sand, the result being encroachment of sand onto roads and private property. The council said it fully appreciates the Authority's concern, but unless the public are virtually excluded from a sand dune area, great difficulty will be found in retaining the sand dunes in their natural form.

The Council does not wish to interfere with vegetation covering the dunes or with the habitat of interesting birds which may inhabit the dunes, unless this becomes necessary as a result of the Council's normal fulfilment of its functions as a local authority. In some cases community interests may override fauna conservation interests. However, the Council

did give its assurance that the interests of wild life and, of course, stability of the dunes will be taken into consideration when any future proposals for these areas are being planned.

The Perth Shire Clerk informed the Authority that it was not the Shire Council's policy to level any of the coastal country and considered that a maximum cover of native vegetation was necessary to maintain stable dunes. The only works envisaged were road-level car parking areas. Reserve No. 2445 to the east of Trigg's Island was regarded as a valuable asset to the District and the Shire Council was determined to keep the area in its native state. However, a long range plan envisaged a motel in one corner.