

**ESPERANCE LAND**

*Presence of Mr. J. B. Regan at Conference:  
Personal Explanation*

**MR. BOVELL** (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [5.35 p.m.]: With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a personal explanation.

**Mr. Tonkin:** Your memory has revived, has it?

**Mr. BOVELL:** Earlier this afternoon the Leader of the Opposition asked a series of questions included in which was—

Would I try to revive my memory to the extent of telling the House whether Mr. J. B. Regan of Geo. Fielder & Co. was also present at the conference of the subcommittee.

At the time I said I could not recall whether that was so, but I have since remembered that he did meet a Cabinet subcommittee. There was no intention on my part to mislead the House. The fact is I did not recall it at that particular time, but I have since checked the position and my memory has been prompted.

**Mr. Tonkin:** Was anybody else there?

The **SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition cannot ask that question.

**Mr. Graham:** The Minister for Lands does not want to answer it.

*House adjourned at 5.36 p.m.*

## **Legislative Council**

Tuesday, the 10th October, 1967

The **PRESIDENT** (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### **QUESTIONS (7): ON NOTICE TRANSPORT**

*Scarborough-Karrinyup-Triggs Area:  
Express Bus Service*

1. The Hon. H. R. **ROBINSON** asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What progress has been made on the proposed "Kiss and Ride" fast transit bus service for the Scarborough - Karrinyup - Triggs area?

(2) (a) When will work commence on the construction of the terminal station at Innaloo: and

(b) when is it anticipated the service will be brought into operation?

The Hon. A. F. **GRIFFITH** replied:

(1) Discussions have been held with interested parties but finalisation of exact area and location of bus

transfer station is not yet complete, although it is expected to incorporate land adjoining the new shopping centre on the corner of Scarborough Beach Road and Oswald Street, Innaloo. This will also include movement of the slow learning children's school to another site. As present their area of land is insufficient for requirements.

(2) (a) and (b) Early construction and commencement of services is not expected.

The success of this proposal in terms of public acceptance will rest on the extent to which it enables the M.T.T. to provide a faster service from Innaloo to the city. The main restriction on this route, to M.T.T. buses, particularly in peak hours, is the West Perth subway.

Prior to committing this expenditure, the authorities concerned are examining the possibility of providing buses with an alternative route to the city.

### **COMPANIES ACT**

*Amendments Recommended by  
Conference of Attorneys-General*

2. The Hon. W. F. **WILLESEE** asked the Minister for Justice:

Can the Minister advise if at the July meeting of the Standing Committee of Commonwealth and State Attorneys-General, it was decided to bring forward amendments to the Companies Act during the present session of Parliament?

The Hon. A. F. **GRIFFITH** replied:

No amendment to the Companies Act will be made in the present session.

3. *This question was postponed.*

### **ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES**

*Muradup and Darkan: Provision*

4. The Hon. S. T. J. **THOMPSON** asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister for Electricity give some definite indication as to when the residents of Muradup and Darkan are likely to be able to utilise the services of the State Electricity Commission?

The Hon. A. F. **GRIFFITH** replied:

At the present rate of progress in the great southern area it is expected that the commission's mains will reach Darkan townsite in March, 1968, and Muradup townsite in April, 1968.

**CATTLE****Sales at Midland Junction Abattoir:  
Scales**

5. The Hon. N. McNEILL asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What progress has been made towards the adoption of a system of liveweight selling of cattle at Midland saleyards?
- (2) As the Government has announced that scales would be installed to operate on a trial basis, would he advise—
  - (a) have scales now been installed, and if so, how many;
  - (b) what type of scales have been selected, and from where were they obtained; and
  - (c) if the scales are in operation, how many trials have been conducted?
- (3) What has been the total installation cost of the scales?
- (4) By whom is this cost being borne?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Meetings have been held between the Midland Junction Abattoir Board, Farmers' Union, Pastoralists and Graziers Association, Meat and Allied Trades Federation, W.A., Livestock Salesmen's Association, and the Livestock Buyers Association.

As a result of these discussions the Midland Junction Abattoir Board has been asked to postpone the siting of the scales until after a full examination can be made of a similar set of scales which are expected to be in operation with the opening of the new metropolitan saleyards at Homebush, New South Wales, in January, 1968.

- (2) (a) Answered by (1).
- (b) Weighbridge scales to be supplied by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd.
- (c) Answered by (1).
- (3) The estimated cost is expected to be approximately \$2,000 per set.
- (4) The Government.

**MARKETING OF SMALL SEED****Deputation to Minister**

6. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Has the Minister for Agriculture yet reached a decision regarding the submissions made to him by a deputation introduced by myself, and consisting of officers and

members of the Esperance & District Seed Producers Association relating to the marketing of small seed?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

It has been decided to conduct a referendum to see whether a majority of growers are in favour of an orderly marketing scheme for barrel medic growers.

This referendum will be conducted by the Chief Electoral Officer after the State general elections next year.

At the present time work is being done on preliminary considerations in connection with the referendum.

**LAND AT KALBARRI****Lease Agreement**

7. The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to my question on Wednesday, the 4th October, 1967, relating to home sites at Kalbarri—

- (a) would the Minister lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the lease agreement referred to in his reply to part (1) of the question; and
- (b) would I be correct in assuming that the lease on Lot 88 would be terminated in view of the fact that the lessee is deceased?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) Yes, copy of which it is requested be tabled for one week.
- (b) The estate of the deceased lessee is not finalised but his son, who is in possession of a current fisherman's license, and who is living and working at Kalbarri has indicated his desire to obtain a transfer of the lease to himself. The department will consider the question further when the position relating to the estate of the deceased lessee clarifies.

*The lease agreement was tabled.*

**IRON ORE (HANWRIGHT)  
AGREEMENT BILL****Third Reading**

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) and passed.

**FAUNA PROTECTION ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Debate resumed from the 5th October

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan) [4.44 p.m.]: I wish to give my general support to this legislation. A start must be made to educate people who derive sport from hunting fauna, and the legislation is, therefore, timely. I think the general observations that have been made about the Bill in relation to kangaroo shooters are worthy of note. In June this year I travelled several hundred miles north of Cue. I stayed with kangaroo shooters for three days, and during that time went out each night with these shooters, and found them to be men who were most experienced in kangaroo shooting, and most conscious of the fact that the kangaroo ought to be conserved. This attitude was quite evident, because these people derive their livelihood from shooting kangaroos.

On no occasion did I see them shoot a kangaroo which was not the largest in the pack. On occasions they would place their spotlight on the kangaroos and, if they found them to be too small, they would turn off the spotlight and move to another pack, which might be 15 miles away. From my point of view their manner of shooting was most humane. I did not see a single wounded kangaroo escape. Each time any of the men pulled the trigger the result was a dead kangaroo.

The men to whom I refer are excellent operators who have been trained in their art from early childhood. The method of their operation was thoroughly clean, and I was particularly impressed with the way they looked after the interests of the station owner. They would shoot perhaps 20 kangaroos; throw them on the back of a truck—which incidentally was hosed down later—and they would take these kangaroos some distance off the main road where they would dress them. After having done this they would hang them up and take them back to the freezer where they were snap frozen.

This meat could quite safely be offered for human consumption, provided it was inspected when it reached Perth. I was most impressed with the cleanliness and the skill of these operators. At this stage I might point out that I do not think there is any danger, even from unscrupulous shooters, of the red kangaroo being shot out in Western Australia. I say this because for every red kangaroo shot there are at least 20 which are frightened and which get away into the bush. The 'roos are generally shot on the sides of the tracks, and quite often there are thousands of acres between the tracks up and down which the men move. I have no fear whatever that the red kangaroo will be shot out in Western Australia.

When, however, we consider the question of duck shooting, which is a favourite pastime of many people, including myself, I think the suggestion made by Mr. Willesee is a very good one indeed. It would be a very good idea to have some form of badge supplied to shooters. I say this because

under the Firearms and Guns Act the position as it applies to the license is quite ridiculous. The license is nothing more than a piece of paper which one is supposed to carry at all times.

I support the idea of having a cheap plastic badge, perhaps with the words "Fauna license No. 1," or something similar, inscribed on it. The badge could perhaps be green and be made about the size of an R.S.L. badge. It could be pinned either inside or outside the clothing of the shooter.

Mention was made by the Minister that, due to the drainage of a large area of 500,000 acres of wetland in the south-west of our State, reservations would have to be set aside and property would have to be purchased for the breeding of our wildlife.

I go along with that, but when we come closer to the city, where no drainage whatever takes place, and where there is much clearing of land, this year there was a much higher level of water in the lakes and swamps than has ever been known before. I refer particularly to Lake Yangebup, in the Jandakot area. For the first time in history, the waters of this lake crossed the road, and this was brought about mainly by the clearing of adjacent lands. With ploughing and cultivation there has been a greater run-off of flood waters which has resulted in our swamps and lakes being at a record level.

Over the past few years, the breeding habits of the various species of ducks and geese in the Jandakot area have produced good results. From a shooter's point of view it is a pleasure to see the number of young birds around. Many people are not happy that next year the date of the opening of the season is to be the 20th January. However, I am more than happy with that date. I can recall the position several years ago—the present Minister was not the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna—when I made representations to the then Minister early in December to have the opening of the season delayed for up to six weeks because of the large numbers of baby grey ducks—commonly called "teal." It is a cranky little bird and if there is sufficient rain and water about it will keep on breeding.

Back in February, 1945, we had some exceptional rains; and this happened again in 1955 or 1956. These grey ducks mated and bred again in February of those years. I made those representations several years ago because a large number of flappers and ducks not feathered were still around our lakes. These young birds cannot fly; and if they are shot they are useless to eat because there is no flesh on them. In the main, they become the victims of the inexperienced shooter.

Not all shooters shoot on the wing; some will not even shoot on the water if they can get ducks on the land. This is a fact.

If they can get them on a bank they think they have more ducks to shoot at. I agree entirely that the next season should open on the 20th January. I think the date should be set on or about the 20th January each year, just as a date is set for the crayfishing industry.

Our duck population has seriously decreased over the past 10 to 15 years. Ten or 15 years ago it was not uncommon to see flocks of up to 500 and 600 ducks in the area where I shoot. Now if anyone sees a flock of 20 or more, he thinks he is going to have a wonderful night's shooting. Even flocks of 20 are very rare.

The time is not very far away when we will have to close the duck-shooting season for possibly four or five years to allow the ducks to breed up again and so increase their numbers. Over the past few years there has been indiscriminate shooting of ducks. The problem which the Minister will have to face—he has not told us yet how he intends to act—is that of policing the Act. In my day I have run into many honorary inspectors and my impression of them is that they have a license to break the law. I do not like them one little bit, because I have seen honorary fauna inspectors do things which a regular duck shooter would not do. I do not go along with the line of thought that this Act can be policed by honorary inspectors.

At the present time I believe there are seven full-time fauna inspectors in Western Australia, plus the fisheries inspectors who have not the time to worry about wild ducks when the season is open because they are busily engaged in the crayfishing section, and other sections, of the fishing industry. Therefore any moneys that accumulate should be used to provide extra inspectors in preference to the purchasing of land at this stage, because until the public are educated that they are allowed to shoot here and not there, indiscriminate shooting will always be a problem. It is the greatest problem that the Minister and the department have to face.

Then we come to the problem of lack of co-operation within the various Government departments. Several weeks ago I had cause to be in touch with the Harbour and Light Department, but first of all I will go back to 1964, when I was approached by the president of what is known as the Lake Walyungup Ski Club. This club applied to the Rockingham Shire Council for permission to ski on Lake Walyungup, or what is commonly called Salt Lake, which is the second largest lake on the righthand side of the road going to Mandurah.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is the depth of that lake?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The basin on the lake would possibly be 30 feet or 40 feet deep in the middle. Salt Lake has never

been known to dry up. I understand it is in some way connected with the sea; hence its being called Salt Lake. White Lake contains a white brackish type of water which never turns salt. Salt Lake definitely is salty; and, when only the basin is left, one can see the edges of the lake encrusted with salt. I do not suggest that we should establish another salt industry at this lake.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I was just curious.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Lake Walyungup Ski Club asked the Rockingham Shire Council for a lease of, or permission to use, the lake for skiing purposes. I will quote correspondence dated the 11th December, 1964, as follows:—

Dear Sir,

Your letter of 28th November, 1964, was placed before the last meeting of this Council. I was directed to advise you that this Council has granted permission for your Club to use Lake Walyungup for the purpose of skiing, subject to the provision of adequate septa toilets on the foreshore.

In regard to this matter, would you please contact the Council's Health Inspector who will advise you of his requirements.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) D. J. Cuthbertson,  
Shire Clerk.

That was very good. These people then tried to purchase an area of land alongside the lake so that they would have access to the lake. However when a transfer was applied for it was brought to the owner's attention that under the regional plan the area was reserved for public open space. To cut a long story short, the owner of the land allowed the club to have access to the lake. The members of the club constructed a groyne and landing facilities for themselves. The club was a family group and membership was not open to the public. Anyone who wanted to join had to meet with the requirements of the club. People could not just buzz around the lake and disturb the wildlife.

The following letter was received from the Chief Warden of Fauna by the Rockingham Shire Clerk:—

Following inspections of Lake Walyungup and discussion of the plans that the Lake Walyungup Ski Club has for the use of the open waters of the lake, I am convinced that orderly skiing there in the manner contemplated will have very little effect on the fauna of the area.

I do believe, however, that skiing activities should be limited to the open club, so as to limit any possible disturbance to a minimum and that the club should be limited to a reasonable section of foreshore to reduce the amount of cover that will need to be destroyed.

The members of this club, after all the trouble they had gone to, had been told previously by the Fisheries and Fauna Department that it could not use the lake for skiing purposes, because that would endanger the wildlife around the lake. However, during October of that year I contacted an officer from the department of fauna and we went to the area to have a look at it during the middle of the duck breeding season.

As a result of that visit, the club was given permission to use the lake basin for skiing from the 1st January until Easter of each year. The use of the lake during that period would not cause any disruption of the breeding habits of the birds. That system has applied until this year. The members of the club have played the game with much credit to themselves. However, during August of this year the president of the ski club received the following letter from the Shire of Rockingham:—

Enclosed please find copy of letter received from the Harbour and Lights Department regarding the use of Lake Walyungup for skiing purposes.

The letter is forwarded to you for your information and attention and it may be advisable for you to contact the Harbour and Lights Department direct and obtain their approval to continue using the lake.

The letter which was enclosed, from the Harbour and Light Department, was as follows:—

I refer to the conversation held this week between yourself and Mr. Armstrong from this Department and should be obliged if you would inform the Lake Walyungup Ski Club that although it controls the present access road to the Lake it has not the exclusive use of the Lake for water skiing should other launching facilities be established.

I view this rather seriously. We find that after an examination by the fauna inspector, and an undertaking given by the club—the undertaking has been honoured and no complaints whatsoever have been received—another person who has bought a store in the area wants to set up a public ski ramp on this particular lake. That person did not go near the department of fauna; he went to the Harbour and Light Department. I had discussions with the officer concerned and he told me, in no uncertain terms, that the lake had nothing to do with the department of fauna. He said that all navigable waters came within the control of the Harbour and Light Department.

This problem will have to be looked at in the case of other navigable waters, particularly in the south-west of our State where ski clubs could be formed and could be given permission by the Harbour and Light Department to use the lakes. Those clubs could do more damage than would

be done if the duck-shooting season were left open all the year around. If the breeding habits of the birds are upset we will have no ducks left within a very short time.

I say there is no co-operation between the various departments. After my discussion with the Harbour and Light Department I rang the Fisheries and Fauna Department and contacted the officer concerned. Neither department seemed to know what controls the other had. I feel that at all discussions which take place when the board is set up—I would rather use the word "authority"—for probably the same reason as Mr. McNeill did—the heads of departments should be represented, and particularly the Harbour and Light Department. If that department is to give permission to bodies to set up ski clubs on our various waterways, it will have an adverse effect on the wildlife.

I support the Bill, but I trust the Minister will take heed of what I have said—particularly my last comments—and make sure that more restrictions are placed on the opening up of our inland waterways for skiing purposes.

**THE HON. C. R. ABBEY** (West) [5.7 p.m.]: Quite rightly, this Bill has brought forth a good deal of comment, and no doubt other members will also contribute to the debate. The point made by Mr. Ron Thompson regarding wardens is not, I think, well founded. It may well be that in the small areas he has referred to there could be one or two who do not meet the necessary requirements, but in my experience I have found that wardens throughout the State generally are very good. They carry out the duties with which they are charged, and they are very concerned to see that our fauna is preserved.

Most of the wardens in the inland areas, whom I know, are shooters themselves. They do not want to see the game numbers decrease, and they take every step possible to preserve them. In fact, I have known many of them to patrol at times when they felt it was necessary to make sure that the spirit of the sport of duck shooting, in particular, was being observed. That is my experience, and I was sorry to hear Mr. Ron Thompson make the point he did because I think this sort of undue criticism could lead to a breakdown of the system, and many interested people are doing this job at present.

In his second reading speech the Minister made some very interesting comments. I found his reference to the possible future benefits to the human race from research into the Rottneest quokka, and its possible application as a cure for muscular dystrophy, extremely interesting. Without doubt, that would be a ray of hope for those unfortunates who suffer from this dread disease. No doubt Dr. Hislop will have something to say on this matter when he makes his contribution to the de-

bate on the Bill—as I hope he will. This illustration, and others contained in the Minister's speech, give all of us some cause for thought.

Personally, I have never doubted the wisdom of conserving our fauna. It is only natural that those who live in close contact with nature should have some understanding of the problem. Farmers and pastoralists, by virtue of their calling, are constantly in touch with the problem which faces conservationists in preserving our wildlife.

Naturally, there are some who are destructive and, no doubt, they number quite a few. On the other hand, there are others who are very concerned that we retain our fauna in perpetuity. I know of many people in my own district who show, by their interest and actions, that they are ready and willing to co-operate in this regard.

I think perhaps the Minister will recall that only last year, just before Christmas, he was invited to Beverley and he met a number of people interested in the conservation of fauna.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I had a very interesting day.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I am glad the Minister had an interesting day. We are rather proud of the actions taken by the shire council at Beverley, by members of the ski club who operate on a lake east of Beverley, and by others—particularly the wardens of the district who are co-operating with the Department of Fisheries and Fauna in its efforts to improve the breeding of ducks and wildlife in these areas.

I would like to mention two people in particular who have played a major part in fostering the conservation of fauna in that area. I refer to Mr. Jack McLean of Bally Bally, and Mr. Henry Hall of Dangin. Those are only two whom I have picked out; but there are many others. However, the two men I mentioned have played a leading part in getting together a group of people who are interested in skiing and in damming up the outlets of the lakes—in particular Lake Mears, and other lakes east of Beverley—and in conjunction with the shire council they have been very successful. In some cases the depth of the water has been increased by three feet or four feet and this has meant that many small islands have formed. The ducks have been breeding prolifically on these small islands.

As members would know, in our State it has always been the practice for ducks to breed in swamps adjoining larger lake areas. The damming of the lakes has created even more favourable conditions for duck breeding. I hope that when money is available from the licenses to be issued to duck shooters these areas will be investigated by the fauna board with a view to encouraging the nesting and breeding of ducks.

The lakes east of Beverley are very salty. They have been tested by Mr. Jack McLean over many months and generally they are almost twice as salty as the sea.

At the instigation of the Minister, investigations by the department have shown that, to date, suitable fish for introduction to these lakes are not available. However there must be some fish that are suitable because at certain times of the year literally millions of small fish—mainly minnows—which are able to survive in the salty conditions of the lakes, are to be found.

As a matter of interest, last year I investigated and inspected some work done on the lookout which overlooks the lake on Mr. Jack McLean's property. Mr. McLean has made quite a large area of land available to the shire council, and on a high peak a lookout has been erected. Among other of his conservation efforts, Mr. McLean encourages nesting eagles, which are protected by him, as he believes they are becoming fairly scarce and considers his efforts are worth while. I know that in this area eagles are regarded as a pest.

Mr. H. T. Edwards, a farmer of East Beverley, has set aside, as a sanctuary, 200 acres of fairly light country which has a good deal of protection, and on which, I believe, are quite a number of kangaroos. This is rather unusual, perhaps, because in the East Beverley area most of the country is fully cleared, but in the vicinity of the lakes, and on the property of Mr. Edwards, there are still some kangaroos, and I have been assured by him that he intends to ensure that they will not be disturbed.

To future generations it will be a matter of interest, of course, that fauna of this type can be preserved within these cleared areas. I have mentioned that the lakes east of Beverley would be suitable for ducks, and in fact they are used for nesting and breeding, but I wonder why more use is not made of our forest areas for this purpose. West of my farm, which adjoins a forestry reserve, there are large areas of forest land which are part of the forest reserves stretching from Perth to the south of the State. In these reserves there are many small streams, quite a few of which feed our water catchments, but I have often wondered why some co-operation could not be obtained from the Forests Department to erect small dams on suitable creeks to foster the breeding of ducks.

I know of a swamp within a few miles of my property where ducks abound. When the swamp dries out about Christmas time the ducks leave. I would therefore advocate that amendments be made to the Forests Act to make it mandatory for State forests and forest reserves within the jurisdiction of the Forests Department to be made available for the breeding and protection of both fauna and flora. Perhaps the Minister for Forests may not be particularly pleased with that suggestion.

but there is the possibility that it would double the number of available sanctuaries within this State.

In recent weeks some critical comments have been made by members of the Royal Society and other such organisations, and in my opinion such criticism does not assist the work of protecting fauna. If members of the farming and pastoral community are to be expected to assist in fauna and flora conservation a realistic attitude must be adopted, and the people concerned consulted—I stress the word “consulted”—with a view to obtaining their co-operation. A great deal could be achieved in this way. No doubt the Minister will tell us what has been done in this regard in the past, but I think much more could be done in the future to bring about better understanding between our scientists, our conservation authorities, and the people who have to live alongside the reserves and who are keenly interested in conservation.

We have an excellent organisation of fauna wardens in this State. At present I believe about 500 or 600 wardens are assisting the Fisheries and Fauna Department in policing the conservation of fauna. Possibly this number could be increased and I do not believe that, as a general rule, anyone accepting this responsible position views it as a license to shoot fauna out of season. Mr. Ron Thompson made this accusation. Possibly he has had experience of such incidents, because I am sure he would not make that statement unless he were aware of such acts in some particular area.

However, if this practice does take place, the offending wardens should be weeded out and more care should be taken with the appointment of wardens in the future. My experience of the appointment of wardens is that, generally, the names of various suitable people are submitted by shire councils to the Minister for approval. The shires are extremely careful about those who are recommended for such appointments. It is my opinion that perhaps the present controversy over the opening of the duck-shooting season would not have taken place had the opinions of the wardens first been sought. I have been informed that some wardens are not happy with the present situation.

Reports are sought on the breeding habits of ducks and other game by the Chief Warden of Fauna, and wardens are able to present a fairly accurate picture of the situation in their respective districts. It would be wise if the Minister sought to create a situation in which there was greater consultation between the wardens of the State and his departmental officers.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The wardens furnish quarterly returns and these are taken into account before a decision is made.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The Minister's statement is quite correct, but I still think an annual conference, as has been suggested in other quarters, would no doubt be of great value in creating more interest and understanding among the wardens and other interested people. Some consideration could be given to this suggestion, because there is no doubt that if those in authority took the wardens and people concerned with conservation into their confidence more enthusiasm would be engendered and further assistance would be forthcoming.

I have here pamphlet No. 94 issued over the signature of the Chief Warden of Fauna (Mr. A. J. Fraser), setting out certain reasons for the opening of the duck season on the 20th January, but I consider the person who prepared the pamphlet could have shown more discretion when choosing the headings used, one of which reads, “What's the Fuss About?” Surely there is no need to create antagonism between the shooters and the department!

This heading brought forth some comment from the *Beverley Times*, and the reaction generally in the district has not been good, because shooters feel it is only reasonable that they should be able to express their opinions, as they have been doing for quite a long time. I would like to read this article published in the *Beverley Times* so that it will go on record. It reads as follows:—

#### Wild Ducks—The Open Season

Following a request to Fauna officer, Mr. H. B. Shugg, we have received from the Fisheries and Game Department a chronological list of the opening dates and times of the duck shooting season since 1916. Sportsmen of the district who are just now very concerned over proposals for new opening dates and times, will be interested to note the changes which have occurred over the years. It will be noted that Beverley was responsible for a change from afternoon to morning openings of the seasons in 1920.

1916 Shooting season opened at 5.30 p.m., December 23, closed June 30, 1917.

1917 Shooting season altered to 5.30 p.m. on December 23 to May 31, 1918, NOTE: Opening time subject to much debate and various actual times advocated from midnight to 5.00 p.m.

There was much diversity of opinion on these matters. The article continues—

1920 A petition dated October 22, 1920, and signed by fifty-eight residents of the Beverley District requested the opening time to be changed to 4 a.m. as “the present time is unsuitable from every point of view.” A proclamation dated December 2, 1920, altered the opening time to 4 a.m. throughout all

the State except the East Murchison and Kimberley Game Districts.

1921 A request by the Boyanup Farmers and Settlers Association to open the season at 12 noon was rejected in a letter dated August 16, 1921. In a proclamation dated November 23, the opening time of the shooting season was amended to 5 a.m. as "4 a.m. is too early and shooting accidents may occur (F. Aldrich)."

One accident had occurred, which was the reason for the suggestion being made at that time. Inexperienced shooters, and those who are poor sportsmen, commence shooting before the season opens. Such people sometimes find ducks settled on open water and, as Mr. Ron Thompson has said, they shoot either with complete disregard for anyone who may be on the other side of the lake or river, or with a complete lack of sportsmanship. The article continues—

Submission accepted and season commenced 5 a.m. December 23rd, 1921, and closed on May 31, 1922. A request by Mr. E. Rose, M.L.C., for the season to be amended from December 15 to April 30 in each year was refused on December 13, 1921.

(The second volume of 49/48 has disappeared and is not available at Archives of our own records).

1944 The recently formed Fauna Advisory Committee recommended on September, 28th 1944, that the 1945 season open on January 22 as the season was particularly late and the normal opening would be much too early. The Fauna Advisory Committee was advised at its meeting on December 7, 1944, that Cabinet had approved its recommendation and that publicity was given to the change.

1945 At a meeting on April 20 1945, Dr. Serventy moved "to open the season in mid-January instead of December 23, Major Whittell was definitely opposed to the proposal because it was a recognised privilege of the Australian people to shoot ducks over the Xmas holidays. He would rather see the season closed earlier.

A report by Mr. A. H. Robinson at that meeting revealed that the 1944-45 season was very poor. (Mr. Robinson commented that young birds were still about on opening day).

The Fauna Advisory Committee recommended on September 26, 1945, that the 1945-46 season open at normal time December 23. This recommendation was, apparently, accepted.

1948 Season altered from "22nd (sic) December to the Sunday immediately preceding Christmas Day" because "as the usual opening date, December 22 (sic) falls on a Wednesday . . . it is certain that illegal

shooting will occur on Sunday, December 19 . . . the matter of a few days will not have any adverse effect on the future prevalence of wild ducks."

1950 The Chairman reported at the meeting of the Fauna Advisory Committee held on 21st January 1950, that the Capel Road Board wanted the season to open at 5 p.m. rather than 5 a.m. On December 1, 1950, the Minister agreed to a request of the Perth Gun Club that the season be advanced to Saturday, December 23 because Sunday was Xmas eve.

The 1950-51 season commenced therefore, from the Saturday preceding Christmas until May 31.

In 1951 the season opened on the Saturday preceding Xmas, and in 1952 for the first time the wishes of the dairy farmers were met, the season opening in the South-West coastal areas at 5 p.m. on December 20, and in the rest of the State at 5 a.m. on December 21. In 1953 the season opened at 5 a.m. throughout the State on December 20 and closed on May 21. Many protests were received including those made at a meeting held at Elgin Hall.

The 1954 season opened at 6 p.m. on the Saturday preceding Xmas (December 18) in the South-West coastal districts and at 5 a.m. on December 19 in the rest of the State. It was to have closed on May 31 but a special proclamation was put through to have it closed on April 30th due to cyclonic rains received in February.

This pattern has continued with exceptions in certain years. In 1956 Xmas Day fell on a Tuesday and the opening was advanced to December 16 and 17. It closed on May 31. The Kimberley and North-West land divisions were opened to duck shooting until December 21, 1962.

The 1958 season opened on December 20 and 21 "on the recommendation of the Department and Guns Clubs." 1951 was similar to immediately preceding years so far as the opening was concerned, but closed on April 30 due to overwhelming support of that date by honorary wardens and shooters. (Earlier closing was strongly opposed by Dr. Serventy).

In 1960 for the first time the proclamation included a specified list of ducks that could be taken during the open season. This was to preclude any possibility that Cape Barren Geese could be considered by a Court to be wild duck for the purposes of the proclamation. This was the pattern which has since been followed. In 1963 the Kimberley, North-West and Eastern Land Divisions were opened for a further continuous season to close on January 1, 1968.



That article in the *Beverley Times* of last week indicates some of the interest that is taken in the matter by the people of this area.

I would like to refer once again to pamphlet No. 94 issued by the department. The following appears in it:—

What's the Fuss About?

Because we intend to—

1. Break away from the tradition of "Ducks for Xmas", i.e. the opening this year will be 2.00 p.m., January 20, 1968.

It is generally considered in the Avon Valley and the areas south that this date is much too late for several reasons. Usually in these districts it is found that very few flappers are about in, say, the third week of December. Admittedly there were years when flappers were shot in this period, and that was a great pity. If it is desired to provide a few more days to enable the young ducks to take wing, the period could reasonably be extended by commencing the season during the first week in January. This extension would fit in with the desires of most shooters.

I would point out to the Minister that, almost without exception, the younger generation of parents arrange their holidays to coincide with the school holidays, so that they can take their children to the coast. If the season is to commence on the 20th January it would be most unfair to them. Many shooters who normally enjoy the duck-shooting season would be precluded, unless they made a special trip back from the holiday resorts.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I hope you are not suggesting that I do not know the pattern of life in the country.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I am not. I merely want to place these comments on record. I am not sure that the assessment by the department as to the scarcity of ducks can be borne out. I have questioned many people who are interested in the subject, and from my inquiries it does not appear that any great decrease in duck numbers is evident. It might well be that in the areas mentioned by Mr. Ron Thompson the position is as he stated; but surely those areas lend themselves to conservation if a good programme is adopted to implement it.

In the pamphlet I have referred to one of the reasons given for this date is—

Eliminating the double opening shoot that causes unduly high shoot-levels on opening weekend.

I would point out to the Minister that the 20th January, the proposed date, falls on a Saturday; and opening on a Saturday afternoon will certainly not achieve what is mentioned in the pamphlet. There is no doubt that many individual shooters, and often parties of shooters, from both

the metropolitan area and the country districts make this a big event. Very often they proceed to the shooting spot on the Saturday afternoon, and if they are fortunate enough to get a bag of 15 ducks I am sure they will stay overnight, and will shoot again on the following day. Thus, instead of having an opening day on a Saturday afternoon in the south-west, and on a Sunday morning for the rest of the State, there will, in effect, be a two-day opening if the proposed date is adhered to.

There is no doubt that in the past, shooters have proceeded to their shooting spot on Saturday afternoon, have camped out overnight, and have enjoyed the conviviality and the exchange of yarns around the campfire. I am sure they will continue to do this if they go out on the Saturday afternoon, and they will shoot again on the Sunday morning.

We will have the spectacle of some careless people creating fire hazards. I think this is inseparable from the lighting of campfires. Very rarely do we find, as occurred last year, a bushfire started from a campfire; but it is a pity that the odd individual does not respect the properties of landholders—properties which adjoin rivers and lakes. If this disregard continues I can assure them that they will be kept out of the access ways to the rivers and lakes, and they will suffer a great deal of inconvenience. I make this comment in the hope that some of those who in the past have been careless as to property rights will not be neglectful in the future. Most landowners have been very tolerant in this regard, and they themselves join the parties of shooters. Generally they have not worried about other people passing over their properties to engage in duck shooting.

In his second reading speech the Minister explained that the new board will be set up on a somewhat different basis, and that the membership will be increased slightly. The intentions of the Minister in this regard are very commendable. The additional membership will provide a wide representation of interests, including scientific and conservation interests. At the moment only one member of the Fauna Protection Board can be said to represent country opinion. To create a situation which will bring about a better understanding between communities in the country and the protection board, there is need for greater representation on the committee of people who are interested in conservation, but this additional representation will have to face up to the realities of life and be prepared to deal with vermin and bushfires.

I am aware that efforts are being made by the present conservation authority to overcome some of these difficulties. But I think there is need for the employment of several officers under the new conserva-

tion board, whose duty it is to ensure that vermin do not become a pest on the properties adjoining the reserves, and that the fire hazard is kept well under control.

I am certain this can be done without unduly affecting the flora of these reserves. At present some friction does occur because of the existence of vermin and because of the fire hazard. However, I feel that if officers were appointed to deal with these aspects, they could make a very worth-while contribution.

I would suggest to the Minister controlling the Bill that to ensure the board is truly representative, two representatives of the group specified by the Minister as comprising three persons who are not State public servants could be drawn from a panel of names submitted by the executive of the shire councils' association, the Farmers' Union, or the pastoralists' association. This would give the Minister a wide range of choice. I would suggest that when we get into Committee the Minister might look at this aspect and thus avoid the necessity for members to seek to make an amendment. With a small change the Minister could perhaps satisfy our requirements in this regard. I feel it should be mandatory that at least two members of the committee be able to represent rural and pastoral interests.

I would make another suggestion which I feel would help with the conservation of fauna in future. We have several boards and commissions and, in particular, the National Parks Board and one administering the fauna reserves. I feel it would be wise if in future we sought to bring these two bodies together, thus making them one strong overall body which should then be allocated more finance to enable it to operate much more effectively. I hope the bodies concerned will not let petty jealousies arise between them because, if this occurs, pressures might be brought to bear to keep the bodies as separate entities.

It is interesting to study some of the recommendations made in a book called *National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, edited by the Standing Committee on Conservation of the Royal Society of Western Australia, and published by the Australian Academy of Science and the National Parks Board of Western Australia. I am not going to weary the House by quoting at length, but I feel I should refer to one or two matters. The following comment is made on page 3:—

The Sub-committee has not attempted to say how reserves or national parks should be managed. This was not its task; nevertheless, a word ought to be said about the general problem of the need for management of reserves. Bitter experience has taught national parks and conservation authorities in all parts of the world that

nature reserves and national parks will not manage themselves. They are artificial things, islands of fauna and flora which are mere fractions of the former distribution of the animals and plants which go to make up their populations. As such they are subject to the kinds of fluctuations and pressures which island faunas and floras experience and which result in the characteristic forms taken by insular communities. If they are to be maintained as representative of continental areas, they must be managed, or they will not stay that way.

It goes on in that vein. The following is found on page 4:—

... the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee which, as a corporate body, has vested in it a number of the most important nature reserves in the State. However, this Committee and the Chief Warden of Fauna have little money and are in no position to control a system of national parks. Similarly, the National Parks Board, cannot, as it is equipped and constituted, manage and control the extensive system of reserves proposed here.

What is needed, then, is a newly conceived National Parks Authority.

I do not agree with this, because I think we could give it a much more appropriate name, possibly the one suggested by Mr. McNeill. The quote continues—

Such an Authority would have to possess adequate finance, be biologically expert, and have the administrative power and personnel to manage these parks and reserves.

I do not wish to weary the House, but these matters are of interest. The following appears on page 49:—

It appears that what is needed now is the development of a new policy towards obtaining for Western Australia a carefully planned reserve system, perhaps under the control of a single authority.

I do not say "perhaps." I think this is absolutely essential. To continue—

The reserves of this system should be so distributed to include all major categories of fauna, natural scenery, historical and archaeological sites. The duty of the controlling authority should be to protect and administer the reserves to the best advantage both of the reserves themselves as natural areas, and for the public who may wish to visit and enjoy them.

Those last couple of lines are very much to the point. I wonder how many people in Western Australia visit and enjoy these areas. Not a very great proportion of the population, I fear.

During the course of my speech I suggested that some streams could be dammed within forest areas with the idea of creating spots where the breeding of ducks and

other water fowl could take place. If this is advisable, and I think it really is, no doubt the Forests Act could be amended. As I understand the position, as that Act stands at present it would not allow such things to be done. However, if it is advisable that we encourage the rural community to play its part in conservation, it is fair enough that we should also require the Forests Department and other departments in control of water catchments and other reserves to play their part.

Some very large areas are involved in our State forests and reserves and it is generally considered that these could become part of a general plan to conserve fauna.

At the present time, as we all know, reserves for flora, fauna, and other purposes are set aside by administration and we are notified by gazettal. This is the only method adopted at present and I do not think it is sufficient or very wise. If it is thought necessary that further flora and fauna reserves should be set aside, then Parliament should have an opportunity to discuss the necessity or otherwise, and each year, as is done with parks and reserves, we should have placed before us the intention of the Lands Department to set aside reserves for flora, fauna, and other purposes. In those circumstances we could debate the proposals and everyone would know exactly what was intended.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Such a Bill should not be presented on the last day, either.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: That is true. It is a very important matter and should be dealt with as such. By this method a good deal of examination could take place and both Parliament and the public would be in possession of the reasons for the proposals.

It is interesting to have a look at the present situation in relation to flora and fauna reserves, of which, as far as I can ascertain, there are 291. Some of these reserves are solely for flora and some solely for fauna; but, in the main, they are for the combined purpose. Those 291 reserves have a total of 4,606,250 acres; and our 34 national parks have a total of 789,302 acres, which gives a grand total of 5,395,552 acres. This is in addition to quite a number of island sanctuaries, some of which are the Abrolhos Islands, Seal Rock, Doubtful Island, Recherche Archipelago, Barrow Island, and many others. The areas of these islands are unsurveyed.

In addition to the above, we have at present set aside in State forests, 4,448,131 acres, and 1,859,538 acres of temporary reserves, which is a total of 6,308,367 acres. If we total up these reserves and State forests, we find that we have a total of 11,703,919 acres which I think can be regarded as being of some value in the preservation of flora and fauna.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is an area as big as Scotland.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Yes. I believe it is also proposed that something like 2,000,000 acres are to be set aside in the Esperance area, together with a large area in the Badgingarra district. No doubt many other areas are under consideration.

We must take into consideration also the mining reserves, water catchment reserves, and so on. These could all play some part in an overall conservation programme.

It is worth noting that since the 30th June, 1966, a total of 475,239 acres has been set aside mainly for flora and fauna. This surely gives the lie to those who state that we are doing very little in this regard. It is not bad, is it, when in a little over 12 months we have set aside 30 flora reserves of 14,629 acres, 12 fauna reserves of 5,805 acres, and 60 flora and fauna reserves of 443,634 acres, plus three national parks totalling 11,171 acres?

I hope I have not bored the House too much, but I am extremely interested in this subject. I trust the Minister will not consider that I have been critical in any way. I have merely attempted to state the position as I see it. I hope that in the future we will achieve a much better situation by combining, as I have suggested, certain bodies that are now separate entities. Of course it would be mandatory that the body would be under one Minister, and I cannot think of a better person than the present Minister for Fisheries and Fauna.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The Minister for Lands might object to that.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [6.1 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion because I believe it has a great deal of merit and warrants members giving a great amount of consideration to it. I believe the speech which has just been made by Mr. Abbey shows that he has, in fact, done just that.

I am interested in this Bill in more ways than one, but at the moment I would like to summarise my thoughts by saying that I believe it is a good Bill, that protection is timely, and that the establishment of a board instead of a committee is well timed. In company with Mr. Ron Thompson I would think that "authority" is a better term than "board," seeing that we have gone to the trouble of changing the designation of the boards of ports to that of authorities. Also I consider the obligation to protect fauna reserves as set out under this measure is one which falls upon all of us, whether we are members of Parliament, in local government, or are ordinary citizens. In addition, I am certain that the proposition which has been placed before us by the Minister will lead to a very solid board.

I do have one concern, however, and that is for the Minister's health in trying to sort out from among the many eligible

persons—which figure could run into hundreds—who should sit on this board, because there are many who could serve with great distinction. Mr. Abbey said a few moments ago that he hopes no jealousies will arise and I agree with him completely. However, I am sure that whoever the Minister in charge of the legislation may be, he will realise the great task which lies in front of him. In my opinion he has a very great responsibility, because this is a new conception altogether for the control and conservation of fauna. I venture to say that when the measure is finally passed by Parliament and becomes law the Minister concerned will have a great deal more responsibility than he probably thought when he first set out to introduce the measure.

There are one or two observations which I wish to make. First of all, I notice that the Minister made play—and I use the word “play” without any disrespect—of the fact that the measure was to be a conservation Bill as compared with the previous preservation legislation. His distinction intrigued me.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: “Protection” was the word previously used.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I referred to *Newnes Family Reference Dictionary* to find the following definitions:—

Conservation—The act of conserving: the keeping entire.

Preservation—The act of keeping safe from harm or loss: the keeping alive: the keeping in existence: the retention: the maintenance, keeping up: the guarding against shooting or fishing by unauthorised persons.

The point on which I wish to support the Minister is that the act of conserving our wildlife in the immediate future—not in 25 or 50 years’ time, but within the next five years—will be of tremendous importance. The temptation will be very great for groups of people and for organisations to combat any action which the proposed board may adopt.

As Mr. Willesee said when he spoke on the measure last week, I feel that the time has come for us to remember that although as a State we are only 138 years old, we are already some hundreds of years old in so far as the development which has taken place on a very vast area of land is concerned. Some parts of the land lend themselves to intense culture and some to intense industrialisation. Wherever we move, there will be a group of people or organisations who will say, “If you do one thing, we will, in fact, lose this other thing,” or vice versa. They will go from right to left and from left to right. Here again, I believe that a tremendous responsibility will fall on the proposed board to carry out the provisions of this measure.

*Sitting suspended from 6.8 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Just before the tea suspension I was making the point that I thought the responsibility which will be placed upon the shoulders of the members of this new board will be tremendous in view of the vast development that is taking place along our coastline, and also because of the huge areas of land—1,000,000 acres per annum—that are being opened up for agriculture. Of course, we know that while 1,000,000 acres per annum are being thrown open for selection, for farmers and prospective farmers, not all of that land is actually being cleared. Probably only a quarter of that area would be cleared annually.

However, I would refer to a very small local area that Mr. Griffith would know—I refer to Brown’s Lake, at Inglewood. This used to be a swampy area and a good deal of wildlife was to be found there. Years ago people used to go there for picnics but then the Government drained the lake and now approximately 25 houses have been built on what used to be a swampy area of ground. The point I am trying to make is that the policing of the provisions of this legislation will be quite difficult but they will be of tremendous importance to Western Australia, and to our wildlife.

I obtained a pull of the Minister’s speech and I hope he does not faint when I say that in my 16 years in this Chamber I have never heard a measure so clearly explained—the reasons for it, the ideas behind it, and what the Minister hopes to achieve by the passing of it. I congratulate the Minister on his lucid explanation. His speech enabled those who are interested in this subject to follow the proposals with ease. I was pleased to note that in his preamble—before he started to explain the provisions of the Bill—the Minister referred to the fact that land set aside for the preservation of wildlife contributed next to nothing to the world’s food supply. However, I think we all realise that certain types of wildlife must be protected to prevent the destruction that could be caused by certain types of pests and insects.

The Minister said that some critics questioned the wisdom of setting aside some 500 acres of land for the short-necked tortoise; and he also mentioned the Rottnest quokka. As the Minister knows, I am interested in the Rottnest quokka because of the experiments being carried out into muscular dystrophy, and I would like the board, when it is established, to ensure that despite any new developments which may take place at Rottnest, the requirements of the quokka population will not be overlooked because of the importance of quokkas in the type of research to which the Minister referred. It is only natural that with the development of Rottnest as a tourist resort more buildings will be erected and there will be

a further encroachment on what is now undeveloped land. However, I hope, as I have said, that the requirements of the quokka population will not be overlooked. Also, I hope the board will ensure that if any application is made to reduce the 500 acres set aside for the short-necked tortoise such application will be very carefully investigated.

When the Minister mentioned that the general idea of the Bill was to strengthen the hands of the conservation authorities, he referred to six or seven items, one of which was the deletion of section 5. He also referred to the fact that the Act is to be renamed as the Fauna Conservation Act. The Minister also referred to penalties being increased, and in my view no hunting without a license should be allowed in Western Australia.

As I have mentioned in the House before, there is a good deal of swampy land to the south of Kwinana, and as far down the coast as Busselton. With the development that is taking place in these areas a great deal of damage could be caused by unlicensed or uncontrolled shooters. They could cause damage not only to fauna but also to humans. As a matter of fact, I am amazed that to date there has not been a tragedy caused as a result of indiscriminate shooting in that area. For a distance of approximately 35 miles inland along that part of the coast these swampy sections are being developed and I think we are lucky that so far no serious accidents have occurred.

As I indicated by way of interjection—and I want to emphasise the point—I think the Minister who controls fauna—whoever he may be—should also be the Minister to control flora; because we know that much of our fauna is dependent on the flora for survival.

Apparently the Chief Vermin Control Officer is to be a member of the board, and I think that is a good move. Also, as Mr. Abbey said, I believe the members of the board should weigh very carefully any propositions that are put to them, and with those who are to be members of the board, I think that will be the position. When a decision is made by the board I believe it should be conveyed to Parliament through the Minister. We should know what is happening because, despite the fact that some members of the public, and the Press, do not think very highly of our capabilities, I believe we are responsible people, and when we speak we put forward worth-while suggestions on matters under discussion. Many times private members of Parliament put forward suggestions which could and should be investigated because they are worth while. I am sure the Minister will not be dissatisfied with the contributions that have been and will be made to the debate on this Bill.

In introducing the measure the Minister said—

The constitution of the committee is to be enlarged by the addition of an extra *ex officio* member who is to be the Director of Fisheries and Fauna, who will be chairman of the board, while the chief warden of fauna will be the executive officer of the board.

The number of appointed members is to be increased from three to six to consist of one botanist, two zoologists, and three persons who are not State public servants. The provision for deputy members will be repealed.

Does this mean that the new members who are to be appointed to the board will be able to spend more time in carrying out the duties associated with the fauna board? Are all the members of the board to be paid for their services? Are any of them to act in a voluntary capacity, or—and I mean no disrespect—will they be like the members of the crossing lights committee who meet only twice a year? I feel sure the Minister will be able to answer the queries I have put to him in this regard. The Minister then went on to say—

Increasing from one to three the number of non-public servant members will allow the reappointment of the existing member together with two additional persons.

As I said earlier, there are many highly qualified people who could be appointed to a board such as is proposed. However, with many boards people who do not quite fit in with the requirements are appointed, and I could not find out from the Minister's speech whether any member of this board can be replaced if he is not fulfilling the Minister's requirements. I am not casting any reflection on any member of any board, but I would like the Minister to explain the position, if that is possible.

I mentioned the areas set aside for the quokkas at Rottnest, and I would like to refer to the reserve at Two People Bay, where the noisy scrub bird has been found. A big area of land is to be set aside as a reserve and I am given to understand, by a man who lives in Albany, that there is a beautiful beach in this vicinity, one that is popular with a great number of people in the area. The squatters at Two People Bay have been removed, but I would like to know if it will be possible for people to have access to the beach through the reserve at Two People Bay. It seems a pity that, in protecting wildlife, the human being must be completely excluded from certain areas. Perhaps the Minister can answer my query on that point.

The use of sanctuaries for both flora and fauna brings me to the point about reserves in the metropolitan area. We know that since 1951, when the Kwinana complex commenced to grow, there has been a far greater area of land developed in the

near-metropolitan area as compared with that developed in the previous 40 or 50 years.

I have with me a very important file which I would be glad to show to any member who may be interested. I would like to quote portions of certain letters that have been written by people like Dr. Ride, Director of the Western Australian Museum; Dr. Main, Reader of Zoology at the University of Western Australia; Dr. Serventy, Head of the Wildlife Division C.S.I.R.O.; and Dr. Royce, head of the botany section, Department of Agriculture, and Keeper of the State Herbarium. There are also statements from Mr. Jenkins, Government Entomologist and Chairman of the Conservation Committee of the Royal Society of Western Australia; the National Trust of Australia (W.A.); the Tree Society; the Science Teachers Association; the Naturalists Club; the Botany Department, University of Western Australia; the Perth Women's Service Guild; and the Governor Stirling High School.

I am only going to quote three points from these letters inasmuch as they draw attention to the reserves in the metropolitan area. I will quote from a letter written by Dr. Main, who is Reader in Zoology at the University of Western Australia. He was writing about the environment situations for teaching purposes. The letter to which I refer dealt with the Talbot Road reserve in the foothills, just below Swan View. This is what Dr. Main had to say—

Further to our many previous discussions on the matter of natural environment situations which can be used for teaching at High School and University level and your recent comments to me regarding the possible fate of the Talbot Road Reserve.

He is writing to Mr. McMillan, Senior Biology Lecturer at the Guildford Grammar School. He continues—

You may recall that when I commenced teaching Ecology in 1952 I had a large number of study sites in the metropolitan area. These had been selected so that they represented most environmental situations in the outer metropolitan area. I had hoped that by using a great number of areas I would provide a representative series of teaching sites of which a large number of graduate school teachers could make use since they would have been trained in similar sites while taking Zoology as a unit in their degree course.

Unfortunately 34 of these sites have failed to survive the expansion of the suburbs. In view of the foregoing you can appreciate how distressing I find your recent comments of the fate of the Talbot Road Reserve.

This area has been used by me since I commenced teaching at University.

I have also used it as a study area for my research and Dr. A. K. Lee, now a lecturer in Zoology at Monash did a considerable amount of work for his Doctorate degree in the Talbot Road area.

The area is notable for the range of habitats available for the burrowing frogs of the genus *Heleioporus* (4 of the 5 known species occur there) as teaching material. These frogs are admirable since they show a habitat preference which is controlled by the angularity of sand grains (*H. psammophilus* angular sand grains, *H. eyrei* rounded grains.) Furthermore three-quarters of the species of frogs in metropolitan area occur in the area bounded by the Talbot Road reserve and the Toodyay Road.

Similar diversity can be found in many other groups of animals e.g., wolf spiders which as you know, are so admirable for teaching purposes.

All these advantages arise from the fact that the reserve sits across the transition from the sands of the coastal plain and rises into typical laterite on its South East corner and as a consequence contains a diversity of plants and animals representing both coastal plain and hills environments. No other reserve or national park has these attributes. There are other teaching advantages and I have not mentioned the attractiveness of the area in spring-time when the native flowers are in bloom.

I would now like to quote two small passages from a statement by Dr. Serventy, as follows:—

The Western Australian Station of this Division, recently established at the above address, is keenly interested in the fate of this reserve as our research officers contemplate including it within the sphere of their ecological investigations.

This block of virgin country represents a precious remnant, which should be preserved in its present state at all costs, of a type of natural habitat which is fast disappearing. The Foothill Zone along the Darling Scarp has virtually no other large reserves near Perth and it is rather remarkable that this comparatively extensive area of some 165 acres should still survive in its native state.

This is apparently the only one of its kind left. To continue—

Once destroyed native bushland cannot be replaced; if a golf course is needed it should be established on disturbed vacant land elsewhere . . .

He also went on to say—

Reserves in the Darling Range, such as the John Forrest National Park and the Walyunga National Park, are

not a substitute for the Talbot Road Reserve. These hills reserves are distinctly different habitats. In my book, "The Birds of the Swan River District, Western Australia," 1948, I refer to the Foothill Zone as perhaps the most distinctive on the coastal plain for bird distribution "for it is virtually the exclusive haunt in the district of such species as the Hooded Robin, Ground Cuckoo-Shrike, Thriller, Brown Song-Lark, Emu-Wren and Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, whilst others, such as the Rainbow-bird and the Black-faced Wood-swallow, have a marked predilection for this belt." Species such as these do not occur in the heavily forested reserves in the Darling Range. Other faunal elements, too, characterise the Foothill Zone, and in the more clayey facies further north is the only known occurrence of the Short-necked Tortoise.

Golf Courses and other playing fields can be built in a variety of places; agricultural development has so greatly mauled the Foothill Zone that bits of it in the virgin state are rare and diminishing rapidly. It would be deplorable if this reserve were to be sacrificed or whittled down to an insignificant segment.

There are several other letters, and I would like to quote one more passage from a letter from Dr. Ride, Director of the Western Australian Museum, written to Mr. McMillan. It reads—

Previously, on the occasion of the presentation to you of the Australian Industries Development Association Award as outstanding science teacher of Western Australia last year I had been particularly struck by the importance of the concept of reserves for biological education which you put forward during your oration. It is very pleasing, now, to see a detailed proposal being put to a Civic Authority for a Reserve for this purpose in a place where it will be of great use.

He further states—

Although the reserve, as an educational facility, will be useful today, it will become of even greater value if the Western Australian educational system extends a further year (as is the pattern elsewhere). More advanced work before university matriculation will be needed in secondary biology and, in this country where problems of land utilization are vital, practical fieldwork in natural communities will assume considerable importance.

I wanted to draw the attention of the House to this, because of the fact that here we have one of the last areas of its kind near the metropolitan area, and it comprises only 167 acres. At the moment there are 1,900 pupils at the Governor Stirling High School and between 500 and 600 at the Guildford Grammar School who

use this area. Apart from this, a number of other schools use the area in question. It is now proposed, however, to take over the area as a golf course.

Yesterday I attended a picnic to raise funds for the muscular dystrophy group. The picnic was held at a place called Mussel Pool in the Upper Swan area. I do not know whether members know the area; but it has been developed by Mr. Whiteman for the use of the public generally. I was amazed to see how the area was laid out. The swamps have been carefully protected, as has the bush-land, and adequate facilities are provided. Yesterday there were about 400 or 500 people present at the picnic.

I wish to speak now because once this Bill is passed, and the board takes over, it will be some time before any member of the House will be able to place before the board any thoughts he may have. We know that the members of boards such as this are among the few people who read *Hansard*, and make pertinent notes. It has often been my privilege and pleasure to be told by a departmental head that he would like to discuss something which I happened to raise during my speech on the Address-in-Reply.

If there is any move to take over the Talbot Road reserve, I hope I would have the support of the Minister and the members of the board he intends to create to prevent such a move. I congratulate the Minister on the Bill he has introduced.

**THE HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [7.59 p.m.]: I regard the Bill as a very worth-while measure, and I hope it succeeds in the manner that we would all like to see it succeed. There is one suggestion I would like to make. I would like to be sure that the fauna in the suburbs of our big city will also be catered for in this legislation. I think it is fairly obvious that we lost nearly all the willy-wagtails as a result of the spray used to get rid of the Argentine ants. I do not know whether that is actually true, but I have been informed that this was so. Our bird life is in a sorry situation. Over the last few years the number of magpies seems to have lessened considerably.

The Hon. J. Dolan: There are still plenty of them.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I was fortunate enough to hear two of them talking to each other in what might be called graceful tones. They may not be very verbose, but they do talk to each other in a beautiful manner.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Three visit me every day.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: If one goes to the extent of looking after this type of fauna, one finds it is well worth having. When I lived in Bellevue Terrace, next door to the American Consul, the vice-consul, when the consul went back to America, carried on what the consul had

been doing by continuing to feed three kookaburras. It was a wonderful sight. In the evenings, when some food was thrown down on to the grass, the kookaburras would come from the tops of posts, and from nearby electric light wires and frantically guard their small offspring while they had their feed. They would hover around and protect their young almost like ferrets.

As I said before, that very lovely little bird, the willy-wagtail, will rehabilitate very slowly if we have taken away that on which he lives. The rainbird is another species that we should never lose. If one hears them in the morning, or late in the evening, one can tell there will be rain within a short period.

These are the birds which must give tremendous pleasure to a very large number of citizens who care for the surroundings in which they live. Therefore I suggest that Dr. Serventy would be the one person to have on this board who could really give valuable service in regard to fauna. I support the measure.

**THE HON. J. DOLAN** (South-East Metropolitan) [8.3 p.m.]: This is the first time since 1954 that we have had before us a Bill to amend the Fauna Protection Act. So after that long period of time it is no wonder that members have taken the opportunity to speak on this subject because of the many changes that have taken place in regard to our fauna over those years.

In addition to passing Bills in order to make an attempt to conserve our fauna, I feel there is a duty upon all of us to educate the people to appreciate the wonderful and unique fauna we have in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia. What do we actually do in order to keep before our people the necessity to regard our fauna with a certain amount of pleasure, and perhaps wonder? When I look around the Chamber I see one of our wonderful species illustrated in about 20 places. I speak of the black swan which we keep continually before the minds of the people.

Might I also refer to the fact that when decimal coinage was introduced, Australian fauna was used for the stylised designs on the coins. I could mention some of them. On the 50c coin, for example, in the Australian Coat of Arms we have two of our unique specimens of fauna, the kangaroo on one side, and the emu directly opposite. The 20c coin has that wonder of wonders—the unique mammal—the platypus. The 10c coin has a bird which, perhaps more than any other, symbolises Australia: that is, the lyre bird. On the 5c coin we have the echidna. Of this, perhaps I could speak at greater length shortly. On the 2c coin there is the frilled lizard; and on the other coin there is what is known as the marsupial mouse.

I notice that our sporting bodies, to a great extent, have done something to keep the image of fauna before the people. They have done this almost on a world-wide basis. Of the rugby teams of Australia, one is known as the Kangaroos, and another as the Wallabies. We find the New Zealanders call their team the Kiwis; and the South Africans refer to their famous rugby team as the Springboks. This shows that all nations have an obligation and duty always to keep before their people the significance of their fauna.

It was suggested by Mr. McNeill that we should give some consideration to changing the name of the proposed board and not call it the "fauna board." I will throw something into the ring for the consideration of the Minister and suggest that if he will be satisfied with a reasonably long name we use the title "wildlife preservation council." If he wishes to have a smaller name, perhaps he would be content with "wildlife council." This would simply necessitate changing the interpretation of "fauna" and in its place putting the word "wildlife," so it would cover fauna as dealt with by the Bill.

We have some remarkable fauna. If we are going to educate the people to conserve our fauna we must make them realise there are good reasons for doing so. I would refer first of all to what we call our egg-laying marsupials, the monotremes. There are two well-known specimens, the platypus being of great Australian importance; and the other one, the echidna, is well known in our own State. With all other mammals, the young are born alive.

At this stage I propose to read a very remarkable telegram which had great significance to those who received it. The year was 1884. A scientist by the name of William A. Caldwell rode from the Barton River in Queensland to a nearby station and sent a telegram to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which was meeting at Montreal. There is a big distance between the origin of the telegram and where it was received. The chairman at this scientific gathering in Montreal rose and read the message, the reaction to which was electric, and all delegates rose and cheered. It is a very short telegram, containing only four words, as follows:—

Monotremes oviparous, ovum meroblastic.

This telegram indicated that it had been discovered scientifically that there were mammals which laid eggs. So far as the science conference was concerned, that was one of the most inspiring moments its members had ever experienced in connection with their work.

The platypus has the long name of *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*. It has that name because there are so many points



associated with its appearance. It has a bird-like beak, webbed feet, and looks like a duck. As a matter of fact, I have heard a good definition of the platypus. It is said that a platypus is really a duck designed by a committee! Whether or not that is true I would not know. After mating, they normally lay two eggs, but sometimes one and sometimes even three. The incubation period is quite rapid—it is about 10 days before the young come out, at which time they are just over half an inch in length. It has been observed that in captivity their life is around 10 years.

In this State we released them in National Park; and there is a possibility that in the future we may release them in our southern rivers. The unfortunate thing is that our rivers probably do not contain enough of the small animal life required for their food, with the result that they cannot rehabilitate themselves. The only danger appears to be that their extinction may be brought about by the over-use of insecticides—as mentioned by Dr. Hislop—which may cause damage to their natural food. There is also the danger that in rivers they may be caught in fish traps; and this may also cause them to become extinct.

I would now like to say a few words about the echidna. This is a strongly built animal, its body being covered with a bristle of spines. It is often referred to as an ant-eater, but naturalists have never seen it eating ants. This animal lives on termites which, from a naturalist's point of view, are not ants, although called "white ants."

The echidna thrives in captivity and there is a record of one having lived for 50 years. However, there is no record whatever of their ever having bred in captivity. This may be due to the fact that in order to survive they require a diet of such things as milk, eggs, chopped up meat, and so on; and perhaps a lack of termites in their diet may be responsible for the fact that in captivity they do not lay eggs. The mother develops a pouch into which it lays the egg, and the period of incubation is similar to that of the platypus—about 10 days. The baby, when born, feeds on milk from the glands and gradually develops little spines at quite an early age, naturally to the great discomfort of the mother echidna. It is said the feeling is something akin to, or even worse than having dry breadcrumbs in one's bed. If any of us has ever experienced that feeling, he can imagine how the mother echidna feels when the young one starts to grow its spines. The echidna is very plentiful throughout Australia, particularly in Tasmania, so there is no likelihood of its ever becoming extinct.

From the egg-laying mammal we pass on to the marsupial mammal, with which we are well acquainted in Western Australia. The word "marsupial" comes from

the Latin word, *marsupium*, which means a pouch. The birth opening is a few inches from the pouch, and it is quite a difficult feat for a baby kangaroo to get from the birth opening to the pouch of the mother. It is not helped by the mother. These things have been observed by naturalists in many parts of Australia.

The first white man to see the marsupials and record his findings was Francis Pelbart. There are two broad classifications of these mammals, the first being the meat eaters, and the second the grass eaters. In the first group there are what are called polyprotodonts, those with big front teeth. There is a large number of families of these from the tiny dunnart—well known in Western Australia—to the giant Tasmanian wolf. They fall into the one class. The second group comprises the diprotodonts, which are grass eaters. In that class are the kangaroos, wombats, koalas, and phalangers.

It is amazing that koalas have survived because man has been very unkind to them. It is recorded that in 1924—not so very long ago—2,000,000 skins were taken in the Eastern States. The koalas are wonderful animals and how anyone could harm them I would not know. However, in one year 2,000,000 skins were taken. In 1927, 10,000 licensed hunters operated in the Eastern States and they destroyed 600,000 animals. That is only 40 years ago and in spite of that the koalas have adapted themselves wonderfully; they can be found in practically all parts of Australia. I have seen them in Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, and New South Wales. We also have them at Yanchep. I cannot recall seeing any in South Australia, but I would not be surprised to find that they exist there because they are most adaptable creatures.

Among others, we have possums, wallabies, and quokkas. The Minister made reference to quokkas in his second reading speech, and I think reference was also made to them by Mr. Lavery. Something about quokkas with which members might not be familiar, and to which I well refer, is the riddle of reproduction. This has been observed with quokkas, and since then naturalists have found that this particularly unusual occurrence takes place with many other types. The observations were made on captive quokkas and revealed that young joeys were born long after the males were removed from the female yard. The young were born long past the period of gestation, which period is generally 27 days. The mother can become pregnant even though still carrying a young in her body, or a youngster in her pouch. Another egg can be fertilised and develops to what is called a 100-cell blastocyst. Dr. Hislop and I will keep its meaning to ourselves, but if anyone wants to know what it is I will explain it privately. The development of the blastocyst goes no further once it reaches this stage, and if anything should happen to the young which is already in

the pouch—if it should die—the delayed growth immediately develops and a second young is born. If nothing happens to the first young, nothing eventuates from the second growth. That is quite an amazing situation and I am sure all naturalists would be greatly interested.

At Garden Island, of course, an animal very similar to the quokka exists and I have seen it often. It is the tammar. Another group which is covered by the Bill comprises marine mammals. I refer to whales which are gradually being exterminated due to the callousness and greed of some nations of the world which will not accept restrictions and are prepared to hunt the whales for their own use. It seems that the day will come when, unless all nations agree to abide by the restrictions, whales will no longer be found in the waters of the world.

Another mammal which some countries of the world—particularly America—have taken very strong measures to conserve, is the fur seal. Around our coast—I have often seen them at Rottnest and other places—we have hair seals. Also in that category are dugongs and dolphins. Dolphins, of course, are noted for their remarkable intelligence. Anybody who has been to Tweed Heads and has seen the dolphins playing volley ball, and jumping to catch fish, and dancing and doing all sorts of tricks, will realise that next to human beings they must be the most intelligent creatures in the world. I had to put in that plug for ourselves because some people might think that dolphins were more intelligent than we are. After all, someone has to feed them when they are in captivity.

To carry on to bird life, I think that in Australia we have about 531 species. The first on my list of birds are those I saw when we were on our north-west tour. At Kununurra we were privileged to see a couple of bower birds. They are wonderful birds which build a playground of any bright objects which they find. I have particularly mentioned bower birds because when its habits became known a new expression came into use in the English language. This is a fact and I am not trying to put anything across members. It will be found that in the English language "a regular bower bird" means a person who picks up things that do not belong to him. That expression came into accepted use.

We do not have woodpeckers in this country. Perhaps we would keep our hats on if we did have them. However, in their place we have black cockatoos and parrots. We have another remarkable bird in the mallee-fowl, which I think will eventually come to our State. That bird builds a mound for its eggs and it controls the temperature of the mound. If the bird finds that the eggs are too hot, it will remove some layers from the mound; and if the mound is not hot enough it

will add a few extra layers. I think if the public were properly educated in regard to our birds, there would really be no necessity to bring down Bills to control and preserve our fauna.

We also have flightless birds, and the most common one, of course, is the emu which appears on the Australian Coat of Arms. I can remember—and this is for the benefit of our farmer friends—that in 1932 the Army was called in to exterminate emus because they were causing so much destruction in the wheat-belt. After quite a gallant fight on the part of the Army, using machine-guns and so on, the war was given up as a bad job and the emus won. That was a victory worth recording!

Between 1945 and 1960 bounties were paid by various local governing authorities on 284,724 of these birds; yet they are still plentiful. Only a fortnight ago I was at the coast and during the middle of the day I saw two emus. This was not very far north of Perth. In order to preserve such a wonderful bird I feel that national parks are needed. I have noticed emus in captivity at Yanchep and there were many little ones, so evidently they take very kindly to captivity.

Although the farming community might not agree with me, I suggest that there should be complete protection in the farming areas. Regular cropping could be carried out by men appointed by the department. Those men could ensure there was no danger of the emu becoming a pest. In those circumstances I do not think anybody would be inconvenienced.

The Hon. E. C. House: Have you seen their big feet?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have seen them, having lived a little longer than most members. I was interested to hear Dr. Hislop refer to magpies. Magpies and butcher birds are two of the finest singing birds in the world. This is recognised by all authorities. Those birds have an outstanding beauty and range and power in song. It is generally conceded that they are the equal of, if not superior to, any other birds in the world.

I think I can spare a few minutes to refer to a bird which appears on our coins—that is, the lyre bird. If there is a bird in which we, as Australians, should take pride it is the lyre bird. Not far from Melbourne there is a sanctuary in Sherbrooke Forest, and two very well-known artists in Robert Helpmann and Katherine Hepburn saw the lyre birds perform their courtship dance. They were in ecstasies about it, so much so that Robert Helpmann wrote a well-known ballet called "Display." It has been featured in all parts of the world, and it is a ballet which advertises our fauna.

We have all seen other birds of various colours. I have seen budgerigars in hundreds of thousands in the north. The budgerigar is such a delicate little bird that one would never dream it was of tropical origin. In the north in their native surroundings, they are all green. A strange thing is that although they appear to be helpless they are almost a match for the falcons. A falcon will dive at a mass of these small birds but the flock will open up and the falcon misses out. They are really amazing, and something to be proud of.

Reference was made to the noisy scrub bird which has been caught and identified in the Albany area. It is a glorious songster but one might wonder why such a great fuss was made about this bird which was thought to be extinct. The reason for the fuss is that it has always been referred to as the Australian night-ingale. So it can be seen why naturalists got so worked up about the discovery of the bird. Although many people have taken a certain amount of credit—and they deserve it—for the reserve at Albany, I feel it was the inspiration of the words of Prince Philip himself, which was responsible for the reserve.

I was amazed the other day to see in the paper a picture and an article about the long-necked tortoises crossing the road at Shenton Park to lay their eggs. I would like to pay a tribute to the public spiritedness of Mr. Flood who put up the notice, although it was inaccurate. The notice was, "Beware Turtles Crossing Road." They were not turtles; they were long-necked tortoises.

Until 1953 it was thought that the only tortoises were long-necked tortoises. However, in 1953 at a wildlife show at the Town Hall, in Perth, a young lad named Robert Boyd exhibited a short-necked tortoise. It caused quite a sensation. I believe the lad told Dr. Serventy that although the show exhibited a long-necked tortoise, he, Boyd, had a short-necked one. Of course, Dr. Serventy thought there were no short-necked tortoises. The lad said that not only did he have one but he could also take the doctor to where there were plenty more. The Museum Director, Mr. Glauert, identified it as an absolutely new species. The reaction was that in an area not very far from Perth, over 500 acres of land have been reserved for the short-necked tortoise, and it is likely to be perpetuated.

That is the point I am trying to make in speaking at length. We all have a part to play in educating people in the belief that we have one heritage, and we have to preserve it.

Another remarkable animal we find portrayed on the 2c coin is the frilled lizard. It is really amazing to watch him get up with his big frilled collar. He

always reminds me of one of the courtiers in the days of King Charles and the Stuarts.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What about the mountain devil?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes, he is on my list, and there is also the blue-tongued lizard. I wonder how many of us, when we drive our cars along the country roads, see these creatures which do no harm to anyone? Although, on one occasion I put my hand down a rabbit burrow and was bitten on the end of one of my fingers by one of these lizards. I wonder how many of us pause along the road and make a survey of the scene that lies before us. There is not a day that one drives through the country when one cannot see the crushed bodies of these creatures.

The Hon. E. C. House: They are protected. There is a \$10 fine imposed on anyone who runs over them.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would like to collect the fine for every one I have seen on the road after it has been run over by a vehicle. Strange things have happened among our fauna which have benefited the pastoralist. I wonder how many pastoralists know that the dingo is responsible for Australia having the most famous cattle dog in the world—the Queensland blue heeler. The original blue heeler was half dingo. This accounts for the fact that these cattle dogs have such wonderful stamina. They have also acquired their intelligence from the dingo. The dingo has therefore made a wonderful contribution to the success of the pastoral industry. On the other hand, of course, the dingo has been responsible for causing a great deal of damage in many ways. We must, however, consider their other attributes before we harm these creatures.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: What about reptiles?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I now wish to refer to the lung fish which I have seen in Queensland. It is one of the most amazing fish in the world and I think it lives in our swamps in the north. It is a double breather. It can breathe oxygen that is dissolved in the water, by means of gills, and then it comes on to the land and breathes air by means of lungs. Its only living relatives are found in Africa and South America, and they have been traced back to creatures that lived 400,000,000 years ago. So in Australia we have fish that can trace their ancestry back further than any one of us can trace ours.

There are some dangers to our wildlife, and I use this term to give some indication that the word "wildlife" sounds as good as fauna. At least "wildlife" is an English word which does not have a Latin origin. Our wildlife can be exposed to dangers by the over-use of insecticides, and those who feel that that cannot happen would be well advised to read *Silent*

*Spring.* As Dr. Hislop said a while ago, willy-wagtails are delightful creatures, and how anyone can harm them I do not know. I used to have many moments of pleasure watching them when they nested in my backyard. We had an old black cat that used to lie on his back and howl when they attacked him. They had him bluffed.

There is the danger, of course, that people will kill fauna for sport, or for their skins. I know a man who took pride in the fact that he had several rugs made from the skins of some of our great specimens of fauna. On the other hand, we have many predatory animals, particularly foxes, which have been introduced to Australia from other countries and they represent a danger to many of our natural fauna.

We have several reserves for the preservation of fauna and in that respect all Governments have done excellent work. However, until many of these reserves become national parks, with all the significance of national parks, in the same way as they have in South Africa where wonderful animal species are protected and preserved in the famous Kruger National Park, and in some of the national parks in America, such as Yellowstone, our work remains incomplete. In the national parks I have just mentioned marvellous service has been rendered not only to the people of the country in which they are situated, but also to people in all other parts of the world.

I understand Australia has a grand total of approximately 5,000 square miles of national parklands, which is one-sixth of 1 per cent. of the total area of Australia. In taking the word of naturalists—particularly that of Dr. Serventy—it is estimated that Australia should be able to reserve 5 per cent. of its total area, or roughly 150,000 square miles. Tasmania, although only a small State, leads the Commonwealth with her national parks. Four per cent. of the total area of Tasmania has been reserved for parkland. Victoria runs second with less than 1 per cent. of its total area. Queensland has one-fifth of 1 per cent. of its total area reserved for parkland, and South Australia and Western Australia each have one-tenth of 1 per cent. of their total areas set aside for national park-lands.

Western Australia has many fauna reserves and for that I give all Governments full credit. I would also like to pay a tribute to the Education Department which fosters the growth of such organisations as the Gould League of Bird Lovers. Branches of this league will be found in nearly every school, and the objects of this organisation are to teach the children not only about the many varieties of birds but also to illustrate their usefulness. There are some people who have no use or regard for birds and yet they do a remarkable service for man. For example,

at one time egrets were almost sacred birds in Egypt, and they were responsible for saving the cotton crops. Yet today, they are slaughtered.

It is amazing that people perform such acts, because they do not realise the economic value of various birds. Nowadays our schools hold nature conservation days. I have to attend one later this month and it is on those days that children are taught to conserve areas where our fauna nest and breed. About a month ago I was fortunate to have the opportunity to make sure there was no interference with one of these areas, and in that respect I would commend the co-operation of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, and also the shire which was responsible for the control of this area. Both of these bodies took immediate action to ensure that there was no interference with the flora or fauna.

Another factor which I consider would contribute towards educating the people to regard our wildlife with a certain amount of awe is the wildlife festival which is held annually in Perth. It is an event that all members should see every year, because there is always something new and inspiring about it.

I commend the Bill to the House. As an adjunct to the measure all members should make themselves lovers of birds and animals, to ensure their preservation. If we do that we will make the best contribution possible towards the preservation of what must be regarded by people of all countries as the most remarkable fauna known in the world today.

**THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON** (Lower Central) [8.38 p.m.]: There are few of us who would raise any protest against the protection of our fauna and the constitution of the proposed fauna board. When it is established this body will have a tremendous task in front of it. No doubt it will save and preserve some fauna species we have been destroying over many years. However, it will also have an obligation, I feel, to landowners whose properties adjoin the respective reserves situated in the agricultural areas.

The vermin on these reserves have at times proved to be a great burden on the adjoining landowners. This aspect was referred to by Mr. Abbey. Another feature is the tremendous fire risk which these reserves represent.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I have a few up my way.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I suppose, when travelling along country roads, some motorists take great delight in seeing kangaroos hopping out of various paddocks. However, as Mr. House has said, it is not very amusing to the person who owns the property and whose crop the kangaroos have destroyed. I therefore consider that the proposed fauna board will

have plenty of scope to take steps to provide more protection for farmers, particularly in eliminating the fire risk that exists with many of these fauna reserves. At the moment those in charge are very reluctant to put a fire through them and there is no doubt that after a short time the reserves constitute a considerable fire risk.

Mr. Abbey was of the opinion that all potential fauna areas should be grouped so that they come under the control of one authority, and I agree with him entirely because this would prove to be of benefit to all our fauna. Mr. Abbey also pointed out that the existing fauna reserves could be greatly augmented if many of the forestry reserves were opened up for the protection of fauna. Once again, I consider that that is a very wise suggestion.

When travelling along the Perth-Albany road recently I have noticed that many specimens of fauna, particularly small animals, seem to be returning to our countryside. This is most evident in the hills section of the Perth-Albany road which has led me to believe that there has been a considerable increase in the numbers of these specimens in recent years.

The Hon. E. C. House: That has been due to the vermin legislation.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: That is so; but on the other hand, as Mr. House knows, all these species like to graze on the new shoots that appear on burnt land. I also think the grain that is blown off the trucks travelling along the road is responsible for the re-emerging of many of the fauna we see today.

The forestry reserves have one advantage over the small fauna areas that are scattered throughout the State; namely, they are not subject to the continual laying of poison to control vermin. The laying of poison has had a disastrous effect on fauna throughout the agricultural areas. Practically none of the old fauna exists today, although foxes and kangaroos are prevalent in the agricultural areas. It appears that the phosphorous poisons we used so freely during the rabbit plague some years ago were responsible for the death of many of the fauna species. No doubt these poisons have been responsible for the disappearance of many of our birds.

Fortunately poison 1080 is being used at present to control rabbits and it has also had a marked effect on the control of foxes. In turn, the use of this poison is allowing the small birds to multiply throughout the country districts. We now see many plovers and the little ground larks returning to the fields despite the fact that only a short time ago it was considered that they were becoming extinct. Another bird I noticed in my area recently, and which I had not noticed for some time, was the curlew. This species of bird used to be plentiful before the

days of the fox. Of course, those birds which nest on the ground are a sitting shot for the fox; there is no doubt they have suffered as a result of their nesting habits.

It will be a lengthy project for the fauna protection board to bring back into circulation some of those species of birds which were becoming extinct. However, I am quite sure that its efforts will be appreciated by those members of the public who are bird lovers.

Many old-timers are familiar with these species, but I am sure the vast majority of the younger generation have not seen them. These are the species which the board is endeavouring to preserve.

A great deal of discussion has taken place on duck shooting. We have to decide whether steps should be taken to protect the ducks, or to provide good shooting for the shooters.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: A bit of both.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I support the licensing system, but if we are to protect the ducks then the proposed opening date of the season—the 20th January—should be adhered to. This will shorten the season by approximately one month, and this is the best way to preserve the ducks.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: If they run out of ducks they can shoot emus.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: The 5 a.m. opening of the season is pretty disastrous to the ducks. The time of 2 p.m. on a Saturday has been suggested, but I would prefer the opening time to be a specified date. If that is done then the time of shooting will commence at one minute after midnight. Some shooters would take advantage of that and would commence shooting at that time; and if they did so they would scatter the ducks before the organised groups got around to slaughtering them.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: You seem to be a spoilsport.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: In Wagin we find carload upon carload of shooters converging on the town. Reference was made by Mr. Abbey to shooters making a night of it at the opening of the season, and I should say they do that rather generously. I do not agree that by setting the time at 2 p.m. on a Saturday, there will, in effect, be a double opening of the season.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You reckon the shooters would see four ducks instead of two!

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: But by fixing the time at 2 p.m. we would have the lakes surrounded by shooters, and every duck that rose into the air would be shot. By opening the season at midnight some shooters will begin shooting at that hour and will stir up the ducks. They will thus

make it harder for those who begin shooting subsequently. If we regard ourselves as sportsmen we should try to shoot the ducks in the more difficult way.

Regarding the preservation of ducks, I do not think they are as scarce as some members would have us believe. In the Wagin area large numbers of ducks are found. The principal species does not go near the lakes or the watercourses, but is found in the paddocks of farmers, and at the dams. Over recent years this species has multiplied considerably, and there is not a property which does not have a large concentration of them. This species seems to be very clever and seems to be aware when the 22nd December arrives. One could drive a harvester around the paddock and find plenty of geese, but come the opening of the season and they are gone.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Perhaps they carry a Collins diary!

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: They seem to return the next winter, and they are prolific breeders. When the waters run low they invade the dams and cause much pollution to stock water. Mr. Ron Thompson referred to the salt lakes in his district. I should say that all the lakes in my district go salty around Christmas, and after that the ducks cause a problem. There is much slaughtering done around the dams, because this is an easier way to bag them. It is probably more difficult to find the ducks when all the swamps and watercourses are full. With those remarks, I support the Bill.

**THE HON. J. HEITMAN** (Upper West) [8.51 p.m.]: I do not intend to speak at length on this measure. The Minister said the Bill covered seven parts, and perhaps it would be sufficient if I dealt with the parts in which I am interested. The part in which I am most interested is the provision to delete section 5 of the Act under which the Fisheries Act, the Vermin Act, the Whaling Act, and the Zoological Gardens Act have precedence over the Fauna Protection Act. The Government is perhaps going too far in this respect.

Up to the present the Agriculture Protection Board has been very effective in the control of vermin and noxious weeds, and it has been set up on the same lines as the proposed fauna board. Representatives from various organisations are appointed to that board to police the Act, in conjunction with the local authorities and farmers, in regard to vermin and noxious weeds. I cannot think of people more capable than the representatives of the Agriculture Protection Board of policing the vermin side of the legislation, or of advising the fauna board where fauna comes into the matter and vermin goes out.

Under the Bill the Minister will have the right to appoint the Government representative on the fauna board, and he is

to be the executive officer of the Agriculture Protection Board. With a committee of 10 he will submit the views of the Agriculture Protection Board, but there are nine other members on the fauna board to be satisfied. In my view this is not a good set-up.

Being a farmer I know what damage can be caused by vermin, especially when kangaroos and emus come down from the north in thousands during dry seasons. When they reach areas in which they are protected, some authority should be provided to declare them to be vermin. While the membership of the fauna board will consist of capable men and those who are experts in the fields in which they are engaged, it does not alter the fact that the Agriculture Protection Board has been responsible for the control of vermin and for the upholding of the rights of the individual when damage was caused. Now that board is to be deprived of that responsibility, and one of its members is to be appointed to the fauna board where he will have one voice against nine others.

The new board should work in close co-operation with the shires in country districts, because they can be of great assistance to the board in the control of vermin and in the policing of the legislation. More thought should be given to the appointment of the additional members to the existing Fauna Protection Board, and such additional membership should include men with practical experience in country districts. Perhaps one representative from the Country Shire Councils' Association, one from the Farmers' Union, and one from the Pastoralists and Graziers Association should be included. There is no doubt that such representatives would be familiar with the habits of the fauna that is to be protected, and would be of greater assistance to the board than the members with expert knowledge in zoology, forestry, and other aspects covered by the Act. I therefore commend to the Minister that consideration be given to enlisting the aid of practical men to act as members of the fauna board. If that were done a more balanced judgment would be arrived at by the board in its decisions.

Clause 26 of the Bill relates to the prohibition of noise, buildings, roads, and other structures on fauna reserves. I would remind the Minister of a trip he made to Wongan Hills, when he flew over Lake Ninan. In the summer it is used by a water ski club and as a picnic area. The opposite side of the lake is inhabited by large numbers of swans, ducks, and other types of winged game. The area is policed by the local fraternity, and no shooting is allowed.

Despite the noise and the roads which have been built around the edge of the lake, and despite the water skiing activities during the summer, these water fowl, ducks, and swans, remain on the

lake. Therefore the prohibition of noise, roads, and other buildings, in fauna reserves is not the answer to the preservation of the bird life.

After having listened to Mr. Dolan's contribution I am led to believe that quite a number of birds and animals have a certain amount of intelligence for which we do not give them credit. They realise when people are taking steps to preserve their existence.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: You suggest they can distinguish between the noise of a shotgun and other types of noise?

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: Very definitely. Perhaps we could place more emphasis on this side of the question, and encourage people to preserve fauna rather than to destroy it. Here again, local knowledge could assist to a great extent. I support the Bill.

**THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND** (North) [9 p.m.]: I have only a few brief observations to make in connection with this fauna legislation. I feel that maybe naturalists and bird and animal lovers would go a little bit too far if some type of restriction was not in force.

In Western Australia we have legislation to preserve animals, vegetation, and bird life and also, I suppose, some types of reptiles and spiders. We have not heard anything about those yet, but I expect they are included somewhere in the legislation or its regulations. On the other hand, we have the Agriculture Protection Board which is, under legislation, charged with the responsibility of wiping out, if possible, some of the animals and birds which the fauna legislation seeks to preserve. Therefore, I do hope that some sort of balance will be established because very many of the birds and animals which are protected under one piece of legislation cause terrific damage in the northern and pastoral areas of the State.

It is a well-known fact that some of the Pilbara sheep stations have been absolutely wiped out. They are no longer in existence as producers because of the ravages of wild dogs and eagles. Many thousands of kangaroos also abound on the leases. I could mention at least eight or 10 stations with no-one at all on them now. They are completely abandoned and consequently they are breeding places for vermin, as some of this fauna is classified by the Agriculture Protection Board.

I remember that some years ago a new large fauna and flora reserve was established just outside the old rabbit-proof fence which runs through Ajana on the very extreme edge of the northern wheat-belt. We have been told tonight of the ravages of emus which come down from the pastoral areas in the dry seasons. Mr. Dolan mentioned the machine-gunning by the Army. This particular area, which is

now a reserve, is where the machine-gunning took place.

During the last 10 years an emu-proof fence has been erected between the north-eastern wheatbelt and the Murchison wheatbelt, as I will call it, to keep the emus back from the farming areas. Therefore although the emu is a fine stately bird and a national emblem, and although the kangaroo is also held up as a national emblem, they both do a terrific amount of damage in the pastoral areas, and if they get into the agricultural areas, as we call them, they do just as much damage. Therefore, as I have said, I think we can go a little too far.

The cost of the activities of the Agriculture Protection Board, which is responsible for controlling some of this fauna, was just over \$840,000, which is a great deal of money to spend to exterminate this fauna. Yet here we are in the metropolitan area hoping to protect and preserve them.

It is interesting to read of some of the activities of this board. For instance, in connection with its aerial baiting scheme for wild dogs, the board dropped 1,066,000 baits by air and in doing so covered 21,530 miles. The number of wild dog scalps handed into the department and paid for totalled 3,206. These scalps were handed in by trappers, doggers, pastoralists, natives, and anyone else who happened to be working in the area and trapped or shot a dog. However, the number of scalps presented for payment of the bonus would be much smaller than the number of dogs poisoned by aerial and land baits. These scalps are never recovered. The 1,066,000 baits dropped by air does not, of course, include the number of land baits laid by pastoralists and employees of the Agriculture Protection Board throughout the pastoral and agricultural areas. It is interesting to note that of the wild dog scalps presented, only 75 came from the agricultural areas; the rest came from the pastoral areas.

Although we have these pests classified as vermin there are many people—and I also join them—who admire many of these animals. However, I believe that the economy of the country and the settlement of the vast areas of Western Australia should take precedence over the gazetted of perhaps far too many reserves which simply breed vermin.

We know that some of these birds are very pretty—birds such as the twenty-eight or, as we call it, the ring-neck. Flocks of this species abound in Safety Bay when the Japanese pepper-trees are in berry. They do not just bite off the berry, as the white cockatoo does. That bird bites off what it wants and holds it in its claw; but not the ring-neck. It bites off the whole spray with the berries on it. It will not reach out for the berries. It takes the whole spray to the ground and

then picks the berries off. These birds are destructive, but they are very pretty.

In the report of the Agriculture Protection Board, mention is made of the fact that galahs are very destructive, particularly in the agricultural areas. They ruin some of the shade trees in the paddocks and interfere with stacked grain. They are poisoned by the Agriculture Protection Board, but, on the other hand, the Commonwealth Government will not allow anyone to sell and ship them out of Australia. The Minister told us that people in places like Holland will pay hundreds of pounds for one of these birds. Therefore it appears the economy is a little upside down. We poison the birds by the thousand and yet the Commonwealth bans their export. That does not make sense. Perhaps the Commonwealth can be apprised of the situation in Western Australia so that we may be able to open up another export avenue. The report of the Agriculture Protection Board, at page 9, has the following, under the heading of "Galahs":—

A considerable amount of damage was caused to stacked grain and shade trees in the north eastern wheatbelt areas. Attempts to poison them using methods recommended by Agriculture Protection Board staff have been reasonably successful.

Of course these birds can be poisoned by placing poison in their drinking water, but then all other birds which use the same water are poisoned also. This is rather unfortunate. It would be far better to allow them to be trapped and exported to wherever they are worth this amount of money.

One pest which has caused a great deal of economic loss to the ricegrowers at Liveringa and on the Ord, is the brolga, or native companion. At Camballin, the ricegrowing area on the Liveringa station, 80 miles from Derby, on the Fitzroy River, the ricegrowers devised a scheme to try to overcome the destruction caused by the brolga. This bird was protected and was not allowed to be shot. Therefore the growers devised a carbide gun, which worked automatically. They had them set up right around the crop on the banks of the irrigation channels. The water dripped into the carbide until it worked up a gas and created an explosion, sounding very much like a shotgun. The noise echoed across the water. There were literally hundreds of thousands of brolgas—that is not exaggerating—in 1961 hiding in the bush hoping that the noise would stop. Of course the noise did not stop, but the birds became used to it. They woke up to the fact that no birds were getting shot, and so in they went.

A brolga cannot rise straight up into the air. It must run along the ground for a certain distance first, and in doing so it flaps its wings down on to the ground.

Members can imagine the wide area of destruction that their wings cause.

Combined with the destruction of the brolga further north on the Ord, and at Humpty Doo, the destruction of the wild geese was experienced. They came in thousands and enjoyed the rice very much. Then came the white cockatoos and corellas in huge numbers. When the grain is in the rice they enjoy it thoroughly also.

Those three birds alone have been one of the major handicaps to the establishment of successful ricefields in the Kimberley and at Humpty Doo. Therefore I hope much more publicity will be given to the depredation of some of this fauna.

Noxious weeds are also a great worry to the agricultural areas of the State because quite a number of seeds, which were never seen before, are appearing in Western Australia.

Only recently, in the country hour session on the radio, I heard that some type of plant had been found in one of the farming districts in the south-eastern wheatbelt. The farmers were warned to be very careful of it and to eradicate the plant when they saw it. It was a plant with a yellow flower.

Another interesting item I heard during an agricultural talk of some kind was a warning issued through one of the regional stations—I think it was Bunbury—to farmers in some districts. The warning concerned a wild dog which had killed a number of sheep on a farmer's property. That dog did not kill because it was hungry; it killed for sport.

I was at a station on the Fitzroy earlier this year. We have read quite a bit about the wedge-tail eagle recently, and a number of people imagine the wedge-tail eagle will not interfere with lambs. While at Quanbun Downs Station I saw that practically the only paddock where wedge-tail eagles were in abundance was where the ewes were lambing. The pastoralist took me out to see the damage that had been done. He had shot some wallabies and poisoned them with strychnine, and around each wallaby carcase there were several eagles. I also saw several lambs which had been partly consumed. Apparently once the lambs get stale—which is very quickly in the north, because of climate—the eagles go for another fresh one. I suppose that is natural.

So the wedge-tail eagles do cause a considerable amount of damage in the Kimberley on sheep stations, and they will continue to do damage if the pastoralists are not forever on the watch and always attempting to poison them. And they do get them; five or six around each wallaby which has been poisoned. So goodness knows how many there must be in the area. It is significant that pastoralists have a constant battle to maintain their flock numbers because of the losses caused by wedge-tail eagles and wild dogs.



So I trust there will not be any large fauna and flora reserves established in the pastoral areas, because the pastoralists have too much trouble now trying to control kangaroos. I heard someone say that 30,000 had been poisoned in a few days on one station. That is the kind of thing which goes on, and it must go on if any control is to be kept over the sheep and cattle numbers. While I support the Bill, I point out these difficulties.

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (Lower West—Minister for Fisheries and Fauna) [9.20 p.m.]: It is very gratifying to think this Bill has attracted the attention and interest of members. Perhaps I might be excused if I comment firstly on the remarks of the last two speakers. I do feel that the story which I tried to get across was understood by all except the last two speakers. I tried to explain to Mr. Huxley from the Farmers' Union the point raised by Mr. Heitman.

I explained in my second reading speech that the deletion of section 5 is one of those things which is done, to quite a big extent, for appearance. At present, the section reads as follows:—

(1) Where there is inconsistency between—

(a) the provisions of this Act; and

(b) the provisions of—

the Fisheries Act, 1905-1949;

the Vermin Act, 1918-1946;

the Whaling Act, 1937; or the Zoological Gardens Act, 1898.

the provisions referred to in paragraph (b) of this subsection shall prevail.

Very frequently overseas and in other parts of Australia, criticism is levelled at Western Australia because we will protect our fauna only when everyone else is satisfied. Remember, this Act originally stated "protect." Now, the whole concept behind the amendment is to change from "protection" to "conservation."

During my second reading speech I mentioned that one of the purposes of this Bill was to license certain processing plants so that we could, in fact, crop. This State depends to a very great extent on its agriculture. I have an idea I mentioned this in regard to pesticides. If I did not, I must have done so at other times I have spoken. We know certain pesticides have a deleterious effect on a lot of our animal life, but it is reasonable that they must continue to be used whilst they are needed by the agricultural industry. As better and less harmful insecticides are developed, those which are harmful can be taken off the list and replaced by the newer developments; but we do have

a farming industry which must be protected. This is precisely why Mr. Tomlinson is on the advisory committee and will be a member of the board.

It is obvious that kangaroos in the station country should be cropped. This is as obvious as it is that many other things should be cropped. It is obvious that dingoes should be kept under control. What is sometimes less obvious but more real is that there should be a great deal more control over the domestic dog which, I believe, is probably responsible for just as many sheep losses as is the dingo. Perhaps also what is not apparent is that there should be much more control over domestic cats which in their wild or feral state—as it is known—can create a great deal of harm indeed. This is a matter of balance.

If I remember correctly, it was Mr. Dolan who said that the Duke of Edinburgh is probably responsible for the Two People Bay reserve. The tremendous amount of publicity which has devolved on Western Australia because of the noisy scrub bird and the short-necked tortoise is quite surprising. It might also surprise members to know that in a worldwide publication, *Animal*, a magnificent magazine, there is a five-page article which carries beautifully coloured reproductions of dead egrets and cranes which were shot last Christmas in Western Australia by people who were ostensibly duck shooting. As I have said, this magazine has a worldwide circulation and the article in question has created a great deal of adverse comment.

This part of the legislation does create adverse comment, but there is no danger to the agricultural industry because it is a matter of reasonable balance. The magpie geese in the Northern Territory, to which Mr. Strickland referred, were quite easily controlled by putting a price on the eggs. The natives have collected the eggs and have caused quite a deal of difference in the actual numbers of magpie geese from a conservation point of view. There is room for these things to operate. I do hope members will appreciate the fundamental difference in the concept of protection and conservation. I personally consider this is vitally important.

I wish to mention one other point which Mr. Heitman mentioned in connection with practical men. At the time, I thought of Professor Main. Incidentally, Mr. Lavery, Dr. Main was recently promoted to the status of professor and it would be very difficult to find a more eminently practical man. I am not very happy about the prospect of putting people who represent organisations on to committees. From my short experience, I consider it is preferable to choose a man who is representative of a particular group rather than a person who represents that particular group. Perhaps I could explain a little further. If one asks an organisation to

elect or nominate a man to represent it, I do not think he does as well as if one is chosen from among those people who will give good service on a board; because he is then acting in the capacity of a member of the fauna board, rather than as a representative of some outside organisation.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: You mean an organism rather than an organisation?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am not too sure I understand what Mr. Watson means, but I am sure members will understand the point I am making. A considerable number of other items were brought up which I do not think require to be answered at this stage. However, I would like to make some comment immediately in regard to the name of the fauna board. The word "fauna" is of Latin origin. Quite frankly I am not too sold on the idea of the suggested term "wildlife council" any more than I am on the term "fauna board." This is because the fauna board actually has to administer land and to consider matters other than just wildlife. I have spent months trying to think of a better name but finally I came up with the suggested "fauna board." I suppose this would indicate that I am sold on that name.

There are all sorts of arguments against the wildlife aspect, mainly because Victoria has a department of wildlife. The department in Western Australia is a fauna department and, all things considered, I suppose it is more sensible when we have a fauna department and a Fauna Protection Act to have a fauna board. It does not seem sensible to switch over to wildlife unless the whole concept is switched.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is quite true.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If we were going to change the name of the department and everything else, there might be some point; but the department is the Fisheries and Fauna Department.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That was done with the Lunacy Act.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes; but there was very good reason for the change. There is no unpleasant connotation associated with the word "fauna" as there was with the word "lunacy," which is completely outmoded.

The point has been raised that it may be preferable to have flora and fauna under the control of the one Minister. Mr. Shugg, who is the principal executive officer and the chief warden went around the world and found that some countries operate under the one department and others operate as we do under two different departments. Even within Australia different methods exist. It cannot be said that one method works better than the other, because it depends a little on the particular set-up. Suffice it to say that with fisheries and marine work, a biologist

is needed, and either a zoologist or a biologist is needed for fauna conservation. With flora, however, the services of a botanist are required. Therefore, the placing of fisheries and fauna under the control of one department seems to work quite well.

I agree with Mr. Ron Thompson that the policing of these fauna reserves will present many problems. In fact, I think the whole concept will fall to the ground unless we follow Mr. Dolan's suggestion of educating all the people of the State as to the benefits of conservation and the advantages that can be gained from this work. This is most necessary in such a large State as Western Australia.

For example, in those areas represented by Mr. Strickland, the bustard is an excellent bird to have on a sheep station, because it eats a tremendous number of grasshoppers. It is also wise to encourage the growth of plovers because they destroy many pests. I will have investigations made into the Lake Walyungup problem which was highlighted by Mr. Ron Thompson, in an endeavour to find some solution. I think it is illogical to have a fixed date for the opening of the duck-shooting season when the seasons vary considerably in length. The opening of the season is also governed by the amount of water that is lying around at the time, and therefore it seems reasonable that the opening of the season should depend on the prevailing circumstances. In other words, there should be a certain amount of flexibility to allow a biological opening and closing date for the duck-shooting season to ensure that there are plenty of ducks available during the season.

In answer to Mr. Syd Thompson I would like to say that we have to ensure we have the ducks. It is a perfectly legitimate sport which can be controlled by limiting the bag. Throughout North America the bag has been limited to three ducks; and shooters sometimes travel 600 miles to bag their three ducks, which proves that this is the sport they love. This is the type of flexibility we are hoping to adopt in the opening and closing of the duck-shooting season in Western Australia.

It has been proved that ducks will breed more than once during a season, and will breed early or late depending on the seasonal conditions. Therefore it is necessary to have this flexibility in fixing the opening and closing dates. This would be an administrative act under the provisions of the Act itself. We would have to raise revenue from the licenses imposed to assist in the breeding of ducks and reforestation in some areas. We would also have to build breeding boxes to foster the breeding of ducks in certain areas.

Mr. Heitman referred to noise. The wilful disturbance by noise of any fauna sanctuary is prohibited. It will be noted that the words used are "wilful disturbance by noise." That means deliberately

disturbing fauna in any sanctuary by making a noise. It is fairly obvious that there could be a lake in the middle of a reserve and this lake could be split in two, as it were, so that people were permitted to shoot ducks at one end and water ski at the other. To give an example of wilful disturbance by noise, a shooter could go up to the end of the lake where water skiing was in progress and fire a double-barrelled shotgun for the purpose of scaring the ducks down to the other end of the lake. There is need, of course, to make multiple use of a particular area, and it is found that the use of one end of a lake for duck shooting and the use of the other for water skiing does work quite well.

Mr. Dolan referred to the need for establishing national parks. It was mentioned to me the other day that in opening up 1,000,000 acres of agricultural land every year, we could perhaps institute some sort of system similar to that operating in subdivisions when 10 per cent. is set aside for public open space; because in actual fact we have, overall, a much smaller area than this reserved for use as national parks.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is what Mr. Whiteman is doing at Mussel Pool.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Many farmers are already reserving some of their land for use as open space and, as Mr. Abbey has mentioned, some are establishing their own private sanctuaries. In reply to Mr. Lavery I do not think I made myself quite clear when speaking of quokkas. In order that quokkas can be retained for scientific purposes and observation, we have set aside 500 acres of swampland on the mainland which will be fenced and retained specifically as a quokka farm. This is apart from the development that is being done on Rottnest itself. It is believed that because of the change in habitat of the quokkas at Rottnest, the population of these animals will probably level off at about 10,000. It is considered that that number of quokkas will be kept on Rottnest Island. However, because of the difficulty of keeping them sufficiently peaceful so that they can be observed from a scientific point of view, it is desirable to have a reserve close to the city on which they can be kept for scientific observation and for teaching purposes.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is worth while keeping Rottnest as a scientific place for quokkas.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This will be done and, in fact, we have a house on the island for the accommodation of University students engaged on this work. In addition, as I have said, we will be reserving 500 acres of land on the mainland as a quokka farm.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I just want to be clear on one point. There are still some quokkas to remain on Rottnest?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes; we expect the quokka population on Rottnest to be stabilised at 10,000. Professor Warner, who is one of the world's greatest authorities on marsupials, has advised me that this will be a suitable number to be retained on Rottnest. It will be found that quokkas are the sort of creatures that become tame very quickly.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They mix pretty well.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Dr. Hislop mentioned the willy-wagtail. This reminded me that the other evening I heard a frog-mouthed owl at Doubleview, and it is believed that the willy-wagtail is starting to return in numbers. I think I have answered most of the queries raised. Mr. Syd Thompson pointed out that many of the fauna reserves constitute a fire risk, and also present problems by breeding many pests. It is hoped that when the fauna board is able to put its working plans into operation on the reserves it will effect many improvements and will bring them up to the same standard as the Tuttanning reserve.

I would like to mention to Mr. Dolan that he could see mallee-fowl mounds at the Tuttanning reserve. He could see them being scratched out each morning and filled in again at night. On these reserves it is necessary to burn portions of the bush so that suitable feed can be provided. We hope we will be able to do this, and in many areas, through the goodwill of adjacent farmers, much is now being done. As I said when I introduced the Bill, there will be matters which will require detailed discussion in the Committee stage.

I thank members for their wonderful reception of the Bill, and I trust their wishes and hopes for the future of the fauna of the State are realised. When the Bill is passed, I think we will have a better foundation to do what we wish to do. I commend the measure to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee*

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair; The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Fisheries and Fauna) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 6 amended—

The Hon. N. McNEILL: As I indicated during the second reading I was not at all happy with the choice of names referred to by the Minister, and accordingly I propose to submit an amendment. If it is accepted it will mean that a great many other clauses in the Bill will need to be amended. It will mean some 40 amendments altogether. Rather than

discuss the matter now the Minister might care to report progress.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I think we should sleep on the suggestion, and, in the circumstances, it would be preferable to report progress.

### *Progress*

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Fisheries and Fauna).

## **MARKETABLE SECURITIES TRANSFER ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Returned*

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

## **COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

*House adjourned at 9.45 p.m.*

# **Legislative Assembly**

Tuesday, the 10th October, 1967

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## **ACTS (7) : ASSENT**

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Acts:—

1. Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment Act.
2. Evaporites (Lake MacLeod) Agreement Act.
3. Albany Harbour Board Act Amendment Act.
4. Bunbury Harbour Board Act Amendment Act.
5. Indecent Publications Act Amendment Act.
6. Police Act Amendment Act.
7. Physiotherapists Act Amendment Act.

## **QUESTIONS (22): ON NOTICE**

### **LEGAL AID**

#### *Introduction of Legislation*

1. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

(1) Is he aware that—

- (a) not only indigent but also middle group earners are affected by the high cost of legal proceedings;

(b) the New South Wales Government has approved a scheme to subsidise legal expenses in selected cases of this group;

(c) the financial assistance will come from interest earned on investment of trust funds held by solicitors on behalf of clients?

- (2) Is any legislation contemplated this session of the same or comparable nature to make possible financial assistance to those who cannot afford recourse to law?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Yes, where they are litigants and the cost is high.  
(b) I understand so.  
(c) It will come from portion of such interest.
- (2) Yes.

## **SCHOOL TEACHERS**

### *Appointments from Overseas*

2. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Referring to my question 8 of the 4th October, 1967, of the 38 school teachers brought to this State, how many are still in the employment of the department?
- (2) Of these, how many are teaching in primary, junior high, senior high, and other schools?
- (3) How many are male and how many are female teachers?
- (4) How many of each sex have been appointed to the permanent staff?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) 36.
- (2)

Primary schools	16
Junior high schools	—
High schools	5
Senior high schools	13
Others	2
- (3)

Male	22
Female	14
- (4)

Male	1
Female	Nil.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT**

### *Meetings of Ratepayers*

3. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

What section of the Local Government Act allows for the calling of a meeting of ratepayers as distinct from a meeting of electors?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Sections 487 and 527.