

Iredale, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. LV, p. 102, Jan.
28, 1935. Macquarie Island.
Distr.: Macquarie Island, New Zealand.

Branch Report

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I have pleasure in presenting to members the following report upon ornithological matters in Western Australia for the year ended June 30, 1934, preparation of which report was unfortunately delayed.

The membership roll for the State has remained unchanged during the past twelve months, but under the circumstances that is a matter for congratulation rather than the reverse, and the formation of bird clubs in a number of the country schools and the delivery of lectures on bird life to various gatherings as well as per medium of the wireless, shows that a live interest in ornithology still prevails.

The trapping of large numbers of wild Ducks on some of the inland lakes of the south-west, especially in the Wagin district, caused much protest through the daily press, and as a result regulations restricting the trapping to 15 Ducks per day per individual have been brought into force.

The mention of trapping brings me to a matter brought up at the last Congress and referred to in *The Emu*, vol. xxxiv, pt. 3, p. 214. In connection with a cutting from the *West Australian* forwarded by a local member, Major H. M. Whittell, the following statement appeared, "Apparently no permit was required in the case of the Perth Zoo, being a Government concern, and under the aegis of that institution the law was being flagrantly broken." From a perusal of the report kindly forwarded by the Collector of Customs, Mr. H. Bird, quoted below, it will be seen that such is far from being the case, and that in common with other exporters the Zoo is required to obtain a permit. Mr. Hanks is certainly correct when he says that newspaper reports are frequently misleading, for hysterical outbursts with little or no bases of fact from time to time appear in local papers concerning the wholesale destruction of birds. That the trapping of Finches is a matter for careful control has always been evident to me and I have frequently discussed the matter with the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, Mr. Aldrich, who is fully alive to the importance of the situation. He assures me that under the present conditions the numbers of the Finches are not likely to be seriously affected by trapping, and that all the necessary precautions to ensure the preservation of the birds are being taken.

With regard to the Bustard or Wild Turkey, the present regulations protect that bird over the southern half of the

State during the breeding season, but efforts are being made to extend the period throughout the year.

A menace more serious than any hunter, trapper or sportsman which local birds have to contend against, is the fox. That animal is rapidly increasing in spite of efforts to control it, and tales of its depredations among Ducks, Swans and various ground birds are continually coming to hand.

In my report for the year 1931-32 mention was made concerning legislation controlling the importation of Goldfinches into Western Australia. Male birds only were to be permitted to enter, but in spite of these precautions this little Finch has succeeded in establishing itself in the vicinity of Perth, and a small colony has taken up its abode in the grounds of Government House, where breeding operations were successfully carried on last season. It will be interesting to see whether the species increases here in the same manner as it has in the sister States. Unfortunately, there seems to be no reason why in a few years it should not be as common in Perth Gardens as it is in those surrounding Adelaide and Melbourne.

I will conclude by quoting the following letter kindly forwarded by Mr. Bird, Collector of Customs:—

"With reference to your letter of 10/1/35, I desire to advise you that permits for the export of the under-mentioned birds were granted for the year ended 30/6/34: Finches: various, 174, Gouldian, 5,483, Blackheart, 176, Yellow, 55, Stars, 14, Longtailed Grass, 1,908, Pictorella, 81, Double Bar, 280, Crimson, 12, Masked, 54, Blood, 43, Red-tailed, 10, Zebra, 10, Painted, 4, Budgerigar, 2, Sparrows (Diamond) 16, Magpie, 1, Pigeons: Bronzewing, 9, Spinnifex, 7; Parrot: Regent,* 4, Many-colour, 6, Port Lincoln, 14, Cockatiel, 2, Major Mitchell, 1, Stanley Rosella, 12, Rosella, 12, Smoker, 27, Red-Collar, 18, Corella, 2, Galah, 2, Ringnecked, 1; Parrakeets: Bourke, 10, Elegant, 2; Cockatoos: Black, 14, Pink, 1.

"It might be noted that the great majority of these birds were exported by the Zoological Gardens Committee.

"No seizures of birds were made during the period under review."

C. F. H. JENKINS,
Branch Secretary.

Members requiring binding cases for Volume xxxiv or requiring loose parts bound, should communicate with the Hon. General Secretary *at once*.

Further parts of A. J. Marshall's paper on McPherson Range birds and of P. A. Gilbert's "Movements and Migrations of Birds in New South Wales" will appear in the July issue.

*See reference to Smoker later, also to both Major Mitchell and Pink Cockatoos.—Ed.