

And what after 1988? Will academe grow bored with Australia and return to living out its exile from what it conceives as the centres of civilisation and power? Or will the Bicentennial Project underwrite a continuing exploration? For *Bowyang* the question does not exist. Work on changing Australia will proceed.

The Bear You Couldn't Buy

Shooting Koalas in Queensland: 1927

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The fur trade was a thriving business in Queensland, early in the twentieth century. Its prize commodity was the coat of the koala bear. By the 1920s the fur frontier was well established with regular open seasons for both possums and koalas. The killings were massive. Bears were trapped, shot or poisoned in hundreds of thousands.

A drive for protection of the bears mounted in the twenties, underscored by a variety of motivations, commercial to environmental. The koalas got some breathing space. A new campaign for an open season was worked up in 1927. It was reinforced by the pressures of unemployment and a depressed economy. Nearly all the skins taken were exported to the U.S.A. for auction to the international fashion houses. Open season returned, temporarily, to help substitute for relief payments. The public debate that flared again would ultimately decide in favour of the little bear, but too late to prevent the slaughter of that year.

In 1927 the koala in Queensland was not protected by law and was destroyed for its fur. Animals and Bird legislation in 1921 and 1924 had been worded to assist the fur trapper and protect grazing and agricultural interests. Naturalists assumed the koala would not be hunted again, but they had not considered the great economic value of its fur to the State. While the fur trade frontier was able to operate without restriction the rural sector wanted possum and bear seasons, and no urban sentiment or nationalism, nor any scientific elite would be able to prevent them. The fur lobby was far too strong.

The placid koala was the ideal animal for the fur trade, its even, thick and supple hide being the best available in Australia. When alive the animal was never in collision with man, neither the aboriginal nor the European settler. Its only economic value lay in its destruction. This continued until its declining numbers rendered the fur uneconomic; until the pursuit of the animal became too destructive to property and the restrictions on trapping and hunting too severe. Only then did the rural sector support the bears' protection, for it had ceased to function as part of the economy.

Since medieval times the fur trade has been a source of wealth to European nations and also a source of conflict. When first imported from Eastern Europe, skins fetched high prices on the European market and gradually the frontier of fur exploitation extended further and further east; skins not only became a lucrative business but also a source of economic controversy. Much of the initial striving of the English to find a route to the east was the result of wanting part of that market, and the Muscovy Company was an attempt to exploit the Russian fur market in the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the fur frontier moved to America. After the establishment of the Hudson Bay Company by Prince Rupert in 1670¹, the British competed successfully with the French, and finally won Canada from them, partly in order to control the whole fur market. In the nineteenth century, although much of North America still yielded good returns, the gradual loss of the fur bearing mammals ensured the eventual movement of the fur frontier through the Pacific to Australia, the last untrapped source. The English came to Australia accustomed to a rural life which depended on animals for food and recreation and so they soon developed the fur trade in all their

colonies. Although in Australia there were no 'coureur des bois' to do the trapping, the 'native born' soon developed a capacity for it which at times, amounted almost to a mania. At first, trapper and grazier existed side by side, but as the wild animals became depleted and trappers moved on, the graziers and small farmers began to fence their land. They came to regard the trapper as a man who damaged their property and intruded upon their rights by taking their fur bearing animals and damaging their stock. Only in the final stage of animal protection, that of preserving wild animals and birds, did a rural-urban clash develop, with the grazier and agriculturalist wanting protection from the city shooter, and from the trapper who used poison.² The city dweller caused further friction by demanding fur and feathers to follow the whims of fashion, while at the same time the city elitists sought to protect the animals whether they were pests or not. There is nothing so valued as that which is lost. It is typical of most conservation efforts that they have stemmed from either cities or places where the particular bird or animal has been exterminated. For, as Le Souef said,

'Practically speaking, the people who live in cities are enthusiastic advocates for faunal protection, but the man on the land sums everything up as to whether it is useful or not.'³

The koala attracted attention from the earliest settlers. They thought it resembled a bear and it was mistakenly given the generic name of *Phasoclairetos* (by the French naturalist de Blainville), taken from two Greek words meaning leather pouch, and a mouse. The word koala is aboriginal, of various spellings, but probably originally 'Karbar' from the Murray river tribes. It means 'never drinks' and this is relatively true in the wild. The koala is selective in its food and eats only certain types of eucalyptus with strong local preferences:

'about twelve species provide the favoured diet; smooth barked trees of high oil-content, such as the blue and green gums being preferred in New South Wales, and the manna gum in Victoria'.⁴

It is not destructive to its own or introduced trees, nor does it trouble the farmer, unlike the wombat who, tank-like, bashes its way through rabbit-proof fences. 'Harmless' and 'inoffensive' are the most commonly used adjectives to describe the koala. Its only

annoying habit is its nightly braying as it moves about; the noise is unbelievably loud. It is prey to a disease not unlike conjunctivitis; the resulting partial blindness causes the animal to starve to death. The incidence of the affliction appears to be linked with a shortage of food supply and thus helps to keep the population stable. So little was known of the koala until Noel Burnet was able to study it in the 1930s that he was the first to see a koala baby born and establish there were two families of koala, the northern *P. cinereus adustus* which is smaller with shorter fur of a more reddish colour, and the southern grey *P. cinereus victor*. No specimens remain from a South Australian group, and it will never be known whether, and to what extent, that family differed from the others.⁵

From the start it was called by all, or any of its names — bear, native bear, koala bear, and it appears in accounts under all three. Only after 1927 was the name koala used widely.

Wheelwright's *Bush Wanderings*⁶ presents the shooters' point of view. He was visiting Australia to gain 'colonial experience' which yielded a number of books including one on 'sports' in many countries.⁷ In the chapter on Australia he referred the reader to the delights of hunting in the Australian bush. Of the koala or native bear of Australia, he says,

'The skin is very thick and tans to an excellent leather... They are extremely difficult to shoot, on account of the thick hide; and it is a cruelty to shoot at them with shot if they are any height up a tree; but a bullet brings them down "by the run". The flesh is eatable - not unlike that of the northern bear in taste. It is considered a delicacy by the blacks.'⁸

Wheelwright is probably quoting local opinion rather than personal experience on the eating qualities of the koala.⁹ The chances of hitting koalas in trees were slim and trappers preferred the wire snare at the base of the tree, or poison, the latter doing the least damage to the pelt. Wheelwright is correct when he says the hide tans well, and from the earliest times the bears were taken for their fur to make warm and durable rugs.

By the beginning of the twentieth century the fur frontier was

moving north and, in 1908, 57,933 native bear skins were exported from Sydney. This does not mean that they were all New South Wales skins; sales of fur continued with the wool brokers in Sydney long after the collection of skins had moved north of Rockhampton. It is impossible to ascertain an accurate record of the numbers of koalas slaughtered because they were not classed as a pest and no scalp register had to be kept. Statistical data of exported furs tends to be inflated because koala fur, being one of the most desirable skins obtainable from Australia, was often listed by dealers as 'wombat' or 'possum' when the season was closed. This happened even more frequently after it had been totally protected in Victoria in 1896, and New South Wales about 1910. Wombat fur is very different; it is coarse and hairy and was never exported in quantity. Possum fur, on the other hand, although a good colour, often has a badly mauled hide because of the violent mating habits of this animal. The koala's pelt stretches to an even oval of perfectly thick soft fur. It was in demand for rugs or for trimmings on clothes. Australian furs do not rank with those of mink or beaver, but have always been well above the rabbit in the scale of American demands.¹⁰ The blanket term 'opossum' was used by the American fur trade for most of Australia's exports in this line, so that the number of koala skins exported is indeed difficult to ascertain. The *American Fur Buyer* for 1925, when Herbert Hoover was Secretary of Commerce,¹¹ quotes the demand for Australian opossum, for trimming purposes, as satisfactory.¹² This refers to two million skins which had been exported in 1924 under various names, but were mostly referred to as 'wombat'.¹³ It can be assumed safely that the Australian opossum included koala as well.

In Queensland, where the fur frontier was firmly established by the 1920s, open seasons were regularly declared for both possum and 'bears'. Between 1908 and 1926, twelve seasons of varying length were opened for possums and three for bears. The bear seasons were as follows:-¹⁴

Closed 1st November 1908	to	24th June 1915
Open 25th June 1915	to	31st October 1915
Closed 1st November 1915	to	31st July 1919
Open 1st August 1917	to	31st October 1917
Closed 1st November 1917	to	31st March 1919
Open 1st April 1919	to	30th September 1919

The season in 1919 resulted in a public outcry with the press and city interests working hard to prevent another open season. It would appear that in the period 1st April to September 30th, 1919, 1,000,000 koalas were

'murdered for their skins. It might have been supposed there was little scope for further carnage'.¹⁵

At the time of this slaughter Alec Chisholm was a reporter for the *Daily Mail* in Brisbane. Later, he recalled that he

'was also Pres. of the Field Naturalists Club of Qld., and moreover, since the Govt. had no wildlife official at the time, I was acting hon. advisor to both the Agricultural Dept. (now Primary Industries) and the Education Dept. But I had not been consulted before the possums and koalas were thrown open to skin hunters and when the Minister (Wm. Gillies) gave me the figures I was horrified.'¹⁶

The public outcry in Australia and overseas resulted in the Queensland Parliament passing the Animals and Birds Act 1921.¹⁷ The new bill was not particularly controversial because it did not contain the rigorous measures which zoologists and naturalists had pressed. It was therefore anticipated it would pass through all stages in the Parliament without difficulty but, at the last moment, the Leader of the Opposition W.J. Vowles spoke against it. Alec. Chisholm waylaid Vowles and asked him why he had opposed the new bill, believing that it was only to disoblige the Minister for Agriculture, W. Gillies, with whom Vowles had quarrelled over another matter. Chisholm then threatened that

'if you block this fauna preservation measure, as far as I'm concerned you'll never get your name in the *Daily Mail* again, except in hostile fashion. What's more I'll try to influence the other papers in the same direction.'¹⁸

The bill was passed. An amendment in 1924 ensured that all royalties, penalties and other monies received should be used to administer the act. This freed the government from the taint of economic interest in open seasons.

In Australia, as in other countries, concern for its fur bearing animals developed on two fronts — the fur trade and the scientific community. The fur trade feared that all the fur bearing animals might be exterminated and was beginning to show signs of wanting ex-

tensive, educated and hard-hitting legislation to prevent wholesale slaughter.¹⁹ In Australia legislation at State level provided some control of the industry, but it did not fully protect wildlife; approximately 45 to 55 percent of the pelts coming to the market were unprofitable because they had been taken in the wrong season or by poor methods. The least common way to take a pelt was by shooting which was not effective because of the angle required to hit a koala high in a tree, plus the likelihood of a hit damaging the hide. More commonly, cyanide was laid at the foot of trees in areas where koalas were reasonably frequent. This method, and the use of wire snares, killed indiscriminately, often resulting in pelts from poor quality animals.²⁰ The best pelts were to be taken in winter when the fur was thickest and after the young had been reared to a stage where they often could fend for themselves.

Many people were horrified at the methods used:

If (killed) by cyanide, a jam tin of water with this in solution, is placed at the foot of a tree or a near-by hollow log, and the morning shows the agony passed through before death gave the animal release. If (killed) by shooting the acetylene search light brought to view the 'possum or bear crouched peering with light lit, frightened eyes from some outstretched branch, or forked limb, a crash! an. horrible thud, and there lies one more to be skinned and its white body slung to the dogs or ants. If snared, trappers place slanting saplings against the likely trees, and arrange on each the deadly wire noose through which the opossum will thrust his head coming down. In the early morning, before dingoes and crows have disturbed the carcasses the trapper does his rounds to collect the strangled 'possums and bears. All 'joeys' are torn from the pouches, the young ones being thrown to the dogs, and the more developed ones sometimes, and if alive, are liberated for future gain.

Source: Cited in H. McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, p.107

While the fur trade was working toward a solution for maintaining its supplies, scientific research was enlisted on an international basis to ensure a rational approach towards this end. One of the best studies appeared in the 1923 *Australian Zoologist*,²¹ where Le Souef gave four causes for the depletion of Australia's native fauna:- The introduction of exotic predators and pests such as the fox, the cat, and the rabbit; the shooting and trapping for the fur market; the opening up of the country by settlement; and diseases, indigenous and imported.²² This was the first time the problem had been categorized and an attempt made to clarify it. Of the fur trade Le Souef said

'the insatiable demands of the fur trade form the second heavy drain on our native animals. This trade should absorb only the natural increase, but the machinery for control is lacking, and the laws make very little difference in the number of skins taken and exported.'²³

He also gave some figures concerning diseases afflicting koalas. In 1898-9 and 1901-03, he saw them nearly exterminated by a then unknown disease in Victoria, New South Wales and Central Queensland. Le Souef stated the necessity for Commonwealth control of the fur trade so that a central body would collect data which, in turn, would serve for the better management of wildlife.²⁴ The central control would also enable permits to be issued only when ecologically desirable. He concluded

'The asset of the fur trade has given Australia millions sterling in the past, and will, if preserved, do so in the future; but unless control is based on accurate knowledge it may be frittered away.'²⁵

In 1926, Queensland was affected by a very bad drought with marked economic effects. Banks which had had assets in 1919 amounting to £15,000,000 were £6,000,000 in debt by 1929.²⁶

The government of the day, led by Labor leader McCormack, defended the possum season in 1926. The Department of Agriculture felt there was little other work for casuals; with a drought, the farmers neither sowed nor harvested and the railways were also slack. By May 1927, letters were reaching the department asking for the season to be opened again, for both bears and possums. 'Dinkum Snarer' 30th May 1927 mentions he has a large family to feed and 'it's hard to live now'.²⁷ His letter may have been sparked off by the following from the *Courier*, 12 May, 1927

'Native Bears

Emerald - May 11

The trappers and shooters of Central Queensland are agitating for the re-opening of the native bear season. They state that the bears which have been closely protected for the last eight years are again very numerous.'²⁸

Certainly from May 1927 onwards letters to the paper both for and against an open season became increasingly frequent. Many reasons were advanced, with little evidence to support them, including arguments based on the lack of work²⁹ and on sickness among the koalas. No one ever claimed that the koala was harming anything. The high price of furs was perhaps the most rational ground for an open season and the Chambers of Commerce in the northern districts were most outspoken on this issue. They represented the country-town interests which of course had most to gain — for they sold guns and ammunition, issued licences and were the centre for the railways who carried the skins to Brisbane. Shooters and trappers, the Queensland Producers' Association in some areas, town councils, traditional skin hunters, and later on, adventurers who saw the chance to make quick money pestered the government for months to open the season. Though most of these voices came from the rural districts,³⁰ when the season did open many city folk applied for licences and joined in the hunt. One of the most important groups in deciding the fate of koalas and, in the end, of all the fur bearers, were the men who had fences, blood stock and stud animals at stake and who finally turned the tide in favour of not opening the seasons again.³¹ According to an article which appeared in the *Daily Mail* of 25 March 1927, the Cattle Growers Association hoped that any open season would not be until July or August, as trapping interfered less with fat cattle during those months than during June. By the end of May 1927 the Department of Agriculture became aware of a strong demand for a bear season in the Northern and Central Western districts. It was more strongly worded than in September of the previous year when the Minister, during an interview with the *Courier*, had stated

'that the Government had no intention of declaring an open season for either bears or possums.'³²

The press largely ignored the matter in June, but on Wednesday 13 July, 1927 the *Brisbane Courier* editorialised that

'The only way to preserve these beautiful bush animals
(Koalas and possums) is to...

ear to the clamours whether of the unions or of the fur traders.'³³

The matter was slowly resolving itself into a question of when, not if, an open season would be granted. The government had already decided to open the season for one month on 7 July 1927.³⁴ The Minister for Agriculture was quoted in the *Courier* on the 16th July 1927

'Mr. Forgan Smith claimed that the Animals and Birds Act of Queensland accorded a degree of protection for native fauna equal to that provided to the fauna of any other country in the world. All the varieties of animal life that were rare or harmless were protected in Queensland and the great bulk of them were totally protected. The only exceptions were those animals destructive of pastures, flocks and so on.

The fur industry was a valuable one in Queensland, he said and it was worthy of note that the royalty collected therefrom did not go into general revenue, but was earmarked for the purpose of supervision of sanctuaries.'³⁵

Protests in the paper and petitions to the government began to flood in. The Anglican Archbishop printed two appeals in the *Brisbane Courier*. The government notified shippers to be ready to receive the skins and began making arrangements for consignments of skins to be checked and punched for royalty purposes at the railhead.

Hopes still ran high of at least delaying the season on bears and under a heading 'Not Yet' the *Brisbane Courier* told its readers

'The fate of the harmless native bear, the gentle koala, an open season of four weeks slaughter of which has been declared by the Queensland Government has not yet been finally decided. The Acting Premier (Mr. W. Forgan Smith) in Sydney and the Acting Deputy Premier (Mr. A.J. Jones), to the deputation of protest in Brisbane on Monday, promised that the Cabinet would review its decision, but at yesterday's meeting the Ministers did not settle the matter.'³⁶

Protests continued and Barkers Bookstore wrote on behalf of twelve learned societies³⁷ whose members had formed the deputation referred to in the *Courier*, led by Prof. E. Goddard, and which represented a most concerned and informed body of opinion. Neither public petitions, from Queensland and interstate, nor the continued pressure of the *Wild Life Preservation Society* were sufficient to persuade the Government to change its view. for it was being constantly

reminded of the importance of the rural vote, and of how much certain unions wanted an open season. The *Australian pastoral gazette* gave the grazier's view, firmly expressing their true horror of the ways of trappers — a sentiment which was really at the root of many of the ethical protests.³⁸ The Government however was not to be stopped; it had taken precautions, restricted the use of fire arms in built up areas, made torches illegal, and issued a statement strangely at variance with remarks on the lucrative fur trade. The Acting Deputy Premier A.J. Jones insisted

'the suggestion that the season has been opened for revenue purposes must be promptly dismissed as the money raised from the issue of licences and from royalties is placed to a fund.'³⁹

As a rider he added that he had recently received requests from a number of representative organisations asking for an extended season and the rangers had advised him how beneficial a season would be.

On the 1st August 1927 the open season for koalas

'was "on" again. I was living in Sydney then, but I saw the Qld. Premier (Forgan Smith) having been advised by a Brisbane newspaper that he was to visit Sydney, and implored him to ban the slaughter. He promised to do so.'⁴⁰

But the Government had no intention of interfering with what had been a very lucrative procedure for many years even though, after 1924, the money received from royalties and fines went into a special fund. There were many other benefits, e.g., to the railways and extra employment in rural districts in winter. There was also the fur lobby.

The Wild Life Preservation Society had made some estimates and advised the press in an interview that at least 300,000 native bears would be destroyed. This was ridiculed in certain quarters, but the final returns recorded 584,738 skins.⁴¹ To this must be added several thousand immature animals left to die because they were too small to skin, and those which were poisoned and crawled away to perish miserably. One of the last letters, written before the season began by 'Bush Woman' read

'So the slaughter of the innocents starts on the 1st of August. Can nothing be done to stop the ruthless destruction of one of our most lovable little animals, one who interferes with

The letters lessened as August progressed. As the rangers checked skins, they also began prosecuting for shooting by torch light, or for bringing outrageous numbers of skins to sell — some quite obviously well tanned, in the first weeks of the season.⁴³ Some of these prosecutions failed because the skins had already been shipped by the fur dealers and could not be produced in court.

Queensland's open season was discussed in Canberra, but it was seen as a State concern and, in the absence of overall legislation, there was no means to prevent what was happening.⁴⁴

The first fur sale of the season was held on 16 August and 23,510 koala skins were offered on that day.⁴⁵ Spot sampling of sales notices suggests the price was £2.0.0 and £3.0.0, a dozen although reports in the newspapers suggested £ 3.10.0 to be the average.⁴⁶ Thirty-eight firms dealt in skins during that season, all registered as required by the Department of Agriculture which defined a dealer as

'a person engaged in or about to engage in the business of dealing in these skins whether by purchase, sale or auction.'⁴⁷

The firms registered were both Australian and overseas companies, most of the latter being American. The skins were exported to St Louis, U.S.A., to be auctioned to the international fashion houses. The number of skins remaining in Australia for the domestic market is not recorded. From the few figures which are available in Commonwealth records it would seem nearly all the skins taken in 1927 were exported.

All in all it was a good month for the dealer, the trapper and the fur trade with 580,624 koala skins and 952,194 opossum skins sold by the end of October. The value to the government of the whole proceedings, permits, confiscations, prosecutions, was an estimated three and a half thousand pounds.

For the established trapper — the men up the gullies — as D.W. Gaukrodger called them in the *Courier*,⁴⁸ who lived on treacle, damper and the hope of never seeing a ranger, the season had been less satisfactory. The government had made more prosecutions than ever

before, and sellers of hides which were obviously not fresh were dealt with harshly. In Rockhampton five trappers were fined £5.0.0 each for killing bears and opossums during the closed season, and unlawfully using an acetylene lamp for that purpose; the value of the confiscated skins, 270 dozen of them, was estimated to be £1,000.0.0.⁴⁹ The government had also suffered. The *Sydney Labour Daily* attacked them on 26 August: "Native bears slaughtered no mercy in Q'land and by Labor government too!" ran the headline. It was becoming no longer viable to offer open seasons on wildlife instead of relief payments. The wild life was diminishing and the cost of policing the seasons rendered the whole procedure uneconomic. An outspoken attack by the graziers of Central Queensland also showed the government that its policy was unsatisfactory to an increasing number of rural voters. The trapper was not well educated, or politically astute; in no way was his voice or his vote as organised as were those of the graziers and towns people. The main pressure for seasons came from the fur trade and once the koala was not essential to them because the number of animals had declined, the pressure for bear seasons ceased from that group. The fur frontier moved further north to where it is to-day in northern and central western Queensland beyond the closer settled areas, and concerns itself with animals considered by pastoralists to be in competition for food with their flocks.

FOOT NOTES

1. J.H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* (London, 1963) p.272.
2. *Brisbane Courier*, 21 July, 1927, p.9.
Stock disturbed quotes are given from an article in *The Australian Pastoralist* of June 10. Speaking of the previous open seasons which would be vividly remembered by stock owners: "There was no restraining influence over the trappers, who, from every part of the state, and from the South, invaded our holdings, even the fat stock paddocks, and shot, trapped, and poisoned whatever and wherever they chose."
3. A.S. Le Souef, 'How Australian Fauna Fares', *Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire Journal*, New Series, part 21, (1934), p.77.
4. E. Troughton, *Furred Animals of Australia*, (Sydney, 1941), p.114.
5. *Ibid.*
6. H.M. Wheelwright, *Bush Wanderings*, (London, 1861).

7. H.M. Wheelwright, *Sporting Sketches*, (London, 1875)
8. *Ibid.* (1861), p.38-39.
9. Charles Lethbridge to N.L. Howlett, 13 September, 1974.
 'My father...over 100 years ago hunted with the aborigines as a boy, spoke their language and knew their habits well. He told me that they didn't eat koala, it was too tough. This always seemed to me to be true. The koala was such a sitting duck, never taking any precautions to hide, never worrying as to what height he was from the ground - that he would most certainly have been exterminated by the black man. It would have been no problem to knock a koala out of a tree, whereas the stalking and killing of a kangaroo or emu would have required a tremendous amount of skill and hard work. Even a 'possum which the Aborigines eat readily took some catching... that they would have eaten them in an emergency seems probable. Just as man driven to necessity practices cannibalism.'
10. D.G. Stead, 'The Story of the Great Slaughter', *Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia*. Annual Report (1928) p.11. 'The Native Bear's fur is not a particularly good one, but among the world's fur it is rare, and correspondingly costly, and when properly worn, may be a mark of financial distinction.'
11. Hoover had worked in Western Australia on the gold fields as a miner and engineer. He took particular interest in Australian matters. There is an unsubstantiated story which credits him with refusing to allow koala skins to be imported to the United States. He first came to the west in 1897 aged 23 and he lived in Australia off and on for the next 10 years. p.10. J. Lahey, *Great Australian Folk Songs* (Melbourne, 1965)
12. *American Fur Buyer*, (16 September, 1925) p.41.
 March of the same year gives the price rises and falls over 1924-25.
- | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Australian opossum | 15% rise | - it is this category which in- |
| " Ringtail | 15% fall | cluded koala. |
| " Red fox | 7½% fall | |
| " Wallaby | 40% rise | |
| " Kangaroo | 40% rise | |
13. A.J. Marhsall (ed.) *The Great Extermination* (Melbourne, 1966) p.26.
14. *Queensland Government Gazette*, 1908-1926.
15. A.H. Chisholm to David Ride, Director of the Western Australian Museum, 2 October 1970. Copy of a letter lent to me by A.H.C.
16. A.H.C. to N.L.H. 7 September, 1974.
17. *Queensland 1921-24 Act*. 12 Geo. V. No. 20 and 15 Geo. V. No. 13.
18. A.H. Chisholm, 'The Great National Parks Movement in Queensland' *Royal Historical Society of Queensland, Journal, Year Book of Proceedings, IX*, 1971-72, p. 212.

19. F.G. Ashbrooke, 'The Fur Trade and the Fur Supply', *Journal of Mammology*, 3, (1922) surveys the growing awareness by the community of the problems of wild fur-bearing animals.
20. *Brisbane Courier*, 20 July, 1927, p. 19. Letter from R.H. Scott which reads in part,
 'Only those with practical experience of the game can understand the useless slaughter that goes on. I have seen case-hardened snarers thoroughly disgusted with the necessity of murdering 30 or 40 "joeys" on every mornings round. Ninety-five per cent of the "does" caught between the months of June and September have young in their pouches totally unable to fend for themselves.'
21. A.L. Le Souef, 'The Australian Native Animals' *Australian Zoologist* 3, (1923).
22. This article was the basis of the section on the koala by Sir James Barrett in his book *Save Australia* (Melbourne, 1925)
23. A.S. Le Souef, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 111. The importance of the fur trade to Australia was freely admitted at this period by natural scientists who opposed the extinction of the koala.
26. *Australian Business Conditions*, 7, No. 6 (1929), p. 4.
27. *Daily Mail*, 30 May, 1927.
28. *Brisbane Courier*, 12 May 1927, p. 11. e.
29. *Western Star*, 24, August 1927. n.p.n. b. R.H. Graham Labour Agent attributed the lack of demand for relief work in Roma to the opening of the trapping season.
30. *Brisbane Courier*, 20 July 1927, p. 19 d., T.L. Moon to the editor 'Even our broadcasting station 4QG takes up the cry of slaughter by advertising large quantities of guns, rifles and ammunition'.
31. *Daily Mail*, 24 April, 1927.
32. *Brisbane Courier*, 13 July 1927, p. 7. A letter quoting the Minister's statements of September.
33. *Brisbane Courier*, 13 July 1927, p. 14 e,f.
34. The Governor in Council was able to use the Animals and Birds Act 1921-24 loophole to declare an open season if desired.
35. *Brisbane Courier*, 16 July 1927, p. 14 d.
36. *Brisbane Courier*, 27 July 1927, p. 15 d,e.

37. Members of the Deputation were:

Mr. H.G. Barnard (RAOU)
 Mr. H. Dinning (Stanthorpe)
 Mrs. Stewart (National Council of Women)
 Commissioner C.S. Snow (Boy Scouts)
 Prof. E. Goddard (Royal Society and Fed. Committee upon export
 of marsupial skins)
 Mr. G.H. Barker (Naturalists Club)
 Mrs. Wedd (Brisbane Women's Club)
 Miss Highfield (Brisbane Women's Club)
 Mrs. Mayo (Nature Lovers League)
 Mr. D.A. Herbert

38. Trapping was particularly cruel. The wire snares set at the bottom of trees did not kill the animal and often after a violent struggle they managed to free themselves. Still alive, but often half skinned they crawled away to die very slowly of starvation or gangrene.
39. *Brisbane Courier*, *op. cit.*
40. A.H. Chisholm to W.D.L. Ride, 2 October 1970. He is in error here - McCormack was Premier of Queensland 1925-1929. Forgan Smith was Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, 1925-1929.
41. *Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia*. Annual Report (1927) p. 3.
42. *Brisbane Courier*, 3 August 1927, p. 16 g. There is a picture of a koala at the head of the letters for that day, it is entitled 'A Pet Teddy'.
43. *Western Star*, 10th August 1927, b. no page no. The fine for taking pelts out of season in Roma was £2.0.0 and forfeiture of rifles.
44. *Brisbane Courier*, 16 August 1927, p. 13 h.
45. *Ibid*, 17 August 1927, p. 15 e.
46. *Daily Mail*, 24 September 1927, 'Money in Bears'.
47. *Daily Mail*, 15 July 1927, 'Dealers'.
- There were nine district opossum Boards in Queensland responsible for licences, skins, etc. They kept the marsupial register and scalp register.
48. *Brisbane Courier*, 22 July 1927, d. letter from D.W. Gaukrodger.
- Oh, for a vigilance officer with an authority, a tin opener, and a nail puller to examine the many tins and cases that to the uninitiated are merely inoffensive looking camp furnishings, such as tables, stools, bunk supports, etc. What a revelation if such officer could attend to see the camp activities during a 'spring cleaning' perhaps in August next. Most of your towns people will not understand this paragraph but "the coves" camped up in those rocky gullies out of gun shot hearing, will understand'.
49. This price of £3.14.0 per dozen skins is a little below the mid season average of £4.3.0 per dozen reported in the *Western Star* 27 August 1927