

Preface: Leschenault Inlet Special Issue

Leschenault Inlet is an estuary located in the south-west of Western Australia, and is truly a special place. Over the past 20 years it has been studied by a number of researchers, and from their results it has become apparent that Leschenault Inlet is globally significant because of its biodiversity of microfauna, is nationally significant in terms of its geoheritage and mangroves, is of State-wide significance because of its peripheral vegetation, and is regionally significant because of its geomorphic setting and estuarine style.

The Royal Society of Western Australia has a long history in helping explore this state's biodiversity, and in publishing findings (the *Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia* goes back to 1913, and through previous societies to 1897 as the *Journal of Proceedings of the Mueller Botanic Society of Western Australia*).

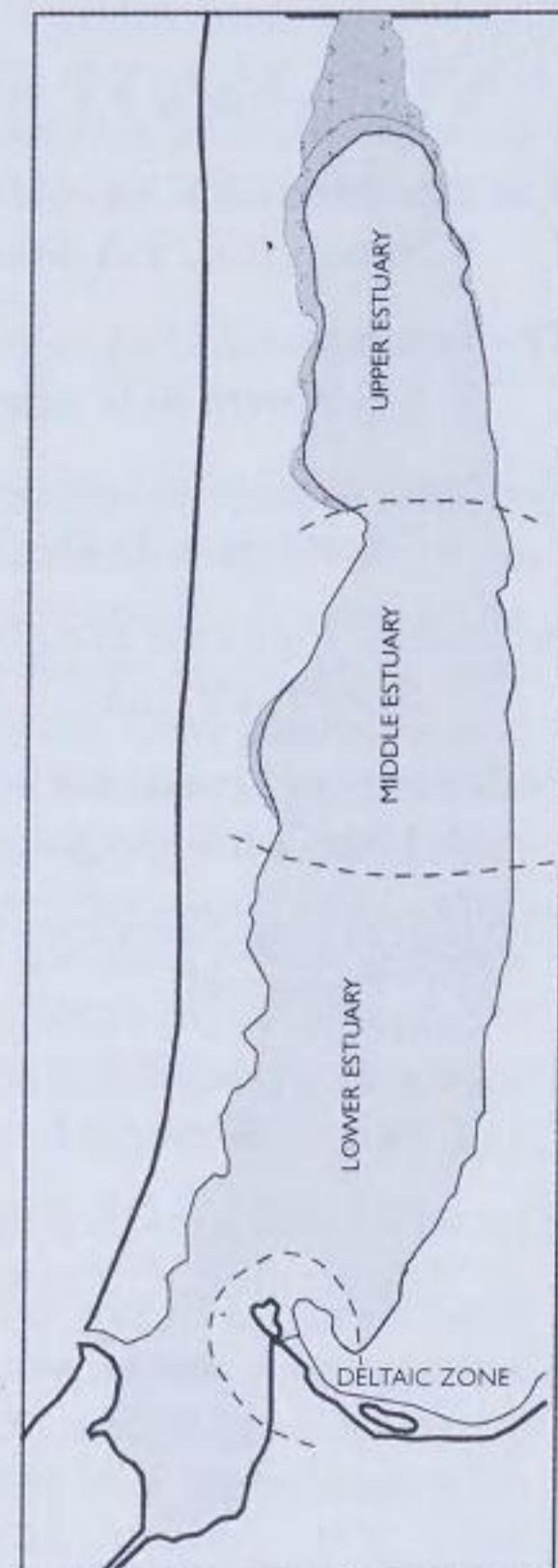
The Royal Society of Western Australia is publishing this Special Issue of its Journal to focus attention on the Leschenault Inlet estuary, bringing together a compendium of some 21 papers on the Inlet, detailing its physical environment, water quality, aquatic flora, fauna, avifauna, and management issues. This issue brings together for the first time a holistic and multi-disciplinary treatment of a linked coastal-marine environment in Western Australia, to a level not before achieved.

Following publication of the Special Issue, a weekend symposium workshop on the Leschenault Inlet environment will be held at Bunbury and Leschenault Inlet, in October 2001. This symposium workshop will bring together researchers, university personnel and students, community and conservation groups, and government personnel in a combined conference and excursion. This special issue provides a framework for fruitful synergistic discussions and hopefully actions at the symposium workshop and excursion.

This Special Issue on Leschenault Inlet is large, some 300 pages, and exceeds the normal annual journal length of the Royal Society, and hence required case binding. It was dedicated as the December issue for the year 2000 so that it would fit at the end of the normally library bound run.

A number of individuals contributed editorially and administratively to the publication this Special Issue, spending long hours editing and proofing manuscripts, and drafting diagrams for the various papers herein. Thanks are extended to P Clifford, J Unno, M Brocx, T Nisbet, and C Miskell for their editorial assistance and contributions to the drafting of the cover.

This Special Issue would not have been possible without funding external to the Royal Society, and here we would like to extend our appreciation to the following organisations that generously contributed funds: the Gordon Reid Foundation for Conservation, the Marine, Coasts and Wetlands Branch of Environment Australia, and VCSRGR.



Dr Vic Semeniuk & Dr Philip Withers
Editors, The Leschenault Inlet Special Issue

