

E. SOUTHERN LAKES ACCLIMATIZATION DISTRICT

(1) *The Fishing Season*

While the known depleted state of the fishery due to the absence of conservation measures for many years was reflected in numerically small catches, fish were in good condition and some quite fair sport was had in favoured localities.

The sum of £436 was received from the sale of licenses to 31st March, 1946, and 57 complimentary licenses were issued to returned servicemen.

(2) *Fisheries Conservation*

(a) *Hatchery Operations*.—Old abandoned hatcheries at Wanaka and Queenstown were taken over from the Marine Department and the Lakes Acclimatization Society respectively, and were reconditioned to a degree sufficient to permit of full-scale operations when supplies of ova from the Rotorua-Taupo District began to arrive.

The Marine Department's small but up-to-date salmon hatchery at Te Anau was also taken over by this Department, and it played a part in the restocking programme carried out.

From the Department's hatcheries in the Rotorua-Taupo District 2,800,000 ova in the "eyed" stage were received, and 305,000 were obtained by "stripping" locally.

The operations resulted in a total of 2,918,000 fry being planted in the waters of the district, as under :—

Water.	Rainbow.	Brown.	Totals.
Lake Hawea system	405,000	120,000	525,000
Lake Wanaka system	289,000	105,000	394,000
Lake Wakatipu system	693,000	210,000	903,000
Lake Te Anau system	330,000	..	330,000
Lake Manapouri system	50,000	..	50,000
Clutha River system	286,000	105,000	391,000
Small lakes	265,000	60,000	325,000
Totals	2,318,000	600,000	2,918,000

This excellent result will undoubtedly be reflected in a great improvement in the stock of fish not only in the Department's district but in the Otago and Southland Acclimatization Districts, which will benefit from the restocking, as the lower reaches of some rivers pass through those districts.

(b) *Destruction of Shags*.—Two hundred and sixty of these enemies of trout were destroyed by the Department's officers.

(c) *Destruction of Eels*.—A campaign against eels, limited to an investigational undertaking by shortage of materials to make traps, was conducted in the Lakes Hawea and Wanaka and Clutha River systems, the number of eels taken at the close of the year being 1,054.

(d) *Ranging*.—This was carried out by officers who are also engaged in other duties—*e.g.*, hatchery-managers, deer-control field officers. One prosecution resulted.

(3) *Absolutely Protected Birds*

These are fairly numerous in forest-clad portions of the district. The presence of Rangers and the measures being taken to destroy predatory animals will, it is confidently anticipated, be potent agencies in the preservation of these birds.