

1925.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1925, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE YEAR UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 17 of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 5th June, 1925.

I have the honour to submit herewith report on scenery-preservation for the year ended 31st March, 1925.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister in Charge of Scenery-preservation, Wellington.

R E P O R T .

DURING the year just closed arrangements were completed for the reservation of over 6,500 acres of Crown lands for scenic purposes.

Several small reservations were made in the North Auckland Land District, including a fine piece of native bush at the entrance to the Tangowahine Gorge, and two small but pretty islands in the Pahi River.

Auckland District reservations include 450 acres situated high up on the slopes of Pirongia Mountain.

In Taranaki a nice piece of native bush on the Ohura River was set aside. This is one of the few remaining areas of virgin bush in the locality, and, being in full view of the Stratford-Okahukura Railway, its preservation should be much appreciated.

In the Wellington Land District an exchange was completed under the provisions of section 45 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1921-22, of an area of 17 acres 3 roods of the Hauatara Scenic Reserve for an area of 21 acres 1 rood of private land. The 17-acre portion is low-lying country not visible from the river, while the area obtained in exchange is in good mixed bush standing on a face and visible from both reaches in a bend of the Wanganui. Ten sections of Crown land on the Wanganui, situated in Blocks III and IV, Hunua Survey District, and containing altogether some 1,235 acres, were also reserved during the year.

The chain of reserves around Lake Rotoroa, Nelson District, was completed by the reservation of two Crown sections comprising 108 acres. The total area reserved on the shores of the lake is now over 5,200 acres.

In the Marlborough Land District two small portions of the river-bank road in the Rai Valley were declared closed by special legislation and made subject to the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Act. These particular areas are covered with very fair native bush, and are situated on a portion of the road reserve not required for traffic. An interesting reservation in this district during the year was that of the Isolated Hill Reserve of 4,260 acres in Whernside Survey District. This area comprises extremely precipitous country of great scenic beauty and rich in native-bird life, and will form a valuable addition to the national reserves of the Dominion.

Three small sections on the Purakaunui Stream, Otago District, were set apart on account of their scenic beauty. They are covered with a fair amount of mixed bush, and there is an attractive series of waterfalls on the Purakaunui much visited by holiday-makers.

The reservation over four small scenic reserves was revoked during the year. These were cases of small areas in isolated localities where the bush had been destroyed and replanting was not considered advisable. In addition the reservation over portions of five other reserves was revoked for various reasons. The total number of scenic reservations in existence now stands at 758, comprising an area of over 450,000 acres, and covering an extremely wide range of the most beautiful bush, river, lake, and mountain scenery that the hand of Nature has so lavishly provided throughout the boundaries of the Dominion. Much work, however, still remains to be accomplished, and the Department is fully aware of the necessity of setting aside further areas of Crown land of scenic beauty, and of the acquisition, where possible and desirable, of suitable privately owned lands.

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES.

During the year local Scenic Boards were appointed or reappointed as follows: The Everett Road Scenic Board, to control the Everett Road Reserves; Levin Borough Council, to control the Waiopahu Reserve; Whangarei Borough Council, to control the Coronation Reserve; Invercargill Borough Council, to control the Waihopai River Reserve; Orari Gorge Scenic Board, to control the Orari Gorge Reserve; Lake Rotoiti Scenic Board, to control the Lake Rotoiti Reserves; Huatoki Scenic Board, to control the Huatoki Reserve; and the Summit Road Scenic Reserves Board, to control the Summit Road Reserves.

Messrs. H. V. Mathias and P. H. E. Surrey were appointed honorary Inspectors under the Act for the Pororari River-bank and Pukerangiora Pa Reserves respectively. The Department has now obtained the services of a considerable number of enthusiasts throughout the Dominion as honorary Inspectors, and the work carried out by these gentlemen in safeguarding the various reserves is of great value and assistance. In 1922 the forest rangers of the State Forest Service were appointed as Inspectors, and during the year under review these appointments were brought up to date consequent upon staff changes, &c. The forest rangers are often on duty in remote localities, and have been able to furnish valuable assistance in reporting on the more distant reserves, &c. It was also found possible during the year to arrange for inspections by our own officers of all the scenic reserves in several land districts, and it is hoped that in the future these inspections will be carried out more frequently still by our field officers. During recent years, owing to the great pressure of soldier settlement, it has not been possible for this branch of the Department's field work to receive as much attention as was altogether desirable, but an improvement in this respect can now be looked for.

DAMAGE TO RESERVES, AND TRESPASS THEREON.

The inspections carried out during the year have shown that the bulk of the reserves are in good order and condition. Several cases of wanton destruction and gross carelessness have, however, been reported, and, unfortunately, in some country districts the Department has had to contend with a good deal of apathy and indifference on the part of the residents. As against this dark picture it must be said that evidence is not wanting to show that public opinion is inclining more and more favourably towards the preservation of natural beauty.

A particularly glaring case of destruction occurred on the Northcote Scenic Reserve, Auckland, where over fifty lance-wood trees were felled and sold for gain. The offender was convicted, and a fine of £50 inflicted. It is hoped that the publicity given to this particular case will prove beneficial in notifying the public of the necessity of treating our scenic areas with the respect they deserve. A conviction was also obtained in a case of illegal removal of firewood from a scenic reserve, and it is the intention of the Department to prosecute wherever possible in such cases, and also in cases of stock trespass.

APPENDICES.

Attached to this report are the following appendices:—

- A. Schedule of reserves made during the year, accompanied by statements of expenditure.
- B. Report of the Scenery Preservation Board.
- C. Marlborough Scenic Reserves.
- D. North Auckland Scenic Reserves.
- E. Kapiti Island.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

RESERVES MADE IN 1924-25 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908, AND ITS AMENDMENTS.

Recom- mendation No.	Local Name.	Description.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
<i>North Auckland Land District.</i>				
551	Tangowahine Gorge	Part of Section 7, Block XIII, Mangakahia S.D.	A. R. P. 5 2 0	21/8/24
546	.. ..	Karamuramu No. 1 and the Kaitara 3B No. 1 Blocks, Block V, Otamatea S.D.	12 2 0	21/8/24
547	Pahi River	Sections 30 and 31, Block XVI, Matakoho S.D.	2 2 0	28/8/24
549	.. ..	Section 43, Block X, Takahue S.D. ..	17 0 0	15/9/24
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>				
554	.. ..	Section 6, Block IX, Thames S.D. ..	262 0 0	5/11/24
555	Pirongia Mountain	Section 6, Block III, Pirongia S.D. ..	450 0 0	24/11/24
..	Marakopa Falls	Parts Section 4, Block X, Kawhia South S.D.	62 2 2	21/2/25
<i>Taranaki Land District.</i>				
559	.. ..	Section 12, Block III, Ohura S.D. ..	40 2 27	21/8/24
<i>Wellington Land District.</i>				
484	Hauatara	Portion of Waimarino C, D, Nos. 3F and 3G, Block I, Owatua S.D.	21 1 0	5/11/24*
562	Wanganui River	Section 4, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	34 0 0	23/3/25
		Section 5, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	22 2 0	23/3/25
		Section 12, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	3 2 0	23/3/25
		Section 14, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	11 2 0	23/3/25
		Section 24, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	1 1 0	23/3/25
		Section 25, Block III, Hunua S.D. ..	1,038 0 0	23/3/25
		Section 13, Block IV, Hunua S.D. ..	1 0 0	23/3/25
		Section 14, Block IV, Hunua S.D. ..	1 2 16	23/3/25
		Section 15, Block IV, Hunua S.D. ..	20 0 0	23/3/25
Section 16, Block IV, Hunua S.D. ..	101 2 22	23/3/25		
<i>Nelson Land District.</i>				
566	Lake Rotoroa	Sections 1 and 2, Block II, Rotoroa S.D. ..	108 0 0	28/4/24
<i>Marlborough Land District.</i>				
564	Rai Valley	Closed road, Block V, Heringa S.D. ..	11 2 0	†
565	Isolated Hill, Whernside	Sections 4, Block III, 4, Block IV, and 4, Block IX, Whernside S.D.	4,260 0 0	11/10/24
<i>Otago Land District.</i>				
568	Purakaunui	Sections 33 and 34, Block VII, Woodland S.D.	39 0 0	21/8/24
		Section 45, Block VII, Woodland S.D. ..	14 2 0	21/8/24

* Subsection (2) of section 45 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1921-22.

† Section 137 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1924.

REVOCATION OF RESERVATIONS.

Land.	Area.	Date of Proclamation in Gazette.
Part Mangaokewa Scenic Reserve, Block IV, Otanake S.D., Auckland Land District ..	A. R. P. 75 0 0	*
Section 24, Block IX, Totoro S.D., Taranaki Land District	8 1 5	25/6/24
Section 42, Block XV, Ngaire S.D., Taranaki Land District	25 0 24	15/9/24
Section 14, Block VII, Mount Cerberus S.D., Wellington Land District	4 3 24	15/9/24
Section 8, Block VIII, Matiri S.D., Nelson Land District	15 0 34	20/11/24
Part Scenic Reserve No. 1177, Block XI, Kanieri S.D., Westland Land District ..	30 2 5	†
Part Scenic Reserve No. 909, Block III, Mount Bonar S.D., Westland Land District ..	7 0 0	8/4/24
Part Scenic Reserve No. 974, Block II, Cobden S.D., Westland Land District ..	7 0 5	31/5/24
Parts of Scenic Reserve No. 966, Block I, Punakaiki S.D., Westland District ..	3 0 4	20/11/24
Total	176 0 21	

* Section 76 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1924.

† Section 2 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1924.

SUMMARY OF RESERVES.

District.	Number.	Area.		
		A.	R.	P.
North Auckland	4	37	2	0
Auckland	3	774	2	2
Taranaki	1	40	2	27
Wellington	1	1,234	3	38
Nelson	1	108	0	0
Marlborough	2	4,271	2	0
Otago	1	53	2	0
Totals	13	6,520	2	27
Reserved up to 31st March, 1924	749	444,924	3	25
	762	451,445	2	12
Less reservations revoked	4	176	0	21
Grand totals	758	451,269	1	31

SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

Statement showing Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March, 1925.

	£	s.	d.
Salaries	18	15	0
Compensation, &c., in connection with lands taken under the Scenery Preservation Act	130	0	0
Compensation for Native lands taken for scenery-preservation purposes	30	3	10
Compensation for land acquired on south bend of Mokau River for scenic purposes	509	18	7
Lake Rototoi, lands ceded to the Crown in the vicinity of—Compensation for lessees' interests, witness's expenses, &c.	487	11	7
Maintenance of the Trounson Kauri Forest	873	8	7
Pukerangiora Pa—Eradication of noxious weeds	200	0	0
Surveys, valuations, and incidental expenses	240	11	3
Administration of reserves and historic spots (including fencing and other works)—			
Salaries and allowances of caretakers	7	10	0
Eradication of noxious weeds	181	11	8
Erection and upkeep of fences	289	11	4
Law-costs	9	3	11
Printing notices, &c.	1	17	6
Felling of dangerous trees on road-line	1	0	0
	490	14	5
Total expenditure	£2,981	3	3

COMPARISON OF EXPENDITURE.

It is interesting to note how money raised under the Act has been expended. It will be seen that the cost of administration has been reduced to a very small proportion of the total expenditure.

Year.	Compensation for Land.	Fencing and Maintenance.	Surveys, Valuations, &c.	Board's Expenses.	Salaries.	Total.
1904-5	£ 216	£ Nil	£ 52	£ 1,822	£ *	£ 2,090
1905-6	3,336	„	527	1,221	*	5,084
1906-7	7,856	304	801	185	*	9,146
1907-8	4,286	382	555	86	175	5,484
1908-9	3,813	1,063	540	24	325	5,765
1909-10	1,688	1,159	2,603	Nil	325	5,775
1910-11	1,066	685	1,643	11	325	3,730
1911-12	2,619	715	2,237	22	345	5,938
1912-13	12,997	798	2,697	6	345	16,843
1913-14	10,467	627	1,547	3	365	13,009
1914-15	6,253	758	476	12	388	7,887
1915-16	1,530	698	104	6	390	2,728
1916-17	252	836	76	1	390	1,555
1917-18	428	602	114	3	390	1,537
1918-19	1,295	1,964†	49	1	280	3,589
1919-20	510	188	12	..	40	750
1920-21	3,031	471	299	..	25	2,825
1921-22	57,768	227	224	..	25	58,244
1922-23	6,306	377	290	..	25	6,998
1923-24	1,488	118	1,589	..	25	3,210
1924-25	1,158	1,565	240	..	18	2,981
Grand total .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	165,168

* Included in Board's expenses.

† Includes £1,750 paid to Summit Road Scenic Reserve Board.

It must be noted that the above expenditure does not include expenses of raising loans and recoupment of interest, &c.

APPENDIX B.

REPORT OF THE SCENERY PRESERVATION BOARD.

THE Scenery Preservation Board comprises the following members: Messrs. W. T. Neill (Surveyor-General), Chairman; B. M. Wilson (General Manager, Tourist and Health Resorts); Chief Judge, R. M. Jones (Under-Secretary, Native Department); and the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district in which the lands being dealt with are situated.

Meetings were held in the office of the Surveyor-General, Wellington, on the 20th May, 1924, when matters in the North Auckland, Auckland, Gisborne, Taranaki, Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, Westland, and Otago Land Districts were dealt with; and on the 21st June, 1924, North Auckland Land District.

Twenty-five recommendations were submitted by the Board to His Excellency the Governor-General for the acquisition and reservation of scenic and historic areas throughout the Dominion under the Scenery Preservation Act.

The Board's Secretary, Mr. W. R. Jourdain, retired from the Service on the 31st December. He was appointed Secretary in 1906, and during his long term of office always displayed a keen interest in all matters relating to scenery-preservation. He has been succeeded as Secretary by Mr. S. Gambrill.

W. T. NEILL, Chairman.

APPENDIX C.

MARLBOROUGH SCENIC RESERVES.

THE past summer was rather wetter than usual, and probably on that account the reserves escaped damage by fire. The beautiful reserves along the Blenheim-Kaikoura-Canterbury main highway are a great asset to the country, and are being carefully watched and protected, as they are a great source of pleasure to the hundreds of people who annually picnic and camp in them.

A systematic inspection of the whole of the scenic reserves in Marlborough has been carried out during the year, and it is pleasing to note that in no case was there any evidence of vandalism.

I wish to place on record my high appreciation of the long and faithful services rendered to the Department by the late Mr. Francis Auchenleck, who died very suddenly in December last. He was for many years honorary Inspector of the Hundalee Reserves, and for years previous to his appointment exercised a fatherly interest in conserving the natural beauties of the whole of that part of the coast.

J. STEVENSON,

Commissioner of Crown Lands.

APPENDIX D.

NORTH AUCKLAND SCENIC RESERVES.

DURING the past year I was able to personally inspect many of the scenic reserves in this district and a great many of the historical spots in the Bay of Islands and Hokianga districts, including Marsden Cross, the spot where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, site of the first Government House. All these were reported on with a view to their permanent reservation.

As outlined in my last report, I put in hand some of the precautions considered necessary to safeguard the magnificent Trounson Kauri Park. A fire which swept through it in March, after an exceptionally dry summer, showed that such necessary precaution had been too long delayed. Owing to financial reasons, we were late in getting to work on the projected precaution, and although damage was done to a portion of the park it is nothing to what might have happened. The forest guard and his mates worked heroically and saved the situation, and I trust and believe that we shall never be in such a dangerous position again. Eventually a strip round practically the whole of the boundary will need to be cleared and grassed. Providing a fire-break appears to be the only satisfactory way in which to cope with the danger from fire.

The bridge over the Waima Stream having now been constructed, motor-cars can get into this reserve from the railway-station, and Mr. Trounson, sen., has just given an extra open area that will be excellent for parking cars and for picnics, &c. A new bridge for pedestrian traffic through the reserve is being constructed, and we hope soon to have a motor drive right alongside the eastern edge of the park, from the railway-station on the south to the caretaker's house on the north.

I also visited the very beautiful Mangamuka Scenic Reserve, at the head of the Hokianga Inlet, on the way to Mangamuka. This reserve is conspicuous for the many shades of green that occur. In addition to the usual amount in the bush in other places, we have numerous karaka, puriri, and many beautiful kowhai.

A visit of inspection was also made to the beautiful kauri forest at the foot of the Waitakerei Falls and Cascade Creek, which is being acquired, and which will, with the adjacent open country, make an ideal scenic reserve for the people of Auckland and the numerous tourists that will some day visit it. The access roads need improving, and a splendid drive can be made from Henderson towards Nihotapu, and thence right along the main range to Pukematekeo Trig. down to the new resort, where golf, tennis, swimming, and all other sports can be indulged in when the final scheme is carried out. At present the roads are obsolete and need revising, as this land has become valuable as a health and scenic resort.

The Henderson Valley Reserve is being well looked after by Mr. and Mrs. Knight, who themselves own a very pretty bit of forest adjoining, and dispense afternoon tea.

As the fences around Kauri Gully, at Northcote, were falling into disrepair, and the tracks grown over and bridges gone, I obtained and spent the sum of £50 in putting them into good order.

An inspection and report were also made of the scenic beauties along the Mangamuka-Kaitaia Road, which will be a most important main highway and tourist route. Action to acquire portion of this area for scenic reserves was recommended.

Witheyford Park area, near Birkenhead, which has been extremely well looked after for the past forty years by the owner, was also reported upon, and it would make an ideal picnic-ground for the people of Auckland, but could hardly be termed a national scenic reserve. It would, however, be a great pity to see it cut up and exploited.

I did my utmost to visit all the scenic reserves in this district, as I take a very keen interest in same, having lived in the heart of the virgin forest for over thirty years.

The soldier revaluation and other work is at present too strenuous to permit the necessary time being spared, and it may be as well to revive the position of Scenic Inspector, if only for the next three or four years, provided a suitable man can be procured.

Arrangements are now in train to acquire some 20 acres of the Waro limestone rocks, near Hikurangi, Whangarei. This is an outcrop of most interesting limestone rocks, of an average height of 40 ft., adjacent to the Waro Railway-station. The purchase was first mooted some twenty years ago, but difficulties arose in connection with the coal-measures underneath. The coal has now been worked out; and, though the limestone is of much commercial value, the present owners, Messrs. Carter Bros. and Wilson's (N.Z.) Portland Cement Company (Limited), have facilitated the acquisition on as reasonable terms as could be expected.

North Auckland has many beautiful scenic and historical spots, and every effort should be made to secure them before it is too late.

Two cases of vandalism were dealt with during the year, and I am glad to say that in each case (Kauri Gully at Northcote, and Waitotemarama at Hokianga) convictions and fines were inflicted. Another case is pending regarding damage done in the Mangamuka Scenic Reserve. It seems a pity that action should have to be taken against offenders, as these historical and beauty spots are the heritage of all, and should be guarded and conserved by everybody.

H. J. LOWE,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

APPENDIX E.

KAPITI ISLAND.

THIS sanctuary has received a good deal of attention during the past year. Development is proceeding under the advice of a committee of scientists and other gentlemen with a wide knowledge of our native fauna and flora. Considerable progress has already been made, and a very marked improvement in the condition of this beautiful and historic island may be expected in the next few years.

The extermination of the goats is a work of great difficulty. The caretaker is giving to it as much time as possible, and he has had much help from visitors who have the welfare of the sanctuary at heart. The few remaining animals are not doing a great deal of damage, but they breed so quickly that their complete destruction is of the utmost importance. Since November last 133 goats, thirty-six rats, and two cats have been killed.

The possibility of extensive damage by fire causes anxiety during the summer months. Seeds of fire-resisting native plants are being sown along the northern boundary for the purpose of establishing a fire-break, and in other portions of the island an effort is being made to extend the forest-covered area by transplanting and by sowing seed.

A contract has been let for the removal or destruction of the wild sheep, and the coming year should see their numbers so reduced that they will no longer be a serious hindrance to regeneration of the forest.

A number of native frogs were liberated during the year. The committee has in hand the introduction of some New Zealand birds not now found on Kapiti, and it is hoped that some success in this direction will be achieved early in the coming season.

It is with regret that I record the death of Mr. J. L. Bennett, who very ably filled the position of caretaker for many years. His successor, Mr. A. S. Wilkinson, who has made a close study of our native birds and forests, has taken up the work with enthusiasm. The following notes are taken from a recent report by him:—

“I was surprised to find the bush looking so well, as I had been under the impression there was no undergrowth owing to the number of goats. The southern portion, or that part south of the waterfall, is no doubt devoid of undergrowth, but north of the waterfall on the eastern side and the trig. on the western young trees and undergrowth of every description are springing up. Indeed, in some parts the young trees are so thick that it is difficult for one to traverse the bush. This applies more particularly to the country between Taapiro and Rangitira. Even on the dry manuka ridges, where the trees are open enough to allow sufficient light through, there are hundreds of young trees coming away. With a little judicious thinning of the manuka it is possible in a few years to replace the manuka with suitable berry-bearing trees, providing we get good seasons and avoid fires, the danger of which is very great in the summer months.

On the large grass area adjoining the Native land where the Advisory Board propose to plant fire-resisting trees as a fire-break along the fence-line manuka is gradually closing in from two sides. Tauhinu is also helping to reduce the area of grass. Beneath the manuka and tauhinu countless seedlings of all sorts are growing.

In Taipiro, where the best sward of grass is, manuka again is the first tree to make an appearance. This is coming away on the slopes facing the north near the gorge, while on the opposite side of the valley, but closer to the western cliffs, the shrubby *Nothopanax anomalum* is creeping down to the bottom of the gully, in spite of the heavy westerly gales which sweep down this valley. This shrubby panax likewise provides shelter for a lot of young bush trees, the mahoe being especially prominent. On the southern portion of the island, from the Maraetakaroro Valley to Wharekohu, excepting for some isolated patches of bush composed principally of kohekohe with a few others, there is nothing much besides tauhinu, manuka, and in places the small-leaved daisy-tree (*Olearia Solandri*), so thick that one has to get down on hands and knees to get through. On the western cliffs, in many places inaccessible to goats, there is a surprising number of different plants growing. They are, considering the locality in which they are growing, looking very healthy. Prominent among them is the taupata, bearing in most cases quite a considerable amount of fruit. This proves that once the goats are destroyed taupata will soon re-establish itself even in this wind-swept locality.

In the Maraetakaroro the flax (*Phormium tenax*) was frequented by dozens of tuis and bell-birds. At Rangitira also these birds were busily engaged on the flax-flowers. In places along the east coast the other flax (*Phormium Cookianum*) flowered profusely, and, like *P. tenax*, was much sought after by the honey-eaters. Whether the abundance of feed has had anything to do with the lengthy breeding season, or whether they always breed later on Kapiti, the fact remains that even at the present time tuis' nests are found with young ones therein, while only a few days ago (28th March) a pigeon's nest was found containing one egg, and the bird is now engaged in incubating."

The caretaker further reports having seen the undermentioned birds during the past six months: Grey warbler, North Island tomtit, ground-lark, tui, pied fantail, whitehead, North Island robin, bell-bird, kingfisher, long-tailed cuckoo, kaka, red-fronted parrakeet, yellow-fronted parrakeet, harrier, morepork, pigeon, weka, blue heron, banded dotterel, white-headed stilt, white-fronted tern, black-backed gull, mutton-bird, diving-petrel, blue penguin, whale-bird, gannet, grey duck, black shag. On two occasions kiwis were heard close at hand, but owing to darkness they were not seen.

The following introduced birds have found their way to Kapiti: Starling, house-sparrow, Californian quail, chaffinch, goldfinch, hedge-sparrow, skylark, redpoll, blackbird, thrush, and yellow-hammer.

T. BROOK,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

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On the large grass area adjoining the Native land where the Advisory Board propose to plant fire-retaining trees as a fire-break along the fence-line, it is suggested that the trees be planted in two rows. The trees are also being planted in the area of grass. Beneath the marks and sapling count-boards all sorts are growing.

In the Tairāroa where the best sward of grass is, it is suggested again to plant an appearance. This is being done on the slopes facing the north near the gorge, while on the opposite side of the valley, but closer to the western cliff, the shrubby Yew-like vegetation is growing down to the bottom of the gully, in spite of the heavy western gales which sweep down this valley. This shrubby vegetation provides shelter for a lot of young bush trees, the native being especially prominent. In the southern portion of the island from the Māori settlement valley to the Māori settlement, some isolated patches of bush composed principally of *Podocarpus* and *Leptosiphon* are to be seen. In the Māori settlement area, and in places the small-leaved *Podocarpus* (*Podocarpus*), as thick as one has to get down to bushes and trees to get through. On the western hills, in many places, *Podocarpus* to grow, there is a considerable number of different species growing. They are considered the locality in which they are growing, and are very healthy. The most common among them is the *Podocarpus*, bearing in mind that this is a common tree in the Māori settlement. The grasses that once the goats are destroyed, *Podocarpus* will soon be established again in this wind-swept locality.

In the Māori settlement the *Podocarpus* (low) was frequented by dozens of tin and bell birds. At present also these birds were badly engaged on the hill-tops. In places along the east coast the other *Podocarpus* (low) were also engaged, and like the *Podocarpus* was much sought after by the honey-eaters. Whether the abundance of food has had anything to do with the large breeding season, or whether they always breed later on Kapiti, the fact remains that even at the present time this nest was found with young ones hatching, while only a few days ago (23rd March) a pigeon's nest was found containing one egg, and the bird is now engaged in incubating.

The greatest further records having been seen the unincubated birds during the past six months: (1) *Podocarpus*, North Island robin, ground-lark, red-footed booby, white-headed North Island robin, bell-bird, ring-billed gull, long-tailed cuckoo, kakā, red-footed booby, yellow-fronted penguin, brown booby, yellow-billed gull, blue-banded dotterel, white-headed stilts, white-fronted tern, black-backed gull, mutton-bird, blue penguin, white-bird, gannet, grey duck, black-bird. On two occasions *Podocarpus* were heard close at hand, but owing to darkness they were not seen. The following introduced birds have found their way to Kapiti: Starling, house-sparrow, European quail, chaffinch, goldfinch, hedge-sparrow, skylark, redpoll, blackbird, thrush, and yellow plover.

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