

Accounts of the sport already obtained during the opening month show that better heads were shot than ever secured before, with the one exception of the record twenty-two-pointer shot at Mahia by Sergeant Wade four years ago. This year a nineteen-pointer from Rotoiti—Okareka herd holds the pride of place. It was a fairly well timbered head of nice dark-coloured antlers. Many fair heads ranging from eight to sixteen points are reported from the various herds, and most extensive thinning of the herds took place owing to many stalkers shooting large numbers of hinds and young stags for their skins and venison. The red deer have always been well under control in the Rotorua Acclimatization District, owing to stalking being permitted in the young herds after a very limited period of protection.

The Japanese herd in the Taupo County (the only one in this Dominion) yielded a number of fine trophies, one being nearly equal to the world's record heads, secured in previous season by Messrs. Holmes, of Te Awamutu, and Jordan brothers, of Auckland.

The Waikaremoana herd is showing the effects of the heavy unrestricted shooting, but the exceptionally dense forest cover favours the deer, and the best stags are difficult to obtain in that class of country.

The opening of the new direct road from Rotorua to Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, via Te Whaiti and Ruatahuna, to the Department's hostel on Lake Waikaremoana will provide shorter and easier access for deer-stalkers in this area in coming years. Three fine heads were secured from the herd in the vicinity of Mount Edgecumbe.

Trout-fishing.—The trout-fishing all over the district has greatly improved on that of previous years. The intensive restocking of all the local waters, and the addition of new blood from the Tongariro River Hatchery to all the outlying lakes and rivers will prove of the greatest benefit in ultimately attracting more Dominion and overseas anglers for our wonderful fishing, and the sales of trout licenses is fast increasing.

The quality and size of the trout in the Waikaremoana area is particularly marked, and a catch of six beautiful rainbow trout taken from Lake Waikareiti this season weighed each 9 lb., 9 lb., 11 lb., 13 lb., 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb., 13 lb., and 19 lb.; this latter trout only being equalled by one caught in Lake Tarawera. These 19 lb. fish easily eclipse the weights of any trout caught in Taupo Lake for several years past. An examination of the scales of the above trout places them nearly all as maiden fish of five and six years old. They were all taken on a medium "barred wasp" fly. There is abundance of trout-food in this lake, which lies at an altitude of some 2,500 ft. above sea-level and is the highest inland trout-water in the district. It more nearly approximates in temperature the waters of that part of America from which our original *irideus* came; and the great disparity in weight between the average American rainbow fish and those above named can only be due to environment and the superabundance of the various trout-food supplies.

Statistics of the trout problems of both the lakes in this county have been kept over some years by Ranger Cobeldick, together with samples of trout-scales, and the knowledge accumulated will be very useful.

The condition of the trout caught in Lake Tarawera during the closing months of the past season was excellent, and early this season all anglers expressed satisfaction with the condition and fighting-qualities displayed by their catches of rainbow trout.

Lake Rotoiti is fast becoming a successful fishing rival of Tarawera, owing to the easier facilities for getting fishing, and the many new anglers' cottages of a most substantial nature erected all along the shore testify to the popularity of this lake as an anglers' resort. The trout landed in Rotoiti were of fine condition, but the catches did not quite approximate the weights of those from Tarawera.

At Lake Okataina; where a spacious and well-equipped fishing-lodge has been erected, the catches of fish closely followed Lake Waikareiti for the best average in large trout. Two anglers took nineteen on one day and ten the next day, the finest of which scaled 12 lb. An overseas angler, who only fished in the daytime, took a basket of thirty trout for four days' angling, with an average of 4 lb. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; but his best trout just failed to draw 6 lb. These weights have since been beaten for Tarawera fish, but their records, though taken this season, were secured after the 31st March.

The fishing in Rotorua Lake is improving slowly, but many fine creels have been filled.

The Ohau Channel and Okere yielded good trout, but the local lake-streams held many poor-conditioned specimens of late-spawned and even unspawned females till after the New Year. The opinion was freely expressed that all fishing in the Rotorua streams—Utahina, Ngongotaha, Waiteti, Awahau, Hamurana, and Wai-ngae—should be prohibited before the 1st January each year. In the later months of the season much better trout were caught, including a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. and a 6 lb. fish taken off the weed-bank at Hamurana by visiting anglers from the fishing-lodge there. The prolific weed-growth in and around this stream holds rich feed in large quantities, and is the sole factor of the good angling obtained there.

Trolling the spoon bait still keeps up its popularity for getting good baskets, and harling is rapidly superseding spinning when the trout are not rising to the spoon baits.

The other lakes—Rotokakahi, Okareka, Rotoehu, Rotoma, Okaro, and Rerewhakitū—were all heavily fished, and many fine trout caught. Indications are that the cycle of diseased and ill-conditioned trout is rapidly passing its transitory period, and if adequate methods are adopted to conserve and increase the food-supply and complete the present survey of the thermal fishing in regard to the elimination of diseased and unfit fish, coupled with other measures of policy, there is little fear that the Rotorua fishing will not again be brought up to the high standard existing twenty-five years ago.

The fishing in the larger rivers of the district was good, especially in the Whakatane, Waimana, Rangitaiki, and Whirinaki. Tarawera River was heavily fished, while the Waipunga, Mohaka, Ruakituri, and Waikare-ta-heke were producing good average fish through the season.