

1934.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.
SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1934, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE 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, 1st September, 1934.

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on scenery-preservation for the year ended 31st March, 1934.

I have, &c.,

W. ROBERTSON,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. E. A. Ransom, Minister in Charge of Scenery-preservation, Wellington.

REPORT.

PROCLAMATIONS issued during the year setting apart land as scenic or historic reserves under the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Act covered an area of some 12,368 acres.

In the North Auckland Land District three small reservations were made, two for the purpose of protecting some nice patches of Native bush, and the other for the preservation of certain limestone caves near Waipu, which possess a considerable reputation amongst sightseers.

Reservations in the Auckland Land District included a small area of bush on the right bank of the Rangitaiki River on the Galatea—Te Teko Road, an area of 104 acres of hilly bush country in the Huntly district, and a small piece of mixed bush in the Otorohanga district.

In the Taranaki Land District the Urenui Pa reserve of some 7 acres was declared during the year to have become Crown land pursuant to a Proclamation published under the authority of section 22 of the Native Purposes Act, 1931. This area was a gift from the Natives to the Crown under certain conditions, and on the issue of the Proclamation the land automatically became a scenic and historic reserve under the Scenery Preservation Act. Suitable arrangements have been made for the appointment of a special Board of Control.

Several valuable reserves were set apart in the Wellington Land District, including nearly 300 acres of heavy Native bush situated just north of the National Park Railway-station and extending for a considerable distance along the railway, and also a particularly fine bush-clad area near Karewarewa. Some additions were made to the existing reservations in the beautiful Pohangina Valley, and a small reserve was set aside on the banks of the Rangitikei River in the vicinity of the Kawatau Valley Road.

At Bulwer, in Pelorus Sound, an area of 224 acres was secured for scenic purposes through the generosity of the Bruce Trustees. The Marlborough Progress League and the New Zealand Forestry League were very active in this matter, and it was mainly through the efforts of the latter body that the Bruce Trustees became interested in the proposal. This is not the first occasion by any means in which the Bruce Trustees have provided funds for the acquisition of scenic areas, and the Department is exceedingly grateful for their assistance. A second reservation in the Nelson District was that of some 277 acres near Riwaka, comprising some very attractive bush at the head of the north branch of the Riwaka River, which issues from a limestone cave in the locality. This area was formerly provisional State forest; but the State Forest Service agreed to the reservation being changed on account of the scenic beauty of the land and its popularity as a favourite picnic resort.

New reserves, totalling some 896 acres, were set aside in various parts of the Marlborough District during the year, chiefly in the Pelorus Sound and Valley. The most important of these was an addition of 450 acres to the Pelorus Bridge Reserve, bringing that fine scenic area up to approximately 1,000 acres.

Westland reservations during the year were those of two areas of virgin forest totalling some 450 acres situated at Weheka near the Fox Glacier.

An important reservation was made in the Canterbury Land District. This was a 9,000 acre block of beech bush situated at the junctions of the Nima, Lewis, Boyle, and Doubtful Rivers. The new reserve will provide an attractive vista for travellers and tourists for a distance of some six or seven miles along the new Lewis Pass Road. It includes also the Sylvia Falls and an interesting hot spring, and will undoubtedly be a very considerable scenic attraction on the new West Coast road via Lewis Pass.

In the Otago Land District the historic rock known as Te Umukuru was set aside as an historic reserve. The rock, which was formerly part of the road skirting the Otago Harbour, bears a plate commemorating the landing-place of the Weller Brothers, Whalers, in 1831, and was reserved at the request of the Otago Early Settlers' Association. A second Otago reservation was that of some 28 acres on the summit of Mount Iron behind Pembroke as an addition to the existing reserve on the mountain. Mount Iron commands a fine view of Lake Wanaka and the surrounding country, and, owing to its easy accessibility, is very popular with visiting tourists and local residents.

Southland reservations were those of an area of 58 acres of good standing bush in the Edendale-Morton Mains District, and a small area at the Niagara Bridge, Waikawa River.

The reservation over various areas, totalling 1,147 acres, was revoked during the year. Of this comparatively large area no less than 935 acres comprised a reserve on the Great Barrier, which was set apart in 1929 following representations made by the residents of the island. At the time of reservation the land, which is very steep and broken country, was covered to a considerable extent with young kauri and other trees which were considered to be worthy of preservation. It was hoped that the area would eventually develop into a kauri forest. However, on a special inspection being made, it was found that the reserve had been completely swept by fire, the whole area having been fired about three years ago, and the land burnt over about every six months ever since. No definite evidence could be obtained of the origin of the fires, and in view of the state of the area and of the impossibility of exercising adequate supervision in such a remote locality, it was reluctantly decided that there was nothing to be gained by retaining the reservation. The bulk of the remainder consisted of a reserve of 160 acres on the western side of the Waiau River between Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri which was included in the Sounds National Park. Some 1,900 acres of provisional State forest and 540 acres of Crown land were dealt with at the same time, the idea being to add all the land on the western side of the Waiau in that locality to the National Park in order that it might be administered under the one form of reservation.

At the close of the year the Department had in hand several important proposals for the reservation of further areas of scenic interest in various parts of the Dominion, and these will be fully dealt with in the next report.

The number of scenic reservations in the Dominion is now 961, covering a total area of approximately 669,000 acres.

SCENERY PRESERVATION BOARD.

Meetings of the Scenery Preservation Board were held in the office of the Surveyor-General, Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, on the 27th May, 1933 (North Auckland Land District); on the 28th July, 1933 (Auckland, Wellington, Marlborough, Nelson, Canterbury, and Southland Land Districts); and on the 26th September, 1933 (Nelson and Marlborough Land Districts).

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

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES.

During the year special scenic Boards were appointed or reappointed as follow: Te Kuiti Borough Council, to control the Mangaokewa Gorge Scenic Reserve; Matamata County Council, to control the Maungatautari Mountain Scenic Reserve; Tauranga County Council, to control the Puketoki Scenic Reserve; Peninsula County Council, to control the Titeremoana Scenic Reserve; the Invercargill City Council, to control the Waihopai River Scenic Reserve; and the Haldane, Huatoki, Mangaohuehu, Matiere, Moana, Pongaroa, Summit Road, Urenui Pa, and Waima Scenic Boards, to control their respective reserves. Two Orders in Council were issued appointing gentlemen to vacancies on the Cape Kidnapper Bird Sanctuary Board and the Katikati Hot Springs Scenic Board, while two Warrants were gazetted placing additional areas under the control of the Hundalee Scenic Reserves Board and the Papatowai Scenic Board. At the request of the members thereof, the Motu Scenic Board was relieved of its responsibilities during the year, and the control of the reserve will in future be exercised by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Gisborne.

During the year, forty-one ladies and gentlemen were appointed honorary inspectors for scenic reserves throughout the Dominion, and a certificate of appointment was issued in each case. The New Zealand Institute of Horticulture has continued to assist the Department by the nomination of suitable ladies and gentlemen who are keen to assist in the national work of scenery-preservation.

GENERAL CONDITION OF RESERVES, ETC.

Reports from the various districts disclose in general a fairly satisfactory state of affairs so far as our scenic reserves are concerned. An unsatisfactory feature in many localities is the grazing of animals in reserves during periods of shortage of pasture. These offences are difficult to detect, and it will continue to be almost impossible to prevent them until stock-proof fences can be provided.

During the month of July a particularly heavy gale was experienced in the northern portion of North Auckland, resulting in considerable damage to the Trounson Kauri Park by the uprooting of a number of kauri-trees on the outskirts of the forest. The damage was confined to the northern portion of the reserve, which is exposed to occasional gales, and every effort must be made to prevent further encroachment. With this end in view investigations are being made of the possibility of establishing

a satisfactory shelter-belt. The trouble seems to be that the surface soil in portions of the reserve is very shallow, resting on a solid sandstone formation, and the root-growth offers insufficient resistance to excessive wind. In the interests of the reserve, and with a view to conservation, it was decided to dispose of the fallen timber by tender. A satisfactory sale was completed, and the timber is in process of removal under the supervision of the resident caretaker.

Several serious fires occurred in reserves in the Marlborough District during the course of an abnormally dry season. Ill-advised fires, some of which probably commenced on adjoining properties, ran into several reserves in the Sounds District, and caused considerable damage. Early in December a fire broke out on the Wedge Point Reserve damaging about 150 acres, and only strenuous efforts by a large party prevented the total destruction of this reserve. In February fires damaged the picturesque Edgecombe Point Reserve at the entrance to Endeavour Inlet, and at the same time the Pattens Passage Reserve caught fire and was partially burnt out.

Incipient fires in the Kumutoto and other reserves were fortunately dealt with before they had time to spread. Prompt action taken by departmental officers assisted by the local people saved the beautiful Pelorus Bridge Reserve from serious damage when it was threatened by fire in early April. In the Nelson District two outbreaks in rather remote localities occurred during the summer, but were extinguished as a result of prompt action on the part of honorary inspectors.

The practice of some settlers in the Marlborough Sounds of lighting fires during times of drought has given the Department grave concern. It is admitted that the firing of fern is necessary on farming properties in the Sounds; but settlers farming properties which march with valuable scenic reserves should be prepared to take special care to control their burning-off operations. If the position in this respect does not improve it appears evident that consideration will have to be given to taking proceedings under section 3 of the Scenery Preservation Amendment Act, 1933, in all cases where damage to scenic reserves results from fires having their origin on adjoining properties.

GENERAL.

The Trounson Kauri Park continues to attract large numbers of visitors, and the recent completion of a through metalled road will increase the popularity of the reserve still further. It is intended to establish a motor camp in the near future for the convenience of visitors.

A considerable increase in the number of gannets nesting in the Cape Kidnapper Bird Sanctuary Reserve was reported during the season. The old nesting-area on the point did not provide sufficient accommodation, and large numbers of the birds nested on the cliff faces outside the sanctuary.

Visits to the Cape are increasing in popularity, and during the summer railway-buses ran a number of excursions to Clifton, from which point visitors walk along the coast-line to the sanctuary.

Mining on scenic reserves, chiefly confined to prospecting operations, has again received its fair share of attention. Some twenty-four applications for ordinary prospecting licenses and other mining privileges were submitted for consideration, but in the majority of cases consent was declined. Some minor damage from unauthorized prospecting came under notice on the Rapahoe Range Reserve, but the miners responsible for the damage could not be traced.

LEGISLATION.

The Scenery Preservation Amendment Act, 1933, which became law on the 15th December last, contains several interesting provisions dealing with the control and administration of scenic reserves.

Section 2 of the amendment deals with the control of opossums on scenic reserves. Under section 2 of the Scenery Preservation Amendment Act, 1926, the Minister was empowered to authorize the taking and killing of any specified kind of animals or birds within a scenic reserve, but the power so granted did not cover the case of opossums. It was considered to be very desirable to be able to deal with opossums within scenic reserves, and the new legislation gives the necessary power in that respect.

Section 3 repeals section 14 of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908, dealing with penalties for damage to reserves by fire from adjoining land, and re-enacts it in a strengthened form. Section 14 dealt only with the case of fires lit on properties adjoining scenic reserves by the owners or occupiers or by any person acting under their authority. The new section covers the case of damage by all fires lit on land adjoining a scenic reserve, and also covers the case of damage to reserves arising out of the lighting of fires on public highways adjoining such reserves.

Section 4 repeals the provisions of the 1908 Act and its amendments dealing with offences, and re-enacts them in a strengthened form. It is provided that, in addition to liability to a fine, any person damaging a reserve may be sued for payment for all damage done and for the full value of any timber unlawfully removed. Provision is also made to cover cases of stock trespass within scenic reserves.

Section 5 provides that proceedings may be taken against an offender at any time within four years. Experience has shown that a provision of this nature is very necessary, more particularly in cases of the taking of timber from reserves.

The provisions of section 6 represent a new departure in scenery-preservation administration in the Dominion. Under this section any owner of land may make application to have his land declared a private reserve, and on the Government being satisfied that the request is reasonable, the land may be so declared. While any such declaration is in force the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Acts dealing with offences in scenic reserves will apply, subject to any necessary modifications, to such land. It is considered that this legislation should prove helpful in giving private owners extra protection against vandalism without unduly affecting their own rights as property owners, and should assist generally in furthering the cause of scenery-preservation.

APPENDICES.

A schedule of reserves made and reservations revoked during the year accompanied by a statement of expenditure, follows as Appendix A, while Appendix B records the work carried out on Kapiti Island.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

RESERVES MADE IN 1933-34 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908, AND AMENDMENTS.

Recom- mendation No.	Local Name.	Description.	Area.			Date of Proclamation.
			A.	R.	P.	
<i>North Auckland Land District.</i>						
755	Aponga Settlement	Section 1, Block I, Purua S.D.	40	1	20	20/7/33
769	Waipu Parish	Allotment 452, Waipu Parish, Block I, Mangawai S.D.	87	0	0	16/8/33
741	Waipu Caves	Allotment 462 and parts Allotment 194, Waipu Parish, Block XII, Ruakaka S.D.	13	0	11	16/8/33
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>						
756	Owaikura Road, Otorohanga	Section 13A, Block III, Orahiri S.D. . . .	23	0	0	20/7/33
742	Galatea - Te Teko Road	Section 7, Block III, Rangitaiki Lower S.D.	55	0	16	20/7/33
770	Wai-o-te-Atua	Allotment 109, Pepepe Parish, Block III, Newcastle S.D.	104	0	0	13/11/33
<i>Taranaki Land District.</i>						
758	Kirai Road	Part Section 3, Block XV, Ngatimaru S.D.	22	2	4	20/7/33
..	Urenui Pa	Subdivision 2B 1 of Section 2, Block III, Waitara S.D.	7	0	0	*
<i>Wellington Land District.</i>						
761	North Island Main Trunk Railway (Waimarino)	Section 12, Block XVI, Kaitieke S.D. . . .	288	3	0	20/7/33
759	Rangitikei River Bank	Section 58, Block X, Hautapu S.D. . . .	23	0	0	20/7/33
771	Karewarewa Village	Section 6B, Block XVI, Hautapu S.D. . . .	63	2	0	19/10/33
760	Pohangina Valley	Section 32, Block VIII, Apiti S.D. . . .	77	0	0	20/7/33
		Section 10, Block VIII, Apiti S.D. . . .	21	3	10	20/7/33
		Sections 4A, 5, 6, and 7, Block IV, Pohangina S.D.	356	0	0	20/7/33
<i>Nelson Land District.</i>						
762	Bulwer, Pelorus Sounds	Section 19, Block VI, French Pass S.D. . . .	224	0	0	20/7/33
773	Bulwer	Section 7, Village of Bulwer	0	1	14	19/10/33
		Section 28, Village of Bulwer	0	1	28	19/10/33
782	Riwaka	Sections 21 to 27, 50 to 56, Village of Bulwer (All in Block VI, French Pass S.D.)	4	1	1	19/10/33
		Section 23, Block VII, Kaiteriteri S.D. . . .	277	2	27	†
<i>Marlborough Land District.</i>						
775	Hundalee (additional)	Section 9, Block XXI, Hundalee S.D. . . .	17	0	0	13/11/33
778		Section 6, Block X, Hundalee S.D. . . .	24	0	0	13/3/34
748	Pelorus Sound	Section 7, Block X, Hundalee S.D. . . .	5	0	0	13/3/34
		Section 12, Block II, Linkwater S.D. . . .	28	0	0	16/5/33
783	Pelorus Bridge (additional)	Section 14, Block III, Orieri S.D. . . .	362	0	0	16/5/33
777	Pelorus Bridge (additional)	Section 67, Block IX, Wakamarina S.D. . . .	10	2	0	16/2/34
		Section 43, Block VIII, and Section 1, Block XI, Heringa S.D., and Section 33, Block IX, Wakamarina S.D.	450	0	0	‡
776	Port Havelock	Sections 1A and 8A, Block VIII, Wakama- rina S.D.	236	0	0	§
<i>Westland Land District.</i>						
765	Weheka (Main South Road)	Reserve 1119, Block XIII, Waiho S.D. . . .	279	3	29	20/7/33
763	Weheka	Reserve 1102, Block I, Mount Cook S.D. . . .	177	3	37	16/2/34
<i>Canterbury Land District.</i>						
780	Lewis Pass Road	Reserve 4326, Blocks X, XIII, XIV, Boyle S.D., Blocks I and II, Skiddaw S.D.	9,000	0	0	11/12/33
<i>Otago Land District.</i>						
766	Mount Iron, Pembroke	Section 58, Block XIV, Lower Wanaka S.D.	28	3	4	20/7/33
751	Te Umukuru	Section 1423R, Block B, Otakou Native Reserve	0	0	29	27/11/33
<i>Southland Land District.</i>						
767	Edendale Morton Mains	Section 9, Block XI, Oteramika Hundred	58	2	1	20/7/33
781	Niagara (Waikawa River)	Sections 36 and 42, Town of Niagara . . .	2	0	2	19/10/33

* Section 22, Native Purposes Act, 1931.
and other Lands Disposal Act, 1933.† Section 12, Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1933.
§ Section 7, Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1933.

‡ Section 8, Reserves

REVOCATION OF RESERVATIONS.

Land.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
<i>North Auckland Land District.</i>		
Allotments 128, 129, 130, 182, and 182A, Aotea Parish	A. B. P. 935 0 0	5/9/33
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>		
Section 3, Block X, Awakino North Survey District	15 2 32	14/11/33
Part Allotment 223, Pepepe Parish, Block III, Newcastle Survey District (portion of Reserve)	0 3 37	28/4/33
<i>Wellington Land District.</i>		
Sections 1 and 2 and parts of Sections 3 and 4, Block VI, Ongo Survey District (portion of Reserve)	8 3 7·8	19/10/33
Section 21, Block I, Makuri Survey District	14 2 0	16/6/33
<i>Westland Land District.</i>		
Part Scenic Reserve 1451, Block XI, Hohonu Survey District	0 3 39	13/2/34
<i>Southland Land District.</i>		
Section 2 of 10, Block XI, Longwood Survey District (portion of Reserve)	11 1 20	29/6/34
Section 3, Block II, and Section 2, Block IV, Manapouri Survey District (part Horse-shoe Bend Scenic Reserve)	160 0 0	*
Total area revoked during year ended 31st March, 1934	1,147 1 15·8	

* Section 17 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1933.

SUMMARY OF RESERVES.

Land District.	Number.	Area.
		A. R. P.
North Auckland	3	140 1 31
Auckland	3	182 0 16
Gisborne .. .. .	..	..
Hawke's Bay .. .. .	..	..
Taranaki	2	29 2 4
Wellington	6	830 0 10
Nelson	3	506 2 30
Marlborough	6	1,132 2 0
Westland	2	457 3 26
Canterbury	1	9,000 0 0
Otago	2	28 3 33
Southland	2	60 2 3
Total reservations for year ended 31st March, 1934	30	12,368 2 33
Reservations up to 31st March, 1933	934	658,292 0 17·66
	964	670,660 3 10·66
Less reservations revoked	3	1,147 1 15·8
	961	669,513 1 34·86

STATEMENT SHOWING EXPENDITURE ON SCENERY-PRESERVATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1934.

	£	s.	d.
Kirks Bush : Fencing and drainage .. .. .	..	..	1 7 0
Summit Road Scenic Reserves : Ranger .. .. .	..	..	156 0 0
Surveys, valuations, and incidental expenses .. .. .	..	..	21 0 6
Trounson Kauri Forest, charges in connection with protection of .. .. .	..	..	286 10 3
Waitangi Historic Reserve—	£	s.	d.
Clearing, ploughing, grassing, internal roading, and compensation	252	9	7
Grant towards charges for and incidental to Waitangi National Trust (equivalent to refund of stamp duty paid by Board)	68	4	0
Renovation of buildings, fences, &c.	500	0	0
			820 13 7
Administration of reserves (including fencing, &c.)—			
Eradication of noxious weeds and destruction of rabbits	62	8	8
Fencing, &c.	85	13	8
Fire-fighting	36	9	1
Ranger, Lake Wakatipu	8	2	0
Travelling-expenses	12	4	4
			204 17 9
			£1,490 9 1

COMPARISON OF EXPENDITURE.

It is interesting to note how money raised under the Act or provided from other sources 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
1925-26	17,923	2,310	305	9	..	20,547
1926-27	2,617	1,182	75	17	..	3,891
1927-28	5,182	1,342	58	17	..	6,599
1928-29	11,642	1,810	538	1	150‡	14,141
1929-30	445	1,548	108	6	300‡	2,407
1930-31	574	1,335	92	2	300‡	2,303
1931-32	2,373	838	1,099	16	279‡	4,605
1932-33	7	476	15	..	200‡	698
1933-34	92	1,221	21	..	156‡	1,490
Grand total ..	..	..	..	..	..	221,849

* Included in Board's expenses.
for Summit Road Scenic Reserves.

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

‡ Ranger

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

APPENDIX B.

KAPITI ISLAND.

(H. W. C. MACKINTOSH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

It affords me much pleasure to report that the year just closed has been one of progress as far as plant-life on the Kapiti Reserve is concerned. So long as the plants and trees from which the birds derive their food can be maintained and multiplied, success in preserving the bird-life on the island is assured.

Although indications in the early summer pointed to a dry period, yet late in December, when the island was very dry, heavy rain fell and every few weeks throughout the summer showers were welcomed. These showers, accompanied by mild weather conditions, not only stimulated the vegetation, but also relieved the Caretaker from considerable anxiety, as the danger of fire is an ever present one. A serious check was experienced, however, in the shape of a southerly gale at Christmas time, which played havoc with some of the trees in exposed places facing the south. Even the taupata, a tough species, could not weather it, and some trees along the shore were killed outright. The rata, too, was in flower at the time, and the gale both destroyed a beautiful picture and deprived nectar-loving birds of a highly esteemed food. The rough seas accompanying the gale destroyed a few nests of the sea-birds on the small islands, but for the most part the gulls and terns had reared their young before the gale began. Satisfactory headway has been made during the year by young trees spreading over open spaces, but the most pleasing feature of the regeneration of young growth is under the manuka of which there are hundreds of acres. All amongst the manuka-trees shrubs of nearly every species are growing. These young plants keep the forest floor damp, causing the manuka branches to decay and removing a source of fire danger. A fair amount of planting has been done during the year, and in this connection the Caretaker, Mr. A. S. Wilkinson, desires me to thank the following donors of plants, &c. :—

- Mr. R. Wall, Ohau, for plants.
- Mr. Morris Jones, Wellington, for plants of various species.
- Mr. A. Wilkinson, Tauranga, for seeds.
- Mr. K. W. Dalrymple, Bulls, for plants.
- Messrs. Duncan and Davies, New Plymouth, for plants.
- Mr. Helyar, Lower Hutt, for seeds and plants.
- Mrs. M. Frew, Enfield, Otago, for plants.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson, whilst on annual leave, collected a considerable number of plants on the mainland and planted them out on the reserve. Continuous warfare is waged against rats and other pests. Three cats and three hundred and thirty-seven rats were destroyed during the year. Some necessary fencing is being erected, at time of writing, along the northern boundary to keep grazing animals off the reserve.

I again express my appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the Caretaker, Mr. Wilkinson. The Department is fortunate in having such a conscientious and able officer in charge of the reserve.

I append hereto extracts from Mr. Wilkinson's report for the year ended 31st March, 1934 :—

"It is pleasing to note the number of young matai and miro coming up amongst the young growth. In time all the larger growing species will grow up through the manuka, and a lot of them will be killed out, but there will no doubt be enough left. Though despised by many people, the manuka is very useful to have on a bird sanctuary, as well as being one of the most beautiful of our native plants. If it were not so common more people would grow it. Parakeets, whiteheads, and grey warblers get a great deal of food from the manuka.

"On the more exposed ridges and rocky places there are numerous young plants of rata (*Metrosideros robusta*) and puka (*Griselinia lucida*) coming on. The rata is wind-sown, while the puka-seed is carried by birds. Both species will grow almost anywhere. I have also planted the puka on rocks along the shore, and it is doing well.

"Ngaio-trees are loaded with berries now (March), and, although not yet ripe, the starlings are after them. These birds are undesirable on a bird sanctuary as they interfere considerably with the native species not only taking the food, but driving them from the nesting-holes. I know of a ngaio that parakeets nested in for years, until two years ago, when it was appropriated by this pugnacious foreigner.

"The flax gave promise of flowering well, but was spoilt by the southerly gale.

"The karaka was loaded with fruit, providing the pigeon with a welcome change of food. Except for the berries of the poroporo (*Solanum*) and the fuchsia, the pigeon has few berries to feed on before the karaka is ripe. So they wait until these are getting yellow before thinking seriously of breeding.

"The matai, miro, hinau, toru, matipo, mahoe, and houhou are all carrying their usual load of berries. Some houhou that I planted out in the grass areas have their first show of fruit. The cabbage-tree (*Cordyline australis*) has also a goodly show of berries. This plant is now well spread over the sanctuary.

"Young cabbage-trees are even coming up right out amongst the tauhinu at the south end, half a mile away from the bush. Some of these are no doubt from seed that I have sown, but birds also carry them a considerable distance. Some that I planted in the swamp in the front of my house flowered this year for the first time.

“Another plant that is making headway is the kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*). On the highest part of the island, just south of the trig-station, the kamahi has filled up quite a gap.

“The birds seem to have had a good season, and there are numerous young ones about. The weather was ideal for the majority to breed.

“The white-fronted tern (*Sterna striata*), and red-billed gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*) again nested on the steep rocks at Paripatea, in spite of the fact that the nesting colony of these birds met with disaster there some two years ago. In October and November there must have been at least a hundred nests of the gulls and terns, and most of them were successful. Most of them were reared by the time the southerly gale swept away all trace of the colony late in December. A few belated individuals may have lost their eggs or young at this time. On Tokamapuna the black-backed gulls (*Larus dominicanus*) had a great number of nests. A few of the white-fronted terns and red-billed gulls also nested on this small island. The other small island, Tahoramaurea, was also used as a nesting-place. Besides these places there were several colonies of terns and small gulls on the western side of Kapiti, and one large colony on the point near Okupe.

“The black shag (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) nested in the usual numbers on the high rocks between the south-west corner and the back of Maraetakaroro. The blue heron still nests in its usual places, except at Paripatea, from where it was chased away by terns. Neither of the two nesting-sites of this bird at Paripatea has been used for the last two seasons, although the herons are about in that locality all through the year.

“The bush birds seem to have had a fair season. Perhaps there are more young robins about than usual, and there are certainly plenty of young whiteheads. There were not nearly the same number of longtailed cuckoos as there have been in certain seasons. There were two young ones of this species about our cottage being fed by whiteheads. The longtailed cuckoos have left the island somewhat earlier this season than previously, and we saw very little of the shining cuckoo. It is usually quite plentiful in October, but was not so in 1933.

“The robins are now to be seen in places where a few years ago there were none. This can be accounted for by the increase in numbers, and by the rapid increase of cover which has taken place. Our house robin still comes about, and occasionally comes inside the house.

“Both tuis and korimakos have plenty of young ones. These species come to our house for syrup, and bring their young ones too. The young tuis have been learning to sing for the last fortnight.

“Pigeons have been much in evidence since the karaka berries were ripe. The pair that nested near our house late last season and reared one young one still have it with them, although they are continually trying to chase it away.

“A kohekohe tree, which for many years provided a nesting-hole for a morepork, until last season, when a kaka took charge of it, was not used this season by either bird. Kakas seem more numerous this year than during previous years.

“The fantail, too, is much more plentiful than last year.

“Tomtits do not seem to have been so successful this year.

“Kiwis are numerous all about the damper parts of the sanctuary. I camped one night in the bush about two miles from my house, and heard them whistling throughout the night. None of the nesting-burrows known to me were used for nesting, although one had the appearance of having been used for a lodging-place.

“Wekas are just as plentiful as ever.

“I have not seen anything of the saddlebacks during the year. The pair that reared young at Kahikatea have evidently shifted to another part of the sanctuary.

“Parakeets are more numerous this year, and young can be heard in most parts. The dearth of flax-seed was not to their liking, but there is plenty of grass seed to be had.

“One pair of paradise ducks came home with nine young ones. Of the original eleven ducks that were brought, only four remain. All the rest have scattered along the beach of the mainland.

“The grey ducks again reared young, and they, the young, too, have disappeared.

“The trapper saw a kakapo in July. The bird was sitting on a leaning tree when first seen and scrambled down at once and disappeared amongst the undergrowth.

“Mr. Webber told me that he had seen some grey terns with a yellow bill on his lake in July. From his description I think these birds were the black-fronted tern (*Chlidonias albistriata*).

“Two plants not hitherto recorded from Kapiti were found during the year—viz., *Cotula minor*, growing at the north end, and *Pterostylis trullifolia*, growing in manuka near Rangatira.”

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