



PIGEON ON NEST.

BIRDS

New Zealanders!
Protect Your Native Birds!

Issued by

N.Z. Native Bird Protection Society

E. V. SANDERSON, Hon. Secretary

Box 631, Wellington.

OBJECTS—To advocate and obtain the efficient protection and preservation of our native birds, a bird day for our schools, and unity of control of all wild life.

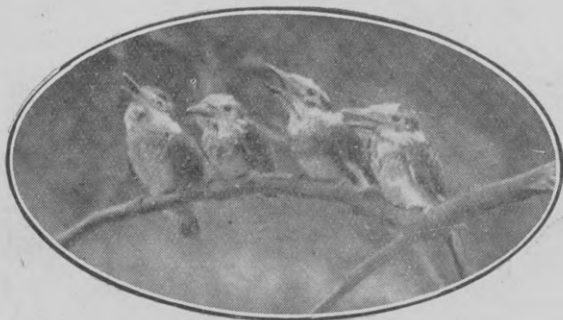
Affiliated with the International Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds.

The foundation of true conservation is in the setting aside of sanctuaries efficiently and rigidly controlled by men who know how.

SUBSCRIPTION, 5/-; CHILDREN 1/-

(Membership open to all.)

Bulletin No. 8



YOUNG KINGFISHERS.



THE New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society invites all those who have respect for our wonderful and unique native birds, all those who realise the great economic and æsthetic value of birds, all those who wish to preserve our unrivalled scenic beauties to band together with the Society in an earnest endeavour to fully awaken public interest and secure efficient preservation, conservation and intelligent utilisation of our great heritage.

With the co-operation, appreciation and assistance of the general public New Zealand can stand unrivalled. Without such our forests will be hopelessly marred and destroyed by fire, animals and wasteful exploitation.

Our subscription is merely 5/-, children 1/-. A ten-shilling note will pay for two years— Besides this, we ask for your co-operation in assisting to conserve your own heritage. Is it worth while?

We aim at issuing only accurate information, all of which is checked by leading authorities. No remuneration is asked by any of our officers. Your contribution goes solely towards better informing others.

Conservation of Our Great Heritage— Birds and Forests

It is incumbent upon all the people of New Zealand to show active interest in their heritage—our forests and birds. If the people wickedly and apathetically allow this priceless heritage to be destroyed, then will we richly deserve what we will get—an almost birdless, insect-ridden, devastated and eroded land. No good citizen can afford to stand idly by.

Bulletin No. 8

BIRD PROTECTION VIEWED IMPERIALLY AND NATIONALLY

One of the great assets of the British Empire lies in its bird life. In this respect it is singularly rich. Since its flag flies over temperate, semi-Arctic, and tropical regions, the avi-fauna embraces species peculiar to all latitudes. England herself is especially the home of songbirds, the land where green fields and sappy woodlands ring with the melody of nightingale and warblers, and where the skylark pours out his lay from soft blue skies. In the New World lies Canada, with its myriads of water-fowl, its kingbirds, flickers, bluebirds, vireos, song sparrows, and plovers; Labrador, with rare Esquimaux curlew and yellowlegs; and Newfoundland with birds of the snow-field and summer visitors. At the other side of the globe, Australia has unique glories such as the lyrebird and the bower-bird, together with wattle-birds, emu, laughing jackass, and brilliant finches and cockatoos; and New Zealand the strange flightless rails and kiwi. Under the Union Jack, again, is British India, with herons, egrets, peacocks, jungle-fowls, rollers, and orioles; British New Guinea, part of the island habitat of the birds of paradise and the crowned pigeon; the West Indies, with glittering humming-birds; and the vast regions of Africa, the natural home of the ostrich, guinea-fowl, secretary-bird, and grey parrot, and also of hornbill, anvil-bird, paradise-fly-catcher, and rhinoceros-bird.

These names but suggest a few characteristic birds of the British Empire. In all their variety and beauty the thousands of species comprised form so magnificent a treasury that the bird-

lover could occupy many a lifetime of delight, feasting his eyes, his ears, his sense of wonder and his imagination, without going outside King George's dominions; and the scientific ornithologist need not travel beyond their limits in order to study more than he can ever master. The largest bird, some of the smallest birds, many of the most brilliant and beautiful, some of the strangest, and the sweetest songsters, are all to be found within the Empire's borders.—(*Royal Society for the Protection of Birds*).

NO INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS MEANS NO CROPS

It cannot be too widely known at the present time that any general or indiscriminate destruction of wild birds would be fraught with grave danger to the food of the people.

In every country and every district where birds have been systematically destroyed, the result has been the same: (1) insect and vermin plagues; (2) serious losses in crops of all kinds; (3) failure of man to deal with the plagues; (4) efforts to bring back the birds.

The greatest and most dangerous enemy of the farmer and food-producer is the insect pest. It has been stated by Mr. Walter Collinge, D.Sc., F.L.S., that it is no unusual thing to find injury done by insects to the extent of 25 to 50 per cent. of the crop; in other cases it is much beyond that. Thus the food-producer loses tens of thousands of pounds in money; the people lose tens of thousands of pounds of food.

When one considers the rate of increase in insects the value becomes very apparent of such birds as the fantail, that king of the flying insect destroyers, the grey warbler which fortunately shows every indication of prospering, and the little silver eye, that pretty little fellow which occasionally does exact a small toll from some soft fruits—he is, however, sudden death on blights, green fly (aphis), etc. Now one fly to-day would mean, should all its descendants survive, 16,000 green flies in a single week. What a good time the green flies and other moths and flies must have if we kill even a few silver eyes or fantails, and what a bad time our crops must have; but we don't always think it is because the birds have been destroyed. Many imported birds also are insectivorous.

Man himself cannot control insect pests. They increase at a phenomenal rate. They are in many cases so small as to be hardly visible to man's eyes. They are hidden underground, and in buds, in fruit, in crannies and crevices of plants, trees, wood, rubbish-heaps, etc. Poison, traps and insecticides of various sorts have been tried, but all entail heavy outlay in money, time, and labour which can ill be afforded at this crisis.

The gipsy-moth, which in 1859 stripped the trees of Brussels of their leaves, multiplies so quickly that a single pair might, should all their progeny live, be responsible for the destruction of all the foliage in New Zealand.

The natural enemy of the insect is the insect-eating bird.

"The millions of the insect world are upon us," writes Dr. Hornaday (New York Zoological Society). The birds fight them for us."

"Birds," says Dr. Gordon Hewitt (formerly of Manchester University, now Dominion Entomologist of Canada), "are the most powerful insecticides we have. Their rapid wings, keen eyes and ears, and sharp beaks are the weapons specially formed to deal with these plagues. The great hunter of insects, our great auxiliary," says M. Edmond Perrier (of the Institute of France), "is the bird."

For want of close examination the harm done by insects is too often attributed to the very birds that are in pursuit of the insects. As Mr. Archibald, of Leeds University, says, the damage done by birds is readily detected; but it is vastly exaggerated through the mistakes of careless observers, "whilst the great services they render are appreciated only by those who will examine and consider facts carefully." The bird is extremely visible; the grub is hidden out of sight, the fly is small and harmless-looking. The bird is six, eight, ten, or fourteen inches long; the beetle is perhaps one-tenth of an inch.

A great proportion of the commoner small birds of the countryside live entirely or chiefly on insects. The amount they consume is prodigious, for a bird will eat one-sixth of its own weight in a day. Beyond this comes the fact that even those species which as adults feed more or less on another diet, feed their young on insects—on grubs, worms, and flies. And at what time of the year is this? In the spring and early summer, just when the destruction of injurious insects is most essential for the life and health of vegetation.

Nearly all land birds are more or less valuable, and a large number are absolutely invaluable, as man's allies in the production of his crops, whether he is a resident of the Old Country, living by the product of the soil his forefathers have tilled for centuries, or a settler bringing virgin land under cultivation. His enemy is the insect—mining, boring, creeping, flying—baffling his knowledge, defying his warfare, unceasingly feeding upon his crops, destroying his green things, devastating his fields, existing in myriads, increasing with a rapidity no other living creature can parallel.—(*Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.*)

"I have estimated that the loss due to insect depredations (in Canada) is not less than 125 million dollars annually," writes

Dr. Gordon Hewitt, who investigated the subject both in Great Britain and in Canada.

"Birds constitute one of the chief natural factors tending to keep insects in subjection. If injurious insects were to increase without any natural control, there would be no vegetation left on this continent in a very short time. Therefore the protection of birds is essential from the point of national economy. . . . In view of the great economic value of our insectivorous birds from an agricultural standpoint—but not forgetting the æsthetic motives, which surely need not be supported by any argument—it is evident that the protection of these birds must form an important part in the maintenance or increase of our agricultural production."—(*Conservation of Wild Life in Canada.*)

"How to keep insect pests in check is a question of the greatest importance to the whole community. . . . It can be done at little or no cost by intelligently encouraging and protecting our birds."—(*Toronto Department of Agriculture.*)

"Without the birds the gardener and farmer would find it impossible to grow any crops at all."—(*Intelligence Department, South Australian Government.*)

"It may be safely said that no country in the world suffers more from insect pests than South Africa; and the cheapest and most efficient agency to check their depredations is a sufficiency of bird life."—(Professor Ernest Warren and R. Godfrey, *South African Birds of Economic Value.*)

"Insects have hosts of enemies other than our feathered allies; but if we exterminated the native birds, the human population of South Africa would in a few years be reduced to a condition of starvation."—(F. W. FitzSimons, *Birds of South Africa.*)

"Man himself has wantonly destroyed his beautiful and faithful allies the birds. He is now paying the penalty in the alarming spread of germ-diseases, and in the diminution of his animal and vegetable food supply."—(Sir H. H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., D.Sc.)

To those familiar with the truth of these pronouncements and of many like them from other distinguished authorities, it appears amazing that steps were not taken long ago to preserve and safeguard the bird life of all countries; still more amazing that so little is done to-day; that not one person in a thousand is made acquainted with the value of wild birds; and that even the most useful species are continually persecuted and destroyed in utter ignorance of their value to the community and in total disregard of their beauty, or in order that the individual may make money by selling them alive into captivity or dead for eating, or by dealing in their skins and plumage.

BIRD PROTECTION IN THE INTEREST OF FARMERS

The first movement towards international protection for wild birds was made by farmers and foresters on the Continent, because of alarming increase in the ravages of insects. In 1895, consequent on a serious diminution of birds and corresponding increase of insects, the French Government invited all the other Governments of Europe to take part in a Conference on International Protection of Useful Birds. The Conference lasted ten days, and its members, representing nearly every European country, were unanimous as to the urgent necessity for bird protection in the interests of agriculture. France, since the bad harvest of 1861, has been trying to undo the effects of indiscriminate destruction of small birds. Shortly before the outbreak of the war the Minister of Agriculture gave instructions to all the professors of agriculture to teach the absolute necessity for protecting birds; and the Agricultural Society of the Gironde issued a placard, "those who destroy the little birds are the worst enemies of agriculture."

In Canada and the United States of America gigantic losses from insect depredations have in recent years led to strong measures for the preservation of birds. It is estimated that the birds of Nebraska eat 170 cartloads of insects a day, said Sir Boverton Redwood, speaking to the British Science Guild in 1914; that those of Massachusetts destroy 21,000 bushels daily, and that a single species of hawk saves the farmers of the Western States 175,000 dollars a year by destroying grasshoppers and field-mice. Yet millions of people engage in killing the birds that destroy injurious and disease-spreading insects; and the moral of these facts applies also to New Zealand.

BIRD PROTECTION IN THE INTERESTS OF THE NATION

Farmers, market-gardeners, and others should therefore on no account destroy small birds, or allow them to be destroyed, unless convinced, by thorough observation and examination, of the harm done to crops by such birds and that this harm is not outweighed by the good. Many a farmer and gardener, beginning as their resolute enemy, has been constrained to become a bird-protector by careful observation of their habits, and by finding in the stomachs of those shot—instead of the grain and fruit anticipated—remains of noxious insects that had been preying on the crops.

"The farmer has only lately learned to appreciate the full value of birds as insect destroyers. More exact knowledge of their food-habits has resulted in a higher estimate of their utility

on the farm and demonstrated more clearly than ever the necessity of active measures to insure their protection."—(T. S. Palmer, Biological Survey, U.S. Department of Agriculture.)

ANIMALS AND OUR FORESTS

By HON. SECRETARY, *New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society.*

Animals in our forests means slow but certain death to our forests. Such is the assertion; and now it behoves us to analyse this statement.

Our forests are maintained largely, succoured and kept moist by decaying leaves, moss and numerous small plant life forming their floor.

The function of this floor is to act in a sponge-like manner and hold moisture over and about the roots of the forest trees, which trees are in New Zealand surface feeding.

Besides this all this growing and decaying humus matter nourishes and keeps the soil warm, thus encouraging growth.

Animals of course destroy the floor totally or in a lesser degree according to the numbers present, leaving roots bare in many places, besides destroying the young trees which are intended to eventually take the place of the older and more matured trees.

A forest consists of trees in various stages from the seedling to the matured tree. Now it is very apparent that, if the seedling and young trees are destroyed, the sequence, as it were, in the growth of the forest is broken and there will come a time when the older trees will reach maturity and die, and with them the forest will die, as there will be no young trees to replace the losses.

There is even a greater evil arising from the presence of animals than this in that these trespassers tramp on the exposed roots, rub their horns on the stems, eat and tear bark off, forming suitable entry places for various fungoid and other diseases which in many instances have already killed the larger timber trees.

This constant worrying and harrying of our forests by animals has the effect of letting in cold winds, thus driving away the remaining moisture and heat, forming tracks for other less energetic animals, vermin, etc., with the result that the main matured timber trees, robbed of their natural root protection and attacked by diseases, are some of the first to die and can be seen in the form of giant skeletons in those forests where animals are or have been numerous. To him who has eyes to see the effects of the presence of animals are apparent from the con-

dition of the floor to the unhealthy appearance of the larger trees themselves. Now it behoves us to ponder and realise what will be the final result of the presence of deer, goats, wapiti, cattle, etc., in our forests, national parks, scenic reserves, reserves and forests which are necessary to the adequate maintenance of beneficial climatic influences, prevention of erosion, timber supplies, etc., and without which no country can be prosperous, and must finally be reduced, without such forests, to little more than a desert. Such things have happened elsewhere as a result of forest destruction.

On the other hand with the removal of animals the regeneration of our forests is wonderful. The trees soon take on a healthier appearance and prosper if the exclusion of the trespassers is not too long delayed.

For ages past no herbivorous animals roamed in our forests, therefore a forest has been evolved which is not equipped to withstand the ravages of such animals; and we cannot retain our forests in their natural scenic glory and value unless we at least greatly reduce, better still exterminate, animals in those forests it is desired to preserve. Are our indispensable forests and our wonderful scenic beauties, of which we are justly proud, worthy of the effort, or shall we meekly say we cannot do anything?

NO NATIVE BIRDS MEANS NO NATIVE FORESTS

Birds have many functions. Some, mostly imported, are essential to the open country, but our native forest bird inhabitants are equally essential in maintaining the health and prosperity of our forests, while the water fowl, swamp birds and sea birds are likewise necessary to the maintaining of an equable balance of nature in their various environments.

In our forests the nectar-eaters, such as the tui and makomako or bell bird, fertilise the forest flowers, and are just as necessary to many of these flowers as the honey-bee is to the clover.

The relation of one forest tree to the welfare of others has not yet been scientifically worked out in New Zealand, but in certain foreign forests where the relationship is better understood, it is the practice to plant certain useless trees with those valuable trees which it is desired to establish; otherwise the desirable timber trees will not flourish.

Here, in New Zealand, this matter is attended to by such birds as the pigeon, which, owing to its habit of making short and longer migrations, ensures a sufficiency of forest seeds being distributed where they are necessary.

Then, again, we have the various insectivorous and grub-eating birds—some working on the ground (wekas, crows, etc.), others in the bark and crannies and cracks (rifleman, tomtits,

etc.), others amidst the leaves (whiteheads, silver eyes, etc.), and yet again others destroying the various moths and beetles in the air (fantails, warblers, etc.). Insect life unchecked increases with stupendous rapidity, and forests have in other lands been totally destroyed by insect plagues, and in this country the inroads of insects and disease are apparent in many places, while nursery-men report increasing non-fertility in many forest tree seeds. The native birds are thus required as effectual guardians of our forests.

Then for the sake of these forests, let alone because they are unique and wonderful, our birds are looked upon by many with at least great regard; and it behoves every New Zealander who has any respect for his country and its beauties to assist in protecting this heritage of ours from vandals, collectors and imported enemies. The deforestation of the land, imported bird diseases, against which our birds are non-immune, have taken a heavy toll in the past, but now with awakening public interest and the establishment of greater immunity from disease, some species have increased quite wonderfully, to wit, the makomako, or bellbird, popokotea or white-headed canary, tui and pigeon, grey warbler, and several other species. Therefore the outlook is at least hopeful. All that is required is such skill in conservation as is exercised in some other countries with marked success. But good conservation cannot be attained without public backing and sympathy.

The New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society appeals to New Zealanders to fully interest themselves in their great heritage, their birds and forests, and think what New Zealand would be without them.

NO NATIVE FORESTS MEANS NO NATIVE BIRDS

THE TRAGEDY OF THE KAURI.

By CAPT. E. V. SANDERSON.

Before the great kauri log goes hurtling down the chute to the dam on its way to the receiving booms in Hokianga Harbour, measurements are taken and it is branded with a number and with the owner's mark for the purpose of identification.

The next course is to make the logs into rafts at the receiving booms and tow them to the mill to be there converted into sawn timber.

But things in the kauri log line do not always run as ordered; sometimes booms break, logs get away. Last winter the booms broke and released a great number of logs, valued from £15 to £30 each, into the harbour, many miles from the sea, and hundreds of logs could be seen floating about. Only two launches

were utilised in rescuing these logs, although the assistance of a large number of additional launches could have been procured on the spot. Formerly it was the custom to pay 2/6 each for the rescue of wandering logs, but the owners withdrew this, in recent years, and wandering logs take their chance now. Many of the logs which were floating round, found a resting place in the mud, amidst the mangroves, some to be rescued later, some to lie and rot, as many others have done in past years. The balance went out to sea, some 80 logs crossing the bar in one day (28th May), to join the host, not of hundreds but of thousands of logs which lie littering our northern coasts for miles and miles never to be redeemed, as it is far easier and cheaper to cut more.

Some of these logs either from here or from other parts of the northern coasts have been known to go for long sea journeys, menacing shipping on the way, and one was traced to Fabre Island in the Huon group.

Here in the south we complacently discuss the merits of *pinus insignis* and other exotic timbers of debatable value, while the monarch of our forests, supplying timber of almost unequalled excellence goes drifting out to sea—surely we are a peculiar people, and our methods pass understanding. Needless to say, although the people of this Hokianga district have destroyed by fire and axe enough forest to pay off our national debt, nobody appears to be the better off. The residents are mostly poor, and in some instances the natives are worse off than the pakeha.

Much of this great national wealth has been wasted, dissipated and lost to the sea, presumably because these wonderful forests have been and are being cut before their time, before the transport means, etc., are available to deal economically with the standing wealth.

Many magnificent logs lie rotting in Hokianga Harbour and elsewhere. Why not make it compulsory for every owner to date logs and allow the ownership only to stand good for a given period. They would at least then be utilised. At present many will never be, and someone might even see his way to start mills on the coast to make use of some not already too far decayed, or destroyed by the treader.

These mighty timber logs are but the cream of the forest. Much could be said about the lesser quality timber left standing or rotting in the forest to be consumed by the invariably following fire. In State forests some quite reasonable attempts are, however, now being made in an endeavour to prevent this fire which has in the past consumed all young 50 and 100 year old trees, leaving a waste in its wake. Nature is trying hard to regenerate our kauri forests in many northern districts; but fire and lack of conservation and common sense prevent her being successful.

TUIS ON THE GUM-TREES

Ere the birds begin singing their gay spring-time song,
When the days are still short, and the nights are still long,
Every gum blossom casts its green cap on the grass
And scatters its scents to the breezes that pass.
Each flower is wafting a message of cheer—
“My table is spread, it is time to be here!
Come rollicking bird, or industrious bee—
There is honey for all in the old bluegum tree!”

Then hurrah for the music, the tuis have come!
Their wild ringing notes drown the bee's drowsy hum—
From the far bushy gullies, on swift black wings borne,
They have flown to the feast in the grey of the morn.
Their chorus of gurgles, and whistles, and trills
The solemn old gum tree with melody fills,
Not a bird in the bush is so merry as they
As they revel and sing thro' the short winter day.

With rich chuckles and fleetings their slim tongues they ply,
And bold is the glance of each dark roving eye—
Not a minah dare tease them, no hawk hovers near—
They are kings of the air, and have nothing to fear.
Swift flights in the sunshine, short rests on the pine,
A clear gleam of white on a black coat so fine;
Then evening notes ripple when darkness has come,
And deep silence and peace wrap the stately old gum.

Now fair Spring's nimble handmaidens spread on her board
The kowhai's rich honey in golden cups stored,
Swiftly forth all her messengers fly on the airs--
“Ho! All you who love nectar come taste of my wares!”
The tuis, remembering the good days of old,
Desert silver chalice for goblet of gold,
They're away to the river-banks shouting in glee
And forsaken and sad stands the old bluegum tree.

H. S. HUTCHINSON.

THE WEKA'S CUNNING

The weka is well known for its extreme inquisitiveness; and one is reported as walking right into a police station in the Taranaki district. But the weka is also a very wise bird, and maybe this individual was taking no risks under our conservation laws.

SANCTUARIES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF CONSERVATION

The object of sanctuaries or refuges, as the Americans and Canadians call them, is of course to give the birds a safe retreat to prosper and breed.

Where the sanctuary is of sufficient area the services of a skilled keeper are necessary. The duties of this keeper or keepers are to destroy all vermin, to breed artificially any species, when necessary, to prevent poaching, collecting, etc., and generally to look after the conservation of his charge. Needless it is to say such work requires very considerable knowledge and skill.

The birds quickly find out such a haven of safety; and the vermin find out what a plentiful food supply there is in the sanctuary, and are thus attracted from the surrounding country only to be destroyed by the keepers' traps, etc. The birds in their turn increase and spread over the surrounding district, which is being cleaned all the while of vermin.

In this country, we have a very valuable lot of areas set aside as sanctuaries for native flora and avifauna, but with one or two minor exceptions no attempt is made at conservation; therefore they can only be looked upon as sanctuaries in name. The disunited system in vogue in New Zealand of having our bird and scenic reserves in charge of many various bodies can only lead to inefficiency and diffusion of effort.

New Zealand owes a great debt to those wise men who set aside these areas; and it remains for us, the present citizens of New Zealand, to see that their work bears fruit by insisting on efficient and intelligent conservation.

Canada and the American States have vast refuges. In California, for instance, any person may have his property declared a sanctuary if it is not less than 160 acres and the term not less than 10 years. No shooting by the owner or anyone else is permitted except to kill vermin, etc., and then only by those licensed to do so. Suitable sanctuaries are set aside by treaty between some countries including America and Canada as resting places in order that migratory birds may be protected during their flight instead of being ruthlessly slain in thousands as they were once wont to be.

Without efficient, rigorous and drastic control of sanctuaries, many birds would sooner or later become extinct.

In New Zealand the islands around our coast would make ideal sanctuaries for our native flora and fauna. Many are now gazetted as such, and it only remains to have united administration under, say, some such body as a board familiar with New Zealand conditions with a supervising inspector as executive officer and keepers wherever the area is sufficient to warrant their

appointment; and we could then be fairly certain of preserving each species of our unique birds and our flora in its natural native state. The more important of these sanctuaries should be accessible to the public, with necessary restrictions. Huts or whares architecturally in keeping with the surroundings could be erected and a charge imposed for their use and for board. By this means the interest of the public would be secured and expenses minimised.

THE VANDAL AT WORK

On a beautiful little beach in Paterson's Inlet, Stewart Island, recently, a picnic party was preparing for lunch. A tui sang in his beautiful liquid notes from the top of a blossoming rata tree under which the ladies were spreading the cloth for lunch. The billy was just on the boil, and the sun shining brightly. All were happy and gay. Suddenly a shot rang out, and the poor tui fell dead actually on the spread tablecloth. Little wonder some of the girls shed unavailing tears while the vandal stood not far away evidently proud of his work, knowing full well no avenging caretaker was on the island to protect the birds.

CONTROL OF RESERVES AND SANCTUARIES

URGENT REFORMS NEEDED.

New Zealand has the weirdest possible way of dealing with its scenic reserves and sanctuaries for native fauna and flora (says a writer in "Truth").

Some of the scenic reserves are under the Commissioners for Crown Lands. (Policy No. 1.)

One of the greatest, the Tongariro National Park, is under a board consisting of a large number of officials, Government nominees, and *ex-officio* persons (like the Mayors for the time being of Auckland and Wellington, who may be persons utterly out of touch with scenic, indigenous, and playground values). (This is policy No. 2.)

Another great national park (Mt. Egmont) is also under a board, but there the resemblance to Tongariro ceases, because the Mt. Egmont Park Board is for the most part elected, and elected locally. (Policy No. 3.)

Kapiti Island sanctuary gets away from an empowered board. It is run by the Lands Department, with the aid of a merely Advisory Board. (Policy No. 4.)

Here is a medley of methods to begin with.

Again, there are ever so many Government Departments with some sort of a finger in the management of reserves and sanctuaries, game, etc.

The Lands Department controls a number of reserves and forests.

The Forest Service controls a number.

The Tourist Department gets its oar in somewhere.

The Department of Internal Affairs interferes in a number of matters concerning game, etc. And this seems to be the Department that bosses collectors' permits, a factor of great danger.

Fish seems to be partly under the last two Departments, and also under the Marine Department. And the Marine Department's lighthouse-keepers, in some cases, are in a position to help (or not to help) the native fauna.

To complete the Babel, the acclimatisation societies fall in at the tail of the departmental procession. And the police are occasionally pressed into the service, where poaching is concerned.

Anything more weirdly ineffective than this network of authorities, mostly incompetent or inactive, it would be hard to imagine.

KAPITI SANCTUARY

Three members of the New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society and also of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, who recently visited Kapiti, have furnished the following report to the Secretary of the former Society.

In the area of bush on the northern end of the sanctuary, where the animals have been driven off, the regeneration of the forest is very notable, large numbers of young seedlings are in evidence and the bush has taken on a fresher aspect while the trees are bearing much more berries with a corresponding increase in bird life, in fact the number of tuis, Popokotea and wekas remind one of old-time bird conditions in New Zealand; large numbers of young birds of these species being present. A nice few pigeons are to be seen, besides parakeets both red and yellow headed, bellbirds are fairly numerous, robins have also somewhat increased. Kaka are scarce, also fantails. No wrens, warblers or riflemen were seen. One kiwi was heard calling one night and was within a few feet of one member of the party. As to sea birds: penguin, gannet, mackrell gull, blue herons, tern, black-backed gull have held good.

In the southern area, south of Taepiro Gully, numbers of animals, including from 1000 to 1500 sheep, are still present and the forest in this area does not therefore show equal regeneration.

In parts where animals are scarce the natural coastal fringe

of taupata is endeavouring to re-establish itself; numbers of seedlings being in evidence.

Some 83 goats were counted one day on the western cliffs. What the bush and scrub areas contain is difficult to estimate.

It is understood a contract is to be let for the removal of the wild sheep but we think, nevertheless, representations should be made to the authorities as to the advisability of expediting the quitting of these animals.

The question of totally exterminating the goats, now much reduced in numbers, is difficult and will take a little time and energy, but we think the numbers of wild sheep excessive, especially as skins have been so high in price and that a good opportunity is being possibly lost.

Kapiti, with the removal of the stock and the consequent regeneration of the forest, would in time be capable of supporting vastly more bird life than at present, and be much enhanced from a scenic point of view. The southern landing on the island at Wharekohu Bay forms a very tempting avenue for poaching, and the services of an assistant caretaker resident there with inter-communication with the present caretaker is desirable to prevent poaching and fires, and to assist in opossum trapping. There is ample necessary work at this southern end for such assistance and money judiciously spent in necessary work now would greatly assist regeneration.

The visiting members were impressed with the general improvement which has taken place on the sanctuary within the past two years. The main present hindrances to even more notable advances are now the sheep and opossums. The latter animals appearing to have increased within the last twelve months.

A few more species, of our birds might well be introduced on this sanctuary as, for instance, saddle back, stitch bird, blue duck, pukeko, also the tuatara lizard.

A very remarkable and interesting lesson can be learnt on Kapiti. First of all an example was to be seen of the deplorable damage animals can do to our forests; then, even with only partial extermination comes a marvelously quick and wonderful regeneration of forest and native bird life in the portion where animals are driven off. Our mainland forest reserves and sanctuaries are merely Kapiti on another scale.

BIRD RESEARCH WORK

In those countries where modern conservation methods are in vogue, a species of bird is not condemned as harmful because it kills a game bird or a fowl or a fish. The complexity of wild

life is very great. The question to be ascertained is, does a particular species of any sort, be it hawk or shag, sparrow or quail, do more harm than good or more good than harm.

To ascertain this with some degree of accuracy a given number of the species on trial would be shot each month in the year and the crop contents microscopically analysed and tabulated.

A bird may kill a fowl and likewise destroy a few hundred rats which would have destroyed a considerable number of eggs and chickens, or another bird may eat some of one's grass seed and destroy an infinitely larger number of gorse and blackberry seeds, or hosts of harmful insects at other times. A sea bird may be destroying the very fish which feeds on the spawn or fry of our most desirable fish.

To either acclimatise or condemn any bird is a very serious matter with reference to the community's prosperity and should not be done in a haphazard manner.



KIWI.

PENALTIES FOR POACHING

The penalties imposed for poaching in some other countries are apparently much heavier than here. In the United States of America, for instance, where the endeavour is to keep fishing and game shooting democratic, an offender for poaching in a sanctuary was recently mulcted in a fine equivalent to £100, besides being sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

Some rather more befitting penalties have, however, recently been imposed in New Zealand, and undoubtedly such a course is justified and wise, as it is unfair to the lawabiding citizens, who are, of course, much in the majority, that the poacher, who is a difficult and expensive person to catch, should get off with merely a nominal fine.

FOOD OF YOUNG BIRDS

It is impossible to ignore the quantities of insect-food consumed by nesting birds. Young birds eat their own weight in food in 24 hours. A young robin (to quote a well-known computation) will eat 14 feet of worm in 12 hours, and be ready for more. A moment's consideration of the numbers of nests and young, and of the number of times a day, an hour, in which food is brought to the ever-hungry brood, may suggest the millions upon millions of injurious insects so destroyed, but no conception can realise the gigantic total.

PIGEONS PROTECTED

Good work continues in the Hokianga district by natives who realise the necessity of protecting the native birds from extermination. A leading chief, Mr. Nopera Otene, has taken an active part in this matter, and he and other chiefs are setting aside extensive sanctuaries and taking other steps. Already the effect of their work is noticeable. One correspondent states: "Pigeons were never so plentiful, and even the North Island crow is increasing," showing our birds only require reasonable and modern conservation methods to quickly increase.

Reports come to hand from other parts showing the public are getting on the side of the birds—kingfishers, bellbirds, tuis, warblers and several other species are reported as increasing in various localities as a result of the movement to awaken a better realisation of the value of our birds.

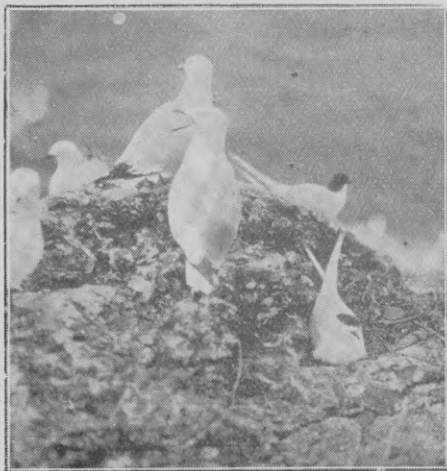
WEKAS KILL RABBITS

A gentleman noted for his careful and accurate observations, writing from Otago, states he saw a weka take a young rabbit out of a hole and kill it. The bird later repeated this performance no less than seven times.

Rabbits are reported as rapidly on the increase in Central Otago despite the presence of a plenitude of weasels, which merely utilise the rabbits in times of shortage of birds as food. The time is certainly long overdue for making careful scientific observations and experiments with reference to the utility of weasels against rabbits in conjunction with the great toll they take of valuable bird life. The casual assertions of a few laymen are of little value and generally misleading.



BLUE PENGUIN.



TERN AND MACKEREL GULL NESTING ON
KAREWA ISLAND



NEW ZEALANDERS!

Fire in Our Forests

means sudden death to our forests.

Animals in Our Forests

means slow but certain death to
our forests.

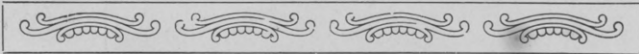
No Native Birds

means no native forests.

No Forests

means decreased production,
desolation and poverty.

Will You Help Avoid these Results ?



*Please pass this booklet on to a friend if of no further use.
Extra copies will be forwarded on request.*