

# Along the Track

**WANGANUI.**—On the farm there is a pond, fed by a spring, where grey duck breed in the clumps of water grass and rear their families. Half a mile away, on a hillside, is a ragged bit of native bush—and all that is left of what once was native bush—chiefly a few titoki trees. One of these, seven feet from the ground, where the tree branches, a wild duck built her nest. We found the duck sitting on eight eggs, but unfortunately she did not hatch them. Possibly this was because of our invasion of her nesting place.

**WEKAS ON THE EAST COAST.**—Wekas have recently been found to be fairly plentiful

on the East Coast in the Northern Gisborne district. This is probably the last area on the mainland of the North Island where they have survived in any numbers, though they are occasionally seen in the far north. Some people regard the weka as a thief and raider, but as he is a potent agent in keeping down rats, mice and noxious insects, this is short-sighted. The Wildlife Branch of the Internal Affairs Department have espoused the cause of these East Coast wekas and by publicity in the local newspapers, appeals through schools and Maori Tribal Committees and circulars to landowners, have stressed the need for the preservation of this remnant of one of New Zealand's once most plentiful birds.

## Sanderson Sanctuary Fund

The Executive acknowledges with thanks the following contributions:—

	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged ..	122	18	3
P.O.S.B. Interest 1947 ..	2	0	11
Mr. I. Foley ..	0	5	0
Miss L. M. Hunter Brown ..	1	0	0
Mrs. A. Matheson ..	10	10	0

Master Ian Allott ..	0	5	0
Miss H. M. Ward ..	0	10	0
Mr. Y. T. Shand ..	1	0	0
Miss E. M. Wallis ..	0	2	6
Miss E. E. Wallis ..	0	2	6
Mrs. H. Budge ..	3	0	0

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## Otumoetai School Native Bush

By ELSIE M. T. THORPE.

**T**HE idea of planting a tree to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of their Majesties, King George V and Queen Mary, was the start of our now-flourishing native tree plantation. The rimu in the picture was a foot in height when planted on Arbor Day 1935 and has flourished as the koromikos, houhere (lacebark), and poroporo made quick-growing shelter for it. Some trees were propagated from seeds, some from hardwood cuttings, and some were young seedlings transplanted from the bush. Two kauris, a titoki, and a miro were presented by well-wishers for Arbor Day ceremonies. Kahikatea, puriri, totara, pohutukawa, hinau and ngaio now are growing well among the erstwhile shelter trees, makomako (wineberry), whau, kotukutuku (fuchsia), whauwhaupaku, rangiora, tarata, karamu and kowhai. So now, what was once the horse paddock, of approximately three chains by one chain, is a sylvan glade to delight our hearts, eyes and ears, be-

cause our feathered friends, tuis, fantails, silver-eyes, riroriros, all frequent the bush that has through the years grown into a suitable home for them. You can realise how first-hand knowledge is gleaned to make our nature study a pleasing and easy lesson. I frequently obey the urge, in answer to the tui's entrancing call, to leave indoor lessons and take the classes out to watch the far-from-timid honeyeaters enjoying themselves in the kowhais.

Besides having many ferns now as undergrowth in the arboretum, we have some straw and maroon coloured native hibiscus to give gay relief.

The many seedlings which grow are distributed to pupils for a nucleus of individual native plantations at their homes.

I feel assured that pupils of Otumoetai School, being able to at least recognise so many of our native trees, will always appreciate and enjoy their heritage.