

The report may call for action, sometimes practicable, sometimes not: a pest to be destroyed or removed, owners or residents to be interested in the welfare of birds present; notices to be erected; an honorary ranger to be appointed; representations to the controlling authority for action to be taken for the better protection of the island; recommendation that ownership be investigated with a view to purchase by the Crown for reservation; or negotiations commenced with owners for declaration as a wildlife sanctuary. Steadily this type of work has gone on.

Goats exterminated on the Great King and Cuvier, pigs on Poor Knights, rabbits on Leper, sheep on South-east Island; a fence erected on Stephens Island to contain the keeper's stock and yearly planting of native shrubs to speed up regeneration; purchase of Cuvier and South-East Islands by the Crown; declaration of Trios and other islands as wildlife sanctuaries; fostering the interest of residents of Great Barrier Island in the protection of the rare brown teal; representations for action on the removal of goats from Raoul Island, pigs from the Chetwodes, rabbits from Motunau, and sheep and cattle from Campbell Island—so the work proceeds. All the time these officers are fostering the interest of land owners, fishermen, lighthouse keepers and others in the conservation of wildlife.

Information Services

The conservation programme that forgets the people has no hope of success, because their cooperation is essential. In a developing country many changes occur which adversely affect wildlife, particularly indigenous fauna, but very little is done with the deliberate intention of doing harm. The damage results, not from intent, but from lack of awareness, from a singlemindedness of purpose which does not see beyond its primary object, or, with others, it results from thoughtlessness and ignorance.

The Wildlife Branch therefore recognises that public awareness and sympathy is required for any real strides to be made. On some issues, because of the lack of widespread public support and sense of responsibility, the conservationist today can well be a minority fighting a series of defensive actions, support generally being too little and too late.

Talks, accompanied by films or slides, are a regular part of the duties of subdistrict officers. The Wildlife Branch film library used by them includes 24 titles on wildlife subjects and is added to whenever suitable films become available. Some of these films are made by the branch itself and deal with particular conservation problems. At the moment over 10,000 people see the films annually. By making more films and advertising their existence it is hoped that a still wider audience can be reached. In the last few years the slide collection has been built up to over 1,700 slides. It now covers a wide range of wildlife subjects, and lecturers in this field, wishing to borrow slides from the collection, have only to write in stating the coverage required. Last year the slides illustrated 82 talks to over 5,000 people.

Various exhibits have also been prepared. They cover the identification of water birds, the protection of native birds, and the building of duck ponds. These are widely used, the water-fowl identification exhibit in particular being shown in towns throughout both islands each year. The duck-pond exhibit is being shown at agricultural and pastoral shows in the North Island this year and it is hoped to extend the coverage next year. Acclimatisation societies and other organisations have been very cooperative and take charge of these exhibits in their own districts.

Leaflets, which are always in great demand, particularly from schoolchildren, have been produced dealing with various subjects: the protection of the native pigeon, the albatrosses of Taiaroa Heads, the brown teal, the safety of the kiwi where traps are set for opossums, and bird protection generally. These pamphlets are distributed where it is felt they will do the most good and are available to those who can make good use of them.

Three booklets have been produced in recent years to meet special needs—*The Ranger's Guide*; a water-fowl hunter's guide issued to all licence holders to help them recognise protected water fowl; and a booklet on building duck ponds which, it is hoped, will stimulate interest in providing more water bird habitat. The water-fowl hunter's guide provides a ready means of identifying ducks, swan, geese, and other water birds. This and the duck-pond booklet are available free to those interested.