

A total of 4,778 lb. of salmon was taken by thirteen rod-fishers from five rivers, and only 811 lb. from two nets from the Waimakariri. In spite of adverse conditions, the average catch of the rod-fishers for the season compares not unfavourably with most of those recorded for previous years, but the netting results are the worst on record. It appears that the channels giving access to the Waimakariri Mouth from the sea were rendered unattractive to salmon owing to the effects of the very heavy floods. Probably for this reason many salmon were recorded for the first time in the Ashley River. Other small rivers in which runs of salmon took place were the Ashburton, Orari, and Opihi. The last mentioned has, in fact, of recent years become a recognized quinnat-fishing resort. Records of the catches in the tidal waters of the Rangitata and Opihi Rivers were kept by Mr. F. W. Pellett, Inspector of Fisheries, Temuka, to whom we are indebted for data for the statement which follows showing the incidence of catches for (approximately) each third of the successive months of the season :—

	February, 1940.			March, 1940.			April, 1940.		
	1st-10th.	11th-20th.	21st-29th.	1st-10th.	11th-20th.	21st-31st.	1st-10th.	11th-20th.	21st-30th.
Rangitata River	4	..	..	93	16	..	..	..
Opihi River	17	36	57	90	60	20	3	..

The comparative totals, 283 for the Opihi and 113, taken at broken intervals, for the Rangitata, indicate the conditions for rod-fishing and in no way reflect the numbers of fish running. By the end of the angling season the upper waters and tributaries of the Rangitata, Rakaia, and Waimakariri were well stocked with spawning fish which, in the absence of factors adverse to successful reproduction, should provide good stocks of the 1940 year-group. Salmon also appeared in greater numbers than usual in the Manawatu River (West Coast, North Island), and one was caught, the first to be recorded, in the Otaki River.

Atlantic Salmon.

The 1939 hatchery season at Te Anau was one of the best experienced for many years. Damage to the foundations of the rack by a previous flood in the Upukororo River had to be repaired before the construction of the rack could be commenced. The rack was commenced on 4th April and completed on 13th April. A spate on 17th April immediately induced a run of salmon, and by the end of the month 180 fish had been trapped. The river remained low during May and June with a low temperature, which fell to 2° C. in July. The record of the fish trapped was as follows :—

					Males.	Females.	Ova taken for Hatchery.
April (17th to 30th)	..	..	..	..	61	119	..
May ..	..	..	..	..	16	34	..
June ..	..	..	..	..	26	34	..
July ..	..	..	..	..	10	55	..
Totals ..	..	..	..	..	113	242	707,500

Trapping was discontinued on 31st July, when all available accommodation in the hatchery was occupied.

The comprehensive records of anglers' catches that are so desirable and necessary for a proper appreciation of the situation regarding the condition of the salmon stock are still lacking, but it may be said that the fishing has probably quite maintained the improved standard that was recorded for last season. Anglers have made good catches in Lake Te Anau and in the Waiau River, and the quality of the salmon has been uniformly high, several well-conditioned fish of 8 lb. and some over 9 lb. having been taken. One may also record that dry-fly fishing in the Waiau River has produced good results in the capture of Atlantic salmon, as well as rainbow and brown trout.

General.

Apart from the quinnat and Atlantic salmon fisheries, which have been the special concern of this Department since their successful naturalization at the beginning of the century, the Marine Department has no direct practical or controlling connection with river and lake fisheries beyond its advisory function in respect of fresh-water fishery regulations made by Order in Council under the authority of Part II of the Fishery Act, 1908. The initiative for particular local regulations comes from the executives of acclimatization societies* who are responsible for administrative control and management in their respective districts, but contacts and collaborative liaisons with some of these executives have been facilitated of late years, since District Inspectors of Fisheries have been functioning in the Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago districts, and especially since the Fresh-water Research staff of the Department came into being in 1937. Collaboration has also been the normal relationship between our salmon hatchery staffs and the acclimatization society staffs in the districts served by our fish culture stations at Hakataramea and Te Anau.