

1926.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.  
SCENERY - PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1926, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS  
AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE YEAR UNDER THE  
SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT.

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 17 of the Scenery Preservation  
Act, 1908.*

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SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 28th June, 1926.

I have the honour to submit herewith report on scenery-preservation for the year ended  
31st March, 1926.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister in Charge of Scenery-preservation, Wellington.

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R E P O R T.

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THE total area of reservations made during the year was some 3,067 acres.

In the North Auckland Land District an area of 16½ acres of native bush at Swanson was acquired and reserved. The situation is close to the main road and railway-line, and the residents of the district, although not contributing towards the purchase price, have taken a lively interest in the matter, and have formed a local board of control under the chairmanship of the Commissioner of Crown Lands. An area of some 186 acres surrounding the Wairoa (or Hunua) Falls was also taken. This land formed portion of a property held by a discharged soldier; but the Department was fortunate enough to be able to make arrangements for its acquisition satisfactory both to the owner and the State. The falls have for many years been highly esteemed for their great beauty, while the surrounding area comprises almost the last native bush in this particular locality. The purchase was completed of an area of 652 acres 2 roods on the Waitakerei Ranges, containing many magnificent clumps of kauri almost equal to those in the Trounson Park. The remainder of the bush is comprised of rata, tawa, kohekohe, &c., with scattered rimu, kahikatea, and totara; and these, combined with a wealth of nikau-palms, mamaku, pungas, and other tree-ferns, will make the reserve a delight to any bush-lover, while native-bird life is fairly abundant. A contribution of half the purchase price was made by the Auckland City Council, which owns a considerable area in the vicinity, under the authority of section 12 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1925, and it is intended to vest control of the reserve in the Council. Particulars of reservation, &c., will appear in next year's report, the proclamation declaring the land a reserve under the Scenery Preservation Act not having been completed by the 31st March last. Another purchase in the closing stages of the year was that of an area of 19 acres 2 roods 39·7 perches containing some of the unique limestone rocks at Waro. Particulars of this will also appear in next year's report.

In the Auckland District an area of a little over 11 acres was acquired near the Kiwinui Railway-station, East Coast Railway, the cost of purchase being shared between the Crown, the Bruce trustees, and the Whakatane County and Borough Councils. The bush on this area is described as being particularly charming.

An area of 333 acres of steep bush-clad country was set aside in the Waiotahi Valley, Gisborne district.

Two small reservations were made in the Wellington District, one of 32 acres on the Wanganui River, and the other of a little over 5½ acres on the Kawatau River. The latter was portion of a river-bank road, and special legislation was therefore necessary to authorize its reservation for scenic purposes. This was provided by section 109 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1924.

A reservation of 5 acres and 23 perches was effected on the Aniseed Creek, Blenheim-Kaikoura Road, comprising light native bush of karaka, ngaio, kohekohe, &c. Portion of Motuanaura Island, in Queen Charlotte Sound, containing 82½ acres, was set aside for scenic and historic purposes, the remainder of the island having been reserved in 1913. Motuanaura Island is of very considerable historic importance. Captain Cook maintained a small settlement there for his crews, and on its summit in January, 1770, he hoisted the flag and proclaimed British sovereignty over the South Island. Long Island (Te Keetu), of 350 acres, in Queen Charlotte Sound, was also reserved during the year.

In the Westland District an area of 135 acres of beautiful native bush adjacent to the Moana Railway-station was proclaimed under the Scenery Preservation Act.

An addition of a little over 4 acres of closed road was made to the magnificent Summit Road Reserves on the Port Hills, Canterbury.

Reservations covering some 1,906 acres were made in the Waipori Survey District, Otago. The land is covered with bush, through which runs the road to the Waipori Power-house. This road is a favourite drive for motorists and holiday-makers from Dunedin and the surrounding localities. The Dunedin City Council consented to undertake the management of these areas, and has been appointed as a special Scenic Board to control the same, together with another small reserve in the vicinity.

In three cases it was found necessary to revoke or partially revoke scenic reservations. Two were cases where the bush had been destroyed and replanting was not considered advisable, while the other concerned the very small islands in the Kawarau River at the Kawarau Falls. The islands in question form portion of a dam-site granted to the Kawarau Gold-mining Company, and many of them have been destroyed in providing a larger outlet from Lake Wakatipu, while others have been utilized in connection with the engineering-works that have been carried out.

The total number of scenic reservations in the Dominion now stands at 769, covering an area of over 454,000 acres.

#### SUPERVISION OF RESERVES.

During the year special local Scenic Boards were appointed or reappointed as follows: The Te Kuiti Borough Council, to control the Mangaokewa Gorge Reserve; Taumarunui Borough Council, to control Lot A, Block I, Hunua Survey District; Dunedin City Council, to control the Waipori Falls Reserves; and the Motu, Pongaroa, Parr's Park, Peel Forest, and Northcote Scenic Boards, to control their respective reserves.

Messrs. R. W. Matthews and D. Richards were appointed honorary Inspectors under the Act for the Wairarapa Lake Shore Reserve and Reserve 3990, Block II, Akaroa Survey District, respectively.

A great deal of inspection work was carried out by officers of the Department. It is fully recognized that our scenic reserves are worthy of every care and attention, and an endeavour is being made to have, as far as possible, each reserve that is not controlled by a special Board, or for which no honorary Inspector has been appointed, visited at least once a year.

#### DAMAGE TO RESERVES, ETC.

Most of the reports received during the year indicate that the great majority of the reserves are in fairly good order and condition. A few small fires have occurred (the total prevention of these, unfortunately, seems to be well-nigh impossible), while a considerable amount of damage was caused in the Lake Rotorua Reserve by a gale of exceptional severity.

A case of wanton destruction of penguins nesting on a reserve came to the Department's notice, but, unfortunately, the offenders, who were strangers to the district, could not be identified. It is difficult to imagine what sport these men found in the slaughter of harmless birds, and it is much to be regretted that definite evidence could not be obtained to warrant their prosecution. The Department would be grateful to receive full particulars of any similar case, either of killing birds or destroying bush. It is usually somewhat difficult to sheet such offences home, but in cases where sufficient evidence is available it is intended to institute legal proceedings.

#### APPENDICES.

Attached to this report are the following appendices:—

- A. Schedule of reserves made during the year, accompanied by statement of expenditure.
- B. Report of the Scenery Preservation Board.
- C. North Auckland Scenic Reserves.
- D. Report of New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board.
- E. Kapiti Island.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

RESERVES MADE IN 1925-26 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908, AND AMENDMENTS.

Recom- mendation No.	Local Name.	Description.	Area	Date of Proclamation.
<i>North Auckland Land District.</i>				
520	Parr's Park .. ..	Portion of Allotment 14, Waipareira Parish	A. R. P. 16 2 0	8/12/25
569	Wairoa Falls.. ..	Part Allotments 48, 49, and 50, Otau Parish, and part Allotment 24, Hunua Parish	186 0 25	7/1/26
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>				
527	White-pine Bush .. ..	Part Lot 2, D.P. 14700, portion Lot 31p No. 1, Rangitaiki Parish	11 0 18	10/11/25
<i>Gisborne Land District.</i>				
583	.. ..	Section 1, Block IX, Opotiki S.D. ..	333 0 0	10/11/25
<i>Wellington Land District.</i>				
544	Pehimahaki (Wanganui River) .. ..	Part Section 7, Block III, Retaruke S.D. ..	32 0 0	22/9/25
	Kawatau River .. ..	Portion of a road adjoining Section 2, Block V, Ruahine S.D.	5 2 16	*
<i>Marlborough Land District.</i>				
563	Aniseed Creek .. ..	Section 1 of C, Block XVI, Kaitarau S.D.	5 0 23	22/6/25
578	Long Island (Te Keetu) .. ..	Section 115, Blocks XV and XIX, Gore S.D.	350 0 0	24/12/25
579	Motuanaura Island .. ..	Section 3, Block XV, Gore S.D. ..	82 2 0	9/1/26
<i>Westland Land District.</i>				
587	.. ..	Section 2883, Block IV, Brunner S.D. ..	135 1 2.9	19/11/25
<i>Canterbury Land District.</i>				
580	Summit Road .. ..	Rural Sections 36940 and 36942, and parts Rural Sections 1323, 11572, and 34651, Block II, Halswell S.D.	4 0 16.9	26/10/25
<i>Otago Land District.</i>				
589	Waipori Falls .. ..	{ Part Run 51A, Waipori S.D. .. .. Section 10, Block X, Waipori S.D. .. ..	{ 1,540 0 0 366 0 0 }	30/11/25

\* Section 109 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1924.

REVOCATION OF RESERVATIONS.

Land.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
Part Lake Rotokohu Scenic Reserve, portion of Section 2, Block II, Kapara S.D., Taranaki Land District	A. R. P. 110 0 0	*
Section 35, Block III, Puketoi S.D., Wellington Land District .. ..	98 0 22	11/8/25
Part of Kawarau Falls Scenic Reserve, part Section 26, Block XVIII, Town of Frankton, Otago Land District	1 2 0	28/5/25
	209 2 22	

\* Section 2 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1925.

SUMMARY OF RESERVES.

District.					Number.	Area.		
						A.	R.	P.
North Auckland	..	..	..	..	2	202	2	25.0
Auckland	..	..	..	..	1	11	0	18.0
Gisborne	..	..	..	..	1	333	0	0.0
Wellington	..	..	..	..	2	37	2	16.0
Marlborough	..	..	..	..	3	437	2	23.0
Westland	..	..	..	..	1	135	1	2.9
Canterbury	..	..	..	..	1	4	0	16.9
Otago	..	..	..	..	1	1,906	0	0.0
Totals	..	..	..	..	12	3,067	1	21.8
Reserved up to 31st March, 1925	..	..	..	..	758	451,269	1	31.0
					770	454,336	3	12.8
Less reservations revoked	..	..	..	..	1	209	2	22.0
					769	454,127	0	30.8

SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

*Statement showing Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March, 1926.*

					£	s.	d.
Compensation, &c., for Native lands taken for scenery purposes	..	..	..	..	148	5	9
Hundalee Scenic Reserves—Improvements	..	..	..	..	93	16	3
Rotoiti Scenic Reserve and Hongi's Track—Cost of fencing	..	..	..	..	309	4	9
Scenery Preservation Board—Expenses	..	..	..	..	9	8	5
Surveys, valuations, and incidental expenses	..	..	..	..	305	6	0
Trounson Kauri Forest—Charges in connection with protection	..	..	..	..	1,360	2	7
Wairoa Falls—Acquisition	..	..	..	..	377	6	3
Waitakerei Kauri Forest—Purchase price (subsidy, £1 for £1)	..	..	..	..	14,000	0	0
Waro limestone rocks, Hikurangi	..	..	..	..	3,242	6	8
Whaiti-Kuranui 1BY 2C 1 Block—Purchase price	..	..	..	..	101	8	7
White-pine bush, Whakatane (29 acres in vicinity of)	..	..	..	..	54	0	0

Administration of reserves and historic spots (including fencing and other works)—

					£	s.	d.
Eradication of noxious weeds	..	..	..	..	446	17	6
Erection of, and upkeep of fences	..	..	..	..	43	6	10
Improvements to tracks	..	..	..	..	9	15	0
Planting trees on burnt area	..	..	..	..	46	8	8
						546	8 0
Total expenditure	..	..	..	..	£20,547	13	3

\*

## 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
Grand total ..	..	..	..	..	..	185,715

\* Included in Board's expenses.

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

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

## APPENDIX B.

## REPORT OF THE SCENERY PRESERVATION BOARD.

THE Scenery Preservation Board comprises the following members: Messrs. W. T. Neill (Surveyor-General), Chairman; B. M. Wilson (General Manager, Tourist and Health Resorts); Chief Judge R. N. Jones (Under-Secretary, Native Department); and the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district within which the lands being dealt with are situated.

Meetings were held in the office of the Surveyor-General, Wellington, on the 4th April, 1925 (Auckland); 1st May, 1925 (North Auckland); 3rd August, 1925 (Wellington); 19th August, 1925 (Marlborough and Canterbury); 6th October, 1925 (North Auckland, Auckland, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Westland, and Otago); 7th August, 1925 (Taranaki); 13th October, 1925 (North Auckland and Wellington); 11th November, 1925 (Wellington); 16th December, 1925 (Wellington); and 10th March, 1926 (Taranaki). A meeting was also held in Auckland to consider a matter in the North Auckland District.

Twenty-five 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 Scenery Preservation Act.

Several field inspections in connection with important matters coming before the Board were made by the Chairman and Mr. Wilson.

W. T. NEILL, Chairman.

## APPENDIX C.

## NORTH AUCKLAND SCENIC RESERVES.

OWING to the extensive Ministerial visits to my district, the necessity of making many personal inspections of farms held by discharged soldiers, and to an exceptional number of special Commissions, I was unfortunately not able this year to devote to the scenic beauties of my district the personal time that they deserve.

As outlined in my previous report, a special survey was made of a spot as near as possible to the actual place where the Governor sat when signing the Treaty of Waitangi. It not being considered wise to sign the Treaty inside the house of Mr. Busby, a table was brought out on to the lawn, around which the Native chiefs assembled, and the site surveyed off for a tablet is fixed as near to this actual spot as is convenient to the present occupants of the house.

Trounson Park: The work put in hand last year to safeguard our magnificent area of kauri and other forest known as Trounson Park was continued. All fallen timber was removed, also dead and uprooted trees, and the ground ploughed and sown down with turnips and grass, and fed off by sheep to keep down the fern. Until recently one could motor up to the northern end of the park, where the caretaker's cottage is, but to get round to the southern end, where the railway-station is, by motor a long detour was necessary, and *vice versa*; now, owing to a gift by Mr. Trounson, subsidized by the Department, it is possible to motor right along the edge of the forest from one end of the reserve to the other; and when the Kaihu Railway is linked up with the Northern Main Trunk at Waiotiria, and Kaihu Valley Road improved, I anticipate that thousands of people will visit this beautiful place, whereas only a few favoured ones can now do so.

Mangamuka Gorge: Now that the route from the railhead at Okaihau is almost completely metalled to Kaitaia this is becoming a most popular route, and the wisdom of preserving the forest from the Mangamuka Gorge across the range to Victoria Valley is becoming apparent to all. Not only is the scenery most beautiful upon a sunny day or moonlight night, but the presence of the forest holds up the steep mountain-sides, which would otherwise overwhelm the road upon every exceptional downpour.

Historic Oak, Waima: The question of procuring the Historic Oak of Waima, and an area adjacent, was gone into with the trustees, and will, I hope, end in it being secured and put under our charge.

It was also desired to obtain a most beautiful spot upon the banks of the Taheke River, but before negotiations could be arranged the Native owners saw fit to chop down the bush.

Ruapekapeka Pa: A special visit was made to the Ruapekapeka Pa with the honorary committee in charge, when it was decided to cut and burn the fern that was choking up the trenches, and sow with danthonia.

Waiomio Cave, Kawakawa: I also visited the Waiomio Cave, near Kawakawa, which, though small, is very grand of its kind, and may some day be acquired when a reasonable price can be fixed by the Native owners. Adjoining this cave are some most wonderful rocks, similar to those recently acquired at Waro, and, being *tapu*, are likely to remain untouched by any vandals.

In the ancient township of Leigh, which has now been opened up by a good road, I found some most beautiful pohutukawa-trees on small education reserves and vacant sections, and an endeavour should be made to preserve these by exchange and otherwise before it is too late.

Parr's Park: The control of Parr's Park at Swanson, acquired in 1924, and comprising 16½ acres of mixed bush, has been vested in a Scenic Board of which the Commissioner of Crown Lands is a member *ex officio*. A grant of £100 for fencing was made, and tenders are being called to have this beautiful piece of bush properly enclosed.

Kirk's Bush: During the year a grant of £50 was secured for renewal and repairs of fencing and erection of suitable entrance-gates to properly enclose Kirk's Bush, an interesting scenic reserve of 7½ acres at Papakura, which was acquired in 1922. This reserve comprises for the most part taraire bush, with a few kohekohe, tawa, and pungas. Steps have also been taken to set up a Scenic Board to control the area.

Waitakerei Falls: The Waitakerei Falls reservation, to which the State contributed £14,000 last year, is now under the control of the City Council, and they have signified their deep appreciation of the gift by purchasing most of the adjacent bush, and bid fair in time to possess one of the finest native parks adjacent to any city in the Southern Hemisphere.

Okuratopo Pa: Negotiations to secure the Okuratopo Pa are still in hand, but the Native owners are very slow. This is one of the most famous pas in the North, where the Natives entertained the well-known missionary, Mr. Samuel Marsden.

Smith's Bush, Takapuna: A visit of inspection was paid to Smith's Bush at Takapuna, as the inhabitants of that borough desired to acquire it. Unfortunately, cattle have destroyed most of the ferns and undergrowth, and let in blackberry, but the puriri-trees are some of the most ancient in the land. Its principal charm, however, is the fact that it is a beautiful shady place within the easy reach of all who visit the beaches near by.

An earnest endeavour was made to secure from the late Miss Outhwaite by gift a most beautiful area of bush just beyond Helensville, on the North Main Trunk line, but, unfortunately, she died before we could accomplish it, and now it is too late. She, however, kindly left the State the Hen Island.

H. J. Lowe,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

## APPENDIX D.

## NEW PLYMOUTH SCENIC RESERVES BOARD.

THREE meetings of the Board were held during the year, and in addition several inspections of the various reserves were made.

The membership of the Board remains unchanged. Mr. Skinner has been on an extended trip to England, and is due to return to New Plymouth on the 1st May.

Pukerangiora Pa : In 1924 authority was obtained to plant this reserve to obviate the constantly recurring expenditure on noxious weeds. Some thirteen thousand trees were planted between August and October of that year. It was necessary to clear the weeds from around the trees in February, May, and December of 1925, and again in February and March of this year. The trees have now grown well above the gorse, fern, &c., and should not require further attention. Messrs. Duncan and Davies replaced about eight hundred trees which had failed to strike, this being considerably in excess of the number required to be replaced by them under the contract. The gorse on the road-line fronting the reserve has also been cleared recently, and this will also require attention in future to prevent danger of fire. The tracks through the reserve also require occasional attention.

Ratapihipihi Reserve : The open portion of this reserve is under lease to A. R. Gudopp, who is farming it to advantage. During the year he donated one hundred *Pinus radiata* for planting on some vacant spaces in the reserve. He also found the labour for planting these, together with seventy-five black-wattle obtained to provide material for repairs to the boundary-fences in years to come. The thanks of the Board are due to Mr. Gudopp for thus assisting in the improvement of the reserve. The paths through the reserve were cleaned up and regraded in time for the summer holidays.

"Meeting of the Waters" Reserve : The bridge leading to this reserve has been partly dismantled by the Mangorei Dairy Factory Company, who have now no further use for it. The public are now warned against using the bridge as a means of access to the portion of the reserve lying across the river. The blackberry on the road fronting this reserve has recently been cleared, and also on the open portions requiring attention.

Puketi Pa : This reserve is under lease to the High School Board, and the clearing of the gorse has recently been attended to.

The three reserves on the north road—namely, Okoki Pa and Pukemiro and Onairo Reserves—do not require much attention. The first-named is leased to Mr. Bleakley, who is keeping the weeds well in check.

The question of the acquisition of the Koru Pa, on the Oakura River, is still under consideration, and it is hoped to have the matter completed this year. The lands adjoining have now been planted by the Taranaki Permanent Forests (Limited). A bridge has recently been erected over the river to give access to the pa from the New Plymouth side. The material was supplied by the New Plymouth Sash and Door Company, and the labour was provided by Mr. R. Davies and the workmen employed by the Afforestation Company.

The Huatoki Scenic Reserve is not under the control of this Board, but the local committee is energetically carrying out the work of improving the domain, and an annual picnic is held for the purpose of raising funds.

The thanks of the Board are due to the three honorary rangers who have been appointed to look after the reserves in their various locations. They are Mr. S. Topless, who has control of Pukemiro and Onairo Reserves ; Mr. P. H. E. Surrey, of Pukerangiora Pa ; Mr. A. R. Gudopp, of Ratapihipihi Reserve.

W. D. ARMIT,

Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chairman of Scenic Reserves Board.

## APPENDIX E.

## KAPITI ISLAND.

SPEAKING generally, this sanctuary has shown an improvement during the year. In the northern portion the undergrowth has come away well since the goats were destroyed, and this improvement in growth has been noticed as far south as the waterfall. South of Taiapiro the undergrowth is not so noticeable, and this is doubtless due to the presence of so many wild sheep. On the western side there are many evidences of shrubs and herbs coming away.

The majority of the trees have borne good crops of berries, especially the karaka. The flaxes are perhaps the only plants that did not flower as they did last season. Neither species had any flowers to speak of, whereas last year they both flowered most profusely. The taupata (*Coprosma Baueri*), too, did not have such crops of berries as last year. In April, 1925, the caretaker was able to gather two benzine-tins full, but this year he could only secure half a tin. The different species of *Coprosma* growing in the bush have carried much more fruit than last season. The fuchsia has also shown up in several places, being particularly prominent along the Taiapiro Stream. This useful tree can now be seen all along the stream, the bushes being a chain or even less apart.

The large grass area adjoining the Webber's has been much reduced by the growth of manuka, but there will be a risk of fire at this end of the sanctuary for many years to come.

The extermination of goats is considered to be one of the most important works at present being undertaken on the island, and the caretaker has spent no fewer than sixty-three days hunting these animals. Out of this number of days, on thirty-two occasions the caretaker did not see any goats, as they are now taking to the most inaccessible places. He estimates the number still at large to be seven. During the year eighty-three goats were destroyed, making a total of 216 since Mr. Wilkinson took over the care of the sanctuary.

The destruction of wild sheep is also a problem. Ten sheep were shot whilst eating young trees planted out by the caretaker. Arrangements have been made with neighbours to shoot out the sheep for the skins.

Fifteen wild cats were destroyed during the year. Apart from the young birds taken by cats, the robin, whitehead, and saddleback are easy prey, more especially the robin, as it gets practically all its food off the ground. Rats are very numerous, and are being destroyed as quickly as possible. The opossum-trapper has done good work, although the wet winter interfered with his work.

A considerable amount of time was spent during the year putting out plants both on the fence-line and in other suitable places. About 8 chains of the fence-line were planted with seeds and plants. Two hundred ngaio and twenty taupata given by Mr. Webber were planted on the boundary, but the dry weather killed a number of them. Some 450 plants not found on the island were put out in different places from the fence-line to the basin. With the exception of fifty pohutukawas, one whau, and several species of veronica, which were sent by the Wellington City Council, nearly all the seeds and plants were sent by Mr. K. W. Dalrymple, of Bull's. Mr. Dalrymple had apparently gone to much trouble and expense to procure the seeds and plants, as they arrived in beautiful condition.

About one hundred plants of *Dawsonia superba* and a packet of seed of *Podocarpus dacrydioides* were also set out. A number of plants from the Hen Island were put out and are surviving, while some have made considerable growth. One totara, for instance, has grown 18 in. since August last.

During October, 1925, the caretaker was away at the Hen Island catching saddlebacks for the island sanctuaries. The required number was caught, and those birds liberated on Kapiti have taken to their new home admirably. The majority of the birds on the island have prospered, especially the tui. The long-tailed cuckoo was prominent during the early part of the nesting season, and no doubt interfered considerably with the domestic affairs of the smaller birds. Dozens of nests were robbed, the principal victims being the robin, tomtit, whitehead, and the fantail. Even the pigeon did not escape, as one nest under observation was robbed of its only egg. Several of these parasitic birds were noticed by the caretaker being fed by the little whitehead. Several nests of the red-headed parrakeet were found, and numerous young birds were seen about. Two nests of the morepork were found. The young moreporks were fed on full-grown rats, so that these birds are doing some good. In December last an interesting visitor in the shape of a black fantail arrived, and has been noticed on several occasions since. Another bird, rare in these parts, the yellow tufted penguin (*Eudyptis chrysocome*), came ashore in January, and after going through the moult put to sea again.

The Kapiti Island Sanctuary under the capable management of Mr. Wilkinson is sure to be a success. Mr. Wilkinson is an enthusiastic worker, and takes an intelligent interest in all matters relating to the flora and fauna of the island.

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

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (750 copies), £11 15s. 6d.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1926.

Price 6d.]