

growth continues to make good progress not only in the bush, but all over the sanctuary. The only grass area of any extent now is that in Taepiro, but even there numerous young bush trees are coming up. All along the stream from the head of Taepiro down the gorge to the sea fuchsia trees can be seen, but perhaps the most pleasing feature of the regeneration is the number of young cabbage-trees that are present in the valley. The white pines that were planted there a few years ago are established.

“At the south end of the island hardly any grass is to be seen now. A few more years and the young bush trees will kill out the tauhinu. Young plants are coming up all through it.

“In the manuka areas the undergrowth is coming away fast and will get better every year, as the more undergrowth the more leaf-mould and damper conditions. In some parts amongst the manuka the young growth is 10 ft. high. Amongst this nearly every species of plant on the island is represented. In places quite a number of young miro and matai are noticeable; in fact, on one ridge at Kahikatea the most prominent species is matai, and some of them are 4 ft. or 5 ft. high.

“In spite of the dry weather experienced lately, most of the taupatas that were planted along the shore from the Native land to the south end are flourishing, and quite a number of them are loaded with fruit. The pohutukawa planted in similar situations seemed to revel in the dry conditions. It flowered well in early December. Some other plants are now producing their own kind from seeds.

“Mutton-birds nested in the usual numbers along the top of the cliffs of the western side. The colonies of this interesting petrel are gradually extending in this locality. All the known pairs of blue herons were successful in rearing a brood. Although they breed every year, their numbers do not seem to increase. I think the old birds drive away their young to the mainland. I saw five of these birds near my boat-shed recently—the most I have seen together on Kapiti. Three of them looked like young ones. If they were, this is unusual, because I have never seen more than two eggs in a nest about Kapiti. The shags appear to be holding their own. Most of those seen about the island are the common black shags and the white-throated ones. At least two broods of paradise duck were seen and several clutches of grey. The stilts and banded dotterel nested as usual about the lake and paddocks at the north end.

“Most of the bush birds have done well. Fantails, which were somewhat scarce last year, again appeared, and in the usual numbers. Several pairs nested quite close to the cottage. Robins and tomtits with young could be seen in most parts of the sanctuary. The honey-eaters had an excellent year, and young of both tui and korimako are to be seen everywhere. A korimako nested within a chain of the cottage and reared three lusty youngsters.

“Both species of parakeet occupied their usual nesting-holes known to me, except in two cases where that pest, the starling, usurped the parakeet's nesting-places. A ngaio tree used for years by parakeets for nesting was occupied by starlings. The parakeets eventually found a suitable place in a bank under some stones. Whiteheads were not bothered so much by the long-tailed cuckoo last season as they have been in previous years. The cuckoo was very scarce. I have not heard the saddlebacks or seen any signs of them during the year.

“In July last I found a petrel on the beach at Rangatira which was new to me. Dr. Oliver, of the Dominion Museum, identified it as the Kerguelen petrel (*Pteradroma brevirostris*). I believe this to be the first record of this species to be found in New Zealand.

“In March of this year the beach near my boat-shed was strewn with the lovely delicate shells of the paper nautilus (*Argonauta argo*). Never before have I seen so many shells of this species thrown up.”

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