

1936.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

SCENERY PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1936, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF
EXPENDITURE AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE
YEAR UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT.

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

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 21st August, 1936.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on scenery preservation for the year ended 31st March, 1936.

I have, &c.,

W. ROBERTSON,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. Frank Langstone, Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation, Wellington.

REPORT.

PROCLAMATIONS issued during the year setting apart land as scenic or historic reserves under the Scenery Preservation Act covered a total area of 34,045 acres.

In the Auckland Land District a small bush-clad gully in the Otorohanga district was made a scenic reserve during the year. Very little bush has been left in the locality, and the reservation of this area should be appreciated by the people of the district. Another reservation comprised some 36 acres on the Pokeno-Waitakaruru Highway, being practically the only piece of bush to be seen along the road. A local settler has been appointed to generally supervise the new reserve and to ensure its protection from timber poaching. An area of 177 acres on the Mangaotaki River near Pio Pio was also brought under the Act, following representations in that behalf by the Waitomo County Council. This land was formerly a State forest, but the forest reservation was cancelled in order that the area might be made a scenic reserve. Satisfactory arrangements have been made for its protection, two local settlers having agreed to act as honorary inspectors for the new reserve. Arrangements were also completed during the year for the purchase and reservation of an area of 100 acres on the slopes of the Ngongotaha Mountain as an addition to the existing reserves on the mountain. The acquisition of this area was rendered possible chiefly through the generosity of the Bruce Trustees, to whom the thanks of the Department are gratefully tendered.

Near Okahukura in the Taranaki District an area of 50 acres of good mixed bush was set apart. This area is regarded as one of the beauty spots in a locality which possesses several magnificent reserves. Further reservations in Taranaki were those of some 30 acres of steep and broken bush country on the Ohura Road near Whanganomona, and 196 acres on the Kururau Road, at a spot known locally as Port Arthur.

Several reservations were made in the Nelson Land District during the year, the areas so dealt with including some 70 acres of heavy bush adjoining the Mount Courtney Reserve in the Buller Valley, 109 acres on a prominent headland on the western coast-line of Tasman Bay, two small sections at Bulwer in Pelorus Sound, a small area in the St. Arnaud Township, Lake Rotoiti, and some 32,000 acres in the Travers Valley. The last-mentioned area comprises practically the whole of the valley running down from Mount Travers to Lake Rotoiti. The valley and the hillsides are clothed with attractive bush, while further above rise the rocky peaks of the St. Arnaud Range on the one side and of the Mount Robert Ridge on the other. The ranges culminate in Mount Travers (7,666ft.) at the head of the valley. The combination of river, bush, and mountain scenery is exceedingly fine, and as the valley is comparatively easy of access the reservation now made should become a very popular and valuable one.

Marlborough reservations included a small bush-clad headland at Poison Point, Kenepuru Sound, and 462 acres at Big Bay, Endeavour Inlet.

In the Westland Land District a beautiful piece of riverflat bush on the Grey River near Greymouth was set apart under the Act, while an area of 668 acres was added to the Rapahoe Range Scenic Reserve. The latter area consists of undulating to steep slopes covered with dense native bush of great beauty, and is in full view from the Greymouth-Westport Main Highway. It was set apart in 1902 for the purposes of the State Coal-mines Act, 1901; but being no longer required for such purposes the Mines Department arranged to make it available for reservation under the Scenery Preservation Act. Two small reservations were made in the Tautuku district, South Otago coast, in a locality which has been generously endowed with luxuriant bush, placid rivers of outstanding charm, and magnificent seascapes of curving bays and bold and rugged headlands.

The reservation over three small portions of scenic reserves was revoked during the year, the total area so dealt with amounting to 3 acres 2 roods 30 perches. In one case an area of 3 acres was released from reservation in order to improve the fencing-line between the reserve and the adjoining farm; in another an area of a quarter of an acre was made available as a site for a public hall; and the third case was that of a small portion of a reserve required for public purposes.

During the year several important acquisitions were arranged which have not been referred to above, for the reason that the final Proclamations had not been issued by the end of the period under review. In one case, that of the purchase of a fairly large area on the slopes of Mount Pirongia, substantial financial assistance was granted by the Bruce Trustees. The areas concerned, together with several important proposals for the reservation of Crown land areas in various parts of the Dominion, will be fully dealt with in the next annual report.

The number of scenic reservations in the Dominion is now 980, covering a total area of over 705,000 acres.

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES.

During the year special Boards were appointed or reappointed as follows: The Hae Hae Te Moana, Tapuinikau Pa, Kaiata, Everett Road, Waikaka, Taihape, Ranfurly Bay, Mapoutahi Pa, Clevedon, and Pukeamuru Range Scenic and Historic Reserve Boards. Additional areas were placed under the control of the Lake Kanieri and Papatowai Scenic Boards. The Wanganui River Trust was given control of a reserve on the Wanganui River, and the Timaru Borough Council was entrusted with the care of a South Canterbury reserve.

Forty-three ladies and gentlemen were appointed honorary inspectors for scenic reserves throughout the Dominion, and a certificate of appointment was issued in each case. As in previous years the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture has assisted in this matter by nominating suitable persons for appointment.

A number of special inspections have been made by officers of the Department, and although pressure of other work has prevented a systematic inspection of all scenic reserves from being carried out, every available opportunity has been taken of supervising as many reserves as possible. Valuable assistance has also been given by officers of the State Forest Service, who in the course of their field duties have opportunities of observing the condition of scenic reserves in localities where State forests are situated.

GENERAL CONDITION OF RESERVES, ETC.

Reports from the various districts enable me to state that the past year was a very satisfactory one from the point of view of scenery preservation. A few small fires occurred, but fortunately very little damage was done. The extensive fires which raged throughout the Catlins district in the spring spread in several cases to adjoining scenic reserves. Some standing bush and underscrub was damaged, but in most cases it is expected that the damage will soon be repaired by the natural regeneration of the bush. In several instances scrub had been cut along the roadsides by the local authority, but had not been cleared away. This helped to spread the fires considerably. The attention of the County Council has been drawn to this matter, and their co-operation sought in preventing fires from this source in future.

A number of applications for mining privileges within scenic reserves was dealt with during the year. Consent was declined in two cases, and given in seven others, subject to special conditions framed for the protection of the reserves concerned.

Fencing is required in a fair number of cases to protect reserves from trespassing stock. Funds for this purpose have again been extremely limited, but it is hoped that the position in that respect will improve in the near future. It is, of course, not sufficient to acquire scenic areas and then leave them to look after themselves. They should, if they are not protected from stock by natural boundaries, be securely fenced, and a certain amount of planting should be done in suitable cases. There is ample scope for a great deal of useful work on these lines, and it is work which, when considered as it ought to be on broad lines of national welfare, will return a real if indirect dividend to the State.

GENERAL.

The Trounson Kauri Park continues to increase in popularity with visitors who wish to see a kauri forest in its virgin state. The motor camp established on an open portion of the reserve is much appreciated, and the facilities provided have been favourably commented upon by the public. Last season Norfolk pines were planted on the northern boundary of the park. These are showing new growth, and will in time give much needed shelter to that portion of the forest that was so severely damaged by the heavy gales. The experiment of transplanting young kauris from the main forest to the damaged area gave

unsatisfactory results; but an attempt will now be made to effect regeneration by sowing seed direct. Other open spaces in the forest are quickly regenerating with native growth, including a natural growth of young kauri-trees. The fire risk was greatly minimized by the abnormally wet summer.

During the season some three thousand people visited the Cape Kidnapper Bird Sanctuary, and subscriptions and donations by the public to the Board's funds amounted to some £28. Steps have been cut in the steeper parts of the tracks in the reserve, and the tracks have also been widened in places.

The Tennyson Inlet Reserves in the Marlborough Sounds are in good condition. Efforts made to keep wild animals in check have been fairly successful, and the undergrowth is increasing. The bridle tracks through the reserves have now been cleared, and easy access is now available to the major portion of the areas. The other reserves in the Sounds are in good condition, and have been kept free from damage during the year. Areas destroyed by fires in former years are all showing signs of regeneration, and it is hoped that the native bush will establish itself again in a few years. The Sounds Reserves are visited by thousands of people each year.

The Westland Land District is particularly fortunate in the wide variety and extensive nature of its scenic reserves, which are becoming increasingly popular not only with the local residents but also with the travelling public. The question of the extension of the existing reserves at Weheka, near the Fox Glacier, has received consideration during the year, and proposals are now in hand for the reservation of all the bush-clad hills visible from the Main South Road, and also of a sufficiently large additional area to embrace Lakes Matheson, Goult, Little, Mueller, and Gibb.

The Department's Ranger on Stewart Island spent as much time as possible in various parts of the reserves in his charge. He paid special attention to Paterson Inlet areas, but also visited the Murray River, Mason Bay, East and West Ruggedy, Port Adventure, Port Pegasus, and other places. He reports that, in his opinion, most species of the native birds on the island are holding their own. Wekas, which for some unknown reason became scarce south of Paterson Inlet, are gradually increasing in that part of the island. Deer continue to do considerable damage to the bush. Rats and wild cats are unfortunately plentiful on the island.

FUTURE OPERATIONS.

Much work still remains to be done in the matter of scenery preservation. There are many areas in private ownership which should be owned by the State, but the financial position has been such that the Department has had for a good many years to be content with very small allocations, and as a result it has been almost impossible to operate the machinery which is in existence for the acquisition by the State of land of scenic value. If the Department could be assured of a substantial annual vote arrangements could be made to proceed with a steady plan for the gradual acquisition of areas of outstanding scenic interest. The system which has obtained during late years has in effect confined the acquisition of scenic areas to cases where the greatest pressure has been brought to bear, and it has been impossible for the Department to work to any regular plan. This has been most unsatisfactory in many ways, and it is hoped that it will be possible for better arrangements to be made in the future.

The Department is firmly of opinion that in the matter of scenery preservation it has a definite contribution to make to the future well-being of the Dominion.

LEGISLATION.

The Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1935, dealt with three matters of scenic interest. The Hundalee Scenic Reserves Board was authorized to accept a lease of an area of 3 acres 35·7 perches of Native land. The Board has vested in it the control of a number of scenic reserves situated along the Main South Road where the road actually follows the coast. In its administration of these reserves the Board has been greatly hampered by the actions of some fishermen who in the past have camped in various parts of the reserves and have refused to shift their camps to the area allotted by the Board for that purpose. When action has been taken to cause them to shift these camps some have moved on to adjacent Native land, part of which forms a Native cemetery. Trustees are being appointed to control the cemetery, and it will then be possible to deal with trespassers thereon; but the only means of controlling the balance of the Native land appears to be to authorize the Board to accept a lease thereof. The parties concerned are agreeable to the leasing proposal, which will be confirmed by the Native Land Court of the district in the usual way.

Certain Crown land and a road area were added to the Ship Cove Reserve, and provision was made for the administration and control of the reserve by making certain of the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Acts applicable thereto.

Authority was given for the application of moneys received in respect of the Onairo Domain for expenditure on the adjoining Pukemiro and Onairo River Scenic Reserves, which are under the control of the New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board. In this case the Board's revenue had proved insufficient for the proper maintenance and improvement of the numerous reserves under its control, and it was considered desirable that a reasonable portion of the funds belonging to the Onairo Domain, which is not used for recreation, but has been leased for grazing, should be made available to the Scenic Board for expenditure on the adjacent scenic reserves.

APPENDICES.

A schedule of reserves made and reservations revoked during the year, accompanied by a statement of expenditure, follows as Appendix A, while Appendix B records the work carried out on Kapiti Island.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

RESERVES MADE IN 1935-36 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908, AND AMENDMENTS.

Recom- mendation No.	Local Name.	Description.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>				
788	Te Pahi	Section 1, Block VII, Orakiri S.D. ..	A. R. P. 36 3 19	29/3/35
790	Waitakaruru	Section 13, Block II, Piako S.D. ..	36 0 0	29/3/35
789	Mangaotaki River	Section 3, Block XI, Maungamangero S.D.	177 0 0	29/3/35
786	Ngongotaha Mountain ..	Rotohokahoka F Nos. 1 and 2 Blocks, Block III, Horohoro S.D., and Blocks XV and XVI, Rotorua S.D.	100 0 0	23/1/36
<i>Taranaki Land District.</i>				
791	Okahukura	Subsection 3 of Section 8, Block XI, Tangitu S.D.	50 0 0	29/3/35
793	Whangamomona	Sections 7 and 8, Whangamomona Suburban, Block I, Mahoe S.D.	30 1 0	29/3/35
792	Port Arthur	Section 8, Block XII, Ohura S.D. ..	196 0 0	7/8/35
<i>Nelson Land District.</i>				
795	Mount Courtney	Section 33, Block VI, Inangahua S.D. ..	70 0 0	29/3/35
797	Totaranui	Section 25, Block IV, Totaranui S.D. ..	109 0 0	29/3/35
798	Lake Rotoiti	Section 65, St. Arnaud Township ..	8 0 18	29/3/35
798	Lake Rotoiti and Travers Valley	Section 11, Blocks VII, VIII, XI, XII, XV, XVI, XVII, Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, Block VIII, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, Block XII, Arnaud S.D., and Sec- tion 13, Blocks I, II, V, IX, XIII, Rotoiti S.D.	32,000 0 0	29/3/35
796	Bulwer	{ Section 6, Village of Bulwer	0 1 26	15/5/35
		{ Section 8, Village of Bulwer	0 1 8	15/5/35
<i>Marlborough Land District.</i>				
803	Poison Point	Section 1 of 8, Block 1, Oriieri S.D. ..	9 3 0	29/3/35
799	Big Bay	Section 49A, Block VII, Gore S.D. ..	462 0 18	29/3/35
<i>Westland Land District.</i>				
805	Kaiata Scenic Reserve ..	Reserve 1064, Block IX, Arnold S.D. ..	22 3 10	29/3/35
804	Rapahoe Range	In Block II, Cobden S.D.	668 0 0	7/8/35
<i>Otago Land District.</i>				
806	Tahakopa River	Section 25, Block IV, Tautuku S.D. ..	25 2 4	29/3/35
807	Tautuku Bay	Section 25, Block VIII, Tautuku S.D. ..	43 0 10	11/12/35

NOTE.—The Proclamation dated 29th March, 1935, was gazetted on the 4th April, 1935.

REVOCATION OF RESERVATIONS.

Land.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
<i>Auckland Land District.</i>		
Part Kinohaku West 12B 2B Block, Block II, Kawhia South S.D.	A. R. P. 3 0 25	11/2/36
<i>Wellington Land District.</i>		
Portion of Section 12, Block IV, Hautapu S.D.	0 1 0	22/2/36
Lot 3, part Section 28, Block VIII, Makotuku S.D.	0 1 5	3/5/35
Total area revoked during year	3 2 30	

SUMMARY OF RESERVES.

Land District.							Number.	Area.		
								A.	R.	P.
Auckland	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	349	3	19
Taranaki	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	276	1	0
Nelson	..	..	..	..	..	..	3*	32,187	3	12
Marlborough	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	471	3	18
Westland	..	..	..	..	..	..	1*	690	3	10
Otago	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	68	2	14
Total reservations for year ended 31st March, 1936							15	34,045	0	33
Reservations up to 31st March, 1935							965	671,500	3	18
							980	705,546	0	11
Less reservations revoked							..	3	2	30
							980	705,542	1	21

* Also additions to existing reserves.

STATEMENT SHOWING EXPENDITURE ON SCENERY-PRESERVATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST MARCH, 1936.

							£	s.	d.
Acquisition of scenic reserves	..	..	..	..	..	..	908	18	8
Summit Road Scenic Reserves : Ranger	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Surveys, valuations, and incidental expenses	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	12	6
Trounson Kauri Forest, charges in connection with protection of	..	..	..	..	..	..	298	11	0
Waitangi Endowment : Planting, &c. (on account of £8,200)	..	..	..	..	..	..	770	1	4
Waitangi Historic Reserve : Clearing, ploughing, grassing, internal roading, and compensation, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,543	15	8
Grant towards cost of carved house at Waitangi	..	..	..	..	..	..	500	0	0
Administration of reserves (including fencing, &c.)—							£	s.	d.
Advance to New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board	..	..	..	..	..	..	25	0	0
Eradication of noxious weeds and destruction of rabbits	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	15	5
Fencing, improvements, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	..	351	18	8
Fire-fighting expenses	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	10	0
Ranger : Lake Wakatipu	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	16	4
Travelling-expenses (including travelling-expenses of departmental officers supervising fire-fighting operations)	..	..	..	..	..	..	23	3	1
							425	3	6
Gross expenditure for year	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,449	2	8
Less Credits-in-aid, &c., received—									
Waitangi Historic Reserve : Wages subsidy from Unemployment Board, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	..	25	13	0
Other reserves—									
Payments by adjoining owners for half-share of cost of boundary-fencing erected, &c., and miscellaneous credits	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	10	0
							64	3	0
Net expenditure for year	..	..	..	..	..	..	£4,384	19	8

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
1926-27	2,617	1,182	75	17	..	3,891
1927-28	5,182	1,342	58	17	..	6,599
1928-29	11,642	1,810	538	1	150‡	14,141
1929-30	445	1,548	108	6	300‡	2,407
1930-31	574	1,335	92	2	300‡	2,303
1931-32	2,373	838	1,099	16	279‡	4,605
1932-33	7	476	15	..	200‡	698
1933-34	92	1,221	21	..	156‡	1,490
1934-35	750	1,804§	18	..	38‡	2,610
1935-36	909	3,473¶	3	..	..	4,385
Grand total ..	..	..	..	..	..	228,844

* Included in Board's expenses. † Includes £1,750 paid to Summit Road Scenic Reserve Board. ‡ Ranger for Summit Road Scenic Reserves. § Includes £1,344 expended on Waitangi Endowment and Historic Reserve. ¶ Includes £2,814 expended on Waitangi Endowment and Historic Reserve.

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

APPENDIX B.

KAPITI ISLAND.

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

THE year just closed must be regarded as one of the best experienced for the last ten years as far as Kapiti is concerned. The almost continual rains which fell throughout the year were ideal for the plant life of the island, and also relieved the Caretaker, Mr. A. S. Wilkinson, from anxiety over the ever present danger of fire. The wealth of flowers produced on almost every species of flowering plant was followed by a great abundance of berries which provided the birds with plenty of food. The Caretaker states that there was more bird food on the reserve than he had ever seen there. There are no grass areas of any extent left on Kapiti except in Taepiro, and that is now being rapidly covered over with manuka, ferns, and shrubs of all kinds. Little trees planted in this place a few years ago are well established, so that in time there will be a good stand of white-pine and rimu there. The boundary-fence at the north end of the reserve should be completed by the end of May. A very useful addition to the equipment on the island was the erection during the year of a telephone-line to the neighbours at the north end. Rats are still in evidence although hundreds of them have been destroyed. A skilled trapper has been engaged, and is doing good work amongst the opossums and rats. Mr. Wilkinson desires to thank the following who so very kindly sent over plants to set out on the reserve:—

- Mr. A. Morris Jones, Kelburn: *Trichomanes rigidum*, *Jovellana repens*, *Cyathodes acerosa*, *Lindsaya linearis*, *Lindsaya viridis*, *Prasophyllum*, *Schizaea fistulosa*, *Metrosideros tomentosa*, *Prosera auriculata*, *Adiantum formosum*. Mr. Jones also found time to assist in planting these species.
- Mrs. Smith, Brooklyn: *Wahlenbergia albomarginata*, *Ranunculus Lyalli*, and a *Celmisia* that I cannot identify; *Mayus radiatus*.
- N.Z. Rock and Alpine Society: *Olearia pachyphylla*, *Chordospartium stevensoni*, *Colensoa physaloides*, *Marrattia fraxinea*, *Adiantum formosa*.
- Mr. E. B. Martin, Nelson: *Olearia cymbifolia*, *Jovellana Sinclairii*, *Asplenium trichomanes*, *Senecio Greyii*, *Senecio Austin*, *Pittosporum Dallii*.
- Mr. J. J. Helyar, Lower Hutt: *Pseudopanax ferox*, *Olearia pachyphylla*, *Dodonaea viscosa*.
- Mr. K. W. Dalrymple, Bulls: *Hymenanthera Novae Zealandia*.
- Mr. W. Knight, Paraparaumu Beach: Thirty-six *Dacrydium cupressinum*.
- Commissioner of Crown Lands, Nelson: Seed of *Pittosporum Dallii*.
- Mrs. Roberts, Vallance Street, Kilbirnie: *Geum parviflorum*.
- Mr. Max Roberts, Vallance Street, Kilbirnie: *Veronica catarractae* (var. *diffusa*), *Veronica Hookeriana*.

I have again to express my high appreciation of the thoroughness and ability with which Mr. Wilkinson carries out his duties as Caretaker. I append hereto extracts from Mr. Wilkinson's annual report:—

"Undergrowth is coming on apace all over the island, amongst the bush, in the manuka, and out in the open. In the bush and under the manuka numerous specimens of the larger trees such as miro, matai, tawa, hinau, and, in some places, even the pukatea can be seen. On some of the ridges and sidelings the undergrowth is 10 ft. or 12 ft. high. These places were absolutely bare ten years ago, as can be shown from photographs. A particularly pleasing feature of the bush is the way the kiekie has spread. This plant is a very useful one for birds of the honey-eating family, as it provides food twice a year. The plant flowers in the spring, and each of these would keep a tui going for at least four days. The male flower is finished then, but the female ripens its pods in May or June, when there are few nectar-producing plants bearing. There are many of these green pods to be seen now.

"In some places along the coast on the eastern side the bush is also creeping down. It was along here that thousands of trees—mostly those species growing on the island—were planted some years ago. Three thousand taupatas and six hundred ngaios were planted in one year along the shore for over a distance of about six miles. Some of the taupatas are now loaded with berries. Another ten years will see this side of the island clothed to the water's edge.

"Along the western side the plants are having a hard struggle, but some of the hardier ones are showing up well. In one or two places manuka is working down the cliffs from the top, and akeake, taupata, kowhai, and the mountain flax are helping to cover this exposed area. Some of the kowhais are from seed I sowed there some years ago. A few of them flowered last season for the first time.

"Both species of flax are spreading well. Last year they were covered with flowers, so the tui and korimako enjoyed sumptuous feasts. There were at least two hundred tuis feeding on the flax close to my house at one time. It was like old times to see so many of these birds together. The wet season seemed to suit the flax, but it evidently had the opposite effect on some of the plants, as no ratas flowered. Usually round about November the rata provides one of the most beautiful pictures, when the hills are blotched with the brilliant scarlet patches. None of the rata species flowered at all but there was a spray or two on the pohutukawa.

"The rewarewa was covered in blossom, much to the delight of the honey-sucking birds. It is now covered with its canoe-shaped seed-pods, and parrakeets are already sampling the seeds.

"The birds seem to have had another good season.

"Pigeons again nested close to our house, one nest being within two chains. The young were reared successfully in the three nests we had under observation. The kaka that nested in the tree, occupied a few years ago by a morepork, never came back to the same place again.

"Several nesting trees that have been used for years by the parrakeets were again made use of by these pretty little birds, and a family reared in each case. That introduced pest (as far as the native birds are concerned) the starling, ousted parrakeets out of two nesting-places. Starlings not only interfere with the nesting-places of the parrakeets, but rob the other birds of a great deal of fruit. Sometimes great flocks of them haunt the bush when ngaio berries are ripe. It does not take long for a flock of even a hundred starlings to strip a ngaio of its fruit.

"Tuis and korimako nested and reared the usual number of young.

"Robins are about all over the sanctuary. They certainly have increased during the last few years. We have a pair that come about close to the house.

"For some reason tomtits are not so much in evidence about Rangatira this season, although they are plentiful on other parts of the sanctuary.

"Whiteheads are still amongst the commonest birds on Kapiti. In January last we had a whitehead's nest under observation in which the longtailed cuckoo had deposited its egg. It was interesting to see the whitehead feeding the young parasite. By the time it was ready to leave the nest it was twice as big as the foster parent. When it was ready to fly I put an aluminium band on its leg. The band was marked, "Kapiti, N.Z., 1936." We were able to get one or two good photographs of the young bird being fed by the whitehead.

"Fantails are more plentiful this year than for years past. Several nested quite close to our house.

"Kiwi seem to be doing well. It is difficult to estimate the number of kiwi on Kapiti, but that they are plentiful is proved by the finding of their feathers caught up in the hooked grass (*Uncinaria*) all over the sanctuary.

"I have seen no trace of the kakapo for some time now. Neither have I seen nor heard the saddlebacks, but it is quite possible to pass close by them and not see or hear them. Except in the springtime they are fairly quiet birds. They have certainly shifted from where they were seen feeding young ones a few years ago. There are any number of places where they could be.

"Moreporks are about in their usual numbers. So are harriers. I saw a sparrow hawk flying over Rangatira in March.

"The petrels are breeding in ever increasing numbers, not only along the cliffs of the western side, but in the bush in different places along the side facing the mainland. It is quite likely that at least four species breed on Kapiti.

"The pretty little banded dotterell was much in evidence on the flax near Okupe Lake. The stilt was also to be seen in considerable numbers at the north end.

"The shags are increasing. Outlawed and destroyed in so many parts of the country, in spite of the help they give anglers by preying on eels, they at least find sanctuary here. They breed in inaccessible places at the south-western corner of Kapiti. The spotted shag—a rare visitor—was seen about in the middle of March. The blue herons nested in the usual places, but there seems to be no more than usual. The old ones drive the young away after they are reared. I have seen them flying to the mainland.

"The torea, or oyster catcher, were again about the small islets. They reared two young.

"The paradise ducks did well. Three pairs reared young. I saw a flock of fourteen by my boat-shed a few days ago. Grey ducks nested in many different parts of the sanctuary as well as in the swamp in front of the house. At the present time, March, the lake at the north end is black with ducks that have come over from the mainland.

"The little blue penguin was just as plentiful as ever, in spite of the heavy mortality amongst these birds a year or so ago through oil having been cast on the waters of Cook Strait.

"I saw an interesting sight at Christmas time. Fourteen blue penguins were rounding up fish in the bay near my boat-shed and the birds were swimming backwards and forwards in almost a straight line across the bay, seemingly driving the fish into the corner. When satisfied that the fish were trapped, the penguins all started diving at once. The team work was splendid. Penguins are now ashore at nights and the noise they make is sometimes appalling.

"Gulls and terns nested as usual on Tokamapuna and around the island. A pair of black-backed gulls built a nest on Rangatira point.

"During the year I found a fern growing in the Rangatira bush that has not hitherto been recorded from this island. It is called *Blechnum nigrum*."

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