

KAPITI SANCTUARY.

(Report by Hon. Secretary.)

This sanctuary was visited on the 24th, 25th, and 26th September. Evidence was apparent that good work had been done in recent months. Many seedlings have been planted out, and, above all, no goats were seen, and it is probable that only a few odd ones are left—a very commendable result, which was considered by some to be almost impossible of achievement, owing to the great cliffs on the western side affording an almost safe retreat.

The limited forest was carrying a good quota of bird life so far as its present condition permits. The sanctuary can, however, be so improved in time as to enable ten times the number of birds to exist there. Robins appear to have increased last breeding season.

Signs of considerable forest regeneration are to be found in many parts.

Indications pointed to opossums having increased during the year. Only one trapper is employed.

As anticipated, the attempt to quit the many wild sheep by mustering has signally failed, as the western cliffs provide a too good get-away.

Much better results still would accrue if operations were supervised by frequent visits to the island of one of the gentlemen composing the Advisory Board, some at least of whom are particularly skilled in matters appertaining to our flora. Such direction is certainly essential, together with closer co-operation between the Advisory Board and the Curator.

FEEDING NATIVE BIRDS.

Native birds can be attracted around our homes by artificial feeding, as well as by planting suitable berry-bearing plants. Thus three tuis were successfully supplied with food in the Oamaru district for many weeks by placing a bottle up a tree, and filled with thin honey, in the mouth of which a wick of red worsted was inserted. A better mixture would be four parts of water to one of sugar by measure, as this is akin to nectar, upon which tuis feed, not honey.

The silver eye can be made a regular visitor by feeding with beef suet, and the aphids on one's roses kept exterminated by the birds at the same time.

All artificial feeding is doubly effective during winter months. Great care should be taken to see no feed is able to