

THE GREY DUCK.

A noted Maori observer, Mr. J. Webber, of Kapiti Island, who has unique opportunities for watching the breeding of the grey duck, estimates that probably as great a percentage as 90 ducklings never reach maturity. As the remains of many young ducks have been unearthed in water rats' holes it is presumed that this rodent is the destroyer. Weasels, etc., are not present on the island. The ducklings stray considerable distances from the mother duck hunting for flies, etc., during the daytime, thus becoming an easy prey. The harrier hawk is one of the principal enemies of the rat, and it is therefore reasonable to suppose that the war waged on the hawk may have a bearing on the question of rodent increases. With the concentration of nearly all shooting on waterfowl, owing to the rapid depletion of upland game birds, the draining and molestation of the breeding grounds of the duck, the practice of some so-called sportsmen of baiting the birds with wheat to attract them to the mouth of the gun, the decrease of this valuable bird must continue. The remedy appears to be close seasons, shorter open seasons, decreased bag limits and the feeding of ducks on sanctuaries prior to an open season as a set-off against feeding them to attract them to their doom. The circumstances surrounding the decrease of ducks are certainly disquieting, as it is well known that when a species is reduced below a certain number of individuals it cannot recover and disappears *in toto*. Birds cannot survive against modern guns, combined with quick transport. The day has surely arrived for every good sportsman to put his gun away, as shooting nowadays is too one-sided.

SPOTLIGHT HUNTERS TO SERVE 45 DAYS.

Thomas Newell and Luigi Zarrelli, spotlight deer hunters, were sentenced to forty-five days each in gaol by Judge Lampman in County Court, Victoria (British Columbia), when the attorney-general, represented by Gordon A. Cameron, appealed the verdict in the Victoria Police Court where Magistrate Jay had turned them free.