

# Forest and Bird

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FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND  
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LONG-TAILED CUCKOO

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THE GOVERNMENT—and NEW ZEALAND

HELPFUL NURSE PLANTS

QUICK SUCCESS WITH NATIVE TREES

LONG-TAILED CUCKOO

CHARM OF RED-BILLED GULL

HAVOC OF DEER & GOATS

KAKA TELLS A STORY

BLUE PENGUIN OF THE COAST

SINS OF "COLLECTORS"

FRIENDLY WEKA

RIGHTS OF PUBLIC FLOUTED

DEER KILL TROUT

APPEAL FOR BEQUESTS

*"Protect your Best Friends - Your Forests and Birds."*

*Alan Thompson*

# FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (Inc.)

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*Do not forget that the welfare of yourselves and your  
children is absolutely dependent on the conservation of your  
natural resources.*

## The Government—and New Zealand

THE new Prime Minister, the Hon M. J. Savage, and his colleagues have declared emphatically that they wish to work for all the people all the time, and they have asked for the co-operation of public-spirited representatives (official or unofficial) of all sections of the community.

Various statements of Mr. Savage and his ministerial associates show that they have a clear understanding of the truth that the making and maintenance of a good standard of living for the general public depend on a well-planned development of natural resources—a perpetual production of real wealth—food, clothing, fuel, shelter. They know that they have to think and act on the plane of production—primary and secondary.

Therefore the basic governmental responsibility is protection of the soil on which the people's living is dependent. It is another case of "save the surface and save the lot." Alas, what an enormous penalty New Zealand is suffering to-day for shortsighted selfishness and stupidity which have cleared the way for disastrous erosion in many parts of the Dominion!

The greatest problem confronting the United States of America to-day does not lie in financial re-arrangements and re-adjustments—which are matters of opinion among persons of conflicting interests—but in the saving of the soil by the checking of erosion.

"Erosion in the Empire" is the title of a very arresting article in a recent issue of "United Empire" (published by the Royal Empire

Society). "True patriotism," the writer declares, "demands not only a call to arms to fight human aggression but to stem the tide of the ever-encroaching forces of erosion. The greatest problem of all facing the Empire to-day is not political nor racial, nor is it essentially defence by armaments; it is geological, for without arable lands and a good water supply the British Empire would soon cease to exist."

Here, then, is ground on which all New Zealanders can work together for mutual benefit, without regard to political opinions or party ties. Here is ground on which everybody can support the Government in a policy which would be good for all the people, all the time.

Such a policy calls for a proper management of the remnants of the native forest and for regeneration in suitable areas; it calls for a cessation of ruinous destruction of forests on watersheds; it calls for a vigorous exterminating war against deer which are killing forests in high country; it calls for a careful control of gold-winning operations which have already laid waste large areas of country that would have yielded real wealth in perpetuity—materials for the maintenance of human life; it calls for common-sense planning and administration in the whole field of wild life.

New Zealand, which is remarkably hilly and mountainous, is alarmingly susceptible to soil erosion. The steepness of much of the country and the friable nature of the surface make the way easy for erosion when nature's protective forests are cut out or burnt out. This scouring of

the soil is intensified in many districts by high rainfall.

As the shores of this country are mainly not far removed from deep

water the "spoil" carried away by flooded streams is generally not available for the formation of additional coastal areas.

## The Trail of the Vandal

The illustration below—a reproduction of a photograph of part of a notice set up by the Forest and Bird Protection Society on a tree in a Sanctuary—shows the bullet-marks of vandals who used the sign as a target.

### **NATIVE BIRDS**

They are necessary to your well-being in that they protect the forest from insect pests, they fertilise the forest tree flowers and attend to the proper distribution of forest tree seeds. Swamp birds, sea birds, and all with few exceptions are of benefit to you.

They are your heritage to be cherished and are, moreover, unique and wonderful.

### **Caution to Vandals, Poachers, Collectors, etc.**

They are almost without exception protected by law. Any person who takes or kills any of these birds (including pigeons and nearly all varieties of sea birds), or takes or has in his



## Helpful Nurse Plants

### For Establishing Plantations of "Natives".

(By Capt. E. V. Sanderson).

The neglect to utilise nurse plants, in endeavours to establish plantations of native trees, is in constant evidence, with the result that grass takes possession of the ground around the young plants. The growth is thus seriously retarded because air and moisture are excluded from the soil. On the other hand continuous cultivation for the checking of grass involves much unnecessary expense and work.

In Auckland one sees attempts at native tree plantations where the plants are struggling for an existence against grass which is frequently cut or mown.

In Wellington quite an extensive attempt was made with the help of unemployed labour to extend a native bush area. All the broom, in itself an already established nurse plant, was hacked down and burnt. The result was death for the planted "natives" which failed to survive last season's dry summer.

#### A Blunder in Dunedin.

From Dunedin reports reach the Forest and Bird Protection Society of the cleaning out of all underscrub in some native reserves with the intention of producing that park-like appearance so dear to the English-trained horticulturist. In such instances the very training of an English horticulturist is against him in his endeavours to realise New Zealand forest requirements. The natural characteristics are thus destroyed, and the standing trees are robbed of their necessary floor protection. Moreover, the charm and uniqueness disappear, and little remains to interest or to attract visitors (especially those from other countries).

The area merely stands as one more example of that desire which has been so disastrous to New Zealand—the attempts to make this country merely an imitation of England or other lands. The fault, however, is not to be so much ascribed to the horticulturist as to those who ask him to undertake work which is not in his understanding. Give

him something more on the lines of a Dutch or English garden and he will excel.

#### Preferably Nitrogenous Nurses.

Now as to these nurse plants! Having spaced the natives, which are to be permanent, sufficiently far apart to allow reasonable crown development later on, interplant as closely as you like with nurse plants (preferably a nitrogenous kind). Many quick-growing native plants can be used, such as lace bark, mahoe and others. Exotics, such as common broom and another broom (the gacia), tree lucerne or even gorse, make excellent nurse plants.

After the first season the nurse plants will overcome grass or other strong-growing competitors, and all that is then required is the cutting back and later the thinning out of the nurse plants as they threaten to over-grow the permanent natives, until in a few years there is a native plantation only, all the nurse plants having been removed.

#### Refutation of a Fallacy.

In this manner, following Nature's methods, all the plants grow up together, each sheltering the others from wind and the soil from excessive heat and dryness. If nurse plants are thus used, the natives, if suitable to the locality, will grow fast with most species. It is, the writer thinks, because native trees have been seen to make slow progress in grass-bound soil conditions that it has become the fashion to say natives are slow growers. The Mayor of one Auckland suburb enthusiastically stated that a native plantation he advocated would be a native forest in twenty years. The hoped-for result would be obtainable in five or seven years with the aid of nurse plants which would also save much labour, expense and loss of plants. This method of utilising nurse plants is merely an adaptation of forest practice in countries where scientific forestry is in evidence.

### Nature's Way at Tarawera.

It is also the method followed by Nature in establishing forest on perfectly bare ground. For instance, on the new soil formed by the Tarawera eruption in

sp.) the seed of which is carried by air like dandelion seed.

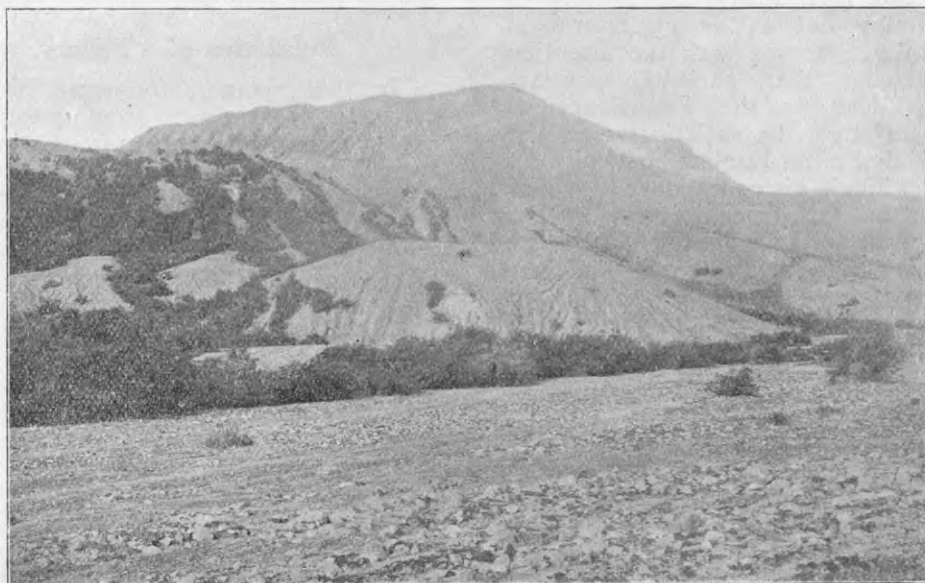
In the patch plants, which resemble a mossy growth less than an inch in height but yards in diameter, birds left the seed of the tutu (Coriaria), one of the best of nurse crops for woody growth but unfortunately poisonous to cattle. Following this shrub, which dies out in about twelve years, the wineberry or makamako (*Aristotelia racemosa*) with other shrubs such as tree fuchsia (*Fuchsia excorticata*), manuka (*Leptospermum*) and mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*) now took possession of the mountain side.



Slopes of Tarawera, 1450 feet. In the background is seen the summit of Tarawera. In the middle distance are gullies with the vegetation slowly creeping up the mountain. In the foreground are manuka (*Leptospermum*) and tutu scrub, with patches of Strathmore weed (*Pimelia*). Walking Stick at the bottom right-hand corner shows the scale. Photo by B. C. Aston in 1913.

1886, by which was deposited to a depth of several feet scoria, gravel, stones, sand, silt and clay on the top of existing vegetation—forest and shrubbery—it was not trees and shrubs that grew first but an organic matter or humus providing nurse crops of mat plants (*Raoulia*

If thus, on a soil lacking all organic matter and consisting of erupted fine and coarse rock, forest may be established by natural means, it must be easy to establish New Zealand forest on good soil.



Looking at the south end of Tarawera, showing gradual slope to summit avoiding the "mural crown." Coriaria shruberies in middle ground; gravel in foreground with patches of *Raoulia*.

Photo by B. C. Aston in 1913.

## Quick Success with Native Trees

### Wind-swept Sand-dunes of Paekakariki.

(By Observer).

Proof of the falsity of a widespread belief that native trees of New Zealand are very slow in growth and difficult to establish is given abundantly on a half-acre section at Paekakariki, Wellington, which Captain E. V. Sanderson began to plant only ten years ago. A dreary stretch of sand-dunes, covered with lupin, exposed to strong winds from the sea, has been changed into a delightful young

Some critics declared that the plants would be blown out of the ground. They felt that the experimenter was wasting his time, and they were rather sorry for him. Those adverse commentators who have lived to see the success of the experiment wished that they had followed Captain Sanderson's example. He had observed Nature's way in the establishment of forests, and took a similar course.

Some of the lupins were left to act as nurse plants. As the young natives grew up they shielded and sheltered one another. It was a kind of "close corporation" for mutual benefit.

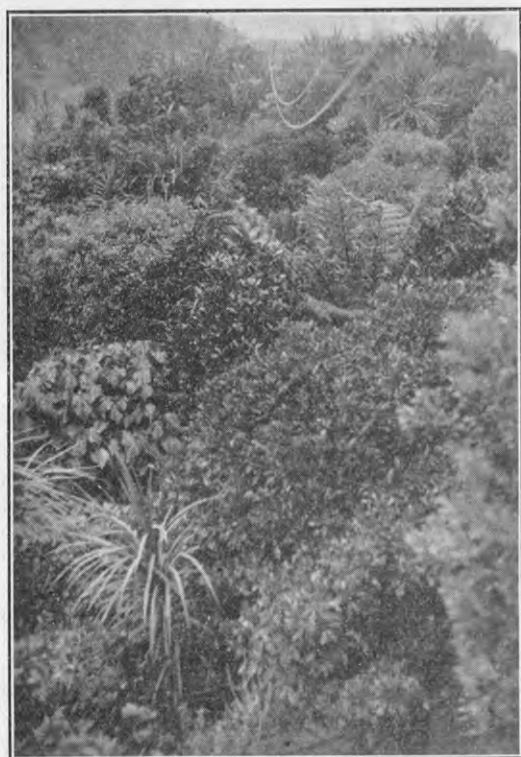
In addition to the nitrogenous nourishment supplied by the roots of lupin, the



Maori gateway to the Sanderson Bush.

forest, where one may enjoy that bush scent which warms the heart of nature-lovers.

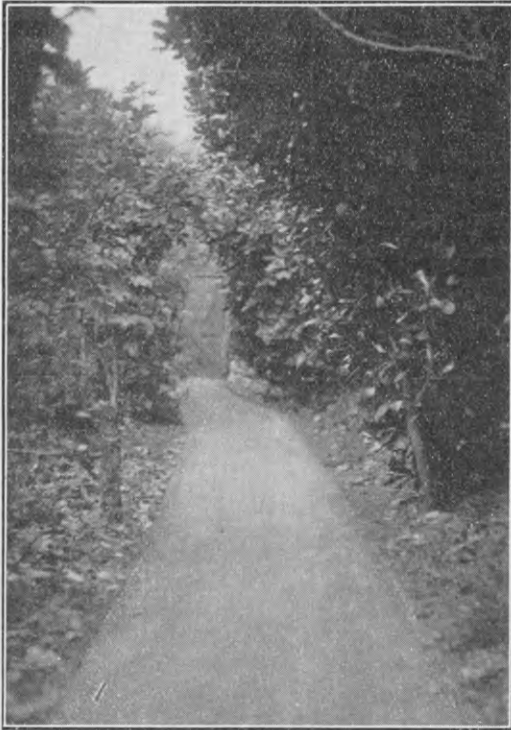
Of course, when the tree-lover began his task, which seemed absurd to many onlookers, he heard frequent predictions of failure. The area became known as "the rubbish-heap," because of the heaps of dead lupin and other rotting vegetation, destined to form the humus necessary for the young native seedlings.



A glimpse of the top of the plantation.

young trees had the help of natural phosphates in the sand. Artificial fertilisers were tried, but potash alone gave any desirable results. Any organic manure proved beneficial. Cow manure gave a notable fillip to karaka.

Among the enemies to be conquered were wood-lice (commonly known as slaters), which soon changed many of the seedlings into bare sticks. Accordingly a permit was obtained for the keeping of three wekas which were assured of safe



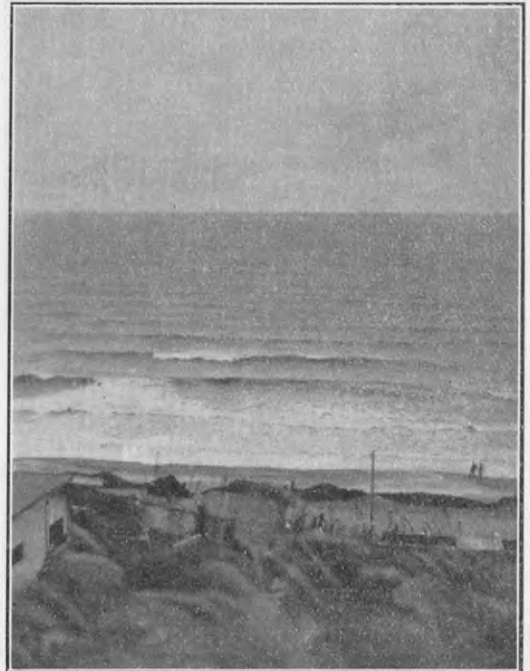
A delightful aisle in the little "sanctuary".

sanctuary by a strong wire-netting fence which enclosed the section. Within a week of the birds' arrival all plants began to improve in health. Slaters, snails and other pests suffered very heavy casualties, and the wekas waxed fat.

A general height of 15 ft. to 16 ft. was attained by the plantation in ten years. Any species which outgrew the others was cut back by heavy winds to the average height of the whole stand—the height at which the trees were mutually protective.

The "natives" (about 70 species) that have been strongly established include poroporo, wharangi, taupata, makomako (wineberry), kotukutuku (commonly called "konini," which is the name of the sweet berry), koromiko, ngutukaka (kaka-beak), pukanui, taraire, karamu, rata, karaka, karo, ngaio, whau, taupata, ake-ake, pohutukawa, ti-toki, tarata, ti (cabbage-tree), mamaku, (a tree-fern), puriri, mahoe, kawakawa, manuka, whauwhi (lacebark) and patete (five-finger).

Captain Sanderson's place "Te Kohanga" ("The Nest") is now used as an experimental station. Various forms of bird-baths are tried out; the bathing conditions preferred by birds are carefully observed, experiments are made in the selection of winter food and methods of feeding and in the trapping of rats, weasels and other enemies without catching birds.



View showing clear scope for winds from the sea.



## The Long-Tailed Cuckoo

Maori name—Koekoea.

(*Urodynamis taitensis*).

(By L. W. McCaskill).

Of the two species of the cuckoo family that annually visit New Zealand from regions nearer the equator, the larger long-tailed cuckoo is perhaps less well known than its smaller relative the shining cuckoo. It is not uncommon during the summer months, but appears to remain in sparsely settled bush country, is of retiring habits even in such districts, and restricts its cry mainly to the first and last hours of daylight. This cry is harsh and rasping, something like kwakwaa (with a short a as in bat) or, better still, like the Maori name "koekoea" with the last e sound drawn out. Another call has been described as "whiz-z-z-t."

This cuckoo's appearance at once suggests the description "hawk-like," and it may be this resemblance to a common enemy that arouses the anger of small birds when a koekoea is seen. It has the colour of a hawk but not its beak and feet, and so must seek safety in retreat with the flock of feathered furies in pursuit. It gains revenge in sneaking fashion by visiting unguarded nests to steal and devour eggs and sometimes even nestlings, and as if in final settlement of its score, the cuckoo may then leave its own egg to be cared for by one of the deluded victims.

Bush canaries (the whiteheads of the North Island and the yellowheads of the South) are frequently the foster-parents thus victimised. The tui has been seen attacking a cuckoo that appeared to have designs on its nest. Wood robins are also reported as foster parents and grey warblers have been seen feeding a young koekoea, but whether these tiny birds have previously fostered the large cuckoo's egg, as they do that of the shining cuckoo, is not definitely known.

Owing to lack of observation we do not know much about the egg itself. It is supposed that a cuckoo imposing upon the bush canary lays an egg somewhat resembling that of a bush canary, and

another cuckoo imposing on the robin lays an egg more like that of the robin. More observation, however, is needed on this point.

During the nesting season the favourite haunts of these birds are mostly away from the haunts of man, but they may be seen even in the neighbourhood of large towns when on migration. In the fresh adult plumage the underparts are white streaked with brown, and the upperparts dark brown spotted and barred with chestnut. In autumn birds in immature plumage are more frequently seen. In these the throat and breast are buff instead of white, and the back is spangled with white spots. Also the tail is a little shorter than in the full grown bird. They consume in their first season a prodigious number of insects and spiders.

New Zealand is the only known nesting country of the long-tailed cuckoo. In winter the species is found in various islands of the South Pacific from the Solomons in the west to Tahiti in the east. The ancient Maori explained its annual disappearance by saying that the bird shed its feathers in the autumn, turned into a lizard, and crawled into a hole in the ground and spent the winter there. There is much to be learned of the migrations and nesting habits of the long-tailed cuckoo.

## The Ways of the Hedgehog

A Wellington horticulturist, who was much troubled with wood-lice (slaters) in his green-house, put in a hedgehog and a number of chickens to eat the insects. That night he slept with an easy mind, satisfied that the wood-lice were in for a bad time.

When he went next morning to view the results of his policy, he saw a happy hedgehog and headless chickens.

Hedgehogs are fond of the chicks of wild birds as well as domesticated kinds.

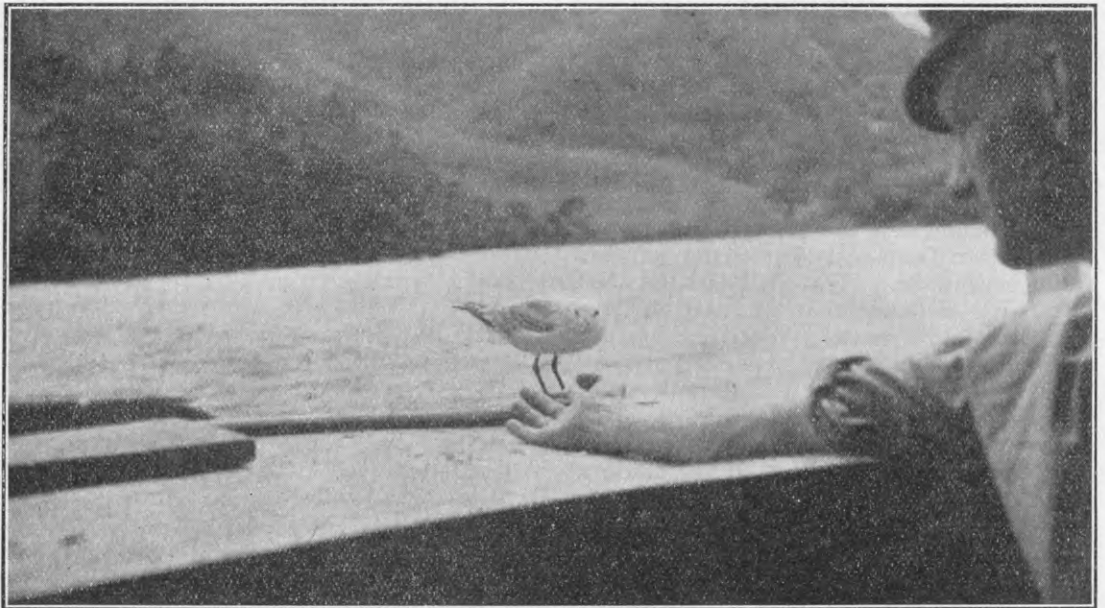
## Charm of the Red-Billed Gull

**Friend of Many Folk by the Sea.**

Anybody who goes fishing near the haunts of the red-billed gull (commonly known as the mackerel gull) will not lack feathered company. These birds regard fishing enthusiasts as providential friends who are pleased to hand out a few tit-bits. Bolder than the larger black-backed gulls, which keep watch further away, the red-bills do not always wait until man deigns to throw a morsel of mussel or other bait. They do not hesitate to act on the proverb "opportunity makes the thief." Craftily they sidle up gradually behind a fisher's back on a rock. Great is his surprise when he looks around for the large fat mussel which he had scooped from its shell a few minutes previously. An unrepentant purloiner is sitting amiably on a crag a few yards away, ready for another chance to give another surprise. However, he would be a hard-hearted man or boy who would grudge those beautiful pilferers a few illicit snacks.



A red-billed gull, injured by a vandal with a pea-rifle, was nursed back to health and strength by Mrs. Sanderson at Paekakariki.



Friendship of a sailor and a red-billed gull.

## Guilt of Deer and Goats Proved

(By Witness).

In striking contrast with the airy plea for the preservation of deer by Lord Latymer (a devotee of stalking) various accurate observers can point to the far-reaching mischief of those animals in native forests.

For example, in the Palliser Bay area, Wellington, one sees gaunt mountain ranges consisting of masses of rock lightly covered with soil (the scant remains of the humus of ages) which for centuries supported luxuriant vegetation.



The old forest is nearly dead; floor covering is practically gone; a washout has begun. The roots, once protected by the undergrowth, now exposed, spread about in octopus-like shapes.

This type of country needs an abundance of undergrowth in order to hold the soil and prevent the hilltops slipping away as shale slides and ruining the valleys below. In the Palliser Bay area deer, goats and other pests have destroyed much of the undergrowth, and the remaining forest

consists of old trees which will die much sooner than they should because denudation of the undergrowth has destroyed their natural protection. Among the few native plants which seem capable of resisting the onslaughts of the deer and goats are the kie-kie and one or two species of the koromiko; nevertheless even where such plants are growing fairly densely there is no floor covering and the stones roll. One notices a total absence of any young trees such as mahoe, pate, hangehange, whau-whaupaku and so on; of course there are no young trees of the larger forest types.

Much of the Palliser Bay area is State Forest. Some action to clean out the goats is urgently necessary. Fire and sheep, of course, contribute to the damage, but fire is avoidable, and sheep do not penetrate far into bush, unless their entry is made practicable by the more agile goats and deer. The big menace is a combination of goat, deer, domestic cattle and opossum, in that order of importance.



Erosion which took place in 1935 in the lower valley, the result of the enormous quantities of water released too quickly by the uncovered ranges above.

## Kaka Tells a Story

"The Good Old Days"—and Now.

(By E. T. Frost).

As I sat up in the top of a dead kauri tree digging out nice fat grubs for you youngsters, I heard two men, who were sitting down close by having their lunch, talking. One of them was holding a piece of paper and looking hard at it. Every now and then he would talk and say something to his companion. I could not hear all that he was saying, but just caught scraps here and there of the conversation. I heard words like these: "hard times," "depression"; and several times he mentioned an incident which he evidently thought had a good deal to do with these "hard times," as he called them. It was something that apparently had taken place some years ago, and he called it the "Great War." He said that before the "Great War" had taken place how everybody had plenty, and he referred to that time as the "good old days."

When he mentioned that term, "good old days," I wondered if he ever gave a thought to the fact that that term applied to other creatures besides man, and that quite near him in the forest were birds whose near relations had lived in what was the "good old days" of bird life in this country, and that it was not a "Great War" that had brought hard times in our bird world, but just the thoughtless acts of this man's kith and kin.

In those "good old days" we were not confined to a small forest such as the one in which we now live on these Mangamuka Mountains, but we could fly up and down the land as we pleased, and when food was scarce in one place, as it often is here, we could fly off to other places where berries were plentiful and good sweet honey was to be had in abundance, to say nothing of nice fat grubs in the dead wood.

Now when food is scarce on these mountains we have nowhere else to go, and sometimes we become very hungry and weak. My mother used to talk to me often about those times, of which she had heard from her grandparents. They all lived in these mountains, but had many trips up and down the coast. When certain berries were scarce here, and our

tribe thought they would like a change of food, they would all set off on a fine morning in autumn for a flight down the coast. It must have been a wonderful sight to see thousands of our tribe, with red wings flashing in the morning sun, all talking at once, gathering up in the air to set off on the southward journey. At a signal from the leader off the whole host would fly.

Keeping just inland from the sea, where the snow-white breakers could be seen dashing against the rocky coast, they sped on southward to a forest, where some of the wise old leaders had been the year before, and where they knew that at this season of the year food would be in abundance. Here and there a large river and a broad harbour would come into view, on whose banks men and women could be seen digging up something out of the ground. My mother said that these were not the same people whom we now see so plentiful in the land, but were a brown-skinned race, which, like our own bird tribe, has become much less numerous since the white-skinned men and women came to this country. These brown-skinned people, although they took a lot of us for food, did not destroy our feeding grounds, and our race kept up its numbers. Not until the white-skinned people came and cut down and burnt our feeding grounds and homes, and pointed those dreadful fire sticks at us, which made such an awful noise and killed us high up in the trees, did our numbers begin to dwindle.

Now I must tell you of one trait in our characters which led to the undoing of many a fine fat bird which flew away on that autumn morning. It was inquisitiveness, which was not confined to birds only. From scraps of conversation I have heard between people who sometimes wander into the forest, a lot of their children also have it. This is a big word for you young birds, but it means in our common talk "poking your beak into places that you ought not." I will tell you of an incident that occurred on that journey which will illustrate what



I mean and will be an object-lesson to you not to be too inquisitive.

"Joey" was a brilliantly-coloured young chap who thought, as he flew high up there above sea and forest, that he had nothing to learn from the wiser old birds who were leading the flock; so, gathering a few young bloods like himself, he left the main party and settled down in a forest, near where people were seen digging.

There were wise old men in that village who knew the habits of our tribe very well, and their keen eyes saw "Joey" and his companions detach themselves from the main flock and settle in the forest near-by, and they immediately made preparations to catch them. They had with them one of our tribe, which they had taken from a nest and reared, and which lived with them in the village. This bird they took with them into the forest, and there they built a small hut with leaves of nikau and ponga, leaving only a small hole in the top out of which they put a small stick.

Hiding themselves in the hut, the men made the tame bird call out, and it was not long before "Joey" heard it. He knew from its call that it was not one of his companions, and so he thought he would find out for himself. Nearer and nearer he drew until he perched on the stick that led down the hole. As it was dark inside he could not see down into the hut, but as the bird inside kept on crying out he sidled down the stick until he was almost out of sight. Just then a strong hand was thrust up out of the darkness, and poor "Joey" paid for his inquisitiveness with his life, and I am sorry to say that he was not the only one of that flock to do so.

One bird managed to escape from his captor and fled away screaming to take the sad news to the others of the main flock, which had settled in a large forest on the Waitakere Ranges. Later on the flock moved further south, flying across the Manukau Harbour and the Waikato River. There they found a very large forest, where many of them settled down for good.

Later on, towards the spring of the year, a number of the flock came back to the old home on the Mangamuka. Now no more can we fly up and down the land as we used to. The forests are nearly all

gone, and we have to be content with our own little world, and it is to be hoped that this will not be taken from us. There are signs, from what I can hear, that these white people are now sorry that they destroyed so much of our forest home and that they are now going to keep as much as possible of what is left for us and our children's children, but we will never have the "good old days."

## Kindness to Birds

The picture below shows a drinking-font, bath and nesting-box for birds in the beautiful War Memorial Gardens of Kaikoura. Similar provision for the feathered friends of man should be made in all public gardens.

Increasing numbers of thoughtful folk are putting bird-baths into their gardens and they are pleased to have feed-boxes for them during the winter and early spring when natural food is comparatively scarce and bad weather may make foraging difficult.



## The Blue Penguin of the Coast

*Eudyptula minor* (Forster).

**Native Name: Korora.**

(By R. A. Falla.)

The presence of penguins along the whole coastline of New Zealand seems to be a matter for surprise to some people who associate these birds only with the polar regions. The facts are of course that the penguin family, although confined to the Southern Hemisphere, consists of seventeen species, only two or three of which are inhabitants of the Antarctic ice. Several of them are subantarctic and three species are found in warmer waters. Of these the smallest is the blue penguin of southern and eastern Australia and New Zealand.

In structure it is like its larger relatives, solidly built and muscular, clothed with short flattened feathers which fit almost like a fish's scales. It has very short webbed feet and powerful flippers in place of wings. Thus equipped, the penguin is much at home in the water, swimming easily at the surface and still more rapidly beneath it. Its food consists of small crabs and crab-like creatures as well as fish, and most of its time is spent at sea. The nesting season, beginning in August, brings penguins ashore at various places along the whole coastline of New Zealand from North Cape to Stewart Island.

The birds are not well adapted for progression on land, a fact that is evident by their awkward movements. The very short legs are so restricted in movement as to make their owners definitely "hobbled," and as they are short-sighted and easily flurried they usually flop down on their bellies and progress with the aid of their flippers as well when alarmed.

### Various Nesting Places.

Caves and rock cavities are favourite nesting places, but some of the birds, either from choice or necessity, travel some distance from the water to make a burrow either in soft earth or sand. Where a coast is steep the birds will even climb to heights of a hundred feet or so for the purpose. Any human being who erects a seaside house near an ocean

beach is likely to have penguin tenants in the basement.

Perhaps because they are unable to pay rent, the birds make up for it by giving vocal performances at night—father penguin, mother penguin, and the chicks, all braying in different keys. Unappreciative owners have been known to tear up the floor boards in desperation and to eject the tenants without notice.

Two eggs are the full complement for a blue penguin nest, white thick-shelled eggs, not unlike good-sized barn-door hens' eggs. There is usually some grass or other nesting material in which they are partly bedded, and the penguin covers them above by crouching over them. The bird that is not sitting remains at sea all day and returns at night.

The eggs hatch within a day or two of each other, and the chicks are practically twins. They are clothed in short woolly down and are quite helpless except that they are able to hold up their heads for food. Their demands in this direction keep the parents busy, and as the chicks grow bigger both adults spend the day at sea fishing.

### Noisy Home-coming.

It is the return of the parents at night that is the occasion for all the noise mentioned previously. The old birds have swallowed the food as they collected it and have the power of regurgitating it in a half-digested condition. This act is stimulated by the chick thrusting its beak up into the old bird's open mouth, and thus receiving its food.

Two successive downy stages in the chicks are followed by the growth of true feathers, and when the last of the second down has dropped off the young birds resemble the old ones, except that they are not so robust and their plumage is of a brighter blue. They swim fairly well as soon as they take to the water, but they seem to have some difficulty in finding food at times, for starving young birds are often washed ashore. Except

for sharks, which are not particularly voracious in New Zealand waters, and perhaps barracouta, they seem to have few enemies.

Throughout the year they may be seen disporting themselves in small parties on the surface of the sea, with little

more than the head showing. By some process of inflation they can also float with about half the body exposed and in this position apparently go to sleep. From this position, however, they cannot dive suddenly, and must deflate before they can submerge.

## Sins of "Collectors"

Even ardent bird-lovers, who also happen to be "collectors," have been known to break the law in their zeal for the acquisition of specimens, however rare the species may be. Indeed, their eagerness is usually intensified by the scarcity of a species.

Lack of effective supervision on the mainland of New Zealand leaves the way easy for poachers. Even when permits are granted to certain collectors there is not a strict control of their toll of birds.

On the outlying islands, particularly far down in the south, unscrupulous "collectors" may do much mischief. The Whitney Expedition, which worked under a permit to obtain limited numbers of certain species of birds on islands of New

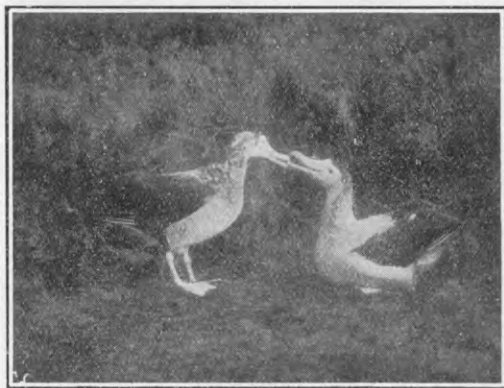


Photo by H. Guthrie-Smith.  
Courtship of wandering albatross, Enderby Island,  
Antipodes.

Zealand, some years ago, exceeded the authorised figures.

The time is long overdue for a checking of the abuses of "collecting".

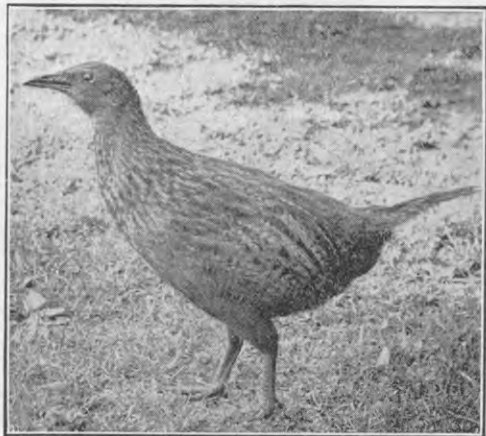


Hair-seals on Enderby Island, Antipodes.

Photo by H. Guthrie-Smith.

## The Friendly Weka

**"Policeman of the Bush."**



H. Guthrie-Smith, a distinguished writer on New Zealand birds, has given warm praise to the weka, which he has termed "the policeman of the bush." After mentioning the feats of wekas in their killing of rats (which, he says, "do more damage to our local avifauna than shooting, fires, dogs, cats, weasels and birds of prey combined") he remarks:—

"The most efficient method of preserving the smaller tree-breeding species of birds lies in the propagation of the weka. Of all the birds that deserve our care he comes foremost. Assistance withheld from him is denied to half the indigenous birds of New Zealand."

In a letter to the Forest and Bird Protection Society, a wellwisher of Greymouth tells a very interesting story of a weka which had the greater part of its beak torn off by an opossum trap.

Two years ago (he writes) we began milling operations in the Ihamatua district. One day this bird made its appearance while the bushmen were having lunch at the bush winch. One of the men threw it a piece of bread and then noticed it was unable to pick it up, as it had lost the top part of the beak, leaving the tongue bare in the lower portion. After some coaxing the bird came and took food out of their hands.

In a week or two it became so tame that it followed the men coming home down the tram of an evening to the sus-

pension bridge over the river, and would meet them again in the morning, at daylight, and go to the bush with them about a mile distant.

Some twelve months ago the lower portion of the beak fell off, evidently having been injured also, although to outward appearances there is no sign of damage to the mouth.

The bird, which is known as "Joey" by the men, has become so docile that he appears to have left the bush and made his abode at the mill, going in and out of the men's huts, and feeding with the cats and dogs, of which he appears to take no notice. He is rather wary of strangers, and usually makes for the fern when they are about, but will come out when the residents call him. He is regarded as a pet amongst the workmen, and although several have wished to take him away the men are most emphatic that he shall remain. His favourite diet seems to be boiled rice. He is an expert at catching field mice with his feet, but owing to his lack of beak he has a big struggle to pick up the mouse to eat it.



**Pity the Parrakeet!**

Native parrakeets of several species were formerly very plentiful in many districts. Their numbers have been grievously reduced by man and his pests.



## Rights of Public Constantly Flouted

One wonders what the shade of Abraham Lincoln, hovering over the United States of America, to-day, would think of his famous plea:—"That this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people shall not perish from the earth."

When Jay N. Darling (a famous caricaturist) took office as Chief of the United States Bureau of Biological Survey, he had high hopes of an administration which could prevail for the general public against the callous selfishness of sectional interests. He fought hard; he fought well—but he was beaten. He was the "irresistible force against the immovable object"—and the stodgy object won. Here are words of "Ding" Darling on his resignation:—

"I have come to realize that most of our wildlife conservation troubles are due to lack of organization among those who are interested but ineffective in the conservation of wildlife. There is no mass strength to enforce adequate legislation and executive attention to wildlife interests. Every other element of American life has a national organization to get effective results. Wildlife interests remind me of an unorganized army, beaten in every battle, zealous and brave but unable to combat the trained legions who are organized to get what they want."

"There is great truth in this statement," comments "Nature Magazine." "The money interest involved on the side of those who want wildlife so that they may kill it has resulted in the organization of this minority 'to get what they want.' They have built up a fiction that they own the wildlife and they defend that fancy with ample funds and power.

"If the makers of cameras, the owners of railroads and the manufacturers of automobiles that carry people to recreation areas deriving much of their allure from the existence of wildlife, or the producers of innumerable items of use to those who seek the outdoors would realize the value at stake things might be different. They might see the wisdom of protecting wildlife and providing the means to combat the money power of the arms and ammunition makers who seek to keep the killing going. There are more people fundamentally interested in perpetuation and increase of our renewable natural resources in wildlife than there are those seeking to destroy these resources. But Mr. Darling is right; they are unorganized."

In New Zealand the Forest and Bird Protection Society offers the national platform on which all public-spirited New Zealanders can stand for the permanent welfare of their country.



Wooded ridges of Little Barrier Bird Sanctuary indicate the necessary national policy for conservation of watersheds.

## Appeal for Bequests

Is there any cause more worthy of bequests by public-spirited citizens, than the objectives of the Forest and Bird Protection Society, which is working wholly and solely for the welfare of New Zealand, present and future? Here is a suggested form of bequest:—

"I give and bequeath the sum of .....to the Forest and Bird Protection Society (Incorporated), and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said Society shall be a complete discharge to my executors for the legacy hereby given to such Society."

The working record of the Society and the personnel of its membership and Executive are a good guarantee that the best possible use will be made of such bequests.

## Call for Sanctuaries

The Society would also welcome the responsibility of administering suitable sanctuaries for land or sea birds, provided that a small annuity is added for the payment of a caretaker. Such sanctuaries could be named after the donor, and would thus be a perpetuation of his name as a saviour of New Zealand's forest and bird life. It is suggested that such sanctuaries should be administered in a manner to ensure their return to the original natural conditions as nearly as possible; to prevent the destruction of native predators, except upon the recommendation of recognized authorities on wild life conservation; to eliminate all exotics to the utmost extent.

## Morepork—Expert Rat-Catcher

Captain Sanderson says that during the past few years a morepork has wintered in his bushy place at Paekakariki. The bird has proved much more skilful than a cat in killing mice and rats. After the morepork has been in its cosy winter-quarters for a week no rodents are caught in the traps which are always left set for them where birds cannot be harmed.

## Deer Kill Trout

"Deer kill trout," calmly remarked a bird-lover to an angler friend.

"What!" exclaimed the fisherman incredulously as his eyebrows rose to the limit. He thought that his friend was trying to make him believe that stags waded into streams, dipped their antlers and tossed up trout while hinds reclined on the banks admiring the prowess of their lords and masters.

"Yes, deer kill trout," repeated the bird-lover. "You anglers are constantly complaining about the heavy losses of trout when big floods scour streams, swish away the food of trout and dash plenty of them to death. In many cases those floods are due to destruction of water-regulating forests in high country. Deer are killing forests in such country. Therefore, as deer are promoters of floods they must be ranked among the deadly enemies of trout. I could say more —."

"Enough," interrupted the angler. "You're right. I'm with you all the way in the war on deer."

## Sport! Oh, Yes!

Some comments of Jay N. Darling (late chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, U.S.A.), which can apply to New Zealand:—

"No major sport in the world (with the possible exception of the wrestling game) has suffered so much from abuses within as the time-honoured recreation of wild-fowling. The boys like it so well they've about ruined it. . . ."

"Speaking by and large, everything goes in the great conglomerate fraternity of those who take fish and game by fair means or foul. Nothing is barred. You may shoot out of season, exceed the bag limit, buy ducks of a bootlegger, bribe a game warden, have your Senator intercede with the judge and still be accepted in good sportsmen's society. If you can carry home one bag limit in the open, hide a gunny sack full under the seat cushions and stuff another dozen in your spare tyres and get as far as the club ice-box with them, it's heigh-ho and a great joke on the Fish and Game Department."

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Invites all those who have respect for our wonderful and unique native forests and birds, all those who realize the great economic and aesthetic value of birds, all those who wish to preserve our unrivalled scenic beauties, to band together with the Society in an earnest endeavour to stimulate public interest and secure efficient preservation, conservation and intelligent utilization of our great heritage.

With the co-operation, appreciation and assistance of the general public New Zealand can stand unrivalled. Without such help our forests will be hopelessly marred and destroyed by fire, animals, and wasteful exploitation.

The subscriptions are:—Life members £5, Endowment members £1 per annum; ordinary subscription, adults 5/-, children 1/-. Endowment members comprise those who desire to contribute in a more helpful manner towards the preservation of our birds and forests. Besides this, we ask for your co-operation in assisting to conserve your own heritage. Is it not worth while?

We aim at issuing only accurate information, all of which is checked by leading authorities. No remuneration is asked by any of our executive. Your contribution goes solely towards better informing others.

**OBJECTS**—*To advocate and obtain the efficient protection and preservation of our native forests and birds, enlisting the natural sympathy of our young, unity of control of all wild life, and the preservation of sanctuaries, scenic reserves, etc., in their native state.*

*Affiliated with the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the British Empire (of which King Edward VIII is Patron) and with the International Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds.*

Recognising that it is essential for all those who desire to save our forest and bird life to band together, I enclose herewith my subscription of £..... as a subscriber to the Society. I shall be glad to receive the quarterly magazine, "Forest and Bird," without further charge.

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