

impending annihilation in the speeding monster bearing down upon it, and with neck and wings outstretched hurriedly paddles out of harm's way, whereupon all the other gulls, craning their necks, watch for a moment or two ere with a well-we-are-all-right-for-a-while demeanour they settle back again. Ultimately one and all fly across to the freshly disced ground and recognised sanctuary. Or it may be that the old brown retriever snoozing on the tractor cover or in the shade of a kerosene drum, and dreaming of his lost youth, wakes up, spies the somnolent gulls, and takes upon himself the task of stalking them. Seeing that the paddock is totally devoid of cover this idea is fraught with overwhelming difficulties. Yet his cautious advance (belly to earth, steps slow and cautious) causes a ripple of unease to run through the would-be

prey. Heads are raised and in one or two instances the owners get uncertainly to their feet, look at each other, and then at the more-stealthy-than-hopeful advancing foe. "It's that infernal dog again, why can't he let a poor bird rest in peace . . ." The "poor birds" have perforce to take to the air. They are off, they alight nearby, as they usually do, and the pantomime is resumed. Occasionally they are chased aloft half-a-dozen times. Usually, however, after the third or fourth attack they adjourn to the extreme corner of the paddock at the time their tormenter slouches back to resume his snoozing.

About three o'clock the tractor is stopped for a smoke-oh. All the seagulls raise their heads again. "Hullo; afternoon tea on the go? . . . well, we do not mind if we do," and back they fly to resume their grass-grub extermination.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION.

"The first great need for the future wildlife programme," said Dr. Gabrielson at the North American Wildlife Conference, held at Washington on the 18th March, "is more information, dependable facts and no guesswork . . . research must be continued and on an increasing and expanding scale." To attain the goal of adequate and suitable places in which wildlife may live, he emphasised the importance of acquiring for this purpose such areas as are geographically strategic with relation to wildlife distribution. Finally, he urged, education must be extended into many fields. He declared that "we have not yet developed an effective mechanism for getting conservation understanding and information into the minds of those who do not yet know and appreciate its basic significance to future human welfare."

SEED DISTRIBUTION BY BIRDS.

(By L. W. McCaskill.)

The experiments at the Christchurch Teachers' Training College have been continued. The wax-eyes were fed on syrup from May to August. The droppings on the food tray were sown in sterilised soil in September last and yielded the following seedlings: *Cordyline australis* (Cabbage-tree) 132, *Benthamia fragifera* (Himalayan Strawberry-tree) 14, *Cotoneaster serotina* 5, asparagus 1. Total 152.

THE LATE W. H. GUTHRIE-SMITH.

By the death of this great naturalist New Zealand loses one of its foremost authorities on bird life. The Forest and Bird Protection Society has much to thank him for in past years. He was a keen supporter and helper. An obituary notice will appear in the November issue.

Procrastination and lack of unity of effort are the shortcomings which threaten not only progress towards the efficient management of forest and wild life matters, but the very existence of the Empire. The whole national wellbeing is involved in the care and preservation of a sufficiency of strategically placed native forest and wild life reserves. The management of these vital resources or any part of them is not an affair for shooters and fishermen, as it seems to have been thought in past years, but, as the wellbeing of every section of the community is vitally concerned in these matters, the call should be for efficient national management and a whole-hearted national effort for the national welfare.—E. V. Sanderson.