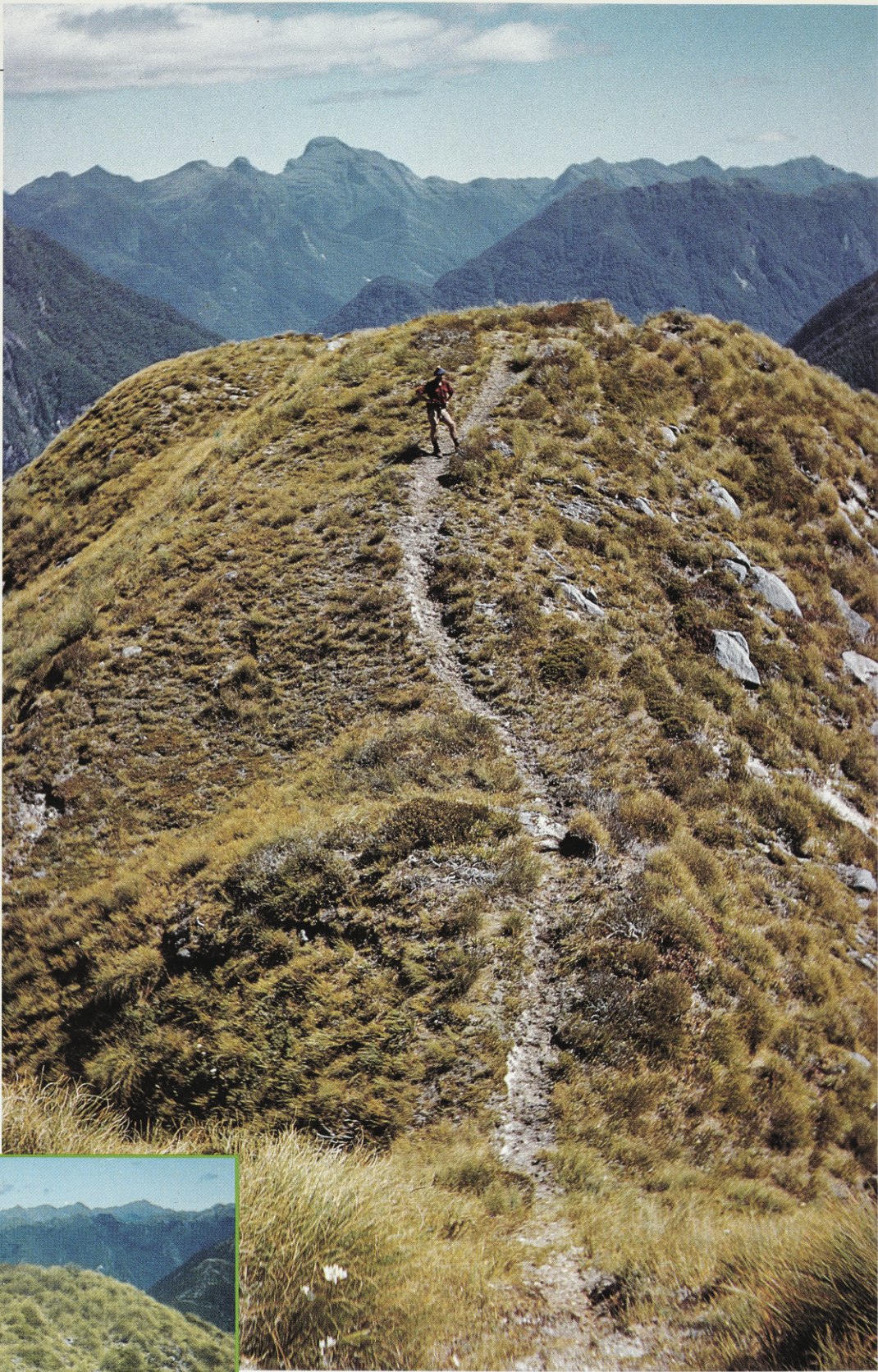


Kakapo tracks at George Sound

by John Hall-Jones,
Southland branch councillor

IN 1956 I DISCOVERED a well-defined kakapo track and bowl system on the summit ridge of Saddle Hill, George Sound. In 1989 I returned to the site and was impressed to find that the kakapo track was still there, although sadly it had obviously fallen into dis-use.

In 1863 John Buchanan, the botanical artist on Sir James Hector's expedition to the West Coast Sounds, made a sketch of a system of "kakapo tracks on a mountain 3,000 feet above George Sound". An alignment of his sketch shows that Buchanan was on the leading ridge of Nita Peaks directly across the valley from Saddle Hill and at the same level



The well worn kakapo path on Saddle Hill, George Sound, in 1956. By 1989 the same path had become overgrown, sad sign that kakapo had disappeared from the area. Photos: John Hall-Jones.