



Photo: Christchurch Press

## Save our Seals

THE PLIGHT of West Coast fur seals drowning in nets in the hoki fishery was highlighted by Canterbury Forest and Bird branch and supporters at a protest at Lyttelton recently.

Five Soviet trawlers moored in the harbour were part of a fleet of fishing vessels which have drowned at least 1600 fur seals over the last two years.

## 1990 medals for conservation

FOREST AND BIRD members featured prominently among the people awarded 1990 medals for services to conservation. Recipients included the Society's former national secretary Joan Leckie, conservation director Kevin Smith, immediate past president Dr Alan Mark, executive member Gordon Stephenson, Lesley Shand from the Canterbury branch, and Derek Shaw (Nelson).

Other notable recipients included West Coasters Maida Bryant and Jim Keenan; Hugh Barr, Arnold Heine and David Henson from Federated Mountain Clubs; Kevin Hackwell from the NZ Rainforests Coalition; Dame Miriam Dell and Cath Wallace from ECO; Theo Simeonidis from the Federation of

Freshwater Anglers and marine reserve advocate Bill Ballantine.

Also awarded medals were: Gary Aburn, Douglas Ackerley, Jacqueline Adams, Dr Ian Atkinson, John Bamford, Stephen Barker, Dr Carolyn Burns, Raymond Cleland, Arthur Cowan, Sheila Davis, Dr Richard Dell, Hamish Ensor, Jocelyn Fish, Peter Hayden, Dr John Hayward, Dr George Heather, Ernest Holdaway, William Johnson, Brian Jones, Percy Lucas, John Mazey, George Mollett, Guy Salmon, Professor John Salmon, Horace Sinclair, William Sutherland, Denise Sutherland, David Thom, Keith Thompson, Donald Thomson.

## Swamp haven

CANTERBURY BRANCH have produced a booklet promoting the special values of Travis Swamp, an 80-ha wetland just 8 km north-east of Cathedral Square.

*Travis Swamp: A Case for Preserving a National Asset* has been prepared by chairperson David Alexander and committee member Robert Harris. It points out that, while the swamp has been significantly degraded, it is still home to 43 bird species, 28 of which breed on site. Invading exotic weeds and many years of grazing have com-

promised the swamp's botanical values, but more than 50 native plant species still occur there.

Travis Swamp is one of the few examples left of natural Christchurch before the arrival of settlers in the 1850s. At that period much of the city area was swamp.

The future of the wetland has been under a cloud since a developer proposed housing on the 23 ha it owns. However, the developer has failed to obtain a water right to drain the land. Landcorp also own 29 ha of marginal grazing land; negotiations are continuing to reserve this area. The city council owns the remainder.

Long term plans for the swamp are to transform it into a wildlife and recreation zone, with board walks and bird hides – a haven for wetland wildlife in the midst of the city.

## New branch

FOREST AND BIRD has a new branch in the north. At the November Council the Hibiscus Coast section became a fully fledged branch. We wish them good luck and many conservation successes.