

The estimated total of 8,698 cwt. shows another substantial increase, Westland, as usual, being the main contributor. The administrative problems in connection with the whitebait fishery are not only complex in themselves, but are further complicated by the fact that so many people are affected by any particular move and the interests of each group clash violently with those of other groups.

FRESH-WATER EELS

Due to lack of staff, little was done in investigating the problems of the establishment of a commercial fresh-water-eel fishery. Some experimental work in canning and freezing eels has been carried out by the trade interests concerned, and it is hoped that 1946 will show a forward move in this field.

Reference to eel-canning will also be found in the marine research section of this report.

QUINNAT SALMON

Last year's report covered the activities of the Hakataramea Station in 1945 and also the activities of the rod and net fishermen. It is proposed to bring this data into line with the rest of the report, so that the next lot of statistics will appear in the 1946 report. The salmon season has continually overlapped the financial year, and in the past it was only the late preparation of the report, months after the close of the financial year, which has enabled this data to be included.

Any person who desires the 1946 season's figures urgently can obtain them on application to the Department.

ATLANTIC SALMON

The same remarks as for quinnat salmon apply in this case.

FRESH-WATER RESEARCH

Up to the close of the 1945-46 year the two Biologists were either still with the Armed Forces or on furlough leave. Both of them will be back during 1946, and plans are being made for a reorganization of the fresh-water side of the Department's activities.

MARINE RESEARCH

The various activities of the Marine Biologist were carried forward throughout the year. It is not perhaps sufficiently recognized that marine biological research is a long-term process, and working out the life-history of any particular species may take several years. Each seasonal change has to be observed and recorded in its turn and seasonal variations noted before all the problems can be elucidated.

The highlight of the Biologist's year was a visit to the Chatham Islands. As this fishing area has not been visited by a Marine Biologist for over twenty years, the report on the trip is of such interest and value that the opportunity is taken to publish portion of it here.

CHATHAM ISLANDS FISHERY

A visit was paid to the islands to determine the prospects of the fishing industry. Transport to and about the Chathams is bad. The time taken from Wellington via Lyttelton was nine and a half days to Waitangi. To Kaiangaroa coastwise a further seven days. The return journey to Waitangi was made overland by jogger, a locally made machine with two rubber-tired motor wheels and comfortable seat drawn by two horses. The thirty miles from Kaiangaroa to Waitangi took eight hours over what must be classed among the worst roads in the world. Best travelling was over open undulating fields, and at low water the two-mile stretch of beach before Waitangi, the roads for the most part being 6 in. to 18 in. deep in mud, which is very hard going on both horses and passengers.

Paua.—Good supplies of living pauas were found on all the rocky sections of the north and eastern shores between Wharekauri and Okawa Point; they are the dominant shell-fish in the coastal zone, and in many places the beach is thickly strewn with the dead shells.