

(2) *Field Investigation Unit*

To conduct the essential field investigations of the above nature which form a link between the reports submitted by the field observers and the researches of the scientific workers, and to be complementary to the latter, the above "unit" was established.

(3) *Wildlife Library*

Considerable progress was made in establishing a library of scientific and other works for the guidance and training of officers of the field staff.

B. ADMINISTRATION OF ANIMALS PROTECTION AND GAME ACT, 1921-22

(1) *Revision of Act*

A start was made on the long-overdue revision of the legislation contained in the existing Act to meet present-day requirements.

(2) *Absolutely Protected Birds*

The preservation of native birds, the great majority of species of which are absolutely protected by law, was actively pursued. Officers recently appointed to the field staff of the Department were appointed Rangers under the above Act, with power to operate as such throughout New Zealand. Several suspected cases of infringements of the law, both by collectors and hunters, were investigated. The taking-over of control of the Southern Lakes Acclimatization District, which embraces the Fiordland National Park, has permitted the application of more effective measures for protecting the avifauna of that vast region.

Preliminary steps have been taken towards the setting-aside of an area near Wellington which is the habitat of a colony of grey teal as a sanctuary for the more effective protection of this now comparatively rare species, and a portion of the Barr-Brown Estate, near Featherston, which is eminently suitable for the purpose, was created a sanctuary.

(3) *Imported and Native Game*

Open game-shooting seasons were observed in all acclimatization districts. It was possible to make a larger quantity of shot-gun ammunition available than in 1944.

It having been established that Canadian geese were present in parts of the South Canterbury Acclimatization District in such numbers as to constitute a menace, the protection on them was removed in that district.

Reports and field investigations show that the chukor, or Indian hill partridge, has become well established over much of the high country along and near the main divide of the South Island and provided excellent sport for those capable of penetrating to such regions.

The native paradise duck, at one time a resident of the South Island only and present there in but small numbers, now exists in considerable numbers in all remote valleys of the South Island mountain regions, and colonies in the North Island have reached dimensions which permitted open seasons in several acclimatization districts.

The position in regard to the other imported game species, pheasant, and quail is not good from the point of view of sportsmen, as their numbers in all districts are showing a downward tendency.

(4) *Opossums*

The number of skins stamped was 405,392, as compared with 563,061 the previous year. Of the revenue derived from license fees and royalty on skins, the sum of £2,000 was paid to acclimatization societies and other bodies entitled thereto, the allocation being made on a basis proportionate to the number of skins stamped in each district.