

APPENDIX B

KAPITI ISLAND

As the years pass, Kapiti Island is gradually showing regeneration, assisted by the planting of trees and the systematic extermination of pests.

The beginning of the year saw Mr. K. D. Jones acting as Caretaker on the island. This gentleman and Mr. Morris Jones, of Kelburn, have, over a long period of years, shown an abounding interest in the welfare of the reserve and have given much valuable assistance. Mr. Morris Jones has once again given and planted native trees. To both these gentlemen thanks are due.

In June Mr. W. A. Lindsay was appointed permanent Caretaker. Due to the preceding unsettled period, a great deal of necessary maintenance to the cottage and surrounds has been necessarily postponed, but this was carried out by Mr. Lindsay, who renovated and painted the cottage, cleared the drains, and in general rejuvenated the area.

For some time the reserve was without the services of a trapper and rats and opossums again began to increase; but with a recent appointment to this position these pests, which are destructive to both the bush and the birds, should soon be brought under control again.

It is perhaps worthy of note that during April Mr. Jones reported the highest tide ever recorded at the island. As a result the rails on the slipway below low tide shifted and were subsequently removed and replaced. Other extensive repairs were made to the slipway.

The weather to December was fairly seasonal, but the dry spell over the last three months made it necessary to curtail permits to visit the reserve on account of the serious risk of fire, but the conduct of the visitors was exemplary and it is pleasing to report that no fire occurred. The severe southerly storm of 15th February caused some minor damage to the boat-shed, brought down a few small trees, and badly scorched the manuka, which provides excellent shelter on the exposed fringe of the island.

Tree-planting has been carried out and all trees on the reserve are reported to be growing well. Kowhais, which previously were only around the memorial seat, were planted by the Caretaker, who has begun a nursery near the cottage.

Bird-life is increasing. In July pigeons, bell-birds, tuis, white heads, South Island robins, and wekas were all plentiful about the cottage and were very tame. Two kakas were being fed by hand each morning. A grey kiwi was also sighted. During this month a number of terns were reported as having been washed up along the west coast of the North Island and several were washed up on the island. Young kaka and wekas were seen during September, while grey ducks, Californian quail, bell-birds, and tuis were all nesting near the cottage. Two newcomers during October and November were the long-tailed and shining cuckoo. In February, despite the severity of the storm, bird-life was still plentiful and the yellow-fronted parrakeet was sighted.

During the year several improvements and acquisitions, in addition to renovations, have improved conditions and allowed for more efficient running of the reserve. A new winch has been installed at the slipway, and will greatly facilitate the work of the Caretaker in his handling of boats and stores.