

The market outside Auckland Province is supplied from the Department's depot at Tokaanu. The Department has regular customers in Wellington, the Wairarapa, Wanganui, and Nelson.

Our three years' operations have proved that a large number of fish must be taken from both lakes annually in order to maintain the standard of weight and condition, and it is now evident that many more may be taken without in any way reducing the numbers necessary to be left to keep up the reputation of the lake fisheries as the anglers' paradise. It is hoped next year to be able to open up fresh markets in parts of the Dominion as yet untouched by the Department.

In order to enable anglers to preserve for food purposes as much of their catches as possible, the Department subsidizes a fish-curer at Taupo to smoke such trout as anglers may bring to him.

The importance of the inland fisheries as an adjunct to the food-supplies of the Dominion has been emphasized by you. There can be no doubt that Lake Taupo is teeming with magnificent fish. The difficulty is to get it away. At present our only means is by coach to Waiouru from Tokaanu. If we could secure access to the lake from the northern end, an enormous increase in the output could be secured. In accordance with your instructions inquiries will be made as to the possibility of using a motor-lorry between Taupo Township and Mokai, a distance of only nineteen miles. From there the Taupo Timber Company's line might be used to secure a connection with the Government railway at Putaruru. By the use of insulated wagons the scheme should be feasible.

Your direction to obtain reports as to fishing the South Island lakes will also be carried out during the present close season.

Study of the Worm Parasite.—The Director of the Live-stock and Meat Division, Department of Agriculture (Colonel Reakes), is so closely occupied by his military duties that further investigation of this question must wait until the end of the war. In the meantime, however, the experimental ponds at Rotorua are being maintained.

Destruction of Shags.—The war on these cormorants continues. During the year 1,328 were accounted for.

Trout-hatchery.—The following statement shows the output of the hatchery for the year:—

Number of rainbow-trout ova sold and distributed.	...	...	1,320,000
Number of rainbow-trout fry sold and distributed	...	...	767,000
			2,087,000

The sales for the year include one to the Acclimatization Society at Ballarat, Victoria. While the larger acclimatization societies are required to pay for their supplies, the Department assists the smaller ones by free gifts of fry. Such gifts were made to acclimatization societies in the North of Auckland this year.

The work of stocking the various rivers and streams within the Rotorua Acclimatization District continues, and with the help of the Waimarino Acclimatization Society 450,000 fry were liberated in the Tongariro National Park rivers in that society's district.

(3.) *Animals Protection Act.*

Shooting Seasons for Game and Deer were declared as usual in the various acclimatization districts. The native game permitted to be shot consisted of grey duck, teal, spoonbill duck, pukeko, and black swan (not more than twenty-five head of native game were allowed to be killed by any one person in one day); and the imported game, cock pheasants, Californian and Australian quail, hares, and mallard duck. As in previous years, many representations were made from the southern parts of the South Island for permission to shoot paradise ducks, but were not acceded to. Petitions were received from Natives in the North Island praying that they be allowed to take the native pigeon for food. In view of the fact that the pigeon is becoming rarer every year the petitions were declined. It has now been withheld from shooting-warrants for five seasons. The present season is one of the close seasons fixed by the Act, but owing to the abundance of game all but seven acclimatization societies have applied for and obtained exemption. With regard to deer, the point most worthy of note is that the deer from the Otago herd which have crossed the Southern Alps have now become established to such an extent as to warrant a limited number being shot each year. The deer season just ended was the second open season in Westland. The difficulty of stalking in the wild country of the southern West Coast will not only appeal to the keen sportsman, but will tend to ensure the preservation of a sufficient number of the best stags to keep the herd from deteriorating.

Sanctuaries.—During the year eleven sanctuaries were declared, the two most important being at Goulard Downs (Nelson) and Pouto Point (Auckland). The published accounts of bird-life at Goulard Downs do not exaggerate. They teem with native birds now rapidly becoming extinct in other parts of the Dominion. The value of the Downs as a sanctuary depends, of course, upon the degree of isolation they continue to enjoy and the efforts made to prevent poaching. With this end in view Mr. R. E. Clouston, by whom public attention was first drawn to them, has been appointed caretaker. The Pouto Point Sanctuary consists of 13,000 acres purchased under the powers given by the Animals Protection Amendment Act, 1914. The greater portion of this sanctuary consists of sandhills, but in parts there are deep fresh-water lakes full of wild water-birds, and the lowland connecting them where they are in a string is covered with vegetation—manuka, cabbage-tree, &c.—and constitutes a real oasis, the whole making an extraordinarily beautiful effect. The isolation of these lakes in the midst of the sand makes them ideal as sanctuaries.