

As showing the variety of plants in the reserves, Professor Arnold Wall, of Canterbury College, and Mr. R. M. Laing have made a botanical survey of the proposed reserve at Sugarloaf Hill, and found 120 varieties of plants and trees thereon. Legislation has been passed to enable the Board to devote any revenue derived from rest-houses and reserves towards reducing liabilities guaranteed by certain public-spirited citizens and members of the Summit Road and Reserves Association, to whom the thanks of the public are due.

G. H. BULLARD, Chairman.

APPENDIX C.

KAPITI ISLAND.

THIS island, the greater part of which was set apart under the Kapiti Island Public Reserve Act, 1897, is held as a sanctuary for native fauna and flora, and the resident caretaker (Mr. J. L. Bennett) reports as follows for the twelve months ended 31st March last:—

Goats: 279 were destroyed during the year, making the total destroyed during the last ten years 3,443.

Opossums: 1,176 were caught during the year, bringing the number destroyed during the last six years to 6,723.

Cats: Only one cat was seen during the year, and was destroyed.

Flax (*Phormium tenax*): In Maraetakaroro Valley, where is the best piece of swamp on the island, flax that was sown a few years ago came away splendidly, and is now 5 ft. or 6 ft. high for a distance of about 43 chains and an average width of $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains.

Bats: Both the short- and the long-tailed bats can be seen at dusk on any part of the east side of Kapiti near the beach. As far as can be observed, their numbers do not decrease as the years pass.

Bird-feed: It is a fair average season for bird-feed. In the sheltered parts the berries are very plentiful, but on trees exposed to the strong winds there is practically none.

Birds: The following notes taken from a report written by Mr. Johannes C. Andersen, dated the 18th January, 1922, may be of interest: "The bird-food cannot be very scarce, for never during any of my visits to the island have I seen or heard so many parakeets and pigeons. Whiteheads I have always found plentiful, and they were as plentiful and lively as ever, nor did the number of bell-birds seem less than usual. I heard tomtits and fantails oftener than ever before, and of blue herons I noticed two broods, one towards the north and the other towards the south. On going up the valley and into the 'basin' tuis were in plenty, and a good many of the smaller birds besides. It was a long time before I saw a robin at all, but one day I mounted a spur I had not been up before and saw them in large numbers, and so tame that the young were fed at my side. I am confident that the birds are as plentiful as ever. I have gone for days and heard hardly a song or a note, though I knew the birds were plentiful, and on other days the singing would be full and continuous."

Saplings: Owing to the policy of keeping the goats out of the bush and out on the open country, where there is a better chance of destroying them and also of giving seedlings a chance of growing into saplings, the bush is now showing a strong growth of saplings in various places, such as kohekohe, lancewood, tawa, fern-tree, nikau-palm, pepper-tree, ngaio, mahoe, fuchsia, and in lesser numbers matai and miro.

Bush: Owing to the strong west and south-west gales from the 1st to the 5th of last August the bush near the seashore on the east side was badly browned, but has now recovered.

General remarks: The birds on Kapiti were splendid this year, and it cannot be said truthfully that the birds are any less than they were years ago. The bush looks perfect, and is healthy. Exposed bush where the high winds and, in the past, goats and sheep have kept it clear of undergrowth will in time regenerate itself—for there is not one single piece of dying bush on Kapiti. The opossums are now doing no damage to the bush, and the lessened number of goats little or any.

A meeting of the Advisory Committee in connection with Kapiti Island was held in the office of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington, on the 6th February last, when there were present Messrs. G. H. M. McClure (in the chair), W. H. Field, M.P., E. Phillips Turner (State Forest Service), Arthur Seed, Professor Kirk, and Dr. L. Cockayne: while Mr. J. L. Bennett (caretaker) was also present.

It was considered that the Crown land on the island should be completely freed from stock, with the object of encouraging the regeneration of natural vegetation, and that certain exchanges of Crown lands with Native lands should be made so as to consolidate the respective interests. It was also thought that the granting of permits to visit the island should be restricted as far as possible. With a view to seeing the present condition of the fauna and flora it was decided to make an inspection at an early date. This took place on Saturday, 18th March, and a special meeting of members was held on the 24th idem, when detailed recommendations were submitted as to the erection of fencing between Crown and Native areas and the exchange of Crown and Native land. The erection of a suitable fence has been authorized and the work put in hand, whilst steps will be taken to eradicate the remaining wild goats and opossums and to remove the stock.

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