

as these herds are removed from settlements no hardship on settlers was imposed. In the 1924 season the Galatea herd produced some fine heads, ranging from eight to fifteen points. Some good heads were secured in the Rotoiti herd, and the Okareka herd yielded a fair proportion of fourteen-point heads, Mr. F. Mayo securing a fine royal 37 in. long, with a span of 35 in. A newly opened Whakatane herd was shot over by three licenses, who only got medium heads. The Mahia red-deer herd was closed in 1924 by the landowners, but was opened this year with a limit of six licenses. No reports are yet to hand from stalkers, but good heads have been sighted, and the prospects are good. The Waikaremoana herd was heavily shot over, and a lot of stags shot with light antlers, but investigation showed that these were mainly young animals from the open country around the shores of the lake. Some heavy heads were seen after the season closed, but the country is very difficult to stalk.

Game-shooting.—The 1924 season (two months) was not particularly good, generally speaking. The sportsmen had to work for their birds, but good bags of ducks were reported from the swamp areas of Rangitaiki and Whakaki. The number of swans and ducks in the sanctuaries during the season shows that the restriction of the period is leading to an increase in the number of game in these areas. Reports have been received of some landholders with small lagoons on their property feeding the young ducks with maize for a few weeks prior to the opening of the season, thus enabling them to easily secure the daily limit allowed to each licensee.

Mallard Ducks.—Mallard ducks were open for shooting in the 1924 season, and during the year 104 young ducks have been reared for liberation in suitable areas. During the year sixty-four of these have been liberated; the remaining forty will be retained for selection of stock birds, and the balance liberated after next shooting season.

Pheasants.—These birds were reported as increasing, but rather hard to shoot. The days of big bags of pheasants are past, owing to the greater number of sportsmen visiting this district. Around the more settled areas a few birds can always be raised with a good dog, particularly in the maize-growing districts, but in bush districts or in heavy scrub country they are harder to obtain.

Pheasantry.—Over 200 pheasants were liberated throughout the district prior to the opening of the shooting season, 1924, and a further supply of young ones will be liberated at the conclusion of the 1925 season. These liberations gave a fair sprinkling of birds for the Wairoa, Whakatane, Rotorua, and Taupo Counties, and materially increased the number of the present wild stock, and supplied the necessary new blood. It is intended to secure some entirely new pheasants of imported Mongolian strain and English Black Neck variety to cross with the stock birds at present in the Department's pheasantry. This year it was noted that there was a higher percentage of unfertile eggs than in any previous year. The curator has ascertained from various pheasant-breeders throughout the North Island that this defect was very prevalent, and is ascribed to the extremely wet summer affecting the birds during the mating season.

Trout-fishing.—Towards the close of 1924 season the fishing was very fine, and many large and notable catches up to 20 lb. weight were secured. Some of the best of these were mounted and sent to the British Exhibition, where they attracted great attention, and no doubt the fact that there are many overseas sportsmen in the Rotorua and Taupo districts at present is due to the impression created by these specimens. So far, the catches as regards weight or numbers are not equal to those of last year. Whether in their cycle of life-history the trout reached their "peak" last year and are now receding, or whether the fact is due to the backward summer added to a late-spawning winter and the lower level of stream-waters, cannot at present be determined, but the fact remains that fishing for this season is not equal to last. A total of 282,000 rainbow trout-fry was liberated within the acclimatization district. Of this number 172,000 were liberated in the Wairoa County waters, and 110,000 in the various waters from the Waipunga River on the Napier-Taupo Road to the Whakatane and Waimanawa Rivers in the Bay of Plenty area.

Marking Trout.—During the year further consideration was given to the marking of a number of rainbow trout in certain waters in the district in an effort to definitely ascertain the life-history of the *Salmo iridens*. With this object some five hundred oxydized-silver tags were ordered and received from London. These will be used during the present year to mark trout of varying sizes. A comparison will be made by microscopic inspection of the scales taken from fish at the time of fixing the tags, and again when such trout are captured.

Ranging.—In February, 1925, an Assistant Ranger was appointed. For the present his headquarters will be in the Wairoa County. Owing to the wide area of this district, comprising as it does the counties of Rotorua, Whakatane, Taupo, and Wairoa, it was absolutely impossible for one man to effectively range the district.

Rotorua Bath Buildings : Balneologist's Report.

As you will see by the accompanying return of receipts, there has been a satisfactory increase in the revenue from the bathhouse and Sanatorium in the past twelve months. This increase has been mainly from the Sanatorium, the massage departments, and out-patients; while the bath returns show a slight falling-off. This latter fact indicates that fewer tourists and casual bathers have visited our spa, but an increase in the number of patients shows a wider sphere of usefulness as a health resort. No doubt the infantile-paralysis epidemic and restrictions on travelling have kept away visitors from Rotorua during the later months of this period, with the consequent reduction of bath receipts.

During the year the Sanatorium accommodation has been fully taxed, and we have had on several occasions to keep a waiting-list of patients for admission. In many respects the institution, an old and patched-up building, is unsuitable as a modern hydro-therapeutic establishment, and is often