

"During the Christmas and Easter holidays fairly large club parties were on the mountain, and good summer skiing was obtained on the Whakapapa Glacier and the Coll.

"Numerous ascents of the various summits of Ruapehu were made and also visits to Tongariro and Ngauruhoe.

"Trips were made to the Wairere Valley, the upper Whakapapa-iti, and the Maungaturatura.

"At Easter and other periods small private parties of club members worked the northern and eastern portions of the Park from the Waihoheho and Maungatepopo huts."

The Tararua Tramping Club (Inc.).—"During the year only one official trip to the National Park area was made by members of the Tararua Tramping Club. This trip was for ten days—23rd August, 1935, to 1st September, 1935, inclusive. The total strength of the party was fifty-six, comprising thirty-six members of the Tararua Tramping Club, the remainder being members of other tramping clubs in the Wellington District—namely, Ruahine, Manawatu, Wairarapa, Hutt Valley, and Victoria University College Tramping Clubs.

"The snow during the ten days was deeper than it has been for some years, and, except for two days when there was a very glassy surface on the snow, conditions for skiing were good.

"The weather conditions on four days were perfect, the remaining being dull and overcast, with mist at times, but not bad enough to make a complete cessation of skiing activities necessary. On this occasion it was possible to ski from the Salt Hut to the Chateau. In addition to skiing, members of the party visited all the places of interest in the vicinity of the Chateau.

"No other official club trip was organized to the Tongariro National Park area, but various members of the Tararua Tramping Club have enjoyed various periods during the year in that locality."

The Alpine Sports Club (Inc.).—"The club's usual Winter Sports Party visited the Chateau during the middle of August for a week's skiing. The absence of some of the club's best skiers at the New Zealand Championships in the South Island and the bad weather of the latter part of the stay rendered advisable the cancellation of a sports programme. In addition to the main winter party, further smaller parties made skiing and climbing trips during the 3rd June, Labour Day, and Dominion Day week-ends, and during the Christmas vacation, using the accommodation of the Chateau and lodge, and also camping."

WARDEN'S REPORT.

Mr. John Cullen, I.S.O., Warden of the Park, in his annual report remarks as follows:—

"The Park area has been fairly free from scrub and tussock fires during the year, only one outbreak having occurred just inside the Park boundary at headwaters of Papamanuka Stream. This fire was undoubtedly wilfully started, as there were no workers on the road at the time. However, it did not burn more than a few hundred acres before it was suppressed.

"A much more serious fire was started in the Military Reserve near the Whakapapanui Bridge, and swept over all that area of the reserve bounded on the east by the Tokaanu-Waimarino Road, on the south and west by the Whakapapanui and Whakapapa Rivers, and on the north by the Papamanuka Stream to the Tokaanu Road. Two small plantations, one of larch and the other of *Pinus insignis*, which were planted by the Prisons Department about twenty years ago, were completely destroyed, and the block of native bush running down the centre of the area was considerably damaged all round its outside. As this fire started alongside the bridge there can be little doubt that it was wilfully started.

"The Haunted Whare has been damaged by having its solitary window broken out, leaving nothing but the bare frame, and the six rustic bunks pulled out and used as firewood by persons who stop over, with their cars, to boil the billy. As the open window space leaves the interior of the building open to all weathers, I suggest that a couple of sheets of iron be procured and nailed over the opening. The iron chimney in the building is sagging down, and needs repairing to make it safe.

"The suspension bridge over the Whakapapanui just below the Haunted Whare, which the Board had erected about ten years ago, was badly damaged by the abnormal flood which occurred about three years ago as the result of a cloudburst on Ruapehu. A large number of trees were brought down by this flood, and in passing under the bridge displaced a portion of the decking and loosened the rest. Since then the remainder of the decking has now disappeared, leaving only the top and bottom wire ropes suspended across the river. I have been informed that foolhardy young trampers make a practice of crossing the river by walking on the lower rope and hanging on to the top one—a most dangerous thing to do as the bridge is about 16 ft. above the boulder-strewn bed of the river, and if a person fell from the rope when crossing he would have little chance of escaping death as the river current is very swift, and the Tawhai Waterfall is just 50 yards down-stream. I recommend that the decking of the bridge be replaced as early as possible.

"Deer have been more numerous in the Park during last year than for some years past. They come from the Kakaramea and Pihanga Ranges on the north, and from the Kaimanawas on the east, the main supply coming from the latter area. They are undoubtedly doing serious damage to young trees and other undergrowth in the native bush, and should be systematically destroyed. On my last visit to the Park I discussed this matter with Mr. Bayfeild, Manager at the Chateau, and were both of opinion that Mr. Bayfeild should be authorized to issue temporary shooting permits to trustworthy guests at the Chateau.

"I have in previous reports deplored the steadily increasing disappearance of native-bird life in the Park attributable to the rapid increase in the number of cats running wild in the bush, and to the presence of stoats and weasels. Cats could be kept in check by laying poisoned fish for them."