

present regulations, the stocks are being maintained in satisfactory abundance on the West Coast beds. The relatively small beds on the Ohope Beach (Bay of Plenty), which in the absence of any official surveillance had been over-exploited and depleted, were closed by regulation for the period 1st February to 30th November, 1936.

The toheroa-beds on the Waitarere Beach (Levin district) have been examined by the Marine Biologist on three occasions during the year. He reports that the stocks have improved considerably since the restrictive regulations of 10th September, 1931, came into force, thanks largely to the services of the honorary local inspector.

Owing to limited facilities for making the necessary observations and collecting the required data, we still lack that understanding of the vital statistics of this species that would enable its economic utilization to be developed to the maximum that may be possible with due regard to the prevention of depletion. It is the inevitable dilemma of deciding between withholding restrictions and risking depletion or applying restrictions and restraining utilization to an extent that may possibly be uncalled for. With a better grip of fundamental facts and closer contact with the material conditions, a system of more flexible and rational control would be possible. There are present indications of a growing demand for toheroas in the future, but, in view of the known examples of the permanent impoverishment of similar resources by exploitation upon which a check has been applied too late, we should not risk remaining in a state of ignorance as to the extent of our toheroa reserves and their average rate of recruitment, or as to the extent to which depleting agencies may be operating.

WHITEBAIT.

The tabulated statement below gives a general view of the principal waters fished and the productivity of the fishery for the 1935 season.

Whitebait Fishery.

Inspector's Centre.	Rivers fished.	Method of Fishing.	Fishing began	Best Month.	Number of Fishermen. (Approximate.)		Total Quantity caught. (Approximate.)
					Whole Time.	Part Time.	
							Cwt.
Auckland ..	Waikato	Hand-nets ..	1st July ..	September ..	70	50	894
Auckland ..	Kaituna and Maketu	Hand-nets ..	1st July ..	September ..	36	20	91
Auckland ..	Matata and Tarawera (Bay of Plenty)	Hand-nets ..	1st July ..	August - November	30	24	125
Napier ..	Tukutuki, Ngaruroro, Wairoa	Set-nets ..	1st July ..	October ..	25	55	32
New Plymouth and Waitara	Mimi, Urenui, Mokau, Waitara, Waiwakaiho, &c.	Set and hand nets	August ..	November ..	Nil	100	15
Foxton ..	Manawatu, Waimea, and Waikanae	Set and hand nets	July ..	October ..	6	24	8
Blenheim ..	Wairau, Opawa, Tuamarina, and Rose's Overflow	Hand-nets ..	September	November ..	20	200	80
Karamca ..	Karamea and Little Wanganui	Hand-nets ..	August ..	September ..	..	50	45
Westport ..	Buller, Orawaiti, Mokihinui	Hand-nets ..	September	October ..	15	30	426
Greymouth ..	Teremakau, Grey, and New River ..	Set and hand nets	August ..	October-November	60	250	646
Hokitika ..	Hokitika, Teremakau, Arahura, Mahinapua Creek, Waimea, Totara, Waitaha	Set and hand nets	August ..	November ..	98	..	580
Matainui ..	Maori, Jacobs, Waitangi, Wanganui, Okuru, &c.	Set and hand nets	Late August	October ..	30	..	294
Christchurch	Ashley, Waimakariri, Salt Water Creek, Avon, Styx, Heathcote	Set and hand nets	August ..	October ..	Nil	82	35
Dunedin ..	Mataura, Oreti, Clutha, Jacobs, Taieri, Wai-kouaiti	Hand-sets ..	September	October ..	(?)	(?)	27
Invercargill ..	Mataura, Oreti, Aparima, Makarewa	Set and hand nets	August ..	September-October	..	200	43
Total ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,251

The total given above does not include catches from all those who fish for whitebait nor from every whitebait river, but the returns are fairly comparable with those given in former reports. Some improvement is shown for the fishery as a whole in comparison with the 1934 season. A notable rise is shown for the Waikato, where the increase of approximately 25 per cent. on last year's total has been ascribed by a local observer to the fact that the river conditions prevented the Maoris from successfully fishing for the adult inanga as they came down to spawn the previous autumn. There are various factors which may affect the success of a whitebait fishery, and it is obvious that any action that would appreciably diminish the numbers of parent fish must be one of them. Meteorological conditions, not affected directly by human agencies, but frequently controlling them, play a dominant