

*North Auckland and Whangarei.*

The Whangarei men use seven to eight sets of long lines, each comprising some two hundred and fifty hooks. There has been a great decline in the catches and in the number of vessels fishing. The decline is ascribed to the use of Danish seines near the Bay and is dealt with under "Danish Seining."

*Russell.*

Not many men here are engaged in long-line fishing for a living, the main difficulty being with regard to marketing. Whangarei is the only market available. It is a good market, but restricted as to the quantity it can absorb at one time. The long lines only carry two hundred hooks each, and two lines are set at a time. A considerable amount of gear is lost, due to the presence of sharks. Snapper are much scarcer than they used to be. Bait is very hard to obtain in the winter-time.

*North of Russell.*

The line-fishing here is intermittent, due to the decline in the supplies, which makes it unprofitable for men to engage in fishing as a full-time occupation.

*New Plymouth and Wanganui.*

The New Plymouth fishermen use long lines and hand-lines. The main trouble is the excessive distance to the fishing-grounds, especially in winter. In summer, when the fish are more plentiful and may be caught nearer home, the market will not stand the gluts caused by the quantities landed from part-time boats in fine weather. The launches fish from Kawhia in the north to Opunake in the south. The winter trips are usually three days in duration; in the short summer season daily trips are made. Snapper is the principal fish caught. Some hapuka are also taken, but their appearance is erratic. A great deal of time is lost, due to the bad weather conditions, sometimes only two or three trips being made per month.

At Wanganui long lines and hand-lines are also used, but long lines are not favoured, for the reason that the men lose too much gear, due to the suddenness with which the weather breaks. The main fish is snapper, with a few hapuka and blue cod. The nearest fishing-grounds are about fifteen miles distant, the best grounds being north of Patea. Snapper stocks are keeping up, but the blue cod are now very scarce. The snapper caught here are all of a large size, being about 8 lb. each in weight. A witness stated that a good day's catch is twelve dozen, but owing to weather conditions only about six days' fishing per month is possible.

## HAND-LINING.

*Otago and South Canterbury.*

This method of fishing is used throughout the Otago and South Canterbury districts, but the fisheries have declined to such an extent that it is becoming practically impossible for the men to make a fair living by the use of hand-lines only, and they are used mainly as an auxiliary method of fishing either while waiting for the set gear to be picked up or when weather conditions make it inadvisable to use set or dan lines.

*Canterbury.*

The fishermen at Akaroa use hand-lines only when it is too foggy to use the dan lines. The catch on hand-lines is very poor—each boat would be fortunate if it could get more than twelve groper for the day. As the fish only average 10 lb. headed and gutted, this would not return sufficient to pay operating-costs and leave the fishermen a fair return for their labours.

At Lyttelton some of the men use hand-lines, fishing from Port Levy, but their returns are poor. They catch groper from October to March, then go on to ling and blue cod.

At Kaikoura hand-lines are used only when and where it is impracticable to use dan lines.

*West Coast.*

The use of hand-lines on the West Coast is confined to some of the part-time fishermen, and the landings from this method of fishing are negligible.

*French Pass.*

The most important fishery here is the catching of blue cod. This is all hand-line fishing, although the boats also engage in windy-buoy fishing for groper at certain times. The men at French Pass are well awake to the depletion of the grounds which has occurred, and by means of their organization have taken active steps to conserve their fishery. They were instrumental in having the size-limit for blue cod raised from 12 in. to 13 in., and prior to the regulation had disciplined themselves to take only those fish 13 in. or more in length.

The destruction by summer visitors of small fish in the Sounds was discussed by the Committee at a general assemblage of the fishermen. The men alleged that the holiday public use such small hooks that the undersized blue cod caught are killed by having a gullet torn, whereas if medium sized hooks were used the fish would not be so injured and would live if returned to the water. The French Pass fishermen were emphatic that mollymawks will not capture small blue cod which are returned to the water, nor will they be caught by barracouta on the way down, and they also stated that they found no necessity to handle their fish in the rough manner so common in Foveaux Strait.