

Fish Specimens.—Arrangements are in train to obtain from various parts of the district suitable specimens for mounting and supply to the Department of Industries and Commerce, Tourist and Publicity, for display overseas.

Game-farm.—At the close of the year under review various additions to the holding pens, &c., were under construction. An additional large holding-pen was necessary to allow the ground in the original pen to be spelled. By the very willing co-operation of the Rotorua County Council it has been arranged that subject to buildings, &c., not being placed in positions likely to interfere with the water-supply pipes the Department will have the use of an additional area of land. Any suggestion of the Game-farm being moved from Ngongotaha is now disposed of, and the action of the Rotorua County Council in meeting the Department is very much appreciated. The number of pheasants reared was 1,144. It had been hoped to have raised a larger number this year. In one storm alone about seventy young birds were lost. A very pleasing addition to the birds at the farm was a gift of pheasants by Major G. L. Ashley Dodd, England, who had previously paid a visit to the Dominion and was so impressed with the suitability of our country for pheasants that he desired to give some practical support to the attempt which was being made to rear game for sporting purposes. In spite of the long sea voyage, thirty pheasants were landed alive. One died later, but twenty-nine of the birds are now at the Game-farm and will be retained for breeding purposes. Fifty mallard ducks are being held at the farm, and holding-pens are being constructed and arrangements made to breed from the birds.

Game Liberations.—For the two seasons since the State Game-farm has been established the policy has been to liberate some only of the pheasants before the shooting season, retaining the balance until after the shooting season. The total number of pheasants liberated between 1st April, 1937, and 31st March, 1938, was 1,291. On the latter date there were 704 on hand, from which part of the stock for next breeding season will be selected and the balance liberated. To improve the Californian quail coverts sixty birds were purchased from the Otago Acclimatization Society and liberated in suitable localities in the Taupo district.

Bird-life generally.—Reports from the departmental rangers indicate an increase in the tui and bittorn in various places. Stilts were observed in large numbers on shallows in the lakes. The birds nested late, young a few days old and even eggs being seen at the end of February. Godwits were in fair numbers on the Ohiwa Harbour. Black swan were more numerous at Hamurana than in past years, and in the Wairoa area have done well. Black teal do not seem to have increased. The native pigeon and other protected birds are holding their own. In some localities pukeko, where previously reported to be numerous, are now scarce. No shooting season for these birds was declared in the Rotorua Acclimatization District. During the past few years goldfinches were comparatively scarce in the vicinity of Rotorua, but in January and February they were to be observed in large numbers.

Reports indicate that the past summer was most suitable to the natural breeding of game-birds and that there has been a good natural increase. It is evident that there have been two hatches of pheasants and quail in many instances.

Opossums.—Only nine licenses and three occupiers' permits were taken out for the trapping of opossums during the 1937 open season. The number of skins stamped in the district was 1,556.

Ranging.—The Department has rangers stationed at Rotorua, Whakatane, Taupo, Turangi, and Tuai. During the year the ranging was strengthened by the appointment of an additional officer to relieve or give assistance as required. Special attention has been and is being devoted to the poaching of protected birds and of trout out of season. During the year under review fines amounting to £110 10s. were imposed for breaches of the Animals Protection and Game and Fisheries laws in the Rotorua Acclimatization District.

DEER, GOATS, ETC.

Numerical Results.

During the financial year a total of 39,897 animals were killed, comprising 96 chamois, 22,248 deer, 17,338 goats, and 215 pigs: and 10,007 deer-skins and 2,473 goat-skins were recovered.

At the stage of preparation of this report it is possible to give separately the numerical results for the year 1st June, 1937, to 31st May, 1938, which embraces the winter "season" (June to October) and the main "season" (November to May), and as each of these "seasons" is strategically and tactically a complete and separate campaign it is desirable that they be considered in their entirety.

The numerical results for the "season," as above, were a total of 37,969 animals killed and 10,089 deer-skins and 2,473 goat-skins recovered.

The deer killed were of five different species, the numbers of each being: Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*), 19,949; Fallow deer (*Mazama dama*), 440; Virginian deer (*Cervus virginianus*), 60; Japanese deer (*Cervus sika*), 26; Wapiti deer (*Cervus canadensis*), 100.

A geographical analysis of the whole "season's" results is as follows:—

NORTH ISLAND.

Lake Waikaremoana area		791 deer killed.
National Park, Kaimanawa, Ahimanawa, and Kaweka Mountains area		9,819 deer killed.

SOUTH ISLAND.

Marlborough-Canterbury area		{ 1,159 deer killed. 16,480 goats killed. 215 pigs killed.
Fiordland National Park-Lake Wakatipu area		8,400 deer killed.
Stewart Island		406 deer killed.
Kermadec Islands		699 goats killed.