

REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 1974.**Beech Forest Utilisation**

Two members of the Society, Dr. C.J. Burrows and Professor G.T. Baylis have been appointed to the Scientific Co-ordinating Committee on the Beech Forest Proposals. Another member, Dr. L.F. Molloy has been appointed to the Beech Forest Management and Utilisation Council.

Pitt Island, Chatham Group

Following our earlier submissions concerning the Glory Block, Pitt Island, we were very pleased to receive notification from the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Walding, that the entire Glory Block had been purchased by the Crown. The remaining bushed areas are to be fenced as a reserve.

Mana Island

The subcommittee has continued its interest in the use of Mana Island by the Agriculture Department. The decision has been made to build a quarantine station and the Society has made suggestions on the sorts of precautions deemed necessary to ensure that the island remains rat-free.

M.V. "Enterprise"

A member of the Society reported to us that the boat that services the Cook Strait Islands with their rare faunas, tuataras and native frogs etc., had rats aboard. The Society wrote to the authority concerned and received assurances that fumigation was to take place. A further letter was sent to the Picton Harbour Board concerning the possible re-infestation from the Picton Wharf. Their reply was not encouraging but there seemed little else the Society could do.

Plimmerton Swamp

During the year, the swamp came under the jurisdiction of the Porirua City Council. The subcommittee prepared a written submission advocating the reservation of the swamp for both educational and aesthetic reasons. We were later gratified to hear that the City Council was negotiating to purchase the area.

Ultramafic Reserves; Red Mountains, South Westland

A letter was sent to the Minister of the Environment concerning the environmental control of prospecting in the area. A reply from the Minister indicated that he appreciated the scientific value of the area and said that an Impact Report would be called for before any larger scale activity occurred.

A letter was then sent to the Minister of Science pointing out that before any impact report could be prepared a great deal more scientific data would need to be collected from the area. The subcommittee believes that plans for an ecological survey of the region is in hand.

Maui Gasfield Development

A subcommittee member represented the Society in a CoEnCo delegation which was invited by Shell, B.P. Todd consortium to visit New Plymouth to discuss the environmental aspects of the Maui Development.

Environmental Impact Reports.

The subcommittee viewed a number of these and made submissions on some of them. These included the Mount

Cook Tourist Development, Hobson's Bay Development — Auckland, and Mount Tauhara Transmitter.

M.N. Foggo, L.F. Molloy, M.R. Rudge.

CONFERENCE 1973

The 22nd Conference was held at the Kelvin Hotel, Invercargill during August 22 — 25 1973. Over 100 people registered, many of whom were local people attracted by the Conference Symposium "Ecology and Management of South Island Beech Forests". On the first morning the following contributed papers were read:

1. Mr A.E. Esler: Vegetation of the Waitakere Range, Auckland: the Southern Beaches.
2. Miss J. Radcliffe: The sheltering effect of short tussocks on grass production.
3. Mr G.A. Dunbar: The influence of fertiliser and ground cover on growth and survival of tussock species on mountain subsoil.
4. Dr A.E. Bell: Fungal succession on opossum dung.
5. Dr J.A. Gibb: Why do rabbits die?
6. Dr P.R. Wilson: Effects on birds of spraying DDT and DDD for control of orchard pests.

After lunch and during all of the second day the Beech Forest Symposium was held under the general chairmanship of Prof. G.T.S. Baylis. The following papers were read:

1. Mr A. Kirkland: The Forest Service rationale for beech utilisation.
2. Dr L.F. Molloy: The Ecological Society view.
3. Dr J.A. Wardle: The life cycle of mountain beech.
4. Mr B. Manson: The life cycle of silver beech.
5. Dr D.R. McQueen: The edaphic and climatic tolerance of *Nothofagus antarctica* in southern South America.
6. Mr G. Mew: Soil factors in the ecology of West Coast beech forests.
7. Mrs H. P. McColl: Arthropods of beech and pine forest floors on the West Coast.
8. Mr R. Milligan: Insects causing damage in beech forests.
9. Mr I.L. James: Influences of larger browsing mammals on beech forests.
10. Mr C. Challies: Trends in deer populations in South Island forests.