

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING

30 JUNE 1975

(presented for adoption at the 23rd Annual General Meeting)

MEMBERSHIP

During the past year, the Society welcomed 30 new members and received two resignations. The policy of removing from membership debtors of long standing was continued and 18 memberships were terminated. The membership now comprises 389 ordinary, 13 joint and 12 corporate members. There are further 129 subscribers to *Proceedings*.

It was with great regret that we record the death, on 10 August 1974, of Norman Elder, a foundation and honorary life member of the Society. Other members of long standing who died during the year included Ralph Kean and Morrison Cassie.

COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The Council met, in Wellington, 10 times during the year. Attendance was as follows:

Bull	10	Gibb	1*	Rudge	8
Burrows	2	Gurr	8	Skipworth	10
Caithness	9	Hay	3	Williams, G.	6
Christie	4*	Hughes	7	Williams, M.	8
Crook	8	McLay	5		
Foggo	6	Rowley	9		

(* Only 8 meetings held during Councillor's term of office).

Mr A. H. C. Christie was appointed Editor, Dr C. L. McLay Conference Organiser and Dr J. A. Gibb was re-appointed as representative to the Member Bodies Committee of the Royal Society. Dr M. R. Rudge administered the register of Ecological Consultants. The Society was represented on the New Zealand Committee on Water Pollution Research by Mrs H. R. Hughes, at the Forestry Development Conference by Dr C. J. Burrows and Mr M. N. Foggo and at the United Nations Association Population Seminar by Dr R. A. Fordham.

Council convened two sub-committees—the Conservation sub-committee under Mr Foggo and the Population sub-committee under Dr Rudge.

ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

Eighteen members are now registered with the Society as Ecological Consultants, an increase of four during the year. One member tendered his resignation. Government Departments, City and Borough Councils, Catchment Boards and other regional bodies throughout New Zealand were made aware of the existence of the register and many now have a list of the consultants. The register

has now been open for three years and the Council is reviewing its operation.

FRESH WATER CLASSIFICATION

A submission, prepared by Mrs H. R. Hughes and Dr R. H. McColl, was sent to the Water Resources Council criticising the present system of water classification and the recently introduced X-classification. The Water Resources Council is currently reviewing the classification standards and the Society has requested an opportunity to present its views to the Council.

EDITOR'S REPORT (A. H. C. Christie)

Few of the papers to be published in Vol. 22 of *Proceedings* were read at last year's conference. In order to present a full record of conference, resumes of papers not appearing in full will in future be published in *Proceedings*. One of the results of authors not publishing the papers they present at Conference is that the Editor must either solicit copy or wait until "non-conference" papers are submitted; either approach can result in considerable delays and make it difficult to have the *Proceedings* published on time. Those who contribute a paper at Conference are therefore strongly urged to publish in *Proceedings* and to have their manuscripts with the Editor by February. A plea (common to all editors) is for intending contributors to follow the instructions printed inside the back cover of *Proceedings*.

REPORT OF THE ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S REPRESENTATIVE ON THE MEMBER BODIES' COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY (J. A. Gibb)

The year ending 31 March 1975 was marked by the death of Dr R. W. Willett in May, shortly after he handed over the Presidency of the Royal Society to Sir Malcolm Burns. Dr Willett had been much concerned with the role of the Members Bodies' affiliation to the Royal Society with the function of the Member Bodies' Committee and with its relationships with the Council of the Royal Society. He had solicited the opinions of the Member Bodies about this and had intended to pursue the matter after his retirement as President.

Sir Malcolm Burns, President of the Royal Society and Chairman of the Member Bodies' Committee, has sustained Dr Willett's initiative and the debate about the function of the Members Bodies' Committee continues. Member Bodies are now being asked to comment on a list of suggestions compiled by the President. While there is some (though not unanimous) agreement that the Member Bodies' Committee has a valuable role to play there is much uncertainty as to how it should play it.

The full Member Bodies' Committee met twice during the year, in May and November and the Management Committee (of which I was a member) on three occasions. The committee now represents some 37 Member Bodies, compared with only 15 in 1965. Apart from discussing its own function the committee has spent most of its time in furthering such on-going activities as promoting the appreciation of science in secondary schools, arranging meetings with Parliamentarians, allocating grants to organisers of Science Fairs, presentation of scientific programmes on radio and television, organising the New Zealand Science Congress in Dunedin in May, 1976, production of the R.S.N.Z. newsletter and calendar of meetings, and with the affairs of ANZAAS in New Zealand. The meetings have continued to be enlivened by reports from Member Bodies' representatives on the current state of play in the disciplines they represent. Professor W. B. Johnston, Convener of the R.S.N.Z. Conservation Committee, also reported to the Committee and asked for opinions of the type of work this Committee should undertake; to date it has apparently restricted itself to considering environmental impact reports.

In mid 1974 the Ecological Society asked the Royal Society to endorse and promote its population statement; but was informed that the Royal Society could not go beyond commenting that the statement had been prepared on this matter of wide public interest, and supporting its distribution on this basis without directly endorsing the statements it contained. Your representative expressed regret at this rather negative response.

The President of the R.S.N.Z. is *ex officio* Chairman of the Member Bodies' Committee. Dr J. H. Buckingham was elected Vice-Chairman for 1975/76 and Dr P. J. Brook and Mr M. A. Collins were elected Member Bodies' Councillors. Dr Buckingham has been a leading critic of the Member Bodies' Committee and may be relied upon to go on working for a reorganisation of the Committee on lines closely in accord with the views already expressed by the Ecological Society.

Having represented the Ecological Society on the Member Bodies' Committee since 1970, I give notice that I wish to resign from this office.

POPULATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT (M. R. Rudge)

1. The Society's population statement, "An Ecological Approach to New Zealand's Future" was published as a supplement to *Proceedings* Vol. 21. Free copies were distributed to all members of Parliament, to major daily and weekly newspapers and magazines published in New Zealand and to other relevant bodies. The remainder of the 1500 copies were made available for sale to the public and most have now been sold. Several of the points and recommendations contained in the population statement have appeared in Governmental documents related to the World Population Conference (August 1974).

2. The Society was asked to reiterate its views as a contribution to a national population policy being com-

pleted by an Interdepartmental Committee on Population Questions. This policy document should appear in August 1975.

3. A submission was prepared, at the request of the Chairman of the National Research Advisory Council, amplifying the Society's suggestion that a Centre for Population Research be established.

4. The subcommittee examined a critique¹, published by the Royal Society of New Zealand, of the Club of Rome's report "Limits to Growth". We have now asked the Royal Society to, (a) continue its involvement by examining the second report to the Club of Rome² which refines the earlier study; and (b) discuss some of the recommendations contained in its own Critique.

¹"Limits to Growth?" Royal Society of N.Z. (1973).

²"Mankind at the Turning Point", Mesarovic and Pestel (1975).

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT (M. N. Foggo, J. Rowley, M. R. Rudge)

Environmental Impact Report Procedures

The sub-committee has spent much time examining the Environmental Impact Report procedures. The Cabinet approval of the Mount Cook Development Scheme provided us with a context for a letter of criticism of the procedures to the Minister of the Environment, Mrs Tirikatene-Sullivan.

In her reply Mrs Tirikatene-Sullivan invited us to submit our criticism to the Commissioner for the Environment who was to review the whole procedures involved.

This was done in a detailed submission in which we particularly asked for more time to review impact reports, especially the larger ones. We requested greater publicity of the processes involved in impact reporting and we also criticised the tendency of some Impact reports to become glossy public relations documents which did not adequately consider the environmental impact.

King Country Reafforestation Environmental Impact Report

The sub-committee made a submission to the Commissioner for the Environment on this Impact Report. We approved in principle the proposal to utilise marginal farm land for reafforestation. We criticised the poorly defined plan for reserves and also the stated aim to convert to *Pinus* all of the substantial area of cut-over forest included in the scheme.

Forestry Development Conference

C. J. Burrows and M. N. Foggo attended the Forestry Development Conference in November 1974 and May 1975. A submission was presented entitled "Research and Reserves in the Indigenous Forest: some future requirements", and this was considered by the Indigenous Forest Policy Working Party.

Ultramafic Reserves, Red Mountain, South Westland

After our efforts over the years with regard to Red

Hills, we were pleased to read the report of the DSIR Scientific Committee who examined the area for the Minister of Science. They considered that the area was of National Park standard and they recommended that it be designated as such.

Sand Dune Reservation, Manawatu

A group of the members of the Society discussed the need for a reserve in the unique sand dune country of the Manawatu area. A case for a reserve has been made to the Department of Lands and Survey.

CONFERENCE 1974

The 23rd Annual Conference was held at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, during 22-25 May 1974. A total of 80 people attended. On the first day the following contributed papers were read:

1. Dr C. J. Burrows: Wetland types and wetland surveys.
2. Dr A. Dobson: Sub-alpine mires of the Arthurs Pass region.
3. Miss E. O. Campbell: Peat deposits of northern New Zealand as based on identification of the plant fragments in the peat.
4. Miss P. M. Bates: A comparison between the restiad bogs of Waikato and the Chatham Islands.
5. Dr A. F. Mark: Eco-physiological studies of three species of *Chionochloa*.
6. Dr E. G. White: Grazing pressures of grasshoppers in alpine tussock grassland.
7. Miss J. Rowley: The biosystematics of alpine ranunculi in western North America.
8. Dr G. R. Given: Documentation and protection of rare taxa—the cinderella of botanical conservation.
9. Mrs M. Bulfin: Seed ripening, germination and longevity of seed of some New Zealand species.
10. Mr A. E. Esler: Vegetation of the sand country bordering the Waitakere Range, Auckland; Piha Beach.
11. Mr I. G. Crook: A preliminary report on faunal surveys in West Coast beech forests.

On the second day a symposium on behavioural

ecology was held. The papers read were:

1. Dr V. Burrows: Learning to study behaviour.
2. Mr B. E. Reid: Breeding behaviour of the takahe in captivity.
3. Mr P. Jenkins: Social organisation of saddlebacks in relation to their habitat on Cuvier Island.
4. Mr I. G. McLean: Song patterns of the fantail.
5. Dr J. L. Craig: Interaction of territory and hierarchy in the pukeko.
6. Mrs A. E. Harvie: Feeding behaviour of the possum.
7. Mr S. R. Hay: Vocal behaviour of the South Island Robin.
8. Dr T. P. G. Purchas: Feeding ecology of the rook in Hawkes Bay.
9. Dr M. J. Williams: Creching behaviour and survival of shelducklings.
10. Mr L. Gurr: Some adaptive mechanisms affecting the distribution of bumble bees in New Zealand.
11. Dr W. Q. Green: Behavioural processes and population regulation in the cinnabar moth.

On the third day, two field trips were undertaken. In the morning the Behaviour Research Unit at Ruakura Agricultural Research Station was visited and in the afternoon the excursion was along the valley of the Waikato River to the site of the Huntly Power Station.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1974

The 22nd A.G.M. was held at the Waikato University on 23 May 1974. Approximately 60 people attended. The meeting elected Miss Ruth Mason to Honorary Life Membership of the Society. Among the main points discussed were the need for a code of ethics for Ecological Consultants, the problem of so few papers being submitted for publication in the *Proceedings*, the need for stronger regional branches and the activities of the Member Bodies' Committee of the Royal Society. The meeting elected the following officers for 1974-75:

President, Dr P. C. Bull; Vice-President, Dr C. J. Burrows; Secretary, Dr M. J. Williams; Treasurer, Dr J. P. Skipworth.