

CONFERENCE 1968

The Seventeenth Annual Conference was held in the Biology Building, University of Auckland on 15-17 August. The Conference was attended by about 50 members and 30 visitors.

There were some excellent papers which stimulated lively discussion. The buffet dinner and social evening in the Auckland War Memorial and Museum was given added interest by a visit to the Auckland Secondary Schools' Science Exhibition. A special prize given by the Society for the most worthy exhibit of an ecological nature was awarded by judges Miss R. Mason and Mr. J. Warham to Miss Barbara Wendsley of Baradene College. Miss Wendsley's project was titled *The water-boatman's place in the pond*.

Accommodation at Norman Spenser Hall was satisfactory. Unfortunately, the timing of the sessions and the usual informality of the conference were disrupted by the time involved in travelling between the University and the Hall.

On Thursday the contributed papers were full of well-illustrated variety. Topics discussed were glaciers, vegetation and climatic change, the Polynesian rat, water balance in snow tussock grassland, habitat and polymorphic patterns of an alpine grasshopper, sand plain vegetation, effects of deer on beech forest and the point-centred quarter sampling of native forests. Highlight of the day was an extremely well-presented address by the guest speaker, Dr. G. M. Dunnet, on research at Culterty Field Station, Aberdeenshire.

The Sixteenth Annual General Meeting was held in the Zoology Lecture Theatre on the Thursday evening. In the absence of Dr. J. A. Gibb the meeting was chaired by Vice-President, Dr. P. Wardle. Thirty-nine members attended. The Annual Report and Financial Statement were adopted. The editor of the Proceedings, Dr. G. R. Williams, delivered an entertaining report which encouraged contributed papers, a higher standard of proof reading and sympathy for the difficulties an editor has to contend with.

There was active discussion on the Council's submission to the Commission of Inquiry into the Organisation of Wildlife Management and Research and views were expressed concerning members' access to information on conservation and listing of nature and scientific reserves. Mr K. H. Miers was elected President for 1968/69. The meeting recommended that Conference 1969 be held in Dunedin. After the A.G.M., the Wildlife Service's beautiful colour film, *Adams Island*, was shown to an appreciative audience.

On Friday morning, Dr. G. R. Williams chaired a Symposium on the quantitative ecology of communities. Emphasis was given to multivariate methods and their application to the analysis of marine animal communities. There was, perhaps, a little too much overlap between papers. However, members were well-introduced to an important interpretive tool.

In the afternoon under the chairmanship of Professor V. J. Chapman, all enjoyed a lively symposium on the teaching of ecology. School and university courses were discussed and speakers and audience contributed to a successful session.

Saturday excursions were to the Manakau Harbour Sewerage disposal plant and oxidation ponds with Mr. R. B. Sibson and to the Leigh Marine Laboratory with Drs. R. M. Cassie and W. J. Ballantine. The excursions were very informative but few attended.

Though the Auckland Conference was not outstanding, the Society was very appreciative of the efforts of Dr. R. M. Cassie and the other members of the local organising committee, Mr. P. Jenkins, Dr. J. Prendergast and Professor J. Morton.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Thursday, 15 August

- "Plants and Glaciers in the Westland National Park" Dr. P. Wardle
- "Some aspects of the ecology of the Kiore (*Rattus exulans*)" Mr. D. J. Campbell
- "Ecological aspects of the Polynesian rat (*Rattus exulans*) in the Tokelau Islands" Dr. K. Wodzicki
- "Effects of burning and grazing on the water balance of snow tussock grassland" Miss J. A. Rowley
- "The relationship between habitat and polymorphic pattern of the grasshopper *Brachaspis collinus*"
Messrs W. Q. Green and C. L. Batcheler
- "Sand-plain vegetation of the Manawatu"
Mr. A. E. Esler
- "Effect of mammals on *Nothofagus* forest at Lake Waikareiti" Messrs I. James and F. P. Wallis
- "An assessment of the point-centred quarter method for forest sampling in New Zealand"
Dr. A. F. Mark and Mr. A. E. Esler

Guest Speaker

- "Culterty Field Station and population ecology of the rook in Aberdeenshire" Dr. G. M. Dunnet

Friday, 16 August

The Quantitative Ecology of Communities

- Chairman, Dr. G. R. Williams
- "An introduction to association analysis"
J. M. Randal
- "Factor Analysis in benthic studies" ... Mr. S. Rainer
- "Multivariate mathematical models in marine ecology" Dr. R. M. Cassie
- "Quantitative distribution of rocky shore animals with respect to wave action" Dr. W. J. Ballantine
- The Teaching of Ecology*
Chairman, Professor V. J. Chapman
- "A Fresh approach to the teaching of ecology in New Zealand high schools" Mr. P. F. Jenkins
- "Community studies in the secondary schools"
Mr. C. A. Percy
- "The teaching of ecology at University level"
Dr. R. W. Balham
- "The teaching of quantitative ecology"
Dr. G. A. M. Scott
- "University Courses in Ecology" Dr. G. R. Williams