

development and classification, a very brief glossary, a substantial index, and a list of principal, general works on this subject.

For purposes of review it is useful to consider the book in terms of the author's stated intention but in this case it is equally important to consider it as a work of reference, because inevitably this is the way many readers will use it.

The former can be gauged from the book's introduction whose opening sentence reads:

"This book is an ambitious attempt, by using common insects in demonstration, to present a popular and general picture of both native and exotic insects in New Zealand . . ."

This general picture has been presented in 23 chapters which effectively divide the common insects into manageable groups. Sometimes these groups are systematic units such as Butterflies, Ants, Aphids and Hover flies, while in other instances an ecological unit or economic association has been used. Examples of these chapters are Aquatic insects, *Phormium* insects, *Eucalyptus* insects, some Insects of Exotic Conifers, Timber Borers, Predators, Parasites and Biological control, Weeds and Insects, and Parasites of Mammals and Birds.

Generally speaking these chapter headings reflect the experience and interests of the author which fortunately are exceptionally wide, and collectively these chapters give a clear cross-section of New Zealand insect life. Many of them will be of direct interest to the teaching profession because they coincide with parts of the secondary school syllabus.

The introduction also helps the reader to understand, to some extent, why relatively obscure insects such as the Takahē feather-louse and the D'Urville Island weevil are included in a book on common insects. Similarly the title would not lead one to expect tracts of Maori mythology.

The text figures depart from the current tendency to use completely new illustrations, and those working in entomology will encounter some old friends amongst them.

As a reference work this book should prove very reliable, for the author's wide experience has saved him from the temptation to go it alone, and he has consulted many authors and current researchers. The book contains few technical errors. While having the advantage of avoiding monotony the varied approach from chapter to chapter places a heavy reliance on the index as a means of locating the principal entry for a given species and members of the public will have quite a hunt when they try to identify an insect from the text. It is quite clear that the author is not writing an identification handbook and readers will be better served if they treat the book as a source of information. It is equally clear, however, that such a large work will be used as a means of identification. We know that people have patiently attempted to identify New Zealand insects from encyclopaedias based largely on United Kingdom examples. We may be sure that they, as well as those of us with more specialised interests, will gain much from this work.

R. G. Ordish

#### Also received:

**Population, Resources, Environment:** Issues in human ecology, 2nd Edition. Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich. W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, U.S.A.

**Energy flow through small mammal populations.** Editors: K. Petruszewicz, L. Ryszkowski. PWN Polish Scientific Publishers, Warszawa, Poland.

## CONFERENCE 1971

The 20th Annual Conference was held at Victoria University, Wellington over the weekend of 20-23 August 1971. Eighty members registered for the Conference and one-day visitors increased the attendance at some sessions, notably the symposium, to 125. Displays by members of the Society and by local suppliers of scientific equipment were on view.

On Saturday (21 August) the symposium, "Engineering and Ecology", was held under the general chairmanship of Dr G. R. Williams. Papers were presented on the themes of how Industrial Engineering, Facility Engineer-

ing and Development Engineering variously affected the environment.

In the evening Dr P. Wardle delivered the Presidential Address on the subject of the ecologist's role in practical environmental affairs. This was followed by the A.G.M.

Monday, 23 August, was devoted to contributed papers. Subjects included the effects of fluctuating lake levels on shore vegetation, the impact of drought on forest, water run off from high country, catchment management and the ecology of opossums, goats, and micro-organisms.

On Sunday, members were taken in a fleet of Land Rovers to Cape Turakirae to see remnants of a raised beach series and up the Orongorongo River to the field station of the Ecology Division of DSIR.

#### Annual General Meeting 1970

The 19th Annual General Meeting was held on 21 August at 7 p.m. in the LBI Lecture theatre at Victoria University, and was attended by 58 members. The annual report and financial statement were adopted. The Editor, Mr. I. G. Crook, asked for comments on editorial policy and received none. Dr J. Gibb, representative to the Member Bodies Committee of the Royal Society, reviewed the activities of that committee and drew special attention to the 12th Science Congress in 1972 and the new Royal Society Committee on Problems of the Environment.

The meeting took pleasure in conferring honorary life membership of the Society on the eminent botanist Mr N. Elder.

Dr P. Wardle was re-elected as President and, Dr G. R. Williams, M. N. Foggo and Dr M. R. Rudge were elected Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

#### Field Excursion

On a fine, sunny day a fleet of 15 Land Rovers took a party of 65 people from Wellington to Cape Turakirae and then up the Orongorongo river to the field station of Ecology Division, DSIR. A detailed excursion guide had been prepared for the route. At Cape Turakirae the remains of the raised beach system was demonstrated amidst the destruction wrought by the removal of boulders for land reclamation in Wellington Harbour. Two scientific reserves were pointed out and the vegetation and geology described by Dr Bagnal and Dr G. Stevens. At the Orongorongo field station the party heard an introductory address on general features of the area and then moved freely among a series of displays demonstrating the research in progress. Scientists were present to explain their projects.

Attendance at this mid-Conference excursion was higher than is normally the case when excursions occupy the last day. It was generally considered a pleasant and successful day.

M. R. RUDGE, Hon. Secretary.

## REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 1972

#### Ecological Guidelines for Engineers

The ecological considerations relevant to engineering projects was the theme of the 1971 conference. The Council's thoughts of how these might be set down as guidelines for engineers were presented as a paper by the Convener of the Conservation Subcommittee. Engineer's are becoming more aware of environmental issues and there has been some reaction to our suggestions, but insufficient to warrant further work at this stage.

#### Mining Bill

Last year the Society made strong representation to the appropriate Ministers on the draft version of the Mining Bill. We conceded that the Bill had clauses designed to safeguard conservation interests, but that these appeared to be nullified by others giving undue legal and tactical advantages to mining interests, e.g. only one month for objections; or that the Minister of Mines had final say without appeal. The representations were without avail.

#### Effect of Road Building Activities

Members have a continuing concern on the effects of road building activities on faunal and floral communities. Because information on proposed work is often unavailable or fragmentary, we are generally unable to discern whether any distinctive biological features

of an area have been taken into account in planned road work. Accordingly an approach has been made to the National Roads Board to see whether certain standard ecological considerations could be built into the decision making process.

#### Poor Knights Islands

The Society, along with other groups, has expressed concern to the Minister of Lands of the possibilities of oil prospecting in the immediate vicinity of the islands.

#### CoEnCo

Following the 'Save Manapouri' campaign there was a feeling among many conservation groups of the need for some form of federation that could express a unified opinion. Discussion took place between groups with the eventual establishment in March of the 'New Zealand Conference on the Environment and Conservation'. The Society has joined, though it expressed concern at the classes of membership available, particularly as it might affect groups who had the technical knowledge on which sound policy should be based.

#### Black Rock Reserve—Dunedin

A Reserve has been gazetted by the Minister of Lands. Dr A. F. Mark must take a good part of the credit for this new reserve.

D. SCOTT, Convener.