

extent was a fine cloud of sand, passing over it but under the net itself. The leg ropes were towing about 12 inches above the bottom, and the wing spreaders about 4 inches. The boards travelling over the bottom stirred up great clouds of silt, sand and, in this area, broken shell. The billows of silt streaming from the boards looked like smoke-screens and herded schools of small fish into the net. The boards were seen to ride very steadily and quite smoothly.

"The small fish I observed, for the most part, swam rapidly in front of the ground rope, not showing any real signs of panic, until the ground rope actually passed beneath them, when quite often they turned and were rapidly carried down into the cod-end. Some fish, however, remained swimming right down the full length of the net to the cod-end. Small flounder were seen on many occasions to swim just above the bottom, and then as they gradually tired, to flip over the ground rope and pass between it and the net. Crabs swam rapidly sideways, keeping up with the ground rope for a minute or so and then passing into the net and down to the cod-end in great confusion.

"The end of the cod-end was entirely obscured in clouds of silt. The only portions of the net in direct contact with the bottom were the ground rope along its entire length; occasionally a portion of the belly about 10 feet behind the throat and the last third to quarter of the cod-end where the mass of material collected. At normal trawling speeds it was quite impossible to gather up a handful of meshes. When the trawling speed was increased, I had to hold my face-mask to prevent it from pushing too hard against my face. At this speed the ground rope still remained on the bottom and the head rope, which was normally 4 feet from the bottom, rose to a height of about 5 feet.

"At normal speed I had little difficulty in pulling myself along the head rope from one end of the wings to the other. I could drift back to the cod-end and then crawl along the entire length of the net by hooking my fingers in the open meshes. At the risk of having my face-mask swept off my face, I could overhang the head rope and look down into the net itself.

"After remaining on the trawl net for 20 minutes I came up the buoyed line and observed the net from above".

CONSERVATION OF RARE FAUNA

Special measures to protect rare fauna have

been applied and others are to be introduced. They were agreed upon at the last meeting of the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee and have been endorsed by the Minister for Fisheries, Mr Ross Hutchinson.

A list of rare fauna will be drawn up and collecting of the named species will be prohibited or permitted only under strictly controlled conditions. A total ban has been applied on the taking of the short-necked tortoise and the noisy scrub-bird. Other species which will be similarly protected are the rufous and western bristle-bird, the western whipbird and the ground parrot. It is probable that some marsupial species will also be included.

With the exception of one small lot, negotiations for the acquisition by the Crown of the Bullsbrook swamps where the short-necked tortoise was found, have almost been completed. The final acquisition of the land, however, will not mean that our worries in the care of this rare species will end. Indeed, although it will be a relief to have the area reserved, and fenced, it will mark the commencement of new problems of management, while the onset of the first winter rains will see wardens and honorary workers paddling about all over the place searching for additional populations.

Approaches for the protection of the habitat of the noisy scrub-bird have been made to the Lands Department by this Department as well as by the National Parks Board. Both authorities are seeking to achieve the postponement of the development of the Two People Bay town-site, as well as the reserving of the surrounding areas, where a series of species of other rare fauna, including both bristle-birds and the western whipbird, occur. It is expected that tourists will be attracted to the area, not only to glimpse the rare fauna to be observed there, but also to enjoy the magnificent scenery and rugged terrain of the whole promontory, which includes Mount Gardner and its surrounding and densely vegetated ravines.