

and to recruit sufficient members to become an effective political force operative in all matters relating to the conservation of the natural resources of New Zealand.

It is to be hoped that with conservation becoming such a talked about and 'respectable' topic the new society can capture the public imagination and realize this general aim.

If this leads eventually to the setting up of a Nature Conservation Council with some real teeth, which can present considered, responsible and informed opinion and which can have a good chance of being heeded, then it will indeed be well worthwhile. There must be no more Manapouris, no more cloak and dagger stuff. In future it must be hoped that the Courts and Committees of Enquiry are set up automatically before decisions of such far reaching importance are made.

To quote from the notice stating the aims of the new Society:- "Conservation is not merely a matter of sentiment or of the ideal but lies at the very root of economic welfare. It is pre-eminently the concern of the practical man. Its tenets will be respected by Governments only in proportion to the strength of the demands of an informed public opinion."

If any of our members are interested in joining they should contact the Secretary Miss D.M.Nairn, 26, Elgin street, Auckland.2. The annual subscription is at present 50 cents.

.....

IS THIS THE TALLEST ?

Two of us recently walking down Kauri Grove Track, Piha Valley, noticed a nikau tree so tall that I deemed it worthwhile to return with a hand instrument to measure it up. As the spread of the outer fronds hid the growing tip, I took the sight to the top of the visible trunk below the swelling of the frond sheaths, which on computation measured 48'6" above ground. Dead fronds lying under the tree were 9' long, which added to the bare stem gave a total height of 57'6". As the centre fronds spring from a higher point on the stem than the outer ones the actual height was probably a little more than this. The top appeared quite healthy although somewhat over-mature. Fronds of young, vigorous nikaus are 10½ or more in length.

In the near vicinity is a kahikatea with a girth of 16', possibly the largest in the Waitakeres.