

NYASALAND PROTECTORATE



**Annual Report
of the
Department
of
Game, Fish and Tsetse Control
for the
Year ended 31st December**

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20. Access roads were made from the main Kasungu-Kota Kota road to the eastern shoulder of Chipata Mountain in the Kota Kota Reserve, where a camp site was cleared overlooking Lake Nyasa and the lower levels of the Reserve. It is planned to erect another small self-service type observation camp on this site which, being within easy reach of the rain forest on Chipata Mountain, should be of interest to botanists as well as those who wish to observe game.

21. Similarly in the Mwabvi Reserve an access road was made to the banks of the Mwabvi River, not far from the rhino and nyala thickets. Another self-service camp is to be erected at this site.

22. The provision of the access roads made it possible to make a start on trying to interest young Africans with more urban backgrounds in Nyasaland wild life and the idea of Game Reserves. Parties were taken from Dedza Secondary School, Kongwe Secondary School, and from the Scout troops of the Blantyre-Limbe area for a long week-end in the Reserve, the Central Province parties going to Kasungu and the Scouts from the Southern Province to the Mwabvi.

23. All the visits went off quite successfully. A reasonable amount of game was seen; the southern party saw rhino and a great deal of interest was displayed, not only in the animals but in the countryside as a whole.

24. Turning to the actual game itself the position in the Reserves seemed much as usual. An attempt was made during the dry season to introduce a uniform method of reporting by Game Reserve Guards on patrol, with the idea of making it possible to make statistical comparisons. This, however, has not yet gone far enough to permit discussion of the results.

25. Kota Kota Reserve continued to show a fairly representative sample of Nyasaland game, elephant, buffalo and sable being seen frequently. Eland were observed while the Chipata camp site was being constructed. Elephant are very prominent in Kasungu, but hartebeest, roan and zebra were well represented. Nyala, though not so frequently seen as in 1957, were still to be found in the Mwabvi, and the Lengwe Guards saw them frequently. Buffalo moved into the Lengwe in small numbers towards the end of the year and a herd of twenty elephant visited for a short time in October. Sable were reported from all three Southern Province Reserves and hartebeest from Majete.

26. Chief Katumbi, Honorary Game Warden, reported most encouragingly concerning the situation in the Vwaza Marsh Controlled Area, which has been closed to shooting since August, 1956. Buffalo, eland and roan have all increased very considerably, particularly the former. Sable are present and elephant from Northern Rhodesia which normally return in November, in 1958 stayed on into the New Year and the Chief thinks they may well remain permanently. Rhino have also been in the area for a short time. The Chief is to be congratulated on these good results from his enforcement of the protective legislation.

27. At the end of the year the posting of a Game Control Officer to the Northern Province made it possible to take better steps to enforce the prohibition of hunting on the Nyika, though there was some poaching earlier in the year. A small force of Game Reserve Guards has now been established on the plateau and steps are being taken to define the boundaries of the non-shooting area more precisely. Elephant were observed on the plateau on one occasion during the year.

28. The question of some form of sanctuary on the Vipya was still under discussion at the end of the year and although a new Wild Birds Protection Ordinance was presented to the last meeting of Legislative Council in 1958, actual enactment was held over pending further discussion with the African unofficial members.

29. Game licences issued showed a slight increase over the 1957 figures. Details are given in Appendix IV.