



Briefly . . .

INTERNATIONAL

Millions More

The world's human population reached 4,365,300,000 in 1978, 59 million more than in 1977, according to estimates by the Environmental Fund, a private US group with a reputation for accuracy. China topped a billion with 1,003,900,000, followed by India with 656 million, the USSR 261m., the US 230m., Indonesia 149m., and Brazil 122m. Dirk Jan van der Kaa, Chairman of the UN Population Commission and a professor of demography at the University of Amsterdam, predicts that in 2050 the world's population will stabilise at 11,500,000,000.

WWF Awards

The WWF Gold Medal was presented last November to Guy Mountfort, eminent British conservationist well known for his work in Jordan, Nepal, Pakistan and Spain, and especially for his championship of Project Tiger. Three other well known conservationists were elected Members of Honour: Dr Eskander Firouz, of Iran; Dr Fritz Vollmar, who retired last year as Chief Executive after 16 years service to WWF, and Dr Bernhard Grzimek, President of the Frankfurt Zoological Society, a tireless champion and promoter of wildlife conservation especially in East Africa, Asia and Latin America.

52 Parties to CITES

Panama (see *Oryx*, November 1978, p297), Togo, Kenya, Jordan, Indonesia and Costa Rica have become the 47th-52nd parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

World Wilderness Congress

The Second World Wilderness Congress will be held in Cairns, Queensland, Australia, on June 9-13, 1980.

Japan-US Conference

The Japanese-American Environmental Conference in Yokohama ended with delegates agreeing to 'seek ways to cope with various environmental problems through this newly established co-operative framework between

the people of the two nations'. On whaling, however, the US contingent urged a total ban while the Japanese argued that, since a ban would cost jobs, 'proper control of sea resources' was enough.

Animal Charter

UNESCO has passed a sweeping Universal Declaration of the Rights of Animals, which states that 'all animals are born with an equal claim on life and the same rights to existence'. Due to become UN law in 1980, the 'Animal Charter' condemns, among other things, hunting, vivisection, factory farming, and the exploitation of animals for human amusement.

Bear Group Formed

A Eurasian Bear Group (EBG), associated with the Bear Biology Association, was formed during the 1978 Second International Theriological Congress in Brno, Czechoslovakia. Membership is free and includes a semi-annual newsletter. Secretary: H.U. Roth, n.238, I-38010 Spormaggiore (TN), Italy.

Tamarin Studbook

The 3rd edition is published of the complete studbook for the golden lion tamarin *Leontopithecus rosalia rosalia*, compiled by D. G. Kleinman.

BRITISH ISLES

Cleaner Clyde

Thanks mainly to improved sewage treatment, fish have returned to the Clyde estuary, described 100 years ago by the Glasgow Corporation as 'a gigantic open sewer'. The fish include sticklebacks, flounders, grey mullet, perch, cod, sprats, herring and eels. If the oxygen level continues to improve, the Clyde could once again be a spawning ground for salmon.

TB in Badgers

The NCC has commissioned an independent three-year research programme into the nature and implications of TB in badgers and other wildlife to be carried out at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Jersey Breeding Successes

The Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust has announced some of its 1978 captive breeding successes: endangered species include seven Goeldi's monkeys *Callimico goeldii*, two of which are pure second-generation, bringing the total stock to 18; five Rodrigues fruit bats *Pteropus rodricensis*, total stock 18; 37 white-



Jamaican hutia

reared pheasants *Crossoptilon crossoptilon* of 187 reared at Jersey since February 1968, when there were only 18 in captivity anywhere; 33 Round Island Telfair's skinks; 23 Guenther's geckos; and 88 Jamaican boas. The Zoo also reports that 23 of the endangered Jamaican hutia have been bred from the animals imported from Jamaica in 1972; several are now on loan to other zoos, including London.

Litter Traps

Discarded bottles, jars and ring-pull cans can become traps for small mammals, because of the slippery inside surface. A survey of roadsides, railways and picnic areas near Sheffield found water, common and pygmy shrews, field and bank voles, and house and wood mice trapped in this way. Reports from other parts of Britain mention stoats, brown rats, dormice, Scilly shrews, and harvest and yellow-necked mice.

Saving Life in Cemeteries

The British Lichen Society has appealed to parishioners not to be too thorough when tidying up churchyards, particularly when scrubbing tombstones, which can support rare, years-old lichen growths. The Society also called for restraint in pulling 'weeds' in neglected cemeteries, which are among the country's best nature reserves.

Shop Fined for Leopard Skins

In a case brought by Friends of the Earth under the 1976 Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act, House of Sears Ltd of London was fined £550 with £50 costs for displaying for sale three leopard skins, priced at £2000, £1500 and £750. A shop assistant had told the FoE investigator that the skins were being sold on commission for a man who imported them from Rhodesia.

Jojoba in Whale Hall

The British Museum (Natural History) has turned over part of its Whale Hall to an exhibit of the jojoba bush *Simmondsia chinensis*, whose seeds contain a wax that has similar properties to sperm oil and could replace it in all its uses.

EUROPE

Cod Stocks Worry Norwegians

The fishing-free zones recently established in the Russian and Norwegian sectors of the Barents Sea and around the Spitzbergen archipelago are not in themselves adequate to protect young cod stocks, because of overfishing in adjoining areas. Norwegian fishery researchers fear the whole of the Norwegian-Arctic stock is in jeopardy.

Swiss Vote for Protection

By 82 per cent, the Swiss electorate has approved an Animal Protection Act; previously, animals had been protected only by a single article in the Criminal Code.

How People Give Seals Ulcers

About 40 per cent of newborn common seals *Phoca vitulina* in the German Waddensee develop skin ulcers around the umbilicus and usually die within two years. Researchers from Kiel have found that the lesions are peculiar to seals that haul out on sand and are the result of humans disturbing the animals and causing them to move across the sand when they should be resting.

Lynx in Europe

At the first international symposium on the conservation and introduction of the lynx into Europe, held in Germany in July 1978, it was agreed that the return of the lynx was justified on both ecological and cultural grounds. There was no evidence that the lynx is responsible for the decline in deer, nor does it endanger the wood-grouse population, compete with sportsmen, or present any threat to man. There have already been successful introductions into Bavaria, Slovenia and Switzerland, but further introductions must be coordinated and monitored.

Only Sweden Protects Wolverines

Though there are a mere 200 wolverines *Gulo gulo* in the whole of Scandinavia, only Sweden, with a population of 75, protects them. In Norway and Finland they are still hunted extensively because of the occasional reindeer they kill. Neither are they protected in Canada, where they once ranged across the entire country but now have a healthy population only in the far north-west, and even this is threatened by development.

Wild Reindeer

Some 2000 wild reindeer inhabit the woodlands of eastern Finland, an increasing population comprised mainly of immigrants from the Soviet Union.



The authorities are attempting to move them to a more favourable habitat in the western part of the country.

The Thoroughgoing Muskrat

A study of the effects of the muskrat *Ondatra zibethica*, introduced in Estonia in 1947 and now common in most of the lakes in the east and south, shows a sharp decline in all kinds of fish, crayfish and molluscs, because the muskrats destroy the lakes' larger vegetation. The absence of molluscs, which filter large amounts of water, has made the lakes murkier.

Camargue Hunters Keep Shooting

Le Monde reports that 28 'well-known inhabitants of Montpellier' were fined varying amounts at Arles court in January 1978 for shooting at birds in the Camargue Nature Reserve. 22 of these hunters had already been fined a total of 200,000 francs in June 1977 for the same offence, claiming they had a right to hunt in the reserve.

Greece Cancels Industrial Complex

A plan to build a massive industrial complex, with steel mills, paint factories and cement plants, on Navarino Bay in south-western Greece, has been abandoned after protests from conservationists. The area is now to be developed for tourism.

NORTH AMERICA

Tecopa Pupfish Extinct

The first animal to be removed from the US Endangered Species List because of its extinction is the Tecopa pupfish, a subspecies native to the Amargosa River near Death Valley, California. The ½-inch-long fish failed to survive competition and predation by introduced mosquito fish, bluegills and crayfish, and the rechanneling of the Amargosa to make way for a bathhouse above a hot spring.

Pesticide Warnings

Until recently pesticides which could not be sold in the US could still be manufactured there and exported without any warning. Now, under the 1978 Federal Pesticide Act, such exports will be accompanied by a statement from the Environmental Protection Agency explaining the reasons for the US ban.

Pest Eats Pest

The fire ant, for which numerous insecticides are manufactured in attempts to halt its spread

across the south-eastern US, has been discovered to be a predator of even worse pests, the boll weevil and bollworm. Researchers at Texas A&M University have found that in unsprayed cotton crops fire ants eliminated 85 per cent of young boll weevils and 93 per cent of bollworms.

First of Many?

The evacuation of the Love Canal neighbourhood near Niagara Falls, after toxic chemicals buried there in the 1940s began to seep to the surface, may be only the first of many such incidents. The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates that at least 1000 long-forgotten dump sites are scattered across the country.

Pollution League Standings

The Council of Environmental Quality has listed in order the six US cities with the highest air pollution: Los Angeles, Denver, Albuquerque, Philadelphia, New York and Boston.

Waste Power

One of the US's most abundant resources—waste—is being used to produce electric power in New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Boston. The largest and most recent waste power operation, in Hempstead, New York, collects the city's garbage, separates out glass and metal for recycling, and burns 2000 tons of organic material a day, providing 250 million kilowatts a year for 40,000 homes.

Mercury in Eskimos

Natives of the settlement of Sugluk, in far north Quebec, have been discovered to have very high mercury levels in their blood, in many cases more than one part per 10 million, 10 times the 'safe' maximum. Their staple diet is whale and seal blubber.

Whooping Cranes Increase

In 1978 71 whooping cranes wintered at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge—62 adults and nine young. Counting these and the ones fostered by the greater sandhill cranes that migrate between Grays Lake, Idaho, and the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, there are now some 90 birds in the wild, and 26 in captivity.

Marine Mammal Ban to End

A moratorium on the taking of nine Alaskan marine mammals will be dropped by Federal agencies as soon as Alaska revises its own laws to conform to the 1972 Marine Mammals Protection Act. The mammals, their estimated populations and recommended harvest are



Ribbon seal *Denys Ovenden*

northern sea lion, 214,000 (6648); land-breeding harbour seal, 270,000 (10,511); largha seal, a harbour seal subspecies found in the western Pacific, 200,000-250,000 (5700); ringed seal, 1-1.5 million (20,000); ribbon seal, 90,000-100,000 (500); bearded seal, 300,000-400,000 (9000); beluga whale, 9500 (360); polar bear, 5700 (170); and sea otter, 100,000-140,000 (3000). The ban on Alaska's 140,000-200,000 Pacific walrus (3000) was lifted in 1976.

Steel Shot Setback

In the latest Department of the Interior appropriations bill, Congress has attached a rider forbidding the Fish and Wildlife Service to spend any money on phasing out lead pellets in shotgun shells. Begun two years ago, the programme to replace lead with steel had until now made good progress. Spent lead shot is a major source of poisoning in waterfowl, but steel shot is disliked by hunters, who say it damages their gun barrels, and by manufacturers who would have to retool.

No Water for Wildlife

The US Forest Service may not reserve water in the West's national forests for wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, cattle-grazing or any other purpose besides timber, according to a ruling by the Supreme Court in a suit brought by New Mexico over water rights in the Gila National Forest, source of the Rio Mimbres.

Wolf Poisoning Banned

British Columbia has banned poisoning for wolf control and replaced it in ranching areas by trapping and compensation for livestock losses. The Provincial Environment Minister said poisoning was neither cost-effective nor humane.

Monsters Described

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has accepted the name *Nessiteras rhombopteryx* for the Loch Ness Monster as a prerequisite to protection under the Endangered Species Act, which will be invoked if the animal is ever discovered. The Bigfoot is similarly treated with the name *Sasquatch*.

637 Endangered Species

By September 30 1978 the US Endangered Species List contained 260 mammals, 211 birds, 58 reptiles, 14 amphibians, 39 fish, 3 snails, 25 clams, 1 crustacean, 6 insects and 20 plants.

Latest Additions

In the 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act, Congress added 1,854,000 acres to the National Parks System, enlarging 39 existing parks and creating 21 new ones. It also declared eight new Wild and Scenic Rivers and six new National Trails.

Salmon Return to Connecticut

The Fish and Wildlife Service has restored salmon to the Connecticut River after a 50-year absence. In 1976, when pollution controls and the construction of fish passages in a series of dams had made the project feasible, 63,000 two-year-old smolts raised in hatcheries were released in the river, and in 1978, 77 returned to spawn. (The normal fatality rate between smolt and adult is 99 per cent.)

Bald Eagle Numbers

The National Wildlife Federation's Raptor Information Center estimates that there are, at most, 85,000 bald eagles in North America—50,000 in Canada, 30,000 in Alaska and 5000 in the 'Lower 48' US.

Poll Favours Sun

Four out of five Americans would support a crash programme to develop solar energy, and fewer than half think that nuclear power should be expanded, according to a recent poll; 71 per cent said that they would prefer a clean environment to an area where jobs were plentiful, and 65 per cent opposed cutting back on pollution control as a way of stimulating the economy.

Pimlott Award

The Canadian Nature Federation has established an annual award in memory of Professor Douglas H. Pimlott, the distinguished conservationist and wolf specialist who died in 1978. Awards will be made for outstanding contributions to Canadian conservation.

Refuge Renamed for Senator

The 2700-acre Ravalli Refuge in Bitterroot Valley, Montana, has been renamed the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge, in memory of the late senator and conservationist from Montana.



Tropical Forest Task Force

A task force to develop US policy on tropical forest management has been set up by the Department of State and the Agency for International Development and includes representatives from the Forest Service, Commerce Department, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and Peace Corps. It is charged with drafting policy and strategy by August 1979.

AFRICA

Cheetah Skins Seized

Hong Kong Customs officials have seized an illegal shipment of 319 African cheetah skins, worth \$20,000.

Resolution Revoked

In lobbying for reclassification of the leopard from Appendix I of CITES to Appendix II, some US consumer groups have been quoting a long-outdated East African Wildlife Society resolution sanctioning leopard hunting. When word of this reached the Society, its Scientific and Technical Committee formally revoked the old resolution and notified the US Government of its support for keeping the leopard in Appendix I.

Chimp Embargos

The US Endangered Species Management Authority will no longer grant import permits for chimpanzees, and Sierra Leone, the main source of the animals, has banned their export.

Sierra Leone Reserve

A 12-sq-mile wildlife reserve has been set up around Mamunta in the northern province of Sierra Leone by the local people under their Paramount Chief Bai Yosso and with the help of Dr Robert Lowes, FPS Consultant in Sierra Leone. The area comprises swamp, forest and savanna, and is rich in bird life; buffalo, various duikers, black and white colobus monkey, bushbuck, waterbuck, bongo and West African dwarf crocodiles have all occurred.

Nakuru Game

Recent game counts in Lake Nakuru National Park (land area: 157 sq km) have resulted in the following population estimates: 2000 waterbuck, 1500 impala, 600 Thomson's gazelle, 250 buffalo, 200 baboon, 150 dik-dik, 150 vervet monkey, 100 bohor reedbuck, 100 warthog, 80 rock hyrax, 50 bushbuck, 50 jackal, 50 steinbok, 30 mountain reedbuck, 25 zebra, 20 Grant's gazelle, 18 giraffe, 15 colobus monkey, 10 bushpig, 8 leopard, 7 hippopotamus,

5 eland, and 2 klipspringer. Most of the smaller numbers are of animals introduced since the last survey in 1971, and the only population declines since then are in bohor reedbuck, and possibly bushbuck and steinbok.

Pelicans Oust Flamingoes

Pelicans, moving in to feed on an introduced fish *Tilapia grahami* in Kenya's Lake Nakuru, have been disturbing the lake's famous flamingoes by taking over their nests.

Kenyan Wildlife Clubs

Kenya's Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife made a grant of £K10,000 to the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya in 1978, their 10th anniversary year. The Clubs now comprise 570 different branches with 30,000 students. The main purpose is to acquaint young Kenyans with native wildlife, much of which they would never otherwise see. Other countries now establishing clubs on the WCK model are Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, Malawi, Cameroon and India.

Healthy Buffalo

Rhodesian veterinarians have established the nucleus of a buffalo *Syncerus caffer* herd which is free of foot-and-mouth disease, by separating calves from an infected herd and raising them in a fenced-off, uninfected reserve. It is hoped eventually to reintroduce disease-free buffalo to places where cattlemen have eliminated the animals because of their reputation as foot-and-mouth vectors.

New Ethiopian Bird

A new species of serin, *Serinus ankoberensis*, discovered at an altitude of 10,000 feet near Ankober in central Ethiopia, is described by J. S. Ash in the January 1979 *Ibis*. Its plumage resembles that of the Yemen serin *S. menachensis* but is slightly darker, and its bill is more elongated. One pair were found nesting in a vertical hole under an overhanging bank.

West African Pollution

Chemical factories on the coasts of Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo and Cameroon are discharging so many untreated effluents that 'the sea is discoloured for miles around', the *Nigerian Tide* reports. More such factories are said to be at advanced stages of planning.

Desert Wildlife Library

The Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture has appealed for donations of books, journals and periodicals for a planned library on wildlife in arid ecosystems. Contributions to: The Librarian, National Wildlife Library, Giza Zoological Gardens, Egypt.



Robert Gillmor

ASIA

Vanishing Seas

The two rivers that feed the Aral Sea—the Amu Darya and Syr Darya—have been so depleted by massive irrigation projects that by 1980 the sea will comprise about one-third its 1960 area of 66,000 sq km. By 2000, it is expected that the Aral Sea will be a salt marsh. The Caspian Sea is also shrinking, and some former ports and fishing villages are now as far as 50km from the coast.

Raptor Trapping

The large concentrations of migrating raptors recently discovered at the eastern end of the Black Sea (see *Oryx*, June 1978, p210) are being increasingly trapped and shot. Some, particularly sparrowhawks, are used for falconry, others are caged, and many are killed as pests.

Rhino Ban

Hong Kong will no longer grant import licences for rhino products.

Andaman Crocodile Decline

Saltwater crocodiles *Crocodylus porosus* in the Andaman Islands have declined sharply in recent years because virtually all the freshwater streams they need for nesting now support human settlements. According to a preliminary survey reported in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*, only 100-200 remain on North Andaman, 50-100 on Middle Andaman and 20-30 on South Andaman. (Little Andaman was not surveyed.)

Fewer Crocs Mean Fewer Fish

The disappearance of crocodiles from many Indian rivers has been accompanied by a decline in commercially important fish because of an increase in the crocodiles' prey, non-commercial predators such as catfish.

Blackbuck Increase

In Pakistan's Lal Suhanra National Park the blackbuck now number 23. The herd was started in 1970 with animals brought in from Texas, where a number of large ranches keep these antelopes in semi-wild conditions. Released about the same time were chinkara gazelle (now 17) and nilgai antelope (now 6).

Training in Pakistan

Six field workers from Sind, Baluchistan, Punjab and North-west Frontier Provinces have been trained in the management of wetlands by Peter Conder, former Director of the RSPB.

National Eagle

President Marcos of the Philippines has ordered that the monkey-eating eagle *Pithechophagus jefferyi* will in future be known as the Philippine eagle.

Bangladesh Bans Rhesus Exports

Bangladesh has followed the example of India and banned the export of rhesus monkeys (see *Oryx*, November 1978, p310).

Nilgiri Langur Survey

A survey of the Nilgiri langur *Presbytis johnii* in India's Palni Hills—published in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*—suggests a 1976 population of 150-500. Considered common as recently as the 1950s, the monkeys have increasingly suffered from hunting and agricultural encroachment.

The Siberian Yeti

In the Verkhoyansk area of north-eastern Siberia, where almost uninhabited land is now being opened up to mining projects, there have been several sightings of the *chuchunaa*, literally 'outcast', a monster of the yeti and bigfoot kind. Two metres tall with arms hanging below its knees, it is said to wear reindeer skin and eat raw meat and berries. Semyon Nikolae, of the USSR Academy of Sciences, takes these reports seriously and believes that the *chuchunaa* may be a pre-human species which has been fleeing civilisation for centuries.

Farming Sea Cucumbers

Korea Today reports that in North Korea sea cucumbers, 'used for preparing tasty dishes and highly valued as a tonic', are now being farmed on a large scale.

Malaysian Primate Research

Research into the biology, conservation and laboratory use of peninsular Malaysian primates is being conducted jointly by the Universities of Pertanian Malaysia, Kebangsaan Malaysia and Cambridge. The aim is to establish a long-term conservation policy that allows for both thriving wild populations and a supply of laboratory animals. Other sponsors of the project are the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Royal Society and the L.S.B. Leakey Foundation.



ANTIPODES

New Queensland Parks

Queensland has created five national parks on the Cape York peninsula—Archer River, Weymouth, Jardine River, Strathmore and Lalefield. The last, covering 500,000 ha from Cooktown to Princess Charlotte Bay, will protect the rare golden-shouldered parrots *Psephodes chrysopterygius*, which are worth up to \$10,000 each and are smuggled out of the country from remote Cape York airstrips. All the new parks are part of a long-term plan to turn the entire peninsula into what could be the world's largest official wilderness area.

Military Ban Sperm Oil

The Australian Minister for Defence, citing the example of his UK counterpart, has stopped the Defence Force's use of sperm oil or of any product whose manufacture involves sperm oil.

Cats Worse Than Foxes

A comparison of the stomach contents of feral cats and red foxes in South Australia found the cats to be the greater threat to native wildlife. Though both survived mainly on rabbits, the cats had eaten a higher proportion of small marsupials, birds and reptiles, while the foxes had supplemented their diet with a large percentage of sheep and kangaroo carrion. The researchers concluded that both of the predators caused more harm by eating native wildlife than good by eating rabbits, and recommended that cats, foxes and rabbits all be controlled by shooting.

Fish in Sydney

Following the introduction of pollution controls, fish are returning to the previously lifeless Parramatta River, which runs through the heart of Sydney.

Garbage and Skuas

The establishment of a French Antarctic base at Point Géologie, Adélie Land, has caused an increase in the local population of skuas *Skerccorarius maccormicki* from 80–90 in 1965/66 to 320 in 1976/77, because the base's garbage dump has proved to be a richer food source than their natural one—the eggs, chicks and carcasses of Adélie penguins. Distances between nests have shortened by nearly half. At the height of the population increase two fledglings instead of one were being raised by a breeding pair, and the egg-laying season, no longer dependent on the penguins' breeding habits, increased from 14 days to 58 days.

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Cat Smuggling

Skins from the Chaco region of Paraguay are smuggled into and then out of Bolivia from private airstrips for export to Europe, accounting for about 3000 ocelots, 300–400 jaguars and 10,000 other animals a month, according to an anonymous *Tier* reporter who travelled with the smugglers. A 12-member cabal of Bolivian skin dealers is said to have found easy ways of circumventing the country's recent ban on cat-skin exports.

Marine Protection in Bermuda

Bermuda has banned the taking of seven molluscs—queen and harbour conches, Bermuda cone, Bermuda and calico scallops, Atlantic pearl oyster and netted olive—as well as all helmet and bonnet shells, hard and soft corals, sea turtles and marine mammals.

New Leatherback Nesting Site

A newly discovered nesting beach of the leatherback turtle, on St Croix in the US Virgin Islands in the Caribbean, has been listed as critical habitat. In 1977, 86 nests were found on the two-mile beach, and also evidence of egg-stealing.

Honduran Bulletin

The Honduran Ecological Association, a non-governmental body dedicated to sound management of natural resources, is now publishing a monthly bulletin, *Ecosistemas de Honduras*. Information from Asociación Hondureña de Ecología, Departamento de Biología, UNAH, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Peruvian Primate Exhibit

An exhibit at the Natural History Museum of San Marcos University in Lima, Peru, features the evolution, behaviour, human utilisation, and conservation of the Platyrrhini primates, and includes the world's only captive yellow-tailed woolly monkey *Lagothrix flavicauda*. It was organised by Dr Hernando de Macedo-Ruiz, the museum's curator of birds and mammals, and funded by the New York Zoological Society.

New Chat Tanager

Annabelle Dod, of the Dominican Republic's National Museum of Natural History, has discovered a new subspecies of chat tanager *Calyptophilus frugivorus neibae* in the Sierra de Neiba cloud forest near the Haitian border, a place 'hitherto unknown ornithologically'. The bird is darker and smaller than other chat tanagers, with a rufescent tail.

OCEANS

Dwindling Hawaiian Tree Snails

Of the 41 species of tree snails of the genus *Achatinella*, endemic to Oahu, 21 are extinct and 20 should be considered endangered, according to Alan D. Hart, who has been surveying them since 1972. A survey only a decade earlier found 14 extinct, 25 rare and endangered and two common. Main causes of the extinctions are collectors, who prize the varied, jewel-like shells; encroachment on the highland forests; forest fires; and exotics such as rats and the cannibal snail *Euglandina rosea*, introduced in 1955 to control yet another exotic, the giant African snail *Achatina fulica*, which still thrives.

Gray Whale Recovers

The Pacific gray whale, protected by the US and Mexico since 1946, has now nearly reached its mid-19th-century population of 15,000.

News from the Galapagos

The Galapagos fur seal *Arctocephalus galapagoensis*, once thought to be extinct, is now estimated to number some 40,000, about the same number as the Galapagos sealion. They are now on all the major islands. The new estimates are the result of a two-year survey by Fritz Trillmich. On Española (Hood) Island the last goats have been eradicated.

New Banded Iguana

What may be a new subspecies of banded iguana *Brachylophus fasciatus* has been discovered in the Fiji Islands. It differs from the main race in colour, crest size, dewlap and the fact that the female is banded as well as the male. Banded iguanas have been considerably reduced on the larger islands by introduced cats and mongooses, but on the smaller, uninhabited ones, including the one with the new subspecies, populations remain healthy.

Porpoises Taken with Tuna

The final figure for the number of porpoises taken incidentally by US tuna fishermen in 1977 is expected to be much lower than the quota allowed, 62,429 animals. It may be as low as half.

Marine Information

A Marine Action Centre has been set up for liaison and information between conservation groups on marine issues. It is run by Joanna Gordon Clark and Jon Barzdo from the Old Post Office, Huntingfield, near Halesworth, Suffolk.

NEW PARKS AND RESERVES

Mexico has declared (May 1978) all the islands of the Baja California peninsula in north-west Mexico and the adjacent Sonoran Desert coast as wildlife reserves. This area covers 6000 sq km and includes the largest islands: Tiburon (mule deer and desert sheep), Cadros (the threatened Cadros Island mule deer), and Guadeloupe (elephant seal and Guadeloupe fur seal).

Costa Rica has established two new national parks and four new reserves, bringing its number of protected areas to 23. The additions are Braulio Carrillo (32,000ha) and Isla de Coco National Parks (3200ha); Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve (84,500ha); and Hitoy Cerere (9044ha), Carara (7600ha) and Palo Verde Biological Reserves (4758ha).

Belize has put seven cays (coral islands) under the control of the Audubon Society as bird reserves. The birds include wood storks; great, cattle and reddish egrets; boat-billed and tri-coloured herons, white ibis, magnificent frigatebirds, and anhingas.

The Netherlands Antilles National Parks Foundation has added two areas totalling 5000ha to the Washington National Park on the Island of Bonaire.

Dominica has created its first national park, the Morne Trois Pitons.

A former Coast Guard communication site comprising 24.8 acres of prairie in Northbrook, Illinois—part of metropolitan Chicago—has been given to the Cook County Forest Preserve District for use as a nature reserve and park.

Austria has declared the Thenar grasslands north of Lake Neusiedel and the Gössbachgraben peatlands in the Günser Gebirge to be integral reserves.

Mount William National Park in north-eastern Tasmania has been enlarged by 3200 hectares of pastureland and gum-tree forest and 20km of coastline.

Swains Wood, a chalky bank in the Buckinghamshire Chilterns, rich in wild flowers, and Hitchcops Farm Pit, a sandpit with a great variety of hymenopterous and other insects, in the part of Berkshire that was recently transferred to Oxfordshire, are the two latest nature reserves of the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalists' Trust. The Trust has also made a major extension to its Aston Upthorpe chalk grassland reserve, a Grade I site.



A grant from the Hambland Foundation has enabled the Otter Trust to buy 47 acres of Swangey Fen near Attleborough in Norfolk, the Trust's first nature reserve.

PERSONALIA

Dr Boonsong Lekagul has been awarded the J. Paul Getty Wildlife Conservation Prize for 1979.

Primitivo Bricino has been appointed General Manager of INDERENA, Colombia's official conservation agency.

Dr Harold J. Coolidge, FPS Vice-President and Honorary President of IUCN, was awarded IUCN's John C. Phillips Medal for distinguished Service in International Conservation.

B. R. Koppiker has been appointed Director of Project Tiger in succession to K. S. Sankhala.

Craig MacFarland, former director of the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos, has been appointed Head of the Wildlands and Watersheds Unit of Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) in Turrialba, Costa Rica, succeeding Arne Darfelt, who has joined the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD).

Merilo Morell has been appointed Director of the Dominican Republic's National Directorate of Parks.

The Hon. Clement Mwananshiku has been appointed Zambia's Minister of Water and Natural Resources. He succeeds the Hon. K. S. Musokotwane, who created the National Parks Board, of which Peter Miller, President of the Wildlife Conservation Society and FPS Consultant, was made a member.

Dr Franklyn Perring, former Director of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology's Biological Records Centre at Monks Wood, has been appointed General Secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Conservation, succeeding A. E. Smith, who retires after serving the Society in various capacities for 19 years.

Maurice Strong has been elected a Vice-President of WWF International.

Dr Lee M. Talbot of the US, FPS Vice-President and a former White House scientific adviser, has been appointed Director of Conservation and Special Scientific Adviser of WWF International.

The WWF's Gavin Maxwell Award for work on otters has been given to Hugh Watson, who is studying otters in Shetland, financed by the Vincent Wildlife Trust.

The Chairman of the IUCN Survival Service Commission (SSC), Sir Peter Scott, has appointed eight Regional Vice-Chairmen, following the General Assembly at Ashkhabad in 1978: Dr Andrew Allo, Africa; John Perry, North America; Prof. Federico Medem, Latin America; M. K. Ranjitsinh, Asia; Prof. Harry Messel, Australia; Dr Sidney Holt, Marine; Grenville Lucas, Threatened plants. The Commission's new Deputy Chairman is Dr Wayne King, and Richard Fitter continues as Chairman of the Steering Committee.

OBITUARIES

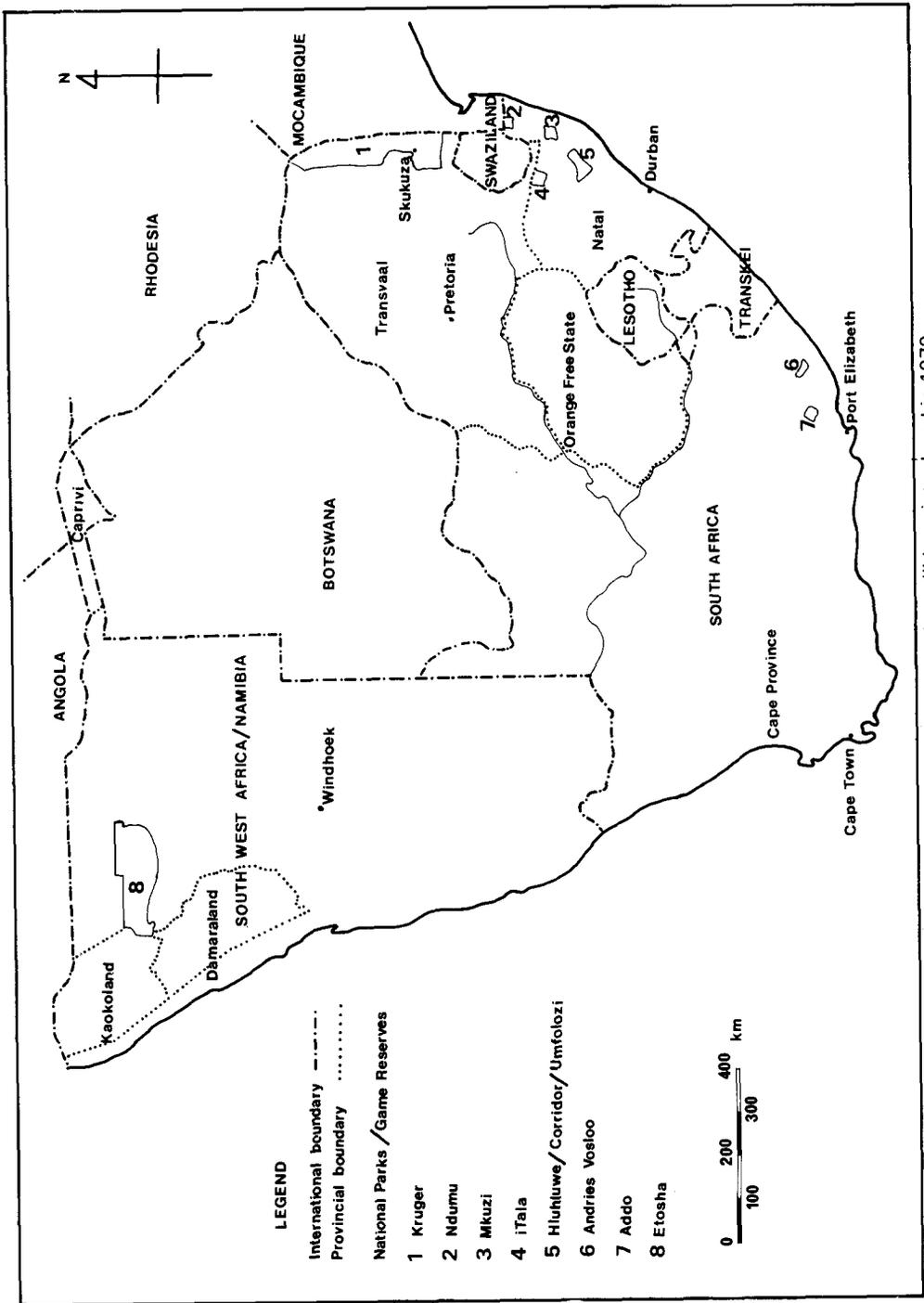
Dr Cristóbal Bonifaz, of Quito, Ecuador, Vice-President of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos, died in 1978.

Dr Jeffrey Harrison OBE, ornithologist and wildfowler, Council member of the Wildfowl Trust and Honorary Director of Conservation and Research for the Wildfowlers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland (WAGBI), died in September 1978.

Dr C. T. Prime, a Vice-President of both the Botanical Society of the British Isles and the Council for Nature, died on February 6.

Sir Edward Salisbury OBE FRS, one of Britain's most distinguished botanists and former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, died in November, aged 92.

Dr Alexander Wetmore, the well-known ornithologist and a former Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, died on December 7 1978, aged 92. The world's leading contributor to avian palaeontology, Dr Wetmore described 189 previously unknown species and subspecies of birds, including 80 from Panama; 17 birds were named after him, as were seven reptiles and amphibians, nine insects, two fishes, five molluscs, a sponge, a bat, a cactus, a deer, an extinct eagle, a glacier and a canopy bridge.



Localities where the black rhinoceros still occurs, has been reintroduced or will be reintroduced in 1979