

Briefly . . .

International

85 for CITES

Algeria, Luxembourg and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago have all become Parties to CITES, bringing the total membership to 85.

Bonn Convention can get off ground

The Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals came into force on 1 December 1983. The 15 initial members of the Convention are: Cameroon, Chile, Denmark, EEC, Egypt, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Niger, Portugal and Sweden. The West Germans must now call a conference of the Parties by the autumn of 1985 to set up the machinery to implement the Convention, which requires the Contracting Parties to protect species listed as being endangered over their entire range and to co-operate with other governments in the protection of designated species—whether endangered or not—which visit both or all their territories.

IUCN General Assembly

The IUCN General Assembly will take place in Madrid, 5–15 November 1984. IUCN's membership now stands at 508 government and non-government institutions in 114 countries.

Breeding Endangered Species Congress

The 4th world Congress on Breeding Endangered Species in Captivity will be held in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, from 27 to 29 September 1984. It is organised jointly by fFPS, the Zoological Gardens of Rotterdam and the Zoological Society of London. The sessions cover Zoo Breeding Programmes, Advances in Artificial Breeding Techniques, Management, Relevance of Wild Populations, Introduction and Reintroduction and a Forum on Future Possibilities.

Biosphere reserve network should be extended

There are now 226 biosphere reserves world-wide designated by Unesco's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, but only eight were created

under the programme. The rest are established national parks and reserves. A draft Action Plan produced by the First International Biosphere Reserve Congress, held in Minsk, USSR, in 1983, calls for extending the reserve network and includes recommendations for reserve management, and for research and monitoring programmes to follow environmental changes and the impact of human activities.

IUCN Bulletin, 14, 10–12

Polar bear population doubles

In 1973 the US, Canada, the USSR, Denmark (Greenland) and Norway signed an international Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears, which was drawn up with IUCN/WWF in response to the decreasing number of polar bears, of which 1000 were being hunted each year. Under the Agreement only the native peoples of Greenland were allowed to kill about 100 animals each year—two per cent of the population. As a result Norway's bear population, which it shares with East Greenland and the USSR, has doubled. There is now pressure for resuming commercial hunting and there are also the growing dangers of tourism and industrialisation of the Arctic. People in helicopters and motorised vehicles are chasing bears—an activity which can be fatal for the animals, which become overheated very quickly when forced to run.

Good news for turtles

More and more shrimp fisheries are using Trawling Efficiency Devices (TEDs) (see *Oryx*, January 1983, page 46), cage-like structures which fit into shrimp trawling nets. Inadvertently captured sea turtles and other large animals and objects, which can comprise 90 per cent of the total catch, are released through a trap door, while shrimps pass into the end of the trawl. The US National Marine Fisheries Service has been promoting use of TEDs in the south-east US since 1981 and now 100–200 shrimpers are using them. Other countries are interested too. Indonesia now requires Japanese shrimpers fishing in its waters to use them, because of severe depletion of groundfish which are also inadvertently caught. Testing is planned in Australia, and the Honduras Government has asked the US for assistance in intro-

ducing TED. A TED demonstration is planned for Mexico and enquiries have been received from The Netherlands, Japan and South Africa.

Marine Turtle Newsletter, No. 27

Seabird conference

The Seabird Group is organising a conference in Uttoxeter, UK, on 15–18 February 1985. The theme will be Population Studies and Population Monitoring, and the cost will be about £30–40 inclusive of fee and full board. Offers of talks and poster presentations welcome. Details: Dr J.P. Croxall, the Seabird Group, c/o RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK.

Europe and North Africa

New threats to otters

The Third International Colloquy on the Otter, held at Strasbourg in November 1983, pointed out new threats to some of Europe's remaining populations of otters *Lutra lutra*: hydroelectric dam projects in Italy would be fatal for the last two populations there; and the imminent drainage of 220,000 ha of marshland in the Basse-Loire and Garonne valleys in western France would destroy one of the few remaining major habitats for otters in that country.

Council of Europe Newsletter, 84–1

Import ban forces close of seal-skin factory

Norway's major seal-skin processing company, G.C. Rieber, is closing its fur-dressing plant in Bergen as a result of the import ban on harp and hooded seal-pup skins (*Pagophilus groenlandicus* and *Cystophora cristata*) into the EEC.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

Baltic pollution killing seals?

The results of autopsies carried out on Baltic seals found dead over several years have revealed a variety of diseases: of 29 adult females 30 per cent had malformations of the uterus which could cause sterility or spontaneous abortions, and 25 per cent had inflamed kidneys. Some seals were also underweight, with an abnormally thin layer of fat and there were many claw abnormalities. Researchers say that these abnormalities may be partly due to the

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high level of PCBs in the Baltic.
Council of Europe Newsletter, 83–12

Lead shot ban

Denmark is to ban the use of lead shot in agricultural areas from 1 August 1984 and is considering a total country-wide ban.

Council of Europe Newsletter, 83–12

Hares die: are herbicides the cause?

Herbicides are suspected as causing the deaths of large numbers of hares, *Lepus europaeus*, in Sweden, Poland and Denmark in the last two years.

Council of Europe Newsletter, 84–1

Substitutes for split-lead weights developed

Swans in the UK are still dying from lead poisoning caused by ingesting anglers' split-lead weights, according to the NCC. Of nearly 1500 swans found dead in 1981–83 about 63 per cent had lead poisoning. But the situation could improve soon: split-lead weights are now sold in spill-proof containers; posters and leaflets have been issued about the dangers to swans and two fishing tackle manufacturers have developed environmentally safe alternatives to split-lead weights. Anglers' Weight is a sticky steel-based putty mixture and Sandvik Safeweight is made of a tungsten polymer. The Government plans to phase out lead weights by 1987—by legislation if necessary.

Forestry Commission land sell-off bad for conservation

The UK Government, by ordering the Forestry Commission to raise £85 million by selling off woodlands by the end of 1987, is jeopardising the already precarious future of the country's ancient broadleaved woodlands. The Commission, which has already sold 20,000 ha for £37 million, is now offering 25 per cent of its land in south-east England, some of it ancient woodland. Ancient Foxley Wood in Bedfordshire, an SSSI, for example, is up for sale. Northampton Trust for Nature Conservation has bought 161 acres (65 ha) of ancient woodland—Gamston and Eaton woods—from the Forestry Commission; but the voluntary organisations are unlikely to be able to afford to buy all the valuable forests.

Briefly

Limestone pavement in the Burren in Ireland (*Gill Barter*).



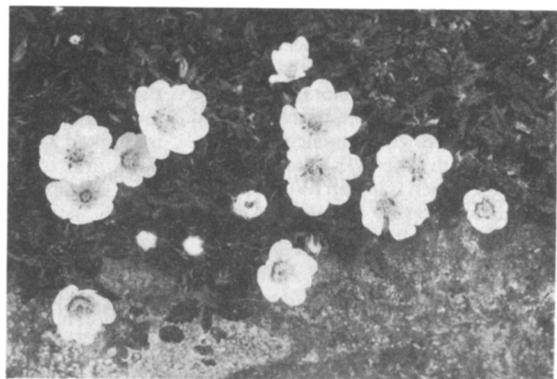
Government-sponsored destruction of the Burren's flora

The unique limestone flora of the Burren in Ireland is being sprayed with fertiliser as part of a government 'land improvement' scheme, which is financed by the EEC. This could lead to the disappearance of rare small species, for example the mountain avens *Dryas octopetala* and spring gentian *Gentiana verna*, which would be unable to compete with the resulting increased growth of pasture species. Fertiliser run-off from the limestone pavement is already polluting the water in the Burren's caves.

Goose sanctuary

The RSPB has bought 3000 acres for a goose sanctuary from the Islay Estate Company on the Island of Islay, scene of the controversial shooting of barnacle geese (see *Oryx*, January 1984). The Society is also pressing the Scottish Secretary of State to get the shooting stopped.

Mountain avens *Dryas octopetala* on the Burren, threatened by fertiliser (*Gill Barter*).



Guns on Dartmoor

Dartmoor National Park in Devon, UK, will almost inevitably be the scene of even more military training as a result of the Department of the Environment's permission for improvements to gunnery ranges there. Military use has already damaged SSSIs and ancient monuments. The decision was taken against the advice of the Countryside Commission, the Government's adviser on national parks.

Natural World, No. 9

A road through Dartmoor National Park

Despite strong opposition by UK conservationists during a long public enquiry, the Okehampton bypass will go through the Dartmoor National Park in Devon, ignoring a previous government guideline on new roads through national parks.

Natural World, No. 9

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Egg thieves prosecuted

Two men caught in possession of 80 birds' eggs, 25 of which were of two specially protected species—red-throated diver *Gavia stellata* and whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*—were fined a total of £2300 in November 1983. It is believed to be the first egg-collection case brought under Section I of the UK Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which increased the level of possible fines but removed the possibility of prison sentences for such offences.

Birds, 10, 1

Swifts above the motorway

Britain's newest motorway, the M54, is the first ever to have nesting boxes installed during its construction. Eight nesting boxes for swifts have been attached to selected bridges.

Natural World, No. 9

Otters take to the wild

Three captive-bred otters released last year by the Otter Trust in East Anglia, UK, have established in the wild with complete success. Six more were due to be released in the spring of 1984.

SSC Newsletter, No. 3

New otter reserve

A new 132-acre (53-ha) reserve acquired by the Devon Trust for Nature Conservation, UK, includes a mile-long (1.6 km) stretch of the River Torridge, one of the last strongholds in the country for the otter.

Natural World, No. 9

An oil embarrassment

Portugal is trying to sell hundreds of tons of sperm whale oil from whaling operations in the Azores, in violation of CITES. The oil has been accumulating for several years due to a bad market and trade restrictions; storage tanks are full and they have temporarily stopped whaling as a consequence. Conservationists in the US are pressing Portugal, which is not an IWC member, to end whaling by threatening Portuguese fishing in the US 200-mile zone.

Monitor, 9.1.1984

Hunters in the park may have to pay compensation

Since 1979 deer, roebuck, and chamois

have been illegally hunted in the Trento and Alto Adige sector of Stelvio National Park in Italy. The two provincial councils, Trento and Bolzana, which have permitted this hunting in defiance of the park authorities, were taken to court by conservationists and the hunting authorisations were over-ruled. The two councils and the hunters may now have to make compensation payments to replace the slaughtered animals, estimated to be 2000 roebuck, 700 chamois and 1000 deer in the last decade.

Italian Committee for National Parks and Equivalent Reserves

Greek island turtle rookery may be disrupted

The possibility of intensive development along the shore at Lagnas Bay, Zakynthos (Zante) Island, Greece, could disrupt the nesting of loggerhead turtles *Caretta caretta*. The area is one of the largest known rookeries for this species in the Mediterranean. Professor Carr, Chairman of the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group, has written to the Greek Minister of the Environment urging him to intervene.

Marine Turtle Newsletter, No. 27

Corrections

Sea eagles

In 'Return of sea eagles to Britain' (*Oryx*, April 1984, page 67) the number of white-tailed sea eagles released on Rhum was 62, not 52 as stated, and of these only seven, not six, were known to have died. The Editor apologises for the error.

Africa

Ivory ban in Sudan

The Department of Wildlife Forces in the Equatoria Region of Sudan has followed the national ban on the export of unworked ivory by withdrawing all souvenir and other hand-craft licences. It also prohibits trade in all cat skins, ostrich eggs and feathers from 31 December 1983.

Greater Kudus on increase in northern Kenya

In the Northern Frontier District of

Kenya greater kudus *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* (which elsewhere in the country are very locally distributed) appear to be increasing on Mount Marsabit, and elephants *Loxodonta africana* are beginning to recolonise the Ndotos Mountains. Both areas are little frequented by tourists and are only lightly settled by tribesmen.

Sir Christopher Lever

Kenya to permit hunting again

Kenya has resumed legalised hunting for game birds and hunting for big game is expected to be permitted soon. Kenya banned hunting in 1977 in response to declining game populations in some areas but these have now largely recovered and the Government says hunting is needed to manage the increasing populations and to bring in much-needed foreign exchange. Endangered species, such as rhino, leopard and cheetah, will not be hunted and quotas will be set for other species. Scientists oppose the proposed hunting of elephants, which they say there is no need to cull, and are concerned for the lion and the leopard.

Rwanda forest recommended for national park

Up to 41 per cent of Rwanda's



White-tailed sea eagle (*John Love*).

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Nyungwe Forest should become a national park, according to a team of forest management specialists commissioned to investigate the state of the forest by the Rwandan Government. The montane forest, which covers 97,000 ha in the south of the country on the watershed between the Nile and Zaïre river systems, has many endemics and nine primate species have been recorded. Forest clearance has been proceeding at about 809 ha per year since 1958 when 97,138 ha were forested.

Suara, 6, 6

Rhino and elephant poaching unabated

The Save the Rhino Trust (SRT) in Zambia reported that poaching of both rhino and elephant continued unabated in many parts of the Luangwa Valley and elsewhere in the country in 1983. Magistrates, however, are just beginning to react to the new anti-poaching laws by giving stiffer penalties, which could help reverse the trend. In 1983 the two SRT anti-poaching units made 167 arrests, seized 72 firearms and recovered 190 tusks and seven rhino horns.

New Nature Conservation Ordinance for the Transvaal

The new Nature Conservation Ordinance for the Transvaal Province of the Republic of South Africa, which came into effect on 1 January 1984, differs from the old in having a section controlling the collection, killing, selling, import and export of certain threatened invertebrates and changing the permit requirements for cycad seedlings to encourage commercial nurseries to grow cycad seedlings for sale to the public in order to reduce collecting pressure on wild populations.

Nature reserve will be used for arms' testing

Despite the petitions of many thousands of objectors, Armscor (the South African Armaments Corporation) is to be allowed to use part of De Hoop Provincial Nature Reserve for military purposes (see *Oryx*, January 1984, page 3). The decision follows the Hey Commission report, which gives the results of an environmental impact study commissioned by the Govern-

ment in response to the public outcry in favour of saving De Hoop. The report makes it clear that the Hey Commission won several important assurances and understandings from Armscor and it seems that a large portion of the adjacent coastal areas will be better protected than before, that the reserve will be extended to include all of De Hoop Vlei (a Wetland listed under the Ramsar Convention) and that Armscor will assist with essential reserve management.

Namibia bans bird exports

Namibia has imposed tight controls over the capture and export of wild birds. A previous ban in 1980 was revoked in 1982 when two dealers were each permitted to export up to 40,000 wild birds annually. Now the dealers must breed their own stock for export.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

A wall to keep predators away

When Marcus Island, in Saldanha Bay, 120 km north of Cape Town, was joined to the mainland by a causeway as part of a harbour development in 1976, it became accessible to terrestrial predators for the first time, despite requests from conservationists for a barrier to prevent this. By early 1980 15 species of self-introduced mammals were recorded, among them Cape grey mongooses, small-spotted genet and Cape foxes, which wreaked havoc on the seabird populations, which included the threatened jackass penguin and black oystercatchers. Then in 1981 a wall was built and, with modifications in 1982, has since proved effective in preventing predator access: more endemic black oystercatchers fledged in 1983 than in the previous five years combined and populations of other species are recovering.

African Wildlife, 37, 5

Patience rewarded

After more than 10 years of effort Honolulu Zoo has successfully hatched, for the first time in captivity, one Madagascar angulated tortoise *Geochelone yniphora*, one of the world's rarest tortoises. The species is near extinction in the wild—feral pigs unearth and eat the eggs, and its scrub habitat is burnt annually to provide pasture for cattle.

AAZPA Newsletter, XXIV, 12

Asia (excluding Indo-Malaya) Platforms for the vultures

On the Golan Heights in Israel tens of young griffon vultures *Gyps fulvus* were electrocuted on high tension lines last year. The Electric Corporation is co-operating to solve the problem by providing roosting platforms on the pylons, as has been done in other conservation-oriented countries.

Israel—Land and Nature, 9, 3

Iriomote cat down to 50

Fewer than 50 individuals of the Iriomote cat *Felis iriomotensis*, which lives on Iriomote Island in Japan, remain. Numbers were estimated at 300 when the species was discovered in 1965. Illegal hunting has reduced numbers of dwarf hog, a principal prey species, and the Japanese Government's supplementary feeding programme using dead chickens has turned the cats into chicken-eaters and they are accused of raiding local chicken coops. A road through the national park presents danger from collision with vehicles and an eye disease, whose cause is unknown, has appeared recently. WWF-Japan is formulating a conservation plan for the cat and its prey as well as for the island ecosystem.

Audubon, 86, 1

Protest against airport

Plans to encourage tourism by building an international airport on 227-sq-km Ishigaki Island, Japan, will mean leveling 135-m Karadake peak, which is covered with lilies in spring, and destroying 3.67 km of reef. Ishigaki fishermen, farmers, and teachers from the University of the Ryukyus on nearby Okinawa Island, are organising a petition against the scheme, which will, they say, destroy just what the tourists come to see.

Earthscan Bulletin, 6, 8

Stricter protection to stop panda trade

The giant panda *Ailuropoda melanoleuca* has been transferred from Appendix III to Appendix I of CITES following a proposal from the People's Republic of China, who requested the change after evidence that panda skins might be commercially traded came to light at the end of 1983.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

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Alligator farm success

The Anhui Province Alligator Farm hatched 300 Chinese alligators *Alligator sinensis* in 1983 and by the end of the year the entire group was doing well. Although few females bred because of the crowded conditions, this problem will be ameliorated in 1984 when a naturalistic enclosure surrounded by 5000 m of fence is completed (see *Oryx*, October 1983).

SSC/CSG Newsletter 3, 1

China's first conservation society

The China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA), the country's first voluntary conservation organisation, has been formed initially to raise funds to prevent the giant pandas starving during the current mass flowering and subsequent die-off of bamboo. But CWCA will also be involved in conservation education and research and fund-raising for China's other threatened species, of which 100 are endangered and 20 are on the brink of extinction.

WWF News, No. 27

Indo-Malaya

Overfishing threatens dam populations

The large-scale killing of fish by netting and explosives in Pakistan's dams has caused stocks to decline so badly that some species could be wiped out.

Fishing News International, 23, 1

Ban on hawking of bustards

A five-year ban on hawking of Houbara bustards *Chlamydotis undulata* in Pakistan is to come into effect soon. Numbers of the bird, whose Asian population breeds on the steppes of northern Asia and winters in the arid zones of Iran, Pakistan, India and north-eastern Arabia, have been declining in Pakistan since the mid-1960s when Arabian falconers first began to hunt there.

ICBP Newsletter, 5, 4

Sandalwood smuggling leads to violence

White sandalwood *Santalum album*, which is highly valued for both its aromatic wood and oil, was introduced to

India from Indonesia long ago, it is believed, and now grows in the wild in parts of the south. Its trade in India is a government monopoly but well organised gangs are illegally felling sandalwood trees and smuggling them via the west coast port of Calicut or up the east coast to Calcutta. Forest Department staff are hampered in their attempts to restrict poaching by the lack of men, money and equipment, but some poachers have been killed in armed clashes.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

Hangul decline

Hangul *Cervus elaphus langlu* numbers have declined to perhaps only 200 individuals, confined to two sites—the Dachigan Sanctuary and the Gamgul Siya-Behl Sanctuary in Himachal Pradesh in India. Urgent measures are needed to save this subspecies, which is threatened with human disturbance, clearing for agriculture and grazing, competition with legal and illegal stock, and poaching.

Deer Specialist Group Newsletter, No. 4

Indian valley should be park not dam

Neora Valley in West Bengal, India, contains 80 sq km of virgin forest and, unlike most of the surrounding area, has so far escaped the loggers. But nearby Kalimpong needs water to supplement its supply, which has dwindled since the surrounding forest was cut, and there are proposals to build two weirs and a pipeline in Neora. Conservationists are trying to persuade the state forestry department to use one of the many already denuded river valleys, but what is really needed is for the Indian Government to intervene and make Neora Valley a national park.

BBC Wildlife, 2, 3

Laos embraces nature conservation

Laos, one of the few south-east Asian countries to lack a nature conservation programme, has now embarked upon one. In 1983 it established a National Environmental Protection Office, a National Hunting and Fishing Office, and is proposing to establish a national park at Houei Nhang in Vientiane Province. Several Lao students are studying wildlife conservation in Bulgaria and the USSR, and the FAO res-

ponded to a request for assistance by sending Jeffrey Sayer, at present working on a national parks project in Burma, to Laos to determine the conservation priorities and to select potential areas for protection.

Tigerpaper, X, 3

Battleground to become park

Phu Hin Rong Kla, a mountain in Phitsanuloke Province in Thailand, which was the scene of a long period of conflict between government and rebel forces, is to become a national park. The mountain plateau, which rises to 1500 m, is deeply fissured and the hill evergreen forest is rich in orchid and rhododendron species.

Conservation News, September 1983

Gibbons need sanctuaries

Thailand's Association for the Conservation of Wildlife is pressing for wildlife sanctuaries for the dark-handed gibbon *Hylobates agilis*. Its only habitat in Thailand, where it was first recorded in 1972, is in forested hills in Yala and Narathiwat, east of Klong Thepha. Much of this forest has been cleared for rubber plantations and even the reserved forest that is left may be selectively logged. The gibbons are also being shot, despite the fact that it is illegal.

Conservation News, September 1983

New plan for Thai forests

Thailand's Royal Forestry Department's new plan to conserve the country's rapidly dwindling forests includes: reforestation programmes in national reserves; provision of 24-ha plots to each shifting-agriculturalist family in deforested areas to encourage people to settle and thereby preserve other threatened forest areas; and more severe punishments for timber poachers—during 1983 the Department seized illegally felled wood worth US \$5.85 million.

Monitor

Malaysia bans macaque exports

From 15 June 1984 Malaysia is banning the export of crab-eating macaques *Macaca fascicularis* to the US, where they are used for weapon research. The Wildlife and National Parks Department are now going to carry out a survey to assess the status of monkeys throughout Malaysia.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

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Javan rhinoceros sighting?

A technical adviser with a plantation firm has reported seeing a Javan rhinoceros *Rhinoceros sondaicus* in February in the Ulu Sat Forest Reserve, Machang, about 70 km from Kota Baru, in Kelantan, Malaysia. The last sighting in Malaysia was in 1932 in Teluk Anson (now Teluk Intan) and the species is now known only from Java in Indonesia where about 50 individuals remain. The adviser, George Joseph, is certain that the rhino was not the less rare Sumatran rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, but his report is yet to be confirmed. *New Straits Times*, 12.3.1984

New marine reserve proposed for Indonesia

The coral reefs, sea-grass beds and mangroves of the proposed Aru Tenggara Marine Reserve in the Aru Islands, Maluku, Indonesia, are critical for several threatened species. Possibly the largest surviving population of dugongs *Dugong dugon* in Indonesia live there; an estimated 1000 have been killed annually, for their meat, teeth and tears, since 1979 despite protection by ministerial decree. The reserve will also protect nesting beaches of green and hawksbill turtles *Chelonia mydas* and *Eretmochelys imbricata*. So much tortoiseshell from the hawksbill has been exported that adults are now very rare in the Aru Islands and it is estimated that 3000–6000 green turtles are killed and two million eggs are collected there every year. *WWF Monthly Report*, December 1983

Blasting damaging marine reserve

Komodo Marine Reserve in Indonesia is being severely damaged by illegal dynamite fishing, which is difficult to control owing to too few staff and insufficient equipment to cover the 750-sq-km area, which includes 44 islands. *Voice of Nature*, 19, V

Giant clam plan

In Taka Bone Rate, the largest coral atoll in Indonesia, and in the Thousand Islands near Jakarta, hundreds of tons of old giant clam *Tridacna gigas* shells are being dug up to make luxury floor tiles. Yet three members of the IUCN/WWF Conservation for Development Programme in Indonesia found no

living *T. gigas* in 100 hours of searching each of these areas. This species is believed to be nearing extinction in Indonesia and populations of other giant clam species are declining due to overharvesting. There are plans to protect reefs where the clams can breed undisturbed; to reintroduce *T. gigas*, either as adults or as juveniles reared at a mariculture station on Palau in the Caroline Islands, into the depleted areas; and to encourage giant clam farming in the buffer zones of marine reserves.

WWF Monthly Report, January 1984

North America

New park for Canada

Canada's new Pukaskwa National Park on the northern shores of Lake Superior is Ontario's largest national park and is on the southern edge of Canada's boreal forest of black spruce, grey pine and paper birch. Moose, wolves, black bears and woodland caribou are among the fauna.

Council of Europe Newsletter, 83–12

Dry oil well gives hope for ecosystem

The first major offshore oil well drilled at Mukluk island in the Beaufort Sea, off Alaska's giant Prudhoe Bay field, was dry, according to Standard Oil of Ohio. Other planned exploration wells in the area, which is on the migration route of the endangered bowhead whale, may not now go ahead.

Monitor, 23.1.1984

Swift foxes back on the prairie

In 1983 the Canadian Wildlife Service released six pairs of swift foxes *Vulpex velox* into the wild. The species was declared extinct in Canada in 1978—the last sighting was in 1938. Major factors in their decline were hunting for pelts, the conversion of prairie to farmland and the huge poisoning and trapping campaigns directed at coyotes, wolves and ground squirrels. Although the swift fox also declined in the US, remnant populations survived in eastern Colorado, South Dakota and northern Texas, and the species began to make a comeback in the 1950s, when better controls on poisoning and trapping were instituted, and has since spread back into parts of its historic

range in Wyoming, Nebraska and Kansas. Further Canadian releases are planned where suitable habitat exists.

Nature Canada, 13, 1

Burrowing owls dig in—hopefully

In 1983 a pair of burrowing owls *Speotyto cunicularia* and their nine nestlings were captured in the US and introduced into a national wildlife reserve in British Columbia, where they were penned and fed for 10 days while they adapted to their new surroundings. By autumn the adults and at least six surviving young had left for their wintering grounds and it was hoped that they would return to the valley in 1984. The species has virtually disappeared from the state, primarily due to a loss of lowland grassland, indiscriminate use of pesticides, illegal shooting, and trampling of their nesting burrows by livestock.

Nature Canada, 13, 1

Islands get protection after 50 years

The Canadian Government has agreed to purchase 40 of the Mingan Islands in Quebec for a future national park from a group of companies headed by Dome Petroleum Ltd. The islands cover 78 sq km in the Gulf of St Lawrence and, with their outstanding flora, seabirds, seals and porpoises, were first recommended for protection in 1926.

Nature Canada, 13, 1

Birds of Prey Centre

The Peregrine Fund, which has been breeding peregrine falcons *Falco peregrinus* for release into the wild in the US—it reared 260 young last year—plans to open the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho. There may be a frozen semen bank to guard against future extinctions and it is hoping to start co-operative ventures with other countries to save birds in their native habitats. First on the list for help are orange-breasted falcons *F. deiroleucus* in Guatemala, aplomado falcons *F. femoralis* in Mexico, Mauritius kestrels *F. punctatus* in Mauritius, elf owls *Micrathene whitneyi* in Arizona and, when the political turmoil cools, the Philippine eagles *Pithecophaga jefferyi*, whose numbers are down to 200–300. *The Living Bird Quarterly*, 3, 1

Briefly . . .

America's national emblem making strong comeback

The American bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, endangered in 43 states and threatened in five others, is making a strong comeback. The US National Wildlife Federation's 1983 survey counted 12,098 bald eagles in 46 states, about the same number as in 1982 and up from the 9815 of 1979.

Animal Keepers' Forum, December 1981

Record number of whooping cranes

There are now 107 whooping cranes in the wild and 37 in captivity. An aerial survey of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas and nearby islands in December 1983 revealed 75 whooping cranes, 68 of which were adult. In addition 32 were counted in the wintering grounds of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico. Most of the captive birds are at the Patuxent Research Center in Maryland.

Grus Americana, 23, 1

Rare turtle captive-bred for first time

Two yellow-spotted sideneck turtles *Podocnemis unifilis* have been hatched at Fort Worth Zoo in the US—perhaps a first in captive breeding. The South American species is endangered and listed on Appendix II of CITES.

AAZPA Newsletter, XXIV, 12

Pollution shortens the short life of a vole

A biologist at the State University of New York has discovered that young voles trapped along the dump site fence at polluted Love Canal near Niagara Falls lived only about 54 days, half their normal life-span. He found severe liver damage and high levels of the pesticide Lindane in the body fat. Voles caught across the street from the canal and those caught in a field one mile away lived 75 days and 100 days respectively.

International Wildlife, 14, 1

Wildlife given priority over cattle

In a major legal victory for the US National Wildlife Federation and the Montana Wildlife Federation, a federal court has ruled that wildlife, notably

sharp-tail grouse and pronghorn, not cattle have first grazing rights on Montana's Charles M. Russell Range. The decision reverses a lower court ruling in favour of cattle ranchers, who sued when the Interior Department proposed limiting cattle access to overgrazed parts of the range.

International Wildlife, 14, 1

Walkers threaten rare groundsel

The San Francisco Peaks groundsel *Senecio franciscanus* has been listed as threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The dwarf alpine plant occurs only within a 2.6-sq-km area in the mountains north of Flagstaff, Arizona and it is jeopardised mainly by trampling by walkers. Future conservation management might include developing new trails away from the most vulnerable populations or erecting signs against leaving the designated paths.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, VIII, 12

Wild release date for California condors near

The California condor recovery programme achieved a boost in 1983 by addition of seven birds to the captive flock, bringing the total to nine, four of them hatched from eggs taken from the first clutches of wild condors. The release of young condors to augment the wild population could begin in 1985.

Audubon, 86, 1

Song sparrow officially extinct

The Santa Barbara song sparrow *Melospiza melodia graminea* has been removed from the US List of Endangered Species in acknowledgment of its extinction. None has been seen in its only home, Santa Barbara Island off California, since a fire devastated most of the island's 640 acres (259 ha) in 1959.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, VIII, 11

Remarkable longevity of skylark

In the US it is customary to require the collection of a specimen to establish the first occurrence of a bird in each state. On 16 December 1978 a European skylark *Alauda arvensis* materialised in the middle of a Christmas Bird Count at Point Reyes National Seashore, California, and was ticked off on all available

local lists as a Smith's longspur *Calcarius pictus*. Once it was correctly identified there arose a clamour for its collection, not only as a first record for the state, but of the natural occurrence of the species on the US mainland. The guardians of the reserve preferred to obey the law and retain the attraction, which expressed its appreciation by remaining for the rest of the winter and returning for at least four more, which also appears to form a further record for faithfulness in returning to its winter quarters.

Western Birds, 14, 113–126 (W.R.P. Bourne)

Eggs to save bean crop

Some Louisiana farmers are spraying their fields with dilute egg mixture to repel deer, which feed on soya bean plants, apparently with success.

International Wildlife, 14, 1

Parrots impounded

In February 1984 104 palm cockatoos *Probosciger aterrimus* and 28 electus parrots *Eclectus roratus* from Indonesia were confiscated from a wildlife wholesaler in Miami by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Their import was a violation of the Lacey Act, which prohibits import of wildlife illegally exported from another country. The birds are being cared for in zoos.

Department of the Interior

Cave shrimp threatened by sewage

The Kentucky cave shrimp *Palaeomonias ganteri*, known only from underground streams in Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky, where it is estimated that 500 individuals live, has been listed as Endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The main threat is contamination of the ground-water flow to the caves from nearby human communities, which have inadequate or no sewage treatment facilities.

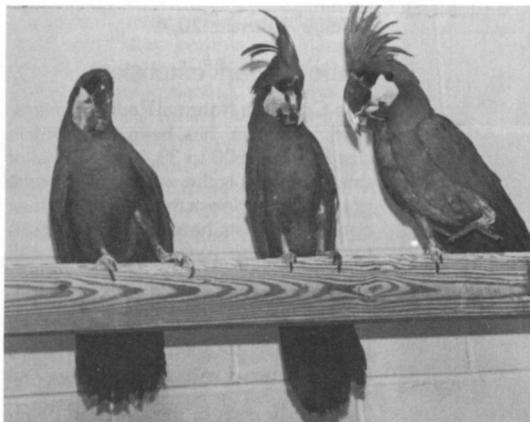
Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, VIII, 11

Snowbells endangered in Texas

Texas where it survives, revealed no down to 25 individuals in the wild, has been proposed for listing as Endangered. A survey in 1982, in the several scattered locations in south

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Palm cockatoos at the National Zoo, Washington DC, after confiscation from a wildlife wholesaler (US Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Law Enforcement).

Texas where it survives, revealed no seedlings or saplings and investigations are in progress to determine if this is due to browsing by cattle or deer. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, VIII, 10

Company's wilderness gift

Cooper Industries, a manufacturing company based in Houston, Texas, has given 500 mining claims covering 10,000 acres (4077 ha) of Alaskan wilderness to the National Park Service in celebration of the company's 150th anniversary. The land is on the southern flank of the Wrangell Mountains about 250 miles (400 km) east of Anchorage and is home for Dall sheep, wolves, moose and bears.

Alligator-saturated habitat

In some prime habitat areas in Texas, American alligators *Alligator mississippiensis* numbers have doubled in the last five years and are probably near the maximum that can be supported by the habitat. The species was listed as Endangered in 1967 after poaching led to a rapid decrease in population. *International Wildlife*, 14, 1

Florida's marshland restoration

South Florida Water Management District has begun to restore an experimental 12-mile (19 km) stretch of the Kissimmee River to its original meandering course. In the 1960s 92 miles (148 km) of the river were canalised to prevent flooding, but this destroyed 40,000 acres (16,188 ha) of

marshland, which was a holding area of southern Florida's freshwater supply, and drained 100,000 acres (40,470 ha) of wetland. The cost of reversing this environmental destruction is estimated at \$200 million; in addition, cattle ranchers are threatening to sue for the loss of the grazing land that they acquired with the drainage. *SSC Newsletter*, No. 3

Tree frog more common than believed

The Florida population of the Pine Barrens treefrog *Hyla andersonii* has been removed from the US List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife because recent surveys have revealed that it is more numerous and widespread than was believed in 1977 when it was listed. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, VIII, 12

Central America

Three parks for Dominican Republic

In August 1983 the Dominican Republic established three new national parks: Jaragua National Park includes important coastal areas in the Barahona Peninsula and the Beata and Alto Velo Islands. Montecristi National Park, covering part of the Manzanillo Bay and the adjacent sea includes the largest mangrove swamp in the country. Sierra de Bahoruco National Park includes conifer forests and the best preserved dry forest in the country. Of the country's 270 orchid species, 110 grow there

and 30 are endemic to the Sierra de Bahoruco. *IUCN Bulletin*, 14, 10-12

Almost too late for forest survey?

The Paraguayan National Forest Service is making an inventory of the country's wild forest resources, with the help of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Peace Corps and the Smithsonian Institution. The scientists must work quickly: forests are being felled for timber and new roads are bringing in settlers. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates that Paraguay's forests may be gone in just 15 years. *Earthscan Bulletin*, 7, 1

Bolivian export ban

In Bolivia, a Ministerial Resolution has been passed which bans the capture and export of wildlife for one year from 1 April 1984.

Reginald Hardy, Bolivian Wildlife Society

Endangered crocodiles to be moved

There is a plan to translocate a population of about 15 sub-adult endangered American crocodiles *Crocodylus acutus*, which are threatened by the construction of new port facilities by the EXXON Corporation in Colombia at Bahia de Portete. EXXON is willing to assist and the IUCN/SSC Crocodile Specialist Group has been asked for advice.

SSC/CSG Newsletter, 3, 1

Felling threatens hummingbirds

The Brazilian Government, by giving a paper company permission to fell more than half the trees in a reserve in Espirito Santo State, is threatening the future of three rare hummingbird species, *Glaucis dohmii*, *Phaethornis margaritae* and *Threnetes grizeki*, which now are known only from that state.

Manatee introductions into reservoirs

Brazil's manatee project has benefited from donations of US \$26,000 from the Amazonas State Government and US \$33,500 from the IBM company to build pools for research on 14 captive-reared manatees *Trichechus inunguis*, with the eventual aim of captive-

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breeding. The Brazilian Institute for Forestry Development is helping by sponsoring a large-scale campaign for the preservation of manatees. And in Curua-una near Santarem, the first hydroelectric reservoir of the Amazon, 42 manatees have been introduced since 1950, most of which were captured in the Rio Japura, 1000 km away. All have radio-transmitters for monitoring purposes. The Brazilian Electric Company intends continuing the project by including the next three hydroelectric dams in the same programme.

SSC Newsletter, No. 3

Slaughter of Chile's sealions

The Chilean Government has listed the southern sealion *Otaria byronia* as a 'destructive' animal and has authorised the killing of those that take fish trapped in fishing nets. This new decree replaces one that necessitated a hunting permit with restrictions as to the number, size and sex of specimens killed, as well as the place, date and methods of killing. Conservationists in Chile claim that the new regulations will allow indiscriminate slaughter.

Traffic Bulletin, V, 5/6

Australasia/Antarctica

22 new Ramsar wetlands

Australia has designated 22 wetlands covering 1,129,703 ha under the Ramsar Convention (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat). *Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter*, 15, 10

New national park

Nangar National Park has been established in New South Wales, Australia; situated between Orange and Forbes its 1600 ha of rugged hill country are still clothed with native vegetation. *Trees and Victoria's Resources*, 25, 4

More land for a rare wallaby

More land for the only remaining population of the bridle nail-tailed wallaby *Onychogalea fraenata* is to be bought with a \$200,000 contribution from the Commonwealth Government. The wallaby, which once occurred from southern Australia to north Queensland, now survives only near Dingo in central Queensland, where a 5900-ha

reserve has been set aside to secure its habitat.

Wildlife Australia, 20, 4

National Park extension

The Cooloola National Park in Queensland, Australia, has been increased in size from 21,600 to 39,400 ha. Most of this extension is the western catchment of the Upper Noosa river, an area where conservationists have fought proposals to replace the native vegetation with pine plantations.

Wildlife Australia, 20, 4

Road would destroy Queensland rain forest

The rain forests in the Daintree River-Cape Tribulation area of North Queensland are the focus of a campaign to save them by the Australian Conservation Foundation. The Queensland Government, which has allowed land speculation and destructive road building, logging and mining, plans a new road that would pass through Cape Tribulation National Park and would bridge, for the first time, the Daintree River. There are already five national parks declared, but ACF want the whole area completely protected in the proposed Greater Daintree National Park.

Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 15, 10

The rise of the noisy scrub bird

When the noisy scrub bird *Atrichornis clamosus* was rediscovered in 1961, after 72 years of apparent extinction, in Two People's Bay in south-west Australia, there were 40 breeding pairs. The Western Australian Government, abandoning plans for a new town at the site, gazetted 4639 ha as a nature reserve in 1966. Protecting the area from fires has allowed the bird's numbers to almost double and in 1983 10 birds were moved to Mount Many-peaks Nature Reserve 10 km away, as a first step to found a new colony.

SWANS, 13, 2

Black robin doubles numbers

The cross-fostering programme developed by New Zealand's Wildlife Service to help restore the Chatham Island black robin *Petroica traversi* population is meeting with success. The first clutches of the robin pairs are placed in the nests of other birds,



Chatham Island black robin (David Cemmick/New Zealand Wildlife Service).

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leaving the robins to produce second clutches. Chatham Island warblers are used as foster parents on Mangere Island, where in 1980, when the programme was instigated, the remaining five individual robins lived, but in the 1981/82 breeding season Chatham Island tits on nearby South East Island were used even more successfully. A second population of black robins has now been established in South East Island. There was a poor breeding season due to bad weather in 1982/83, but the 1983/84 season began with nine birds, of which six were paired, and ended with 20—the highest since the programme began.

Dynamite shatters more than peace in Antarctica

Many penguins died as France used dynamite in the building of an airstrip at its Antarctica base of Dumont d'Urville. It is one of 26 sites in the Antarctic for emperor penguins *Aptenodytes forsteri* and one of the five sites for snow petrels *Pagodroma nivea*.

Oceania

Light shades to help birds

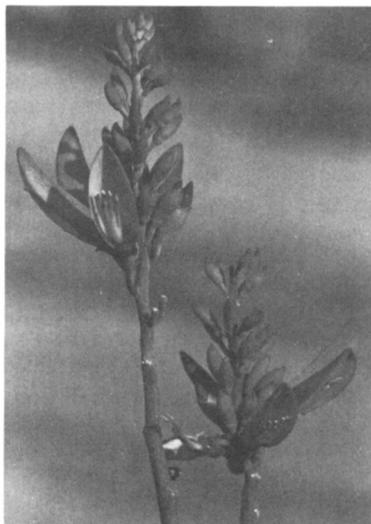
The Kauai Electric Company has reached an agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to install streetlamp shades on Kauai Island in the Pacific to help stop Newell's shearwaters (*a'o*) *Puffinus puffinus newelli* colliding with the lights, which is a major cause of mortality for these endangered birds.

Grazing threatens Hawaiian plants

Two Hawaiian plants have been proposed for listing as endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service: *Gouania hillebrandii*, a shrub known from only two sites on the Island of Maui, suffers from grazing by introduced livestock and, sometimes fatal, infestation by an introduced herbivorous insect; Hawaii tree cotton *Kokia drynarioides*, a small tree with red flowers, has also declined due to livestock grazing, habitat drainage and competition from introduced plants—only 15 individuals are left in the wild in three small areas on the Island of Hawaii.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, VIII, 10

Briefly



Erythrina elenae

Cuban plant flowers for first time outside Cuba

Erythrina elenae, a greyish thorny shrub, flowered for the first time ever outside Cuba, where it is confined in the wild to only two localities. After many years of trying, Waimea Falls Park in Oahu at last obtained seeds by appealing to Cuba's President, Fidel Castro.

Vanuatu moves to protect marine resources

On 1 September 1983 Vanuatu introduced new fishery conservation measures. Crustaceans, some molluscs, green turtles *Chelonia mydas* and hawksbill turtles *Eretmochelys imbricata* all receive some kind of protection, and to prevent over-collecting of coral it is now prohibited for any person to take more than three pieces of living coral in any period of 24 hours without permission. Permits are now required for the export of many marine species, for which quotas will be set, and fishing for any marine mammal is prohibited. Vanuatu will soon establish its first marine reserve at Million Dollar Point, Espiritu Santo.

Naika, 12

Requests

Hog deer publications

Any publications or other information on the ecology and behaviour of the

hog deer *Axis porcinus* would be appreciated by Mr Sanat K. Dhungel, c/o University of Montana, Department of Wildlife, Missoula, Montana, USA.

Mule deer volunteers

Volunteers and contributions are needed to aid in the study and stabilisation of the mule deer *Odocoileus cerrosensis* population found only on Cedros Island, Baja California, Mexico. At last count only 42 remained. In February 1985 a multi-national team will be on the island to investigate the species. Please contact Have Mule Will Travel, Inc., (a non-profit organisation) 787, South Grade Rd, Alpine, California 92001, USA for further information.

CITES

Any individuals or groups who have been actively involved with CITES are asked to contact Mark Trexler, who with Laura Kosloff is conducting an in-depth implementation analysis of the Convention. Many kinds of information are sought; full details from Mark C. Trexler, IUCN, Avenue du Mont-Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland.

People

Two distinguished Indian conservationists, Zafar Futehally and Madhav Gadgil, who live in Bangalore, Karnataka, received the Karnataka State Award on the occasion of the State's Reorganisation Day in 1983.

Mr John Alan Gulland, Chief of the Marine Resources Service of the Food and Agriculture Organisation, has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society, distinguished for his formulation of principles and policies for the management of world resources of whales, fish and shellfish.

James W. Thorsell, a Canadian, is the new Executive Officer of the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas. He was formerly senior lecturer at the Mweka College of Wildlife Management, Tanzania.

Dr Michael Tillman is the new Director of the IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, UK. He is on a three-year secondment from his directorship of the US National Marine Mammal Laboratory and is Chairman of the IWC's Scientific Committee.

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