

Dr Petter, with the co-operation of the Madagascar Government, is working in close conjunction with IUCN, co-ordinating and implementing conservation measures in Madagascar. With the recently introduced £100 levy on the export of lemurs from Madagascar, it has become more difficult to get animals with which to build up groups in captivity, so it is more than ever important for zoos to make the best possible use of those they already have and to co-operate in building up potential breeding colonies for a permanent breeding programme, with stud books of the rarer species. If the Malagasy reserves are subjected to further degradation and are unable to support their wildlife, zoos could play an important part in ensuring the survival of this unique fauna.

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Primate News

MORE than 60,000 primates were taken for research in the USA in 1966 according to the Laboratory Primate Newsletter. Of these only 4070 were bred by the research institutions; 58,173 were acquired through dealers, including nearly 300 apes, mostly chimpanzees. Over 50,000 were Old World monkeys, mostly rhesus and cynomolgus, macaques and vervets; more than 11,000 from the New World were mostly squirrel monkeys. A primate biology programme covering both education and research has been started at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington under the direction of J. R. Napier, who will also have an office in London. Dr Napier is also president of the newly founded Primate Society in London, for promoting research in primate biology, of which the Hon Secretary is Richard P. Michael, Institute of Psychiatry, 3 de Crespigny Park, London SE5.

A survey of rhesus monkeys in northern India showed a substantial reduction in numbers in the villages and an increase in the towns, with a considerable increase in the proportion of juveniles in both villages and towns. In their report on the survey, published in the February *Journal of Animal Ecology*, the two scientists concerned, Charles H. Southwick and M. Rafiq Siddiqi, attribute the changes to the fact that trappers do not work in towns because of the danger of diseased animals, and that the town monkeys have become commensals of man, like rats, living on food scraps. Being highly adaptable and aggressive the rhesus monkey, they say, will continue to survive, but increasing urbanisation will not make for healthy or valuable animals.

As a result of the findings in a WWF survey on the vervet monkey in Kenya, undertaken because of the large numbers being trapped by dealers for medical research and polio vaccine purposes, the Kenya government has stopped all trapping of vervets pending possible new regulations. The government has also banned the export of wild animals trapped in Kenya, except for those destined for public (not private) zoos and recognised research bodies.

Israeli Field Centre

With the aid of a grant from the World Wildlife Fund, a Field Study Centre for Conservation has been opened on Mt. Meiron, in Israel, the fifth of a chain of centres established by the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.